



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT

The Director-General

Brussels, 28 -07- 2009
Env B2 FW/PP/sp D(2009) 187956

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF MR. F. FOTIADIS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG MARE**

Dear Fotiadis,

Subject: ACFA's Opinion on the Great Cormorants

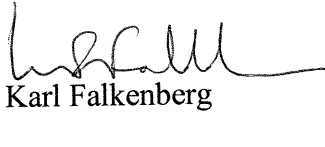
Thank you for your note 7768 of 3 July 2009 inviting me to react to the Opinion on the Great Cormorants adopted by the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (ACFA) on 17 June 2009. ACFA calls upon the Commission to address the impact of Cormorants on aquaculture, angling and other fisheries through a number of EU-wide management measures, including an EU-wide Cormorant management plan, the identification of minimum population level and population control at a pan-European scale.

The issue was already raised in the European Parliament's Resolution of 4 December 2008¹. The Commission position, which was prepared in full agreement with DG MARE and transmitted to the European Parliament in response to the resolution, did not support the need for an EU-wide Cormorant management plan. It envisaged instead some actions at EU level, comprising a set of co-ordinated measures envisaging the reduction of the impact of Cormorants on fisheries while at the same time fully taking into account the provisions of relevant Community legislation.

The Commission is aware that the increase of Great Cormorant populations puts pressure on aquaculture/fisheries activities and on sport fishing in certain locations and regions in the EU. The Commission has been examining what type of measures would help to address the conflict with fishing interests as well as be suitable for all Member States.

Our view is that legislation and policy in place should be adequate to address the matter while at the same time finding a balance not to jeopardise conservation. It is true that the positions of Member States are heterogeneous. Nonetheless, efficiency would be enhanced if some actions were more co-ordinated, particularly at a regional scale.

Details about the Commission position and envisaged action are given in the Annex.


Karl Falkenberg

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/file.jsp?id=5666102> (doc ref. SP(2009)401).