



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE.C.1/AK/ms/Ares(2022)

**Subject: BSAC recommendation on western Baltic herring**

Dear Ms Laustsen,

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2022 in which you provide further explanations about BSAC's ideas regarding the management of western Baltic spring spawning (WBSS) herring.

I am happy to read that BSAC agrees that the existing scientific data for this stock is robust and that the EU multiannual plan (MAP) for the Baltic Sea should be used for setting fishing opportunities.

You rightly point out the role of third Parties in ensuring the sustainable management of western Baltic herring. The final report of the joint EU-UK-Norway working group on the management of the North Sea autumn spawning (NSAS) herring stock shows the important intermixing of western Baltic herring with NSAS herring in the Skagerrak and eastern North Sea. It is estimated that about 80% of the catches of western Baltic herring are now occurring in the Skagerrak and North Sea. This evidence calls for strong action from all Parties involved.

The EU, the UK and Norway are currently discussing a new long-term management strategy for North Sea herring, on the basis of the report's findings. One key aspect that this strategy should encompass is the interplay with western Baltic herring, and how the management of the NSAS herring can best help recover western Baltic herring. Our objective is to reach an agreement on a strategy for NSAS herring that takes full account of its impact on western Baltic herring.

Pending this agreement, the EU will continue to base its long-term strategy for western Baltic herring on the EU MAP for the Baltic Sea, or on any future rebuilding plan that may be developed in collaboration with the Member States and the sector. The Commission will also continue to engage with Norway to accept the EU's management plan as a basis for the ICES catch advice.

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I hope this information clarifies the Commission's approach to this important issue. Rest assured that the Commission is and will keep doing our utmost to ensure that the good results are achieved.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to thank you for your continued interest in and your commitment to sustainable management of western Baltic herring, and I look forward to continuing working with the BSAC to make best progress towards a recovery of this important stock.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]  
Charlina VITCHEVA