

## MEPs vote for sustainable fishing in the Baltic Sea

**A multiannual plan for managing Baltic cod, sprat and herring stocks was approved by Parliament on Tuesday. This is the first such plan under the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which took effect in 2014. Long-run management, rather than year-on-year planning, should make life more predictable for fishermen.**

Multiannual management, and the fact that these three interacting species will now be managed through a single plan, should also make fishing in the Baltic more sustainable.

"The plan is a long-awaited pioneer proposal. It should help to ensure the balanced, sustainable exploitation of the stocks concerned and hence protect the livelihoods of fishermen. The multispecies approach should achieve this far more effectively than single species management. At the same time, the plan should also ensure that management measures reflect the most up-to-date scientific advice on stock status, interactions between species and ecological needs, said rapporteur Jarosław Wałęsa (EPP, PL).

### **Sustainable fishing: reformed CFP key aims must be met**

MEPs ensured that the stocks must be restored and maintained "*above*" biomass levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), thus reflecting the language of the CFP regulation. MSY means catching no more than a given stock can reproduce in a given year, a key concept made mandatory by the reformed CFP.

The plan also has provisions for enforcing other key parts the new CFP, such as the landing obligation ("discard" ban) and regional management (see [background note on the new CFP](#)).

### **Background**

A Baltic cod stock management plan has been in place since 2008, but herring and sprat had yet to be covered. The present plan replaces the existing one.

The stocks concerned are interdependent. For example, cod eat sprats, and to a lesser extent, herring, while herring and sprat sometimes feed on cod eggs. So cod fishing management can have an impact on sprat and herring fishing opportunities, and vice versa.

Multiannual stock management plans aim to keep stock sizes within safe biological limits. They lay down maximum catches and a range of technical measures, taking due account of the characteristics of each stock and the fisheries in which it is found (species targeted, gear used, status of target stocks) and the economic impact of the measures on the fisheries concerned.

### Next steps

The Council has of Ministers approved its “General Approach” on 20 April. Parliament and Council negotiators will now start talks, helped by the European Commission, with a view to reaching a [first reading agreement](#) on the plan.

*Procedure: Co-decision (Ordinary Legislative Procedure), first reading*

*#fisheries #CFPreality #CFPreform #BalticMAP*

### Further information:

[Adopted text will be available here \(click on 28.04.2015\)](#)

[Video recording of debate \(click on 27.04.2014\)](#)

[EP Think Tank: Multiannual plan for fisheries in the Baltic Sea](#)

[EP Background note on the Common Fisheries Policy](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Council General Approach \(20.04.2015\)](#)

[Council General Approach \(14.04.2015\)](#)

[Commission press release on Baltic Plan proposal \(6 October 2014\)](#)

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