

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

Brussels,

By e-mail

Dear Mr Holt, dear Mr Froese,


Thank you for your letter and comments. I welcome your support for the reformed Common Fisheries Policy, which should deliver healthy seas and stocks, profitable fishing and sustainable livelihoods in Europe's coastal zones, and maximized food supplies from fishing. We recognize that both of you have been staunch supporters of the latest reform.

The CFP is expected to bring fishing pressure in line with Maximum Sustainable Yield MSY, through the legal obligation to achieve by 2020 at the latest that exploitation rates are set in line with MSY, with the aim to ensure that biomass levels will be restored and maintained above levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yields over a long period of time. The Commission, in its annual proposals for fishing opportunities, has been applying this approach since 2012 and is resolved to deliver within the timeline set in the CFP. The setting of fishing opportunities for 2016 needs to contribute or achieving this goal.

In its proposals for fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and the north Sea for 2016, the Commission has followed the principles set out in its Consultation on the fishing opportunities for 2016 under the Common Fisheries Policy (COM(2015) 239 final).

For most Baltic stocks during the last couple of years the TAC are set in correspondence with the ranges of MSY as advised by ICES. For 2016 the Council agreed TACs that should reach Fmsy either in 2016 or not too long afterwards, and in any case well before the 2020 deadline. For the Western cod stock the Council has taken account of the social and economic effects, but the TAC set by the Council should still allow to reach Fmsy in 2017. The reduction of the TAC by 20% and the protection of the spawning should help to bring the cod stock back above the precautionary level.

I thank you for your continued interest in the CFP.



Ernesto PENAS LADO
 Director