

To all member states around the Baltic

Copy to Director General of DG Mare, Ms. Lowri Evans
and Ms Carla Montesi, Director, Directorate E

Copenhagen 4th May 2011

Dear member state colleagues,

The BSRAC held its Demersal working group in Gdynia on 22nd March 2011. One of the items on the agenda was a briefing on the BSRAC discards workshop, which took place in Simrishamn on 9th -10th February 2011. It was agreed by the working group that we should write to you and inform you about the workshop. I am pleased to send you a copy of the report and recommendations from the workshop, as well as a copy of the minutes from the Demersal working group.

The workshop acknowledged that a discard ban in the Baltic is likely to happen. It also agreed on the need to further improve trawl selectivity through further investigation into the development of fishing gear.

The BSRAC put forward its own project on selectivity back in 2009, but funding has not been forthcoming. The Simrishamn workshop was intended to keep the discussion on selectivity and discards on the agenda and to feed ideas into the Commission project tender: "Collaboration between the scientific community and the fishing sector to minimize discards in the Baltic cod fisheries." A consortium of institutes from some Baltic member states has applied and we wait to hear the results of the tender.

In order to further maintain the momentum on working towards increased selectivity in the cod fishery, we encourage member states to support projects that focus on reducing discards. The Demersal Working Group heard about one such project using an envelope-type construction of the codend where the meshes at the end (closure) of the codend are turned 45 degrees. This is an example of a selectivity project that further develops the gear, and entails relatively simple changes, but without costing a lot of money. We would commend this sort of project and would be happy to send you information on it.

Kind regards,



Michael Andersen

Chairman of the Demersal Working Group

Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Council

H.C. Andersens Boulevard 37, 3rd floor | 1553 Copenhagen V | Tel. +45 3393 5000 | Fax +45 3393 5009 | bsrac@bsrac.org | www.bsrac.org

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