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Date: 6 November 2012  
Our reference: 1213PRAC10  
Subject: Fishing opportunities 2013 for WBSS and NSAS herring  
CC: Olivier Baudalet (by e-mail)

Dear Ms Evans,

At its latest Working Group I meeting on 4 October 2012 the Pelagic RAC discussed fishing opportunities in 2013 for Western Baltic spring spawning herring and North Sea autumn spawning herring taking into account the recent results of the ICES working group WKHELP on the revision of the North Sea autumn spawning herring management plan. Subsequently the formulated recommendations were adopted unanimously by the Executive Committee through written procedure.

Please find the detailed recommendations attached in the annex and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Ohms', is written in a cursive style.

Ms Verena Ohms  
Pelagic RAC Secretariat

## **Annex I: Recommendation on fishing opportunities in 2013 for Western Baltic spring spawning herring and North Sea autumn spawning herring.**

### Western Baltic spring spawning herring

Since there is no management plan in place for this stock the Pelagic RAC does not advise on a specific TAC number for 2013. Instead it is strongly recommended that the development of a management plan for this stock will be given the highest priority for the next year. A benchmark exercise will be conducted in the forthcoming months in which the Pelagic RAC will be heavily involved and the results from this exercise should be used as the basis for developing a management plan. Over the course of that process several issues should be addressed and resolved: questions of allocation between subdivisions 22-24 and area IIIa, evaluation of mixing with North Sea autumn spawning herring and the possible quota flexibility into the North Sea.

In summary, the Pelagic RAC recommends that:

- The development of a management plan will be given highest priority in 2013.
- Issues relating to catch allocations, mixing with other herring stocks and quota flexibility will be resolved during the benchmark process.

### North Sea autumn spawning herring

The Pelagic RAC recommends that the current management plan for this stock will be amended according to the advice of the ICES working group WKHELP in which representatives of the Pelagic RAC participated. Based on a joint EU-Norway request to re-evaluate the precautionary reference points ( $B_{lim}$ ,  $B_{pa}$ ,  $F_{lim}$  and  $F_{pa}$ ) and management reference points ( $B_{trigger}$ ,  $F_{msy}$ ) for this stock as well as to conduct an evaluation of the harvest control rule under different conditions, WKHELP has identified several options which are in accordance with the precautionary approach. The most favourable of these options in the view of the Pelagic RAC is the current harvest control rule with a 50/50 stabilizing mechanism, a  $B_{trigger}$  of 1.3 Million tons and a Fishing mortality of 0.24. On top of that the Pelagic RAC recommends applying banking or banking & borrowing of 10% or any lower number which ICES considers sustainable. The TAC for 2013 should be set in accordance with this harvest control rule.

In summary, the Pelagic RAC recommends that:

- The current management plan will be amended by using the current harvest control rule, but applying a 50/50 stabilizing mechanism.
- $B_{trigger}$  will be set to 1.3 Million tons and  $F$  to 0.24.
- Banking or banking & borrowing of 10% or any lower sustainable number will be applied on top of this harvest control rule.
- The TAC in 2013 will be set accordingly.