



To: Bernhard Friess, Acting Director-General
Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium
By e mail

Copenhagen Friday 1st May 2020

BSAC 2020-2021/6

Dear Bernhard Friess,

Re: Commission Farm to Fork Strategy

Thank you for organising the Dialogue on Food Systems on 16th April 2020 in relation to the above Strategy which the Commission will be launching. The BSAC Executive Committee has been informed about the proceedings and the presentations made at the meeting.

Thank you for inviting the Advisory Councils to further discuss and send a common position on the matter. In agreement with the BSAC ExCom chair, honorary chair and working group chairs, please find attached from the BSAC a short feedback to the initiative on the Farm to Fork Strategy.

Kind regards,

BSAC Executive Committee

Feedback from the Baltic Sea Advisory Council to the European Commission's initiative on the Farm to Fork Strategy "F2F"

BACKGROUND

The Commission published its Roadmap to the Farm 2 Fork Strategy on 17th February 2020¹.

The feedback period was from 17th February to 21st March 2020. It received 654 responses. The BSAC didn't send a reply.

DG Mare held a Dialogue meeting on Sustainable Food Systems on 16th April 2020, to which the Advisory Councils were invited. DG MARE informed that this was the first phase of the Dialogue, and the main priorities, challenges and targets were presented. The COVID-19 outbreak has delayed the adoption of the Farm 2 Fork Strategy. This provides the opportunity to get more views before its finalisation. DG Mare has therefore invited all Advisory Councils to further discuss the F2F Strategy and send in a common position on the matter as soon as possible.

FEEDBACK from the BSAC

The BSAC is very glad to be able to provide a short feedback. It is still early in the process and we look forward to seeing the strategy from the Commission, as well as subsequent proposals. We will need to reflect more and discuss the Commission's initiatives, and we hope that the deadlines provided will enable us to develop our input.

The BSAC recognises the importance of the F2F Strategy as a key component of the European Green Deal. It is important for both farmers and fishers as producers of a sustainable supply of food.

As part of the Strategy, the Common Fisheries Policy, together with the EU environmental legislation, is making progress towards the environmental sustainability of fisheries. Its full implementation will help to ensure a coherent and sustainable food system.

A responsible approach to fisheries and fisheries management, including efficient and environmentally friendly technologies will ensure that fish and fisheries products continue to be an important source of protein for European consumers.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12183-Farm-to-Fork-Strategy>

The BSAC has committed itself to providing input to a future reformed Common Fisheries Policy. It also welcomes the fact that Commissioner Sinkevičius has been asked to take on the task of reviewing the CFP and his task will include issues not sufficiently covered, such as the social dimension, climate adaptation and clean oceans.

An important consideration is that the Baltic ecosystem is faced with dramatic changes. They are having an impact on, in particular, the eastern Baltic cod. This was highlighted in a recent statement from the BSAC.² The BSAC is anxious to continue the dialogue with the scientists, experts and managers to find out more about the factors affecting in particular the eastern Baltic cod, for example lack of food, temperature, oxygen and salinity conditions as well as seals and the impacts of the fishery. Scientists need better knowledge to predict the future development of the stock, reproductive success and ecological interactions. Long term solutions need to be identified.

HELCOM is currently in the process of updating its Baltic Sea Action Plan. This is an important contribution to the health and welfare of the Baltic. Focus on sea based and land-based activities will lead to a healthier sea, and a greater resilience of the marine area. The BSAC is taking part in this work.

All of us with a concern and stake in the Baltic – managers, experts, stakeholders, decision makers, inter-governmental bodies - can and must work together for the benefit of the Baltic, as part of the F2F Strategy.

² <http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-Statement-on-fisheries-and-fisheries-manageme>