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European Union

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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the framework of the Convention on Future Multilateral Co-operation in the North-East Atlantic Fisheries as regards the application for accession to that Convention submitted by the United Kingdom and repealing Council Decision (EU) 2019/510 - Adoption

1. In accordance with the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, during the transition period, the United Kingdom may negotiate, sign and ratify international agreements entered into its own capacity in the area of exclusive competence of the Union. Those international agreements may already enter into force or apply during the transition period if so authorised by the Union. Council Decision (EU) 2020/135 sets out the conditions and procedure for granting such authorisation.
2. On 6 July 2020, the United Kingdom submitted an application for accession to the NEAFC Convention. This accession would take effect during the transition period in a manner consistent with the Withdrawal Agreement.

3. On 8 September 2020, the Commission submitted a proposal for a Council Decision on the position of the Union on this accession within NEAFC repealing Council Decision (EU) 2019/510¹.
4. On the same date, the Commission also submitted a proposal for a Council Implementing Decision on the authorisation of the United Kingdom to express its consent, in its own capacity, to be bound by certain international agreements to be applied during the transition period in the area of the Union's common fisheries policy (cf. doc. 10589/20 PECHE 228 UK 37).
5. To prevent unsustainable fisheries, it is in the interest of the Union that the United Kingdom cooperates in the management of the stocks of common interest. This accession to the NEAFC Convention will allow the United Kingdom to cooperate in the necessary fishery management measures, with a view to ensuring that fishing activities are carried out in a way that results in the sustainable exploitation of the stock or stocks concerned.
6. The Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy examined this proposal on 11 September 2020 and agreed to it with minor amendments as set out in doc. 10570/20 PECHE 224 UK 34 and finalised by the legal-linguists.
7. The Working Party on the United Kingdom examined this proposal on the same date and did not raise objections to the text from a EU-UK perspective.
8. Therefore, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend that the Council adopts the decision as set out in doc. 10570/20 PECHE 224 UK 34.

¹ Council Decision (EU) 2019/510 of 25 March 2019 authorised the European Commission to approve the application for accession of the United Kingdom to the NEAFC Convention if the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union takes place without a withdrawal agreement.