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

2008/0063(CNS) - 18/12/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a recovery plan for four particular cod stocks.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 establishing a long-term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting those stocks and repealing Regulation (EC) No 423/2004.

CONTENT: the Council adopted this Regulation revising the long-term plan for cod (Gadhus morua) stocks established in 2004. This Regulation establishes a plan for four cod stocks corresponding to the following geographical areas:

a) the Kattegat;

b) the North Sea, the Skagerrak and the eastern Channel;

c) the west of Scotland;

d) the Irish Sea.

The Regulation updates some measures on the basis of the most recent advice from the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), particularly:

**Setting the fishing mortality per fishery** at 0.4 for all the stocks concerned, but subject to a review clause;

**The Total Allowable Catches (TAC) for the Kattegat, the west of Scotland and the Irish Sea** are set by the Council each year on the basis of the limit values set out in the text. These concern the levels in tonnes of the minimum spawning biomass and the level in tonnes of the precautionary spawning biomass:

- if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be below the minimum spawning biomass level established in the text, the fishing mortality rate shall be reduced by 25% in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year;
- if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be below the precautionary spawning biomass level set out in the text and above or equal to the minimum spawning biomass level, the fishing mortality rate will be reduced by 15 % in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year; and
- if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be above or equal to the precautionary spawning biomass level set out in the text, the fishing mortality rate will be reduced by 10% in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year.

Initially, **the TAC for the North Sea, Skagerrak and Eastern Channel** will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality which is a fraction of the estimate of fishing mortality on appropriate age groups in 2008 as follows: 75% for the TACs in 2009, 65% for the TACs in 2010, and applying successive decrements of 10% for the following years. Subsequently, if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year prior to the year of application of the TACs is:

- above the precautionary spawning biomass level, the TAC will correspond to a fishing mortality rate of 0.4 on appropriate age groups;
- between the minimum spawning biomass level and the precautionary spawning biomass level, the TACs will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality rate on appropriate age groups equal to the following formula: (a) 0.4 – (0.2 (Precautionary spawning biomass level – spawning biomass)/ (Precautionary spawning biomass level – minimum spawning biomass level)); (b) at or below the limit spawning biomass level, the TAC will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality rate of 0.2 on appropriate age groups.

In addition:

- the annual variation in the TAC will not exceed 20% of the TAC for the previous year;
- the fishing effort limitation will be expressed in ceilings in kW -days by effort group, that is to say by types of fishing gear. The ceilings are to be set by the Council each year.

The Commission will, on the basis of advice from STECF and after consultation of the relevant Regional Advisory Council, evaluate the impact of the management measures on the cod stocks concerned and the fisheries on those stocks, at the latest in the third year of application of the Regulation and then each third successive year and, where appropriate, propose relevant measures to amend it.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 24/12/2008.