



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND MARKETS

Brussels,  
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Dear Mr Standing,

I would like to thank you for your letter and report regarding the evaluations of Fisheries Partnership Agreements.

I welcome very much your comments and proposals to make evaluations more effective and to improve the process leading to their adoption.

As a starting point, I am satisfied to see that CCFA considers these reports as useful and well-researched. I take it as a positive point and recognise that improvements can however be made.

First, regarding availability to the public, the Commission has taken good note of various requests that ex-ante and ex-post evaluations should be made public. This is why we consider that from now on, all reports should be non-classified and we should properly ensure their dissemination, including their publication on the Internet. At the same time, the Commission services will endeavour to ensure that evaluations reports are available before the adoption of negotiating mandates by the Council. Although comments on these reports from interested parties are always welcome, I would however be cautious in initiating a process of open consultation as it would change the nature of the evaluation and lead to a large extent the process being "out of control".

Let me add that, as evaluations would become part of the public domain, we still need to provide some guarantees, in particular linked to data protection rules, and abstain from publishing personal or disaggregated data. Finally, a new contractor has been selected recently, therefore making irrelevant the criticism that the EU always operates with the same consulting firm.

Without going further into detail, I can reassure you of our commitment to contribute to increased transparency and public participation on EU fisheries agreements.

Yours sincerely,

*With kind regards*

Stefaan Depypere

Mr André Standing  
CFFA Adviser, [Andre.standing@transparentsea.co](mailto:Andre.standing@transparentsea.co)  
cc. Mrs Béatrice Gorez  
CFFA Cordinator, [Cffa.cape@scarlet.be](mailto:Cffa.cape@scarlet.be)