

Ms. Lisa Borges  
D.G. Mare  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Copenhagen, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Dear Lisa Borges,

### **Project on selectivity in the Baltic cod fishery**

You asked us to send you by 15<sup>th</sup> July some more precise specifications concerning the proposed BSRAC project on selectivity in the cod fishery. The original description of project, which was sent to DG Mare in July 2009, still applies. However, for convenience, a summary of the project is attached at the end of this letter.

We would like to underline that we are not presenting a scientific project, where all the parameters are discussed and agreed on in advance.

What we are proposing (as mentioned in paragraph 6 of the project proposal) is the creation of a steering group for this project, and we think it is crucial that it starts its work in the autumn. The steering group would consist of 2 or 3 representatives from national administrations, gear experts and participants from the BSRAC. This steering group would function as the board for the project.

The steering group would be chaired and led by Dr Steve Karnicki, from the Sea Fisheries Institute, Gdynia, and we very much hope that DG Mare will give the green light to Steve to initiate the work. It would then be up to Steve Karnicki to call the first meeting of the steering group, and its first task would be to write down the precise terms of reference for the project, and to draw up a timetable for the work.

The BSRAC will take on the responsibility of getting together a reference fleet, whilst at the same time taking on board requirements from the scientists and looking at the T90 and BACOMA gear types, or even investigating new gear. In other words, the practical implementation would be the responsibility of the BSRAC. It would be up to the scientists and the BSRAC to put forward the practical questions relating to the gear types, or to propose whether a new gear type should be investigated and tested.

The steering group will report to and inform DG Mare during the course of the project. The original proposal for the project was a timescale of 2 -3 years, but this timetable can be discussed and revised by the steering group.

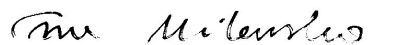
As for financing, we can inform you that the BSRAC has been promised extra funding from the Swedish Board of Fisheries. It is thus even more important that we make a start and discuss this in the steering group, which we hope will be set up as soon as possible.

Nowadays, we have a mixed picture in the Baltic, where the cod fishery in Denmark, Germany and Sweden is being carried out with both T90 and BACOMA gear. Perhaps we should investigate whether there could be an agreement around the Baltic to use just one gear? This could be part of the discussions in connection with the Baltic roadmap towards a discard ban.

Kind regards,



Reine J. Johansson  
Chairman of the BS RAC



Ewa Milewska  
Vice-chair of the BS RAC

## **Project on selectivity in the Baltic cod fishery**

### **A summary of the text from July 2009**

The Baltic RAC proposes a project on selectivity in the cod fishery. The aim is for people with first-hand-knowledge about fishing operations and gear design to sit down with scientists and other interested parties and discuss in detail what the actual problems are – and what kind of solution, or solutions can be imagined.

A steering group, chaired by an expert from the scientific community, and bringing together representatives from the national administrations, gear technologists and members of the BSRAC will be established to draw up the terms of reference for the project, to administer the project and coordinate the work. The Steering Group will report to the BSRAC ExCom and to DG Mare.

The project is expected to run for 2-3 years with three stages:

#### **A. Describing the problem.**

The aim is to have a good description of the variation in discards in the cod fishery over the year and the seasons.

##### **WG Describe**

A working group is set up consisting of fishermen from all the cod fishing nations, and scientists from relevant institutions. WG Describe will be asked to deliver a report on discard in the cod fishery in the Baltic within a year of its foundation. The report will describe the problem on a temporal as well as on a spatial scale and – if possible – give an estimate of the actual level. Within the first six months the WG will deliver an interim report providing the framework for WG Design, with an identification of the fishing activities with the highest discard rates.

#### **B. Designing solutions.**

The aim is to consider other solutions to the discards problem than just increasing mesh sizes.

##### **WG Design**

WG Design will be tasked to prepare a list of solutions to the problems identified by WG Describe. The WG will consist of fishers, netmakers, scientists and stakeholders with an interest in finding innovative solutions to broad as well as narrow problems. The WG will start its work as soon as possible, but may not terminate its work until after the termination of the work in WG Describe. After delivering the first results, it will remain active and work side-by-side with WG Investigate.

#### **C. Investigating the practical consequences**

The aim is to investigate the effects that proposed changes will have on the fishery as a group – not just on individual vessels, and to know what effect different measures might have on the stocks.

##### **WG Investigate**

In close cooperation with WG Design and through contact with fishing vessels, WG Investigate will test the different solutions in the practical fishery as well as the possible effects on the stocks. The WG will consist of fishers and scientists of different fields of expertise such as economics and social science.