

## **EU - The European Commission has adopted two discard plans for certain demersal fisheries in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea.**

In the Mediterranean Sea, as of 1 January 2017 the landing obligation will be compulsory for demersal species that define the fisheries and that are subject to a minimum conservation reference size as defined in the "Mediterranean Regulation (Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006).

The fisheries targeting hake, red mullet, common sole and deep water rose shrimp in certain areas of the Mediterranean Sea are subject to this provision.

The new plan establishes detailed rules for the implementation of the landing obligation in these fisheries, including different levels of "de minimis" exemptions depending on the area and fishing gear used.

Under this exemption, operators can discard a small percentage of unwanted catches, given that the costs of their handling would be disproportionate.

The plan also stipulates a number of survivability exemptions, allowing operators to throw back specimen that have a high chance of surviving (for example for sole caught with beam trawls and for scallop, carpet clams and venus shells caught with mechanized dredges).

The survivability exemptions last for one year, and Member States are to transmit additional scientific data in the course of 2017 for possible renewal.

These exceptions were examined by the EU's scientific advisory body, i.e. the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF). All the provisions of the discard plan stem from the joint recommendations drawn up by the Member States concerned namely Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia, after consultation of the Mediterranean Sea Advisory Council.

As far as the Black Sea is concerned, as of 1 January 2017 the landing obligation will be compulsory for turbot fisheries.

The plan adopted for this fishery is based on a joint recommendation transmitted by Romania and Bulgaria and assessed by the STECF. It has a duration of three years and foresees a one-year survivability exemption for turbot caught with bottom set gillnets.

Romania and Bulgaria are to send additional data in the course of 2017, based on which the survivability exemption may be prolonged in the coming years.

**Lien article :** <http://www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/28362/new-discard-plans-adopted-for-mediterranean-and-black-sea/>