



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

28.04.2008 D 04590

Brussels,
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Ms. Ann Bell
Secretary
NSRAC Secretariat
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen AB16 5GB
Scotland

Subject: NSRAC observer status at STECF

Dear Ms. Bell,

Thank you for your letter dated 10 April in which you express the interest of the NSRAC in being an observer at STECF meetings and therefore having a formal observer status.

I share your concern that we need to ensure communication between our scientific advisory bodies and the RACs. We are, for that reason, encouraging STECF and ICES to go as far as possible to ensure transparency in the advisory process including opening the process as much as possible to stakeholder observers.

There have been stakeholder observers at some STECF meetings in the past, but this has so far been arranged on an "ad hoc" basis. We understand that STECF is currently developing its rules of procedure including rules to enable stakeholder observers in the process. Until such rules have been finalised, the issue will probably have to be discussed with the STECF Chair on a case-by-case basis.

The Commission encourages transparency but leaves it to the scientific advisory bodies themselves to make the final judgement as to how far and how it should apply to their work. I therefore encourage you to contact the STECF Chair, Mr. John Casey, via the STECF Secretariat (stecf-secretariat@jrc.it) to explore the possibility of sending observers to meetings of relevance to the NSRAC.

Yours sincerely,

Fokion Fotiadis

c.c.: Mr. John Casey - STECF Chair