



**VIRGINIJUS SINKEVIČIUS**  
Commissioner for Environment  
Oceans and Fisheries

Brussels,  
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Adam Weiss  
Head of Programme  
Ocean, Plastics, and Chemicals,  
ClientEarth  
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Dear Mr Weiss,

Thank you for your letter dated 19 March, sent on behalf of several NGOs, in which you raise the need for increased transparency in negotiations on fishing opportunities between the EU and the UK, as well as the need for stakeholder participation in the work of the Specialised Committee on Fisheries.

As I underlined in my letter to you of 25 February, I would like to see the number of NGOs included in the Member States' delegations increasing and I am working with my services to address this. I am equally committed to a transparent and accountable decision-making process under the Specialised Committee on Fisheries.

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) concluded between the Union and the United Kingdom underlines the need for a transparent decision-making for all specialised Committees established under it. The Union will and is to consult civil society on the implementation of the TCA. This will take place in particular through interaction with the domestic advisory groups and the Civil Society Forum established under the TCA.

The newly created or existing domestic advisory group or groups will be comprised of a representation of independent civil society organisations including non-governmental organisations, active in sustainable development, and environmental organisations. The TCA also envisages the organisation of a Civil Society Forum to conduct a dialogue on the implementation of the TCA. It will be for the Partnership Council to adopt operational guidelines for the conduct of the Forum. The Civil Society Forum will be open for the participation of independent civil society organisations, including members of the domestic advisory groups.

Please be assured that in the process of setting up these consultative bodies, we will engage with all relevant partners with the aim to ensure that the stakeholders have an access, that debriefs take place between negotiation teams and NGOs in the context of the work of the Specialised Committee on Fisheries for the sake of an accountable decision-making process.

I hope that I was able to clarify the matter for you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'V. Sinkevičius', written in a cursive style.

Virginijus Sinkevičius