

Programme

2nd edition of the BSAC Workshop on Seals and cormorants – the Baltic predators: balancing fisheries and the environment

30th October 2024 09:00-16:00 EET

Hobo Hotel, Kluuvikatu 4, 00100 Helsinki, Finland,

In person and online through Zoom

Registration is required to take part, please register under [this link](#) before 11/10/2024.

Introduction and objectives

The BSAC organized in the Autumn 2023 a workshop which took a close look at the legal framework, existing conservation and management efforts in relation to cormorants and seals and research on the topic. The BSAC wishes once again to thank officials and scientists for their contributions which can all be found [on the BSAC website](#).

This second workshop sets out to focus on an exchange of views around conservation and management of these two species of predators. The BSAC encourage participants to share views on solutions as to how to achieve the delicate balance between conservation and management. Under the discussion points, the BSAC has listed some questions which are there to guide participants. The various interventions and responses to the questions will also be guiding the BSAC in its subsequent adoption of recommendations on cormorant and seals.

Detailed Agenda

09:00-09:10 [EET] (note this is Helsinki winter time)

1. Welcome by the BSAC ExCom Chair Jarek Zielinski

- a. Presentation of the agenda and workshop objectives
- b. Summary of the [first workshop](#)

09:10-10:00 [EET]

2. Updates from science & research and latest management discussions

- a. *New EMFAF Project on seals and cormorants, Niels Jepsen & Mathis Olesen (DTU)*
- b. *EIFAAC update on the European-wide cormorant management planning process, Raymon van Anrooy (EIFAAC FAO), Ian G. Cowx (Hull International Fisheries Institute)*
- c. *BALTFISH summary of the Council AOB discussion on Baltic predators (TBC)*

10:00-11:00 [EET]

3. BSAC members discussions on cormorants

- a. *How can science look more into species interaction? Updates from the KoMoDo Project, Katja Mehrwald - Tyrell de Weber- (Institut für Binnenfischerei e.V. Potsdam-Sacrow)*

- b. Understanding direct effect of cormorants' predation in nets. *Results of studies on cormorants-fyke nets interactions, Mats Westerbom (LUKE)*
- c. Discussions around the following guiding questions:

- *Do participants see a need for more cross-border cooperation regarding conservation and management of cormorants, involving both Baltic States and the European Commission, and if so, what could such cooperation concretely consist of?*
- *Can ICES do more, for instance by always providing breakdowns of estimated sources of mortality, including mortality by predation other than fishing?*
- *Should science look more at interspecies interaction, i.e. how to balance the existence of one predator species without it being at the expense of the good status of a fish species such as salmon and cod? How does the fish stock status and structure influence the competition between fishers and cormorants?*
- *Should a favourable conservation status goal of numbers of breeding pairs be created and maintained in the Baltic?*
- *Should all Baltic States provide for financial support for primarily preventive measures through their EMFAF operation programmes?*
- *Other points?*

11:00-11:15 [EET] - Coffee break

11:15-11:45 [EET]

3. c. Continued discussion

11:45-12:15 [EET]

4. **BSAC Chair key takeaways on cormorants' discussions**

12:15-13:15 [EET] – Lunch break

13:15-15:00 [EET]

5. **BSAC members discussions on seals**

- a. What solution to mitigate competition and ensure coexistence? *Case study of Lake Saimaa ringed seals and fisheries, TBC*
- b. How can science reflect better fish stock's natural mortality linked to seals? *Incorporation of seal induced mortality in the vendace fishery assessment, Teija Aho (SFPO)*
- c. Discussions around the following guiding questions:
 - *Do you see a need for more regional cooperation between Baltic States to achieve a regional conservation and management of seals in the Baltic Sea?*
 - *[HELCOM's Recommendation 27-28/2](#) is central to seal conservation in the Baltic Sea, do you see a need for HELCOM to review its recommendations, and if so, on which points?*

- *Can ICES do more to help fisheries managers? Should ICES seek to always include a breakdown of sources of mortality including mortality due to predation other than from fishing?*
- *Should science look more at interspecies interaction, i.e. how to balance the existence of one predator species without it being at the expense of the good status of a fish species such as salmon and cod? How does the fish stock status and structure influence the competition between fishers and seals?*
- *Are there specific measures Baltic States can take, such as always planning for funding of preventive measures?*
- *Other points?*

15:00-15:15 [EET] - Coffee break

15:15-15:45 [EET]

6. BSAC Chair key takeaways on seals discussions

15:45-16:00 [EET]

7. Next steps and closing by BSAC Chair

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