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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. Cion doc.:	11813/16 PECHE 296 - COM(2016) 545 final
Subject:	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2017 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/72 - Statements

Joint Statement by the Commission and Germany on the option of support for the temporary cessation of fishing activities by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

1. Point (b) of Article 5(4) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2016 establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks allows the Member States to adopt emergency measures in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy.
2. According to the assessment of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the cod stock in the western Baltic Sea is in a very critical state. The spawning stock biomass of cod is below the spawning stock biomass limit laid down in column B of Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2016/1139. There is an urgent need to adopt corrective measures in order to reach a level above the minimum reference point.

3. Germany therefore deems it necessary to adopt emergency measures in accordance with Article 13(1) of Regulation 1380/2013. The emergency measures consist of limitation of fishing activities by additional 30 days for German fishing vessels fishing for cod in Subdivisions 22-24 of as follows: the 30 days in the form of three 10-day blocks which fishermen are free to determine independently within the fishing periods from 1 January to 31 January and from 1 April to 30 June 2017.
4. The Commission welcomes the decision of Germany to implement this emergency measure.
5. Germany considers that this emergency measure under point (a) of Article 33(1) of Regulation (EU) No 508 /2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2328/2003 is eligible for funding from the EMFF.

Statement by Poland

The compromise text as adopted, which aims to ensure a balanced approach and protect stocks in the Baltic Sea, will demand many sacrifices of and place a heavy burden on the fishing industry.

Poland therefore takes the view that the European Fisheries Fund should accord special protection to coastal fishing, which has a low environmental impact, and which makes an essential contribution towards preserving the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea region.

Poland would explicitly like to mention the need to adapt the operational programme in such a way as to provide fishermen with additional opportunities for conserving resources in the Baltic Sea.

Furthermore, Poland requests special control of fishing in the Baltic Sea with particular regard to industrial fisheries, which have a significant, negative impact on cod stocks.

Poland would also urge the BALTFISH Presidency to take immediate and decisive action to introduce biological recovery periods for both cod stocks and pelagic species in the Baltic Sea.