COMMISSION SERVICES NON-PAPER ON BILATERAL EU-UK CONSULTATIONS ON FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2022

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Bilateral EU-UK consultations on fishing opportunities for 2022

In accordance with the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), the Commission will, on behalf of the Union, engage in consultations with the UK on the setting of the fishing opportunities for 2022 and potentially intrinsically related provisions. This non-paper aims to complement the approach set out in the Commission non-paper of 18 October 2021, with additional stocks that only recently received scientific advice for 2022.

The EU position presented is based on the best available scientific advice and in accordance with the objectives of the common fisheries policy (Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013) and the applicable multiannual management plans for the stocks concerned.

The Commission seeks the views of the Council on the approach set out in this non-paper for the stocks concerned in view of the annual consultations for 2022.

The final decision on the fishing opportunities for the Union will be set out in a Commission proposal submitted to the Council, which has the ultimate competence to set fishing opportunities under Article 43(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Stocks with MSY advice

Megrim. The ICES advice for Rockall is 994 tonnes and for the North Sea and West of Scotland is 7,350 tonnes.

Nephrops North Sea. The ICES advice for this TAC consists of nine separate advice sheets for various functional fisheries management units. Five of them received precautionary advice for 2021 and 2022, whereas four received new MSY approach advice for 2022.

Nephrops Celtic Sea is a target stock under the WW MAP (Regulation (EU) 2019/472). The ICES advice for this TAC consists of MSY approach advice for seven functional units and precautionary advice for one functional unit for 2022. ICES advises two TAC increases, five TAC decreases and one with no change.
Nephrops in Porcupine bank is a target stock.

Celtic Sea whiting is a target stock under the WW MAP. Fishing pressure on the stock is above FMSY and the spawning-stock size is below MSY Blim. This stock is managed together with the 7d component of the North Sea whiting stock, in an overall TAC that covers divisions 7.b–c and 7.e–k. The North Sea component of the TAC is decided at trilateral level EU-UK-Norway, which is in a healthy state.

In line with the WW MAP, the Union adopted a delegated act on remedial measures, which needs to be discussed in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries. By means of Council Regulation (EU) 2021/924, the Council established specific remedial measures for cod and whiting in the Celtic sea and additional selectivity measures aiming to reduce gadoid bycatches in the Irish Sea and West of Scotland. Those measures apply until a delegated act is adopted introducing corresponding technical measures for the North Western Waters. Such a delegated act has been proposed following the joint recommendation submitted in 2021 by the concerned Member States.

Joint measures between the two parties have not yet been agreed. Without an agreement between the EU and the UK on technical measures, in particular for those measures related to fish stocks caught in mixed fisheries in the North Western Waters, Union technical measures remain necessary. Until the agreement of the parties on common measures, in the context of the Specialised Committee on Fisheries, as soon as the EU remedial measures will be applicable within Union waters, these will be applicable in respect of both EU and UK vessels. These measures will be notified to the UK in accordance with Article 496 of the TCA.

Stocks with precautionary advice

Anglerfish North Sea and West of Scotland: The ICES precautionary advice is for a total of 14 116 tonnes for both TACs.

Boarfish. ICES provides a biennial precautionary advice for 2022 and 2023.
European eel. The recently released ICES advice has changed compared to previous years. The recent advice states that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catch in all habitats in 2022. This applies to both recreational and commercial catches, and includes glass eels for restocking and aquaculture. All other anthropogenic mortalities should be minimised and eliminated where possible.