

Brussels, 6 October 2010

## **No increase in deep-sea fishing opportunities 2011-2012**

***The European Commission proposes not to grant increases in fishing opportunities for deep-sea fish in EU waters and in international waters of the North-East Atlantic for 2011-2012 until positive trends in the abundance of deep-sea stocks have been properly identified. The Commission's proposal is based on scientific advice. However, some important Total Allowable Catches (TACs) will be kept stable. The Commission also remains committed to phasing out fishing for deep-sea sharks and orange roughy until there is clear evidence regarding the level of unavoidable by-catch of these valuable species.***

The European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Maria Damanaki commented: "The Commission's proposal is not only determined by its own discipline on applying scientific advice, but also by the fact that international standards have developed that are specific to deep-sea fisheries. Since deep-sea species in general live long and are only able to reproduce after many years, they are particularly vulnerable to fishing activity. Wherever we are uncertain about stock status, we need to ensure, at the very least, that we don't fish more than we do today until we have better knowledge of the real biological conditions. This includes reducing total allowable catches where they are well above the official catch levels of recent years. Our knowledge of this area is slowly improving and we are learning that the growth pattern of deep-sea species may be quite different from one species to another. This gives us ever better information to manage deep-sea fisheries species more sustainably for the future."

Changes to the 2010 TACs have been limited to annual reductions of no more than 15% – where necessary applied over the two-year period. Since 2003, TACs for deep-sea stocks have seen considerable decreases. The proposal for 2011 and 2012 brings the TACs broadly into line with the scientific advice on precautionary catch levels. It is based on scientific advice received from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Economic and Technical Committee for Fisheries (STECF)<sup>1</sup>.

Concerns, however, remain as to the negative impact of deep-sea trawling on bottom habitats and on the ecosystem. The Member States' efforts to designate special areas of protection are expected to improve the situation to some extent, but the Commission believes that the fishing sector will need to be more involved in developing fishery-specific measures that reduce these negative impacts, such as fishery-specific limitations on fishing effort and the use of gears with a lower impact on non-targeted species.

---

<sup>1</sup> The rules according to which the Commission has translated this advice into the TAC proposals can be found in the Consultation on Fishing Opportunities for 2011 (COM(2010)241 final).

**For more information**

Table in annex: overview of the Commission's proposal for 2011 and 2012

Proposal: [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing\\_rules/tacs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/tacs/index_en.htm)

**Overview of TAC changes 2009-2012** (Figures in tonnes; changes in % compared to the year before)

Species	Area	TAC 2009	TAC 2010	TAC proposal 2011	TAC proposal 2012
<b>Deep-sea sharks</b>	Western waters	824	0 (by-catch allowance)	0 (-100% on by-catch allowance)	0 (+/-0%)
	Azores	10	0 (by-catch allowance)	0 (-100% on by-catch allowance)	0 (+/-0%)
<b>Deep-sea sharks and Deania histricosa and Deania profundorum</b>	Mid-Atlantic	25	0 (by-catch allowance)	0 (-100% on by-catch allowance)	0 (+/-0%)
<b>Black scabbardfish</b>	North Sea and beyond	12	12	12 (+/-0%)	9 (-25%)
	North-western waters, Mid-Atlantic	2738	2547	2165 (-15%)	2000 (-7%)
	Iberian peninsula, Azores	3600	3348	3348 (+/-0%)	3348 (+/-0%)
	Madeira	4285	4285	3643 (-15%)	3643 (+/-0%)
<b>Alfonsinos</b>	All areas	328	328	309 (-6%)	309 (+/-0%)
<b>Roundnose grenadier</b>	North Sea and beyond	17	17	15 (-12%)	13 (-13%)
	Skagerrak and Kattegat	850	850	850 (+/-0%)	850 (+/-0%)
	North-western waters	(3910)	(3324)	(6951)	(6000)
	Iberian peninsula, Azores; Mid-Atlantic	(5197)	(5197)	(293) TAC-area reorganisation resulting in (-15%)	(253) (-14%)
<b>Orange roughy</b>	West of Scotland	17	0	0 (+/-0%)	0 (+/-0%)
	Celtic Sea	65	0	0 (+/-0%)	0 (+/-0%)
	Other areas	15	0	0 (+/-0%)	0 (+/-0%)
<b>Blue ling</b>	North Sea and beyond	66	56	56 (+/-0%)	56 (+/-0%)
	Skagerrak and Kattegat	13	11	10 (-9%)	8 (-20%)
<b>Red seabream</b>	Western waters	253	215	215 (+/-0%)	215 (+/-0%)
	Portuguese waters	918	780	780 (+/-0%)	780 (+/-0%)
	Azores	1136	1136	1136 (+/-0%)	1136 (+/-0%)
<b>Forkbeards</b>	North Sea and beyond	31	31	27 (-13%)	23 (-15%)
	North-western waters	2028	2028	2028 (+/-0%)	2028 (+/-0%)
	Iberian peninsula	267	267	267 (+/-0%)	267 (+/-0%)
	Azores, Mid-Atlantic	54	54	46 (-15%)	40 (-13%)