

# **Fisheries resources: recovery of the sole stocks in the Western Channel and the Bay of Biscay**

2003/0327(CNS) - 23/02/2006 - Final act

**PURPOSE** : to establish a multi-annual plan for the sustainable exploitation of the stock of sole in the Bay of Biscay.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT** : Council Regulation 388/2006/EC.

**CONTENT** : the Council adopted a Regulation establishing a multi-annual plan for the sustainable exploitation of the stock of sole in the Bay of Biscay, following a political agreement reached at the Council meeting on 20-22 December 2005.

The objective of the plan is to bring the spawning stock biomass of Bay of Biscay sole above the precautionary level of 13 000 tones in 2008 by gradually reducing the fishing mortality rate on the stock. After this date the Council will decide on a long-term target fishing mortality rate and a rate of reduction in the fishing mortality rate. Each year the Council will decide on a total allowable catch (TAC) for the following year for Bay of Biscay sole.

In order to limit fishing effort, measured as the sum of the engine power in kilowatt and the number of days fishing in the area, the Regulation provides for: either a special sole fishing permit in the Bay of Biscay which will be granted to vessels fishing more than 2 000 kg of sole by the Member States, or for a Member State whose quota for sole in this area is less than 10% of the TAC, the level of fishing effort must not exceed the reference level of the fishing effort in 2006.

**ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 27/03/2006.