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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Council Regulation fixing for 2023 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/109 as regards certain fishing opportunities in other waters - Political agreement - statements

DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (12.01.2026)

Joint Statement by Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden on the application of Article 15(9) in the Basic Regulation for eastern Baltic cod and western Baltic cod in 2023

Given that the biomasses of the stocks of eastern Baltic cod and western Baltic cod are below Blim, and in order to ensure the recovery of the stock in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden undertake not to make use of inter-annual flexibility under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 with regard to these stocks in 2023. This undertaking is a response to the current exceptional circumstances for the eastern Baltic cod and western Baltic cod stocks.

Joint Statement by Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden on the application of Article 15(9) in the Basic Regulation for western Baltic herring in 2023

Given that the biomass of the stock of western Baltic herring is below Blim, and in order to ensure the recovery of the stock in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden undertake not to make use of inter-annual flexibility under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 with regard to this stock in 2023. This undertaking is a response to the current exceptional circumstances for the western Baltic herring stock.

Joint Statement by Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland on the application of Article 15(9) in the Basic Regulation for main basin salmon in 2023

Given that south to latitude 59°30'N almost all wild salmon river stocks are well below Rlim, and in order to ensure the recovery of the stocks in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland undertake not to make use of inter-annual flexibility under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 with regard to these stocks in 2023. This commitment is a response to the current exceptional circumstances for the wild salmon river stocks south to latitude 59°30'N.

Joint Statement by the Commission, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden on Central Baltic and Gulf of Bothnia herring

The Commission, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden are concerned about the size and age structure of central Baltic Sea herring and Gulf of Bothnia herring. The Commission will request ICES to: (i) conduct scientific analyses of the size and age structure of those stocks, and of the reasons for the observed reduced number of larger-sized herring, and (ii) identify possible measures to address this issue.

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Joint Statement by the Commission, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden on recreational salmon fisheries in the Main Basin

Since 2021 ICES advises that there should be no commercial or recreational fishing of wild salmon in mixed sea fisheries in the main basin. Therefore, the fishing opportunities in the south to latitude 59°30'N have been limited to unavoidable by-catches and recreational fisheries in this area has been limited to a bag limit of one adipose fin-clipped salmon per fisher per day.

The Commission will request ICES to examine ways of improving the available data, notably on different types of recreational fisheries, the level of catches associated with those fisheries and their impact on the river stocks of salmon, as well as their corresponding post-release mortality. The Commission, and Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden will, based on that analysis by ICES, examine existing measures on recreational fisheries.

Joint Statement by Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden on control in pelagic fisheries

ICES states in its stock advice for the 2023 fisheries for sprat and for central herring that there is evidence of misreporting of sprat as central herring but that the effects have not been quantified nor included in the annual stock assessment. To avoid misreporting, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden underline the importance of ensuring the effective control of the mixed fisheries of sprat and herring, including correct reporting per species. These Member States commit to improve, where necessary, the control mechanisms to avoid misreporting, ensuring they are appropriate and comprehensive.

Joint Statement by the Commission, and Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden on exchanges of eastern and western Baltic cod quota

In a spirit of solidarity, a Member State not needing its entire by-catch quota for eastern or western Baltic cod will seek to agree on quota exchanges with a Member State that can demonstrate it will be confronted with a choke effect due to its limited eastern or western Baltic cod quota.

The Commission and the Member States in the Baltic Sea will assess the adequacy of these exchanges before the fixing of the fishing opportunities for 2024.

Joint Statement by Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania and Poland on transfers of Main Basin salmon quota

In a spirit of solidarity and recognising the conservation efforts made by Finland and Sweden, which have led to healthy stocks in their waters, a Member State which cannot use its entire quota for Main Basin salmon will consider a voluntary transfer of the unused or unusable part of that quota to Finland and/or Sweden.

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Joint Statement by the Commission and Germany on the option of support for the temporary cessation of fishing activities by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) or the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)

1. Article 5(3), point (a) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2016 establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks allows the Member States to adopt emergency measures in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy.

2. Given the assessment of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) on cod and herring in subdivisions 22-24 Germany therefore deems it necessary to adopt emergency measures in accordance with Article 13(1) of Regulation 1380/2013. The emergency measures in subdivisions 22-24 for German fishing vessels consist in introducing an additional closure of 30 days for the protection of cod along the fishing rules established in Article 7(3) of the Regulation fixing for 2023 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea during which the exemption contained in Article 7 (4)(b) shall not apply, and limiting the herring fishery by additional 30 days during which the exemption for certain small-scale coastal fisheries from the prohibition to target western herring is interrupted.

3. The Commission and Germany agree that this emergency measure under Article 33(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 508 /2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund or Article 21(2)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1139 of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 is eligible for funding from the EMFF or the EMFAF respectively, in accordance with the conditions therein.

Joint Statement by Denmark, Germany, Finland, Poland and Sweden on Western Baltic Spring Spawning Herring

Given the poor status of the stock and that the biomass of Western Baltic spring spawning herring remains below B_{lim}, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Poland and Sweden underline their willingness to rebuild the stock. To achieve this, it is necessary to limit catches from this stock in all management areas where it is present. Therefore, aforementioned Member States will support in the framework of the trilateral negotiations between the European Union, Norway and the United Kingdom to roll over the methodology applied for 2022 for the TAC setting of herring in ICES subarea 3.a, including the respective footnotes. They furthermore urge the Commission to negotiate with Norway on seasonal area closures in the so called "transfer area" in the Eastern North Sea.

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