



Brussels, 6 February 2018
(OR. en)

8736/97
DCL 1

PECHE 174

DECLASSIFICATION

of document:	8736/97 RESTREINT
dated:	10 June 1997
new status:	Public
Subject:	Norway: herring and mackerel management regime

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

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

8736/97

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of: Working Party on External Fisheries Policy

dated: 5 June 1997

N° prev. doc.: 7845/97 PECHE 149

Subject: Norway: herring and mackerel management regime

1. Following the meeting of 23 May 1997 and the comments of Member States on the Non-Paper, the Commission representative outlined the approach which the Commission intended to adopt at the consultations with Norway on 18-20 June 1997.

Mackerel

1. As far as tactics were concerned the Commission intended to invite Norway to clarify its proposal for management of the stock, while reaffirming the Community's own aims to improve the biological state of the stock without discriminating against either party and to adopt the twin track approach to management outlined in the previous Working Party meeting.
1. The twin track approach involved two elements: improved control of the existing regime and an exchange of ideas on a possible new management system.

1. Discussions of the control element could include the following elements:
 - the deployment of observers on large freezer trawlers and those involved in klondyking;
 - increased control on landings and a possible limit to the number of landing sites;
 - a system for reporting landings in third countries;
 - a system for exchanges of information between the Community and Norway on mackerel landings.
1. From the Community's point of view consultations on a new management regime should focus on the following issues:
 - one management area per party (EU - Norway - Faroe Islands) with the southern component excluded;
 - a TAC fixed through trilateral consultations (the question of the Swedish coastal fishery would need to be resolved);
 - reciprocal access arrangements which would involve a geographical balance between the Community and Norway. Eventually, Norway would have to accept a decrease as the Community was not interested in increased access to Norwegian waters;
 - a licence system for access to Norwegian waters, possibly limited to Member States to whose waters Norway has access;
 - a sharing of the TAC based on for example quotas over five years and fixed for a 3-5 year period.
1. The Commission's suggested approach to the control issue received broad approval from a majority of delegations, although scrutiny reservations on certain aspects (notably costs) were entered by the German, Spanish, French, Netherlands, Portuguese and United Kingdom delegations.
1. At the suggestion of the Irish delegation, with the support of the Danish delegation, the Commission representative agreed to include the question of satellite monitoring in the consultations with Norway on control.
1. As far as the second 'track', a new management regime, was concerned, again a majority of delegations endorsed the ideas put forward by the Commission.

1. The German, French and Irish delegations noted that a number of internal Community issues (in terms of relative stability, access arrangements and special preferences) had still to be resolved before any scheme could become operational.
1. In particular, the Danish delegation considered that it would be entitled to compensation if other Member States obtained access to Norwegian or Faroese waters. The German delegation felt that the special preferences should vanish within the framework of a new management system.
1. The French delegation was concerned that present access arrangements between Member States should be maintained.
1. The Danish and United Kingdom delegations stressed the importance of making Norway realise that it was not a question of *when* a new management regime should be introduced, but rather *whether* such a regime was feasible. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to discuss details with Norway at this stage.
1. All delegations were mindful of the possible impact on the existing relative stability key of a new management system and scrutiny reservations were entered by the Danish, Spanish and French delegations.
1. A reservation of substance was entered by the Irish delegation. It was conscious of the likely impact a new management regime could have on the Irish processing industry, since it seemed probable that it would favour Norway in the medium and long term. In particular, it was concerned about Norwegian access to western waters and considered a reduction of Norway's overall share a prerequisite for any arrangement.
1. The Commission representative noted Member States' observations. He confirmed that there was no question of getting a scheme operational for 1998, but that this was a consultation exercise with Norway, with no commitment, to see whether there were any advantages to a new approach. Clearly the details of the scheme would have to be examined closely. In the Commission's view the creation of a new zone would involve *a priori* a relative stability key for the whole area, but the details of this, including the reference period for the calculation, would need to take account of what was acceptable to Member States.
1. In response to a question from the Irish delegation on Norwegian access to non quota species in western waters, the Commission representative indicated that this was not a priority concern at the moment, but it might be later.

Herring

1. The Commission representative indicated that a preliminary response had been received from ICES to the joint EU-Norway request for a further evaluation of the herring fishery. The Commission had prepared a working document which highlighted the main issues to be addressed, notably the setting of a target spawning stock biomass (SSB) and the establishment of appropriate target fishing mortality rates for adults and juveniles in order to achieve this.
1. Although the minimum biologically acceptable level of SSB was 800,000 tonnes for ICES, the Commission view was that this was too risky to use as a target and had opted for 1.2 million tonnes. As far as the fishing mortality rate was concerned the ICES opinion was that a combined rate for adults and juveniles of 0.55 was appropriate. However, the Commission felt that 0.4 (0.25 for adults + 0.15 for juveniles) would give a greater margin of security.
1. The Commission representative also noted that the emergency measures introduced in 1996 for North Sea herring were showing signs of bearing fruit, with an indication of an improvement in the stock.
1. The preliminary ICES report was welcomed by delegations, but scrutiny reservations were entered by the Danish, German, Netherlands and United Kingdom delegations.
1. The Danish delegation expressed regret at the apparent increase in misreporting in the human consumption fishery, particularly as Denmark had applied strict conservation measures for the industrial fishery. It also entered a reservation on the Commission working document and indicated that the 1996 emergency measures should form the basis for a future management regime. The Commission representative shared the Danish concern about misreporting.
1. The question of the sharing out of the TAC with Norway was still problematic and the Commission representative indicated that further internal consultations would be necessary.
1. The United Kingdom delegation advised that its scientists were preparing a paper which implied that zonal attachment would give Norway a reduced share (significantly less than the 25 % benchmark). It would circulate the paper to Member States when it became available and would appreciate having it endorsed by STECF.