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PECHE 146

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 6 April 2017
To: Delegations

Subject: Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy:
I. First Joint T-RFMO FAD Working group meeting
II. Technical measures
III. EU/Senegal Joint Committee
IV. IOTC annual session
V. Mediterranean Swordfish
VI. Amended GFCM Agreement
VII. SPRFMO Proposal
VIII. Norway Snow-crab in Svalbard

V. Allocation key for Mediterranean Swordfish

1. The Commission representative recalled that during its annual meeting in November 2016, ICCAT adopted a recovery plan for Mediterranean Swordfish which included an unallocated TAC from 2017. Therefore, the Proposal for the Regulation for fishing opportunities in 2017 indicated a "pm" with regard to the EU's TAC/quota for the said species. ICCAT subsequently reached a tentative agreement on the ICCAT allocation key during the ICCAT Working Group on Mediterranean Swordfish in Madrid, in February last, resulting in an allocation of 70,756% of the ICCAT TAC for the EU, amounting to 7,410.48 tonnes in 2017. ICCAT is in the process of adopting the ICCAT allocation by written procedure which expires on 18 April 2017.

2. As part of preparing the Commission's Proposal for the 2nd amendment of the Regulation for fishing opportunities in 2017, which is envisaged for June 2017, the Commission services organised a technical meeting with delegations on 21 March 2017. During this meeting several options were discussed, but the option as set out in the non-paper¹ for discussion in the Working Party was the option which gathered the broadest support. At this stage, the Commission services wish to hear the views of the Working Party on the ideas set out in the non-paper.
3. IT underlined the sensitivity of the issue and could not support the ideas set out in the non-paper. It did not agree with a reference period different from the period used by ICCAT and wanted to see the proof on the allegedly illegal fishing activities in 2010 and 2011. IT stated that, should the contents of the non-paper become the Commission's official proposal, it would take the issue to Coreper/Council. HR did not support an allocation of 16 tonnes either, noting it was looking for an allocation in the region of 50 tonnes.
4. EL stated its support for the tentative agreement on an allocation key which had emerged during the technical meeting on 21 March 2017. She considered the allocation key balanced and reflecting collective efforts by delegations to ensure an overall result which both took account of national conservation efforts and of delegations with very small catches. In a spirit of compromise, CY, ES and FR could support the non-paper. ES offered HR a quota swap of 35 tonnes for the rest of the year, which led HR to withdraw its opposition.
5. The Presidency concluded that the Working Party had had a discussion on the non-paper which, due to an ES offer of quota swap with HR, was supported by all delegations with the exception of IT. The Working Party will revert to this issue in the context of the 2nd amendment of the Regulation of fishing opportunities for 2017.

¹ Cf. doc. 7924/17