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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: AOB for the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 26 January 2026
Urgent EU Action needed on Northeast Atlantic Mackerel
- Information from Ireland, supported by Latvia and Poland

Urgent EU Action needed on Northeast Atlantic Mackerel

**AOB item from Ireland, supported by Poland and Latvia, at the AgriFish Council of
26 January 2026**

Ireland, Poland and Latvia note that, on 15 December 2025, four Coastal States agreed upon a Total Allowable Catch for Mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic that disregards the headline advice provided by ICES. This arrangement, and the means by which it was agreed, presents a stark outlook for the sustainability of the Mackerel stock in the Northeast Atlantic. The exclusion of the EU ignores the European Union's position as a key Coastal State for this stock.

Member States have consistently raised significant concerns regarding the actions by Northeast Atlantic Third Countries in setting unsustainable unilateral quotas for Mackerel, noting the detrimental effect this has had on the stock condition and the subsequent negative economic impact on the EU's seafood sector.

Now more than ever, a concerted response from the EU is urgently required in relation to Third Countries whose actions threaten the viability of this stock and the sustainability of our fishermen and women.

At the Agrifish Council in October 2025, Member States recalled that the EU has tools at its disposal to address reckless actions taken by our international partners. We reiterate that the Unsustainable Fishing Regulation, (EU) No 1026/2012, provides a legal basis for the Union to take concrete action against Third Countries who allow unsustainable fishing of a stock of common interest.

Ireland, Poland and Latvia wish to be informed of the actions the Commission will take now, or propose are taken, to ensure that all parties, both within the EU and the four other Coastal States, are left in no doubt as to the importance that the EU places on the survival of its pelagic sector and the prosperity of the communities which depend on it.

Given the extremely low fishing opportunities for Mackerel for 2026, the EU must take steps to offset the very significant impacts now faced by our fishermen and women as a result of the unsustainable fishing activities of Third Countries.

Ireland, Poland and Latvia call for the Commission to make available sectoral support through emergency market measures for impacted fishers including, but not limited to, an implementing decision under 26(2) of the EMFAF Regulation.
