



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



16171/08 (Presse 339)

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

2909th meeting of the Council

### **Agriculture and Fisheries**

Brussels, 28 November 2008

President

**Michel Barnier**

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries of France

# **P R E S S**

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16171/08 (Presse 339)

## Main results of the Council

*The Council noted the Presidency's conclusions on the future of the **Common Agricultural Policy after 2013**, which were submitted following the discussion at the informal meeting in Annecy (France, 23 September 2008).*

*The Council held a public debate on **food aid for the most deprived people in the Community**.*

*The Council adopted without debate a Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities in the **Baltic Sea** and for **deep-sea** stocks. It also adopted a Decision on the conclusion of an agreement between the European Community and **Australia** on trade in **wine**.*

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<sup>1</sup> Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.  
Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).  
Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

### **Belgium:**

Ms Sabine LARUELLE

Minister for SMEs, the Self-Employed, Agriculture and Science Policy

### **Bulgaria:**

Mr Valeri TSVETANOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food Supply

### **Czech Republic:**

Mr Petr GANDALOVIC

Minister for Agriculture

### **Denmark:**

Ms Eva Kjer HANSEN

Minister for Food

### **Germany:**

Mr Gert LINDEMANN

State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

### **Estonia:**

Mr Ants NOOT

Secretary-General, Ministry of Agriculture

### **Ireland:**

Mr Brendan SMITH

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

### **Greece:**

Mr Léonidas ROKANAS

Deputy Permanent Representative

### **Spain:**

Mr Josep PUXEU

Mr Jesús Miguel ORIA

State Secretary for the Rural Environment and Water  
Minister for Rural Development, Livestock Breeding,  
Fisheries and Biodiversity of the Autonomous Community  
of Cantabria

### **France:**

Mr Michel BARNIER

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

### **Italy:**

Mr Luca ZAIA

Minister for Agricultural and Forestry Policy

### **Cyprus:**

Mr Panicos POURROS

State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural  
Resources and Environment

### **Latvia:**

Mr Aivars LAPINS

Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture

### **Lithuania:**

Mr Vytautas GRUŠAUSKAS

Under-Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

### **Luxembourg:**

Mr Fernand BODEN

Minister for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural  
Development, Minister for Small and Medium-sized  
Businesses, the Liberal Professions and the  
Self-Employed, Tourism and Housing

### **Hungary:**

Mr József GRÁF

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

### **Malta:**

Mr George PULLICINO

Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs

### **Netherlands:**

Ms Gerda VERBURG

Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

### **Austria:**

Ms Edith KLAUSER

Member of the Private Office of the Federal Minister for  
Agriculture, Forestry, the Environment and Water  
Management

**Poland:**

Mr Marek SAWICKI

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

**Portugal:**

Mr Jaime SILVA

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

**Romania:**

Mr Dacian CIOLOS

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

**Slovenia:**

Mr Milan POGAČNIK

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

**Slovakia:**

Ms Marieta OKENKOVÁ

Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture

**Finland:**

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

**Sweden:**

Mr Eskil ERLANDSSON

Minister for Agriculture

**United Kingdom:**

Mr Huw IRRANCA-DAVIES

Minister for the Natural and Marine Environment,  
Wildlife and Rural Affairs

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**Commission:**

Mr Louis MICHEL

Member

Ms Mariann FISCHER BOEL

Member

## **ITEMS DEBATED**

### **Food distribution to the most deprived people in the Community**

The Council held a public policy debate on a proposal for a Regulation to optimise the current system of food distribution to the most deprived.

The Council instructed the Special Committee on Agriculture to continue its discussions pending receipt of the European Parliament's opinion, which is expected in March 2009.

This first discussion centred on the question of the legal basis.

Several delegations thought that Article 37 TEC – which the Commission had chosen when drawing up its proposal – was appropriate since the proposal did indeed seek to "stabilise the agricultural markets" by using intervention stocks and to "ensure reasonable prices in supplies to consumers".

Conversely, a number of delegations, without questioning the high solidarity value of food distribution to the most deprived, considered that the programme as amended by the Commission proposal no longer came within agricultural policy but rather social policy, or even the national sphere of responsibility of the Member States.

These comments were made without prejudice to the positions that would be expressed at a later stage concerning the key points of the proposal, namely:

- intervention stocks to be the priority **supply sources**, but market purchasing to be allowed;
- **wider range** of foodstuffs: allowing Member States to choose foodstuffs most in line with the objectives of nutritional balance, in consultation with the competent organisations;
- three-year plan: as from 2010 food distribution plans would be drawn up for three-year periods so as to improve long-term planning and ensure better preparation by national administrations and civil-society partners;
- co-financing: the Member States would have to co-finance the distribution programme and the highest Community participation would be in the "cohesion" countries (new Member States, Greece and Portugal).

Participation in the programme is optional; 19 Member States took part in 2008.

In 2009 the programme will continue under the existing legal framework, with a budget of EUR 500 million.

## **Conclusions on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013**

The Council noted the Presidency's conclusions<sup>1</sup> on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013, following the discussions held at the [informal meeting of Ministers at Annecy](#) (France) on 23 September (16287/2/08 REV 2).

### **Further information**

["Who will feed the world?"](#) – conference in Brussels on 3 July 2008.

[French Presidency website.](#)

European Commission booklet: [Towards a more sustainable CAP](#)

### **Other business**

(a) Reintroduction of export refunds for dairy products

– request by the Polish delegation, supported by the Lithuanian delegation

The Council noted the request by the Polish delegation, supported by the Lithuanian delegation, concerning the reintroduction of export refunds for dairy products, and also the comments made by the Commission representative ([16298/08](#)).

(b) WTO DDA negotiations

– State of play

The Council took stock of the agricultural negotiations of the WTO Doha Round and confirmed its consistent and united support for the Commission in the current negotiations, in compliance with the mandate that had been issued. It also referred to the EU's aim of achieving a comprehensive, ambitious and balanced final agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> The Latvian, Swedish and United Kingdom delegations were unable to agree to the text being adopted in the form of Council conclusions.

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED****AGRICULTURE****Guaranteed prices for cane sugar from the ACP countries and the Republic of India**

The Council adopted a Decision on the conclusion of an agreement between the European Community and the States referred to in Protocol 3 on ACP Sugar and the conclusions of an agreement between the European Community and the Republic of India on the guaranteed prices for cane sugar for the delivery periods 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 ([14962/08](#)).

**Agreement between the European Community and Australia on trade in wine\***

The Council adopted a Decision on the conclusion of a new Agreement between the European Community and Australia on trade in wine ([14963/08](#) + [15590/08](#)). The aim of the Agreement is to facilitate and promote trade in wine originating in the Community and Australia on a basis of non-discrimination and reciprocity.

**FISHERIES****Outermost regions – Management of fleets – Public aid**

The Council adopted a Regulation extending until 2011 the period allowed to the outermost regions of the EU countries to add extra fleet capacity using public funds ([14965/08](#)).

The purpose of the Regulation is to extend the 31 December 2008 deadline laid down in Regulation (EC) No 639/2004 for the derogation which the outermost regions enjoy under Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 so as to enable vessels for which aid has been granted but which are still under construction to enter the fleet.

The deadline is being extended owing to the late adoption of the legal instrument allowing the Member States concerned to grant this aid and the limited capacity of the shipyards.



## **Baltic Sea – fishing opportunities and associated conditions for 2009 (TACs and quotas)**

The Council adopted a Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities and associated conditions for certain fish stocks in the Baltic Sea for 2009 ([15287/08](#) and [16075/08 ADD1](#)). The adoption of this Regulation follows up the political agreement reached by the Council at its meeting on 27 and 28 October 2008.

The Regulation fixes for 2009 the TAC (total admissible catches) levels and quotas for certain stocks in the Baltic Sea, the related fishing effort for Baltic cod stocks and certain restrictions on fishing for flounder (*Platichthys flesus*) and turbot (*Psetta maxima*). It mainly concerns TACs and fishing quotas for EU Member States bordering the Baltic Sea.

More information and a table showing the main changes from 2008 may be found in Press Release [14784/08](#), page 6.

## **Deep-sea species – TACs and quotas for 2009 and 2010**

The Council adopted a Regulation fixing the TACs and quotas for 2009 and 2010 for certain deep-sea fish<sup>1</sup> such as certain deep-sea sharks, black scabbardfish (*Aphanopus carbo*), orange roughy (*Hoplosthetus atlanticus*) and forkbeards (*Phycis blennoides*) ([15286/08](#) and [16080/08 ADD1](#)).

The adoption of this Regulation follows up the political agreement reached by the Council at its meeting on 27 and 28 October 2008.

The main points of this Regulation together with a comparative table showing the changes from 2007-2008 may be found in Press Release [14784/08](#), page 8.

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<sup>1</sup> For 2007 and 2008 the fishing opportunities for deep-sea species were fixed in Council Regulation (EC) No 2015/2006 of 19 December 2006 (OJ L 384, 29.12.2006, p. 28).

**INTERNAL MARKET****Chemical products – System of classification and labelling**

The Council adopted a Regulation on the classification, labelling and packaging of chemical products in order to increase the level of protection of human health and the environment as well as the free movement of substances, mixtures and certain specific articles, while enhancing competitiveness and innovation (3671/08 ADD 1 to ADD 13 and 15161/08).

By adopting this Regulation, the EU confirms its intention to contribute to general harmonisation of the criteria for the classification and labelling of chemicals at international level by incorporating into Community law the criteria of the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), bearing in mind the potential advantages for promoting business competitiveness.

The objective of the Regulation is to determine which properties of substances and mixtures should lead to classification in order that the hazards of certain substances and mixtures can be correctly identified and communicated. To ensure that customers receive information on hazards to human health and the environment, suppliers of substances and mixtures will have to ensure that they are labelled and packaged in accordance with the Regulation before placing them on the market, depending on how they have been classified.

The provisions of the Regulation will, as a general principle, apply to all substances and mixtures supplied in the EU, except where other Community legislation lays down more specific rules on classification and labelling.

Trade in substances and mixtures is an issue relating not only to the internal market, but also to the global market. Harmonised criteria for classification and labelling have been developed over a period of 12 years within the United Nations (UN) structure with a view to facilitating worldwide trade.

This new Regulation replaces Directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC and supplements Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (the REACH Regulation).

At the same time, the Council also adopted:

- a Directive ([3673/08](#)) amending six existing Directives to adapt them to the classification and labelling criteria of the new Regulation, and
- a Regulation ([3673/08](#)) to align Regulation (EC) No 648/2004 with the new provisions.

The Parliament delivered its first-reading opinion on 3 September 2008. The outcome of the Parliament's vote concerning these three legislative acts reflects the compromise agreement reached between the institutions.

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