



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels, 12.05.2009 D 05365  
MARE-A-4/SM D(2009) REP 3201

Mr Sam Lambourn  
North Western Waters RAC  
Bord Iascaigh Mhara, P.O. Box 12,  
Crofton Road,  
Dun Laoghaire,  
Co. Dublin  
Ireland

**Subject:** Harmonisation of conversion factors for fish products in the EU

Dear Mr Lambourn,

Thank you for your letter expressing both your interests and concerns in the application of fish conversion factors on European Union flagged vessels.

Please find below a note explaining the process regarding the possible harmonisation of fish conversion factors in Europe as well as the current state of play.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Conversion factors (hereafter referred to as 'CF') are used for quota management in order to convert the processed weight of fish products into the live weight of species. These conversion factors are mainly used for the purposes of data accuracy recorded in logbooks as is required by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and to correct the landing figures obtained during inspections.

The fact that CF are related to the relative quota stability of the Member States (hereafter referred to as 'MS') makes them all the more important. The distribution formula of the Total Allowable Catches (TAC) for each MS has remained both stable and unchanged since it was agreed in 1987. The annual quota for each MS is calculated using this distribution formula and TAC's and quotas are conveyed in live weight.

Thus CF allow the calculation of the amount of live weight to be deducted from each of the MS annual quota.

There have been cases however, where fishermen have not had the same treatment between different ports of landing when using the CF. Such cases mainly occurred when calculating the margin of tolerance, especially where recovery and management plans applied.

There have been infringement procedures on the non-respect of the margin of tolerance for the hake recovery plan due solely to the use of different CF, between national authorities of the port of landing and vessels flying the flag of another MS. In this way, the existence of different CF between MS creates difficulties and a degree of inequality both in terms of control and enforcement and consequently, creates the need to simplify and harmonise CF in the European Union.

## **2. HARMONISATION PROCESS**

For a number of years, there have been several CF control problems mainly due to the fact that they were not officially published and that there are several CF for the same species/ presentation with different values in the various MS.

During 2005, it was decided that all MS conversion factors should be published on the Commission website and also that a proposal would be drafted in order to reach an agreement whereby there would be a single conversion factor for a given species and product.

The publication process and possible harmonisation process started in October 2005 with an extract of all quota species from the 2005 TAC and Quota regulation and with the compilation of all the MS CF.

During January and February 2006, all of the data received with the updated CF were entered in DG Fisheries and Maritime Affairs database.

All the information was prepared for and published on the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries website<sup>1</sup> and is regularly updated and made available for consultation by all MS and should also be available to all National Fisheries Control and Enforcement Units.

Data and statistical analyses have been carried so that logical and coherent proposals could be made for the harmonisation of fish CF among MS.

## **3. HARMONISATION PROPOSALS**

CF by state can be fresh, frozen, alive, boiled or salted and in this instance, the possible harmonisation to be treated and discussed shall be done so referring only to fresh fish CF. This is due to the fact that there is less heterogeneity in the processing of fresh fish than in the other presentations (therefore less heterogeneity on the values of CF).

### **3.A) FIRST PROPOSAL, BASED ON SIMPLE AVERAGE**

The first draft proposal made was based on a simple average of all the existing CF for the same presentation.

For all the MS CF, comprising a total of 529 presentations, an assessment was made to verify if the simple average for CF with the same presentation was an acceptable proposal, i.e. if the coefficient variation values (average/standard deviation multiplied by 100) were under 5%.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/control\\_enforcement/conversionfactors\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/control_enforcement/conversionfactors_en.htm)

The calculations highlighted that 40% of the harmonised CF presentations had coefficient variation values under 5% and thus reliable averages. However the simple average proposal was not applicable for the remaining 60% of the CF. These remaining conversion factors made up 43% of unique presentations (229 presentations), i.e., presentations where only one CF was proposed and 17% of CF with presentations that were not unique and thus where the average proposal was not applicable due to the large differences between the MS CF's.

This first harmonisation exercise together with its impact exercise was discussed during several Expert Group for Fisheries Control (EGFC) meetings held in 2007.

Discussions with the MS involved emphasised that such methodology based on a simple average used to obtain the harmonised CF was too simplistic and would have to be redefined.

### **3.B) PRESENT PROPOSAL, BASED ON WEIGHTED AVERAGE**

Several MS stressed that CF obtained on a weighed average would decrease the impact of gains and losses inexorably linked to fishing opportunities and inherent within the harmonisation process.

In this way, the Commission proposed a new exercise, which would calculate the harmonised CF using a weighed average linked to three different sets of parameters CF (the previous exercise only considered the 2005 TAC).

MS should decide in correlation with calculation and impact exercises, which of the three sets of parameters shall be used to define the harmonised CF (to be decided/discussed in the EGFC of 24/09/2008).

- a) Using the quota allocation figures by species and presentation for the year 2006, as attributed in the TAC and Quota Regulation, CR (EC) N° 51/2006.
- b) Using the final quota (after swaps) by species and presentation for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006.
- c) Using landed figures by species and presentation for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

(Please see the annex for a detailed description of the formulas)

We consider that by weighing the average, either by using quota allocation as a weighing parameter or by using total landings, the potential impact will be proportional to the share of the MS in different fisheries.

Furthermore, using three years instead of one will be relevant when we talk about exercises b) and c) because due to relative stability, quota allocation will follow the same repartition key independently of the year, while final quotas after swaps and landings might show inter-annual variations.

## **4. THE CURRENT SITUATION**

In March 2008, MS received the calculations for the harmonised CF as well as the impact exercise for each of the 3 sets of data (a, b and c).

After some meetings, the MS concerned decided that the set of data to use in the calculation of the harmonised Community conversion factors would be the landing data for the year 2006 (set c, see formula used in Annex I).

During the third trimester of 2008, MS received a draft version of the regulation harmonising fish conversion factors and in January 2009 the document was sent for translation.

On 11 March 2009, during the Committee for Fisheries and Aquaculture, the draft Regulation was voted and approved by qualified majority (Draft Regulation in annex II).

The Commission Regulation establishing Community conversion factors and presentation codes used to convert fish processed weight into fish live weight, and amending Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83 will be published in May/June 2009 and will enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010.

Yours sincerely,



Fokion Fotiadis

## ANNEX I- formula

The formula used to calculate the harmonised conversion factors (HCF) was:

Or, for **exercise c) based on landings**

$$\text{HCF (spA)} = \frac{[\text{CF (ms1, spA)} * \text{L (ms1, spA)}] + [\text{CF (ms2, spA)} * \text{L (ms2, spA)}] + \dots [\text{CF (msn, spA)} * \text{L (msn, spA)}]}{\text{Total L(spA)}}$$

Total L(spA)

Where;

CF- conversion factor

Sp- species

Ms- Member State

Q- Total Quota for species A

L- Total Landings of species A

The parameters are defined as follows:

c) Based on total landed figures during 2004, 2005 and 2006 (discriminated by presentation and including MS landings in or out of National ports)

CF of the concerned MS as published in our website,

Sp = quota species as discriminated in CR (EC) N° 51/2006,

MS = concerned Member State,

L = sum of all landed amounts by concerned MS for species A during 2004, 2005 and 2006.

## **ANNEX II- draft Regulation**

**EN**



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, XXX  
COM(2009) XXX final

Draft

**COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No .../..**

**of**

**establishing Community conversion factors and presentation codes used to convert fish  
processed weight into fish live weight, and amending Commission Regulation (EEC)  
No 2807/83**

Draft

**COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No .../..**

**of**

**establishing Community conversion factors and presentation codes used to convert fish processed weight into fish live weight, and amending Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83**

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 of 12 October 1993, establishing a control system applicable to the Common Fishery Policy<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 5 thereof, Whereas:

- (1) The implementation of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83 of 22 September 1983 laying down detailed rules for recording information on Member States' catches of fish<sup>2</sup>, has brought to light certain differences which result in problems of application and enforcement of Community legislation and which should be rectified, notably by harmonising fresh fish conversion factors among EU Member States.
- (2) Presentation codes for processed fish should be established in order to eliminate ambiguities in the interpretation of data recorded and therefore allow a more effective control of catch uptake by Member States.
- (3) Harmonised Community conversion factors will ensure harmonisation in the calculations of each of the national quota uptake, a more effective monitoring of the reporting obligations and a standardised calculation of the margin of tolerance.
- (4) For the purpose of the correct application of fish conversion factors, only Three-Alpha codes established by the FAO for fish species should be used. Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83 should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (5) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Committee,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 187, 10.06.1993, p. 6

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 276, 10.10.1983, p. 2

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

*Article 1*  
*Subject matter*

This Regulation establishes Community conversion factors and presentation codes for processed fish, to convert fish processed weight into fish live weight for the propose of monitoring catches.

*Article 2*  
*Scope*

This Regulation shall apply to fishery products on board or landed or transhipped by Community fishing vessels and by third country vessels fishing in European Union waters.

*Article 3*  
*Definitions*

For the purpose of this Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) "Community fishing vessel" means a fishing vessel flying the flag of a Member State and registered in the Community;
- (b) "Fish" means any marine organism subject to catch limits;
- (c) "Presentation" means the form into which the fish is processed while on board of the vessel and prior to landing, as described in Annex I.
- (d) "Collective presentation" means a presentation consisting of two or more parts extracted from the same fish.
- (e) "total allowable catches" (TAC) means the quantity that can be taken and landed from each stock each year;
- (f) "quota" means a proportion of the TAC allocated to the Community or Member States.
- (g) "state of processing" means the way the fish is preserved (fresh and fresh salted)

*Article 4*  
*General principles*

1. The Community conversion factors set out in Annex II and Annex III shall apply to convert fish processed weight into fish live weight.
2. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, where Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, of which the European Community is a Contracting party or cooperating non Contracting party, or regions or coastal areas where the European Community has an agreement to fish in third country waters, have defined regional conversion factors, those factors shall apply.
3. Where no Community or regional conversion factors exist for a given species and presentation, the conversion factor adopted by the flag Member State shall apply.

*Article 5*  
*Calculation method*

1. The fish live weight shall be obtained by multiplying the fish processed weight by the conversion factors referred to in Article 4 for each species and presentation.

2. In case of collective presentations, only one conversion factor corresponding to one of the parts of the collective presentation shall be used.

#### *Article 6*

##### *Use of conversion factors by the master of the vessel*

1. The masters of Community fishing vessels shall use the conversion factors referred to in Article 4 in the logbook as referred to in Article 6 of Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93, to:
  - (a) estimate the live weight of the quantities onboard the fishing vessel and,
  - (b) to calculate the live weight of the quantities upon landing.
2. When deemed necessary by the master of the fishing vessel to use, in the landing declaration as referred to in Article 8 of Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 or transhipment declaration as referred to in Article 2 of Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83, the presentation code "OTH" (other), the master shall describe exactly what the presentation "other" refers to.

#### *Article 7*

##### *Use of Community conversion factors by Member States' authorities*

Member States' authorities shall use the Community conversion factors referred to in Article 4 when calculating the live weight of landings in order to monitor the quota uptake.

#### *Article 8*

##### *Amendments to Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83*

In Article 1 of Regulation (EEC) No 2807/83, paragraph 4 is replaced by the following:

"4. The codes given in Annex VI and the Three-Alpha codes established by the FAO for fish species shall be used for indicating, under the appropriate headings of the logbook, the fishing gear used and the species caught."

#### *Article 9*

##### *Entry into force and application*

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2010.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, [...]

*For the Commission*

*Member of the Commission*

## ANNEX I

### **Presentation 3-alpha codes**

3-Alpha presentation code	Presentation	Description
FIL	Fillets	Removal of head, guts, bones and fins. Each fish originates two fillets not joined by any par
FIS	Skinned fillets	Removal of head, guts, bones, fins and skin. Each fish originates two fillets not joined by any par
GHT	Gutted headed and tailed	Guts, head and tail removed
GUG	Gutted and gilled	Guts and gills removed
GUH	Gutted and headed	Guts and head removed
GUL	Gutted liver in	Guts removed with the exception of liver
GUS	Gutted headed and skinned	Guts head and skin removed
GUT	Gutted	All guts removed
HEA	Headed	Head removed
LVR	Liver	Liver only, In case of collective presentation* use code LVR-C
OTH	Other	Any other presentation
ROE	Roe (s)	Roe(s) only In case of collective presentation* use code ROE-C
SGT	Gutted and salted	Guts removed and fish salted
TAL	Tail	Tails only
TNG	Tongue	Tongue only. In case of collective presentation* use code TNG-C
WHL	Whole	No processing
WNG	Wings	Wings only

## ANNEX II

### Fresh Community conversion factors

<b>Species:</b> Albacore <i>Thunnus alalunga</i>	<b>ALB</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11

<b>Species:</b> Alfonsinos <i>Beryx spp.</i>	<b>ALF</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Anchovy <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	<b>ANE</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Anglerfish <i>Lophiidae</i>	<b>ANF</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.22
GUH	3.00
TAL	3.00

<b>Species:</b> Mackarel icefish <i>Champscephalus gunnari</i>	<b>ANI</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Greater silver smelt <i>Argentina silus</i>	<b>ARU</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Bigeye tuna <i>Thunnus obesus</i>	<b>BET</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.10
GUH	1.29

<b>Species:</b> Blue ling <i>Molva dypterygia</i>	<b>BLI</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.17

<b>Species:</b> Brill <i>Scophthalmus rhombus</i>	<b>BLL</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.09

<b>Species:</b> Black scabbardfish <i>Aphanopus carbo</i>	<b>BSF</b>
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WHL	1.00
GUT	1.24
HEA	1.40

<b>Species: Atlantic blue marlin</b> <i>Makaira nigricans</i>	<b>BUM</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species: Capelin</b> <i>Mallotus villosus</i>	<b>CAP</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species: Cod</b> <i>Gadus morhua</i>	<b>COD</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.17
GUH	1.70
HEA	1.38
FIL	2.60
FIS	2.60

<b>Species: Common Dab</b> <i>Limanda limanda</i>	<b>DAB</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11
GUH	1.39

<b>Species: Picked dogfish</b> <i>Squalus acanthias</i>	<b>DGS</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.35
GUS	2.52

<b>Species: European flounder</b> <i>Platichthys flesus</i>	<b>FLE</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.08
GUS	1.39

<b>Species: Greater forkbeard</b> <i>Phycis blennoides</i>	<b>GFB</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11
GUH	1.40

<b>Species: Greenland halibut</b> <i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	<b>GHL</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.08

<b>Species:</b> Haddock <i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	<b>HAD</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.17
GUH	1.46

<b>Species:</b> Atlantic halibut <i>Hippoglossus hippoglossus</i>	<b>HAL</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Hering <i>Clupea harengus</i>	<b>HER</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.12
GUH	1.19

<b>Species:</b> European hake <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<b>HKE</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11
GUH	1.40

<b>Species:</b> White hake <i>Urophycis tenuis</i>	<b>HKW</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Horse mackerel <i>Trachurus spp</i>	<b>JAX</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.08

<b>Species:</b> Antarctic krill <i>Euphausia superba</i>	<b>KRI</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Lemon sole <i>Microstomus kitt</i>	<b>LEM</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.05

<b>Species:</b> Megrims <i>Lepidorhombus spp</i>	<b>LEZ</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.06
FIL	2.50

<b>Species:</b> Unicorn icefish <i>Channichthys rhinoceratus</i>	<b>LIC</b>
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WHL	1.00
<b>Species: Ling</b> <i>Molva molva</i>	<b>LIN</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.14
GUH	1.32
FIL	2.64
<b>Species: Atlantic mackerel</b> <i>Scomber scombrus</i>	<b>MAC</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.09
<b>Species: Norway lobster</b> <i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	<b>NEP</b>
WHL	1.00
TAL	3.00
<b>Species: Humped rockcod</b> <i>Notothenia gibberifrons</i>	<b>NOG</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: Norway pout</b> <i>Trisopterus esmarkii</i>	<b>NOP</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: Marbled rockcod</b> <i>Notothenia rossii</i>	<b>NOR</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: Orange roughy</b> <i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>	<b>ORY</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: Pacific snow crab</b> <i>Chionoecetes spp</i>	<b>PCR</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: White shrimps</b> <i>Penaeus spp</i>	<b>PEN</b>
WHL	1.00
<b>Species: European plaice</b> <i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	<b>PLE</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.05
GUH	1.39
FIL	2.40

<b>Species:</b> Saithe <i>Pollachius virens</i>	<b>POK</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.19

<b>Species:</b> Pollack <i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	<b>POL</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.17

<b>Species:</b> Northern prawn <i>Pandalus borealis</i>	<b>PRA</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Atlantic redfishes <i>Sebastes spp</i>	<b>RED</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.19

<b>Species:</b> Rough-head grenadier <i>Macrourus berglax</i>	<b>RHG</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Roundnose grenadier <i>Coryphaenoides rupestris</i>	<b>RNG</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11
GUH	1.92
GHT	3.20

<b>Species:</b> Sandeels <i>Ammodytes spp</i>	<b>SAN</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Blackspot seabream <i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	<b>SBR</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11

<b>Species:</b> Rough longnose dogfish <i>Deania histricosa</i>	<b>SDH</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Arrowhead dogfish <i>Deania profundorum</i>	<b>SDU</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> South Georgia icefish	<b>SGI</b>
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<i>Pseudochaenichthys georgianus</i>	
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Common sole <i>Solea solea</i>	<b>SOL</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.04

<b>Species:</b> European sprat <i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	<b>SPR</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Northern squid <i>Illex illecebrosus</i>	<b>SQI</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Squid <i>Martialia hyadesi</i>	<b>SQS</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Skates <i>Rajidae</i>	<b>SRX</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.13
WNG	2.09

<b>Species:</b> Swordfish <i>Xiphias gladius</i>	<b>SWO</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.11
GUH	1.31

<b>Species:</b> Patagonian toothfish <i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	<b>TOP</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Turbot <i>Psetta maxima</i>	<b>TUR</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.09

<b>Species:</b> Tusk <i>Brosme brosme</i>	<b>USK</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.14

<b>Species:</b> Blue whiting <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	<b>WHB</b>
WHL	1.00

GUT	1.15
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<b>Species:</b> Whiting <i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	<b>WHG</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.18

<b>Species:</b> Atlantic white marlin <i>Tetrapturus albidus</i>	<b>WHM</b>
WHL	1.00

<b>Species:</b> Witch flounder <i>Glyptocephalus cynoglossus</i>	<b>WIT</b>
WHL	1.00
GUT	1.06

<b>Species:</b> Yellowtail flounder <i>Limanda ferruginea</i>	<b>YEL</b>
WHL	1.00

**ANNEX III**

**Fresh salted Community conversion factors**

<b>Species: Ling</b> <i>Molva molva</i>	<b>LIN</b>
SGT	2.80