



Annex II

Joint NGO recommendations for 2018 total allowable catches

For selected Northeast Atlantic and North Sea stocks

4 December 2017

This annex contains joint NGO recommendations for total allowable catches (TACs) in 2018 for selected fish stocks. This list of stocks does not aim to be comprehensive but rather to highlight cases of particular concern, for instance due to unfavourable stock status and/or excessive fishing mortality to date. This focus on stocks that have not yet met the objectives of the CFP does not preclude potential increases in catches for other stocks, as long as they are in line with scientific advice.

Unless otherwise stated, these joint NGO TAC recommendations refer to maximum amounts that should not be exceeded. In the context of mixed fisheries, TACs for some stocks will have to be set below these recommended limits in order not to overexploit other stocks.

All of the recommendations below refer to stocks for which the management area is the same or larger than the advice area¹, so that TAC figures can be directly compared to the scientific advice. Mismatch issues related to the management areas and the advice areas prevent clear recommendations for other stocks of concern.²

For stocks fully subject to the landing obligation, the TAC recommendations are based on catch advice, whereas for stocks not yet subject to the landing obligation recommendations are based on landings advice (as discarding will be allowed to continue). Our TAC recommendations do not include top-up quantities, but the relevant TACs for which a top-up may be considered (marked with an ^a) and those which are fully subject to the landing obligation (marked with a ^b) are identified in the first column of the table. An asterisk (*) identifies the TACs that the Commission and the Council agreed to keep unchanged due to a “presumption of stability”.³

¹ TAC areas are often larger than the area covered by the corresponding ICES advice in order to avoid misreporting of catches as taken in areas without TAC.

² For example, the two whiting stocks in the West of Scotland (VIa) and Rockall (VIb) are managed under one combined TAC (WHG/56-14), which prevents a stock-specific TAC recommendation and does not ensure sustainable exploitation of both stocks. ICES has been advising zero catches for the West of Scotland stock since 2006 and the Commission’s proposal for 2018 follows this, but in previous years a bycatch-TAC has been set for both stocks combined.

³ Joint Statement by the Council and the Commission “Ad statement stable stocks”. Council document PECHE 491, 15502/15 REV1.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
^a Cod in Kattegat (COD/03AS)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - F increasing - SSB decreasing	Catch: 772 Landings: 254	525 (no top-up specified)	525	254	Recruitment in 2016 was lowest in the time-series. Stock size increasing since 2009; now decreasing again. Very high levels of discarding (67%). Possible mixing with North Sea cod.
Cod in Vla , EU & int. waters Vb (E) (COD/5BE6A)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F > F_{lim}$ - $SSB < B_{lim}$	Catch: 0 Landings: 0	0	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	Recruitment has been low since 2001.
*Cod in Vlb , EU & int. waters Vb (W) (COD/5W6-14)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - F trend unknown - SSB trend unknown	Catch: 14 Landings: No advice	74	74 (0%)	14 (-81%)	

⁴ All top-up information is based on a European Commission response (30/01/2017) to an access to information request regarding 2017 fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea - documentation on the calculation of top-ups, submitted by Seas at Risk on 23rd Nov 2016. Ref Ares(2017)499998 – Annexe 3 (Summary of pre and post top-up TACs).

⁵ Figures based in original proposal COM (2017) 645, Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2018 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. [Articles](#), [Annex I](#), [Annex II-VIII](#). For certain stocks, no proposal has been published – these are marked in the Commission proposal as *pm (pro memoria)*.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
Cod in VIIe-k , VIIbc, VIII-X, CECAF 34.1.1 (COD/7XAD34)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F_{PA} > F > F_{MSY}$ - $SSB < B_{lim}$	Catch: 3428 Landings: 3076	2830	pm	3076 (+9%)	Recruitment is below average and has been highly variable over time.
Haddock in VIIf-k , VIII, IX, X, CECAF (HAD/7X7A34)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F_{PA} > F > F_{MSY}$ - $SSB > MSY B_{trigger}$	Catch: 8358 Landings: 5911	7751	pm	5911 (-24%)	Recruitment is below average. In recent years, actual catches have significantly exceeded ICES catch advice.
^a Hake in VIIfc , IXa (HKE/8C3411)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F_{PA} > F > F_{MSY}$ - $SSB > MSY B_{trigger}$	Catch: 8561 Landings: 7366	9776 (+ 744t)	7366 (-25%)	7366 (-25%)	Recruitment is close to the historical average. In the last couple of years, actual catches exceeded the agreed TAC, which in-turn exceeded the catch advice.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
^b Herring in Vla North & South, VIIbc (HER/6AS7BC & HER/5B6ANB)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F < F_{MSY}$ - $SSB < B_{lim}$	Catch: 0 Landings: 0	1630 + 4170 = 5800	1630 + 4170 5800 (0%)	0 (-100%) In line with ICES response to the EU request to evaluate the proposed recovery plan , any monitoring TAC should be reduced to match the maximum F following from the ICES MSY rule.	Recruitment since 2013 has been at an all-time low. A roll-over of the '2017 monitoring TAC' is expected to further reduce the SSB. No catch options predicted to result in $SSB > B_{lim}$ by 2018. The TAC of 5800 t set for monitoring purposes in 2016 and 2017 exceeded ICES advice for a scientific monitoring fishery (4840 t) by 20%, and estimated catches by ICES for 2016 (6937 t) exceeded this TAC by an additional 20%.
^b Herring in VIIa, VIIg-h, VIIj-k (HER/7G-K.)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F_{lim} > F > F_{PA}$ - $MSY B_{trigger} \& B_{PA} > SSB > B_{lim}$	Catch: 5445 Landings: No advice	14467	5445 (-62%)	5445 (-62%)	Recruitment has been below average since 2013.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
*Plaice in VIIh-k (PLE/7HJK)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach (MSY proxy) Stock status/trends: - $F > F_{lim}$ proxy - $SSB < B_{lim}$ proxy	Catch: 0 Landings: 0	128	0 (-100%)	0 (-100%)	Recruitment at low level since 2013. Taken in mixed fishery. Area management and increased selectivity to prevent catch of small plaice could improve stock recovery. Landings below TAC in last 2 years.
Sole in VIIa (SOL/07A.)	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F < F_{MSY}$ - $SSB < B_{lim}$	Catch: 0 Landings: 0	40	40 (0%)	0 (-100%)	Recruitment is at low levels.
*²Sole in VIIbc (SOL/7BC.)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - F trend unknown - SSB trend unknown	Catch: 24 Landings: 24	42	42 (0%)	24 (-43%)	No top-up because catch advice = landings advice.
*³Sole in VIIhjk (SOL/7HJK.)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach (MSY proxy) Stock status/trends: - $F < F_{MSY}$ proxy - $SSB > MSY B_{trigger}$ proxy	Catch: 268 Landings: 268	382	382	268 (-30%)	No top-up because catch advice = landings advice.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
* ^b Sprat in VIIde (SPR/7DE.)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - Harvest rate increasing - Biomass decreasing	Catch: 2354 Landings: 2354	4120	3296 (-20%)	2354 (-43%)	Extension of the acoustic survey is foreseen for 2017. Official landings far below TAC for years. The Commission's proposal does not follow ICES advice. It appears to apply the 20% reduction to the 2017 TAC, rather than applying the uncertainty cap and precautionary buffer to the advised catch for 2017, as advised by ICES.
^a Whiting in IIIa (WHG/03A.)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - F trend unknown - SSB trend unknown	Catch: 400 Landings: 172	1050 (no top-up specified)	pm	172	Whiting in IIIa are taken as bycatch in demersal fisheries and are mostly discarded. The TAC of 1050 t has exceeded ICES catch advice by > 100% since 2013, and actual catches in 2015 and 2016 exceeded the agreed TAC.
*Whiting in VIIa	Advice basis: - MSY approach Stock status/trends: - $F > F_{lim}$ - $SSB < B_{lim}$	Catch: 0 Landings: 0	80	pm	0 (-100%)	Recruitment has been low since the early 1990s. ICES has been advising 0 catches since the early 2000s.



Species, fishing area and TAC code	Advice basis and stock status/trends	2018 ICES advice in tonnes	2017 TAC excluding top-up in tonnes (+ top-up in tonnes ⁴)	2018 EC proposal excluding top-up in tonnes ⁵ (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	2018 NGO recommendation excluding top-up in tonnes (% change vs. 2017 TAC excluding top-up)	Technical observations
Whiting in VIII & IX (WHG/08. + WHG/9/3411)	Advice basis: - Precautionary Approach Stock status/trends: - No reference points - F trend unknown - SSB trend unknown	Catch: No advice Landings: 1613	2540 (0%)	2540 (0%)	1613 (-36%)	Landings have been reasonably stable over the time period. For the fleets for which discard data are available, discarding is substantial (well above 5%).

* Stocks with a “presumption of stability” included in the 2013 Joint Statement by the Council and the Commission “Ad statement stable stocks” (Council document PECHE 491, 15502/15 REV1.), agreeing to keep these TACs constant for 5 years, unless the perception of the status of any of them changed significantly according to scientific advice.

^a Stocks at least partially subject to the landing obligation in 2018, for which a top-up may be applied to the landings-TAC. The NGO TAC recommendations are based on the landings advice.

^b Stocks fully subject to the landing obligation in 2018, for which the NGO TAC recommendations are based on the catch advice.