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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing specific conditions for deep-sea stocks in the North-East Atlantic and provisions for fishing in international waters of the North-East Atlantic and repealing Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002 (First reading) - Adoption of the Council's position at first reading and of the statement of the Council's reasons = statement

Statement by the Kingdom of Spain

The proposal for access to deep-sea species is of great interest to the Kingdom of Spain, which has followed it particularly closely in recent years and is strongly committed to it, to the point that it will accept compromises for the sake of reaching a balanced agreement that will satisfy all parties, such as limiting fishing activity with bottom trawls below 800 metres in European Union waters and an own system of sanctions or of data collection, as well as an authorisation regime that will lead to a disproportionate administrative workload.

Spain has been flexible, even accepting, as indicated, redundant management systems, but a situation has been arrived at as regards observer coverage which Spain cannot agree with, since the impact which this compromise would involve will cause problems in terms of security, economic costs and the operationality of the fleet, since it envisages 20% observer coverage for targeted fishing, which is not covered by the mandate the Council gave to the Presidency, which was for 15%.

The Kingdom of Spain's commitment to protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems is beyond question. Spain has been working for years on mapping sea beds in order inter alia to achieve better and greater protection of ecosystems and the environment. The human and material investment made has been enormous, but has always been seen as an investment in sustainability. However, this compromise has disproportionate costs, does not comply with the principle of proportionality and its added value is not clear.

For all these reasons, the Kingdom of Spain is voting against this proposal.