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## North Sea cod fisheries: MEPs end time-at-sea limits

**North Sea cod fishermen will be able to land every catch – not just cod – more easily following Parliament’s green light on Tuesday. The updated regulation will remove limits on the number of days a vessel can spend in a fishing area and thus remove all obstacles to complying with the landing obligation in full.**

The update will amend the 2008 [Regulation establishing a long-term-plan for cod stocks](#) in the Kattegat, the North Sea, the Skagerrak and the eastern Channel, the west of Scotland and the Irish Sea, and fisheries exploiting those stocks. This will make it fully compatible with the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), by applying the obligation to land all catches in full.

### Landing obligation and calculation of fishing effort

MEPs removed the rule for calculating fishing effort – i.e. power of each vessel in kW plus the number of days it is present within a given area - as this led fishermen to discard unwanted catches by hampering further adaptation of fishing patterns, such as the choice of area and gear.

Under the new rule, fishermen will face no obstacles to landing all their catches as they will no longer be subject to time limits. The landing obligation and the discard ban are key elements of the new CFP.

### Cod stock sustainability

The long-term cod plan aims to “maintain the cod stocks above levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield” (MSY).

### Next steps

The new regulation will enter into force on the fourth day following its publication in the EU Official Journal of the EU and will apply from 1 January 2017.

*Note to editors*

*The scientific evaluation of the performance of Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 carried out by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) has shown a number of problems with the application of that Regulation. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has suggested a re-evaluation of the management strategy, in particular following a changed perception of the North Sea stock.*

*New multiannual plans for multi-species fisheries in various Atlantic regions, based on Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, are currently being prepared. Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 will eventually be superseded, for each relevant area, by those new multiannual plans for multi-species fisheries. Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 will therefore continue to apply for only a short period of time. However, a number of urgent amendments should nevertheless be made to Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 to cover the period until the new multiannual plans for multi-species fisheries starts to apply.*

### Facts

- Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is a term used in fishery management to describe the highest average catch (by weight) that does not reduce a stock's abundance over time, taking into account the stock's reproductive and growth capacities under prevailing environmental conditions. MSY is typically determined for a single species.

### Further information

[Adopted text \(2012/0236 \(COD\) will soon be available here \(22.11.2016\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Committee on Fisheries](#)

[The discard ban and its impact on the maximum sustainable yield objective on fisheries. A study commissioned by the Fisheries Committee \(2016\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)

### Political groups

[News pages of the EPP group](#)

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MEPs put an end to the time-at-sea limits in the North Sea cod fisheries© AP Images/European Union - EP