

**To: Coastal State negotiators and national experts
in the UK, Norway, Greenland, Faroe Islands,
Iceland**

By e-mail

Brussels, 18 June 2020

Call for the continuation of sustainable atlanto-scandic herring fisheries

Dear coastal state negotiators and national experts,

It has been brought to our attention that in January 2020, the auditors of the four different MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certified fisheries collectively issued an announcement, indicating that the atlanto-scandic herring fisheries risk losing their MSC certification by 30 November, unless specific conditions are fulfilled, which relate to the collective management of atlanto-scandic herring fisheries.

EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. Many of our members aim to offer products based on a sustainable exploitation of resources and, consequently, the sector seeks to meet the recognised international standards and certifications applying to raw materials, production and traceability.

Herring is a very important product in Northern European retail; it is one of the most consumed seafood species, especially by households in German speaking parts of Europe, Scandinavia, and Benelux. Importantly, atlanto-scandic herring is a MSC certified product, which provides us and our consumers with an independent verification of its sustainability credentials. Sustainably managed, atlanto-scandic herring is an important seafood option available to our customers.

As a direct result of unilateral quota setting leading to fisheries collectively exceeding scientific advice, several of the North East Atlantic stocks are now at risk of losing their MSC and MarinTrust (formerly IFFO RS) certifications. This already applies to mackerel and could spread to atlanto-scandic herring and blue whiting. This will have major implications not only for the fishing industry but also for the processing industry and the retail sector.

EuroCommerce would like to urge all coastal states negotiators to commit to a clear negotiation process and to establish binding fisheries management strategies, to fish in accordance with scientific advice, and to honour sustainable quota shares for the shared stocks in the Northeast Atlantic.

Yours sincerely,



Christian Verschueren
Director-General

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