



SECRETARIAT FOR THE BALTIC SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Axelborg,
Axeltorv 3
1609 Copenhagen

Denmark

Position of DAFV on Cod Fishing (Western Baltic Stock / SD22-24)

On 29 May 2020, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) published its catch recommendations for the western and eastern cod stocks in the Baltic Sea for the year 2021. In its report, the Panel indicates that the slightly positive trend in the cod population in the Western Baltic Sea (SD 22-24) area has continued. For the first time in years, the stock of spawning fish could rise above the sustainable stock level (MSY). Hopes for a promising recovery are still pinned on the very strong recruitment of the year 2016, but the reproduction figures from 2019 continue the positive trend of the last three years - but at a low level.

What the Council (ICES) proposes

For cod in the Western Baltic, the Council foresees a quota in the range of 2,960 to 4,635 tonnes for commercial catches in the framework of the EU management plan. In the last few years, reproduction, with the exception of the 2016 year class, has had sobering success. The mature year class of 2016 now accounts for by far the largest share of the population of western cod. This indicates that the population is extremely unbalanced. For the western cod, however, a quota increase of 21.8% for professional fishermen is quite possible. A corresponding increase in fishing opportunities for anglers would be only logical and justifiable for the scientists at the Thuenen Institute. Taking into account the CoVid 19 pandemic and the associated travel restrictions, the Council (ICES) has forecast lower cod catches of 1315 tonnes for anglers in 2020. For Eastern cod, ICES recommends a moratorium on cod fishing for next year. Due to the corona pandemic, ICES recommendations were published in a shortened version this year.

Hauptgeschäftsstelle Berlin

Reinhardtstr. 14 Telefon 030/97104379
10117 Berlin Fax 030/97104389

Geschäftsstelle Offenbach

Ferdinand-Porsche-Str. 2 Telefon 069/8570695
Gebäude E Fax 069/873770
63073 Offenbach

E-Mail info@dafv.de
Web: www.dafv.de



Bag-limit - This is the anglers' contribution

Since 2016, the so-called bag-limit (daily catch limit) has applied to cod fishing in the western Baltic Sea. This limits the daily catch for all anglers species to a certain amount of fish. In 2020, the daily catch limit is 5 fish per angler and fishing day and 2 fish during the spawning season in February and March. This is about half the amount of cod taken by anglers this year is predicted to be around 1315 tonnes. The amount (2573 tonnes) of the previous year. In 2019 anglers were still able to catch seven fish. Another contribution to recovery, although unplanned.

Even though the effects of the bag-limit for anglers cannot (yet) be quantified or are even reflected in the success or failure of the measure, anglers see themselves as part of the effort to build up the cod population in the Baltic Sea.

The socio-economic values of recreational fishing for coastal areas have now been published in many different ways. Angling is recognised in many countries of the world as so-called "high-value low-impact" tourism. Especially considering the period after the travel restrictions imposed by CoVid 19, the benefits of angling in coastal countries can now be recognized and promoted.

The position of DAFV

Against the background of this slightly positive development, for 2021, the German recreational fishing association, DAFV, is demanding that the bag-limit be increased by one fish, from five to six fish per angler and fishing day. As in previous years, the organised anglers in Germany are against targeted fishing of spawning stock. Avoid spawning grounds, protect spawning cod - continue to allow fishing! Fishing at depths of up to 20 metres must be guaranteed in February and March. Spawn protection and fishing are not per se mutually exclusive.

Berlin/Offenbach, 19.06.2020