



Council of the
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PECHE 402

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 27 October 2016
To: Delegations

Subject: Internal and External Fisheries Policy Working Party of 27 October 2016:
I. Deep Sea TAC
II. WCPFC Annual Meeting
III. 20th Special Meeting ICCAT

III. Preparation of the 20th Special meeting of ICCAT (Vilamoura, Portugal, 14-21 November 2016)

1. The Commission representative made a presentation of the non-paper as set out in doc. 13522/16 PECHE 380. As regards its point 1.2 on Mediterranean swordfish, she pointed out that the draft proposal would be further discussed at the technical meeting the following day with a view to reaching an agreement on the contents of a recovery plan.

3. On Mediterranean swordfish the Commission's proposal consists of a 15 year recovery plan, in the light of the bad stock assessment, including a gradual introduction of a decreasing TAC and a comprehensive package of measures to improve compliance, traceability and reporting. EL, ES and IT were willing to consider a gradual TAC, but linking their acceptance to notably an increase of the Eastern Bluefin tuna TAC in 2017 over and beyond the already agreed 20%. IT was very concerned by the lack of clarity as to the socio-economic consequences of the proposed plan. EL and ES considered a reference period of 5 years to be appropriate. CY and SI recalled the need for special provisions for small artisanal fleets with very limited catches. FR supported the proposed plan, provided that special provision be made for small artisanal fleets and that the control rules applying to such fleets be proportionate. MT reiterated its opposition to a TAC, maintaining that technical measures should be introduced instead. DE, PL and SE supported the idea of a recovery plan. The Presidency noted that this point would have to remain open in the light of the ongoing discussions.
6. In relation to Eastern Bluefin tuna the Commission proposes to leave the agreed 20% TAC increase for 2017 unchanged, but to seek ways to possibly address the legitimate request of Algeria regarding its share in the allocation key and to continue the dialogue initiated with Turkey last year. EL, ES, IT and PT reiterated their view that an increase over and beyond the agreed 20% was now justified because of the good signs of recovery. EL, ES and IT recalled the link to Mediterranean swordfish. EL further did not recognise that Algeria had a legitimate right. DK, FR, NL and MT supported the view that the TAC should not be considered until in 2017 when a new stock assessment is available. The Commission representative reiterated that 2017 will be the right moment to consider the TAC as there will be a new stock assessment. In addition, she could not see the need for any compensation, since the proposed TAC for Mediterranean swordfish will only be effective as of 2018. The Presidency noted the limited support for a TAC increase and invited delegations to continue to work with the Commission services so that the Working Party would not have to revert to this issue the following week. In relation to Western Bluefin tuna, FR recalled the importance of this species for its overseas territory St. Pierre et Miquelon.

9. In the light of the above, the Presidency concluded that the Working Party had endorsed the EU positions as set out in doc. 13522/16 PECHÉ 380, with the exception of point 1.2 on Mediterranean Swordfish where the discussion will continue next week. He recalled his hope that no delegation would raise the issue of Eastern Bluefin tuna in point 1.6.
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