



Commission proposes fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2017

Brussels, 27 October 2016

In preparation for the December Fisheries Council, where Member States will negotiate fishing quotas in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2017, the Commission is presenting its proposal for healthy and sustainable stocks.

Today the Commission is presenting its proposal on fishing quotas for next year in the Atlantic and the North Sea. This is the annual scheme for the amount of fish which can be caught by European Union fishermen from the main commercial fish stocks next year, also referred to as Total Allowable Catches (TACs). On the basis of the scientific advice received, the Commission proposes to maintain or increase the current fishing quotas for 42 stocks which are in good health, and reduce catches for 28 stocks which are faring poorly.

Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: *"Our goal is clear: we need to bring all stocks to healthy and sustainable levels as soon as possible so that our fishing industry can remain viable. This is not up to the Commission alone: stakeholders are fundamental enablers in this process. We are proposing an ambitious programme for 2017 and the only way forward will be to work with fishermen, scientists and national authorities to develop real solutions that lead to fisheries that are both economically profitable and sustainable"*.

Later this autumn the Commission will also propose some additional quotas, the so-called 'quota top-ups', for the fisheries that fall under the [landing obligation](#) in 2017. These extra quotas are granted on account of the fact that fishermen can no longer discard the fish caught unintentionally but have to land it. The allowed quota is therefore increased to facilitate the transition to the new system of no discards. The exact top-ups per fishery will be determined on the basis of scientific advice expected in mid-November and of the quantities that need to be landed according to the regional discard plans.

The proposal covers stocks managed by the EU alone and stocks managed with third countries, such as Norway, or through [Regional Fisheries Management Organisations](#) (RFMOs) across the world's oceans. International negotiations for many of the stocks concerned are still ongoing and some stocks are awaiting scientific advice. For these, the figures will be included at a later stage, once the negotiations with third countries and within RFMOs have taken place.

Today's proposal will be submitted for discussion and adoption by the Ministers of the Member States at the Fisheries Council in December, to be applied as from 1 January 2017.

Details of the proposal

The Commission's objective, under the reformed [Common Fisheries Policy](#), is to have all stocks fished sustainably by respecting the Maximum Sustainable Yield of a fishery. Fishing at [Maximum Sustainable Yield](#) (MSY) levels allows the fishing industry to take the highest amount of fish from the sea while keeping fish stocks healthy. The Commission proposes maximum fishing levels on the basis of scientific advice received from the [International Council for the Exploration of the Sea](#) (ICES). This year, ICES advice was given for 34 stocks.

- **Stocks at sustainable levels**

For some EU stocks already at MSY, such as **anglerfish** in Southern Waters, **common sole** in the Skagerrak/Kattegat and **sole** in the Western Channel, the Commission proposes to raise the TACs. Increases are also proposed for **Norway lobster** in the Kattegat/Skagerrak, **horse mackerel** in Atlantic Iberian waters and **haddock** in the Irish Sea and Celtic Sea. The continued growth of the Northern **hake** stock also justifies a new substantial increase in the TAC.

- **Stocks fished unsustainably**

At the same time, some stocks still give reasons for concern - for example **cod** stocks continue to decline in West of Ireland, in the Celtic Sea, in the Bay of Biscay and in Atlantic Iberian Waters. **Sole** in the Irish Sea is very vulnerable. The advice for **whiting** in the West of Scotland is for zero catches and decreases are proposed for **megrims** and **pollack** in the Celtic and Irish seas. In the Kattegat a reduction for **plaice** is proposed.

The scientific advice for **sea bass** is also very alarming. The Commission has included in its proposal actions for managing **sea bass** in 2017. These management measures would allow some fishing possibilities to the small-scale fishermen that depend on this stock, but take into account that ICES advises to cut the overall landings of sea bass.

- Stocks for which scientific data are lacking

For cases where data are not sufficient to properly estimate the stock's size, the Commission proposal follows the advice of ICES, i.e. cuts or increases of a maximum of 20%. Following a common statement in 2012, 26 data-limited stocks were set at a lower TAC but maintained for 5 years. For 2 of these stocks, updated scientific advice demonstrates that the stocks have declined further and an additional TAC reduction is now needed. This concerns sprat in the Channel and plaice in the Celtic sea and South-West of Ireland.

For more information

See **tables below** for details on today's proposals for the Atlantic and the North Sea

TACs and quotas

Questions and Answers on [Commission's proposal on fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2017](#)

Scientific advice: the proposed TACs take due account of the [scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea \(ICES\) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries \(STECF\)](#).

Stakeholders were also consulted, based on the [Commission's Consultation document](#)

Multiannual management plans

Map of fishing areas

Note: The tables below only list EU stocks not shared with third countries

Table 1: Stocks with proposals for increased TAC

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2016	TAC 2017 (Proposal)	TAC change: 2016 - 2017 (Proposal)
Anglerfish	Lophius	VIIIc, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1	2569	3955	54.0%
Common sole	Solea solea	VIIe	979	1178	20.3%
Common sole	Solea solea	IIIa; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32	391	534	36.6%
Common sole	Solea solea	VIIIfg	779	782	0.4%
Haddock	Melanogrammus	VIIb-k, VIII, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	7258	7751	6.8%
Haddock	Melanogrammus aeglefinus	Union and international waters of VIb, XII and XIV	3225	4130	28.1%
Hake (overall N. TAC)	Merluccius	Overall northern TACs (IIIa / IIa and IV / Vb, VI, VII, XII and XIV / VIIIabde)	108784	111865	2.8%

Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	IX	68583	73349	6.9%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	320	336	5.0%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	IIIa; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32	11001	12715	15.6%

Table 2: Stocks with no changes in TAC[\[1\]](#)

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2016	TAC 2017 (Proposal)	TAC change: 2016 - 2017 (Proposal)
Anchovy	Engraulis	IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	10622	10622	0.0%
Cod	Gadus morhua	Kattegat	370	370	0.0%
Cod	Gadus morhua	VIa; Union and international waters of Vb east of 12° 00' W	0	0	0.0%
Common sole	Solea solea	VIIIab	3420	3420	0.0%
Lemon sole and witch	Microstomus kitt and Glyptocephalus cynoglossus	IIa (EC), North Sea (EC)	6391	6391	0.0%
Megrim	Lepidorhombus	Union waters of IIa and IV	2639	2639	0.0%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	VIIa	1098	1098	0.0%
Turbot and Brill	Psetta maxima & Scophthalmus rhombus	Union waters of IIa and IV	4488	4488	0.0%

Table 3: Stocks with proposals for decreased TAC

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2016	TAC 2017 (Proposal)	TAC change: 2016 - 2017 (Proposal)
Anglerfish	Lophius	VII	33516	29534	-11.9%
Anglerfish	Lophius	VIIIabde	8980	7914	-11.9%
Blue ling	Molva dypterygia	Int. waters of XII	446	357	-20.0%
Boarfish	Caproidae	Union and international waters of VI, VII and VIII	42637	27288	-36.0%

Cod	Gadus morhua	VIIb, VIIc, VIIe-k, VIII, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF	4565	1447	-68.3%
Common sole	Solea solea	VIIa	40	7	-82.5%
Common sole	Solea solea	VIIId	3258	2257	-30.7%
Greater silver smelt	Argentina silus	Union and international waters of V, VI and VII	4316	3453	-20.0%
Hake	Merluccius	VIIIc, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	10674	6838	-35.9%
Herring	Clupea	VIa (S), VIIb, VIIc	1630	1360	-16.6%
Herring	Clupea	VIIa(1)	4575	4127	-9.8%
Herring	Clupea	VIIg(1), VIIh(1), VIIj(1) and VIIk(1)	15442	14467	-6.3%
Herring	Clupea harengus	Union and international waters of Vb, VIb and VIaN(1)	4170	3480	-16.5%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	VIIIabde	1802	1513	-16.0%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	Union and international waters of Vb; VI;	5214	4900	-6.0%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	VII	18254	13099	-28.2%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	VIIIc, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	1363	1013	-25.7%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	VIIIc	48	0	-100.0%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	Union waters of IIa and IV	13700	13686	-0.1%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	VIIde	12446	10022	-19.5%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	VIIfg	420	405	-3.6%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	VIIhjk	135	108	-20.0%
Plaice	Pleuronectes platessa	Kattegat	2347	2065	-12.0%

Pollack	Pollachius pollachius	VIIIabde	1482	1186	-20.0%
Pollack	Pollachius pollachius	VII	13495	10796	-20.0%
Sprat	Sprattus	VIIde	5150	4120	-20.0%
Whiting	Merlangius	VI; Union and international waters of Vb; international waters of XII and XIV	213	0	-100.0%
Whiting	Merlangius	VIII	2540	2032	-20.0%

Table 4: Stocks subject to late advice or ongoing negotiations

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2016
Anglerfish	Lophiidae	Union waters of IIa and IV	11267
Anglerfish	Lophius	VI; Union and international waters of Vb; international waters of XII and XIV	6375
Blue ling	Molva dypterygia	Union and int. waters of Vb, VI, VII	4746
Cod	Gadus morhua	VIIa	146
Common sole	Solea solea	Union waters of IIa and IV	13252
Dab and flounder	Limanda limanda & Platichthys flesus	Union waters of IIa and IV	18434
Haddock	Melanogrammus	Vb,VIa	6462
Haddock	Melanogrammus	VIIa	1654
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	Union waters of IIa, IVa; VI, VIIa-c,VIIe-k, VIIIA, VIIIB, VIIId and VIIIE; Union and international waters of Vb; international waters of XII and XIV	107168
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	Union waters of IVb, IVc and VIId	11650
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	VIIIc	17235
Ling	Molva molva	Union and int. waters of VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII, XIV	10297
Ling	Molva molva	IV (EU)	2912
Norway lobster	Nephrops	VI; Union and international waters of Vb	16524

Norway lobster	Nephrops	VII	23348
Norway lobster	Nephrops	VII - Porcupine Bank special condition	1850
Norway lobster	Nephrops	VIIIabde	3899
Norway pout	Trisopterus esmarki	IIIa, Union waters of IIa and IV	129000
Picked dogfish	Squalus	Union and international waters of I, V, VI, VII, VIII, XII and XIV	0
Picked dogfish	Squalus	Union waters of IIa and IV	0
Picked dogfish	Squalus	Union waters of IIIa	0
Sandeel	Ammodytes	Union waters of IIa, IIIa and IV	79219
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of IIa and IV	1313
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of IIIa	47
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of VIa, VIb, VIIa-c and VIIe-k	8032
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of VIII and IX	3420
Skates and rays	Rajidae	VIIId	966
Sprat	Sprattus sprattus	Union waters of IIa and IV	219500
Tusk	Brosme brosme	Union and international waters of V, VI and VII	937
Whiting	Merlangius	VIIb-k	22778

Table 5: Stocks for which the TAC is delegated to an individual member state

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	Delegated to
Herring	Clupea	VI Clyde(1)	United Kingdom
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	CECAF(Canaries)	Spain
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	CECAF(Madeira)	Portugal
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	X,CECAF(Azores)	Portugal
Penaeus shrimps	Penaeus	French Guyana	France

[1] This table [Table 2] does not include the stocks included in the Joint Statement by the Council and the Commission "Ad statement stable stocks" (see Council document PECHÉ 491, 15502/15 REV1). The TACs for data limited stocks included in this statement will be maintained for a further 2 years, unless the perception of the status of any of these stocks changes significantly during this period.

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