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## **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Flagship Project**

**“To lay the groundwork for developing a plan to reduce the number of accidents in fisheries”**

**Baltic Sea Advisory Council Secretariat**

**April 2014**

**[www.bsac.dk](http://www.bsac.dk)**

## **Acknowledgments to .....**

Acknowledgement goes first and foremost to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) which was launched by the Commission in June 2009 and adopted by the European Council in October 2009. The overarching aim of the EUSBSR is, through closer cooperation between the Baltic Sea States, to save the sea, connect the region and increase prosperity. Maritime safety is included in the objectives of the strategy and the health and safety of fishermen falls under that remit.

Representatives from DG REGIO and DG MARE are gratefully acknowledged for their support and initiative in contacting and encouraging the BSAC to carry out this project.

To the Swedish Institute, for providing funding for this project and for providing guidance where necessary.

To the EUSBSR for providing financial support, so that full participation by representatives from all Baltic Sea States was ensured.

Henrik Loveby, President of the Swedish Fishermen's Federation, took the project under the wings of the Swedish Fishermen's Federation and secured the smooth application to the Swedish Institute and the overall captainship of the project.

The Danish Fishermen's Occupational Health Service, with its base in Esbjerg, has given full support to the project and provided the expertise of one of its consultants in the running of the project and the carrying out of visits and meetings.

The BSAC Executive Committee was committed to the project from the start and has been following its progress at regular meetings.

The BSAC fisheries members have given their time and facilitated meetings with representatives from the sector both at the harbours, at schools and in administration.

To the coordinators of the Priority Area PA Safe for guidance and good ideas throughout the project.

To Dr Leonid Meyler, Kaliningrad State Technical University, for arranging a successful visit to Kaliningrad.

## **Executive Summary**

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014, the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) has been coordinating, under the captainship of the Swedish Fishermen's Federation, a project with the aim to lay the groundwork to reduce the number of accidents in fisheries in the Baltic. The objective has been modest, because this has been new territory for the BSAC and because it was important first to investigate the potential and scope of such a project.

In advance of the project period, the BSAC Secretariat carried out a desk study at the end of 2011 in order to compile initial data on accident and work related health and safety statistics, so as to consider what the basis was to carry out such a project. A decision to continue the work in the form of a project was subject to funding and this was secured from the Swedish Institute and through the EUSBSR.

The bulk of the work has consisted of establishing contacts across the Baltic Sea States, holding meetings, carrying out study visits and writing reports.

A kick-off meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013 in order to compile initial information and data from the representatives from the fisheries organisations and maritime authorities. This information covered requirements to become a fisherman, education and training, and the formal accident reporting requirements in the Baltic Sea States.

After that, a series of visits has been carried out to all the Baltic Sea States in order to discuss health and safety issues, to learn about best practices in education and training establishments as well as on board fishing vessels, and to collect suggestions and recommendations for improvements to or continued work with health and safety. Separate reports were written after each meeting in collaboration with those visited.

A final meeting was held in Copenhagen on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and the invitation was extended to all those involved and informed hitherto.

From the work carried out and the meetings held, the following conclusions can be presented:

1. The general state of the fishing sector in the Baltic Sea States is generally characterised by poor recruitment and a rather ageing fleet. This needs to be presented in as positive a way as possible by highlighting potential profitability, including new quota systems with the potential to make the sector more professional. By addressing such issues, the health and safety of the sector will also benefit.

2. With respect to statistics and data, the reported low number of accidents and incidents in the Baltic fisheries sector can be disguised by the fact that many accidents, incidents and near-misses go unreported. There is a need for more comparable statistics and a knowledge baseline in order to create a culture of reporting, of information and of safety.
3. There are benefits to be derived from exchange and collaboration across the Baltic Sea States with respect to education and training and this includes a clear-cut recommendation on providing refresher courses to fishermen during their working career. Moreover, cooperation is called for with respect to the use of training vessels, if they are to be used.
4. There is a clear call from this project to all States to ratify the STCW (F) Convention as a basic common denominator for the education and training of fishermen.
5. Compiling and making information available, including a discussion on ideas on what and where can be the focal point for this. The BSAC, as well as the EUSBSR strategy website, are put forward as possible information points. If such an information portal is going to be bigger, it may need to have place or site of its own.
6. Clarity is needed with respect to the different fleet segments in the Baltic. The risks in fisheries can be higher, the smaller the vessel, but knowledge about the rules is lower. The need for safety on small vessels has particular needs and the rules are different in the different Baltic Sea States. Information campaigns could be useful here.
7. The recreational sector is a relatively unknown area. The absence of requirements with respect to this sector in some Baltic Sea States can mean that it is be hazardous at sea.

No decision has been taken on which or whether any of these recommendations should be pursued in the form of projects. It was agreed to further evaluate the results of the project and to keep the relevant stakeholders informed about new project opportunities and proposals.

The project has also demonstrated the potential for the BSAC to carry out such projects or similar activities. Its strength lies in its broad membership base and its network which reaches far out into fisheries and related sectors.

## 1. Motivation for the project and the start

How big, if at all, is the problem of accidents and incidents in the fisheries sector in the Baltic?

On the basis of any data acquired and analysed, what recommendations can be made to improve the health and safety of fishermen and, if necessary, to reduce the number of accidents in the sector?

These questions were asked in connection with a proposal put by the European Commission and the coordinators of the Steering Committee of PA Safe to the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) to undertake such a project for the EUBSRS under the Priority Area PA Safe, which is coordinated by a Steering Committee under the joint chairmanship of Denmark and Finland. Informal contacts with the BSAC took place at the First Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea, held in Tallinn on 14<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> October 2010. The BSAC Executive Committee was consulted on the possibility of getting involved in such a project and gave its support in 2012.

DG MARE gave the following reasons to explain why such a project is important to them:

- Socio-economic data in the capture sector is generally poor
- Accidents at sea and accidents at work are too numerous
- The EU is committed to cutting the number of accidents at work
- Better knowledge of the causes of accidents makes it possible to prevent the occurrence of accidents (be they of meteorological, technical or human origin)
- The model can be exported to other areas of the EU

The ambition of such a project was not to introduce another layer of legislation, but to gain improved knowledge of the problems experienced on board the vessels. This could be particularly relevant for the smallest vessels, of which there are many operating in the Baltic. According to the EU fleet register (information given 2013); there are 10.877 vessels in the Baltic, of which 10.000 are < 15m. This was one reason to highlight the strong motivation for such a project.

The BSAC had several qualifications to carry out this project:

- Operating since 2006, the BSAC brings together from all Baltic Sea Member States stakeholders who have an interest in the successful management of the Baltic fisheries. Its main task is to provide advice and recommendations on fisheries management in the Baltic.
- Fisheries interest organisations affiliated to the BSAC represent the majority of commercial fishermen working in the Baltic and they have contacts through their daily work with educational establishments and training centres, as well as fisheries and maritime authorities.

- Health and safety issues are of common concern and interest to all representatives - whether they be from fisheries interest groups or other interest groups.
- The BSAC has a permanent secretariat based in Copenhagen and this could be the focal point for gathering together material and coordinating any necessary meetings and travel to investigate the subject further.

The importance of involving Russia was also highlighted and early on contacts were sought through the diplomatic representation of Russia in Copenhagen.

A desk study was seen as the best way to make a start and this was carried out in advance before envisaging the feasibility of a project. Initial contact was made through the administrations of the eight Baltic Sea States with varying degrees of success. A web search provided details of relevant authorities to contact. In contacts by e mail or formal letter the following questions were asked:

- How big (if at all) is the problem of accidents in fisheries in the Baltic?
- Are there any statistics on this available in the Baltic Sea States?
- Do the figures apply only to the Baltic Sea? (ICES Areas IIIb, IIIc and IIId/or SDs 22 - 32) and out at sea?
- Do these figures cover the most serious accidents?
- Is there any more data which covers specific accidents for the fishermen, such as loss of fingers, broken leg?
- Do you consider the problem of accidents in fisheries to be a big problem?
- Is there a need for education and training?

Information received from some Baltic Sea States was more detailed than from others. However, more or less detailed documentation on the number and type of accidents involving fishing vessels was provided. It emerged that the Baltic Sea States collect and compile their statistics in different ways. This implies that in several, if not most cases, the statistics in their current form do not allow for direct comparison between the countries of the region. There might also be differences in the reporting procedures and consequently in how well accidents are reported. However, the statistics gathered still give an overall impression about the number and type of accidents. There were several comments from sources saying that the problem with accidents in fisheries is not a big one, and in particular, that there are not many fatalities.

Several sources mentioned the need for education and training and a willingness and interest in cooperating with the BSAC on this.

On reading the first report from the desk study, two questions emerged:

- 1) How to harmonize reporting and draw conclusions?
- 2) How to reduce the number of accidents?

One way forward could be to hold a workshop to address these issues. This could include information from Eurostat on current EU requirements with respect to safety at sea, examples of best practices in use in some member states, and information on several on-going projects using IT systems that a fisherman can download, so as to prevent accidents involving fishing vessels. This could be done by inviting a representative from DG Mare to a forthcoming BSAC meeting.

It was recognised that authorities in the Member States are at different levels in terms of data collection and the provision of services, training etc. So it was asked whether there is a possibility for or interest in the exchange of best practices. The BSAC was asked for assistance in this connection.

These issues could usefully be explored in a project involving contact with the relevant authorities, fisheries organisations and educational establishments in the Baltic Sea States. To give a full picture of the Baltic, it was considered important to involve contact to the Russian Federation.

- **The report from the desk study is on the BSAC website.**

## **2. The project to lay the groundwork for developing a plan to reduce the number of accidents in fisheries in the Baltic**

Carrying out such a project cannot be accomplished without the means to bring people together and to continue the discussions on some of the questions asked above. Once a decision was made by the BSAC to be the lead agent for the project, the work of the project was facilitated by funding from Swedish Institute and the EUSBSR, expertise from the Danish Fishermen's Occupational Health Service and the tutelage of the Swedish Fishermen's Federation.

On that basis, it was possible to bring together representatives from the sector and to discuss further. It was thought that the following model was best for the success of the project: a stakeholder kick-off meeting, fact finding visits, and a final getting together of interested representatives.

### **Kick-off meeting 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

The first meeting provided the opportunity for fisheries representatives and invited representatives from maritime authorities to highlight key issues with respect to access to the profession: what skills are required to become a fisherman and what education is compulsory in the Baltic Sea States and with respect to accident reporting: what are the requirements. This first meeting was an ideal opportunity for those taking place to describe current practices and rules and so on in the sector and a very good set of information has been gathered together. This was a good exercise in gathering information: the obligation for all representatives to come with data was a good discipline. In addition, DG Mare gave a presentation, explaining why such a project is important to DG Mare, seen in the context of the Common Fisheries Policy, as well as the international framework with respect to legislative requirements. A representative from the Swedish Transport Agency gave a presentation on the anonymous near-miss and discrepancy reporting system (ForeSEA) that is in operation in Sweden and which Finland joined in 2010. Experience in Sweden has shown that such near-miss reporting systems can be used with success, provide useful information and can be a useful supplement to official accident and near-miss reporting systems.



## Accident statistics and comments

This table extrapolates in a general form the information received from different sources/authorities during the desk study and supplemented by the information provided at the kick-off meeting (25<sup>th</sup> February 2013):

<b>Country</b>	<b>Time period given by the source</b>	<b>Number/type of accidents and comments</b>
Denmark	1/1/2001 to 19/10/2011	80 boundary Skagen-Gothenburg (not only Danish vessels) 29 boundary Møn-Dasser-Ort (not only Danish vessels) The important message is that the trend has been decreasing since 2000
	January 2001 to March 2011	119 work-related
Estonia	2005 -2012	6 near-miss and 1 very serious, no deaths
	2004 -2011	16 work-related
Finland	Since 2000	No precise information 1 fatal accident 2 trawler accidents in 2011
		No precise information on work-related accidents
Germany	2010	10 (6 less serious, 3 serious, 1 very serious (not just the Baltic)
Latvia	1999 -2011	5 serious cases 1 – 2 cases per year of man overboard
		No statistics on occupational accidents
Lithuania	2005 -2011	10 (serious) 2 deaths and none missing
Poland	2007 -2011	42 – all types of accidents
	2007 -2011	5 work-related
Russian Federation <sup>1</sup>	2008 -2011	5 accidents involving fishing vessels in the Baltic (four involving damage to vessel, and in the fifth case a seaman was lost at sea)
Sweden	1/1/2006 – 31/12/2010	21 No lives lost, no fishermen disappeared

<sup>1</sup> Information from Russia, gratefully received, came in at a later stage of the project.

The kick-off meeting generated a good list of recommendations and highlighted key elements that could be the subject of further work either within the current project or beyond:

1. Definitions of accidents and incidents. There is a whole hierarchy of events that take place and that can be reported on. It can be useful to define all those happenings in the same manner, so there is a common language and understanding about what is being talked about and dealt with. To synthesize this information into the relevant and currently agreed upon standards can be a useful exercise.
2. To ensure that there is access to the data and that the statistics are compiled.
3. To look in more detail at the education and training provided and on offer so as to be able to compare what is available. It would be valuable to see and note what differences and similarities there are across the Baltic Sea region in terms of course time or length, and what the formal requirements are. Available courses can be compared, in order to identify whether the amount of courses provided is sufficient, whether access to them is dependent on such factors as previous qualifications, experience or cost.
4. Suggestions were made to improve present regulatory systems. What are the minimum legal requirements? This related to the requirements relating to the STCW (F) Convention and the state of play regarding its ratification.
5. The use of voluntary accident and near-miss reporting systems was put forward as an alternative or supplement to compulsory reporting systems. Private insurance solutions may give similar results. The work being done by the Danish Fishermen's Occupational Health Service in Esbjerg in connection with work place assessments was put forward as another example.

It was appreciated by the meeting that under the remit of the current project, it was not possible to generate new data or statistics. However, a further desk study could be carried out at a later stage in order to compare the data in more detail, as well as to compare the education and training on offer in the Baltic Sea States.

- **The report from the kick-off meeting as well as relevant presentations, is on the BSAC website.**

## **Bilateral visits around the Baltic to all the Baltic Sea States**

Thanks to the flexibility provided by the Swedish Institute, it has been possible to extend the length of the project in order to include visits to every Baltic Sea State. To carry out such a full sweep of visits to all the Baltic Sea States has been seen as a big achievement. The welcome and kind reception shown to the project team on every visit testifies to the fact that this was appreciated and reciprocated. Using the services of the fisheries organisations affiliated to the BSAC it was possible to establish contacts and to arrange visits at suitable times during the year. The preparation in advance of a brief made it possible to introduce the topic and to frame the questions under two headings: to focus on education and to learn something about health and safety practices with the fishermen. The key questions came under the headings: how do you work with safety and how can things be done better?

### **Discussions were based on some general questions:**

- Is there any kind of arrangement for the fishermen in your country with respect to safety? What rules/regulations apply?
- Is there any kind of targeted preventative work or initiative to deal with work-related accidents and illnesses in the fisheries sector?
- Is safety training a part of the basic education for fishermen? To what extent?
- How are work-related accidents or illnesses reported?
- Are fishermen covered by insurance if they are away from work because of a work related injury?
- Is there anything that can be done differently/better in future in order to increase general safety for the fishermen?

### **At the schools the following questions were put:**

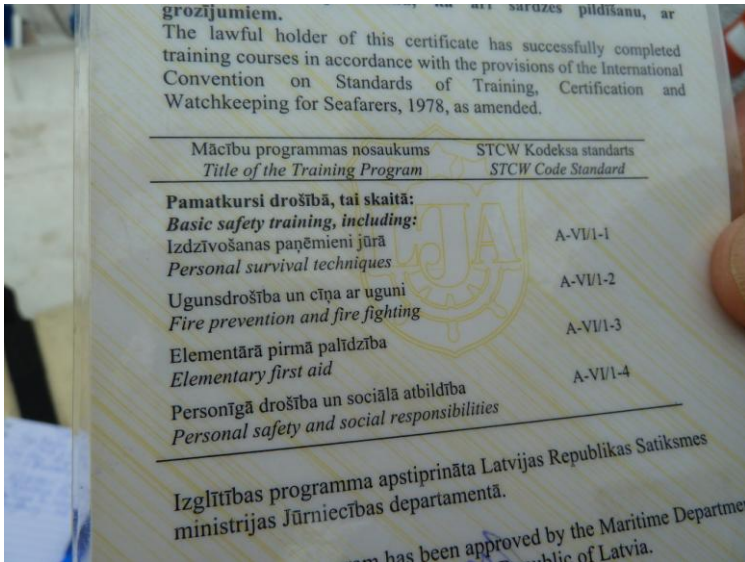
- What education is on offer to become a fisherman?
  - How many fishermen do you train each year?
  - Are there any special health and safety requirements for fishermen (as opposed to other maritime branches)?
  - What weight is given to the theoretical and the practical in the training courses (this relates to the many requirements put in the STCW-F Convention)?
  - How much time and weight are given to safety in the education and training?
  - What kind of further/refresher training is there in health and safety, once you've qualified as a fisherman?
- **The full reports from the visits are available from the BSAC website. Included in all of the reports are recommendations put forward by the interviewees, as well as any relevant information supplied on education and training.**



Denmark: Training vessel gives practical safety training from the start



Finland: A safety vest is fundamental



Latvia: Certificate of training in the four key elements of the STCW Convention



Lithuania: Safety instruction also takes place indoors



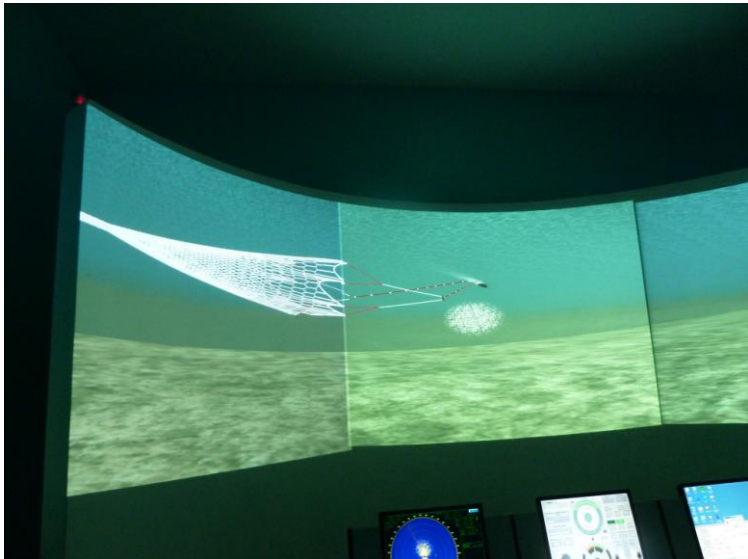
Estonia: Severe ice conditions in winter mean that fishermen must be extra careful



Poland: Working example of trawler operating in the Baltic



Sweden: Take fishermen's needs and ideas into account when developing protective clothing



Kaliningrad: Fishing simulator gives insight into the dynamics of fishing trawls and can provide safety



Germany: Typical Baltic fishing vessels of different sizes (Fehmarn)



Estonia: Sprat fishery is important to the Baltic

There are some themes running through the visits and these can be summarised here.

### **1. The general state of health of the Baltic Sea fisheries sector**

Representatives from some Baltic Sea States (for example Finland, Latvia and Lithuania), highlighted a key question with respect to the purpose of the visit and indeed the project. Is the focus on improving health and safety, or is it/should it be to enhance recruitment into the sector? From all the visits, it was clearly demonstrated that the education and training facilities are available in all the Baltic Sea States. They follow different traditions and have varying emphasis on the mix of theory-practice. However, as representatives from several schools and training centres pointed out, the provision of fisheries education and training depends on there being a sustainable fisheries sector. At the same time, the average age of fishermen is increasing, so it is important to attract new recruits to the sector. The reality is that the fisheries departments are competing with other maritime sectors for the students. Economic considerations have meant that schools in several Baltic Sea States are widening their choice of courses and education to accommodate and attract other maritime branches.

### **2. Reporting of accidents and culture of safety**

The generally low record of accidents and incidents in the fisheries sector in the Baltic Sea region fisheries sector was repeatedly confirmed during the visits and discussions. Nevertheless, it disguises the fact that many accidents, incidents and near-misses go unreported. For example, the Estonian representatives asked what can be done to improve the general culture of reporting accidents and incidents. During discussions at the Öckerö Training Centre in Sweden, the fishermen acknowledged that sometimes, they omit to report accidents because of the burden of paperwork. In Germany, it was highlighted that there is considerable public interest in the issue of safety. The number of accidents is falling, but the number of accidents is still considered too high. The Lithuanian authorities mentioned the need to promote a culture of safety amongst the fishermen. This includes willingness to report and talk about near-misses and close-shaves, as well as to report on work related accidents. There was appreciation in several institutes and schools of the value of using accident reports to get a better understanding of the causes of accidents and to use this knowledge as prevention and improved safety awareness. Representatives in Kaliningrad would like to benefit from learning from an exchange of information from accident and incident databases in the different EU Member States, again learning from existing experience and practices.

### **3. Education and training: international requirements**

There was broad consensus that the STCW (F) Convention is the reference point for course planning and contents in the schools and training centres. This was pointed out in many of the training centres and schools. At the same time, it was underlined that the STCW (F) Convention must be seen as mutual recognition of minimum standards only. Moreover, Denmark highlighted that the STCW (F) Convention does not include use of the medical inventory: this seems to be unique to Denmark and could be incorporated into the Convention.

#### **4. Education and training: refresher courses**

This was raised by several training establishments as an important element. Representatives in Estonia mentioned the need to introduce obligatory refresher health and safety training for fishermen, as there was no provision for this in their education syllabuses. The Öckerö Training Centre in Centre Sweden showed a working example of obligatory two-day refresher courses every five years for all those working in the commercial fisheries. The educational establishments in Kaliningrad run obligatory two month refresher maritime training for all qualified crew members after 5 years. The Maritime school in Denmark does not have such refresher courses once students have qualified, but was aware of the fact that they could be a good idea.

#### **5. Education and training: shared information**

Somewhere and somehow a focal point could be created to compile this information. At several schools there was agreement that it could be an idea to have some shared common safety materials and educational materials in the respective languages. Finland gave the example of instruction by film on the use of seal safe traps. Poland was looking for an easy to use guide on stability. Sweden would appreciate a useable guide on what they refer to as the “systematic working environment”. The representatives in Kaliningrad were especially interested in sharing experience with the EU and in receiving any relevant documentation on health and safety requirements, as well as on the safety equipment used on EU vessels. Moreover, the advantages of having a dedicated fisheries training vessel were highlighted.

During the course of the project, funding has been used to produce in English a stability guide for smaller vessels. This has been produced in Danish by the Danish Fishermen’s Occupational Health Service, so it was a straightforward task to get it translated into English. It is available in hard copy from the BSAC Secretariat and is also on the BSAC website.

#### **6. Education and training: teacher trainer exchanges**

The teachers and trainers in Finland appreciated the visit under the project and its aims and welcomed the idea of there being cooperation around the Baltic Sea and an exchange of knowledge and experience. One of the representatives at the German school in Rendsburg felt it would be interesting to see how others work and to get new ideas, for example on the theory on safety with a two day seminar inviting trainers and teachers from around the Baltic Sea to take part. This proposal links up to lifelong learning and the usefulness of practical refresher courses during their working life, also for the teacher/trainers. The representatives at education establishments in Kaliningrad pointed out that exchanges could also extend to students.

## **7. Specific needs for specific fleet segments**

Most of the Baltic Sea region fleet is below 12 metres. Different rules apply to the size of the crew on these vessels. A small-scale fisherman in Finland was held up as a working example of the skills and experience required to operate different vessels and gears. In Kaliningrad representatives emphasized that the fishing vessels in the Baltic tend to be low tonnage and this makes the challenge of safety very relevant. Denmark has focus on the small-scale vessels in connection with the regular inspection of the vessels and suggested that there could be a check of necessary papers to document education and qualifications. Lithuanian representatives highlighted that the education requirements on vessels over 24 metres are in accordance with the STCW (F) Convention: this was perhaps at too high a level or too extensive for small fishing vessels. There were possibilities to arrange shorter, specialised training for fishermen on vessels below 24 metres. Whilst attaching importance to the safety of fishermen, German fisheries representatives called for the rules to be proportional to the vessel size and crew.

## **8. Personal safety equipment and awareness for the fishermen**

The project team took note of the consistently high level of safety across the Baltic and the use of personal safety equipment. Representatives highlighted that the acquisition of and use of personal safety equipment and awareness for fishermen goes hand in hand with the culture of safety and prevention of accidents. Interlocutors in Estonia pointed out that the introduction of new clothing (e.g. dry suits) could be informed on and tried out at refresher courses. The purchase of safety gear and clothing could be reimbursed by the government (EU funded), as could the courses. Nevertheless, it was pointed out on several visits that the advantages of buying safety equipment had to be weighed up against the commercial benefits from improved equipment to ensure more efficient catch handling: investing in new pumps, storage facilities, as well as carrying out vessel improvements. The surplus earned from the fishery can be invested in new catch handling equipment. Overall improvements, as well as associated harbour investments and improvements, were also seen as contributing to the future viability of the sector and in turn improved health and safety conditions for those employed. Examples of this were shown in Latvia (Skulte harbour), Poland (Kolobrzeg) and Kaliningrad (Svetly).

## **9. The recreational fisheries**

It was asked whether the recreational sector can benefit from this project as well as from courses and training in basic navigation and safety. No clear recommendations were put forward as to whether accidents with recreational fishing vessels should be investigated.

- **Reports from the bilateral visits and additional related information and photos are available on the BSAC website.**



## **Final meeting to sum up and present conclusions from the project 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

The attendance at this meeting was regrettably small, and many apologies had been received. However, this was interpreted in a positive way and seen as reflection of the fact that the subject had been well covered during the visits, reports written, findings well documented and recommendations and ideas already clearly noted and conveyed.

A briefing note was provided in advance of the meeting. The main conclusions from this meeting sum up the overall findings from the project and lay out the scope and potential for further work if a decision is taken to carry on further projects. As follows:

The chairman of the meeting summed up that there are a few topics that can be highlighted as conclusions and possible recommendations for further work:

1. The general state of the sector is characterized by poor recruitment and an ageing fleet. There was agreement that this needs to be presented in as positive a way as possible by highlighting the fact that the introduction of new quota systems and making the sector more professional would promote the profitability in the sector. If such issues are addressed, they will also improve the health and safety of the sector.
2. Statistics and data were highlighted as a specific area of work where focus could be on further developing and producing more comparable statistics, a knowledge baseline and in turn creating an information and safety culture.
3. Education with respect to refresher courses, sharing of information, teacher training exchanges, and possible cooperation on teacher training vessels was highlighted as an area of potential and to be further investigated. It also included reference to the international requirements and baselines, without which there is nothing to anchor health and safety issues to.
4. A clear and unanimous call from this project to all to ratify the STCW (F) Convention, as well as a clear-cut recommendation on refresher courses for all fishermen.
5. The collection and dissemination of information: ideas on what and where can be the focal point for this were discussed. The BSAC was put forward, as well as the EUSBSR Strategy website. If such an information portal is going to be bigger, it may need to have place of its own.
6. With respect to different fleet segments, it was highlighted that the need for safety on small vessels has particular needs and the rules and regulations differ from State to State. It was agreed that this area was not clear cut because some rules can be burdensome to some, but not to others. The risks in fisheries can be higher, the smaller the vessel, but knowledge about the rules is lower. Focused information and safety campaigns can be useful.
7. The recreational fisheries sector was highlighted as an unknown area. It was agreed that the absence of requirements in some Baltic Sea States can be hazardous at sea and this was an area that could benefit from further work.

On the division of labour with respect to further work, some clear conclusions were highlighted:

- With respect to data and statistics: the relevant authorities could work together and develop further the needs for compiling and developing this area.
- With respect to education and training, the institutes, schools and training centres could work together.
- With respect to the collection and dissemination of information, fisheries organisations, with the involvement of the Advisory Councils, can investigate how best to work together.

Also at this meeting there were two presentations which added to the value of the meeting and the information for the project.

- A Representative from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, OSHA, which is providing information and guidance with respect to health and safety at work, but does not provide policy or legislation. OSHA does a lot of awareness-raising and information campaigns according to theme, group hazard or risk, by sector approach such as awareness-raising and by means of primary target group. The presentation showed great awareness and appreciation of the specific needs and risks in the fisheries sector. It also emphasized the importance of leadership and worker participation with respect to safety. For an effective health and safety strategy to work, the involvement of all stakeholders - the inspectorate, the vessel owner and the workers – provided the best conditions.
- Sisse Grøn from the Danish consultancy TeamArbejdsliv presented the findings of a project entitled Safety in the fishing industry which had the Danish fishing sector as its focus. The project, which consisted of a week of field work and interviews with informants, has clearly shown a positive development in the sector whereby attitudes and behaviour towards health and safety have become natural. The project report will be made available in English.

The Danish Maritime Authority, in its capacity as joint coordinator for PA Safe, provided a separate briefing note from this meeting with a view to informing the Steering Committee of PA Safe. It outlined a number of potential projects as a result of the project findings:

- The fisheries fleet in the Baltic Sea region is in general old, challenged by difficulties in creating jobs as well as attracting new and younger labour. One of the challenges is the image that is sometimes attributed to the sector. It was proposed to set up a new project that promotes the fisheries more positively. This can attract new labour and in a long term perspective will hopefully improve the health and safety in the fisheries sector.
- Another finding was that the low number of accidents and incidents in the Baltic fisheries sector was disguised by the fact that many accidents, incidents and near-misses go unreported. Moreover, the comparability of the accidents statistics was also a challenge due to the fact that the Baltic Sea States use different methods for determining accidents. A project addressing these issues was also proposed.
- The problem with accident reporting could mainly be attributed to the safety culture in the fisheries sector. Thus a project that addresses the safety culture on board fishing vessels was proposed. The Danish Fishermen's Occupational Health Services expressed a clear interest in leading such a project, which can engage directly with the fishermen by means of education. They had prepared a project proposal which was distributed at the meeting.

➤ **The final meeting report and copies of presentations are on the BSAC website**

The findings and recommendations from this project were reported on to Executive Committee meeting of the BSAC on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in Gdynia. The Executive Committee guides the work of the BSAC. It will receive a copy of the final report and will consider the recommendations made at its forthcoming meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014, including whether it should continue with this work and which aspects of the work to focus on.

**The following associated material is available on the website of the BSAC:**

<http://www.bsac.dk/ooizzCMS/DA/bsracflagshipproject>

Text on the project: Desk study, Kick off meeting, Bilateral visits, Final meeting

Report from the desk study (19<sup>th</sup> March 2013) 18 pages

Report from the kick-off meeting (25<sup>th</sup> February 2013) 17 pages

From the bilateral visits: Briefing notes (in English, Polish and Russian), programmes for visits, as well as reports and relevant background information from Baltic Sea States:

Denmark

Estonia

Finland

Germany

Latvia

Lithuania

Poland

Sweden

Russia

Report from the final meeting (25<sup>th</sup> March 2014) (and the advance briefing note for the meeting)

Report from the final meeting by the Danish Maritime Authority (26<sup>th</sup> March 2014)

Presentations:

By DG Mare (from 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013)

Of the near-miss system from Sweden (from 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013)

By Danish Maritime Authority (from 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013)

Of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work OSHA (from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014)

Of Sisse Grøn TeamArbejdsdLiv (from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014)

A stability guide for smaller vessels

A contact list