



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 10 July 2013
(OR. en)**

12122/13

PECHE 315

NOTE

From: Irish, United Kingdom, French and Spanish Delegations
To: Council
Subject: North East Atlantic Mackerel Management and Trade Measures

Delegations will find attached an information note received from the Irish, United Kingdom, French and Spanish Delegations on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 15 July 2013.

318th meeting of the COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

(Agriculture and Fisheries) – 15th July 2013

AOB Item “North East Atlantic Mackerel Management and Trade Measures”

Information Note from the Irish, United Kingdom and French Delegations

Background

- In 2013, Iceland and the Faroese have set autonomous quotas for mackerel amounting to 52% of the 2013 TAC. This compares with the situation in 2006, when the joint share of both countries in the mackerel catches was just over 5%.
- The North East Atlantic mackerel fishery, if fished within recommended levels, is worth approximately €1 billion. The value to the European Union as the largest shareholder is estimated to be over €600m.
- The mackerel fishery has been built up by the prudent management and husbandry of the traditional main Coastal States participants of the EU and Norway, with support from the Faroe Islands up to 2009.
- Iceland, who had no traditional dependency on this stock, have, since 2008, engaged in an unsustainable and irresponsible fishery on mackerel. Iceland has set an autonomous mackerel quota for 2013 of 123,000 tonnes or 22.7% of the science based 2013 TAC.
- The Faroese were a member of the traditional three party Coastal States management framework since 1999, but refused to take part since 2010 and have unilaterally increased their outtake. Faroe Islands has set an autonomous mackerel quota this year of 159,000 tonnes or 29.3% of the 2013 TAC.

- Since 2009 Iceland and the Faroe Islands have refused to enter into joint management and sharing arrangements with the EU and Norway.
- In addition, the Faroe Islands have now also broken the coastal states agreement on the sharing of the atlanto-scandian herring stock and set themselves a greatly increased quota for 2013. This demonstrates a disregard for proper international fisheries management and the coastal states process.
- In response to the unsustainable activities of Iceland and the Faroes, the EU has introduced legislation enabling the imposition of trade restrictions in cases where fishing nations engage in non-sustainable fishing practices on stocks of common interest with the EU in order to prevent that fish entering EU markets.

Ireland, the United Kingdom France and Spain

- acknowledge and support all the efforts made by Commissioner Damanaki to bring about an acceptable and balanced resolution.
- stress the need for Norway to mirror any restrictions placed by the EU on both parties so as to bring accumulated pressure to bear on Iceland and the Faroe Islands to modify their demands to levels which are fair and justifiable.
- welcome the fact that the internal Commission procedure to implement an instrument for trade measures in respect of the Faroe Islands in relation to atlanto-scandian herring has commenced.
- Note Commissioner Damanaki's recent discussion in Iceland and requests the Commissioner to report back on the outcome of these discussions.

- If these discussions were not fruitful, urge strong and decisive action by the Commission against both Iceland and the Faroes in respect of the unacceptable lack of meaningful engagement involving 5 years of irresponsible and unacceptable fishing against the mackerel stock by both countries. In this regard, Ireland, United Kingdom and France re-iterate the need for the Commissioner to now take the appropriate actions involving trade measures on mackerel in order to prevent unsustainably caught fish coming into the EU. This was discussed at the May Fisheries Council where it was agreed that such action was the appropriate follow up in the event of the unsuccessful discussion with the new Icelandic Fisheries Minister.
 - Would welcome an update on proposed actions and timeframe from the Commission.
-