

AC Secretariat meeting with DG Mare

On-line

12th May 2022

14:00 – 17:30

REPORT

Participants: Advisory Councils' secretaries and financial officers, Commission (DG Mare); Units D3 (CFP and structural support development and coordination) and E1 (Financial Unit).

Ewa Milewska, the BSAC rapporteur and information assistant represented the BSAC.

Chair: Valerie Tankink

1. Opening remarks – Valerie TANKINK, Head of Unit MARE-D3, CFP and Structural support policy development and coordination

Valerie Tankink, Head of Unit MARE-D3 welcomed the representatives of all Advisory Councils. She underlined that DG Mare appreciates that the InterAC meetings are held on a regular basis, more often than in the past. She thanked the MEDAC for organising the online meeting.

2. Follow-up of the actions undertaken to implement the delegated act

The BSAC presented the state of play of the implementation of the new Delegated Act. With reference to Article 4 the BSAC referred to the General Assembly and ExCom meetings held the day before, which had elected the new Chair (from the fisheries) and a Vice Chair (from the other interest group, representing the anglers). The BSAC only has one Vice Chair. The ExCom appointed the new Executive Secretary Guillaume Carruel who will start in mid-June. The BSAC will be giving its own Rules of Procedure a going-through to make sure they are in alignment with the latest amendments of the COM Delegated Regulation

The General Assembly and the ExCom have a balanced and wide representation of all stakeholders.

With reference to Article 5 Working methods – the BSAC does do what is described in the Delegated Act in a) – c). And has made full use of IT and interpreting where possible.

With reference to Article 7a on performance reviews - Once every five years to doing a review – the BSAC had carried out a review end 2020, and the report was adopted by ExCom in January 2021.

Other ACs presented the state of play of the implementation of the new Delegated Act **MEDAC** informed that they have 3 vice presidents. The performance review will be carried out this year. Membership fee will be modified, will propose two different fees, higher and lower, so all stakeholders have access to the AC.

LDAC found the new Delegated Act quite helpful for the internal functioning and clarification of working procedures. The membership respects the balance.

MAC informed - no major changes, vice chairs and chairs already in line. Balance respected. Working practices are transparent and balanced. No problems with the classification of members.

NWWAC informed that nothing changed as concerns chairs and vice chairs. Rules of procedure were updated last year to match the requirements of the Delegated Act. Performance review – working on it. Membership – need to evaluate everybody, because problems with classification of one member.

PELAC complies with most of the provisions of the new DA. The Rules of Procedure were revised. The vice chair was elected. Consensus advice only.

NSAC revised the Rules of Procedure. One vice chair seat is vacant. WG vice chairs – not in rules of procedure. Categorisation of members: set up criteria so members self-identify themselves. Equitable membership fees. Hybrid options of meetings, but encourage members to join in person. Performance review – internal review conducted by the Secretary.

CCRUP a member registered as OIG ended up in the fisheries group.

Black Sea AC good to have these meetings to exchange information. DA came at the moment of elections.. Now need to revise the rules again. Vice chair elections will be postponed. New classification criteria will be included in the rules of procedure. Performance review – have reserved some money for that. Will start in the autumn.

AAC rules in line. Stakeholder classification problems in the past had been solved. No ongoing problems. Review membership once a year according to the criteria to verify if members are in the right groups.

The Commission took note of the updates given by the ACs.

classification interesting. Performance review – independent review needed. Performance reviews could be shared to exchange experience. She referred to the CFP stakeholder event on 10th June 2022 – the Commission will see what elements can be put forward to make things work better.

3. Planning of meetings for the second half of 2022

The Commission informed that it will continue with internal meetings with the AC Secretariats. They are more informal than the InterACs meetings and the dialogue is more open. The InterACs meetings will deal with cross cutting policy, as well as financial matters.

The meetings will continue as online or hybrid meetings due to the Green Deal recommendations on travelling. The Commission will try to organise an in-person InterACs meeting. Maybe in the autumn 2022, depends on the budget. The expenses had been cut again.

She asked the ACs for their opinion on the frequency of InterACs meetings and meetings with the AC Secretariats.

MAC appreciated that there are more meetings than before. In their opinion, there should be a middle ground solution in terms of frequency.

NSAC also welcomed increased number of meetings. In their view, the COM meetings with the Secretariats should be held three times per year. The InterACs should be held twice a year. One online and one in person or hybrid.

LDAC the InterAC meetings should be hybrid. Some wanted meetings in person, but are keeping in line with the Green Deal. Once a year meet in person.

MAC stated that hybrid meetings discourage people to participate in person. However, will continue with hybrid meetings to cut travel expenses.

MEDAC was not in favour of hybrid. Challenge to have translation into 6 languages.

NWWAC underlined that it is easier for many, including COM to join virtual meetings.

The Commission concluded that they will look at what is feasible it rems of the budget. There are big constrains in COM as far as the travel budget and meetings are concerned. In the future it would be good to hold InterACs meetings in the different AC headquarters. The planned InterAC meeting on 28th June 2022 – the Commission will confirm whether this meeting will take place. Date not good because it overlaps with Oceans' Day on the 28th June. The InterACs meeting in the autumn – the Commission will take a decision whether it will be hybrid or online.

4. Lump-sums and financial points

Presentation by COM – they reminded that all details concerning the new financial set up and lump sum approach had been given during previous meetings. Some elements were highlighted and updated. COM informed that the decision on lumps had been signed in April. LDAC starts with lump sum approach on 1st June 2022 as first AC. PELAC will be next. Procedures are the same as before (application, award decision, signature grant agreement). Lump sum amount will be stated in the grant agreement. The lumpsums will be very much dependent on the Work Programme. There are clauses on deliverables: percentage of implemented recommendations and meetings should not be less than 50%. It is a financial guarantee for COM, so as to apply some pressure to get deliverables. 50% is achievable for all. Reduction by 30% of grant if one of requirements listed in CFP has not been met. COM will send letters to the ACs about the results of the assessment of the budget estimations submitted to COM. Formal grant application should be submitted by the ACs using the template indicated in the COM letter. COM will carry out an evaluation of applications and issue an award decision.

The BSAC will start with new system in the next financial year 2023-2024.

On indexation of grants: the EUROSTAT figures will be used. A 2% indexation will be applied according to the general rules of the Commission. Several ACs asked questions about the new financial arrangements. When will the grant agreement be delivered to ACs? At the beginning of the financial year?

The Commission informed: if the application is sent early in advance, grant application will be delivered at the beginning of the financial year. The representative of DG Mare stated that it is up to the individual ACs to provide explanations in cases where the costs estimated for the next 4 years are higher than the historical ones. The Commission will examine these budgets on a case-by-case basis and in exceptional cases correct the lumpsum amounts.

On audits: no audits needed. Compliant only with national taxation. Just sign eligibility of the costs.

COM informed that there will be no financial impact if the deliverables do not go below 50%. Lumps sums had been introduced to minimise the administrative burden for the ACs. COM invited the ACs to send questions to DG Mare. Guidelines will be ready soon. COM is now busy with the LDAC agreement. Salary costs have to be covered. Travel costs need to be reduced. COM reminded once again that it (the Commission) needs to cut down travel costs by 50% from 1st January.

5. AOB

The Commission informed that the Study on regionalisation will be published soon. More information on the 10th June Stakeholder event will be coming soon.

The Chair thanked all participants for good discussions.