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Subject: Draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 (2014/0285 COD)

- Adoption of the legislative act (LA + S)

- Completion of the written procedure related to CM 3313/16

I am pleased to inform you that the written procedure relating to the adoption of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 was completed today, **1 July 2016**, with all delegations agreeing except the Latvian delegation, which abstained. The statements submitted are given in the Annex hereto.

Statement by the Commission**On Article 9 — Regionalisation**

When proposing and adopting delegated acts under the regionalisation provisions of this plan, the Commission will comply with the framework set out in the Basic Regulation (in particular Article 18), and the practice established under the Basic Regulation in implementing the regionalisation process will continue as it has since 2014.

Statement by the Latvian delegation

In general, Latvia supports the main objective of the Regulation to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, reaching and maintaining maximum sustainable yields for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea. Latvia recognizes the overall importance of development and implementation of multispecies and multiannual plans within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy.

However, Latvia is of the opinion that the Baltic Sea multispecies and multiannual plan should contribute to the achievement of the Common Fisheries Policy objectives that would ensure that fisheries are environmentally sustainable in the long-term and are managed in a way that is consistent with the objectives of achieving economic, social and employment benefits, and of contributing to the availability of food supplies.

The key articles of the proposed Regulation, according to which fishing opportunities may be fixed (Articles 4 and 5, and Annexes I and II), contain complex cross-references that are based on two sets of fishing mortality ranges and fisheries biomass reference points, set according to the best available scientific advice. Therefore, while the Common Fisheries Policy aims concerning conservation of the resources have been referenced in these articles in detail, there is no direct reference to other legitimate and equally important aims of the Common Fisheries Policy, such as consideration of socio-economic aspects and interests of those employed and dependent on the fisheries sector. Latvia finds such approach unbalanced and is concerned that above mentioned criteria might cause unjustified restrictions on application of the whole range of scientifically justified fishing mortality ranges, when setting the annual fishing opportunities.

Furthermore, at this stage there is insufficient scientific knowledge regarding some of the reference points in Annexes I and II. For example fishing mortality ranges in Annex I have not been defined

for 2 out of 8 Baltic Sea stocks and spawning stock biomass reference points in Annex II have not been defined for 4 of 8 Baltic Sea stocks. Without complete ranges, the Baltic Sea multiannual plan cannot be considered to be fully functional and there is no mechanism within the plan itself on how to address such issues.

Latvia invites the Commission, when proposing the annual fishing opportunities, to take into account the availability and application of the most recent scientific data as well as the necessity to balance all the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, while not undermining those related to social and economic stability of the fisheries sector

The Latvian delegation abstains from voting on the Baltic Sea Multispecies and Multiannual Management Plan as it stands.
