

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

**The Director-General**

Brussels,  
MARE/ (2017)

**Mr Giampaolo Buonfiglio**  
Chairman  
MEDAC  
Via Nazionale, 243  
00184 Roma – RM  
Italy

**Subject: Ministerial conference – 29 and 30 March 2017 – Malta – Follow-up**

*Dear Giampaolo,*  
Dear Mr Buonfiglio,

I would like to thank you for your participation to the Ministerial Conference on Mediterranean fisheries, held on 29 and 30 March in Malta. Your personal involvement strongly contributed to the success of this meeting, which highlighted the willingness of Mediterranean countries to ensure sustainability for the Mediterranean fisheries and enabled the signature of the Malta MedFish4Ever Declaration.

With this Declaration, we are delivering on our engagement, made in April 2016 at the Brussels Ministerial Conference, to address the worrying status of the fishing stocks and to protect the region's ecological and economic wealth.

The Malta MedFish4Ever Declaration represents a historical turning point which will enable us to work together towards a sustainable future for fisheries in the whole Mediterranean.

In this vein, the signature of this Declaration enabled us to adopt political commitments, based on a set of clear objectives and specific targets, on data collection and scientific evaluation for key stocks, eco-system based approach in fisheries management including multi-annual management plans for all key fisheries and development of fisheries restricted and marine protected areas, fight against IUU fishing and improvements to the level playing field, support and sustainable development of small scale fisheries and aquaculture, and greater solidarity across the Mediterranean to accommodate modernising fisheries governance.

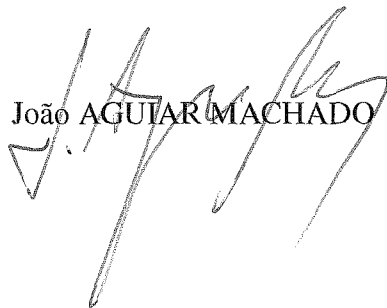
It is my strong belief that the Malta MedFish4Ever Declaration establishes a roadmap for the next 10 years and we now have the common responsibility to effectively implement it. This can only be made possible by involving in the process all fisheries stakeholders – men and women –, coastal communities, civil society, industrial, small-scale, artisanal and recreational fisheries, as well as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and the GFCM.

We should therefore keep up the momentum created by this Declaration and work, both at EU level and multilaterally, in implementing year after year the specific actions foreseen within a spirit of a true Mediterranean partnership.

We should also ensure that the parties that signed the Declaration follow up properly the commonly agreed actions and take stock on regular basis of the progress done. To this end, the European Commission welcomes the offer made by Tunisia to organize a Ministerial meeting in two years' time to take stock of the progress we made in implementing the Malta MedFish4Ever Declaration.

I look forward to our cooperation on this major endeavor to return fisheries in the Mediterranean to sustainability and in this way preserve growth and jobs.

Yours sincerely,

  
João AGUIAR MACHADO