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**PECHE 312**

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

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To: Delegations

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No. Cion doc.: 11813/16 PECHE 296 + ADD 1 - COM(2016) 545 final + Annex

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Subject: Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2017 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea

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Delegations will please find attached additional written comments by the Latvian delegation on the above-mentioned proposal.

**Latvia's additional comments on the Commission proposal  
for a Council Regulation fixing for 2017 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and  
groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea**

Latvia welcomes the ongoing discussions on the Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2017 the fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea. In addition to the previous commentaries Latvia would like to draw Commission's attention to the following issue.

Latvia invites the Commission to set the TAC for the Gulf of Riga herring in 2017 in accordance to the F range principles described in Baltic Sea multispecies multiannual plan Regulation 1139/2016 Article 4 paragraph 4. b) (justified by intra- or inter-species stock dynamics) and use the applicable range provided in the Annex I column B, corresponding to the fishing mortality  $MSY_{Fupper}=0.38$  (TAC 2017- 31121 t).

It should be stressed that the big increase of the stock size in the following years would be associated with slower growth and poorer feeding condition of herring, which in turn results in decrease of the medium weight. The forecast for development of herring stock in the Gulf of Riga indicated that the stock in the coming years will be around 80 thousand t. ICES in their forecast assumed that the 2015 generation will be of average productivity. But the recent joint Latvian-Estonian hydro-acoustic survey showed that the productivity of 2015 generation is above average, so there will be higher stock increase than planned. With the significant catch reduction recommended by ICES and also by the Commission the stock will rise even more than survey shows, and this will affect the growth of herring and the medium weight of age groups will decline. For relatively small sea area like the Gulf of Riga the food competition and negative stock dynamic tendencies will appear more rapidly. The data analysis show that there is already negative correlation ( $r=-0.75$ ) between SSB and average weight of herring in age groups 2-7.

