

Informal deal on measures to support fishermen and sustain fish stocks in the Baltic Sea



The Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement to support fishermen affected by difficult stocks situations in the Baltic Sea. The provisional agreement aims at protecting the financial viability and livelihood of fishermen in the Baltic Sea while allowing for fish stocks, particularly the Eastern Baltic cod, to recover. It includes specific measures such as the financial support to the affected fishermen, the reduction of fishing capacity of the affected fleets and enhanced monitoring and controls. The provisional agreement also allows for the careful resumption of fishing activities once stocks have sufficiently recovered or after five years.

If the agreement is confirmed by the Council's committee of permanent representatives (COREPER), the regulation will be submitted for approval to the European Parliament.

Background

Eastern Baltic cod is one of the key fisheries in the Baltic Sea and currently in very poor shape due to environmental, climate and fishing reasons. In July 2019, the European Commission banned the fishing of Eastern Baltic cod until year end (allowing only bycatches). In October 2019, the European Commission adopted a proposal to amend the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) regulation to allow support for permanent fishing cessation of the Eastern Baltic cod. The provisional agreement between the Council and the European Parliament has expanded the scope to also include the Western Baltic cod and Western Baltic herring.