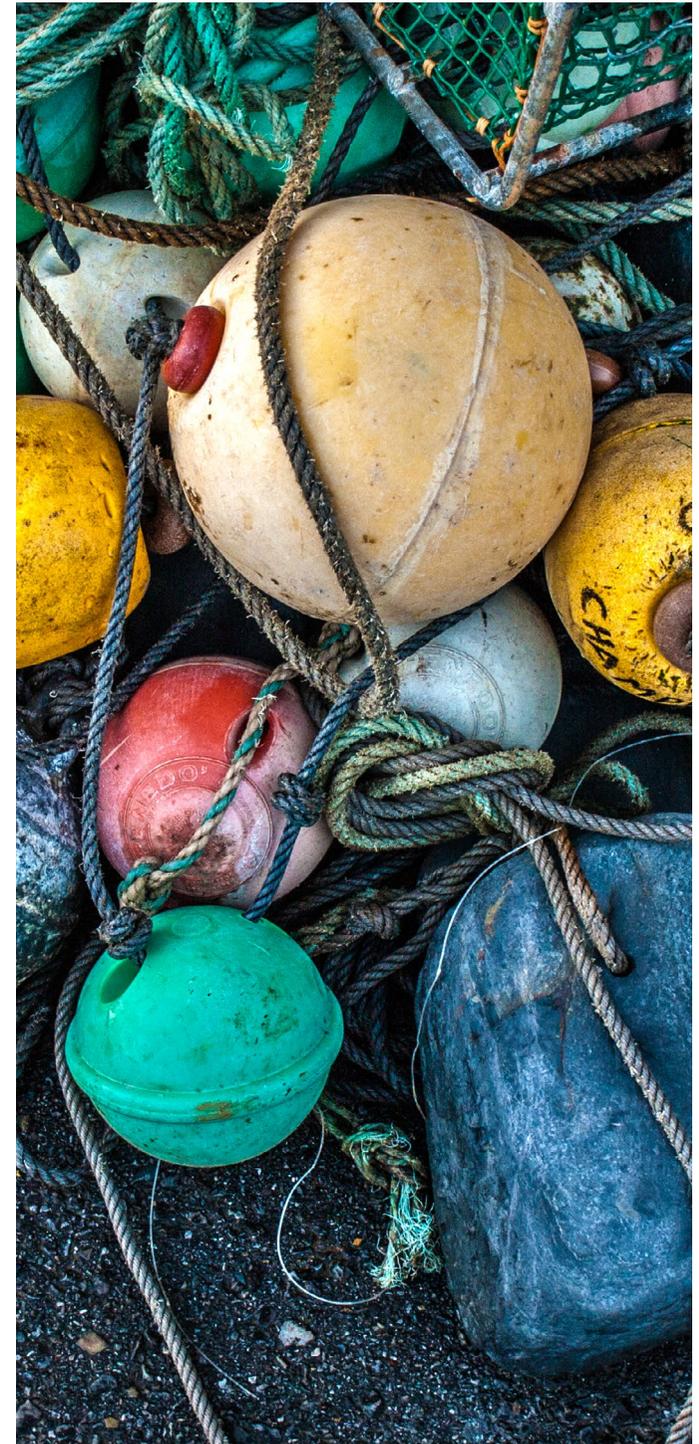


COMPARISON OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS ON EU FISHERIES “IN LINE WITH MAXIMUM SUSTAINABLE YIELD”

FROM 2015 TO 2020

APRIL 2020

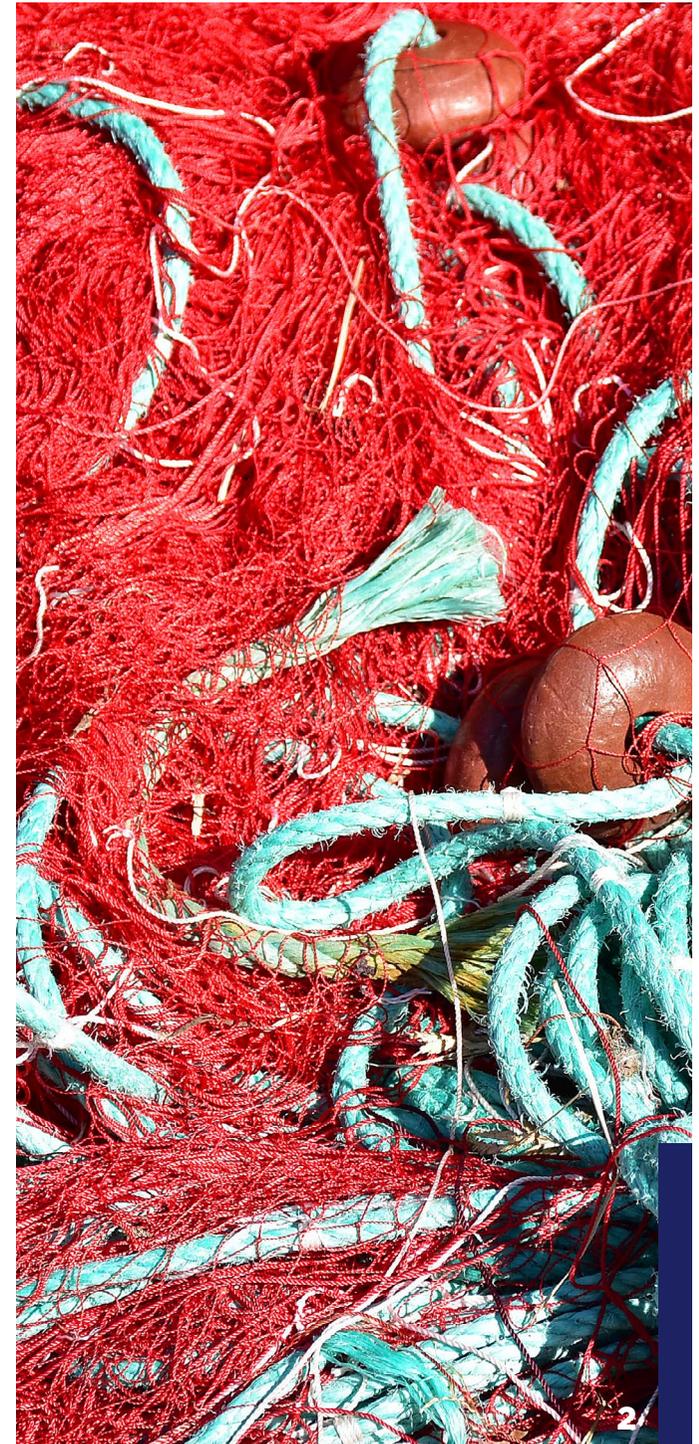


BACKGROUND

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) requires that the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) exploitation rate be achieved by 2015 where possible, and on a progressive, incremental basis at the latest by 2020 for all fish stocks, to allow them to recover to sustainable levels. **Since the CFP entered into force in early 2014, what progress has been made to set fishing limits in line with the scientific advice on MSY fishing rates?**

Following the decisions by EU fisheries ministers at their EU AGRIFISH Council meetings from 2014 to 2019, the European Commission published communications listing which stocks fished in the North East Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea it considers would be harvested “in line with maximum sustainable yield (MSY)” for the following year, provided that the corresponding fishing limits (Total Allowable Catches (TACs)) were respected (See Commission documents “in line with MSY” for **2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019** and **2020**).

This report compares the different communications, raises a number of concerns, draws conclusions and makes specific recommendations to the European Commission on how to improve the reporting on progress towards ending overfishing. As in previous editions (see Fundació ENT, Sciaena and Ecologistas en Acción comparison “in line with MSY” for **2016, 2017, 2018** and **2019**), the document ends with a detailed overview illustrating which TACs the Commission reported as being “in line with MSY” in the different years.



MAIN FINDINGS

The number of TACs being “in line with MSY” has been overestimated by the European Commission each year:

► The overall number of TACs set in line with MSY according to the Commission would be: **36** for 2015 TACs, **38** for 2016 TACs, **47** for 2017 TACs, **53** for 2018 TACs, **59** for 2019 TACs and **62** for 2020 TACs.

► But our analysis for this year indicates that at least **18** TACs included in the Commission list should not be considered as “in line with MSY” in 2020 and should be removed from the list.

► Our data also shows that the European Commission has overestimated by **29%** the number of TACs set in line with MSY in 2020. Taking into account the data available from 2015 to 2020, in average the European Commission has overestimated by **19%** the number of TACs set in line with MSY since 2015.

► As a result, according to our analysis, the overall number of TACs included in the Commission list and set in line with MSY would be: **30** for 2015 TACs, **29** for 2016 TACs, **37** for 2017 TACs, **50** for 2018 TACs, **49** for 2019 TACs and **44** for 2020 TACs.

This detailed analysis also indicates that the progress towards ending overfishing (in terms of number of TACs) has actually been reversed in the last 2 years, showing an alarming lack of progress taking into account the EU’s own legally binding deadline for achieving sustainable fishing limits for all fish stocks by 2015, when possible, and by 2020 at the latest, has passed.

Number of TACs set in line with with FMSY

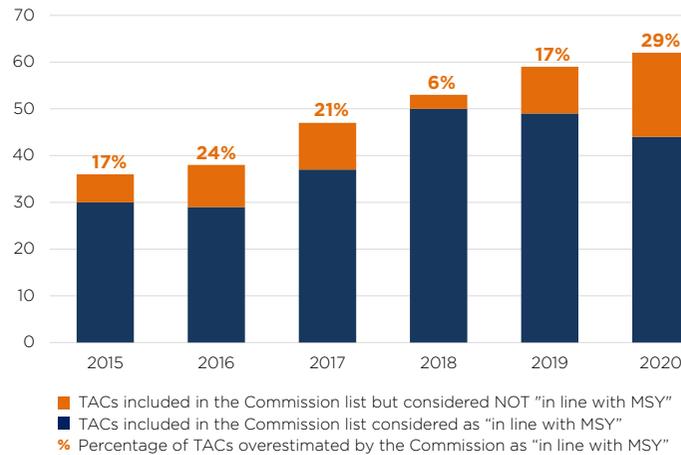
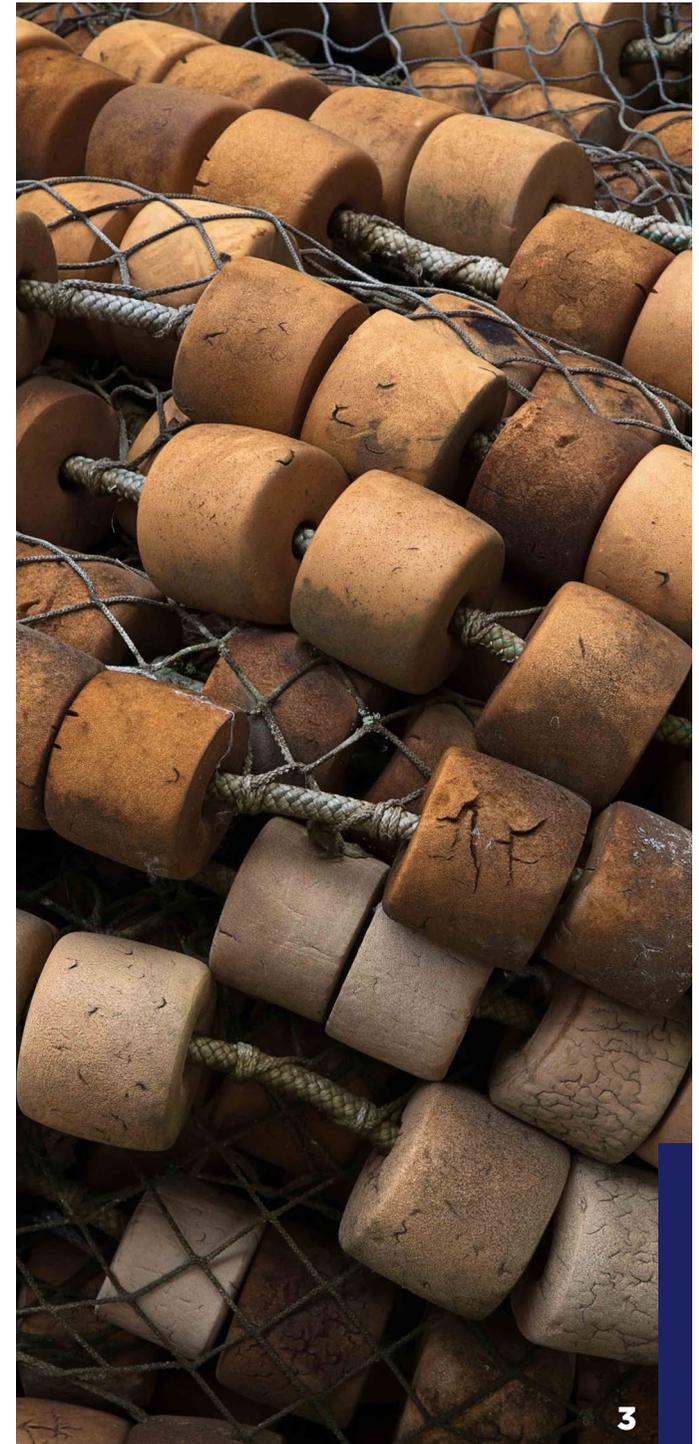


Chart 1: Number of TACs set in line with FMSY advice since 2015 according to our analysis.

Overall, the Commission has to increase transparency and incorporate in its communication substantial improvements in order to allow to evaluate the real number of TACs set “in line with MSY” and to illustrate trends that are important to judge progress made towards ending overfishing. This is particularly important this year, as the transition period to end overfishing by 2020, as foreseen in Article 2(2) of the CFP, it’s over.



OBSERVATIONS

According to the different communications of the European Commission, **73** TACs have been set “in line with MSY” at least once between 2015 and 2020.

But multiple TACs that were reported as being in line with MSY in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 or 2019 are no longer in that category in 2020. For instance, **3** TACsⁱ that were considered as being in line with MSY in 2019 are no longer in that category in the Commission’s 2020 list.

As from previous years, we consider that the numbers reflected in all these communications, including the one from 2020, are not fully correct and some TACs should be removed from the Commission’s list because: some fishing limits have been set above scientific advice on MSY or above ICES precautionary approach; or because it is a combined TAC and according to ICES the state and exploitation status of one of the species is unknown; or because some stocks or Functional Units are considered undefined by ICES or have no MSY advice, among other relevant science or policy based reasons.

Therefore, taking into account the previous observations, our analysis indicates that **13** TACs should not feature as in line with MSY in 2020, as: for **9** of these TACsⁱⁱ EU Fisheries Ministers agreed to set the TAC exceeding the ICES advice in relation to MSY for 2020; for further **2** TACsⁱⁱⁱ Ministers agreed to exceed the scientific advice for zero catches based on precautionary considerations; and for the remaining **2** TACs^{iv} their catch level were set above the corresponding F_{MSY} by using the upper F_{MSY} ranges.

In addition, there are **5** TACs^v that should be also removed from the 2020 list, because some stocks or Functional Units are considered undefined by ICES, or because they only have partial or no MSY advice for the stocks covered by those TACs. It must to be noted that one of these TACs (megrim in Bay of Biscay, see footnotes ii and v) falls in two categories, therefore it has been counted just once in the final counter.

Finally, another 1 TAC^{vi} should not be included in the Commission list of TACs “in line with MSY” as it does not correspond to a TAC and/or it is not included in the TAC Regulation.

> Considering all these parameters together, our analysis indicates that at least 18 TACs should not be considered to be “in line with MSY” in 2020 and should be removed from the list.

ⁱ **Cod** in Irish Sea; **Herring** in Celtic Sea, South West of Scotland and **Herring** in Baltic Sea: Bothnian (30-31).

ⁱⁱ **Hake** - Overall northern stocks (4 TACs); **Megrim** in Irish Sea; **Megrim** in Bay of Biscay [...]; **Salmon** in Baltic main basin; **Sprat** in Skagerrak and Kattegat; and **Turbot and Brill** in Norwegian Sea and the North Sea.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (directed); and **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (bycatch).

^{iv} **Hake** in Bay of Biscay [...] Union waters of CECAF; and **Sprat** in Baltic Sea: 22-32.

^v **Megrim** in Bay of Biscay [...]; **Norway lobster** in the Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters); **Norway lobster** in the Faroes Grounds [...]; **Norway lobster** in Celtic Sea, Irish Sea; and **Sandeel** in Union waters of Norwegian Sea, Kattegat and Skagerrak, North Sea.

^{vi} **Northern Seabass** in Celtic Sea, Channel, North Sea, Irish Sea, Southern North Sea.



OBSERVATIONS

► As a result, just 44 TACs (out of 62) included in the 2020 Commission list could be considered as being set “in line with MSY”.

According to the Commission, 7 new TACs are in line with MSY in 2020. However, when comparing against earlier Commission communications: 4 out of those 7 TACs^{vii} had already been listed at least once in the previous years (between 2015 and 2019), therefore they cannot be considered new; a further 2 TACs^{viii} should not be listed as new in 2020 list, as the TACs agreed have not been set “in line with MSY” (as seen in footnote ii); and lastly 1 TAC^{ix}, which is a bycatch one, should never be classified as a new one because the TAC agreed by EU Fisheries Ministers exceeds scientific advice for zero catches (as seen in footnote iii).

► Consequently, none of the TACs considered new (out of the 7 listed in the Commission list) can be truly considered new.

In contrast, we consider that there might be (at least) 3 missing TACs^x from the 2020 list given by the Commission that should be listed as “in line with MSY”. Of which one TAC has been listed as “in line with MSY” in previous years, while the other two TACs have never been included in the Commission list. Findings which have been also included in the detailed table below.

In brief, our analysis indicates that the number of TACs being “in line with MSY” has been overestimated by the Commission each year (by 17% in 2015; 24% in 2016; 21% in 2017; 6% in 2018; 17% in 2019 and finally, 29% in 2020).

Our analysis also shows that the progress towards ending overfishing has actually been reversed in the last two years. This “two steps forward, one step back” trend, which appears in our analyses for each year, raises deep concerns in terms of the “progressive, incremental” trajectory towards MSY exploitation rates required by the CFP.

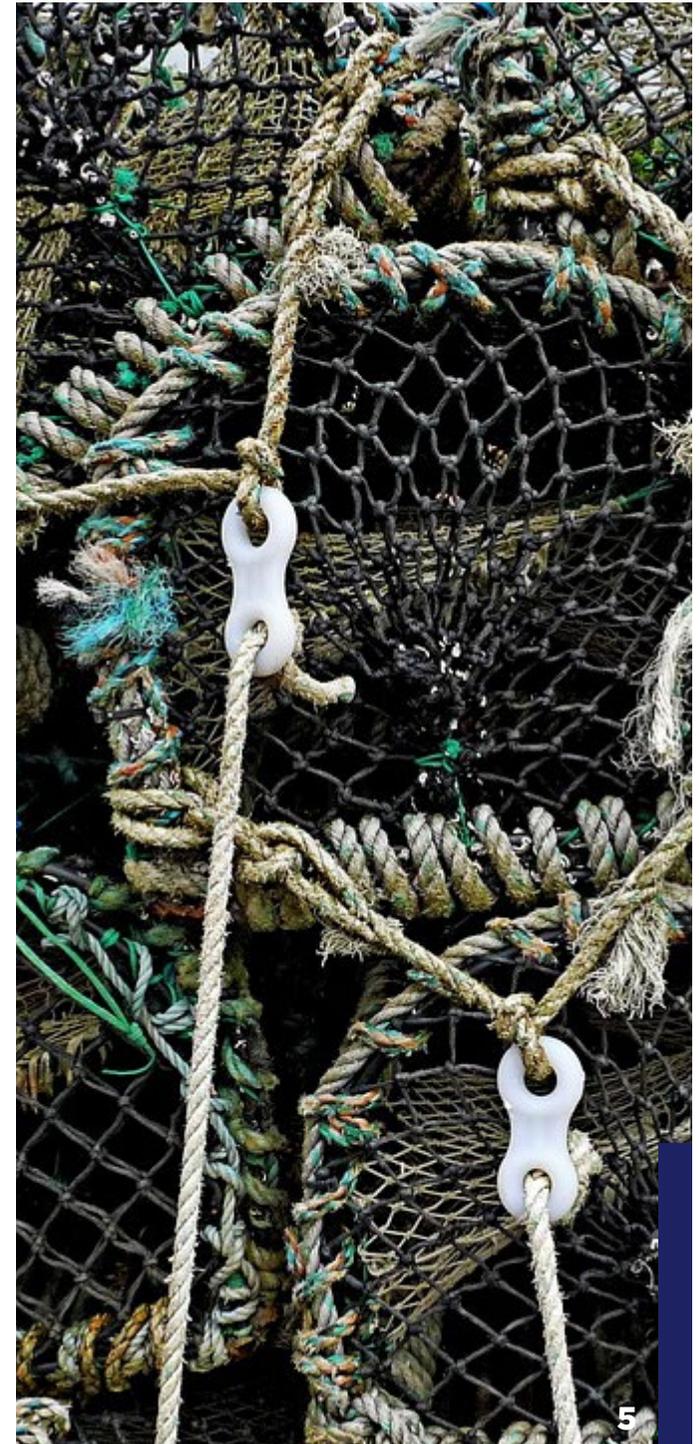
Overall, we can only conclude that the methodology and the communication used by the Commission are not clear, making it very difficult to know the real number of TACs set “in line with MSY”. This poses a challenge in terms of transparency, as it hinders stakeholders from assessing progress towards achieving the CFP’s MSY objective.

^{vii} **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (directed); **Herring** in Union and Norwegian waters of the Northern and Central North Sea; **Herring** in Southern North Sea, Eastern English Channel (directed); and **Herring** in North Sea, Eastern English Channel and EU waters of Norwegian Sea (by-catches).

^{viii} **Sprat** in Skagerrak and Kattegat and **Turbot and Brill** in Norwegian Sea and the North Sea.

^{ix} The TAC agreed for **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (by-catch) exceeds scientific advice for zero catches, and is not precautionary with respect to western Baltic spring spawning herring.

^x We would consider that **Sole** in Eastern English Channel appears to be missing in the list while it seems to be set “in line with MSY” for 2020. As well as **Horse Mackerel** in Southern and central North Sea, Eastern English Channel and **Plaice** in Bristol Channel, TACs which have never been included in the Commission list.



CONCERNS

The CFP requires MSY exploitation rates to be achieved on a progressive, incremental basis. Therefore, it is of great concern that a large number of TACs that had already been set in line with MSY have been later set above scientific advice, i.e. resuming overfishing.

This detailed analysis also indicates that the progress towards ending overfishing has actually been reversed in the last 2 years, showing an alarming lack of progress toward meeting the requirement to end overfishing.

In the same way, there are serious concerns regarding the failure to respect the deadline for achieving sustainable fishing limits for **all** fish stocks by 2020, at the latest, as agreed in the CFP.

The communications published by the Commission look only at individual years without illustrating developments and trends that are important to judge progress made towards ending overfishing.

The lists provided by the Commission should mention the total number of TACs decided by ministers in a given year. This would allow a better evaluation of progress in setting fishing limits in line with MSY, in particular as the number of stocks with scientific advice for MSY catch limits varies from one year to another.

In addition to the above observations, the Commission defines **13** TACs in 2020 as “in line with MSY” and hails them as a success, although: their fishing limits were set above the precautionary approach, above the scientific advice for zero catches, above the scientific advice on MSY, or above the corresponding FMSY by using the upper FMSY ranges. Consequently, the following TACs should not be

listed in the 2020 Commission’s list (as already mentioned in footnotes ii, iii and iv):

- **Salmon** in Baltic main basin
- **Sprat** in Skagerrak and Kattegat
- **Sprat** in Baltic Sea: 22-32
- **Turbot and Brill** in Norwegian Sea and the North Sea
- **Hake** in Overall northern stocks (it includes 4 TACs)
- **Hake** in Bay of Biscay - South, Portuguese waters, Azores, Union waters of CECAF
- **Megrim** in Irish Sea
- **Megrim** in Bay of Biscay - North - Central - Offshore and West
- **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (directed)
- **Herring** in Skagerrak and Kattegat (bycatch)



CONCERNS

There are **5** additional TACs that should not be classified as being “in line with MSY” in 2020 due to only partial or no MSY advice on catch available from ICES for stocks covered by a TAC, or because some stocks or Functional Units are considered undefined by ICES (as previously mentioned in footnote v):

- **Norway lobster** in the Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters)
- **Norway lobster** in the Faroes Grounds (EU and international waters), Rockall [...]
- **Norway lobster** in Celtic Sea, Irish Sea
- **Sandeel** in Union waters of Norwegian Sea, Kattegat and Skagerrak, North Sea
- **Megrim** in Bay of Biscay – North – Central – Offshore and West

Finally, a further **1** TAC should not be classified as being “in line with MSY” in 2020 because the stock does not correspond to a TAC and it is not even included in the TAC Regulation (as previously mentioned in footnote vi):

- **Northern Seabass** in Celtic Sea, Channel, North Sea, Irish Sea, Southern North Sea

Overall, and taking into account that one of the TACs mentioned above fall in more than one category (and therefore it has been counted just once), our analysis indicates that at least **18** TACs cannot be considered to be “in line with MSY” in 2020 and should be removed from the list.

As a consequence, only **44 of the 62** TACs included in the Commission list can be considered to be set in line with MSY in 2020. This means that the number of TACs touted as set in line with MSY is overestimated in each year and that progress to end overfishing has been too low.

Hence, it remains clear that insufficient progress is being made to deliver the CFP’s objectives. A concern that has also been shared by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries (STECF), which emphasized in its **latest CFP monitoring report** that “many stocks remain overfished and/or outside safe biological limits, and that progress achieved until 2017 seems too slow to ensure that all stocks will be rebuilt and managed according to FMSY by 2020”.

With regards the full implementation of the Landing Obligation (LO), the Commission no longer proposes adjustments to fishing opportunities. Instead TACs have been set using the total catch advised by ICES and not landings (wanted catch) recommendations. This is a critical decision as it assumes that the Landing Obligation is fully applied and all catches are landed and effectively monitored. While the LO is still not effectively implemented, TACs are overestimated for all stocks that are still discarded (most demersal) and overexploitation is therefore occurring.



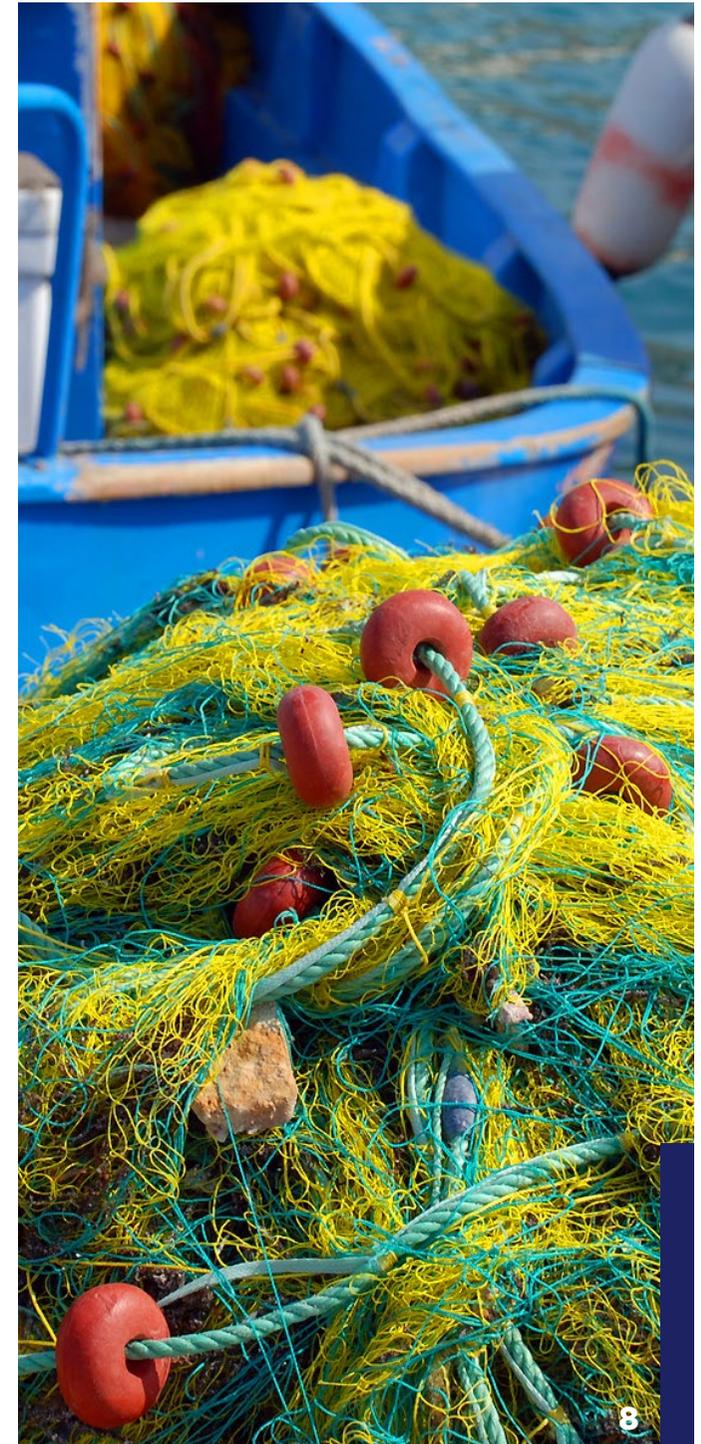
CONCERNS

Furthermore, some TACs have been subject to exemptions from the LO, but have also been set using the total catch advised by ICES without any deductions for allowed discards. Knowing the lack of control and monitoring of many fisheries, it increases our concerns about how the Commission and the Member States are ensuring that fishing mortality is not increasing and that the CFP goals will be reached in 2020 or beyond.

Moreover, we are concerned about the impact of member states' continued use of various flexibilities to address the challenges of the LO without adequate at sea monitoring, control and enforcement. The absence of adequate monitoring and control of the LO, combined with setting TACs based on catch rather than landings advice, risks increasing fishing mortality above scientifically advised sustainable levels (for further details see the **Joint NGO recommendations** on the setting of Northeast Atlantic fishing opportunities for 2020).

Finally, another relevant aspect is that many stocks now fall under multi-annual plans (MAPs), such as the Baltic, North Sea or the Western Waters MAP. While these MAPs were adopted under the CFP, they contain a number of provisions which are not fully aligned with the objectives of the article 2(2) of the CFP. In particular, they provide for the use of FMSY ranges which go beyond the FMSY point value, or they differentiate between target stocks and those which are caught as bycatch, among others.

All these parameters make this analysis and the reporting even more complex than in previous years. This is why our concerns regarding the methodology and the approach used by the Commission -when counting for example the number of TACs in line with MSY- has even increased compared to previous years.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We welcome that the European Commission is measuring the progress made by EU Fisheries Ministers towards setting TACs in line with CFP requirements, even if strong concerns about the methodology remain.

The Commission should be specific about its definitions and methodology, provide the overall number of TACs set, and report on several years to allow identification of trends.

The Commission should also be very clear when a given TAC has been set following scientific advice or specifically MSY advice (i.e. it requires MSY reference points or proxies); and should include in its “in line with MSY” communication the scientific advice for each fishing limit, as well as the TAC agreed by the EU fisheries ministers.

Considering the number of inconsistencies of the Commission’s lists since 2015, we would recommend improving this communication in order to reflect the real number of TACs set in line with MSY.

The Commission must recognize that fishing above the F_{MSY} point value, where F_{MSY} ranges are used will not fulfil the MSY objective in article 2(2). F_{MSY} is a limit, not a target exploitation rate. Therefore, the Commission should always recommend and set exploitation levels at or below F_{MSY} , in order to ensure that the biomass of the stock will deliver the maximum sustainable yield (B_{MSY}) as requested in the CFP.

As the CFP’s article 2(2) MSY objective applies to all harvested species the Commission should ensure that all stocks are being treated with the same degree of ambition, including the ones which are taken as bycatch and/or subject to data-limited precautionary approach.

In addition, we encourage the European Commission to increase the transparency and the public information provided, e.g. regarding the numbers of TACs established following scientific advice (whether it is provided by ICES on the basis of MSY or the precautionary approach) and fully in line with the requirements of the CFP; methodologies used for matching scientific advice with TAC areas, as well as the information related to all ‘non-papers’ with additional TAC proposals; access to the reports containing socio-economic evidence used to justify any delay or exemption, etc.

As the CFP final deadline to end overfishing has passed, the next Commission communication must illustrate the urgency for EU fisheries ministers to significantly increase their efforts to end overfishing and also ensure that the precautionary approach, as defined in the CFP, is applied.

Finally, and taking into account the Landing Obligation context, we request the Commission not to set TACs following ICES advice for total catch, but only for landings (wanted catch) advice as otherwise it would compromise the MSY objectives. Increasing TACs without an effective implementation of the Landing Obligation (even if they are set in line with MSY catch advice) will translate in overfishing.



COMPARISON TABLE

“TACs in line with MSY”

	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR					
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	 Anglerfish¹ (<i>Lophius spp.</i>)	Celtic Sea, Irish Sea	●	●	●	●	●	● ²
2	 Anglerfish¹ (<i>Lophius spp.</i>)	Bay of Biscay – North, Central, Off Shore and West of Bay of Biscay	●	●	●	●	●	● ²
3	 Anglerfish¹ (<i>Lophius spp.</i>)	Bay of Biscay - South, Portuguese Waters, Azores Grounds, CECAF 34.1.1	●	●	●	●	●	● ²
4	 Blue Ling (<i>Molva dypterygia</i>)	EU and international waters of Faroes Grounds, Rockall, Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland, the Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland also known as the West of Scotland; Irish Sea, West of Ireland (...), and Southwest of Ireland - East and West	⊗ ³	⊗ ³	●	●	●	●
5	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	Irish Sea	●	●	●	●	●	●
6	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	Baltic Sea -Western	●	●	●	⊗ ³	●	●
7	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Western English Channel, Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, South-West of Ireland, Bay of Biscay, Portuguese Waters, Azores Grounds, Union waters of CECAF	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ³	●	●	●	●
8	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	North Sea; Union waters of Norwegian Sea; that part of 3a not covered by the Skagerrak and Kattegat	●	●	●	●	●	●
9	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	Eastern English Channel	●	●	●	●	●	●

● Present from the European Commission's annual list “TACs in line with MSY”

⊗ Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as “in line with MSY”

● Absent from the European Commission's annual list “TACs in line with MSY”

New TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020

⊗ Present in Commission's list, but TAC should not be considered as “in line with MSY”

⊗ New TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels

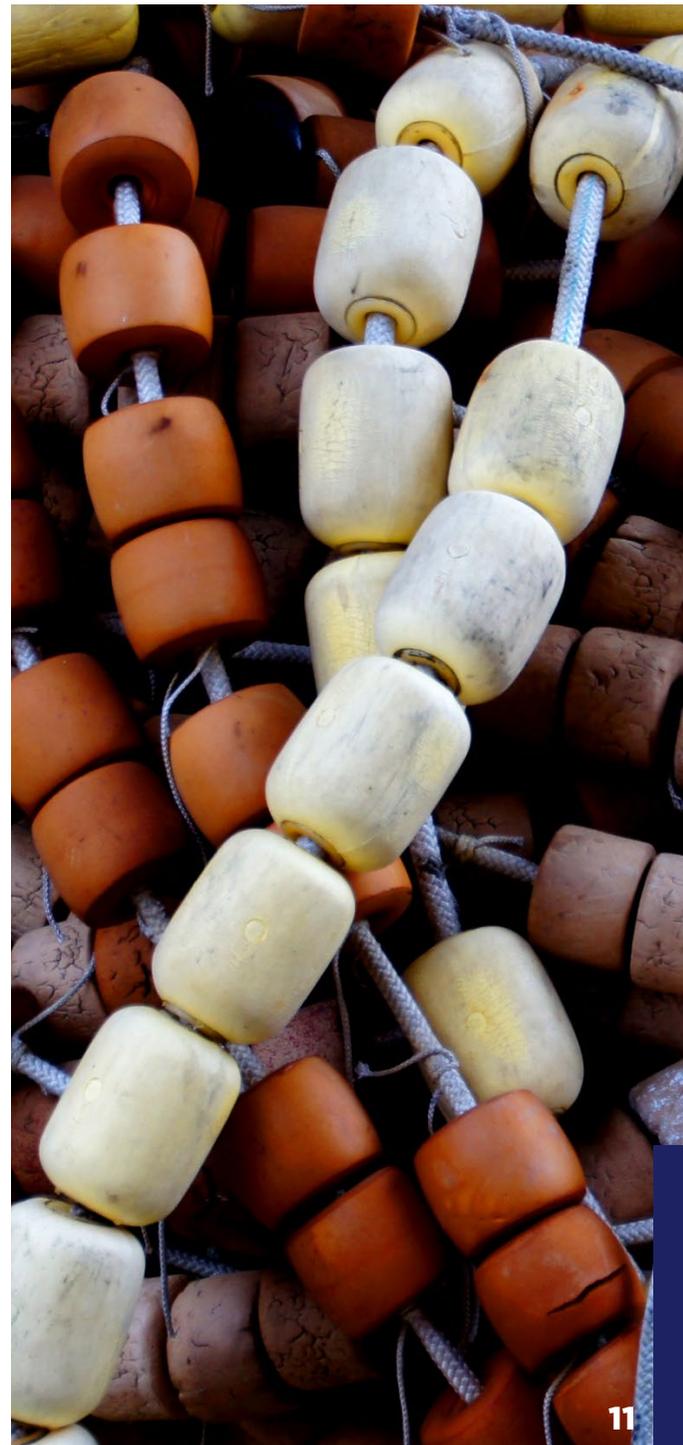


	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
10	 Cod (<i>Gadus morhua</i>)	Skagerrak	●	●	●	●	●	●	
11	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	EU and international waters of Rockall, North of Azores and East Greenland	⊗ ³	● ⁵	●	●	●	●	
12	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	Irish Sea	●	●	⊗ ^{4,6}	●	●	●	
13	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	North Sea, Norwegian Sea (EU waters)	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	
14	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	Kattegat and Skagerrak, Union waters of subdivisions 22-32	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	
15	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland or West of Scotland	●	⊗ ⁴	● ⁶	●	●	●	
16	 Haddock (<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>)	Celtic Sea, Bay of Biscay, Portuguese Waters, Union waters of CECAF	●	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	
17-20	 Hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>)	Overall northern stocks (4 TACs)	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	⊗ ⁷	
21	 Hake (<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>)	Bay of Biscay - South, Portuguese waters, Azores grounds, Union waters of CECAF	●	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ⁸	
22	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Irish Sea	●	●	●	●	●	●	
23	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Celtic Sea, South West of Scotland	●	●	●	●	●	●	
24	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Baltic Sea: Western (22-24)	●	●	●	●	●	●	
25	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Baltic Sea: Central (25-29, 32)	●	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	
26	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Baltic Sea: Riga (28.1)	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	
27	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Baltic Sea: Bothnian (30-31)	●	●	●	●	●	●	

- Present from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"
- ⊗ Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as "in line with MSY"

- Absent from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"
- New TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020

- ⊗ Present in Commission's list, but TAC should not be considered as "in line with MSY"
- ⊗~~New~~ TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels



	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
28	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat (directed)	 ⁴					 ^{New} ₉	
29	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat (bycatch)						 ^{New} ₉	
30	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Union, Faroese, Norwegian and International waters of Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea, Spitzbergen, and Bear Island		 ⁵					
31	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Union and Norwegian waters of the Northern and Central North Sea						 ^{New}	
32	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	Southern North Sea, Eastern English Channel (directed fishery)						 ^{New}	
33	 Herring (<i>Clupea harengus</i>)	North Sea, Eastern English Channel and EU waters of Norwegian Sea (bycatch)						 ^{New}	
34	 Horse Mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Portuguese waters							
-	 Horse Mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Southern and Central North Sea and Eastern English Channel						 ³	
35	 Horse Mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Norwegian Sea, Northern North Sea; Rockall, the Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland also known as the West of Scotland; Irish Sea, West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Eastern and Western; English Channel, Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea North and South, and Southwest of Ireland - East and West; Bay of Biscay; EU waters of Faroes Grounds, North of Azores, East Greenland							
36	 Horse Mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>)	Bay of Biscay - South							
37	 Megrims (<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>)	Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters)							
38	 Megrims (<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>)	Union and international waters of Faroes Grounds; Rockall, Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland, the Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland also known as the West of Scotland; international waters of North of Azores and East Greenland							

 Present from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"

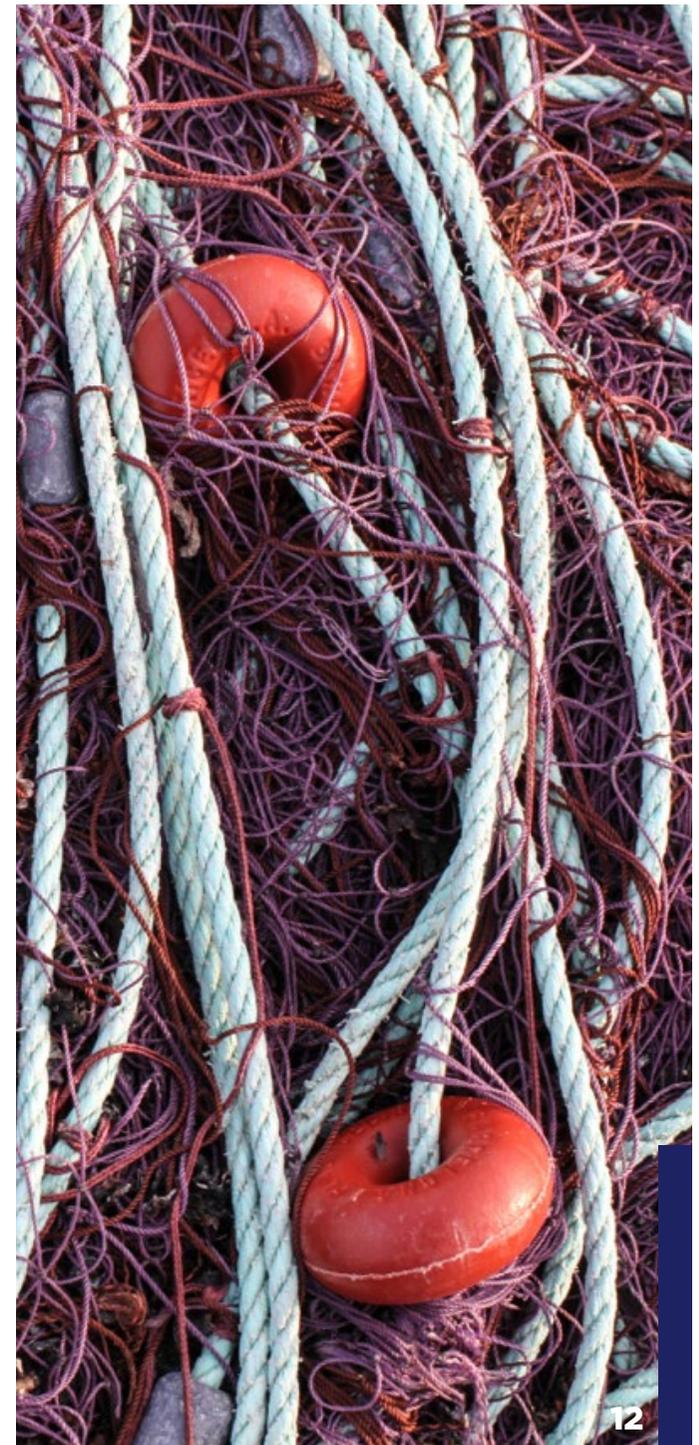
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 Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as "in line with MSY"

New TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020

 ~~New~~ TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels



	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
39	 Megrims (<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>)	Irish Sea (Celtic Sea?) ¹⁰	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ⁴	
40	 Megrims (<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>)	Bay of Biscay – North – Central – Offshore and West	●	●	●	⊗ ^{4,11}	⊗ ^{4,11}	⊗ ^{4,11}	
41	 Megrims (<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>)	Bay of Biscay - South, Portuguese Waters, Azores Grounds, CECAF 34.1.1	●	●	●	●	⊗ ¹¹	● ¹²	
42	 Northern Prawn (<i>Pandalus borealis</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	●	
43	 Northern Prawn (<i>Pandalus borealis</i>)	EU waters of Norwegian Sea and North Sea	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	●	
44	 Northern Seabass (<i>Dicentrarchus Labrax</i>)	Celtic Sea, Channel, North Sea Irish Sea, Southern North Sea	●	●	●	●	⊗ ¹³	⊗ ¹³	
45	 Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>)	Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters)	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	
46	 Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>)	Faroes Grounds (EU and international waters), Rockall, Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland (also known as the West of Scotland)	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	⊗ ¹⁴	
47	 Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat, Union waters of subdivisions 22-32	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	
48	 Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>)	Celtic Sea, Irish Sea	●	●	●	●	●	⊗ ¹⁴	
49	 Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>)	Bay of Biscay – North – Central – Offshore and West	●	●	●	●	●	●	
50	 Norway pout (<i>Trisopterus esmarkii</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat; EU waters of Norwegian Sea and North Sea	●	⊗ ³	●	●	●	●	
51	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Eastern English Channel, Western English Channel	●	●	●	●	●	●	
-	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Bristol Channel						⊗ ³	
52	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Union waters of the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea not covered by Skagerrak and Kattegat	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	

● Present from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"

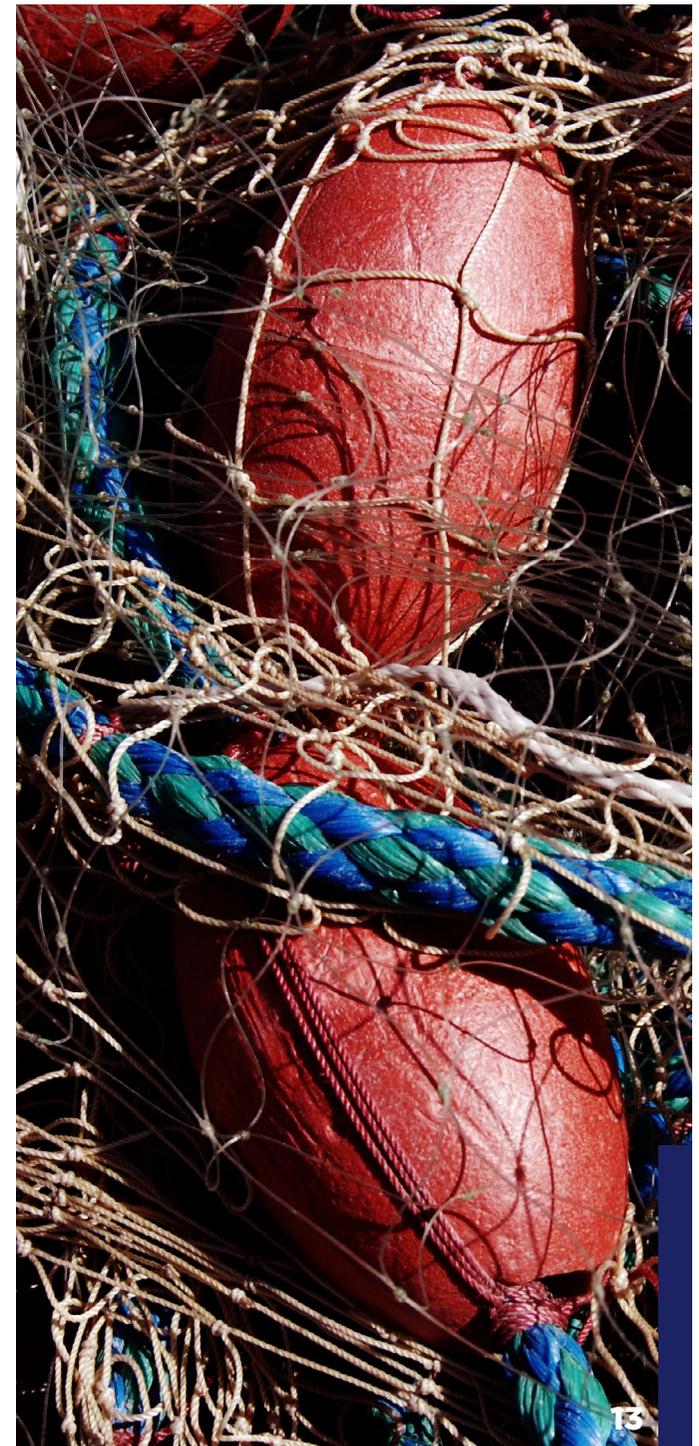
⊗ Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as "in line with MSY"

● Absent from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"

New TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020

⊗ Present in Commission's list, but TAC should not be considered as "in line with MSY"

~~New~~ TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels



	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
53	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Kattegat	⊗ ³	●	●	⊗ ³	●	●	
54	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Skagerrak	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	
55	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Irish Sea	●	●	●	●	●	●	
56	 Plaice (<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>)	Baltic Sea: 22-32	●	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	
57	 Saithe (<i>Pollachius virens</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat, North Sea, EU waters of Norwegian Sea, Sound, Belt Sea	●	●	●	●	●	●	
58	 Saithe (<i>Pollachius virens</i>)	Rockall, Northwest Coast of Scotland and North Ireland also known as the West of Scotland; EU and international waters of Faroes Grounds, North of Azores and East Greenland	●	●	●	●	●	●	
59	 Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	Baltic main basin	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ⁴	⊗ ^{4,15}	
60	 Sandeel (<i>Ammodytes tobianus</i>)	Union waters of Norwegian Sea; Kattegat and Skagerrak; North Sea	●	●	⊗ ^{6,16}	⊗ ¹⁶	⊗ ¹⁶	⊗ ¹⁶	
61	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Irish Sea	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	●	
62	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Western English Channel	●	●	●	●	●	●	
63	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat, Sound, Belt Sea, Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32	●	●	●	●	●	●	
64	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Eastern English Channel	●	●	●	●	●	⊗ ³	
65	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Bristol Channel and Celtic Sea North	●	●	●	●	●	●	
66	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Bay of Biscay – North and Central	●	●	●	●	●	●	

● Present from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"

⊗ Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as "in line with MSY"

● Absent from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"

New TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020

⊗ Present in Commission's list, but TAC should not be considered as "in line with MSY"

⊗~~New~~ TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels



	NAME	CATCH AREAS	COMMISSION'S LIST FOR						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
67	 Sole (<i>Solea spp.</i>)	Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters)	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	
68	 Sprat (<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>)	Skagerrak and Kattegat	●	●	●	●	●	⊗ ⁴ New	
69	 Sprat (<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>)	Baltic Sea: 22-32	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	●	⊗ ¹⁷	
70	 Sprat (<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>)	Norwegian Sea (EU waters), North Sea (EU waters)	●	●	●	●	●	●	
71	 Turbot and Brill (<i>Psetta maxima, Scophthalmus Rhombus</i>)	Norwegian Sea and the North Sea	●	●	●	●	●	⊗ ^{4,18} New	
72	 Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>)	North Sea; Union waters of Norwegian Sea	●	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	●	
73	 Whiting (<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>)	West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Eastern English Channel, Western English Channel, Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea North, Celtic Sea South, South-West of Ireland - East, South-West of Ireland - West	●	⊗ ⁴	●	⊗ ⁴	●	●	

- Present from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"
- Absent from the European Commission's annual list "TACs in line with MSY"
- ⊗ Present in Commission's list, but TAC should not be considered as "in line with MSY"
- ⊗ Absent in Commission's list, but TAC should be considered as "in line with MSY"
- ~~New~~ TAC listed by the Commission as in line with MSY for first time in 2020
- ~~New~~ TAC should not be listed as new in 2020, as TAC has been set in line with MSY at least once before or it has not been set at MSY levels

¹ The scientific name has been changed as this TAC covers two anglerfish species (*Lophius budegassa* and *L. piscatorius*).

² According to ICES, management of catches of the two anglerfish species (*Lophius budegassa* and *L. piscatorius*), under a combined TAC prevents effective control of the single-species exploitation rates and could lead to the overexploitation of either species.

³ TAC absent in the Commission list but we consider it as being "in line with MSY".

⁴ The TAC has been set above ICES MSY advice or above ICES precautionary approach. Therefore this TAC cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

⁵ According to the Commission, the TAC was set in line with MSY in 2016, but it was not included in the previous edition of the document (Council of December 2015).

⁶ According to the Commission, the TAC was set in line with MSY in 2017, but it was not included in the previous edition of the document (Council of December 2016).

⁷ Overall northern stocks (4 TACs) have been set above the F_{MSY} level advised by ICES. Therefore, northern hake cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

⁸ ICES catch advice for the southern stock covered the MSY range (see western waters MAP), whilst the northern stock ICES advised based on MSY approach. The TAC has been set above the corresponding F_{MSY} , using the upper range of F_{MSY} (MSY Fupper). Therefore, this TAC cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

⁹ The stock is not overfished but the TACs for Fleets C&D were set above ICES advice of zero based on precautionary considerations for western Baltic spring-spawning herring stock.

¹⁰ Megrin in the Irish Sea (7a) does not correspond to a TAC or a stock area, we believe that the distribution area corresponds to megrim in Celtic Sea (7).

¹¹ This is a combined TAC and according to ICES in this area the state and exploitation status of the four-spot megrim (*L. boscii*) are presently unknown. Therefore this TAC cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

¹² This is a combined TAC and according to ICES catches of the two megrim species (*L. whiffiagonis* and *L. boscii*) under a combined species TAC prevents effective control of the single-species exploitation rates, and could lead to overexploitation of either species.

¹³ Northern Seabass is not managed under a TAC. Therefore, even if management measures have been put in place, it should be not listed in the Commission communication.

¹⁴ Some stocks or Functional Units are considered undefined by ICES or have no MSY advice. Therefore this TAC cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

¹⁵ Based on ICES advice for the "reported wanted catch" of 59,800 salmon, minus an assumed Russian share of 1.9%, the **joint NGOs recommendation for 2020** for this TAC was to not exceed 58,664 salmon.

¹⁶ According to ICES, fishing mortality reference points with respect to MSY are undefined in some sandeel areas (e.g. sandeel in area 7 - northern North Sea, Shetland). Therefore, we do not consider this TAC should be listed as being "in line with MSY".

¹⁷ The **joint NGOs recommendation for 2020** for this TAC was to set it in the lower F range i.e. between MSY Flower (152,833 tonnes) and F^{MSY} (203,027 tonnes). The TAC recommendation of 203,027 tonnes was based on ICES advice of F^{MSY} (225,786 tonnes), for which the joint NGO recommendation deducted an assumed Russian share of 10.08%. But the TAC was set above the corresponding F^{MSY} , using the upper range of F^{MSY} (MSY Fupper) when accounting for an estimated Russian share. Therefore, this TAC cannot be listed as being "in line with MSY".

¹⁸ This is a combined TAC. ICES advises that brill should be managed using a single-species total allowable catch (TAC) covering an area appropriate to the relevant stock distribution (Subarea 4, and divisions 3.a and 7.d-e). Furthermore, this combined TAC was set above ICES advice.

► For further information please **contact:**

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FROM 2015 TO 2020

APRIL 2020

