



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 27.03.2015
C(2015) 2186 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Sejm for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down a prohibition on driftnet fisheries, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 850/98, (EC) No 812/2004, (EC) No 2187/2005 and (EC) No 1967/2006 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 894/97, {COM(2014) 265 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Opinion of the Sejm in support of the Commission's proposal on the introduction of a full prohibition to take on board or use any kind of driftnets.

The Commission notes the Sejm's concern about the proposed revised definition of driftnets which is considered to extend the scope of the currently existing definition to the detriment of Polish fishermen.

The Commission is of the view that the revision of the current definition is justified by the need to improve clarity and understanding of the precise scope of the existing rules on driftnets and by the need to extend this scope to include fishing gears with more than one wall of netting hung jointly in parallel on the headline(s) (i.e. trammel driftnets).

It is also necessary to recall that semi-driftnets are anchored gears on one side only and they are thus operated in the same way as fully free driftnets and therefore raise the same concerns as the latter do. Such gears were classified as driftnets before the entry into force of the driftnet ban in the Baltic Sea in 2008 and bottom set nets from then onward.

The points made above are based on the initial proposal presented by the Commission which is currently in the legislative process involving both the European Parliament and the Council at which your government is represented.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Sejm and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

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First Vice-President*

*Karmenu Vella
Member of the Commission*

*Mr Radoslaw SIKORSKI
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