



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels
MARE.D3/PCO/mbe/Ares (2020)

Mr Esben Sverdrup-Jensen
Chair BSAC Executive Committee
es@pelagisk.dk

Ref: BSAC 2020-2021/3

Subject: BSAC statement on the need for a responsible approach to fisheries and fisheries management in the Baltic

Dear Mr Sverdrup-Jensen,

Thank you for your letter dated 21 April 2020 in which you inform us about the BSAC's views regarding a responsible approach on fisheries management in the Baltic Sea.

I very much welcome and agree with your overall message. Given the current difficult situation of several fisheries in the Baltic Sea, most notably eastern Baltic cod but also western Baltic herring and to a lesser extent salmon, it is of utmost importance for all actors involved to act responsibly in order to secure sustainable fisheries in the long term.

In this context, you rightly mention the importance to reduce as much as possible by-catches of cod, and I can only commend BSAC for encouraging the adoption of new selective gears. In its special advice on eastern Baltic cod (sr.2019.24 of 13 November 2019) and the underlying technical report (ICES Scientific Reports Volume 1, Issue 76), ICES mentioned the potential of using more selective gears, notably in flatfish fisheries, and described several prototypes which are being tested. The Commission therefore invited BaltFish in February 2020 to prepare a Joint Recommendation in this respect and they have to consult your Advisory Council on the Joint Recommendation. I would strongly encourage BSAC to discuss your ideas with BaltFish already before the formal consultation.

Finally, I fully agree with you that the dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, including on non-fisheries related factors, has to continue in order to find the most sustainable way forward.

Let me in the end mention one issue on the way the current statement was drafted. I was recently informed that a contribution prepared by a BSAC member representing Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) had not been incorporated in the current statement. I regret that your recommendation did not incorporate these comments, all the more so as this organisation is facing difficulties in having its voice heard. As you know the CFP basic

regulation sets out that the members of the Executive Committee shall, where possible, adopt recommendations by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, dissenting opinions expressed by members shall be recorded in the recommendations adopted by the majority of the members present and voting.

I would therefore urge you to incorporate minority opinions in the next BSAC recommendations. I look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation and invite you to take contact with Ms Pascale Colson (Pascale.Colson@ec.europa.eu; + 32 2 29 56273), should you have any further question on this reply.

Yours sincerely,

Bernhard FRIESS
Acting Director-General

c.c.: Finish BaltFish presidency, Mr Risto Lampinen