

## SEAFISH

### BRUSSELS UPDATE

March 2014

EU COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES 24/03/2014

#### **FISHERIES**

**Management of sandeel** - establishment of a TAC for 2014 The Council reached an agreement on the establishment of a total allowable catch (TAC) for sandeel for 2014 in line with the scientific advice. In addition, following the conclusion of the EU Norway bilateral agreement and the arrangement between Coastal States (see point below), a higher TAC of blue whiting is also included in the same agreement (7916/14). This issue of sandeel is of particular importance for Denmark, which is the main stakeholder in the sandeel fisheries. Owing to the short-lived nature of this species, the fishing season for sandeel opens on 1 April. The scientific advice for this stock generally becomes available just before the beginning of the fishing season. This year the scientific advice for 2014 was published on 28 February, leaving very little time to prepare and adopt a specific decision. In December 2012, the Council invited the Commission to submit separate TAC proposals for each stock of short-lived species, including sandeel.

**Coastal States consultations on mackerel** - The Commission reported back to Council on the five-year arrangement for mackerel in the North East Atlantic, which was reached in London on 12 March between the EU, the Faroe Islands and Norway. Member States broadly welcomed the arrangement, which put an end to a period of four years without common Coastal State management of this mackerel stock. They also regretted that Iceland was not part of the arrangement. The arrangement, establishes a number of important principles, including a commitment to sustainable fisheries, a sharing between the parties, and a commitment to establish a new long-term management plan in 2014 following the advice of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice. Iceland is not part yet of this arrangement but the provisions of the arrangement make room for another Coastal State to join at a later stage.

Following the conclusion of this arrangement, an agreement was reached between the EU and the Faroe Islands on reciprocal exchanges of fishing opportunities in each other's waters for 2014. The new agreement involves the exchange of a number of important quotas, including cod, haddock, saithe and redfish for the EU, with Norway pout and blue whiting for the Faroe Islands. The parties have also agreed reciprocal access to each other's waters for mackerel and blue whiting. In addition, EU-Norway bilateral consultations have established reciprocal exchanges of fishing opportunities in each other's waters for 2014.

#### **ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING: Council adopted trade measures against 3 countries for illegal fishing**

The Council triggered a series of measures affecting the trade in fisheries products and other fisheries-related activities with Belize, Cambodia and Guinea in order to put a stop to commercial benefits stemming from illegal fishing activities. Ultimately, fisheries products caught by vessels from these countries will be banned from being imported into the EU ([6262/14](#)).

The adoption of the implementing decision establishing a list of non-cooperating third countries in fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing pursuant to regulation 1005/2008 is the first decision of this kind and follows a formal warning made in November 2012. This decision marks an intensification of the EU's fight against illegal fishing by identifying Belize, Cambodia and Guinea as non-cooperating third countries. Despite the EU working closely with the national authorities to set up fisheries management and effective control measures, the three countries have still not addressed structural problems and have failed to show real commitment to tackling the problem of illegal fishing. Fisheries products caught by vessels flying the three countries' flags will be banned from being imported into the EU. EU vessels will have to stop fishing in these waters. Other forms of cooperation, such as joint fishing operations or fisheries agreements with these countries, will no longer be possible.

The Spanish delegation informed the ministers about its concerns regarding the trade measures adopted by the Council in this session (see "Other items") in the context of fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing regulation. These measures would directly affect the trade in fisheries products and other fisheries-related activities with Belize, Cambodia and Guinea in order to put a stop to commercial benefits stemming from illegal fishing activities. Several Member States considered together with Spain that it was necessary to draw the attention of the Council on this issue and to request from the Commission that it takes the appropriate measures to obtain the maximum transparency, common collaboration and coherence in the application of IUU regulation. These countries noted in particular the distortion of competition between fishing fleet from Member States and third countries due to the implementation of those trade measures.

### ***INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES***

The Permanent Representatives Committee of the Council approved a compromise text provisionally agreed between the Presidency of the Council and the European Parliament on a draft regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. It thereby endorsed the agreement reached between the Presidency of the Council and representatives of the European Parliament on 5 March. The regulation lays down rules to prevent, minimise and mitigate the adverse impacts of the introduction and spread, both intentional and unintentional, of invasive alien species on biodiversity, the related ecosystem services, as well as other economic and social impacts. To this end, the Commission will adopt an open list of invasive alien species of Union concern, which will be regularly updated and reviewed at the latest every six years. Species on the list may not be intentionally brought into the territory of the EU, nor may they be kept, bred, transported to, from or within the Union, placed on the market, grown or released into the environment. The new regulation also addresses invasive alien species of regional concern and of member state concern. It allows member states to identify, from their national list of invasive alien species of member state concern, species native or non-native to the Union that require enhanced regional cooperation. Such regional cooperation will be facilitated by the Commission. The regulation also establishes a surveillance system for early detection and measures for rapid eradication. Furthermore, member states must provide for penalties if the regulation is not correctly applied. The regulation also provides for a system of authorisations and permits to allow certain activities based on invasive alien species. The Commission will assess the application of this regulation by 1 June 2021.

## **FOOD**

**Minutes of the DG SANCO Stakeholders Workshop on COOL for unprocessed foods, single ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50% of a food:** On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014 DG SANCO organised a workshop to discuss with the EU stakeholders about the feasibility of having the country of origin indicated in the label for frozen foods of animal origin.

**NIACIN:** EFSA has launched an open consultation on the draft scientific opinion on dietary reference values for niacin. This document proposes dietary reference values for niacin for adults, infants and children, pregnant and lactating women (Link [here](#))

## **TRADE**

**MEPs urge Thailand to address fishing industry forced labour:** As part of ongoing trade negotiations between the EU and Thailand, the European Parliament (EP) approved a resolution urging the latter to address human trafficking and forced labour issues in its fishing industry. The resolution, proposed by President of the European Parliament Fisheries Committee (PECH) Gabriel Mato MEP, highlights that: “The ILO and various NGOs have recently uncovered serious shortcomings with regard to social and labour conditions and respect for human rights in the Thai fishing industry.” Furthermore, the resolution calls for Thailand to “respect, promote and implement internationally recognised labour standards...including those on forced labour and child labour.” It also calls for Thailand to be required to cooperate in fighting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, citing the involvement of Thai-owned fishing vessels in IUU fishing in West Africa.

**Commissioner of Trade, Karel de Gucht attended the last meeting of the INTA Committee at the EP on 1<sup>st</sup> April.**

Here you can find his speech:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-270\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-270_en.htm)

Moreover he addressed some questions from the members of the INTA Committee; specifically he gave some tips about the following topics:

- The Commissioner plans to go to the EU Court of Justice before the end of his mandate to report the dominant position of the Council of EU on trade which is against the Lisbon Treaty.
- The revision of the agreement with Japan will be at the end of May or early June because the EC needs a report on the progress made so far.
- Concerning the CETA agreement the Commissioner recognized that EU and Canada are finalising the negotiations on tariff quotas.
- The Commissioner insisted that the negotiations with Myanmar are conditioned upon a greater democratic development in Myanmar, that means free elections in this country.
- Some MEPs mentioned the importance of a code of conduct for EU companies operating in the least developed countries as Myanmar, Bangladesh or Cambodia. De Gucht said that it's time to have an open dialogue with the EU companies.

## EU ACTIVITIES:

- TTIP: Officials from the European Union institutions will meet with their United States counterparts in Brussels on Wednesday March 26.
- EP Committee for Fisheries 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April.
- Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth. The Hague, Netherlands. 22/25 April

## LINKS:

- Minutes of the last meeting EP PECH Committee 17-18 February 2014: The Committee for Fisheries and Aquaculture met on February 25 2014. Please find the meeting agenda below and the summary record of the meeting [here](#). Among the items discussed we shall mention the following:
  - ✓ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, Rapporteur Raül Romeva i Rueda(Verts/ALE).
  - ✓ Fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Madagascar
  - ✓ Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and the financial contribution provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Seychelles
- DG MARE:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/newsroom/cf/mare/news.cfm?subweb=343&sub=1&lang=en](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/mare/news.cfm?subweb=343&sub=1&lang=en)

- EU Presidency

<http://gr2014.eu/>

- EFSA:

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/>

Events:

<http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/?siteLanguage=en>