

PROPOSED FINAL CONCLUSIONS OF NORTH SEA CONFERENCE ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

ARDOE HOUSE, ABERDEENSHIRE

1 OCTOBER 2010

1. Meeting in Aberdeenshire on 1 October, and representing states responsible for the management of North Sea fisheries, we reaffirm our commitment to work together to secure the long term sustainability of our shared fish stocks.

2. In recognition that fisheries management should be based on the best scientific advice, we believe that states should take all possible steps to account for and manage the total removals of fish by their fishing fleets. This will encourage innovation in selective fishing methods and provide precise catch data which will enable us to set more scientifically robust catch levels, and improve the level and accuracy of harvest limits.

3. In the light of the Joint Statement signed by Ministers from Denmark, Germany, the UK and Scotland in Aalborg in October 2009, we welcome the trialling in 2010 by the EU of fully documented fisheries aimed at reducing the level of discards and optimising the revenue secured from the harvesting of our shared resource. Such approaches provide an opportunity to integrate information provided by fishermen into management advice and to encourage the fishing industry to take greater responsibility for sustainable management of resources.

4. Experience of Norwegian fisheries and the trialling by the EU of catch quota management from 2008 to 2010 indicate that management approaches based on the reduction or elimination of discards can provide benefits to stocks and to the industry. This experience clearly demonstrates the feasibility of moving urgently in the North Sea towards the implementation of arrangements which:

- make provision for output controls over total removals from the sea (catch-quotas) so as to allow progress towards the introduction of a discard ban primarily for cod and associated species throughout the North Sea and beyond;
- lead to a simplification of control and technical rules, including effort and landing regulations where appropriate;
- include provisions for national administrations to allow fishermen every opportunity to match quota with catches through an improved, transparent system of quota transfers.

5. We are convinced that in order to enhance the effective management of our fisheries any future governance framework must:

- focus on results-based objectives, leaving the means of achieving these objectives to be developed by states in co-ordination with each other;
- enhance close cooperation between the relevant states in any sea area so as to allow the development of collaborative regional fisheries plans;
- provide greater scope for engagement of stakeholders in management decisions;
- facilitate the integration of fisheries with other marine sectors on a regional basis; and,
- provide for effective control and enforcement.

6. In preparation for the introduction of new, more effective management arrangements, we welcome initiatives designed to:

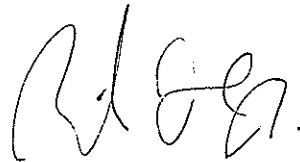
- develop and assess models of regional fisheries management;
- develop effective, innovative measures in cooperation with stakeholders to meet management objectives and build mutual trust and confidence;
- pilot bilateral and multilateral measures to improve fisheries management; and
- promote cooperation between industry, scientists and administrations to improve data on fish stocks.

7. We also agree that further meetings of senior officials should be held on a regular basis to pursue effective co-operation.

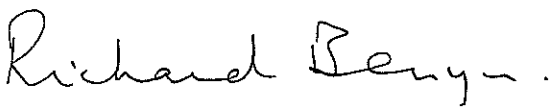
Signed in Aberdeenshire 1 October 2010



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