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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)/Council
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Subject:	COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2017 and 2018 the fishing opportunities for Union fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks and amending Council Regulation (EU) 2016/72 - <i>Statements</i>

Statement by the Council and the Commission on data-poor stocks

The Council and the Commission agree that lack of reliable data impairs advice for fish stocks. The Council and the Commission strongly encourage the relevant Member States to improve the collection and analysis of data to be transmitted to the relevant scientific bodies in order to facilitate sustainable management of the relevant fisheries.

Statement by Spain and Portugal on data collection for red seabream in relevant CECAF and GFCM areas

ICES pointed out that the current TAC for red seabream does not limit the whole fishery because it applies only to subarea IX. Catches from this stock that are caught in the adjacent areas are not regulated by the current TAC. With a view of improving management of red seabream in the subarea IX as well as improving the scientific assessment of the stock, Spain and Portugal will continue to cooperate on data collection by providing to the Commission the data of their catches for the last ten years in the relevant CECAF and GFCM areas before 1 April 2017. This information will be submitted to the Commission and forwarded to ICES by the Commission with a request for an updated scientific advice, for the whole distribution area of the stock and its units as defined by ICES.

Statement by the Commission and Portugal on red seabream in area X

The Commission and Portugal take note of the fact that the TAC for red seabream in area X for 2017 and 2018 is set while ICES is expected to revise its advice for this stock in early 2017. Following any such revision, the Commission will, where appropriate, propose a revised TAC for 2017 and 2018, in line with the scientific advice. Portugal will support a revision of the TAC, in line with the scientific advice, even if this results in a decrease of the fishing opportunities.

Statement by the Commission and Spain, France and Portugal on a minimum conservation reference size for red seabream (all areas)

The Member States concerned agree to support the Commission's draft regulation of setting a minimum conservation reference size of 33 cm for red seabream for all stocks.

Statement by Portugal on black scabbard fishery with longlines

Portugal will establish a management plan for the black scabbard fishery with longlines. The plan will include improvements to the selectivity of by-catches of deep-sea sharks.

Statement by Portugal on black scabbard fish in various areas including area IX

Considering the positive trend in the abundance index of black scabbard fish in areas including area ICES IX as presented in the last ICES advice, Portugal calls on the Commission to ask ICES for a mid-term review of the state of the resource and a possible revision of the TACs.

Portugal is committed to supply scientific data to support the referred review by ICES and by the Commission.

Statement by Spain with regard to recital 11

The Kingdom of Spain wishes to express its concern regarding the wording of recital 11 of the proposal, which could be understood to mean that catches of roundnose grenadier have been misreported as catches of roughhead grenadier, and that restrictive measures may be taken based on this possibility.

We would like to stress our conviction that the fishing activity conducted has been carried out within the parameters of lawful use of fishing opportunities and with due regard for the principle of sustainability of resources.

We feel that it is precisely such inaccuracies as those contained in this recital which have given rise to this complicated situation whereby a species has been included for which no advice is available, whose inclusion is very difficult to justify, and with a quota increase which is very badly distributed and calculated. We would also like to recall that this issue is sub judice.