

Mr Alain Cadec  
Member of the European Parliament  
Parlement européen  
Bât. Altiero Spinelli, 13E205  
60, rue Wiertz  
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25 September 2014

**Ref: 14/093**

Re: Hearing of Commissioner-designate Vella and proposed structure and mandate for the new Commission, 29<sup>th</sup> of September

Dear Mr. Cadec, Chairman of the Fisheries Committee

In the run-up to the European Parliament's hearing of Commissioner-designate Karmenu Vella, we would like to share our thoughts regarding Jean-Claude Juncker's proposed candidate, structure and mandate for the new Commission. We would ask that you, as chairman of the Fisheries Committee, take these thoughts into account in preparation for the hearing with Commissioner-designate Vella.

During its past term, the European Parliament, notably also under your leadership, pursued and delivered prominent and ambitious reforms of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the European Fisheries and Maritime Fund (EMFF). Core objectives of the reform are the recovery of fish stocks, minimisation of the impact of fishing on the marine environment and the protection and ecosystem-based management that contributes to the restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems. Moreover, in the wider context of maritime policy and marine protection, the EU has set out a roadmap towards sustainable maritime development that minimises the adverse impacts of human activities on the marine environment. The goals are, therefore, to recover fish stocks and to deliver a good environmental status of marine waters by 2020, thereby maximizing the opportunities that our oceans offer to society.

The reforms and wider roadmap will require a number of follow-up initiatives, including the adoption of multi-annual plans, the development of discard plans, a framework for revised technical measures and comprehensive action to improve compliance with the EU's fisheries and conservation laws, including the implementation of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas. A strong and effective Commission that steers the EU towards the agreed goals is therefore required.

In this context, we hope that the Parliament will request that the mandate of Commissioner-designate Vella be expanded to explicitly include references to delivering stock recovery and proposals for sustainable long-term fisheries management plans, as well as a references to achieving a good environmental status in line with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and implementation of the EU's Birds and Habitats Directives, as well as delivering the commitments set out in the 7<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme which clearly states that:

*"...while the maritime sector offers economic opportunities, from fishing, shipping and aquaculture to raw materials and offshore energy and marine biotechnology, care needs to be taken to ensure their exploitation is compatible with the conservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems."*

Moreover, we are concerned that the proposed new structure of the Juncker Commission, in which the sole right to initiate legislation is vested with the Vice-Presidents, could prevent Commissioner-designate Vella from pursuing his role in full. It will be prohibitively restrictive to frame all up-coming policy initiatives in the field of environment, fisheries and maritime affairs through the Vice-Presidents' policy portfolios of energy union, better regulation and/or jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness. We suggest that the Committee requests that one Vice-President be given the explicit mandate to secure the integration of sustainability considerations in EU policy.

We therefore urge you, as chair of the Fisheries Committee, in your hearing with the Commissioner-designate to ask how he will deliver on the implementation of both the fisheries and environmental obligations, and whether he is prepared and mandated to propose new legislation which will work towards achieving the agreed goals.

Yours Sincerely,



Angelo Caserta  
Regional Director, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia Division

On behalf of:

Uta Bellion, Director, European Marine Programme, The Pew Charitable Trusts  
Sandy Luk, Head of the Biodiversity Programme, ClientEarth  
Xavier Pastor, Executive Director, Oceana in Europe  
Saskia Richartz, Greenpeace, EU Oceans Policy Director  
Monica Verbeek, Executive Director, Seas At Risk

