



**REPORT OF DISCUSSION IN THE COUNCIL WORKING PARTY REGARDING THE PROPOSAL FOR
FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CERTAIN FISH STOCKS AND GROUPS OF FISH STOCKS
(ATLANTIC) FOR 2017**

Meeting of 23 November 2016

Brussels,
24/11/2016
C.2

KEY OUTCOMES

- **COM presented three non-papers: on top-ups, on snow crab and on sea bass in the Bay of Biscay.**
- **MS asked for the calculation sheets for top-ups figures to be sent as soon as possible. MS were surprised that in some cases the top-up percentages were lower than last year (it is due to more recent discard estimates).**
- **FR and ES did not welcome the non-paper on sea bass and asked to withdraw it. The Council expressed that the non-paper was causing political difficulties and wanted technical clarifications.**

1. Examination of the 3rd non-paper on top-ups

COM presented the method used for the calculations of top-ups, and the given top-ups stock by stock.

- **General comments on the calculation method**

FR, DK, UK, ES, BE, SE and NL requested to have the calculation sheets used by the COM in order to calculate the proposed top-ups. COM would be sending those calculation sheets to MS as soon as possible.

COM clarified that more top-ups figures would be issued for the shared stocks after the agreement with Norway. Answering the UK question on how high survivability exemptions were taken into account, COM clarified that no top-ups were given when high survivability exemption was applicable, as discarding would be allowed to continue.

SE, DE and DK asked whether different top-up percentages could be applied in different sub-zones of the same stock.

- **Examination of the amendments to recitals, Articles and Annex IC**

No comments.

- **Examination of the amendments to apply top-ups to TACs in Annex IA**

The comments made by each member state are provided in the table below.

| Common name | TAC Unit | Code | TAC 2016 | 2017 Top-ups in tonnes | TAC 2017 (Proposal with top-ups) | TAC change: 2016 - 2017 (Proposal) | MS comments |
|-----------------------|--|---|----------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Haddock | Union and int. waters of VIb, XII and XIV | HAD/6B1214 | 3225 | 141 | 4271 | 32.4% | DE thought that their share should be 32t with top-ups (31t without top-ups), instead of 11t as in the non-paper. COM will explain the figure. |
| Hake (overall N. TAC) | IIIa IIa and IV Vb, VI, VII, XII and XIV VIIIabde | HKE/3A/BCD HKE/2AC4-C HKE/571214 HKE/8ABDE | 108784 | n/a n/a 445 2971 | 115281 | 6.5% | On HKE/571214 ES asked for the proposed top-up figure needs to be increased. ES expressed the need to take account of the ES data on the number of vessels covered sent to the COM 3 months ago. FR asked for the calculation sheet and for some clarification on the method used. On HKE/8ABDE ES pointed out that the proposed top-up figure is a huge drop from last year's figure. The decrease of the top-up figure would send a bad signal to the fishing sector. FR asked to the COM how many stocks had been re-evaluated for the top-up calculation. COM explained that top-up calculations are based on discards figures so that implies a yearly re-evaluation of all stocks. |
| Hake | VIIIc, IX and X; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1 | HKE/8C3411 | 10674 | 313 | 7151 | -33% | ES pointed out that 313t as a top-up is not enough as hake southern stock is recovering, mortality has dropped, and that ES fleets has been decreasing over time. This stock has a big socio-economic impact on Cantabria's fleet. ES explained that the fishing sector wants to see results after the major sacrifices had been made. |
| Plaice | Kattegat | PLE/03AS | 2347 | 458 | 2523 | 7.5% | DK and SE wanted to have the calculation sheet for this stock as they came up with a different figure than the one proposed by the COM. |
| Common sole | VIIId | SOL/07D | 3258 | 98 | 2355 | -27.7% | FR stated that there is a big fall in the top-up figure from last year to this year, and would like to know the reason. BE placed a reservation. It is an important stock for them and BE does not understand the figure proposed. |
| Common sole | VIIIfg | SOL/7FG | 779 | 3 | 785 | 0.8% | BE asked why there is such a low top-up for this stock. |

2. Examination of the 4th non-paper on snow crab

COM presented the 4th non-paper.

PL supported the non-paper and will send their written comments. **UK** and **LV** placed a scrutiny reservation, especially on the wording used in the non-paper.

On the explanatory note, **ES** asked for flexibility with the wording used in the non-paper. **ES** asked to use a term such as "snow crab seems to be a sedentary species" instead of "snow crab is a sedentary species". **COM** answered that there is no doubt that snow crab is sedentary so such wording could not be accepted.

LT supported the non-paper and asked for some clarifications of sentences used in the non-paper.

On the amendments to the annexes, **ES** and **LV** asked for the column "maximum number of vessels present at any time" to be deleted. **COM** explained that the column should not be seen as a restriction on number of vessels.

LV asked for their allocation of fishing authorisations to be 11 vessels instead of 8 as currently proposed.

3. Examination of the 5th non-paper on sea bass

COM presented the 5th non-paper, and that this non-paper should be seen as a supporting proposal to **FR** national measures.

FR, **ES** and **BE** expressed their concerns of the arrival of such a non-paper 3 weeks before the FO council.

FR was disappointed and saw it as breaking mutual trust. It was surprised about the measures and absence of consultations. It could not understand reasons for such a proposal, which is neither justified legally nor technically. The situation was different from the Northern stock. **FR** pointed out that the political context was difficult and it would be hard to defend these measures against the **FR** fishing sector. **FR** underlined that a limit of 10 sea bass per month is uncontrollable. **FR** felt that the **COM** did not take into account the comments made by the **MS** previously. **FR** asked the **COM** to withdraw the non-paper.

ES suggested withdrawing the non-paper or, at least, spending more time on this subject before making a decision. **BE** also asked for more time to look into this subject in more detail.

COM clarified that the data used is the one that the member states provided on sea bass in the Bay of Biscay (number of vessels, gear type, etc.), and data from **FIDES**. **COM** explained that it will be as transparent as possible, and will send this data to **FR**.