



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

BALTIC SEA, NORTH SEA AND LANDLOCKED MEMBER STATES

Brussels,  
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**Baltic Sea Advisory Council**  
Mr Reine Johansson  
(Chairperson)  
H.C. Andersens Boulevard 37, 3rd floor  
DK-1553 Copenhagen

**Subject: Request for a BS AC recommendation on measures in the long term management plan for the Baltic Sea**

*Reduce*  
Dear Mr Johansson,

As previously informed, the work of DG MARE on a multiannual management plan for the Baltic Sea covering pelagic and cod stocks is currently on-hold, pending completion of the discussions between the European Parliament and the Council on multiannual plans.

We would like to make use of this time to consult the Baltic Sea Advisory Council and the Member States concerned on how to make progress in preparing those elements of the plan that are not concerned by the inter-institutional discussions.

In future, through multiannual plans, the Parliament and the Council may decide to set objectives and leave implementation to regionalisation. We would like to hear the expectations and views of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council on the potential for regionalisation under a future multiannual plan for the Baltic Sea covering pelagic and cod stocks, focusing on the question of which types of measures are likely to be needed and useful in developing and implementing such a plan.

I would like to learn the views of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council on these issues. These may contribute to ensuring that the Commission is able to consider the Baltic Sea Advisory Council's views. The attached document is intended to provide a starting point for the Baltic Sea Advisory Council discussions.

I would appreciate your input by 1 April 2014 at the latest.

Yours sincerely,

*Best regards,*

Carla MONTESI  
Director

## **Consultation of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council Multiannual management plan for Baltic Sea cod and pelagic stocks**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Commission is currently developing a proposal for a co-decision regulation for a multiannual management plan for Baltic Sea cod and pelagic stocks (Baltic multispecies plan).

In preparing this proposal, the Commission is interested in collecting relevant evidence and information to help develop its thinking in this area. The questions outlined below aim to solicit feedback from the Baltic Sea Advisory Council with its views on some of the elements that the Commission may consider in developing its proposal.

Discussions on a Baltic multispecies plan have been underway for some time. The questions reflect some of the views that have been previously expressed, for example by BALTFISH or the Baltic Sea Advisory Council. This consultation offers a further opportunity to consider these questions.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission, and should not be interpreted as a commitment by the European Commission to maintain a specific position on any of the elements outlined below.

### **2. SCOPE OF THIS CONSULTATION**

Building on the recently published public consultation on the "Development of a new framework for technical measures in the reformed CFP"<sup>1</sup>, this consultation concerns the specific technical measures needed for the implementation of the Baltic multispecies plan. Measures that apply to all EU waters will be addressed under the future technical measures framework.

### **3. SCENARIOS FOR TECHNICAL MEASURES**

According to the new CFP there are two possible scenarios for the adoption (and subsequent amendments that may be necessary) of technical measures specific to the Baltic multispecies plan:

- (1) The technical measures and all their parameters are adopted by the co-legislator. Changes to these rules are adopted in co-decision as well (no regionalisation).
- (2) EU legislation defines the objectives that the technical measures should meet. The specific parameters for the implementation of the technical measures are based on

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs\\_fisheries/consultations/technical-measures/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/maritimeaffairs_fisheries/consultations/technical-measures/index_en.htm)

a joint recommendation from the Member States in line with the new CFP (and adopted into EU law by the Commission through a delegated act).

*Question 1: Is there a preferred option between the two outlined above? If yes, why?*

#### **4. MINIMUM CONSERVATION REFERENCE SIZE (MCRS)**

On various occasions BALTFISH and the fishing industry have suggested the benefits of MCRS for stocks, and there have been indications of preferences for the levels at which these may be set.

*Question 2: Should regionalisation be considered for the adjustment of MCRS?*

#### **5. SPECIFICATIONS FOR FISHING GEAR**

A number of gear specifications exist for the stocks that might be covered by the Baltic Multispecies Plan. It is appropriate to consider how to manage gear specifications in the future.

*Question 3: Should the Baltic Multispecies Plan define:*

- *the specific gears that may be used in the fisheries concerned by the Plan, (in this case, which gears should be included in the plan?) or*
- *only the conditions<sup>2</sup> that the gear must meet in order to be allowed (in this case, which data / information / evidence could the ACs provide in support of the assessment of different gears vis-à-vis the conditions specified?)*

*Question 4: Should any restrictions (under co-legislation or alternatively under regionalisation) be defined for gears in relation to specific areas or times?*

#### **6. OTHER MEASURES**

*Question 5: Are there other technical measures you consider should be addressed in the Baltic Multispecies Plan?*

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<sup>2</sup> Similar approach to what has been proposed by the Commission in Article 6 of Skagerrak Regulation (COM(2012) 471 final) which reads:

"Article 6

**Specifications of fishing gears**

1. The carrying on board or the use of any demersal trawl, Danish seine, beam trawl or similar towed net having a mesh size of less than 120 mm is prohibited.
2. By way of derogation from paragraph 1:
  - (a) Gears having the same selectivity characteristics as the ones set out in paragraph 1 confirmed by experimental fishing trips or assessment from the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) may be used.
  - (b) Trawls with minimum mesh sizes of less than 32 mm may be used provided the catch on board contains more than 50 % of one or more pelagic or industrial species."

**Question 6:** *Are there other technical measures that currently exist and that you consider may become redundant (e.g. closed areas, one net rule, catch composition rules for species subject to the landing obligation, catch composition rules for species not subject to the landing obligation, special fishing permits, etc)?*

On both of the above, please provide details and/or scientific references for your answers.