



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 23 June 2010

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NOTE

From: Irish delegation
To: Council

Subject: Mackerel management negotiations with Iceland and Faroe Islands - current state
of play and possible options
– Request by the Irish delegation

Delegations will find attached a document submitted by the Irish delegation, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 29 June 2010.

Mackerel management negotiations with Iceland and the Faroe islands – current state of play and possible options

Current State of play:

Since 2008 Iceland has dramatically increased its levels of mackerel fishing claiming to have caught over 100,000 tonnes in 2008 and 2009 and declaring their intention to catch 130,000 tonnes in 2010. Prior to this very minor catches were recorded.

For 2010 the Faroe Islands for their own reasons have declined to agree to the normal Coastal States arrangements. They have now threatened to declare their own TAC for 2010 indicating a level of 15% (from 3.5%) around 90,000 tonnes.

In the absence of a Coastal States Agreement on Mackerel, the EU and Norway brokered a 10 year agreement on mackerel management arrangements on 26 January 2010. As the EU and Norway collectively have the main share of the Mackerel stock, they agreed an overall TAC figure of 572,000 tonnes based on scientific advice from ICES.

A series of meetings with Iceland and the Faroes on the management of Mackerel have taken place, the most recent in London in May 28th – 30th. At these discussions, Iceland have maintained their strong negotiating position seeking a substantial share of the TAC, while the Faroes declined to formally indicate their final intentions for the 2010 fishery.

Ireland's position:

Ireland commends the Commission on their efforts to bring about an acceptable resolution in what are very demanding and fraught circumstances. The challenge of formulating a unified approach with Norway, working with Iceland and the Faroese to encourage them to engage in realistic and pragmatic discussions, aligned to accommodating the at times differing Member States views cannot be underestimated. Ireland fully supports their efforts to date.

However we are now facing into the autumn negotiations for the 2011 fishery with the impasse unresolved.

The first priority of Member States must be on the long term health and sustainability of the stock, any procrastination on the matter could have devastating results, in the short, medium and long term.

Ireland wants this issue kept firmly to the front of the Commissions agenda, with a view to an early resolution that guarantees the stability of the stock which is now showing the benefit of prudent management in recent years.

In this, we urge the Commission to continue its efforts, encourage it to examine all options, and to bring this matter to a resolution.
