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Subject: Adexe Primero - Spanish crab fishing in the Fisheries Protection Zone around Svalbard

Reference is made to previous contact concerning the Spanish application for a research expedition relating to snow crab and red king crab and the subsequent request from Spain for the same vessel to be issued a licence to fish in the Fisheries Protection Zone around Svalbard.

As we are aware, the application for a marine research expedition was rejected by the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries. The question now is how to respond to the request to fish in the fisheries protection zone.

Our understanding from what the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs has stated is that fishing for snow crab and red king crab in the fisheries protection zone is not yet regulated and there is also no general licence requirement for foreign vessels. To follow-up the matter, we propose that an assessment be conducted of how the fishing for snow crab and red king crab is regulated. A broader assessment of unregulated stocks may also be applicable.

In terms of a response to the Spanish authorities, we propose a reference to the planned fishing activities having to take place within Norwegian fisheries jurisdiction, that fishing for snow crab and red king crab is not regulated and that Norway does not accept unregulated fishing. We also propose that reference is made to the previous research application that was submitted for the same vessel and that we see a connection in its activities. Provided that the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs also sees the need for regulation, the response can also state that the need for further regulation in the area is under consideration.

For example, the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs can include the following statements in the response:

- We have taken notice of the information provided by Spain [refer to the authority/body in Spain] regarding plans to issue a fishing permit for the vessel "Adexe Primero", which intends to fish for king crab and snow crab in Norwegian waters.
- The Norwegian Fisheries Directorate has also received an application regarding an experimental campaign on King Crab and Snow Crab in Norwegian waters involving the same vessel. The application was made under the Norwegian Regulations relating to marine scientific research. As the main purpose appeared to be exploration or exploitation for commercial purposes of the stocks rather than basic scientific research, consent was not given. The fact that the vessel is now planning to fish for king crab and snow crab in other parts of Norwegian waters, seems to support the Directorate's conclusion.
- Regulation of fisheries for king crab and snow crab in Norwegian waters is at present under consideration. Awaiting these considerations, no quotas for king- and snow crab fisheries will be issued. Norway does not recognize nor accept foreign licenses to fish in Norwegian waters unless agreed upon between Norway and the issuing state.

Use of the above statements naturally assumes that they are in compliance with Norwegian regulations and practices in the area of fisheries. As the specialist ministry, we assume that the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs is best suited to assess this.

Written by: Advisor Kristina Nygård

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With kind regards

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