Procedure file

Basic information

CNS - Consultation procedure Regulation	2003/0327(CNS)	Procedure completed
Fisheries resources: recovery of the sole stocks in the Western Channel and the Bay of Biscay Amended by 2008/0216(CNS) Repealed by 2018/0074(COD) Subject 3.15.01 Fish stocks, conservation of fishery resources		

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PECH Fisheries		28/07/2004
		ALDE MORILLON Philippe	
	Former committee responsible		
	PECH Fisheries		20/01/2004
		PPE-DE STEVENSON Struan	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	Former committee for opinion		
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport	2710	23/02/2006
	Agriculture and Fisheries	2702	20/12/2005
	Agriculture and Fisheries	2611	18/10/2004
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Maritime Affairs and Fisheries		

Key events

23/12/2003	Legislative proposal published	COM(2003)0819	Summary
09/02/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/09/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/10/2004	Debate in Council	2611	Summary

15/03/2005	Vote in committee		
16/03/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A6-0050/2005	
14/04/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/04/2005	Debate in Parliament		
14/04/2005	Decision by Parliament	T6-0128/2005	Summary
23/02/2006	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
23/02/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/03/2006	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2003/0327(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Amended by 2008/0216(CNS) Repealed by 2018/0074(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 037
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/5/20548; PECH/6/21134

Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal		COM(2003)0819	23/12/2003	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2003)1480	23/12/2003	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A6-0050/2005	16/03/2005	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T6-0128/2005 OJ C 033 09.02.2006, p. 0495-0540 E	14/04/2005	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2005)2124	19/05/2005	EC	

Additional information

European Commission	EUR-Lex

Final act

Regulation 2006/388
OJ L 065 07.03.2006, p. 0001-0004 Summary

Regulation 2007/509 Summary

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

PURPOSE : to establish measures for the recovery of sole stocks in the Western Channel and the Bay of Biscay. PROPOSED ACT : Council Regulation. CONTENT : there are two sole stocks covered by this proposal, namely the stock in the western Channel (ICES Division VIIe) and the stock in the Bay of Biscay (ICES Divisions VIII a and b). The objective of this recovery plan is to ensure the recovery of the stocks to within safe biological limits within a time frame of five to ten years. The proposal is written in five chapters, and the key details are as follows: - the proposal sets out for each sole stock what the maximum fishing mortality rate should be to ensure their recovery within the time frame. Total allowable catches will then be calculated based on these; - the Bay of Biscay stock is probably around 10000 tonnes, having declined by approximately one third since 1995. Fishing mortality has been above Flim, the fishing mortality at which it is thought that the stock could collapse, since 1997. The western Channel stock has been declining since 1980 and is now estimated to be at its historically lowest level, probably around 2000 tonnes. Fishing mortality has been mostly above Flim since 1982. Scientists have indicated that while the estimated relative developments in stock sizes are very accurate the estimates of the absolute sizes of the stocks are very uncertain. Therefore, biomass reference points should not be used as targets for recovery. The recovery targets should instead be expressed in terms of fishing mortality rates. The fishing mortality reference point F0.1, which is based on yield-per-recruit criteria and therefore robust to changes in absolute estimates of stock size, has been chosen as the recovery limit. F0.1 is sufficiently low to give, if achieved, a high probability of recovery; - the target mortality rates will be achieved by reducing the fishing mortality rates gradually over time and setting TACs consistent with them such that recovery is likely to be achieved within the same time scale as that proposed for the cod recovery plans, namely around five to ten years. In any case, F0.1 is a limit, not a target. This means that recovery can be achieved, and the recovery plan replaced by a management plan, when the stocks are considered to be within safe biological limits, regardless of whether the limit of F0.1 has been reached; - the long term yield per recruit when fishing at F0.1 is close to the maximum yield, and although the reduction in the fishing mortality towards F0.1 will result in a short term decline in yield, the yield is expected to increase in the medium to long term; - the proposal also elaborates details of the principle that the largest annual change, upwards or downwards, in any TAC from one year to the next should not be greater than 15% after the first year of implementation of a recovery plan. In the first year, these limits are increased to 25% to allow for a possible higher first recovery step; - the draft regulation gives details of the management of a fishing effort limitation scheme - i.e. restricting the time that the fishing vessels concerned may spend fishing to correspond with the TAC's. The system is the same as proposed in the cod recovery plan, giving flexibility to Member States in management and allocation of fishing effort to individual fishing vessels.These sole stocks are, however, also found within the area covered by the proposal on the recovery of northern hake and the effort limitation measures proposed for the hake may therefore contribute to sole recovery. To avoid making the management systems too complicated, the effort management for sole will include only those vessels fishing for sole and having landed more sole than hake. Vessels having landed more hake than sole will be covered by the effort scheme for hake. The system will work as follows: - first, the overall fishing effort over a three-year reference period of all vessels catching sole not covered by the northern hake plan is calculated; - then the reduction in fishing effort, relative to the effort in the reference period, required to match the selected TAC is calculated and allocated to Member States in proportion to each Member State's share of the total landings of sole and taking into account differences in catchability. Member States will distribute these effort limits, expressed in kilowatt-days, within - but not between - the geographical areas occupied by the respective sole stocks. They will be fully transferable between the vessels and usable at any time throughout the year; - there are measures for improved monitoring, inspection and control for the vessels covered by the effort management system. These measures include details of prior notification, the requirement to land sole in designated ports and stowage and transport conditions. Technical conservation measures have not been included in this regulation.?

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

The over fishing of sole in the Western Channel and in the Bay of Biscay has inevitably left existing stocks critically low. To such an extent that the scientific community is warning of a total collapse of stock if urgent action is not taken. In recent years the EU has taken various measures to try and protect its stock of cod. Now, the Commission is seeking to introduce similar measures to protect its sole stock in the Western Channel and the Bay of Biscay. It is hoped that dramatic measures will ensure safe biological levels within five to ten years. The proposed instruments for combating the decline in sole stock are similar to those used under the cod recovery plan, namely reduced fishing possibilities, limits on fishing effort and specific control measures. However, one important distinction is that, unlike the cod recovery plan, the targets set in the latest plans are expressed not in terms of the level of adult fish in the stock (biomass) but rather in terms of fishing mortality rates - or in other words the proportion of fish removed by fishing. The Commission's Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries or STEFC will decide when sole has reached a safe biological limit to allow for a resumption of fishing in the Western Channel and Bay of Biscay. The EU is offering aid to those Member States and those fishing communities most in need of it. Recovery plans will be financed from the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG).?

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

The Council held a policy debate on the basis of a questionnaire drawn up by the Presidency on two proposals establishing measures for the recovery of Southern Hake and Norway lobster stocks in the Cantabrian Sea and Western Iberian peninsula, and for the recovery of sole stocks in the Western Channel and Bay of Biscay. The Council instructed Coreper to continue its work on this matter.

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

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Philippe MORILLON (ALDE, FR) making some amendments to the Commission?s proposal:

- the word "recovery" is replaced by "management" in the title of the legislation and through most of the text;

- the management plan shall aim to maintain the sole stocks concerned within safe biological limits.

This replaces the Commission?s text which speaks of rebuilding the sole stocks concerned to within safe biological limits;

- Parliament has made several amendments to TAC values;

- Commission limits of 50kg are replaced with 100kg;

- the Annex is deleted.

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

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.

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

PURPOSE: to establish a multi-annual plan for the sustainable exploitation of the stock of sole in the Western Channel.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation (EC) No 509/2007.

CONTENT: this Regulation sets up a method for the establishment of the annual total allowable catches (TACs) and a system whereby fishing efforts on sole stocks are restricted to levels at which the TACs are unlikely to be exceeded. It also fixes an objective of 0.27 of fishing mortality rate on appropriate age-groups of sole, in accordance with the advice provided by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, with a view to bringing the Western Channel sole stock within safe biological limits.

Control measures in addition to those laid down in Council Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 of establishing a control system applicable to the common fisheries policy, need to be included in order to ensure compliance with the measures laid down in this Regulation.

During the first stage in the years 2007, 2008 and 2009, the multi-annual plan shall be deemed to be a recovery plan and subsequently a management plan within the meaning of Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 31/05/2007.