

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES  
THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,  
A2/D(2013)

**North Western Waters RAC**  
Bertie Armstrong (Chair of the Exec. Committee)  
BIM, PO Box 12  
Crofton Road,  
Dun Laoghaire  
Co. Dublin  
Ireland

**Subject: Implementing the landing obligation in small and large pelagic fisheries, industrial fisheries and fisheries for salmon in the Baltic Sea**

Dear Mr Armstrong,

Discussions on the reform of the CFP are progressing and informal trilogues have begun between the European Parliament and the Council with the aim to reach political agreement on the new CFP.

A central element of the reform is the introduction on a gradual basis of a landing obligation. As it stands, there is a high degree of similarity of approach between the Parliament and the Council: progressive coverage of all fisheries over a number of years, and flexibility mechanisms in relation to quota use (among species, and between years). There is also the possibility of introducing exemptions from the landing obligations for species that have a high probability of surviving (and for the Council only, also *de minimis* exemptions where increased selectivity is impossible, or to avoid disproportionate costs of handling unwanted catches). Both Council and Parliament envisage the introduction of exemptions subject to scientific advice and in a regionalised context through either a multiannual plan or a specific discard plan. The regionalised approach allows for the development of specific measures at regional level. These regionalised plans should be developed by the Member States, working closely with the relevant (Regional) Advisory Councils (RACs). For this reason, I am writing to you to draw your attention to the need to start preparing for the implementation of the landing obligation.

The landing obligation for fisheries for small and large pelagics, industrial species, and fisheries for salmon in the Baltic Sea is likely to enter into force on 1 January 2014. Preparatory work for the implementation of the landing obligation for these fisheries should start urgently.

The work should be geared to identifying details of implementation mentioned in the Council and Parliament positions, including where needed the exact identification of the

fisheries covered, possible exemptions for species with high survival rates<sup>1</sup>, possible practical and operational issues that may require special rules (such as additional technical measures including the fixing of minimum conservation reference sizes and specific control and monitoring provisions).

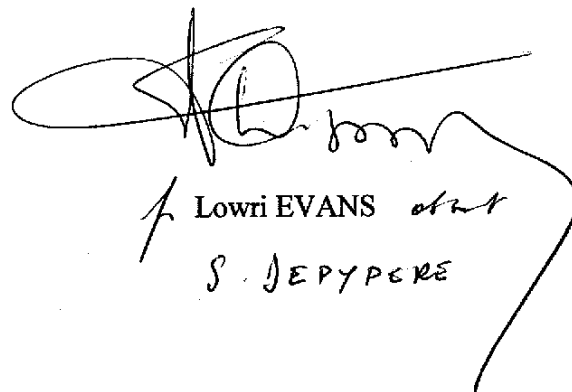
Where necessary, the Commission is ready to facilitate and to contribute to this process. To facilitate discussions regarding the fisheries covered, a preliminary assessment of which fisheries would be concerned (as specified by vessel type, gear type, target species, area and Member States involved) is attached to this letter.

Another important element for the implementation of the landing obligation is the estimation of discards in the above-mentioned fisheries. Member States data will have to be communicated to ICES and STECF in order that any necessary adjustments to assessments, advice and to catch forecasts to include discards are reflected in time for setting fishing opportunities for 2014.

In parallel to the work mentioned above, the Commission is preparing a proposal under the ordinary legislative procedure to remove all legal obligations to discard that are currently contained in the technical conservation measures and control Regulations.

I am sure you will wish to give this matter your close and urgent attention.

Yours sincerely,



A. Lowri EVANS *at*  
S. JEPYPERE

---

<sup>1</sup> An Assessment by STECF on survival of discarded fish is contained in the Report of the April 2012 STECF Plenary meeting available at [http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/319250/12-04\\_PLEN+12-01\\_JRC70759.pdf](http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/319250/12-04_PLEN+12-01_JRC70759.pdf)

## ANNEX:

**Small Pelagic Fisheries**

Target Species	Gear	Mesh Size Range	Area	By-catch Species (quota)	MS involved
Mackerel	PTM,OTM	32-54 mm	All areas except Baltic and Mediterranean	Horse mackerel, herring, boarfish	IE, UK, DK, DE, NL, ES, PT, FR (Med countries)
Mackerel	PS	32-54 mm	South western waters	Horse mackerel, boarfish, sardine	DK, SE, UK, ES, PT
Mackerel	LHP	Na	All areas except Baltic and Mediterranean	None	IE, UK, FR, ES, PT
Mackerel	GND,GNS	50-70 mm	All areas except in Baltic and Mediterranean	Herring	IE, UK, FR
Herring	PTM,OTM	32- 54 mm, 32-89 mm (Baltic)	All areas except South western waters and Mediterranean	Sprat, Sardine, Mackerel, Horse mackerel	IE, UK,DK, DE, NL, FI, SE, EE, LT, LV,PL,
Herring	PS	32- 54 mm, 32-89 mm (Baltic)	North Sea, Baltic	Sprat	UK,DK, FI, SE, EE, LT, LV,PL,
Herring	GND,GNS	50-70 mm	All areas except South western waters and Mediterranean	Sprat, mackerel, sardine	IE, UK,DK, DE, FI, SE, EE, LT, LV,PL
Horse mackerel	PTM,OTM	32-54 mm	All areas except Baltic	Mackerel,	IE, UK, DE, DK,

					NL
Horse mackerel	PS	32-54 mm	South western waters	Mackerel	ES, PT
Horse mackerel	OTB	32-54 mm	South-western waters	Blue whiting, hake	ES, PT
Blue whiting	PTM,OTM	16-31 mm	North western waters, South western waters	Argentine, Gadoids	IE, UK, DE, FR, NL
Anchovy	PS	16-31 mm	South western waters, Mediterranean	Sardine	FR, ES, PT, IT, GR,SI
Anchovy	OTM,PTM	16-31 mm	South western waters, Mediterranean	Sardine	FR, PT, IT, GR, SI
Argentine	OTM	32-54 mm	North western waters	Blue whiting	NL (Bycatch for everyone else)
Sardine	PS	16-31 mm	Mediterranean (not under quota in other areas)	Anchovy, mackerel, horse mackerel	IT, ES, FR, GR, SI
Sardine	PTM	16 -31 mm	Mediterranean (not under quota in other areas)	Anchovy, mackerel, horse mackerel	IT, FR, GR, SI
Sprat	OTM, PTM,PS	16-31 mm	North Sea, Baltic, Black Sea	Herring	UK, DK, DE, EE, FI, LT, LV, PL, SE, BG, RO
Sprat	FPN,GNS	NA	Black Sea	None (anchovy, horse mackerel not covered by quota)	BG,RO

Boarfish	OTM,PTM	32-54 mm	North western waters	Mackerel, Horse mackerel	IE, DK, UK
----------	---------	----------	----------------------	--------------------------	------------

### **Large Pelagics**

Target Species	Gear	Mesh Size Range	Area	By-catch Species (quota)	MS involved
Bluefin Tuna	LLD	NA	South-western waters, Mediterranean	Albacore, Bigeye, Swordfish, Marlin	ES, FR, IT, MT, GR, PT, CY
Bluefin Tuna	PTM	120mm	South western waters	Albacore, Swordfish	FR
Bluefin Tuna	PS	NA	South-western waters, Mediterranean	Bigeye, Swordfish, Marlin, Albacore	FR, ES
Swordfish	LLD	Na	South western waters, Mediterranean	Albacore, Bigeye, Marlin	FR, ES, IT, MT, GR, PT
Albacore Tuna	PTM	120mm	North western and south western waters	Bluefin, Swordfish	FR, IE
Albacore Tuna	LTL	NA	Mediterranean	Bluefin, Bigeye Swordfish, Marlin	ES, FR, IT
Albacore Tuna	LHP,LHM	NA	North western and south western waters	None	ES
Albacore Tuna	LLD	NA	North western and South western waters	Bluefin	ES

### **Industrial Fisheries**

Target Species	Gear	Mesh Size Range	Area	By-catch Species (quota)	MS involved
Norway	OTB	16-31	North Sea	Blue whiting,	DK

Pout		mm		horse mackerel, Gadoids	
Sandeel	OTB	< 16 mm	North Sea	None	DK
Herring	OTM,PTM,PS	16-31mm	North Sea, Baltic	Sprat	DK, EE, FI, DE, LT, LV, PL, SE

**Salmon**

Target Species	Gear	Mesh Size Range	Area	By-catch Species (quota)	MS involved
Salmon	LLD	Na	Baltic	Sea trout (no quota but mls)	DK, EE, FI, DE, LT, LV, PL, SE
Salmon	FPN, FIX	Na	Baltic	Sea trout (no quota but mls)	DK, EE, FI, DE, LT, LV, PL, SE
Salmon	GNF,GNS	>157 mm	Baltic	Sea trout (no quota but mls)	PL