

Fishery resources: recovery of cod stocks, long-term plan

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The Council held an exchange of views on the proposed regulation aimed at strengthening a recovery plan for cod stocks. It requested the permanent representatives committee to oversee detailed examination of the text.

The recovery plan, established in 2004 under regulation (EC) No 423/2004, is aimed at ensuring the reconstitution of cod stocks within a ten-year period to precautionary levels advised by scientists.

The proposal, approved by the Commission on 2 April, is intended to improve several aspects of the plan, given that cod stocks remain under severe pressure.

The main proposed changes are as follows:

- revision of the plan's long-term objectives, so as to take account of the effects of global warming on ocean conditions;
- inclusion of an objective on fishing mortality;
- simplified and more efficient implementation of a management system to regulate fishing effort;
- a modulated approach for the adjustment of fishing opportunities where recovery is already achieved for a given stock;
- measures to reduce cod discards and to encourage fishermen to engage in cod-avoidance programmes;
- inclusion of the Celtic Sea in the recovery plan.