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PECHE 274

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Working Party on Fisheries Policy of 6 July 2023

- I. PRESIDENCY WORK PROGRAMME
- II. CCSBT
- III. CECAF
- IV. WECAFC
- V. RFMO'S
- VI. EU-UK TCA
- VII. MAIN TAC (4TH AMENDMENT)
- VIII. MOROCCO SFPA

DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (28.02.2024)

- I. Presentation of the Presidency Work Programme
 - 1. The Presidency presented its priorities related to fisheries for the next six months.
- II. **Annual meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)**
 - *Information by the Commission*
 - 1. The Commission representative explained that whilst remaining committed to the work of both organisations, the Commission did not propose to attend the annual meetings of CCSBT and CECAF this year. This decision would have no impact on the two meetings.
 - 2. In the absence of comments from delegations, the Presidency concluded that the two annual meetings had been duly prepared and that the Working Party supported the line taken by the Commission representative.

III. Annual meeting of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF)

– *Information from the Commission*

1. This item was taken together with item 2.

IV. Nineteenth session of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) (6-8 September 2023, Bridgetown (Barbados))

– *Preparation*

1. The Commission representative presented a non-paper and draft declaration of competences (doc. 11266/23), saying that the Commission would endeavour to revive the process, initiated before the Covid-19 pandemic, aimed at upgrading WECAFC as an RFMO empowered to take binding decisions. He asked for delegations to make known by 10 July if they intended to participate in the meeting.
2. The Legal Service representative suggested amendments to the declaration of competences.
3. Two delegations intervened, one commenting further the draft declaration of competences. The Commission representative responded, reiterating his position on the declaration of competences.
4. The Presidency announced that it would table a compromise proposal for the declaration of competences. The Working Party would revert to the matter.

V. State of play of ongoing transpositions (ICCAT, eBCD, NEAFC, NAFO, SIOFA, GFCM)

– *Information from the Presidency*

1. The Presidency presented the state of play of various active files concerning the transposition into Union law of measures adopted by Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). The Presidency explained that it intended to present a general reflection paper on the topic of transpositions.
2. The Commission representative welcomed that transpositions featured on the agenda of the Presidency and welcomed the start of a reflection exercise, also in view of the future Parliament and Commission. He expressed support for an open and honest discussion on the topic.
3. No delegation took the floor.

4. The Presidency concluded that the Working Party on Fisheries Policy had taken note of the information provided by the Presidency.

VI. Specification of the Union position to be taken in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries pursuant to Article 508 of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement

– *Information by the Commission*

1. The Commission representative presented the document containing the proposed specification of the Union position to be taken in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries, with one draft decision and two draft recommendations attached.
2. Several delegations took the floor, expressing their comments and posing some questions.
3. The Council legal service representative replied to one question.
4. The Commission representative replied to some of the comments made by delegations.
5. The Presidency concluded that the Working Party had taken note of Commission's presentation and of all the comments made.

VII. Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EU) 2022/109 of 27 January 2022 fixing for 2022 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in Union waters and for Union fishing vessels in certain non-Union waters, and Regulation (EU) 2023/194 of 30 January 2023 fixing for 2023 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, as well as fixing for 2023 and 2024 such fishing opportunities for certain deep-sea fish stocks (4th TAC amendment)

– *Presentation and examination of the non-paper*

1. The Commission representative presented the latest Commission services non-paper as set out in doc. ST 11435/23 that updated the above-mentioned proposal in relation to Northern prawn.
2. Two delegations intervened and expressed support for the content of the non-paper.
3. The Presidency concluded that the Working Party had examined the non-paper and supported its content. He informed delegations that a Presidency compromise for the 4th TAC amendment would be circulated shortly for as silent consultation to ensure a speedy adoption.

VIII. Next joint committee meeting under the EU-Morocco SFPA (poss. 13 July, Brussels)

– *Preparation*

1. The Commission representative informed delegations that the next joint committee with Morocco under the current protocol would take place on 13 July ahead of its approaching expiration date.

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4. The Presidency concluded that the Working Party supported the approach outlined by the Commission and that the meeting was thus prepared.