

Conservation of fishery resources: stock of cod in the Baltic Sea, multi-annual plan

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The committee adopted the report by Zdzisaw Kazimierz CHMIELEWSKI (ALDE,PL) amending - under consultation procedure - the proposed regulation establishing a multi-annual plan for the cod stocks in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks. The amendments were aimed at maintaining an appropriate balance between the need to rebuild cod stocks and the need to maintain the basic conditions for fishing communities to continue fishing:

- the 10% reduction in fishing days proposed by the Commission in Article 8(3) should be brought down to 8%;
- a new article provided, by way of derogation from the rules for cod laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005, for the minimum landing size for cod in the Baltic Sea to be increased to 40cm, on the grounds that this would give the cod further opportunities to breed and thereby strengthen the stock;
- the permitted margin of tolerance in estimating quantities in kilograms of fish subject to a TAC (Total Allowable Catches) that are retained on board vessels should be 10% of the logbook figure instead of 8%, as proposed by the Commission. The committee also proposed a 10% margin for catches which are landed unsorted;
- the committee said that the provisions laid down in Article 17(2), applicable to a vessel which exits from Area A, B or Subdivision 28-32 (Area C) with more than 100kg of cod on board, were unnecessarily complicated and proposed instead that the vessel's master should immediately notify the appropriate fisheries inspectorate of the size of the catch in the Area the vessel has left;
- the cod weight limit in respect of which notification is required should be increased from 100 kg, as proposed by the Commission, to 300 kg;
- the Commission should evaluate the impact of the management measures on the cod stocks concerned and on the fisheries exploiting those stocks in the second year of the application of the proposed regulation and not in the third year, as originally proposed;
- a new article stipulated that the Commission should draft a report on the socio-economic impact of the regulation and in particular on employment and the economic situation of fisherman, shipowners and firms engaged in cod fishing. The report should be presented in the second year of application of the regulation and in each subsequent year.