

Multiannual plan for fish stocks in the western waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks

2018/0074(COD) - 12/02/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 525 votes to 132, with 19 abstentions, a legislative resolutions on the the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for fish stocks in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 establishing a multiannual plan for the Baltic Sea, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007 and (EC) No 1300/2008.

The position of the European Parliament adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Objectives of the plan

The proposed multi-annual plan covers demersal stocks, including deep-sea stocks, in western waters and fisheries exploiting these stocks.

The plan should:

- contribute to the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), in particular by applying the precautionary approach to fisheries management, and aim to ensure that the exploitation of the living biological resources of the sea restores and maintains populations of exploited species above levels that achieve the maximum sustainable yield (MSY);
- contribute to ending discards, avoiding and reducing unwanted catches as much as possible and implementing the landing obligation for species subject to catch limits and to which the regulation applies;
- implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries management to ensure that the negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem, in particular on vulnerable habitats and protected species, are kept to a minimum.

The regulation should take into account the constraints linked to the size of artisanal and coastal fishing vessels in the outermost regions.

Under the amended text, the geographical scope of the plan would be based on the geographical distribution of stocks indicated in the most recent scientific advice on stocks issued in particular by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) or a similar independent scientific body recognised at Union or international level.

The proposed targeted objectives would be expressed in fishing mortality ranges based on the F_{MSY} . The F_{MSY} ranges under the plan would be requested in particular from ICES or a similar independent scientific body recognised at EU or international level.

Limitation of fluctuations in fishing opportunities for a stock

An advisory board could recommend to the Commission a management approach that aims to limit annual variations in fishing opportunities for a particular stock listed in the regulation. The Council should take these recommendations into account when setting fishing opportunities, provided that they comply with the targeted objectives and safeguard measures provided for in the plan.

Recreational fishing

Where recreational fishing mortality has a significant impact on a stock managed on the basis of MSY, the Council could set non-discriminatory limits for recreational fishermen based on transparent and objective criteria. Where appropriate, Member States should take the necessary and proportionate measures for monitoring and data collection in order to make a reliable estimate of the actual levels of recreational catches.

The landing obligation would not apply to recreational fishing,

The amended text also provides that the TACs for sole in the Western Channel (ICES Division 7e) under the plan would be subject to fishing effort limitations.

Regional cooperation

Member States with a direct interest in management in the northern western waters could submit common recommendations for the northern western waters and Member States with a common interest in management in the southern western waters could submit common recommendations for the southern western waters. These Member States could also jointly submit common recommendations for all these waters.