

Multi-annual plan for the stock of herring distributed to the west of Scotland and the fisheries exploiting that stock

2008/0091(CNS) - 06/05/2008 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: establishing a multi-annual plan for the stock of herring distributed to the West of Scotland and the fisheries exploiting that stock.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

CONTENT: recent scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) indicates that the stock of herring (*Clupea harengus*) in the seas to the West of Scotland is slightly overexploited with respect to maximum sustainable yield. Advice from scientific agencies, supported by advice from stakeholders, indicates that better management would result from setting total allowable catches in the framework of a multi-annual plan.

The Commission therefore proposes the creation of a multi-annual plan with the objective of ensuring that the stock will be exploited on the basis of maximum sustainable yield and under sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions.

This objective will be attained by:

- maintaining the fishing mortality rate at 0.25 per year on appropriate age-groups when the spawning stock is above 75 000 tonnes;
- maintaining the fishing mortality rate at no more than 0.2 per year on appropriate age-groups when the spawning stock is below 75 000 tonnes but above 50 000 tonnes;
- providing for the closure of the fishery in the event that the spawning stock should fall below 50 000 tonnes.

To ensure stability in the fishing possibilities, it is appropriate to limit the variation in the TACs from one year to the next when the size of the stock is above 75 000 tonnes.

A revision clause is included in the proposal to ensure that the target fishing mortality rates can be amended if appropriate in the light of new scientific information and advice.

The multi-annual plan contains provisions for a review every four years to verify the performance and appropriateness of the management arrangements.