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Date: 6 May 2016  
Our reference: 1516/PAC 72  
Subject: Implementation of boarfish closures

Dear Mr Gueudar-Delahaye,

It has been a longstanding tradition of the Pelagic AC to develop multiannual management strategies for all stocks under its remit. One of the management strategies successfully developed by the Pelagic AC in collaboration with the Marine Institute in Ireland and DTU Aqua is the one for boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic (see annex I). ICES has evaluated this strategy and concluded that it is precautionary and the Commission has announced to take it into consideration for its future work on boarfish<sup>1</sup>.

While the Commission indeed proposed a TAC in accordance with the management strategy, this strategy also foresees the following closed seasons and areas which cannot be included in the TAC and Quota Regulation:

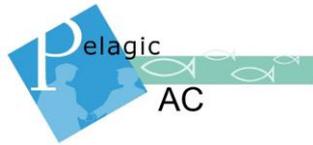
- a) A closed season shall operate from 31<sup>st</sup> March to the 31<sup>st</sup> August. This is because it is known that herring and mackerel are present in these areas and may be caught with boarfish.
- b) A closed area shall be implemented inside the Irish 12-mile limit south of 52°30 from 12th February to 31st October, in order to prevent catches of Celtic Sea herring, known to form aggregations at these times.

After consultation with the Commission it has been confirmed that these closures could, however, be implemented through an amendment to the discard plan for pelagic fisheries in the North Western Waters. Therefore, the Pelagic AC kindly requests the North Western Waters regional group to amend its discard plan for pelagic fisheries accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pelagic-ac.org/media/pdf/1516ref%2006%20EC%20reply%20CS%20herring%20and%20boarfish.pdf>





In case you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Gatt".

Ian Gatt  
Chairman Pelagic AC



## Management Strategy for Boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic

This management strategy aims to achieve sustainable exploitation of boarfish in line with the precautionary approach to fisheries management, FAO guidelines for new and developing fisheries, and the ICES form of advice.

- 2) The TAC shall be set in accordance with the following procedure, depending on the ICES advice
  - a) If category 1 advice (stocks with quantitative assessments) is given based on a benchmarked assessment, the TAC shall be set following that advice.
  - b) If category 1 or 2 (qualitative assessments and forecasts) advice is given based on a non-benchmarked assessment the TAC shall be set following this advice.
  - c) Categories 3-6 are described below as follows :
    - i) Category 3: stocks for which survey-based assessments indicate trends. This category includes stocks with quantitative assessments and forecasts which for a variety of reasons are considered indicative of trends in fishing mortality, recruitment, and biomass.
    - ii) Category 4: stocks for which only reliable catch data are available. This category includes stocks for which a time-series of catch can be used to approximate MSY.
    - iii) Category 5: landings only stocks. This category includes stocks for which only landings data are available.
    - iv) Category 6 : Category 6 – negligible landings stocks and stocks caught in minor amounts as bycatch
- 3) Notwithstanding paragraph 1, if, in the opinion of ICES, the stock is at risk of recruitment impairment, a TAC may be set at a lower level.
- 4) If the stock, estimated in the either of the 2 years before the TAC is to be set, is at or below  $B_{lim}$  or any suitable proxy thereof, the TAC shall be set at 0 t.
- 5) The TAC shall not exceed 75,000 t in any year.
- 6) The TAC shall not be allowed to increase by more than 25% per year. However there shall be no limit on the decrease in TAC. Where the TAC is reduced to zero the 25% limit shall not apply to reopening the fishery. Instead ICES advice will be followed.
- 7) Closed seasons, closed areas, and moving on procedures shall apply to all directed boarfish fisheries as follows:
  - a) A closed season shall operate from 31<sup>st</sup> March to the 31<sup>st</sup> August. This is because it is known that herring and mackerel are present in these areas and may be caught with boarfish.
  - b) A closed area shall be implemented inside the Irish 12-mile limit south of 52°30 from 12th February to 31st October, in order to prevent catches of Celtic Sea herring, known to form aggregations at these times.
  - c) If catches of other species covered by a TAC amount to more than 5% of the total catch by day by ICES statistical rectangle, then all fishing must cease in that rectangle for 5 consecutive days.