



Political agreement on Western Waters Multi-Annual Plan undermines Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) commitments

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On 12 December 2018, a political agreement on the European Commission's proposal for a multi-annual Plan (MAP) for fish stocks in the Western Waters was reached in trilogue. The text resulting from inter-institutional negotiations was approved by the Fisheries Committee on 23rd January, and will be voted in the plenary on 11th of February 2019.

NGOs urge you to reject the text resulting from the inter-institutional negotiations, as it undermines key requirements of the CFP.

IT FAILS TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF ALL WESTERN WATERS STOCKS.

The CFP's objective to restore harvested species to healthy levels applies to all fish stocks. The political agreement would only apply this objective to a limited number of Western Waters 'target' stocks, and apply lower management targets to so-called 'bycatch' stocks.

IT ALLOWS FISHING ABOVE SUSTAINABLE LEVELS.

In order to restore fish stocks, the CFP requires that fishing mortality be limited to sustainable levels. The political agreement, as with earlier MAPs for the Baltic and North Seas, contravenes this requirement as it allows the use of ranges of fishing mortality above the F_{MSY} point value. This will impede the achievement of the CFP's objective.

IT FAILS TO DELIVER LONG-TERM, ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT FOR THE WESTERN WATERS.

Multi-annual plans were intended to deliver the overarching objectives of the CFP under regionalized, long-term, ecosystem-based fisheries management. The political agreement merely enables the Council to set fishing limits above the levels required by the CFP, without adding measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of Western Waters ecosystems such as eliminating bycatch of seabirds, dolphins and whales.

We urge MEPs to reject the text as it is not in line with the CFP, is inconsistent with EU environmental legislation, and does not secure environmentally and economically sustainable fisheries.

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