



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

ATLANTIC, OUTERMOST REGIONS AND ARTIC

Brussels,
Mare.C2/MK/Ares(2015)

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Dear Chair,

I am taking this opportunity to contact you as chair of the Advisory Councils in order to inform you that the Commission proposal on fishing opportunities for the Atlantic and the North Sea for 2016 was adopted by the Commission on 10 November 2015. As you know in a number of demersal fisheries as of 1 January 2016 fish that was previously discarded will be landed. To compensate the extra efforts of the industry to land all catches, the Commission will be proposing TAC top-ups for stocks under the landing obligation, where supported by the scientific evaluation which is underway. The TACs concerned by this are listed in annex 1.

The TAC top-ups will be made on the basis of how much those fleets that come under the landing obligation in 2016 have caught in total catches and have discarded. When calculating the TAC top-ups we will also take into account the *de minimis* percentages of discards which will still be allowed.

The Commission has asked STECF to analyse all fleet segments on the basis of expected discards. Where the Member States have not sent complete information on discard data and information per fleet segment, the Commission has asked STECF to advise on the risk level associated with using the discard average given by ICES to calculate TAC top-ups. This risk analysis will guide the proposals for TAC top-ups in those cases. STECF will give us their advice in mid-November, so after the adoption of the Commission's Fishing Opportunities proposal for 2016. Therefore you will see that the stocks for which TAC top-ups will be proposed are in "p.m." in our proposal. Details about the content of the Commission proposal can be consulted via the MARE website.

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/index_en.htm

At the end of the day the objective is to come to an equitable TAC top-up that reflects reality and compensates fishermen for the extra amount of fish landed as of 2016. The Commission will table a non paper to Council with all the TAC top-ups as soon as possible after the STECF advice in mid-November and we will also send the same information to the Advisory Councils in order to keep all stakeholders informed.

In addition, I would like to use this opportunity to inform you about legal acts the Commission adopted recently due to the landing obligation entering into force in demersal fisheries on 1 January 2016. On 12 October 2015 the Commission adopted two regulations on discard plans for certain demersal fisheries in North-Western waters and in South-Western Waters. On 22 October the Commission also adopted a regulation for the North Sea. All three regulations are annexed to this letter.

Furthermore we will no longer have catch composition rules in fisheries under the landing obligation, and to give the fishing industry legal certainty about this the Commission adopted regulations to this end for fisheries for hake in ICES areas III, IV, V, VI and VII, VIII a, b, d, e and fisheries for cod in the North Sea and the West of Scotland:

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1867 of 19 October 2015 amending Regulation (EC) No 494/2002 as regards the landing obligation (OJ L 275, 20.10.2015, p. 20–21);
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1897 of 21 October 2015 amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2056/2001 as regards the landing obligation (OJ L 277, 22.10.2015, p. 11–12).

We hope that the Advisory Councils find this information useful and remain,

Yours sincerely,



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Annex 1

- anchovy in IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1
- haddock IV and Union waters of IIa
- haddock in IIIa and Union waters of 22-32
- haddock in VIIa
- haddock in Vb, VIa Hake in IIIa, IIa and IV
- hake VIIIc, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1,
- hake VIIIA, VIIIB, VIIID and VIIIE,
- hake in VIIIc, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1
- common sole Union waters of IIa and IV
- common sole IIIa; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32
- common sole VIIIA and VIIIB,
- common sole VIIIC, VIIID, VIIIE, IX, X and CECAF 34.1.1,
- common sole in VIIID
- common sole in VIIIE
- common sole in VI; Union and international waters of Vb; international waters of XII and XIV
- common sole in VIIbc
- common sole in VIIfg
- common sole in VIIhjk
- plaice IV; Union waters of IIa and the part of IIIa not covered by the Skagerrak and Kattegat
- plaice VIII, IX, X and Union waters CECAF 34.1.1,
- Norway lobster in Union waters of IIa and IV
- Norway lobster VIIIA,b,d,e, Norway lobster VIIIC,
- Norway lobster IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1,
- Norway lobster in VII
- Norway lobster in VI; Union and international waters of Vb
- Norway lobster in IIIa; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32
- Northern Prawn in IIIa
- Northern prawn in Union waters of IIa and IV and
- saithe IIIa and IV; Union waters of IIa, IIb, IIc and Subdivisions 22-32.
- whiting in VIIb-k

