

Fishing mortality ranges and safeguard levels for certain herring stocks in the Baltic Sea

2017/0348(COD) - 18/12/2017 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to safeguard the full reproductive capacity of certain herring stocks in the Baltic Sea.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: following the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/1139](#) established a multiannual plan for cod, herring and sprat stocks in the Baltic Sea. The objective of the plan is to ensure that the exploitation of the stocks concerned restores and maintains populations of these stocks above the levels that achieve maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

The scientific evaluation of the Bothnian Sea herring stock and the Bothnian Bay herring stock conducted in 2017 by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) showed that those **two stocks are similar**. As a consequence, ICES combined the two stocks into one, changed the boundaries of its geographic distribution area and re-estimated the MSY fishing mortality ranges, as well as the relevant conservation reference points.

Regulation (EU) No 2016/1139 provides that where, on the basis of scientific advice, the Commission considers that the conservation reference points set out in Annex II to that Regulation no longer correctly express the objectives of the plan, those points, as a matter of urgency, may be submitted for the revision to the European Parliament and the Council.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to urgently amend Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 to ensure that the fishing opportunities for Gulf of Bothnia herring stocks are determined in accordance with the updated conservation reference points following the scientific evaluation carried out by ICES.