



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR FISHERIES AND MARITIME AFFAIRS

Conservation Policy

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Mr. Johansson
Secretariat for the Baltic Sea
Regional Advisory Council
H.C. Andersens Boulevard 37,
Third Floor
1553 Copenhagen V

Dear M. Johansson,

Thank you very much for your letter of 25 October 2007 together with the BSRAC statement on compliance and the sustainability of the Baltic cod fishery.

Priorities for the Commission this year have been to increase compliance and to establish a comprehensive and effective control system. These two factors are key to rebuilding the Baltic cod stocks and ensuring sustainable and stable fishing opportunities for the sector in the long term. BS RAC initiatives to date and the positions taken by its members to promote compliance and control in the Baltic are very positive and constructive contributions in this regard and provide a good example for other European waters.

With regards to the joint statement by Poland and the Commission at the Fisheries Council on 22-23 October 2007, I am pleased to inform you that a first technical meeting for the development of a National Action Plan for Poland has taken place and that a second meeting is planned before the end of the year to discuss a first draft of the plan. Finalisation of the plan, together with an appropriate scheme for the pay-back of this year's overshoot of the quota, is envisaged for the beginning of next year.

I can also inform you that on 5 December 2007 the Court of Auditors published a report on data collection, control and enforcement under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), in which it criticised the limited mandate of the CFCA. In its official reply the Commission stated that "an enhanced mandate of the CFCA could further improve the situation".

The Commission welcomes the interest shown by the BS RAC in contributing to the work on traceability systems for fish and fish products from the point of landing until they reach the consumer. A proposal (COM (2007) 602 final) for a Council regulation establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing was published on 17 October. It contains the main elements of a

traceability system which could contribute to reducing illegal fishing in the Baltic Sea. The BS RAC is welcome to formulate a position on this proposal.

The intention of the BS RAC to establish comprehensive co-operation between stakeholders and the scientific communities is very much appreciated. The Commission already provides financial support to Member States for data-related projects within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy.

I am looking forward to further BS RAC initiatives along the lines expressed in your statement.

Yours sincerely,



Fokion Fotiadis