NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2019 and 2020 the fishing opportunities for Union fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks

Delegations will find attached written comments by the Danish delegation on the above-mentioned document.
Preliminary comments from the Danish delegation on Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2019 and 2020 the fishing opportunities for Union fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks COM(2018) 676 final

The Danish delegation welcomes the Commission’s proposal fixing for 2019 and 2020 the fishing opportunities for Union fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks.

Please note that Denmark has a general scrutiny reservation and a parliamentary scrutiny reservation.

Roundnose Grenadier in Union and international waters of 3

We think that the TAC for Roundnose Grenadier in Union and international waters should be removed. A removal of the TAC would ensure that Roundnose Grenadier does not become a choke species in the TAC area.

The Commission has proposed such an approach for Roundnose Grenadier in areas 1, 2 and 4. This is done according to ICES’ advice that it is possible to remove the TAC for Roundnose Grenadier in ICES subareas 1, 2 and 4 due to the fact that Roundnose Grenadier does not occur to any significant level in those areas.

On Roundnose Grenadier in area 3 ICES advices that the TAC for Roundnose Grenadier in subarea 3a should be maintained due to very large catches historically because of directed effort. Directed fisheries for Roundnose Grenadier occurred in area 3a until 2007. The fisheries was solely carried out in Norwegian waters. Therefore, the historical directed fishery referred to by ICES did not take place in the TAC area covered by the Regulation. Catches within the TAC area were very limited. The precondition for ICES’ advice for maintaining the TAC for Roundnose Grenadier in the TAC area is therefore misleading.
It may be added that there is no international waters in TAC area 3 contrary to the specification regarding Roundnose Grenadier in the annex of the proposal.

Even though it is highly unlikely that directed effort would develop regarding Roundnose Grenadier in Union waters of TAC area 3, we furthermore suggest that a safeguard mechanism is inserted in the Deep-sea TAC regulation to avoid such a potential situation. The following paragraph could be inserted as a paragraph 2 in Article 7 of the Deep-sea TAC regulation:

2. “It shall be prohibited for Union fishing vessels to fish directly for Roundnose Grenadier in Union and international waters of ICES subareas 1-4.”

This would also lead to a horizontal approach with regard to the protection of Roundnose Grenadier in the broader TAC-area in the North Sea region. Please find attached an annex containing the historical landings of Roundnose Grenadier in ICES subarea 3.

If the TAC is maintained, it is the view of the Danish delegation that a roll-over of the TAC for Roundnose Grenadier in ICES subarea 3 would be appropriate. This is because ICES does not provide any new information about the stock warranting a different TAC setting. In any case, a precautionary approach to the TAC setting of Roundnose Grenadier in ICES subarea 3 should not exceed minus 20 percent.
Danish catches of Roundnose Grenadier (tonnes, live weight) in ICES subarea 3

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Source: Danish Fisheries Agency, Statistics database on landings