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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
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Subject:	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2019 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks in the Black Sea - Statements

Statement by Bulgaria and Romania

Bulgaria and Romania, in the context of the adoption of the Regulation fixing for 2019 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks in the Black Sea and having recognized the importance of continuing implementing a robust monitoring, control and surveillance system in achieving sustainable use of fisheries marine resources in the Black Sea, commit to the following:

(1) To follow up and further implement:

a) Turbot fisheries

- to keep the fishing authorisations for turbot at 116 for Bulgaria and 53 for Romania and the minimum allocation per vessel,
- to establish their respective number of designated ports for landings, 8 for Bulgaria and 13 for Romania, in order to streamline the control of landings,

- to continue the strict policy for the recording of all catches, including below 50 kg, in corresponding logbooks, landing declarations and sales notes of all authorised vessels,
- to keep, at least to the level of 2018, the number of market inspections and inspections at sea, including during the closed season, based on a risk assessment methodology and time schedule agreed with the European Commission and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA),
- to keep or increase in 2019 the joint inspection actions under the coordination of EFCA, including controls at sea, at landings, on the markets as well as the monitoring of the transport of fish by road,
- to monitor the discards in the *Rapa whelk* fishery, in order to evaluate the impact on juveniles of turbot, complementary to the provisions of the GFCM multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in Black Sea,
- to increase by 10% the control at sea of the implementation of the marking and identification of the static gears in accordance with European Union rules,
- to statistically monitor the imports/exports of turbot to and from the European Union,
- to work with the Commission and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) in implementing Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/4 (turbot MAP), as well as any other measures that are deemed necessary to address the misreporting, the IUU fishery of turbot in the Black Sea and the marketing of the catches illegally caught in the region.

b) Picked dogfish fisheries

- to keep their respective catches of picked dogfish in 2019 to their 2015 level of catches and to inform the Commission on a quarterly basis of the actions taken to meet this objective,
- to continue implementing the strict policy adopted in 2016 for the recording of all catches, including below 50 kg, in corresponding logbooks, landing declarations and sales notes of all authorised vessels as well as vessels having by-catches of dogfish.

- to further improve data collection on dogfish, catches and by-catches, and make data available.

(2) Catch registration

To appropriately address any control weaknesses in the catch registration system identified in recent audits by the Commission services, so as to ensure full compliance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 and with its implementing measures.

Statement by Council and Commission on control issues

The Council and the Commission consider that it is a high priority to address the endemic existence of IUU fishery of turbot in the Black Sea through the effective implementation of the Regional Plan of Action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the GFCM area of application and of the joint control and inspection pilot scheme in the context of the multiannual management plan of turbot in the Black Sea.

Control and monitoring measures should be at least maintained or further increased, as stipulated in the declaration by Bulgaria and Romania. The relevant Member States should dedicate the necessary efforts and resources to enhance their control system and to ensure effectiveness of the measures that have been decided.

Furthermore, the EU will seek to ensure that GFCM pay particular attention to the full compliance of its Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties to implement the Regional Plan of Action to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Black Sea, to implement the mid-term strategy 2017-2020 adopted by GFCM in 2016, the Sofia Ministerial Declaration signed by the Black Sea Fisheries Ministers in June 2018 and the Blacksea4fish project in line with the Bucharest Declaration.