COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) 820/2004

of 29 April 2004

amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2287/2003 as regards fishing opportunities for blue whiting in certain zones

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2287/2003 of 19 December 2003 fixing for 2004 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 [1], and in particular Article 5(4) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Article 5(4) of Regulation (EC) No 2287/2003 lays down the possibility to increase the Community's fishing opportunities for blue whiting and herring when third countries do not respect a responsible management of those stocks.

(2) No maximum fishing opportunities for blue whiting for 2004 have been established by the Faeroe Islands and Norway. Iceland has established fishing opportunities far above their historical catches of the stock. It may therefore be considered that those third countries do not respect a responsible management of the blue whiting stock.

While awaiting a long term management agreement on the blue whiting stock with the coastal States concerned, it is appropriate for the Community to provisionally increase its quota with 350 000 tonnes in zones II (International waters), IIa (EC waters), North Sea (EC waters), V,VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII, XIV, CECAF 34.1.1 (EC waters).

(3) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Management Committee for Fisheries and Aquaculture.

(4) Regulation (EC) No 2287/2003 should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Annexes IB and IC to Regulation (EC) No 2287/2003 are amended in accordance with the Annex to this Regulation.

[1] OJ L 344, 31.12.2003, p. 1.

Article 2

This Regulation shall enter into force on the third day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 29 April 2004.

For the Commission
Franz FISCHLER
Member of the Commission