

Multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks

2014/0285(COD) - 28/04/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted **amendments** on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007.

The matter was **referred back to the committee responsible for reconsideration**. The vote has been postponed.

Scope: the Commission proposal provides for the plan to also apply to plaice, flounder, turbot and brill (flat fish) in the Union waters of the Baltic Sea caught when fishing for the stocks concerned (that is, cod, herring and sprat).

Parliament seeks to shift the importance from flatfish to the main species covered. Therefore, it is suggested that the regulation provides, in addition, **technical measures relating to by-catches of plaice, flounder, turbot and brill**, which apply when fishing activities targeting the stocks concerned.

The technical conservation measures relating to plaice, flounder, turbot and brill may be adopted by **delegated acts including the participation of the European Parliament and the consultation committees concerned**. The Commission shall, in consultation with the Member States concerned, analyse the impact of the delegated acts one year after their adoption, and every year thereafter.

Plan objectives: the plan shall ensure the achievement of the objectives of the common fisheries policy (CFP), in particular:

- **restoring and maintaining the stocks** concerned above biomass levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield;
- contributing to the **conservation of the stocks** of plaice, brill, flounder and turbot through management of by-catches, in line with the precautionary approach;
- contributing to the **elimination of discards**, taking into account the best available scientific advice, by avoiding and reducing unwanted catches.

Coherence with Union environmental legislation: Members demanded that the plan apply the **ecosystem-based approach** to fisheries management. In order to ensure that negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem are minimised, the plan shall contribute to achievement of the objectives of, the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) so as to achieve good environmental status by 2020.

Objectives targeted: the fishing mortality target shall take into account the **most recent scientific advice** and shall, where possible, be achieved by **2015 and, on a progressive, incremental basis, by 2020 at the latest**, and shall be maintained thereafter for the stocks concerned.

Members suggested that values for FMSY (fishing mortality consistent with achieving maximum sustainable yield) shall be taken from the latest reliable scientific advice available and Fishing mortality (F) should aim at $0.8 \times \text{FMSY}$.

Fishing opportunities shall be set in such a way as to ensure that there is less than a 5% probability that they are in excess of the F-MSY values.

Moreover, this Regulation shall provide for the temporary cessation of fishing activities as defined in Regulation (EU) 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), with financial support being provided under that Regulation.

Minimum spawning biomass level: when the spawning biomass of any of the stocks concerned for a certain year is below the minimum spawning biomass levels set out in the Regulation, appropriate remedial measures shall be adopted to ensure that the stocks concerned return to levels above those capable of producing maximum sustainable yield (MSY) as soon as possible.

Technical measures: Members requested that during the cod spawning season, pelagic fishing using stationary gear with a mesh size of less than 110 mm, or 120 mm in the case of outrigger gear, shall be prohibited.

Specific measures: the resolution indicated that any fishing activity should be prohibited from 1 May to 31 October within the areas enclosed by rhumb lines successively connecting certain following positions noted in the amended regulation.

Regional cooperation: Parliament considered that the rules should take account of the principle of regionalisation outlined in Article 18 of the base CFP regulation PCP ([Regulation \(EU\) No 1380/2013](#)).

Any joint recommendations concerning the specific conservation measures or technical measures may be submitted by the Member States concerned, **after having consulted the regional advisory councils**. The Member States may also submit such recommendations **in the event of any abrupt change in the situation for any of the stocks covered by the plan**, if the measures recommended are deemed necessary or justified by scientific advice.

Any deviations by the Commission from the joint recommendations would be presented to the European Parliament and to the Council and should be capable of being scrutinised.

Review: three years after the entry into force of this Regulation, and every **five years** thereafter, the Commission shall evaluate the impact of this multiannual plan on the stocks covered by this Regulation and on the fisheries exploiting those stocks, in particular as regards the progress achieved towards restoring and maintaining fish stocks above levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield.