

Press release: Clean bill of health for all but one of the 41 EU agencies, say Auditors

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Fisheries: Commission proposes measures to conserve stocks of deep-sea species in the North-East Atlantic

"Our proposal invites Member States to apply a precautionary approach to reverse the worrying situation of declining deep-sea fish stocks", said Commissioner Karmenu Vella, responsible for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. "It is in our shared interest to ensure that we have healthy fish stocks in deep-sea waters, for the sake of our fishermen and coastal communities, their livelihoods and for our marine ecosystems. Evidence also shows that sustainable fish stocks go hand in hand with a thriving industry."

The majority of deep-sea species are highly vulnerable and take a long time to mature. The Commission's proposal is based on precautionary scientific advice from the [International Council for the Exploration of the Seas \(ICES\)](#), and takes into account the obligation for fishermen to bring to land all catches as of 1st January 2019. The proposal reduces the catch limits in seven fish management areas compared to 2017-2018 levels, including for alfonsoinos and black scabbardfish. Fishing for orange roughy will remain prohibited.

At the same time, positive scientific advice concerning red seabream around the Azores and roundnose grenadier in South Western waters, has allowed the Commission to propose increased quotas for these species over the next two years.

The Commission also proposes to cancel the TAC management system for three species (greater forkbeard in the North-East Atlantic, roundnose grenadier in the North Sea and black scabbardfish in the North Sea and Skagerrak), as they are fished in small quantity which does not prevent them from reproducing.

The scientific advice for deep-sea sharks was delivered on 5 October and is currently being analysed. The Commission will complete the current proposal in view of its adoption by EU Member States in the Council, currently scheduled for 19-20 November.

Background

Deep-sea fisheries account for less than 1% of all fish caught in the North-East Atlantic. Over the years, fishing activity and associated jobs have been declining together with deep-sea stocks. At the same time, data on the structure of the stocks, age classes or frequency of young fish recruitment are often difficult to gather because of the deep-sea marine environment. Scientific advice recommends applying the precautionary approach to these stocks. The goal is to improve the state of stocks and allow for fishing at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), the level that allows the fishing industry to take the highest amount of fish from the sea while keeping fish stocks healthy.

Fishing for deep-sea species has been regulated by the European Union since 2003.

For further information

[Map of fishing areas](#)

[Total Allowable Catches](#)

Annex: TACs proposal for each deep-sea species

Species	Area	Council Regulation (EU) 2016/2285 12/12/2016		Commission Proposal XXX (2018) 09/10/2018			
		TAC in 2017 (tonnes)	TAC in 2018 (tonnes)	TAC 2019 Proposal	TAC change (%) 2018-2019 <i>proposed</i>	TAC 2020 Proposal	TAC change (%) 2019-2020 <i>proposed</i>
Deep-Sea sharks	EU and international waters of 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	10	10	pm *		pm *	
	EU and international waters of 10	10	10	pm *		pm *	
Deep-sea sharks – <i>Deania hystricosa</i> and <i>Deania profundorum</i>	International waters of 12	0	0	pm *		pm *	
Deep-Sea sharks	Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2	10	10	pm *		pm *	
Black scabbardfish **	EU and international waters of 5, 6, 7, and 12	2954	2600	2390	– 8%	2390	0%
	EU and international waters of 8, 9 and 10	3330	2997	2832	-6%	2832	0%
	EU and international waters of CECAF 34.1.2.	2488	2189	Delegation to PT		Delegation to PT	
Alfonsinos	EU and international waters of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 14	280	280	224	-20%	224	0%

	EU and international waters of 3	278	223	50	-78%	50	0%
Roundnose grenadier **	EU and international waters of 5b, 6, 7	3052	3120	2462	-21%	2462	0%
	EU and international waters of 8, 9, 10, 12 and 14	2623	2099	2281	+9%	2281	0%
	EU and international waters of 6, 7 and 8	144	130	104	-20%	83	-20%
Red seabream	EU and international waters of 9	174	165	149	-10%	149	0%
	EU and international waters of 10	517	517	576	+11%	576	0%

* The scientific advice for deep-sea sharks has been delivered on 5 October 2018 and is currently being reviewed.

** TAC management cancellation:

- for black scabbardfish in the North Sea and Skagerrak (ICES subareas of 1,2,3 and 4) due to low quota uptake and no targeted fisheries
- for roundnose grenadier in the North Sea (ICES subareas 1,2 and 4), following ICES advice that this would pose no risk of unsustainable exploitation
- for greater forkbeard (ICES subareas 1-10, 12 and 14), following ICES advice that removing these TACs would pose a low risk of unsustainable exploitation

[Joint Declaration by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the European and World Day against the Death Penalty](#)

Press contacts

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On the European and World Day against the Death Penalty, the Council of Europe and the European Union (EU) reiterate their strong opposition to capital punishment in all circumstances and for all cases. The death penalty is an affront to human dignity. It constitutes cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and is contrary to the right to life. The death penalty has no established deterrent effect and it makes judicial errors irreversible.

All EU and Council of Europe member states have abolished the death penalty. Abolition in law or practice is a pre-condition of Council of Europe membership and the absolute ban on the death penalty in all circumstances is entrenched in both Protocols No 6 and No 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. We call on those European states that have not yet done so to ratify them.

We also reiterate our call to the authorities in Belarus, the only country on the European continent still using the death penalty, to introduce a moratorium as a decisive step towards aligning the country with pan-European standards.

On a global level, the Council of Europe and the EU will continue to work towards the abolition of the death penalty. We will support the upcoming Resolution of the UN General Assembly on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty and the EU and Belgium will host the 7th World Congress Against the Death Penalty in Brussels at the end of February 2019.

Pending the introduction of a moratorium, the Council of Europe and the EU urge those countries still applying the death penalty to commute any remaining death sentences to prison terms and, in any case, to ensure that conditions of detention respect human dignity. In line with international law, those countries shall not carry out executions on minors, on pregnant women, or on people with mental illness or intellectual disabilities. Furthermore, using the death penalty on people convicted of economic crimes, on people who are themselves victims of serious crimes such as marital rape and whose acts – motivated by genuine self-defence – result in the incidental death of another person cannot be justified. Member states should refrain from supporting, through mutual legal assistance or other forms of co-operation, the drug policies of countries where drug offences may be sanctioned with the death penalty.

Member states should continue taking effective measures to prevent their involvement, however indirect, in the use of the death penalty by third countries, such as by adopting measures that prevent the trade in goods that could subsequently be used to carry out executions. In this context, the Council of Europe and the EU will continue promoting the “Global Alliance to end trade in goods used for capital punishment and torture”.

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Scientific advice recommends applying the precautionary approach to these stocks. The goal is to improve the state of stocks and allow for fishing at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), the level that allows the fishing industry to take the highest amount of fish from the sea while keeping fish stocks healthy.

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Daily News 09 / 10 / 2018

Fisheries: Commission proposes measures to conserve stocks of deep-sea species in the North-East Atlantic

Today the Commission has proposed Total Allowable Catches (TAC) for a number of species for 2019 and 2020, in an effort to restore deep-sea fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic. *“Our proposal invites Member States to apply a precautionary approach to reverse the worrying situation of declining deep-sea fish stocks”*, said Commissioner Karmenu **Vella**, responsible for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. *“It is in our shared interest to ensure that we have healthy fish stocks in deep-sea waters, for the sake of our fishermen and coastal communities, their livelihoods and for our marine ecosystems. Evidence also shows that sustainable fish stocks go hand in hand with a thriving industry.”* The majority of deep-sea species are highly vulnerable and take a long time to mature. The Commission’s proposal reduces the catch limits in seven fish management areas compared to 2017-2018 levels and cancels the Total Allowable Catches (TAC) management system for three species as they are fished in small quantity which does not prevent them from reproducing. Fishing for orange roughy will remain prohibited. The proposal is based on precautionary scientific advice from the [International Council for the Exploration of the Seas \(ICES\)](#) and its adoption by EU Member States in the Council is currently scheduled for 19-20 November. A [press release](#) is

available online. (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664)

Mergers: Commission approves acquisition of Com Hem by Tele2

The European Commission has approved unconditionally, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of Com Hem by Tele2. Tele2 and Com Hem both provide telecommunications services in Sweden. Com Hem's main activities are related to fixed telecommunications and TV, while Tele2 is mainly active in mobile telecommunications. Firstly, although both companies are active in the provision of retail mobile telecommunications services, retail fixed internet access services and multiple play services, the Commission found that the impact of the transaction on these markets is very limited. Secondly, the Commission found that the merged entity would continue to face significant competition from other players such as Telia and Telenor, both active on all retail telecommunications markets in Sweden, as well as Tre, active on the retail mobile telecommunications market in Sweden. Thirdly, the Commission concluded that the merged entity would not have market power to shut out or marginalise its fixed or mobile competitors by bundling fixed and mobile products. Therefore, following its phase I investigation, the Commission concluded that the transaction would raise no competition concerns in any of the affected markets and cleared the case unconditionally. The full press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of VTG by Warwick Holding

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of VTG Aktiengesellschaft ("VTG") by Warwick Holding GmbH, both of Germany, controlled by Morgan Stanley of the US. VTG is a provider of wagon hire and rail logistics services, as well as multimodal logistics services, focusing on rail transport and global tank container transport. Warwick Holding is an indirectly, wholly-owned subsidiary of funds advised by Morgan Stanley Infrastructure. Morgan Stanley is a leading global financial services firm providing a wide range of investment banking, securities, wealth management and investment management services. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the lack of horizontal overlaps and vertical relationships between the activities of VTG and Morgan Stanley. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9116](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini delivers keynote speech at the opening of the Frankfurter Buchmesse

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** will deliver a keynote speech at the opening of Frankfurt Book Fair, the Frankfurter Buchmesse, on cultural diplomacy today at 17:30. Culture is an important pillar of the EU's external relations. In June 2016, the High Representative and the Commission put forward a [Strategy for International Cultural Relations](#) for deeper and more effective cultural relations and cooperation between EU Member States and cultural actors in- and outside the EU. In line with the strategy, the EU has launched a number of programmes to foster cooperation among stakeholders in the cultural sector, aiming at supporting culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development, promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful intercommunity relations, and reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage. Georgia is this year's guest of honour of the Frankfurt Book Fair. Together with Georgian Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze, High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** will attend the inauguration of the Guest of Honour Pavilion. Georgia has been awarded fifteen grants under the Creative Europe programme, with two projects specifically involving the book sector. Federica **Mogherini**'s speech will be available on [Ebs](#). For more information on EU cultural relations see [here](#) the factsheet. *(For more information: Maja Kocijančič – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Esther Osorio – Tel.: +32 229 62076)*

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini in Finland

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** will be in Finland on Wednesday, 10 October. On Wednesday morning at the University of Tampere, where she will be awarded a doctoris honoris causa in a promotion ceremony and deliver a lecture discussing "A superpower for peace: Europe's choice in a challenging world". The speech can be followed live on [EbS](#) at around 11:00 local time/ 10:00 CET. In the afternoon she will have bilateral meetings in Helsinki with Prime Minister Juha Sipilä and the Foreign Minister's Special Representative on Mediation, Jutta Urpilainen. The High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** will address the press together with Prime Minister Sipilä at 17:15 local time/10:15 CET. In the evening, she will deliver a speech on "the European Union as a peace project, in the Balkans and beyond" at the celebration, organised by the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), of the 10th anniversary of Martti Ahtisaari's Nobel Peace Prize. In that context, she will also meet with the former President Ahtisaari, founder of the CMI, as well as the current CMI Chairman, former Prime Minister Alexander Stubb. Audio-visual coverage of her visit will be available on [EbS](#). *(For more information: Maja Kocijančič – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Esther Osorio – Tel.: +32 229 62076)*

Event in Brussels "Energy Union in motion – Cohesion Policy supporting coal regions in transition" with Vice-President Šefčovič and Commissioner Crețu

Today Vice-President in charge of the Energy Union Maroš **Šefčovič** and Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** are hosting a high-level event

on “Energy Union in motion – Cohesion Policy supporting coal regions in transition” in Brussels. The event will take place in the Square (Brussels 1000) from 15h45-17h15 and is open to accredited press and to participants of the [European Week of Regions and Cities](#). Vice-President **Šefčovič** and Commissioner **Crețu** will hold a joint press point at the event’s venue at 15h45. Dietmar Woidke, Minister-President of the German State of Brandenburg, Tomasz Dąbrowski, Polish Deputy Energy Minister, Małgorzata Ochęduszek-Ludwik, Regional Board Member of the Silesian Voivodship, Octav Dan Paxino, Romanian Secretary of State of the Ministry of European Funds, Vojtech Ferencz, Slovak State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy David Koppitz, Czech Deputy Minister for Regional Development, Ministry for Regional Development, will speak at this event, which will take stock of the [Platform for the Coal regions in transition](#) launched in December 2017 and of the [tailored support](#) provided by the Commission to such regions. Vice-President **Šefčovič** said: *“Climate action starts in our regions. That is why we have launched a structural support for coal and carbon intensive regions – to support the modernisation of their economies, and address the social impacts of the low-carbon transition. It is about people’s health, their jobs as well as about opportunities for the future. Therefore, we are already working with regions in seven Member States and mobilising our EU programmes for this great cause. Moreover, we are set to discuss this initiative with our international partners at COP24 in Katowice to expand it globally.”* Commissioner **Arias Cañete** said: *“We launched the Platform for Coal Regions in Transition, to help affected regions manage the social and economic transformation that comes with the decline of coal. We are pleased that many stakeholders and many governmental representatives from coal intensive regions will be joining the next Platform meeting at the beginning of November, to the benefit of European regions managing this transition”.* Commissioner **Crețu** added: *“The EU is committed to ensuring that nobody and no region is left behind in the shift towards a low-carbon economy. The EU Cohesion Policy significantly invests to foster growth and jobs in coal regions, by helping them identify, develop and invest in new areas of competitive strength – what we call smart specialisation.”* The seven Member States concerned are the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. More information on the Commission support to coal regions in transition is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615, Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

La commissaire Bulc participe à un dialogue avec les citoyens sur la numérisation et la décarbonisation dans le secteur des transports à Milan, en Italie

Aujourd’hui, la commissaire chargée des transports, Violeta **Bulc**, participe à un dialogue avec les citoyens à l’Université catholique du Sacré-Cœur de Milan. Mme **Bulc** écoutera plus de 150 étudiants dans le cadre de discussions sur la numérisation et la décarbonisation du secteur des transports en Europe, comme indiqué dans les propositions de la Commission européenne [“L’Europe en mouvement”](#), pour une mobilité propre, sûre et connectée. La commissaire soulèvera en particulier l’importance du sujet en déclarant: *“La*

décarbonisation et la numérisation sont les deux pierres angulaires de notre ambitieuse Vision Zéro pour l'Europe qui veut atteindre: zéro décès sur les routes européennes, zéro émission des transports et zéro papier d'ici 2050. L'avenir des transports en Europe est numérique et vert. En mettant l'accent sur la décarbonisation et la numérisation, nous accélérons la transition de l'Europe vers un transport plus durable, efficace et intégré." L'événement sera diffusé en direct via facebook [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Enrico Brivio – Tél .: +32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tél .: +32 229 13917)

European Commission's participation in G20, World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings in Indonesia

Vice-President **Dombrovskis**, Commissioner **Hahn** and Commissioner **Moscovici** will represent the European Commission at the [2018 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group](#) in Bali, Indonesia, this week. Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will take part in the introductory plenary session of the International Monetary and Financial Committee of the IMF; Commissioner **Hahn** will host a high level enhanced cooperation meeting with European and International Financial Institutions and Commissioner **Moscovici** will participate in the meetings of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors. The Vice-President and the Commissioners will also have several high-level bilateral meetings and speaking engagements. Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will meet Mr Jerome Powell, Chair of the Federal Reserve of the United States; Ms Oksana Markarova, Acting Minister for Finance of Ukraine; Mr Steven Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States; and Mr Suma Chakrabarti, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). He will also speak at the event '[Investing for positive impact: what is needed to scale up](#)' and take part in the panel discussion 'Europe's way forward: for more resilience and sustainable growth', organised by DZ Bank. Commissioner **Hahn** will also have a number of bilateral meetings with representatives of leading European and International Financial Institutions as well as Islamic and Asian development banks. Commissioner **Moscovici** will meet Mr Zied Laâdhari, Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation of Tunisia; Mr John C. Williams, President and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of New-York; Mr Taro Aso, Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister of Japan; and Mr Ueli Maurer, Head of the Federal Department of Finance of Switzerland. He will also speak at the event '[How global trade can promote growth for all](#)' organised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Annikky Lamp– Tel.: +32 229 56151; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887)

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)