

# North Sea fisheries: Council adopts multiannual management plan

On 18 June 2018 the Council adopted a new **multiannual management plan (MAP) for the North Sea** concerning **demersal fish stocks** – species that live and feed near the bottom of seas.

The new measures will **target key species** covering more than 90% of the landings in the area (ICES divisions 2a, 3a and subarea 4) and being at risk of over-exploitation, as well as **their by-catches**. The North Sea basin is a complex fishing area marked by the presence of **mixed stocks** and the phenomenon of **choke species**, i.e. low volume quota species which, if reached, would lead to vessels having to tie up even if they still had quota for other species.

The new North Sea MAP will ensure that **demersal fish stocks** are **sustainably exploited** according to the principles of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management. Thanks to the new rules, the **best available scientific advice** will be the basis for setting **ranges, within which** total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas **will be set in the future**. Moreover further measures will have to be taken to bring stocks back within safe biological limits where limits are exceeded.

The adoption of a multiannual management plan for fisheries in the North Sea is a fundamental contribution to making the principles of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy a reality. A predictable and science-based approach will help politicians make the right choices for the future competitiveness and sustainability of European fisheries, and will help fishermen have a longer term vision for their businesses.

*Rumen Porodzanov, minister of agriculture, food and forestry of the Republic of Bulgaria and president of the Council*

## **Next steps**

The North Sea MAP was adopted at a meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council, without discussion. It will enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

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## **philosophical and non-confessional organisations**

Today, the European Commission hosted a high-level meeting with 12 representatives from philosophical and non-confessional organisations from across Europe, as part of the regular dialogue with churches, religions, philosophical and non-confessional organisations foreseen by Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. This ninth annual high-level meeting discussed the topic *“Artificial Intelligence: addressing ethical and social challenges”*. Today’s meeting was chaired by Vice-President Andrus **Ansip**. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, responsible for the Article 17 Dialogue said: *“Our societies are in the midst of an unprecedented digital revolution which will impact every person living on the planet. This revolution brings new promises, and new risks of disruption. We have seen recently that the digital world moved faster than the ethical discussion about what could and should be allowed online. We cannot risk the same thing happening with Artificial Intelligence and automatization. We need to be in control of this transformation, and make sure that it is used to foster our values and defend our social model”*. Andrus **Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, said: *“From better healthcare to safer transport, the benefits of artificial intelligence are many and Europe should grab them. Along with increased investments, we are developing ethical guidelines for the development of AI for good and for all. This requires an open discussion on key issues such as the importance of diversity and gender balance in AI to avoid biased decisions. Today’s meeting and the recent set up of the European AI Alliance contribute to this broad debate.”* A full press release is available [here](#). Several other events on AI are also happening in parallel in Brussels. Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** delivered this morning a speech on the European approach to AI at the stakeholder summit *“A European Strategy for Artificial Intelligence”*. This afternoon she will participate in a conference on AI bringing together Member States’ representatives involved in the Digitising European Industry initiative. She will close the conference with a keynote speech at 16:30 Brussels time. (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

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the right direction, which could be complemented. The EFB is an independent body mandated to advise on the overall direction of fiscal policy of the euro area and to evaluate how the EU fiscal governance framework is executed. It was formally established end 2015 and began operating shortly after its members were appointed in October 2016. The report and press release will be available [online](#). (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151)

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would lead to only a limited increase in Sky's existing share of the markets for the acquisition of TV content, as well as in the market for the wholesale supply of TV channels in the relevant Member States. Given that the merging companies are mainly active at different levels of the market, the Commission's assessment focused on whether, as a result of the proposed transaction: i) Comcast would be able to prevent or significantly limit access by Sky's competitors to its films and other TV content or to its TV channels. The Commission concluded that these possible concerns were not founded; ii) Sky would have the incentive to cease purchasing content from Comcast's competitors. The Commission found that this was unlikely as it would reduce the quality of Sky's product offering; iii) Sky could prevent competing channels from accessing its platform. The investigation found that the merged companies' ability to shut out Comcast's rivals was significantly mitigated by existing regulations in the UK, Germany and Austria. In addition, competitors that could have been targeted for exclusion are either contractually protected for a sufficient period of time or are not dependent on Sky's retail platform in the relevant Member States. Based on the results of its market investigation, the Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns. A full press release is available in [EN](#), [DE](#), [FR](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

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will address an audience of representatives of national and local authorities, retailers and other businesses, international organisations, civil society and academia. Other speakers include Lachezar Borisov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Bulgaria, Kris Peeters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs of Belgium, and Pascal Arimont, Member of the European Parliament. Just two months after the Commission set out [best practices](#) to make the European retail sector fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the conference provides a platform to discuss how to adapt to new developments in the field. The sector is changing rapidly with the development of e-commerce and multi-channel retailing. Retail and wholesale activities are one of the largest services sectors in Europe, with almost one in ten Europeans employed in over 3.6 million retail companies. The [conference is web-streamed](#) and journalists can register by [email](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229-80379; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

### **Digital4Her conference: Building a gender balanced digital sector**

Tomorrow, Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** will host [Digital4Her](#) conference in Brussels focusing on gender equality in the digital sector. At the event, a number of tech, digital, telecom and media companies will sign a declaration aiming to promote and increase the [participation of women](#) within their corporate structures. A new networking platform for stakeholders called European Network for Women in Digital, will also be launched. This network will facilitate the collaboration and the building of an inclusive and gender balanced digital sector in Europe. Finally, with the input of the panels, Commissioner **Gabriel** will present the “Women in Digital” Action Plan composed on concrete actions and best practices to be promoted at all levels. The conference will be livestreamed, the main stage can be followed [here](#) and startup pitches and press conferences [here](#). Further details on the event are available [here](#) and on women in digital [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

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## **Daily News 18 / 06 / 2018**

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information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229-80379; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

### **Digital4Her conference: Building a gender balanced digital sector**

Tomorrow, Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** will host [Digital4Her](#) conference in Brussels focusing on gender equality in the digital sector. At the event, a number of tech, digital, telecom and media companies will sign a declaration aiming to promote and increase the [participation of women](#) within their corporate structures. A new networking platform for stakeholders called European Network for Women in Digital, will also be launched. This network will facilitate the collaboration and the building of an inclusive and gender balanced digital sector in Europe. Finally, with the input of the panels, Commissioner **Gabriel** will present the “Women in Digital” Action Plan composed on concrete actions and best practices to be promoted at all levels. The conference will be livestreamed, the main stage can be followed [here](#) and startup pitches and press conferences [here](#). Further details on the event are available [here](#) and on women in digital [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)

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## **[Artificial Intelligence: Commission discusses ethical and social impact with philosophical and non-confessional organisations](#)**

Today, the European Commission hosted a high-level meeting with 12 representatives from philosophical and non-confessional organisations from across Europe, as part of the regular dialogue with churches, religions, philosophical and non-confessional organisations foreseen by Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty. This ninth annual high-level meeting discussed the topic **“Artificial Intelligence: addressing ethical and social challenges”**. Today’s meeting was chaired by Vice-President Andrus Ansip.

First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, responsible for the Article 17 Dialogue said: *“Our societies are in the midst of an unprecedented digital revolution which will impact every person living on the planet. This revolution brings new promises, and new risks of disruption. We have seen recently that the digital world moved faster than the ethical discussion about what could and should be allowed online. We cannot risk the same thing happening with Artificial Intelligence and automatization. We need to be in control of this transformation, and make sure that it is used to foster our*



*values and defend our social model”.*

Andrus **Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, said: *“From better healthcare to safer transport, the benefits of artificial intelligence are many and Europe should grab them. Along with increased investments, we are developing ethical guidelines for the development of AI for good and for all. This requires an open discussion on key issues such as the importance of diversity and gender balance in AI to avoid biased decisions. Today’s meeting and the recent set up of the European AI Alliance contribute to this broad debate.”*

Today’s high-level meeting provided an occasion to address two important issues related to artificial intelligence (AI). First, the meeting looked at the potential impact of AI on fundamental rights, in particular when it comes to privacy, dignity, consumer protection and non-discrimination. Second, the social dimension of AI was addressed looking in particular at the impact of AI on social inclusion and on the future of work.

Vice-President **Ansip** encouraged the participants to continue their engagement on this topic by contributing to the ongoing initiatives of the Commission on AI, in particular through the [European AI Alliance](#) that was launched last week. The AI Alliance is a community of stakeholders brought together through an online forum to engage in a broad and open discussion of all aspects of artificial intelligence development and its impacts.

Facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue on how to advance AI innovation to increase trust and adoption, and to inform future policy discussions, is a commitment made as part of the recent [G7’s Charlevoix Common Vision for the Future of Artificial Intelligence](#). It is also a key element of the [European approach on AI](#) and the [Declaration of Cooperation on AI](#) signed by 28 European countries.

## **Background**

Today’s high level meeting with representatives of philosophical and non-confessional organisation is the ninth in the series of meetings launched by the Commission in 2009 when the dialogue with churches, religions, philosophical and non-confessional organisations was enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty (Art 17 TFEU). The dialogue is under the responsibility of First Vice-President Timmermans. Each year, these meetings are dedicated to different topical matters. In previous years, First Vice-President Timmermans has invited participants for valuable discussions on [‘Living together and disagreeing well’](#) in 2015, [‘Migration, integration and European values’](#) in 2016, and [‘The Future of Europe’](#) in 2017.

On 25 April 2018, the European Commission launched a European initiative on artificial intelligence (AI). The Commission is proposing a three-pronged approach to increase public and private investment in AI, prepare for socio-economic changes, and ensure an appropriate ethical and legal framework. The Commission is in particular concerned that no one is left behind in the digital transformation and that these new technologies are based on values. As with any transformative technology, some AI applications may raise new

ethical and legal questions.

As part of this initiative, ethical guidelines on AI will be developed by the end of 2018, based on the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, taking into account principles such as data protection and transparency, and building on the work of the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies.

To help develop these guidelines and provide recommendations, the Commission has appointed an expert group on AI.

### **More information**

The Communication "Artificial Intelligence for Europe" can be found at: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/factsheet-artificial-intelligence-europe>

To join the European AI Alliance:

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-ai-alliance>

European Commission' dialogue with churches, religious communities and philosophical and non-confessional organisations on DG Justice home page on fundamental rights:

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/dialogue/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/dialogue/index_en.htm)

### **List of Meeting Participants**

- Mr Henri BARTHOLOMEEUSEN, President of the Centre d'Action Laïque (CAL)
- Mr Michael BAUER, Vice-President of the European Humanist Federation, Humanistischer Verband Deutschlands Bayern (CEO)
- Mr Max BOJARSKI, Grand Orient of Poland, Vice-President of the Congress of Laicity
- Ms Martine CERF, Secretary General of Egalité Laïcité Europe (EGALE)
- Ms Raluca CIOCIAN-ARDELEANU, Vice-President, Romanian Secular-Humanist Association
- Jean DE BRUEKER, President of the Contribution des Obédiences Maçonniques Adogmatiques et Libérales à la Construction Européenne (COMALACE)
- Mr Giulio ERCOLESSI, President of the European Humanist Federation (EHF)
- Ms Marie-Claude KERVILLA-BOUX, President Institut Maçonnique Européen, Grand Master of the Women's Grand Lodge of France
- Mr Marc MENSCHAERT, President of the European Masonic Alliance (Alliance Maçonnique Européenne – AME)
- Pr. Laszlo NEMES, Hungarian Humanist Association, Professor at Eszterházy Károly University, Eger (Hungary)
- Mr Keith Porteous WOOD, Executive Director of the (UK) National Secular Society
- Mr Claude WACHTELAER, President of the European Association for Free Thought (AEPL)

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# Weekly schedule of President Donald Tusk

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