



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESS RELEASE

2917th meeting of the Council

Agriculture and Fisheries

Brussels, 18 and 19 December 2008

President **Mr Michel BARNIER**
French Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

P R E S S

Main results of the Council

The Council reached political agreement on fishing opportunities for 2009 (TACs and quotas).

The Council rejected a proposal on the decontamination of poultry carcasses.

The Council adopted, without discussion, conclusions on the safety of agricultural and agri-food products imported into the Community, and a scheme for the distribution of fruit in schools.

CONTENTS¹

PARTICIPANTS.....	6
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ITEMS DEBATED

AGRICULTURE	8
Green Paper on agricultural product quality	8
Removal of surface contamination from poultry carcasses.....	8
FISHERIES	9
TACs and quotas for 2009.....	9
OTHER BUSINESS	29

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED*AGRICULTURE*

– School fruit	31
– Protection of calves and pigs - Codification of Directives.....	32
– Health rules as regards animal by-products not intended for human consumption.....	32
– Residue limits in foods of animal origin.....	34
– Safety of imported agricultural and agri-food products and compliance with Community rules – <i>Council conclusions</i>	35
– Better regulation in the plant variety and seeds sectors – <i>Council Conclusions</i>	41

FISHERIES

– Cod – stock management plan.....	42
– Herring to the west of Scotland - multi-annual management plan.....	44

¹

- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

– European Evidence Warrant*	46
– Filling in visa stickers	46
– Maintenance obligations	47
– Implementing a new approach to Schengen evaluation – <i>Council conclusions</i>	47

COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

– Ballistic missiles – EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction	49
– EU activities in the CFSP area – budget	49
– Climate change and security	49
– EU Special Representative to the African Union - Presidency report	50

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

– EU-Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan - enlargement	51
---	----

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

– External auditors of the national central banks - Luxembourg	51
– Protection of the euro against counterfeiting	51
– Medals and tokens similar to euro coins	52
– Combating fraud – Cooperation between the European Community and Switzerland	52

EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

– Financing of CFSP operations	53
--------------------------------	----

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

– Loans and grants blending mechanisms	54
– Centre for the Development of Enterprise - 2009 Budget	54

COMMERCIAL POLICY

– Anti-dumping – Cotton-type bedlinen – Graphite electrodes – India	54
– Anti-dumping – Prepared or preserved citrus fruits from China	55

REGIONAL POLICY

– Operations co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund	55
--	----

CUSTOMS UNION

- Export of cultural goods – Codification of the Regulation55
- Industrial, agricultural and fishery products.....56
- Tariff quotas for agricultural and industrial products56

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Time-sharing of holiday products – Tourism – Internal market.....56

INTERNAL MARKET

- Chemicals – "REACH" Regulation.....57

ENERGY

- Eco-design of digital decoders – Regulatory procedure with scrutiny.....58

ENVIRONMENT

- Protection of the coasts and waters of the North-East Atlantic58

TRADE

- Amendment of the agricultural agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation.....58

INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

- European Parliament - Parliamentary assistants.....59

PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Kris PEETERS

Minister-President of the Flemish Government and
Flemish Minister for Institutional Reform, Ports,
Agriculture, Sea Fisheries and Rural Policy

Bulgaria:

Mr Valeri TSVETANOV

Minister for Agriculture and Food

Czech Republic:

Mr Petr GANDALOVIČ

Minister for Agriculture

Denmark:

Ms Eva Kjer HANSEN

Minister for Food

Germany:

Ms Ilse AIGNER

Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Consumer
Protection

Estonia:

Mr Gert ANTSU

Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Brendan SMITH

Mr Tony KILLEEN

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food (with special responsibility for
Fisheries and Forestry)

Greece:

Mr Konstantinos KILTIDIS

State Secretary for Rural Development and Food

Spain:

Ms Elena ESPINOSA MANGANA

Mr Jesús Miguel ORIA

Minister for Minister for the Environment and the Rural
and Marine Environment
Minister for Rural Development, Livestock Breeding,
Fisheries and Biodiversity of the Autonomous Community
of Cantabria

France:

Mr Michel BARNIER

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

Italy:

Mr Vincenzo GRASSI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Cyprus:

Mr Panicos POUROS

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural
Resources and Environment

Latvia:

Mr Martins ROZE

Minister for Agriculture

Lithuania:

Mr Ausrys MACIJAUSKAS

Deputy Minister for Agriculture

Luxembourg:

Ms Octavie MODERT

State Secretary for Relations with Parliament, State
Secretary for Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural
Development, State Secretary for Culture, Higher
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Hungary:

Mr Barnabás FORGÁCS

State Secretary (with special responsibility), Ministry of
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Mr George PULLICINO

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Netherlands:

Ms Gerda VERBURG

Minister for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Austria:

Mr Nikolaus BERLAKOVICH

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the
Environment and Water Management**Poland:**

Mr Marek SAWICKI

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Portugal:

Mr Jaime SILVA

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries

Romania:

Mr Dacian CIOLOS

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development

Slovenia:

Mr Milan POGAČNIK

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Slovakia:

Mr Viliam TURSKÝ

State Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture

Finland:

Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILA

Minister for Agriculture and Forestry

Sweden:

Mr Eskil ERLANDSSON

Minister for Agriculture

United Kingdom

Mr Huw IRRANCA-DAVIES

Minister for the Natural and Marine Environment,
Wildlife and Rural Affairs

Mr Richard LOCHHEAD

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment
(Scottish Government)

Ms Michelle GILDERNEW

Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development for
Northern Ireland**Commission:**

Ms Mariann FISCHER BOEL

Member

Mr Joe BORG

Member

Ms Androula VASSILIOU

Member

ITEMS DISCUSSED**AGRICULTURE****Green Paper on agricultural product quality**

The Council took note of the initial reactions of certain Ministers to the Green Paper on agricultural product quality ([14358/08](#)).

The public consultation launched by the Commission will be completed at the end of the year. The Czech Presidency is due to organise a conference on product quality in Prague on 12 and 13 March 2009. The Commission should forward a communication to the European Parliament and to the Council on this issue in May 2009.

Removal of surface contamination from poultry carcasses

The Council recorded the qualified majority necessary for the rejection of a proposal for a Decision regarding the possibility of using antimicrobial substances to remove surface contamination from poultry carcasses ([16163/08](#)).

FISHERIES

TACs and quotas for 2009

The Council reached **unanimous** political agreement on a Regulation fixing for 2009 the fishing opportunities and associated conditions for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in Community waters and, for Community vessels, in waters where catch limitations are required.

The fundamental principles which guided the agreement are as follows:

- compliance with current recovery and management plans for certain species such as cod, herring or sole, which are starting to show positive effects;
- implementation of the approach defined in the statement of general policy which the Commission published last June ([10264/08](#));
- compliance with the commitments entered into by the Community within certain international fisheries organisations, such as ICCAT for bluefin tuna, or under bilateral agreements with third countries such as Norway or the Faroe Islands.

This agreement aims to pursue the balance between conservation of fisheries resources and economically viable conditions.

Important aspects to be noted include the following:

- specific measures for cod, haddock and whiting to the west of Scotland, so that these fisheries do not need to be closed;
- measures governing the use of bottom-set gillnets in the South Atlantic;

- technical measures enabling discards to be reduced;
- a 50 % reduction for spurdog, with a ban on targeted fishing;
- establishment of a catch limitation for ray and skate in certain zones based on a calculation of catches in recent years;
- separate TACs in the Eastern Channel for cod;
- a precautionary TAC of 200 000 tonnes for sandeel;
- a rollover of the 2008 quotas by zone for anglerfish, Norway lobster, tusk, ling and blue ling;
- clarification of the detailed arrangements for implementing the recovery plan for cod;
- protection of juvenile blue ling.

The results obtained from the long-term recovery plans are guiding the Member States along the road towards sustainable fisheries and encouraging the Commission to submit new plans for 2009, e.g. for haddock to the west of Scotland, pending the forthcoming reform of the common fisheries policy expected in 2012.

Measures to protect shark in European waters will be strengthened and completed by 2010.

The Commission submitted its proposal on 7 November 2008, on the basis of the most recent scientific advice concerning the state of stocks, as submitted by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), and on the basis of contributions by the parties involved.

Thanks to the frontloading process, the TACs for the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and deepwater species were adopted separately in October 2008.

The Regulation will be adopted by written procedure so that it can be published in the Official Journal in January 2009.

The following table sets out the indicative values of the principal TACs for 2009 compared with those for 2008 and the Commission proposal¹.

¹ See Commission proposal: 15578/08.

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/ COM
ANNEX IA SKAGERRAK, KATTEGAT, ICES zones I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII and XIV, EC Waters of CECAF, French Guyana waters								
<i>Ammodytidae</i>	Sandeel	Lançon	IIa (EC waters), IIIa & IV (EC waters) (SAN/2A3A4)	177500	na	na	na	na
<i>Argentina silus</i>	Greater silver smelt	Grande argentine	I & II (EC and International waters) (ARU/1/2)	116	116	0%	116	0%
<i>Argentina silus</i>	Greater silver smelt	Grande argentine	III & IV (EC and International waters) (ARU/3/4)	1.331	1.331	0%	1.331	0%
<i>Argentina silus</i>	Greater silver smelt	Grande argentine	V, VI, VII (EC and International waters) (ARU/567)	5.311	5.311	0%	5.311	0%
<i>Brosme brosme</i>	Tusk	Brosmes	By catches - EC and Int. Waters of I, II & XIV (USK/1214EI)	24	23	4%	21	-9%
<i>Brosme brosme</i>	Tusk	Brosmes	EC and Int. Waters of III (USK/03-C)	28	28	0%	24	-14%
<i>Brosme brosme</i>	Tusk	Brosmes	EC and Int. Waters of IV (USK/04-CI)	231	231	0%	196	-15%
<i>Brosme brosme</i>	Tusk	Brosmes	EC and Int. Waters of V, VI, and VII (USK/567EI)	435	435	0%	370	-15%
<i>Brosme brosme</i>	Tusk	Brosmes	IV (Norwegian waters) (USK/4AB-N)	170	170	0%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	IIIa (HER/03A)	32.190	44.281	-27%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	IV north of 53°30' N (EC & Norw. Waters of ICES) (HER/04A) (HER/04B)	97.843	116.210	-16%	pm	na

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<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	Norwegian waters south of 62° N (HER/04-N)	846	846	0%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	by-catches in IIIa (HER/03A-BC)	8.373	11.470	-27%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	by-catches in IV, VIIId and in EC waters of IIa(HER/2A47-DX)	15.985	18.806	-15%	18.806	0%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	IVc, VIIId	23.567	26.661	-12%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	Vb, VIaN (EC waters), VIb	21.100	26.540	-20%	pm	na
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	VIaS, VIIbc	9.314	11.642	-20%	8.732	-25%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	VIa Clyde	800	800	0%	680	-15%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	VIIa	4.800	4.800	0%	4.400	-8%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	VIIe, f	1.000	1.000	0%	1.000	0%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	VIIg, h, j, k	5.918	7.890	-25%	5.918	-25%
<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	Anchovy	Anchois	VIII	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	Anchovy	Anchois	IX, X, CEECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	8.000	8.000	0%	6.800	-15%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Skagerrak	3.981	3.063	30%	pm	na
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Kattegat	673	673	0%	505	-25%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	IV, EC waters of IIa, the part of IIIa not covered by the Skagerrak and Kattegat - COD/2A3AX4	23.902	18.386	30%	pm	na

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<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Norwegian waters south of 62° N - COD/04-N	382	382	0%	pm	na
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Vb (EC waters), VI, Int and EC waters of XII and XIV	302	402	-25%	302	-25%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	VIIa - COD/07A	899	1.199	-25%	899	-25%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	VIIb-k, VIII, IX, X, CEECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	4.023	5.174	-22%	4.023	-22%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	VIIId - COD/07D	1.678	na	na	pm	na
<i>Lamna nasus</i>	Porbeagle	Requin taupe commun	EC and International waters of I-XIV	436	581	-25%	0	-100%
<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>	Megrims	Cardines	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	1.597	1.597	0%	1.357	-15%
<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>	Megrims	Cardines	Vb (EC waters), VI; XII, XIV (intern. Waters)	2.799	2.592	8%	2.203	-15%
<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>	Megrims	Cardines	VII	18.300	18.300	0%	15.555	-15%
<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>	Megrims	Cardines	VIII a,b,d,e	2.125	2.125	0%	1.806	-15%
<i>Lepidorhombus spp.</i>	Megrims	Cardines	VIIIc, IX, X, CEECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	1.430	1.430	0%	1.430	0%
<i>Limanda limanda and Platichthys flesus</i>	Dabe and Flounder	dabé et Flet	IIa and IV (EC waters)	18.810	18.810	0%	16.929	-10%
<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters) -	11.345	11.345	0%	11.345	0%

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<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	IV (Norwegian waters)	1.550	1.610	-4%	pm	na
<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV	5.567	5.155	8%	5.155	0%
<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	VII	28.080	28.080	0%	25.740	-8%
<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	VIIIa,b,d,e	7.920	7.920	0%	7.260	-8%
<i>Lophiidae</i>	Anglerfish	Baudroie	VIIIc, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	1.760	1.955	-10%	1.466	-25%
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	IIIa, IIIbcd (EC waters)	2.217	2.472	-10%	pm	na
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	IIa (EC waters), IV	32.679	37.626	-13%	pm	na
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	707	707	0%	pm	na
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	VIb; XII and XIV (internat. Waters)	5.879	6.916	-15%	5.879	-15%
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	Vb, VIa (EC waters)	3.516	6.120	-43%	4.590	-25%
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	VII, VIII, IX, X; CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	11.579	11.520	1%	8.790	-24%
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	VIIa	1.424	1.238	15%	1.238	0%
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	IIIa	258	258	na	pm	na
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	IIa (EC waters), IV	12.593	pm	na	pm	na

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<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV	574	765	-25%	574	-25%
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	VIIa	209	278	-25%	209	-25%
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	VIIb-k	16.949	19.940	-15%	16.949	-15%
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	VIII	3.600	3.600	0%	3.060	-15%
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	Whiting	Merlan	IX, X, CEEAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	653	653	0%	555	-15%
<i>Merlangius merlangus and Pollachius pollachius</i>	Whiting and Pollack	Merlan et Lieu jaune	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	190	190	0%	pm	na
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	Hake	Merlu	IIIa, IIIbcd (EC waters)	1.552	1.627	-5%	1.552	-5%
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	Hake	Merlu	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	1.808	1.896	-5%	1.808	-5%
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	Hake	Merlu	Vb (EC waters), VI, VII; XII, XIV (internat. waters)	28.879	30.281	-5%	28.879	-5%
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	Hake	Merlu	VIII a, b, d, e	19.261	20.196	-5%	19.261	-5%
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	Hake	Merlu	VIIIc, IX, X, CEEAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	8.104	7.047	15%	8.104	15%
<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting	Merlan bleu	Norwegian waters of II and IV (! in 2008 only waters of IV)	4.000	8.000	na	pm	na

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<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting	Merlan bleu	EC and international waters of I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIIa, VIIb, VIIId, VIIe, XII and XIV	74.058	175.466	-58%	pm	na
<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting	Merlan bleu	VIIIc, IX and X; EC waters of CECAF 34.1.1	15.155	32.107	-53%	pm	na
<i>Microstomus kitt & Glyptocephalus cynoglossus</i>	Lemon sole and Witch	Limande sole et plie grise	IIa and IV (EC waters)	6.793	6.793	0%	6.114	-10%
<i>Molva dypterigia</i>	Blue ling	Lingue bleue	EC waters & waters not under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of TC of VI, VII	2009	2000	0%	1708	-15%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	I, II (EC and International waters)	45	45	0%	38	-16%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	IIIa, IIIb-d (EC waters) LIN/03	100	100	0%	85	-15%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	IV (EC waters) LIN/04	2.856	2.856	0%	2.428	-15%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	V (EC and International waters) LIN/05	34	34	0%	34	0%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII, XIV (EC waters and international waters) LIN/6X14	10.776	10.776	0%	9.160	-15%
<i>Molva molva</i>	Ling	Lingue	IV (Norwegian waters)	850	850	0%	pm	na
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	IIIa; IIIbcd (EC waters)	5.170	5.170	0%	5.170	0%

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/COM
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters) NEP/2AC4-C	24.837	26.144	-5%	23.609	-10%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	IV (Norwegian waters)	1.210	1.250	-3%	1.210	-3%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	Vb (EC waters), VI NEP/5BC6	18.891	19.885	-5%	16.902	-15%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	VII	24.650	25.153	-2%	21.380	-15%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	VIII a, b, d, e NEP/8ABDE	4.104	4.320	-5%	3.672	-15%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	VIIIc	112	124	-10%	112	-10%
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Norway lobster	Langoustine	IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	374	415	-10%	374	-10%
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	IIIa	6.205	6.205	0%	pm	na
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	4.980	3.984	25%	pm	na
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	Norwegian waters south of 62°00' N	664	664	0%	pm	na
<i>Penaeus spp.</i>	'Penaeus' shrimps	Crevette royale	French Guyana	4.108	4.108	0%	4.108	0%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	Skagerrak PLE/03AN	9.163	9.163	0%	pm	na
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	Kattegat PLE/03AS	2.338	2.338	0%	pm	na

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/ COM
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	IV, EC waters of Iia, that part of IIIa not covered by the Skagerrak and Kattegat PLE/2A3AX4	47.875	47.875	0%	pm	na
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV PLE/561214	668	786	-15%	668	-15%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VIIa	1.430	1.849	-23%	1.430	-23%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VII b, c	94	110	-15%	110	0%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VII d, e	4.646	5.050	-8%	4.421	-12%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VII f, g	422	491	-14%	422	-14%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VII h, j, k	256	303	-16%	256	-16%
<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	Plaice	Plie	VIII, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters)	448	448	0%	381	-15%
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Pollack	Lieu jaune	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV POL/561214	13066	14100	-7%	pm	na
<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	Lieu jaune	VII POL/07	15.300	15.300	0%	13.005	-15%
<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	Lieu jaune	VIII a, b, d, e	1.680	1.680	0%	1.680	0%
<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	Lieu jaune	VIIIc POL/08C	262	262	0%	223	-15%

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<i>Pollachius pollachius</i>	Pollack	Lieu jaune	IX, X, CEEAF 34.1.1 (EC waters) POL/9/3411	288	288	0%	245	-15%
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	IIa (EC waters), IIIa, IIIbcd (EC waters), IV	60.448	65.232	-7%	pm	na
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV POK/561214	450	450	0%	383	-15%
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	Norwegian waters south of 62° N	880	880	0%	pm	na
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	VII, VIII, IX, X, CEEAF 34.1.1 (EC waters) POK/7/3411	3.790	3.790	0%	3.222	-15%
<i>Psetta maxima & Scophthalmus rhombus</i>	Turbot and brill	Turbot et barbu	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	5.263	5.263	0%	4.737	-10%
<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et Raies	VIab (EC waters), VIIa-c, e-k (EC waters) (SRX/67AKXD)	15.748	new area	new area	10.596	new area
<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et Raies	VIIId (EC waters) (SRX/07D)	1.044	new area	new area	736	new area
<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et Raies	VIII et IX (EC waters) (SRX/8910C)	6.423	new area	new area	4.030	new area
<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et Raies	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	1.643	1.643	0%	1.397	-15%
<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et Raies	IIIa (EC waters) (SRX/03-C)	68	na	na	58	na
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	IIa (EC waters), IV, VI (EC and international waters) GHL/2A-C46	720	847	-15%	720	-15%

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/COM
<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Mackerel	Maquereau	IIa (EC waters), IIIa, IIIb, c, d (EC waters), IV MAC/2A34	23.450	18.149	29%	pm	na
<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Mackerel	Maquereau	IIa (non-EC waters), Vb (EC waters), VI, VII, VIII a, b, d, e, XII, XIV MAC/2CX14	311.531	234.082	33%	pm	na
<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Mackerel	Maquereau	VIIIc, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters) MAC/8C3411	35.829	27.005	33%	pm	na
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	IIIa, IIIb,c,d (EC waters)	800	940	-15%	705	-25%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	IIa, IV (EC waters)	13.910	12.710	9%	pm	na
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	Vb (EC waters), VI, XII, XIV SOL/561214	68	68	0%	58	-15%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIIa	502	669	-25%	502	-25%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIIb, c	50	55	-9%	50	-9%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIIId	5.274	6.593	-20%	5.274	-20%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIIe	650	765	-15%	650	-15%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIII f, g	993	964	3%	940	-2%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIII h, j, k	553	650	-15%	553	-15%
<i>Solea solea</i>	Common sole	Sole commune	VIII a, b SOL/8AB	4.390	4.170	5%	4.390	5%
<i>Solea spp.</i>	Sole	Sole	VIIIc, d, e, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters) SOX/8CDE34	1.216	1.216	0%	1.034	-15%
<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	Sprat	Sprat	IIIa	48.100	48.100	0%	pm	na
<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	Sprat	Sprat	IIa (EC waters), IV (EC waters)	150.777	175.777	-14%	pm	na

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/ COM
<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	Sprat	Sprat	VIIId, e	6.144	6.144	0%	6.144	0%
<i>Squalus acanthias</i>	Spurdog / dogfish	Aiguillat chien de mer	IIa & IV (EC waters) (DGS/2AC4-C)	266	581	-54%	0	-100%
<i>Squalus acanthias</i>	Spurdog dogfish	Aiguillat chien de mer	IIIaEC waters (DGS/03A)	104	new area	new area	new area	na
<i>Squalus acanthias</i>	Spurdog dogfish	Aiguillat chien de mer	IIIa, EC & Int. Waters of I, V, VI, VII, VIII, XII & XIV (DGS/15X14)	1.002	2.004	-50%	0	-100%
<i>Trachurus spp.</i>	Horse mackerel	Chinchard	IIa & IV (EC waters) (JAX/2AC4-C)	34.770	37.230	-7%	34.770	-7%
<i>Trachurus spp.</i>	Horse mackerel	Chinchard	Vb (EC waters), VI, VII, VIIIa, b, d, e; XII, XIV (internat. Waters) (JAX/578/14)	165.939	167.920	-1%	pm	na
<i>Trachurus spp.</i>	Horse mackerel	Chinchard	X, CEEAF Azores (JAX/X34PRT)	3.200	3.200	0%	2.720	-15%
<i>Trachurus spp.</i>	Horse mackerel	Chinchard	CEEAF Madeira Islands JAX/341PRT	1.280	1.280	0%	1.088	-15%
<i>Trachurus spp.</i>	Horse mackerel	Chinchard	CEEAF Canary Islands (JAX/341 SPN)	1.280	1.280	0%	1.088	-15%
<i>Trisopterus esmarki</i>	Norway pout	tacaud norvégien	IIa (EC waters), IIIa, IV (EC waters) NOP/2A3A4	26.250	36.500	-28%	26.250	-28%
<i>Trisopterus esmarki</i>	Norway pout	tacaud norvégien	IV (Norwegian waters) (NOP/4AB-N)	1.000	5.000	-80%	pm	na
		Industrial fish	IV (Norwegian waters) (I/F/4AB-N)	800	800	0%	pm	na
		Other species	IV (Norwegian waters) (OTH/4AB-N)	5.000	5.000	0%	pm	na

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/COM
ANNEX IB NORTH EAST ATLANTIC AND GREENLAND AND ICES zones I, II, V, XII, XIV and Greenland Waters of NAFO 0 and 1								
<i>Chionoecetes spp.</i>	Crabe	Snow crab	Greenland waters of NAFO 0 and 1	500	500	0%	500	0%
<i>Clupea harengus</i>	Herring	Hareng	EC and International waters of I and II HER/1/2	106.959	98.822	8%	pm	na
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Norwegian waters of I and II COD/1N2AB	19.324	17.057	13%	pm	na
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	Greenland waters of NAFO 0 and 1, Greenland waters of V and XIV (COD/NO1514)	3.500	3.500	0%	3.500	0%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	I and IIb COD/1/2B	19.793	16.211	22%	16.211	0%
<i>Gadus morhua and Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Cod and haddock	Cabillaud et églefin	Vb (Faroese waters)	500	500	0%	pm	na
<i>Hippoglossus hippoglossus</i>	Atlantic halibut	Flétan	V, XIV (Greenland waters)	1.075	1.000	8%	pm	na
<i>Hippoglossus hippoglossus</i>	Atlantic halibut	Flétan	NAFO 0, 1 (Greenland waters)	75	100	-25%	pm	na
<i>Mallotus villosus</i>		Capelin	IIb	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Mallotus villosus</i>		Capelin	V, XIV (Greenland waters)	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Melanogrammus aeglefinus</i>	Haddock	Eglefin	I, II (Norwegian waters)	2.500	2.500	0%	pm	na
<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	Blue whiting	Merlan bleu	Faroese waters	3.000	12.240	-75%	pm	na

<i>Species LATIN NAME</i>	Species English name	Espèces NOM français	ICES fishing zone	COUNCIL TACs 2009	COUNCIL TACs 2008	COUNCIL % difference 2009/2008	COMMISSION proposal 2009	Difference Council/ COM
<i>Molva molva and Molva dypterigia</i>	Ling and Blue ling	Lingue et Lingue bleue	Vb (Faroese waters)	3.065	3.065	0%	pm	na
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	Greenland waters of V and XIV PRA/514GRN	7.000	7.000	0%	7.000	0%
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	Greenland waters of NAFO 0 and 1 PRA/N01GRN	4.000	4.000	0%	4.000	0%
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	I, II (Norwegian waters)	3.000	3.832	-22%	pm	na
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	International waters of I and II	0	0	na	0	na
<i>Pollachius virens</i>	Saithe	Lieu noir	Vb (Faroese waters)	2.425	2.425	0%	pm	na
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	Norwegian waters of I and II	50	50	0%	pm	na
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	International waters of I and II GHL/12/INT	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	Greenland waters of V and XIV	7.500	7.500	0%	7.500	0%
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	Greenland waters of NAFO 0 an 1	2.500	2.500	0%	2.500	0%
<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Mackerel	Maquereau	Ia (Norwegian waters)	12.300	9.300	32%	pm	na
<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	Mackerel	Maquereau	Vb (Faroese waters)	3.001	3.001	0%	pm	na
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Sébaste	V, XII, XIV	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Sébaste	I, II (Norwegian waters)	1.500	1.500	0%	pm	na
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Sébaste	V, XIV (Greenland waters)	0	0	na	0	na
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Sébaste	Va (Icelandic waters)	0	0	na	0	na

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<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Sébaste	Vb (Faroese waters)	1.600	1.600	0%	pm	na
		By-catches	NAFO 0, 1 (Greenland waters)	2.300	2.300	0%	2.300	0%
		Other species	I, II (Norwegian waters)	350	350	0%	pm	na
		Other species	Vb (Faroese waters)	760	760	0%	pm	na
ANNEX IC NORTH WEST ATLANTIC Area of NAFO								
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	NAFO 2J3KL	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	NAFO 3NO	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Gadus morhua</i>	Cod	Cabillaud	NAFO 3M	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Glyptocephalus cynoglossus</i>	Witch flounder	Plie grise	NAFO 2J3KL	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Glyptocephalus cynoglossus</i>	Witch flounder	Plie grise	NAFO 3NO	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Hippoglossoides platessoides</i>	American Plaice	Faux Flétan	NAFO 3M	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Hippoglossoides platessoides</i>	American Plaice	Faux Flétan	NAFO 3LNO	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Illex illecebrosus</i>	Short fin squid	Calmar à nageoires courtes	NAFO sub-zones 3 and 4	34.000	34.000	0%	34.000	0%
<i>Limanda ferruginea</i>	Yellowtail flounder	Limande à queue jaune	NAFO 3LNO	17000	15500	10%	15500	0%
<i>Mallotus villosus</i>		Capelin	NAFO 3NO	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Northern prawn	Crevette nordique	NAFO 3L	334	278	20%	334	20%
<i>Reinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	Greenland halibut	Flétan du Groenland	NAFO 3M	6.951	6.951	0%	6.951	0%

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<i>Rajidae</i>	Skate	Raie cendrée	NAFO 3LNO	8.500	8.500	0%	8.500	0%
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Redfish	NAFO 3LN	0	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Redfish	NAFO 3M	7.813	7.813	0%	7.813	0%
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Redfish	NAFO 3O	7.000	7.000	0%	7.000	0%
<i>Sebastes spp.</i>	Redfish	Redfish	NAFO Subarea 2, divisions 1F and 3K	2.503	2.503	0%	2.503	0%
<i>Urophycis tenuis</i>	White hake	Merluche blanche	NAFO 3NO	5.000	5.000	0%	5.000	0%
ANNEX ID HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH - All AREAS								
<i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	Bluefin tuna footnote	Thon rouge	Atlantic Ocean, east of longitude 45°W and Mediterranean BFT/AE045W	11.907	16.211	-27%	11.907	-27%
<i>Xiphias gladius</i>	Swordfish	Espadon	Atlantic Ocean (north of latitude 5° N)	8.232	6.987	18%	8.232	18%
<i>Xiphias gladius</i>	Swordfish	Espadon	Atlantic Ocean (south of latitude 5° N)	5.717	5.780	-1%	5.717	-1%
<i>Germo alalunga</i>	Northern Albacore	Thon blanc	Atlantic Ocean (north of latitude 5° N)	38.193	37.050	3%	38.193	3%
<i>Germo alalunga</i>	Southern Albacore	Thon blanc	Atlantic Ocean (south of latitude 5° N)	1.915	1.915	0%	1.915	0%
<i>Thunnus obesus</i>	Bigeye tuna	Thon obèse	Atlantic Ocean	31.200	31.350	0%	31.200	0%
<i>Makaira nigricans</i>	Blue marlin	Makaire bleu	Atlantic Ocean	103	103	0%	103	0%
<i>Tetrapturus alba</i>	White marlin	Makaire blanc	Atlantic Ocean	47	47	0%	47	0%

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ANNEX IE ANTARCTIC Area of CCAMLR								
<i>Champocephalus gunnari</i>	Antarctic icefish	Poisson des glaces antarctique	FAO 48.3 Anatarctic ANI/F483	3834	2462	56%	3834	na
<i>Champocephalus gunnari</i>	Antarctic icefish	Poisson des glaces antarctique	FAO 58.5.2 Antarctic ANI/F5852	102	220	-54%	102	na
<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	Antarctic toothfish	Légines	FAO 48.3 Antarctic TOP/F483	3920	3920	0%	3920	na
<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	Antarctic toothfish	Légines	FAO 48.4 Antarctic TOP/F484	75	100	-25%	75	na
<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	Antarctic toothfish	Légines	FAO 58.5.2 Antarctic TOP/F5852	2500	2500	0%	2500	na
<i>Euphausia superba</i>	Krill	Krill	FAO 48 KRI/F48	3 470 000	3 470 000	#VALUE!	3 470 000	na
<i>Euphausia superba</i>	Krill	Krill	FAO 58.4.1 Antarctic KRI/F5841	440 000	440 000	#VALUE!	440 000	na
<i>Euphausia superba</i>	Krill	Krill	FAO 58.4.2 Antarctic KRI/F5842	2 645 000	2 645 000	#VALUE!	2 645 000	na
<i>Lepidonotothen squamifrons</i>	Grey rockcod	Colin austral	FAO 58.5.2 Antarctic NOS/F5852	80	80	0%	80	na
<i>Paralomis spp.</i>	Crab	Crabe	FAO 48.3 Anatarctic PAI/F483	1600	1600	0%	1600	na
<i>Macrourus spp.</i>	Grenadier	Grenadier	FAO 58.5.2 Antarctic GRV/F5852	360	360	0%	360	na
	Other species	Autres espèces	FAO 58.5.2 Antarctic OTH/F5852	50	50	0%	50	na

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<i>Rajidae</i>	Skates and rays	Requins et raies	FAO 58.5.2 Anarctic SRX/F5852	120	120	0%	120	na
<i>Martiala hyadesi</i>	Squid	Calmar	FAO 48.3 Antarctic SQS/F483	2500	2500	0%	2500	na
ANNEX IF SOUTH-EAST ATLANTIC OCEAN Area of SEAFO								
<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	Patagonian Toothfish	Légine australe	SEAFO	260	260	0%	260	0%
<i>Chaceon spp.</i>	Deep-sea Red crab	Gérion ouest-africain	SEAFO Sub Division B1	200	200	0%	200	0%
<i>Chaceon spp.</i>	Deep-sea Red crab	Gérion ouest-africain	SEAFO excluding Sub division B1	200	200	0%	200	0%
<i>Beryx spp.</i>	Alfonsinos	Béryx	SEAFO	200	new TAC	new TAC	200	new TAC
<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>	Orange roughy	Hoplosthète orange	SEAFO	260	new TAC	new TAC	200	new TAC
ANNEX IG SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA - All Areas								
<i>Thunnus maccoyii</i>	Bluefin tuna footnote	Thon rouge	By-catches in all areas (SBF/F41-81)	10	16.211	-100%	10	-100%

OTHER BUSINESS**Question concerning unspent CAP budget**

The Council took note of a recurring request from the Polish delegation¹ regarding the unspent CAP budget which could in the latter's opinion fund measures for mitigating the effects of the crisis on the agro-food sector and an active market management policy ([17378/08](#)).

The Commission representative recalled certain terms of the Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management, inter alia regarding refund to the Member States of unused margins subject to a ceiling. She also pointed out that when circumstances were difficult, the Commission endeavoured to find appropriate measures, including budgetary ones.

Increased control measures imposed by Greece on cereals imported from Romania and Bulgaria

The Council took note of the joint solution devised between the Member States concerned.

¹ Cf. [13522/08](#).

Situation in the Irish pigmeat sector

The Council took note of the management of the dioxin crisis in the pigmeat sector mentioned by the Irish delegation and the relevant Commission services ([17392/1/08](#) and [17433/08](#)).

Further information: [Frequently Asked Questions: dioxin](#)

Union for the Mediterranean

The Presidency informed the Council of the progress made under its aegis in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean project.

Further information: [ue2008.fr - Welcome](#)

Combating illegal fishing

The Council took note of information from the Portuguese delegation concerning an incident involving a vessel suspected of illegal fishing.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

AGRICULTURE

School fruit

The Council adopted a Regulation on the setting up of a school fruit and vegetables scheme ([16321/1/08](#)).

This programme is intended to effect a lasting increase in the proportion of fruit and vegetables in children's diets, at the age when they are developing their eating habits, and thus to contribute to the fight against obesity.

Its main features are as follows:

- Children aged 6 to 10 are the main target of the programme, but the Member States may extend supply to crèches, other pre-school establishments, and primary and secondary schools;
- Those Member States which wish to improve the programme may, in addition to the Community aid, grant national aid for the supply of the abovementioned products, and to fund certain related costs. Thus they may grant national aid to finance accompanying measures;
- The Member States may choose from fresh or processed fruit or vegetables, including bananas, depending on objective criteria which include which fruit are in season, the availability of products, or environmental concerns; in this respect, the Member States may give preference to products of Community origin;
- The Community aid is fixed at EUR 90 million per school year¹;

¹ Each participating Member State is guaranteed to receive Community aid of at least EUR 175 000.

- The aid cannot exceed 50 % of the costs of supply and related costs (75 % of such costs in convergence regions and the outermost regions), or cover costs other than the costs of supply and related costs explicitly referred to in the Regulation;
- Given the limited budget, the Member States may call for contributions from the private sector;
- Finally, any national programme already in place will not be eligible, unless the Member State concerned wishes to extend the programme in question or to increase its effectiveness ("additionality" of the aid);
- The programme will apply with effect from the 2009/2010 school year and the Commission will present a report on its implementation to the Council and the Parliament by 31 August 2012.

Protection of calves and pigs - Codification of Directives

The Council adopted codified versions of two Directives laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves ([8713/1/08](#)) and pigs ([8719/1/08](#)).

Directive 91/629/EEC (calves) and Directive 91/630/EEC (pigs) were substantially amended several times. They were codified for reasons of clarity and rationalisation.

Health rules as regards animal by-products not intended for human consumption

The Council took note of a report on the progress of discussions on a proposal for a regulation laying down health rules as regards animal by-products not intended for human consumption.

The Council's preparatory bodies made progress in particular on the scope, the responsibilities of operators and Member States, the rules for approval and registration, the pet food sector, the relationship with environmental legislation and simplification.

The draft Regulation, which is intended to replace the currently applicable Regulation on animal by-products (1774/2002), aims to

- provide greater legal certainty regarding the scope of the rules on animal by-products;
- introduce an end point in the life-cycle of animal by-products;
- adopt a more risk-based approach;
- adjust the regulatory framework concerning the categorisation of animal by-products to the risks posed by new animal by-products.

The Parliament's rapporteur, Horst Schnellhardt, is due to submit his draft report to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety in January 2009.

Residue limits in foods of animal origin

The Council adopted its common position on the proposal for a Regulation laying down Community procedures for the establishment of residue limits of pharmacologically active substances in foodstuffs of animal origin, and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2377/90 ([15079/08](#) + [15079/2/08 REV 2](#)).

The provisions envisaged aim to guarantee a high level of protection of public health and to increase the availability of veterinary medicinal products. The main changes planned are as follows:

- an obligation to consider possibilities of extrapolation when scientific evaluation is being carried out to establish a residue limit;
- an obligation for the Community to take over residue limits adopted at *Codex Alimentarius* level if it did not table any objections when they were adopted;
- the creation of a legal framework for the establishment of residue limits for pharmacologically active substances which are not a priori intended to be used in veterinary medicinal products in the Community;
- the establishment of reference values when necessary for the purposes of control in cases where there is no residue limit.

A further aim of the new Regulation is to simplify current legislation and to improve its legibility.

Safety of imported agricultural and agri-food products and compliance with Community rules – *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL,

RECALLING THAT

- (1) The EU is the world's largest food importer; the growth of global trade in food, feed, animals and plants increases the probability of the emergence and spread of risk factors and diseases, which are sometimes discovered after the event, as recent crises have shown.
- (2) The European system for controlling import-related risk is in compliance with the World Trade Organisation Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).
- (3) Food, feed, animals and plants imported into the EU from third countries must be just as safe as Community products.
- (4) This system is based on the responsibility of operators along the food chain and on rules for import controls, which contribute to a high level of health protection for consumers, animals and plants (including protection from invasive alien species).
- (5) Effective control systems in Member States are a key element. It is important to ensure effective sanitary and phytosanitary controls at agreed points of Community entry at the EU's external borders, or at places of destination where applicable and useful.

- (6) Food and Veterinary Office inspections in Member States and in third countries play an essential role in the system.
 - (7) The system works satisfactorily on the whole, but has to be regularly adapted in order to maintain a high level of protection for the sake of European citizens.
 - (8) A memorandum entitled "Food, feed, animal and plant imports: safety and compliance with Community rules" was submitted to the Council of Ministers (Agriculture) on 23 June 2008.
 - (9) The European Economic and Social Committee's exploratory opinion on the safety of agricultural and food imports was adopted on 22 October 2008.
 - (10) The conclusions of the Council relating to the evaluation of the current Community plant health regime and to a proposal for a Community plant health strategy were adopted on 21 November 2008.
1. IS PLEASED to note the Commission initiatives designed to improve the Community system of import controls, such as:
 - 1.1. the revision of Community legislation on the organisation of veterinary checks on products of animal origin (Directive 97/78/EC) and live animals (Directive 91/496/EC) entering the Community;
 - 1.2. the plans, based on Regulation No 882/2004/EC, to tighten up health checks on imports of certain foodstuffs of plant origin, on the basis of new or known risks;
 - 1.3. the Commission communication on the EU animal health strategy (2007-2013), which emphasises the importance of ensuring border biosecurity;

- 1.4. carrying out, and increasing resources for, the Better Training for Safer Food programme, which provides technical assistance for those responsible for compliance checks along the entire import chain, in particular in developing countries which export to the EU;
- 1.5. the increasing number of FVO inspections in third countries and in Member States concerning sanitary and phytosanitary safety of imports and concerning controls performed at authorised Community points of entry;
- 1.6. the development of software and harmonised databases (RASFF, TRACES and EUROPHYT applications) in order to target sanitary and phytosanitary controls and to ease the management of non-conformities taking into account existing and functioning systems in the sectors concerned.

2. STRESSES that it is important:

Concerning analysis of import-related sanitary and phytosanitary risks:

- 2.1. for import controls policy to be based on risk analysis covering the entire import cycle, in order to adopt measures which are proportionate to the risks and to optimise allocation of the human and financial resources necessary for controls;
- 2.2. to that end, with the support of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in the framework set by the Community legislation, taking into account the work of the relevant international bodies, to build up, where appropriate, scientific methodologies for risk assessments;
- 2.3. for risk managers where possible to define, if necessary, with input from risk assessors, the levels of sanitary and phytosanitary protection judged appropriate in the EU, and to ensure that third countries are made aware of them;

- 2.4. when planning Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspection visits to third countries and Member States, to take full account of the findings of risk assessments and any non-compliance found during import controls;

Concerning harmonisation of procedures and coordination between inspection services:

- 2.5. to continue to ensure that import control procedures are commonly accepted and effective and to encourage coordinated Community-level cooperation between the various points of entry into the EU, in order to ensure that imported food, feed, animals and plants provide equivalent level of protection wherever they enter the EU;
- 2.6. to continue to improve information technology (IT) systems and make procedures secure (in particular electronic certification, e.g. UNCEFACT) and to develop the RASFF, TRACES and EUROPHYT applications in order to create tools to assist decision-making by the services responsible for organising and carrying out import controls;
- 2.7. to coordinate closely, inter alia by sharing information between the Member States' various services involved in controls and sanitary risk assessments relating to humans, animals, plants and foodstuffs entering Community territory;

Concerning information and communication:

- 2.8. to ensure appropriate traceability within the Community throughout the whole food chain, including for imported food, feed, animals and plants, as an essential component of risk management;

- 2.9. to have operational warning systems linking Member States and the Commission, allowing them to react and communicate swiftly in the event of health threats entering the EU;
- 2.10 to draw international travellers' attention to the health risks of bringing in food, feed, animals and plants from third countries, by regularly organising information campaigns in the Member States.

3. DRAWS ATTENTION

to the need for the Commission's impact analysis to describe and take into account the economic impact of Community rules and the risks and opportunities presented where EU and international standards differ.

4. INVITES the Commission:

- 4.1. within the relevant existing legal frameworks, to actively pursue the ongoing regulatory initiatives to improve import controls;
- 4.2. in addition, in the light of the above considerations from 1.1 to 2.10, to submit to the Council and the Parliament by the end of 2010 a report on the effectiveness and consistency of sanitary and phytosanitary controls on imports of food, feed, animals and plants, with a view to continuing a well-functioning Community framework on imports, along with proposals, if appropriate;
- 4.3. in compliance with the SPS Agreement, to continue to promote European standards and regulatory criteria within international standardisation organisations (e.g. OIE, IPPC, EPPO, Codex alimentarius) in the fields of animal health, plant health and food safety, and in negotiations for bilateral agreements with third countries;

- 4.4. to strengthen policy on international cooperation with exporting third countries and, together with the Member States, to continue to support capacity building in third countries and other initiatives such as "better training for safer food", in order to make it easier for them to meet European standards and to support the establishment of sanitary and phytosanitary surveillance networks for improving knowledge of epidemiological situations, taking into account existing structures;
- 4.5. to work for the development of harmonised tools for contributing to the risk assessments referred to in point 2.2. and, at European level, organising systems to monitor emerging risks in Member States and third countries, taking into account existing risk assessment standards in the sectors concerned;
- 4.6. to continue to work with Member States to ensure effective assessment of risks resulting from illegal imports, encouraging cooperation between the relevant authorities both within and between Member States to apply measures to detect and discourage smuggling;
- 4.7. to begin considering appropriate mechanisms for consumer information that would provide much greater transparency on the methods and conditions of production and characteristics of products, in accordance with international trade rules;
- 4.8. to explore what impacts any differences in standards between EU producers and key international trading partners actually have on Community trade, and to analyse, as a basis for further discussion, how international and bilateral trade rules can better interact with EU societal concerns and legitimate factors."

Better regulation in the plant variety and seeds sectors – *Council Conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL

- Considering the Council conclusions on 7 May 2007 on better regulation in the plant variety and seed sectors,
- Having acknowledged the conclusions of the evaluation of the Community *acquis* on the marketing of seed and plant propagating material carried out by the Commission with the assistance of a Consultant Cabinet,
- Having acknowledged the forthcoming evaluation of the current Community plant health regime,

INVITES THE COMMISSION :

- To carry out an assessment of the impact of possible changes of legal framework taking into account the conclusions of the evaluation;
- To present an appropriate proposal that leads to significant simplification of legislation on the marketing of seeds and plant propagating material;
- To give the Council regular feedback on progress."

FISHERIES**Cod – stock management plan**

The Council adopted a Regulation revising the long-term plan for cod (*Gadhus morua*) stocks established in 2004 ([16292/1/08](#)).

The plan covers four cod stocks in the Kattegat, the Skagerrak, the North Sea, the Eastern Channel, the west of Scotland and the Irish Sea.

It updates some measures on the basis of the most recent advice from the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), particularly:

- setting the fishing mortality per fishery at 0,4 for all the stocks concerned, but subject to a review clause;
- the TACs for the Kattegat, the west of Scotland and the Irish Sea are set by the Council each year on the basis of the following limit values:

Stock	Minimum Spawning Biomass Levels in tonnes	Precautionary Spawning Biomass Levels in tonnes
Cod in the Kattegat	6 400	10 500
Cod in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Eastern Channel	70 000	150 000
Cod to the west of Scotland	14 000	22 000
Cod in the Irish Sea	6 000	10 000

- (a) if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be below the minimum spawning biomass level established in Article 6, the fishing mortality rate shall be reduced by 25 % in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year;

- (b) if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be below the precautionary spawning biomass level set out in Article 6 and above or equal to the minimum spawning biomass level established in Article 6, the fishing mortality rate will be reduced by 15 % in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year; and
- (c) if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year of application of the TAC is predicted by STECF to be above or equal to the precautionary spawning biomass level set out in Article 6, the fishing mortality rate will be reduced by 10 % in the year of application of the TAC as compared with the fishing mortality rate in the previous year.
 - Initially, the TAC for the North Sea, Skagerrak and Eastern Channel will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality which is a fraction of the estimate of fishing mortality on appropriate age groups in 2008 as follows: 75 % for the TACs in 2009, 65 % for the TACs in 2010, and applying successive decrements of 10 % for the following years.

Subsequently, if the size of the stock on 1 January of the year prior to the year of application of the TACs is:

- above the precautionary spawning biomass level, the TAC will correspond to a fishing mortality rate of 0,4 on appropriate age groups;
- between the minimum spawning biomass level and the precautionary spawning biomass level, the TACs will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality rate on appropriate age groups equal to the following formula:
 - $0,4 - (0,2 * (\text{Precautionary spawning biomass level} - \text{spawning biomass}) / (\text{Precautionary spawning biomass level} - \text{minimum spawning biomass level}))$

- at or below the limit spawning biomass level, the TAC will not exceed a level corresponding to a fishing mortality rate of 0,2 on appropriate age groups.
- the annual variation in the TAC will not exceed 20 % of the TAC for the previous year;
- the fishing effort limitation will be expressed in ceilings in kW -days by effort group, that is to say by types of fishing gear. The ceilings are to be set by the Council each year.

Herring to the west of Scotland - multi-annual management plan

The Council adopted a Regulation establishing a multi-annual management plan for the stock of herring to the west of Scotland ([16542/08](#)).

It was agreed that the annual variation in the TAC would be limited to 20 % or 25 % depending on the state of the stock, the 2009 TAC being reduced by 20 % by comparison with the 2008 TAC.

The Regulation establishes a multi-annual plan for the fisheries exploiting the stock of herring in the area to the west of Scotland in international and Community waters of ICES zones Vb and VIb, and that part of ICES zone VIa which lies west of the meridian of longitude 7°W and north of the parallel of latitude 55°N, or east of the meridian of longitude 7°W and north of the parallel of latitude 56°N, excluding the Clyde.

It introduces measures based on the advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) on that stock of herring (*Clupea harengus*), in particular:

- maintaining the fishing mortality rate for appropriate age groups at:
 - 0,25 per year when the spawning stock is more than 75 000 tonnes;
 - 0,2 per year when the spawning stock is between 50 000 tonnes and 75 000 tonnes;
- the rates may be revised if the objectives of the plan are not achieved;
- when the spawning stock is below 50 000 tonnes, fishing is closed;
- vessels must hold a special fishing permit for the zone concerned;
- the Member States will carry out administrative cross-checks by comparing the landing declarations, the fishing areas and catches recorded in the logbook, catch reports and VMS data. Such cross-checks shall be recorded and made available to the Commission on request.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

European Evidence Warrant*

The Council adopted a framework decision on the European Evidence Warrant for the purpose of obtaining objects, documents and data for use in proceedings in criminal matters ([13076/07](#) + [13076/07 COR1](#) + [10100/1/08 REV1](#) + [15414/1/08 REV 1](#)). The purpose of this new legislative act is to create a device to facilitate proof in cross-border cases on the basis of the principle of mutual recognition.

The EEW will be a decision issued by a judicial authority in a Member State and directly recognised and executed in another Member State. By comparison with the existing mutual assistance procedures which it replaces, the European Evidence Warrant will speed up proceedings and provide guarantees for the issue and execution of a warrant. The European Evidence Warrant applies to specified objects, documents and data needed in the issuing State for the purpose of criminal proceedings or other proceedings which may ultimately give rise to proceedings before a criminal court. The executing authority will recognise all European Evidence Warrants, transmitted in accordance with the provisions of the text, without any further formality being required and will take the necessary measures for its execution, unless it decides to invoke one of the grounds for non-recognition or non-execution provided for in Article 13 or one of the grounds for postponement provided for.

Filling in visa stickers

The Council adopted a Decision amending Annex 13 to the Common Consular Instructions on filling in visa stickers ([15280/08](#)).

Annex 13 to the Common Consular Instructions lays down common rules on filling in visa stickers in the form of examples corresponding to the different categories of uniform visa. Example 9 in Annex 13 on the short-stay travel visa is amended since it no longer corresponds to any of the legal provisions of the Common Consular Instructions following Council Decision 2006/440/EC of 1 June 2006 (OJ L 175, 29.6.2006, p. 77) harmonising the administrative costs for processing visa applications.

Maintenance obligations

The Council adopted the Regulation on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance obligations ([15736/08](#)).

The Regulation combines in a single instrument all of the measures required for recovery of maintenance claims in the European Union in cross-border disputes. It thus includes provisions on conflicts of jurisdiction, on conflicts of law, on enforceability and enforcement of foreign decisions and on cooperation between Member States' judiciaries. Its scope extends to all maintenance obligations arising from family relationships or relationships having similar effects, so as to ensure equal treatment for all creditors. It should thus enable creditors to obtain an enforcement order easily and swiftly, and in most cases free of charge, which can circulate without obstruction throughout the European judicial area and result in regular payment of amounts due.

Proceedings on the proposed Regulation also took place against the background of the negotiations under way at the Hague Conference on Private International Law concerning a convention and protocol on maintenance obligations.

Implementing a new approach to Schengen evaluation – *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"Bearing in mind the Council conclusions of 5 and 6 June 2008 on future monitoring of the correct application of the Schengen *acquis* in participating Member States, which endorsed the principle of thematic and/or regional evaluations to be adopted as part of the programme of each Presidency's "Scheval" programme as a complement to country evaluations which should not be affected thereby,

Pointing out the importance of accurate implementation of the Schengen *acquis* and emphasising the advantages of an efficient evaluation mechanism, both for candidate countries and for Schengen Member States, a mechanism which should be adapted in the context of the gradual enlargement of the Schengen area,

Bearing in mind the proposal for a Schengen Evaluation Programme for 2008-2013, drawn up by several successive Presidencies and approved by the Working Party on Schengen Evaluation on 10 May 2008,

Recalling the objective of the Hague programme concerning the new instrument to be proposed by the Commission to supplement the existing Schengen evaluation mechanism,

The Council of the European Union:

- Notes with interest the work done on adapting evaluation procedures to the new challenges stemming notably from the requirement to evaluate a growing number of Member States every year and to the continuous increase in risks and threats, including the elaboration of practical guidelines;
- Emphasises in particular the usefulness of completing work on the training of experts in Schengen evaluations, a measure certain to increase the efficiency of the evaluation mechanism;
- Notes with the same interest the work being done on updating the Schengen Catalogues of Recommendations and Best Practices, work that is especially useful for the sharing of best practices between the relevant bodies in Schengen Member States;
- Invites Member States to continue work on adapting the evaluation process and to launch, in the short term and on an experimental basis, the process of an initial thematic and/or regional evaluation in close liaison with the General Secretariat of the Council and the European Commission and drawing on the assistance of national experts;

- Awaits with interest the Commission proposal supplementing the Schengen evaluation mechanism;
- Invites successive Presidencies to report regularly on the progress made in this respect to the relevant preparatory bodies and to the Council by the end of 2009 at the latest."

COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

Ballistic missiles – EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The Council adopted a Decision in support of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation ([15098/08](#)).

Continuing the implementation of the EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the EU supports the activities being carried out by States signatory to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, in order to help achieve the following objectives: promoting the universality of the Code, and in particular the subscription to the Code of all States with ballistic missile capabilities; promoting implementation and enhancement of the Code.

EU activities in the CFSP area – budget

The Council took note of a report on priority measures for 2009 and 2010 in the Common Foreign and Security Policy field for budgetary planning purposes.

Climate change and security

The Council took note of a report containing recommendations from the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy concerning climate change and international security ([16994/1/08](#)).

The recommendations follow up a joint report from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council in March 2008 analysing the consequences of climate change for international security ([7249/08](#)).

The report contains three main recommendations:

- more detailed analysis of the security implications at regional level;
- integration of these analyses into our early warning mechanisms;
- an intensified dialogue with third countries and other organisations.

In addition, the report stresses that in order to deal with the consequences of climate change for security, the EU will have to act at global level while having a detailed understanding of effects at local level.

During the second half of 2009 the Council is due to examine the progress made on climate change and security and on implementing the recommendations.

EU Special Representative to the African Union - Presidency report

The Council approved a Presidency report under Article 14 of Council Joint Action 2007/805/CFSP appointing a European Union Special Representative (EUSR) to the African Union ([17284/08](#)).

The report deals with the future of the office of the EUSR to the African Union and its organisation.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS**EU-Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan - enlargement**

The Council adopted three decisions approving the conclusion of protocols to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Kazakhstan ([16402/08](#)), Kyrgyzstan ([16405/08](#)) and Uzbekistan ([16407/08](#)) to take account of the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU in January 2007.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS**External auditors of the national central banks - Luxembourg**

The Council adopted a decision approving the appointment of KPMG AUDIT Sarl as the external auditor of the Banque du Luxembourg for the financial years 2009 to 2013 ([16504/08](#)).

The accounts of the European Central Bank (ECB) and of the national central banks of the Eurosystem have to be audited by independent external auditors recommended by the Governing Council of the ECB and approved by the Council.

Protection of the euro against counterfeiting

The Council adopted two Regulations amending respectively the Regulation laying down measures necessary for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting ([16361/08](#)) and the Regulation extending the effects of those measures to Member States which have not adopted the euro as their single currency ([16362/08](#)).

Accordingly, for the purposes of detecting and identifying counterfeit notes and counterfeit coins, transfers of such notes and coins between the competent national authorities and the institutions and bodies of the European Union will be authorised henceforth; moreover, an explicit obligation has been introduced for credit and other relevant institutions to check the authenticity of euro notes and coins which they have received before putting them back into circulation. However, time is provided to allow such institutions to adapt their internal procedures and upgrade their equipment.

Medals and tokens similar to euro coins

The Council adopted two Regulations amending, respectively, the Regulation concerning medals and tokens similar to euro coins ([16365/08](#)) and the Regulation extending the application of that Regulation to the non-participating Member States ([16366/08](#)).

The abovementioned Regulations aim to clarify the protective provisions and to increase transparency in the decision-making process in order to provide more protection for euro coins against medals and tokens similar to euro coins.

Combating fraud – Cooperation between the European Community and Switzerland

The Council adopted a Decision concerning the signature of a Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation to counter fraud and all other illegal activities to the detriment of their financial interests, including value added tax and excise duties ([12352/04](#)). This cooperation agreement was designed to supplement the Agreement between the European Union, the European Community and the Swiss Confederation concerning the Swiss Confederation's association with the implementation, application, and development of the Schengen acquis.

The objective of this Agreement is to extend administrative and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Swiss Confederation, of the other part, so as to combat certain illegal activities. It applies in particular to the administrative and criminal prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and repression of fraud and any other illegal activity to the detriment of the Contracting Parties' respective financial interests, as well as to the seizure and recovery of amounts due or wrongly received as a result of the illegal activities. The agreement covers:

- trade in goods contrary to customs and agricultural legislation;
- trade contrary to tax legislation applicable to value added tax, special taxes on consumption and excise duties;
- the charging or retention of funds – including their use for purposes other than those for which they were initially granted – from the budget of the Contracting Parties or budgets managed by them or on their behalf, such as grants and refunds;
- procedures for the award of contracts by the Contracting Parties.

EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Financing of CFSP operations

The Council adopted a Decision establishing a mechanism to administer the financing of the common costs of European Union operations having military or defence implications (ATHENA) ([16561/08](#)).

This Decision replaces and repeals Decision 2007/384/CFSP.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Loans and grants blending mechanisms

The Council took note of a report on loans and grants blending mechanisms in the context of EU external assistance ([17123/08](#)).

Centre for the Development of Enterprise - 2009 Budget

The Council approved the draft decision to be sent for adoption to the ACP-EC Committee of Ambassadors with a view to the adoption of the work programme and budget for 2009 of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise ([2124/08](#)).

The draft overall budget for 2009 amounts to EUR 18,35 million.

COMMERCIAL POLICY

Anti-dumping – Cotton-type bedlinen – Graphite electrodes – India

The Council adopted two Regulations:

- one amending Regulation (EC) No 74/2004 imposing a definitive countervailing duty on imports of cotton-type bedlinen originating in India ([16374/08](#)),
- and the other amending Regulation (EC) No 1628/2004 imposing a definitive countervailing duty on imports of certain graphite electrode systems originating in India and Regulation (EC) No 1629/2004 imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain graphite electrode systems originating in India ([16379/08](#)).

Anti-dumping – Prepared or preserved citrus fruits from China

The Council adopted a Regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty and collecting definitively the provisional duty imposed on imports of certain prepared or preserved citrus fruits (namely mandarins, etc.) originating in the People's Republic of China ([16885/08](#)).

REGIONAL POLICY**Operations co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund**

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, in respect of certain revenue-generating projects, with the aim of simplifying and improving the management of such funds ([13874/08](#)).

The purpose of this Regulation is to amend Regulation No 1083/2006 , in respect of certain revenue-generating projects, by limiting its application to operations which are co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund or Cohesion Fund and the total cost of which exceeds EUR 1 million.

CUSTOMS UNION**Export of cultural goods – Codification of the Regulation**

The Council adopted a codified version of the Regulation on the export of cultural goods ([8714/1/08](#)).

Regulation (EC) No 3911/92 has been amended several times and to a substantial extent. It has been codified with a view to clarity and rationality.

Industrial, agricultural and fishery products

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1255/96 temporarily suspending the autonomous common customs tariff duties on certain industrial, agricultural and fishery products ([16785/08](#)).

Tariff quotas for agricultural and industrial products

The Council adopted a Regulation on opening and providing for the administration of autonomous Community tariff quotas for certain agricultural and industrial products ([16479/5/08](#)). The new legislative act amends Regulation (EC) No 2505/96 and takes account of changes in Community demand and of the repercussions from the current quota volumes on the internal market.

CONSUMER PROTECTION**Time-sharing of holiday products – Tourism – Internal market**

The Council adopted a directive aiming to enhance the protection of consumers in respect of timeshare and long-term holiday product contracts ([3701/08](#)).

This directive lays down the commercial conditions associated with the use of timeshare goods and long-term holiday products (of a duration of more than one year), and with resale and exchange, in order to give consumers the possibility to acquaint themselves with the pre-contractual information, the rights and obligations under the contracts and possibilities of withdrawal, in a clear and comprehensible manner.

Among other things, consumers will be able to benefit from an extended withdrawal period where information has not been provided by traders. The exercise of the right of withdrawal should remain free of charge during that extended period regardless of what services consumers may have enjoyed. The expiration of the withdrawal period does not preclude consumers from seeking remedies for breaches of the information requirements.

The new legislation will make it possible to guarantee equivalent protection in all EU countries with regard to the timeshare market. The law applicable to a contract will be determined in accordance with the Community rules on private international law, in particular Regulation (EC) No 593/2008 on contractual obligations ("Rome I" Regulation)¹. Under that Regulation, the law of a third country may be applicable where consumers are targeted by traders whilst on holiday in a country other than their country of residence.

The supply of timeshare goods (for example, holiday stays in movable rather than immovable property, such as boats or caravans) has changed considerably over the past few years, and new long-term holiday products (holiday clubs at preferential rates, in particular) have appeared on the market. These new products and certain transactions associated with the use of timeshare goods have not hitherto been covered by Community legislation.

INTERNAL MARKET

Chemicals – "REACH" Regulation

The Council took the decision not to oppose the amendment proposed by the Commission to the "REACH" Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemicals), with regard to dispensation from tests of substances (Annex XI).

¹ OJ L 177, 4.7.2008, p. 6.

ENERGY**Eco-design of digital decoders – Regulatory procedure with scrutiny**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a Regulation implementing Directive 2005/32/CE on eco-design of digital decoders.

According to the EU's regulatory procedure with scrutiny, the Council may oppose the adoption of legal acts by the Commission. This means that, unless the European Parliament objects, the Commission may adopt the Regulation.

ENVIRONMENT**Protection of the coasts and waters of the North-East Atlantic**

The Council adopted a Decision authorising the signing, on behalf of the European Community, of the Additional Protocol to the Cooperation Agreement for the Protection of the Coasts and Waters of the North-East Atlantic against Pollution ([16538/08](#)).

TRADE**Amendment of the agricultural agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation**

The Council adopted three decisions concerning the amendment of the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products.

In the Decision set out in [15486/08](#), the Council determines the position to be taken by the Community regarding the amendment of Appendices 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 to Annex 11 to the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products. Once the Joint Veterinary Committee has approved the position, border checks on animals and animal products will be lifted as from 1 January 2009.

In the Decision set out in [15472/08](#), the Council signed and made provisionally applicable an Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation amending the existing Agreement on trade in agricultural products. This Decision aims in particular to extend the scope of the current agreement to include pet animals.

The Decision in [12445/08](#) aims to update and adapt the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products in the light of developments in Community and Swiss legislation and the consequences of the enlargement of the EU, in particular as regards geographical indications.

INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

European Parliament - Parliamentary assistants

The Council approved a Regulation which aims to clarify and improve the legal framework for staff who assist Members of the European Parliament.

This Regulation will allow parliamentary assistants to be employed under a direct contract with the European Parliament. It will enter into force on the first day of the parliamentary term starting in 2009.

In accordance with their statute, Members of the European Parliament are entitled to help from personal assistants.
