

The North Sea Advisory Council

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Scheveningen Presidency
Ministry of Economic Affairs
Bezuidenhoutseweg 73
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27th February, 2017

Phasing in of the Landing Obligation

Dear members of the Scheveningen Group,

At the last meeting of the North Sea Advisory Council (NSAC) Demersal Working Group meeting in Paris on 8th February, we discussed issues related to the phasing in of the landing obligation for 2018. We are now finalising our advice for the 2018 discard plan which we will issue by the end of this month. In this advice we will identify some problematic issues for the species proposed for next year. We hope to work with you on finding solutions to these issues.

During this meeting, we also touched on the expected situation for 2019. We came to the conclusion that the more difficult issues, which during the implementation process have been delayed to the last year, are of considerable magnitude and complexity. The unavoidable 'big bang' in 2019 will likely lead to a situation which can only be characterised as 'problematic'. So far we have not seen sufficient and timely solutions for fishers, fisheries managers or control agencies and there is general agreement among all stakeholders in the Advisory Council that this should be given due priority in the coming months.

In view of the above, we urge you to immediately continue your work for the 2019 discard plan as soon as the 2018 process is finalised. We plan to issue our advice in June 2017 on the 10 month process leading to the 2019 discards plan.

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The NSAC highly values the good working relationship with the Scheveningen Group. We therefore offer our full support in the June 2017- April 2018 period to identify and analyse the remaining problems. We offer you our broad expertise, to aid you in finding answers to the problems that lie ahead. We expect the prime focus will be on, but not limited to, finding solutions for choke species related issues.

Yours sincerely,



Niels Wichmann
Chairman, NSAC

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