

\$(summary.referenceAndDate) - \${summary.subTitle}

The Council adopted a second general approach on the proposal for a Regulation on the common fisheries policy (CFP) replacing the basic provisions of the CFP as part of the CFP reform package:

This political agreement on the CFP basic provisions is a completion of the first partial general approach agreed by the Council in June 2012. It specifies the Council position on the implementation of the discards ban and the possibility of by-catch quotas.

Its main aspects are as follows:

Dates for implementing the discard ban have been set:

- from 1 January 2014 for pelagic fish;
- from 1 January 2015 for species defining the fisheries in the Baltic (and until 2018 for other species);
- from 1 January 2016 for species defining the fisheries in the North Sea, the North Western waters and the South Western waters (and until 2019 for other species);
- from 1 January 2017 for species defining the fisheries in the Mediterranean, in the Black Sea and in all EU waters and non-EU waters (and until 2019 for other species).

Management tools: management tools have been introduced to help the fishing industry to adapt to the obligation to land all catches. The level proposed for de minimis exemptions through management plans should reach 7% in the final phase with a degressive rate (9% the first two years; 8% the two following years). These exemptions apply under strict conditions, in particular that all such catches should be fully recorded.

Use of catches for charitable purposes: a possibility also has been introduced of using for charitable purposes catches of at least the minimum conservation size landed in the framework of the discard ban.

Environmental obligations: the discussions also addressed definitions and responsibilities for implementing environmental obligations that impact on fishing activities.

The European Parliament voted on its position at first reading for this proposal on 6 February 2013. On the basis of the general approach reached in the Council, the discussions between Parliament and the Council will begin shortly.