

Conservation of fishery resources: 15 years rebuilding plan for Greenland halibut in the waters of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation NAFO

2004/0229(CNS) - 07/10/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : the establishment of a rebuilding plan for Greenland halibut in the framework of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Regulation.

CONTENT : Since 1979, the European Union has been a Contracting Party to the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO). The EU is a major player in NAFO waters – holding 55% of the quota in these international waters. In June 2003, a scientific advisory committee gave warning that the Greenland halibut stock was in a critical condition - more so than had previously been thought. In order to avoid a complete collapse of these stock substantial reductions in the fishing effort would have to be made. In 2003, NAFO adopted a 15-year rebuilding plan for Greenland halibut in NAFO Sub-area 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO. The objective of this rebuilding plan is to attain a level of exploitable biomass of five years and older of 140 000 tonnes on average, allowing a stable yield over the long term for this stock.

The rebuilding plan foresees a progressive reduction of the TAC:

42 000 tonnes in 2003;

20 000 tonnes in 2004;

19 000 tonnes in 2005;

18 500 tonnes in 2006 and

16 000 tonnes in 2007.

The total allowable catch for subsequent years shall be established on the basis of the Scientific Council advice. The plan also foresees additional control measures to ensure the effectiveness of the plan. Although a Council Regulation 2287/2003 has been adopted, which fixes the fishing opportunities for 2004 it is now necessary to implement the rest of the Plan by way of a Council Regulation implementing multi-annual measures for Greenland halibut for the entire duration of the NAFO rebuilding plan.