

15628/17

(OR. en)

PRESSE 72
PR CO 72

OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3586th Council meeting

Agriculture and Fisheries

Brussels, 11 and 12 December 2017

Presidents **Mr. Tarmo Tamm**
Minister for Rural Affairs of the Republic of Estonia
Mr. Siim Kiisler
Minister for Environment of the Republic of Estonia

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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ITEMS DEBATED

AGRICULTURE

Communication from the Commission on the future of food and farming

The Commission presented to the Council its communication, '[The Future of Food and Farming](#)', which outlines the Commission's vision for the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) period after 2020.

The communication puts marked emphasis on objectives such as fostering a smart and resilient agricultural sector, bolstering environmental care and climate action, and strengthening the social fabric of rural areas. In order to achieve these objectives and unleash the potential of the agricultural sector, the Commission maintains the existing two-pillar structure but also proposes major changes, such as an enhanced role for member states in drafting their own strategic plans, and replacing complex greening rules to the benefit of a more targeted and more ambitious, yet flexible, approach.

Ministers then had a first opportunity to react to the ideas set out in the communication. They highlighted in particular what they considered to be the strategic issues for the future CAP and the missing elements in the Commission's communication.

Ministers generally agreed that the CAP had achieved its main objectives and that its main features and pillar structure should therefore be maintained. In light of this and of the ambitious objectives that the CAP is asked to help achieve (e.g. climate action, attainment of sustainable development goals), they stressed the importance of adequate funding for the CAP from the EU budget.

Ministers restated the need to continue with direct payments and generally opposed the idea of co-funding pillar 1 in order to guarantee a level playing field. Some member states advocated further external convergence of direct payments. Pillar 2 was also indicated as key.

Concerning the new elements of the communication, such as the strengthened environmental dimension and the new delivery model, ministers highlighted the importance of introducing real simplification and making sure that greater subsidiarity does not turn into a 're-nationalisation' of the CAP, which should remain a truly European policy. Some member states regretted that effective risk management and market measures were not sufficiently developed in the communication.

Other elements indicated by member states as key features of the future CAP included research and development, innovation, smart agriculture, a stronger position for farmers in the supply chain, generational renewal and young farmers, sustainable animal breeding and animal welfare, and coupled support.

Any other business

- *Outcome of the conference 'Modern biotechnologies in agriculture: paving the way for responsible innovation', Brussels, 28 September 2017*

The Commission presented the results and conclusions of the conference on modern biotechnologies in agriculture that took place in Brussels in September. The conference was intended to promote an open and transparent discussion with all stakeholders on innovative approaches in the agri-food sector related to the use of modern biotechnologies.

- *African swine fever*

The Council was informed by the Czech Republic and the Commission about the outcome of the fifth ministerial meeting on African swine fever (ASF), which took place in Prague last November with the participation of Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. In particular they informed the Council about the meeting's conclusions, which focused on the need to further reinforce international cooperation, stimulate additional research on ASF, learn from best practices and address the problem of the human factor in the spread of the disease.

The Council also heard the Danish delegation's views on possible measures to deepen the EU control strategy to eradicate ASF. Denmark acknowledged the efforts made by the Commission in fighting ASF, but also asked to step up efforts in terms of: controlling, containing and eradicating ASF in wild boar populations; preventing further spreading via means of transport; improving information activities and biosecurity in affected areas; and investing in further research.

In the ensuing debate member states agreed that a lot of good work had already been done, but cooperation could be further improved within the EU and with neighbouring countries. They stressed the importance of addressing the human factor and continuing to invest in research.

– *Tackling unfair trading practices to achieve a more balanced food supply chain and strengthen farmers' position*

On behalf of Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia, the Slovak delegation presented a paper calling on the Commission to continue the discussion on the issue of strengthening farmers' position and achieving a more balanced food supply chain within the internal market. In particular Slovakia encouraged the Commission to present the outcome of its impact assessment on the food supply chain as soon as possible and not later than February 2018, with a view to tackling the issue of unfair trading practices (UTPs) through legislation at European level.

Several delegations supported the Slovak request and stressed the need for EU-level legislation on UTPs, while others said that the issue of UTPs was better tackled at national level.

FISHERIES

Atlantic and North Sea fishing opportunities for 2018

The Council reached a political agreement on a regulation concerning the 2018 fishing opportunities for the main commercial fish stocks in the Atlantic and the North Sea.

As a result of this Council decision, the number of fish stocks managed at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels will increase next year to 53, nine more than in 2017. The agreement also sets out solutions for the critical state of eel and seabass stocks.

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Sandeel	Norwegian waters of 4	0	pm		pm	
Sandeel	EU waters of 2a, 3a and 4	486 115	pm		pm	
Greater silver smelt	EU and international waters of 1 and 2	90	90	0%	90	0%
Greater silver smelt	EU waters of 3 and 4 (excluding FU 22-32)	1 028	1 234	20%	1 234	20%
Greater silver smelt	EU and international waters of 5, 6 and 7	3 884	4 661	20%	4 661	20%
Tusk	EU and international waters of 1, 2 and 14	21	21	0%	21	0%
Tusk	3a; EU waters of Subdivisions 22-32	29	31	7%	31	7%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Tusk	EU waters of 4	235	251	7%	251	7%
Tusk	EU and international waters of 5, 6 and 7	937 (3 860)	4 130 (including Norway)	7%	4 130 final EU quota: 1207	29%
Tusk	Norwegian waters of 4	170	170	0%	170	0%
Boarfish	EU and international waters of 6, 7 and 8	27 288	20 380	-25%	20 380	-25%
Herring	3a (directed)	43 573	41 768	-4%	41 768	-4%
Herring	EU and Norwegian waters of 4 north of 53° 30' N	288 788	359 977	25%	359 977	25%
Herring	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	1 151	1 239	8%	1 239	8%
Herring	3a (by-catches)	6 659	6 659	0%	6 659	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Herring	4, 7d and EU waters of 2a	11 375	9 669	-15%	9 669	-15%
Herring	4c, 7d (directed fishery)	52 954	66 089	25%	66 089	25%
Herring	EU and international waters of 5b, 6b and 6aN(1)	4 170	4 170	0%	4 170	0%
Herring	6a (S), 7b, 7c	1 630	1 630	0%	1 630	0%
<i>Herring</i>	<i>6 Clyde(1)</i>		To be established		To be established	
Herring	7a(1)	4 127	7 016	70%	7 016	70%
Herring	7e and 7f	930	930	0%	930	0%
Herring	7g(1), 7h(1), 7j(1) and 7k(1)	14 467	5 445	-62%	10 127	-30%
Anchovy	8	33 000	33 000	0%	33 000	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Anchovy	9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	12 500	10 000	-20%	12 500	0%
Cod	Skagerrak	5 558	7 736	39%	7 736	39%
Cod	Kattegat	525	525	0%	630	20%
Cod	4; EU waters of 2a; the part of 3a not covered by the Skagerrak and the Kattegat	32 553	35 819	10%	35 819	10%
Cod	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	382	382	0%	382	0%
Cod	6b (Rockall); EU and international waters of 5b west of 12° 00' W and of 12 and 14	74	74	0%	74	0%
Cod	6a; EU and international waters of 5b east of 12° 00' W	0	0	0%	0	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Cod	7a	146	292	100%	695	376%
Cod	7b, 7c, 7e-k, 8, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF	2 830	2 830	0%	3 076	9%
Cod	7d	2 059	1 733	-16%	1 733	-16%
Megrims	EU waters of 2a and 4	2 639	2 526	-4%	2 526	-4%
Megrims	EU and international waters of 5b; 6	5 682	5 432	-4%	5 432	-4%
Megrims	7	13 691	12 310	-10%	12 310	-10%
Megrims	8abde	1 352	1 218	-10%	1 218	-10%
Megrims	8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	1 159	1 387	20%	1 387	20%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Dab and flounder	EU waters of 2a and 4		No TAC		No TAC	
Anglerfish	EU waters of 2a and 4	13 521	16 225	20%	16 225	20%
Anglerfish	Norwegian waters of 4	1 500	1 700	13%	1 700	13%
Anglerfish	6; EU and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	7 650	9 180	20%	9 180	20%
Anglerfish	7	33 516	29 534	-12%	33 516	0%
Anglerfish	8abde	8 980	7 914	-12%	8 980	0%
Anglerfish	8c, 9, 10, CECAF 34.1.1	3 955	3 955	0%	3 955	0%
Haddock	3a, EU waters of Subdivisions 22-32	1 982	2 461	24%	2 461	24%
Haddock	4; EU waters of 2a	26 405	32 461	23%	32 461	23%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Haddock	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	707	707	0%	707	0%
Haddock	EU and international waters of 6b, 12 and 14	4 690	5 163	10%	5 163	10%
Haddock	5b, 6a	3 697	4 654	26%	4 654	26%
Haddock	7b-k, 8, 9 and 10; EU waters of CEECAF 34.1.1	7 751	5 116	-34%	6 910	-11%
Haddock	7a	2 615	3 207	23%	3 207	23%
Whiting	3a	1 031	1 031	0%	1 031	0%
Whiting	4; EU waters of 2a	14 703	20 651	40%	20 651	40%
Whiting	6; EU and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	213	0	-100%	213	0%

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SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Whiting	7a	80	0	-100%	80	0%
Whiting	7b-k	22 930	18 979	-28%	22 213	-19%
Whiting	8	2 540	2 540	0%	2 540	0%
Whiting and pollack	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	190	190	0%	190	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Northern hake - global TAC including all areas	Overall northern TACs (3a / 2a and 4 / 5b, 6, 7, 12 and 14 / 8abde) <u>SPLIT BY MANAGEMENT AREAS IN ROWS BELOW</u>	119 765	104 190	-13%	111 785	-7%
Hake	3a, EU waters of subdivisions 22-32	3 371	2 941	-13%	3 136	-7%
Hake	2a and 4	3 928	3 426	-13%	3 653	-7%
Hake	5b, 6, 7, 12 and 14	67 658	58 642	-13%	62 536	-7%
Hake	8abde	44 808	39 816	-11%	42 460	-7%
Hake	8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	10 520	8 045	-24%	9 258	-12%
Blue whiting	Norwegian waters of 2 and 4	0	0	0%	0	0%
Blue whiting	1 to 7, 8abde, 12, 14 (EC and	385 254	401 363	4%	401 363	4%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA							
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT		
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017	
	international waters)						
Blue whiting	8c, 9, 10, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	51 719	53 473	3%	53 473	3%	
Blue whiting	EU waters of 2, 4a, 5, 6 north of 56° 30' N and 7 west of 12° W	0	0	0%	0	0%	
Lemon sole and witch flounder	2a (EC) and 4	6 391	6 391	0%	6 391	0%	
Blue ling	EC and international waters of 5b, 6, 7	11 014	10 763	-5%	10 763	-5%	
Blue ling	International waters of 12	357	286	-20%	286	-20%	
Blue ling	EU and international waters of 2 and 4	53	53	0%	53	0%	
Blue ling	EU and international waters of 3	8	8	0%	8	0%	

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA							
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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017	
	(excluding FU 22-32)						
Ling	EU and int'l waters of 1 and 2	36	36	0%	36	0%	
Ling	3a; EU waters of 3b, 3c, 3d (excluding FU 22-32)	87	87	0%	87	0%	
Ling	4	3 494	3 494	0%	3 843	10%	
Ling	EU and int'l waters of 5	33	33	0%	33	0%	
Ling	EU and int'l waters of 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14	20 396	20 396	0%	20 396	0%	
Ling	Norwegian waters of 4	1 350	1 350	0%	1 350	0%	
Norway lobster	3a; EU waters of Subdivisions 22-32	12 715	11 738	-8%	11 738	-8%	

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Norway lobster	EU waters of 2a and 4	20 034	24 518	22%	24 518	22%
Norway lobster	Norwegian waters of 4	1 000	800	-20%	800	-20%
Norway lobster	6; EU and international waters of 5b	16 407	12 129	-26%	12 129	-26%
Norway lobster	7	25 356	29 091	15%	29 091	15%
<i>Norway lobster</i>	<i>7 - Porcupine Bank special condition</i>	3 100	2 734	-12%	2 734	-12%
Norway lobster	8abde	4 160	3 614	-13%	3 614	-13%
Norway lobster	8c	0	0	0%	0	0%
Norway lobster	9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	336	381	13%	381	13%
Northern prawn	3a	3 856	3 916	2%	3 916	2%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Northern prawn	EU waters of 2a and 4	2 446	1 957	-20%	1 957	-20%
Northern prawn	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	334	334	0%	334	0%
<i>Penaeus shrimps</i>	<i>French Guyana</i>	0	To be established		To be established	
Plaice	Skagerrak	16 832	15 036	-11%	15 036	-11%
Plaice	Kattegat	2 343	1 483	-37%	1 483	-37%
Plaice	4; EU waters of 2a; the part of 3a not covered by the Skagerrak and the Kattegat	119 389	104 758	-12%	104 758	-12%
Plaice	6, EU and int'l waters of 5b, 12, 14	658	658	0%	658	0%
Plaice	7a	1 098	1 793	63%	1 793	63%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Plaice	7b, 7c	74	74	0%	74	0%
Plaice	7d, 7e	10 022	10 360	3%	10 360	3%
Plaice	7f, 7g	405	511	26%	511	26%
Plaice	7h, 7j, 7k	128	0	-100%	128	0%
Plaice	8, 9, 10, CECAF 34.1.1	395	395	0%	395	0%
Pollack	6; EU and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	397	397	0%	397	0%
Pollack	7	12 141	12 163	0%	12 163	0%
Pollack	8a, 8b, 8d, 8e	1 482	1 482	0%	1 482	0%
Pollack	8c	231	231	0%	231	0%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Pollack	9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	282	282	0%	282	0%
Saithe	3a and 4; EU waters of 2a, 3b, 3c and Subdivisions 22-32	47 888	50 531	6%	50 531	6%
Saithe	6; EU and international waters of 5b, 12 and 14	9 484	9 575	1%	9 575	1%
Saithe	Norwegian waters south of 62°N	880	880	0%	880	0%
Saithe	7, 8, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	3 176	3 176	0%	3 176	0%
Turbot and brill	EU waters of 2a and 4	4 937	5 924	20%	5 924 for 2017 7 102 for 2018	20% for 2017 44% for 2018
Skates and rays	EU waters of 2a and 4	1 378	1 378	0%	1 654	20%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Skates and rays	EU waters of 2a and 4	47	47	0%	47	0%
Skates and rays	EU waters of 6a, 6b, 7a-c and 7e-k	8 434	8 434	0%	9 699	15%
Skates and rays	7d	1 063	1 063	0%	1 276	20%
Skates and rays	EU waters of 8 and 9	3 762	3 762	0%	4 326	15%
Undulate rays	EU waters of 8	30	30	0%	30	0%
Undulate rays	EU waters of 9	48	48	0%	48	0%
Greenland halibut	EU waters of 2a and 4; EU and international waters of 5b and 6	1 400	1 400	0%	1 400	0%
Mackerel	3a and 4; EU waters of 2a, 3b, 3c and Subdivisions 22-32	35 286	28 693	-19%	28 693	-19%
Mackerel	6, 7, 8a, 8b, 8d and 8e; EU and international waters of 5b;	407 517	326 014	-20%	326 014	-20%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
	international waters of 2a, 12 and 14					
Mackerel	8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	46 631	37 305	-20%	37 305	-20%
Mackerel	Norwegian waters of 2a and 4a	16 004	12 803	-20%	12 803	-20%
Common sole	3a; EU waters of Subdivisions 22-24	534	341	-37%	448	-18% (MSY advice)
Common sole	EU waters of 2a and 4	16 123	15 684	-3%	15 684	-3%
Common sole	6; EU and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	57	57	0%	57	0%
Common sole	7a	40	40	0%	40	0%
Common sole	7b, 7c	42	42	0%	42	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Common sole	7d	2 724	3 235	19%	3 405	25%
Common sole	7e	1 178	1 209	3%	1 209	3%
Common sole	7f, 7g	845	920	9%	920	9%
Common sole	7h, 7j, 7k	382	382	0%	382	0%
Common sole	8a, 8b	3 420	3 621	6%	3 621	6%
Sole	8c, 8d, 8e, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	1 072	1 072	0%	1 072	0%
Sprat	3a	30 784	24 627	-20%	24 627	-20%
Sprat	EU waters of 2a and 4	165 411	0	-100%	0	-100%
Sprat	7d, 7e	4 120	3 296	-20%	3 296	-20%

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SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
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Picked dogfish	EU waters of 3a	Prohibited	N/A		Prohibited	
Picked dogfish	EU waters of 2a and 4	Prohibited	N/A		Prohibited	
Picked dogfish	EU and international waters of 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 14	270 by-catch avoidance programme	270 by-catch avoidance programme	0%	270 by-catch avoidance programme	270 by-catch avoidance programme
Horse mackerel	EU waters of 4b, 4c and 7d	14 697	12 629	-14%	12 629	-14%
Horse mackerel	EU waters of 2a, 4a; 6, 7a-c, 7e-k, 8a, 8b, 8d and 8e; EU and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	82 229	99 470	21%	99 470	21%
Horse mackerel	8c	13 271	16 000	21%	16 000	21%
Horse mackerel	9	73 349	55 555	-24%	55 555	-24%

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			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
<i>Horse mackerel</i>	<i>10, CECAF(Azores)</i>	pm	To be established		To be established	
<i>Horse mackerel</i>	<i>CECAF(Madeira)</i>	pm	To be established		To be established	
<i>Horse mackerel</i>	<i>CECAF(Canaries)</i>	pm	To be established		To be established	
Norway pout	3a; EU waters of 2a and 4	141 950	55 000	-61%	55 000	-61%
Norway pout	Norwegian waters of 6	0	0	0%	0	0%
Industrial fish	Norwegian waters of 6	800	800	0%	800	0%
Other species	EU waters of 5b, 6 and 7	Not relevant	Not relevant		Not relevant	
Other species	Norwegian waters of 4	9500	10 000	5%	10 000	5%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Other species	EU waters of 2a, 4 and 6a north of 56° 30' N	Not relevant	Not relevant		Not relevant	
Herring	EU, Faroese, Norwegian and international waters of 1 and 2	42 059	28 319	-33%	28 319	-33%
Cod	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	23 002	23 008	0%	23 008	0%
Cod	Greenland waters of NAFO 1F and Greenland waters of 14	2 200	2 100	-5%	2 100	-5%
Cod	1 and 2b	33 025	29 218	-12%	29 218	-12%
Cod and haddock	Faroese waters of 5b	950	950	0%	950	0%
Grenadier	Greenland waters of 5 and 14	0	80	180%	80	180%
Grenadier	Greenland waters of NAFO 1	0	20	120%	20	120%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA							
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL			COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017	
Capelin	2b	0	0	0%	0	0%	
Capelin	Greenland waters of 5 and 14	0	0	0%	0	0%	
Haddock	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	1 200	1 200	0%	1 200	0%	
Blue whiting	Faroese waters	2 500	2 500	0%	2 500	0%	
Ling and blue ling	Faroese waters of 5b	pm	2 000		2 000		
Northern prawn	Greenland waters of 5 and 14	1 150	1 050	-9%	1 050	-9%	
Northern prawn	Greenland waters of NAFO 1	2 600	2 600	0%	2 600	0%	
Saithe	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	2 550	2 550	0%	2 550	0%	
Saithe	International waters of 1 and 2	0	0	0%	0	0%	
Saithe	Faroese waters of 5b		2 800		2 800		

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Greenland halibut	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	50	50	0%	50	0%
Greenland halibut	International waters of 1 and 2	900	900	0%	900	0%
Greenland halibut	Greenland waters of NAFO 1	1 925	1 925	0%	1 925	0%
Greenland halibut	Greenland waters of 5 and 14	4 515	4 515	0%	4 515	0%
Redfish (shallow pelagic)	Shallow pelagic - EU and international waters of 5; international waters of 12 and 14	pm	pm		pm	
Redfish (deep pelagic)	Deep pelagic - EU and international waters of 5; international waters of 12 and 14	1 159	1 004	-13%	1 004	-13%
Redfish	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	1 500	1 500	0%	1 500	0%
Redfish	International waters of 1 and 2	8 000	8 000	0%	8 000	0%

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
Redfish (pelagic)	Greenland waters of NAFO 1F and Greenland waters of 5 and 14	974	868	-11%	868	-11%
Redfish (demersal)	Greenland waters of NAFO 1F and Greenland waters of 5 and 14	1 600	1 650	3%	1 650	3%
Redfish	Icelandic waters of 5a	pm	pm		pm	
Redfish	Faroese waters 5b	pm	100		100	
Other species (1)	Norwegian waters of 1 and 2	350	350	0%	350	0%
Other species (1)	Faroese waters of 5b	pm	700		700	
Flatfish	Faroese waters of 5b	pm	50		50	
Other (by-catch)	Greenland waters	900	750	-17%	750	-17%
Snow crab	Areas 1 and 2b	20 licences	N/A		N/A	

2018 EU TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES IN THE ATLANTIC AND NORTH SEA						
SPECIES	MANAGEMENT AREA	Final TAC 2017	COMMISSION PROPOSAL		COUNCIL AGREEMENT	
			TAC 2018 tonnes	TAC variation 2018-2017	TAC 2018	TAC variation 2018-2017
					20 licences	
Atlantic halibut	Greenland waters of 5 and 14		N/A		N/A	
Atlantic halibut	Greenland waters of NAFO 1		N/A		N/A	
Porbeagle	French Guiana waters, Kattegat and Atlantic		N/A		N/A	
Whiting	19 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1		N/A		N/A	

In view of the critical state of eel fisheries, it will be prohibited to fish for European eel of an overall length of 12 cm or more in Union waters of ICES areas, including the Baltic Sea, for a consecutive three-month period, to be determined by each member state, between 1 September 2018 and 31 January 2019. That is the time when eels are migrating and therefore are most vulnerable. Member states will have to inform the Commission of the chosen period by 1 June 2018.

The decision is complemented by a joint declaration by the European Commission and member states which aims to further protect the stock of European eel, for instance in inland waters, by strengthening eel management plans during all stages of the eel lifecycle.

Concerning sea bass, the Council acknowledged the bad state of stocks in the Celtic Sea, Channel, Irish Sea and southern North Sea and its importance for many countries. It consequently decided to make additional efforts by only allowing limited fisheries with certain gears in those areas, while providing for a two-month closure to protect spawning aggregations. Recreational fishing is further restricted, with only catch-and-release fishing allowed for the entire year. A lower daily bag limit for recreational fisheries is also fixed in the Bay of Biscay.

The Council agreement largely reflected the initial Commission proposal ([13780/17](#) + [13780/17 ADD 1](#) + [13780/17 ADD 2](#)), which established fishing opportunities in the form of **yearly total allowable catches** (TACs) and **quotas** by fish stock in the different fishing zones. TACs and quotas concern stocks that the EU manages either **autonomously or jointly with third countries**, for instance with Norway in the North Sea and the Skagerrak, in relation to North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) Coastal State consultations, as well as stocks determined through agreements reached within the framework of regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs).

Based on the scientific advice provided by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), the Commission had proposed for 2018 to increase or keep current catch limits for 53 stocks and to reduce them for 25 stocks. The Commission had also proposed a **fishing ban on eels in the Baltic, North Sea and Atlantic**.

One of the main objectives of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is to ensure high long-term fishing yields (**maximum sustainable yield**, or MSY) for all stocks by 2015 where possible, and at the latest by 2020. In December 2016, 44 stocks were fished at MSY levels.

Together with MSY, another important objective is to reduce unwanted catches and gradually introduce the **landing obligation**. As from 1 January 2019 all stocks under catch limits will be subject to the landing obligation.

The setting of TACs and quotas is an annual management exercise decided upon by the Council only, in accordance with Article 43(3) of the TFEU. It takes place in parallel to the adoption of fishing opportunities in the Black Sea, and is preceded by a similar TAC-setting exercise for deep-sea fish stocks in November (every second year), and Baltic Sea stocks in October.

Following finalisation by the legal/linguistic experts, this item will be included in part 'A' of the agenda for adoption at a forthcoming Council meeting.

Any other business

- *Outcome of the conference 'Beyond 2020: supporting Europe's coastal communities', Tallinn, 12-13 October 2017*

The presidency and the Commission informed the Council about the outcome of the abovementioned conference, which involved more than 70 speakers and 300 participants in a discussion on the past, present and future support for the Common Fisheries Policy and EU maritime policy.

During the conference, most stakeholders agreed that the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) is a fundamental instrument for supporting the CFP objectives and the broader blue economy. The conference also examined the reasons behind the slow uptake of EMFF spending and the challenges and opportunities for the fisheries and maritime sectors.

In the ensuing debate delegations welcomed the conclusions of the conference and asked for simplification and a reduction of the administrative burden linked to the EMFF during the next programming period. They also wished for the fund to be endowed with sufficient resources to boost marine activities and the blue economy.

– ***Implementation of the landing obligation, choke species risk in January 2019***

On behalf of the North Western Waters regional group (Belgium, Ireland, France, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom), Spain drew ministers' attention to the risk of choke species linked to the implementation of the landing obligation by 1 January 2019.

In particular, Spain informed the Council about the choke mitigation tool (CMT) that had been developed to gain a better insight into the phenomenon. According to the North Western Waters regional group the existing toolbox of measures would not provide appropriate solutions to the choke risk and alternative measures needed to be found soon.

In the ensuing debate the Commission welcomed the initiative of the North Western Waters regional group as it gave better insight into the phenomenon of choke species. It stressed that there was scope for improving selectivity and reducing the choke risk by means of existing tools and encouraged member states to use them. Finally the Commission underlined that, although postponing implementation of the landing obligation was not an option, flexibility could be considered if there was evidence that the available technical tools still could not reduce the choke risk.

– ***Outcome of the 'Our ocean' conference, Malta, 5-6 October 2017***

The Commission informed ministers about the discussions held and commitments undertaken at the 'Our ocean' conference that took place in Malta last October.

At the [conference](#) over 400 commitments worth more than €7 billion were announced, from nearly 1 000 representatives of international institutions, governments, businesses, NGOs, foundations and research institutes from 123 countries around the world.

The next 'Our ocean' conference will be hosted by Indonesia and take place on 29-31 October 2018 in Bali. As the Commission will participate in the conference with further commitments to tackle global ocean challenges on behalf of the EU, it took the opportunity to encourage member states to also provide new, concrete and measurable commitments and ensure a high level of participation at the conference in Indonesia.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

AGRICULTURE

2018 catch limits for certain fish stocks in the Black Sea

The Council adopted a regulation setting the 2018 catch limits for certain fish stocks in the Black Sea. The regulation affects Bulgaria and Romania.

In particular, the Council decided to confirm the Commission proposal to roll over the catch limit for sprat to 2018 (11 475 tonnes). For turbot, the Council set a total allowable catch (TAC) at the levels established by the multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries (644 tonnes), which had been agreed during the 41st annual meeting of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in October 2017.

Black Sea stocks exploited by Bulgaria and Romania are shared with non-EU countries, e.g. Turkey, Ukraine, Georgia and the Russian Federation. So far, no TACs had been decided at regional level between the EU and non-EU countries, and every year since 2008, the European Union had been fixing autonomous quotas for turbot and sprat stocks in order to help ensure that the CFP rules were applied.

For the first time this year, all stakeholders involved in the GFCM agreed on a multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries. The agreement establishes a quota for turbot in the short term but will become a fully fledged management plan comprising further management measures as from 2020.

Reference laboratories in the field of contaminants in feed and food

The Council did not oppose the adoption of a Commission regulation amending annex VII to regulation no 882/2004 as regards the EU reference laboratories in the field of contaminants in feed and food ([13869/17](#) + [ADD 1](#)).

Regulation (EC) no 882/2004 lays down the general tasks, duties and requirements for EU reference laboratories for food and feed and for animal health. It also includes the list of these laboratories in part I of annex VII.

The new regulation designates the laboratory National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark (Denmark) as the EU reference laboratory for metals and nitrogenous compounds in feed and food and the EU reference laboratory for processing contaminants. It also designates the laboratory RIKILT (Stichting Wageningen Research) (Netherlands) as the EU reference laboratory for mycotoxins and plant toxins in feed and food. The regulation also extends the scope of the EU reference laboratory for dioxins and PCBs in feed and food to all halogenated persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in feed and food.

Pesticides – maximum residue levels

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission regulation amending annexes II, III and IV to regulation 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels (MRLs) for ametoctradin, chlorpyrifos-methyl, cyproconazole, difenoconazole, fluazinam, flutriafol, prohexadione and sodium chloride in or on certain products ([13880/17 + ADD 1 + ADD 2](#)).

Regulation 396/2005 establishes the MRLs permitted in products of animal or vegetable origin intended for human or animal consumption. These MRLs include, on the one hand, levels which are specific to particular foodstuffs intended for human or animal consumption and, on the other, a general limit which applies where no specific level has been set. MRL applications are submitted to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which issues a scientific opinion on each intended new MRL. Based on the EFSA's opinion, the Commission proposes a regulation to establish a new MRL or to amend or remove an existing MRL, modifying the annexes of regulation 396/2005 accordingly.

Omnibus regulation

The Council adopted the agricultural part of the so-called omnibus regulation, following the informal agreement reached with the European Parliament on 12 October.

The [adopted regulation](#) makes the following technical improvements to the four Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) regulations and will enter into force on 1 January 2018.

- Direct payments: the rules on permanent grassland have been modified so as to provide greater flexibility for member states. Certain elements of greening will also become simpler. In addition, the distinction between active and non-active farmers will become optional, thereby allowing member states where it resulted in an excessive administrative burden to discontinue it.
- Rural development: risk management measures will become more attractive as some thresholds are lowered while support rates are increased. Also, the use of financial instruments will be simplified.
- Common market organisation: some prerogatives of producer organisations, such as planning production, optimising production costs, placing on the market and negotiating contracts for the supply of agricultural products on behalf of members, will be extended to all sectors with a view to improving the position of farmers in the supply chain. These prerogatives already exist in sectors such as olive oil, beef and arable crops. The option of collectively negotiating value-sharing terms in contracts will be extended to sectors other than sugar and will be voluntary.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Investment plan for Europe

The Council adopted a regulation extending the European fund for strategic investments (EFSI), with a target of €500 billion of additional investments.

The EFSI is the flagship initiative under the EU's 'investment plan for Europe'.

The regulation:

- extends the EFSI's lifespan until 31 December 2020
- raises the investment target to €500 billion
- increases the EU budget guarantee to €26 billion (of which €16 billion will be available for guarantee calls until mid-2018)
- increases the European Investment Bank's contribution to €7.5 billion (from €5 billion currently), pending approval by the EIB's board of directors

Agreement was reached with the European Parliament on 26 October 2017. The Parliament approved the regulation at first reading on 12 December 2017.

TRADE

Trade in goods used for capital punishment, torture and other cruel treatment

The Council decided not to object to a delegated act submitted by the Commission amending the list of countries benefiting from the Union general export authorisation to include the Dominican Republic, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo.

Council regulation (EC) no 1236/2005 sets out rules governing trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The regulation requires an authorisation for any export of this type of goods. All the countries benefitting from this authorisation are included in a list annexed to the regulation.

In order to be included on the list, countries need to have abolished capital punishment for all crimes and confirmed that abolition through an international commitment. For countries that are not members of the Council of Europe, there is also an obligation for them to have ratified the second optional protocol to the international covenant on civil and political rights.

ENVIRONMENT

Convention for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean

The Council adopted a decision on the position to be taken, on behalf of the EU, at the twentieth meeting of the contracting parties to the convention for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean ([14694/17](#)).

The position particularly concerns the proposal to amend annex II to the protocol regarding specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean.

The EU supports this amendment, which adds four new Anthozoa species (*Dendrophyllia cornigera*, *Dendrophyllia ramea*, *Desmophyllum dianthus* and *Isidella elongata*) to the list of species and updates the denomination of a number of marine and coastal bird species in that list.

The meeting of the contracting parties to the convention for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention) will take place from 17 to 20 December 2017 in Tirana (Albania). The convention entered into force on 9 July 2004.

See [here](#) for more details on the Barcelona Convention.

Aviation rules in the EU emissions trading systems (ETS)

The Council adopted a regulation extending existing provisions covering aviation activities in the EU emissions trading system (ETS) regulation beyond 2016 and preparing for the implementation of the global market-based measure as of 2021 ([PE-CONS 55/17](#)).

The adoption of this new regulation before the end of the year was indispensable in order to avoid any legal gap as regards compliance with the current ETS regulation in 2017.

The legislative act will enter into force on the day of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

For more information, see the [press release](#) from 18 October 2017.

RESEARCH

Research fund for coal and steel

The Council approved a decision which aims to ensure an appropriate level of funding for coal and steel research projects ([14532/17](#)).

The decision provides a bridging solution to the exceptional decrease in the revenue stemming from the assets of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in liquidation, which is dedicated to the funding of research projects for coal and steel.

In view of the exceptional decrease, due to the low-interest-rate environment on the capital markets in recent years, in the revenue stemming from the assets of the ECSC in liquidation, which is dedicated to research in the sectors related to the coal and steel industry, the rules on the cancellation of commitments made under the programme of the [Research Fund for Coal and Steel](#) (RFCS) need to be revised so as to make amounts corresponding to such cancellations available to the programme.

For the same reason, it is also necessary to revise the rules on the amounts recovered under the programme so as to carry them over to the programme under the provisions on assigned revenues of the financial rules applicable to the EU's general budget.

The new decision, which will amend decision [2008/376/EC](#), will be forwarded to the European Parliament for its consent.

The revenues generated from the assets of the ECSC which were transferred to the EU in 2002 are used to support the RFCS programme.

SPACE POLICY

UNISPACE +50

The Council endorsed the EU's recommendations ahead of the United Nations UNISPACE +50 conference, which is scheduled for 20-21 June 2018.

[UNISPACE +50](#) will mark the 50th anniversary of the first UN space conference and is expected to provide recommendations on a range of issues on the international space agenda and to renew the mandate of the committee on the peaceful uses of outer space (COPUOS) and of the UN office for outer space affairs (UNOOSA).

As part of the preparations, the [COPUOS agreed on seven thematic priorities](#).

ENLARGEMENT

EU-Turkey Association Council – EU position

The Council established the EU's position for the [EU-Turkey Association Council](#) as regards the amendment of protocol 2 to decision no 1/98 of the EC-Turkey Association Council on the trade regime for agricultural products ([14375/17](#)).
