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Cod plan: agreement between Council and Parliament

On 29 June 2016 the Council led by the Netherlands Presidency and the European Parliament reached a **political agreement** on a regulation amending the **long-term plan for cod stocks from 2008**, the so-called cod plan.

The agreed draft regulation **discontinues the effort regime**, recognising this is a main obstacle to introducing in full the landing obligation in the areas of the cod plan, and thereby granting more flexibility to fishermen. Furthermore in the agreed text the **rules on allowable catch limits** (TACs) are **largely simplified**, while the co-legislators await the Commission's proposal of a reform-based multiannual plan for the North Sea, which is expected to contain a chapter on specific targets and safeguards in this respect. Finally as regards the **landing obligation**, the Council and European Parliament underlined the importance of maintaining **selectivity and discard reduction measures** that were developed under the cod plan. Maintaining or further developing these measures should facilitate the phasing-in of the landing obligation in demersal fisheries which started in 2016.

The proposal for a new amended regulation establishing a long-term plan for cod stocks from 2008 was presented by the Commission in September 2012. The aim of the proposal was to amend the effort regime in the cod plan, modify the rules for setting TACs for data-poor stocks, and strengthen measures to address discards.

The European Parliament adopted a position at first reading on 11 June 2013 and a revised negotiating position on 7 June 2016 following the Court judgement on Joined Cases C 124/13 and C 125/13. On 22 June 2016 the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) gave a revised mandate to the Presidency to enter into negotiations with the European Parliament.

Next steps

The Coreper will be invited to endorse the agreement, while the European Parliament is expected to vote on the compromise text at a future meeting of its Fisheries committee (PECH), probably mid July. Further steps will then be the formal adoption of the Council's position at first reading, reflecting the political agreement, and Parliament's identical second reading position in autumn. The amendment is planned to be published in late autumn 2016, and to come into force at 1 January 2017.

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