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Delegations will find attached the declassified version of the above document.

The text of this document is identical to the previous version.



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 21 December 2000

14867/00

RESTREINT

**PECHE 235
NIS 126**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of :	Working Party on External Fisheries Policy
on :	4 December 2000
No. prev. doc.:	13157/00 PECHE 187 NIS 111 (RESTREINT)
No. Cion. prop.:	14085/99 PECHE 267 NIS 136 (RESTREINT) - SEC (1999) 2052 final
Subject :	Russia: Recommendation for a Council Decision to authorise the Commission to negotiate a Fisheries Co-operation Agreement with the Russian Federation

1. The Working Party reverted to the examination of the above-mentioned recommendation which previously had already been on its agenda three times.
2. The Commission representative provided additional information on the planned new Fisheries Agreement with Russia. He pointed out the following, in particular:
 - Inclusion of commercial features: Commercial co-operation in the field of fisheries was already possible within the general framework of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA). The co-operation envisaged under the future fisheries agreement would not go beyond the scope of what was already provided for under the PCA, and the relevant topics (in particular tariffs, standards and certification) would have to be discussed in the PCA Subcommittee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Consumer Protection, which would report to the PCA Co-operation Committee.
 - "Fisheries body": This entity would deal with all the technical aspects of the Fisheries Agreement, as set out in the Commission's recommendation for negotiating directives. Its

tasks, competences and composition would be similar to those of any Community delegation holding annual consultations on fisheries arrangements with third countries (*e.g.* the three Baltic States). Future consultations on fisheries arrangements with Russia would be held under the usual procedure applying to such consultations, in full co-ordination with Member States within the framework of the Working Party on External Fisheries Policy.

- Fishing rights: In principle, all Member States would be allowed to fish in the waters Russia might grant access to. However, the situation with respect to specific rights of certain Member States in areas of the Baltic Sea needed to be verified.¹
- Shipowners' fees: Such fees would create implementation problems in the Baltic Sea in the case of fishing on Russian quotas in the Community zone (transferred quotas). In addition, the concept of shipowners' fees was extraneous to the "Northern" fisheries agreements. The Commission was prepared to provide more detailed explanation on this issue to Member States on a bilateral basis.

3. Delegations' reactions to the Commission representative's intervention can be summarised as follows:

- The Spanish, French and Italian delegations maintained their doubts on the inclusion of commercial features. The Portuguese delegation stressed that the scope of the agreement must be entirely clear.
- The Spanish, Netherlands and Portuguese delegations insisted on the inclusion of shipowners fees in view of ensuring equal treatment between "Southern" and "Northern" fisheries agreements and in order to limit the budgetary cost of the agreement. The Spanish delegation, supported by the Netherlands delegation, reiterated its request for a written note from the Commission on the issue of shipowners' fees.
- The Danish, German and United Kingdom delegations took the view that the Working Party should swiftly complete the technical examination of the recommendation and refer it to a higher level for discussion of the political issues which had been identified.

¹ Concerning the question of access for Russian vessels to Community waters, the Commission could envisage a declaration specifying that the annual exchange of fishing possibilities between the Parties would be limited to the Baltic Sea only (cf. doc. 13157/00 PECHE 187 NIS 111, point 5).