

**Fourteenth Annual Report of the
Baltic Sea Advisory Council 2019-2020**
Adopted by the BSAC by written procedure 26th May 2020

Start: Written report from the BSAC Executive Committee chair to the General Assembly

Annual Report for 2019-2020

Dear members,

The draft Annual Report gives a comprehensive overview of the work by the BSAC during the year

Unfortunately, our work and especially progress with input to reform of CFP was abruptly curtailed by COVID-19. Our planned ExCom and Theme meeting planned for 17th March was cancelled. I am looking forward to picking up where we left off asap.

The strategy of long term and short-term approaches has worked well

Long-term enabled us to start the review of the CFP and prepare a communication from the BSAC. A good meeting in Helsinki to start this process (and thanks to HELCOM for the meeting room) Our work on this has been appreciated by members, by the Commission and Member States. We hope to make a meaningful contribution and hope that Commissioner Sinkevičius will join in our work.

Short-term to deal with the other work programme business of the BSAC – advice on the fishery, revision of the control regulation, multi-annual, multi-species management, the landing obligation, contribution to the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, taking part in collaboration with other Advisory Councils on single use plastics and port reception facilities.

Collaboration with ACs is well-functioning - and this is a very positive way to further the advice process from the Advisory Councils where there are issues of common interest. For example, financial and administrative issues, as well as more specific stocks (western Baltic spring spawning herring), broader issues such as marine waste, plastics.

The introduction of Theme meetings during the ExCom meetings has been a useful contribution to our work:

Included invitation to our meetings of experts to cover a theme:

We had Uwe Krümme from Thünen Institute and Margit Eero DTU Aqua at the first ExCom to talk about cod

We had Clara Ulrich (STECF) and Lotte Worsøe Clausen (ICES) at the January ExCom to talk about key issue affecting the Baltic

The situation for eastern Baltic cod is a challenge

This has been the red thread going through much of the work of the BSAC this year – in meetings, recommendations. The BSAC wants very much to be part of the process and has called for a Task Force to deal with this.

Information flow and transparency

The Secretariat has busily kept members informed – BSAC members have received 11 newsletters from the BSAC Secretariat. The BSAC Executive Committee has received 23 letters with updates and notifications during the year.

The BSAC Management Team

This has become an established part of the BSAC to coordinate and plan the work and to ensure information flow. There have been six during the year. This model has served us well. I intend to continue with this in 2020-2021.

External meetings to back up the work of the BSAC and its WGs

The annual report has a long list of these, and they highlight how much there is of relevance to the BSAC, how important it is for us to strive to take part, be informed and updated and bring the information back to the BSAC as part of the core work. Members are encouraged to commit to this, to take an active part (though not always with direct mandate to negotiate on behalf of the BSAC) and to report back in full.

The BSAC is only as good as its members

As members of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council, we bring together a diversity of interests and expertise. I call on all of us to show our commitment and take an active part in the work – meetings, contribution in writing – to further the work of the BSAC and to produce advice and recommendations that make a contribution to the management of the Baltic.

Final thanks

Thanks for the cooperation with the Commission, with Member States, with EFCA, with HELCOM, with experts – in ICES and other institutes and bodies – and others who follow our work. We've tried to initiate cooperation with the EP PECH Committee and hope that can be more productive.

I hope you will all continue to stay safe during these challenging times. I hope to see all of you very soon.

Kind regards,

Esben Sverdrup-Jensen
Chair BSAC Executive Committee

**Fourteenth Annual Report of the
Baltic Sea Advisory Council 2019-2020**
Adopted by the BSAC by written procedure 26th May 2020

Introduction

The Baltic Sea Advisory Council has been running since 2006. Its main function is to advise the European Commission and Member States on matters relating to management of the fisheries in the Baltic Sea. Its work and activities are funded by the EU Commission, the Baltic Sea Member States and its members.

This annual report covers the activities and meetings of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) from 1st April 2019- 31st March 2020.

The member organisations of the BSAC in 2019-2020 have been fisheries associations and organisations, producer organisations, processors, market and trade organisations, environmental NGOs, and recreational and sports fishers. The members come from across the Baltic Member States.¹

The BSAC consists of a General Assembly, an Executive Committee, three Working Groups: for demersal fisheries, pelagic fisheries, and ecosystem-based management (EBM). The demersal and pelagic working groups have been holding joint working groups since 2010, because they share issues of common interest. A salmon and sea trout working group has been dormant since 2012. The BSAC is assisted by a Secretariat based in Copenhagen and Warsaw, and by a Management Team (consisting of the honorary chair, executive committee chair, vice chair, working group chairs and secretariat).

Main results/outputs from the BSAC during the year 2019 – 2020

The BSAC work programme contained a number of focus areas.

The long-term approach: future Common Fisheries Policy

Discussion on the future CFP: According to Article 49 of the Basic Regulation, the Commission must report on the functioning of the CFP on 31st December 2022. The report was expected to focus on the implementation of the policy and not seek major changes. With the appointment of the new Commission in November 2019, and the Mission Letter from Commission President von der Leyen to the Commissioner for DG Mare, new focus areas were highlighted: the social dimension, climate adaptation and clean oceans.

¹ The list members of the BSAC for 2019 - 2020 is at the end of the Annual Report.

The BSAC objective was to produce a communication to the Commission on what the future CFP should contain. It would take place over a series of meetings. A discussion on the future Common Fisheries Policy began at the BSAC Executive Committee Theme meeting on 3rd September 2019 in Helsinki. A report was produced and discussion on how to proceed with this work was had at a Management Team meeting on 2nd December 2019. A plan of work was agreed for the next steps. The second Executive Committee Theme meeting was planned for 17th March 2020 and a questionnaire focusing on specific areas of CFP policy was sent to BSAC members in advance. A good response was received from members. **The meeting had to be cancelled to the COVID-19 developments.** The Management Team took stock of developments at a meeting on 27th March 2020. It was noted that the work on the BSAC recommendation (a white paper) on the future CFP will continue into the WP 2020-2021 as soon as possible.

The short-term approach: several work programme areas

The main focus areas of the year's work have been:

Baltic Cod

The BSAC has made it a priority for the BSAC to address this issue. The BSAC recommendations for the fishery 2020 also reflected concerns regarding cod. The BSAC also addressed the letter from the Commission letter concerning emergency measures for eastern Baltic cod (12th March 2019). The Executive Committee hosted a specific Theme meeting on 14th May 2019 to focus on Baltic cod. Expert presentations were made by representatives from the Thünen Institute and DTU Aqua. A list of proposed recommended measures to alleviate the problems affecting Eastern Baltic cod was adopted by the meeting.

Western Baltic herring

During the WP year 2019-2020, the BSAC recommended that ICES be asked to advise on a recovery plan for western Baltic herring. The BSAC proposed remedial measures and a solution to the consequences of new proposed reference points for this stock. A focus group was formed to analyse varying strategies that will lead to SSB recovery ($SSB > B_{lim}$). The focus group did not make a lot of headway. It did provide input to the annual meeting between ICES and the Advisory Councils in January 2020 and raised the issue of zero catch advice. The BSAC will work further on this with a view to developing a re-building strategy for this stock and to seek clarification on the utility of this approach.

Ecosystem based management

Of the several work areas named under the work programme, the main agenda items of the one meeting held of the working group on ecosystem-based management on 18th+19th September 2019 were the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAC).

The BSAC sent recommendations of topics to address under the revision of the HELCOM BSAP. One concluding work from the previous Work Programme 2018-2019 was focus on fisheries management measures in Natura 2000 areas in the Baltic; the BSAC developed and approved a set of recommendations on basic principles on fisheries management measures in protected and Natura 2000 areas.

Selectivity and the landing obligation.

The stated aim was to maintain a proactive approach on selectivity and enhance improved co-operation between fishermen, scientists and net-makers, in the regional co-operation with BALTFISH. No specific meetings or activities were held during the year. The importance of selectivity has come up indirectly, both in the annual working group meeting to deal with the ICES advice on Baltic fisheries, and the Executive Committee meetings. It has also been a recurrent theme during the workshop organised on 28th January 2020 by 4 Advisory Councils on the Circular use of gear. The aim is to develop recommendations on the circular use of gear.

Multiannual multi-species management of the Baltic fish stocks, taking into account ecosystem interactions

The BSAC provided a reply to the Commission's targeted questionnaire to the BSAC and to BALTFISH on the assessment of the results of the implementation of the Baltic Multiannual plan. The BSAC discussed the questions at its Joint Working Group meeting on 11th – 12th June 2019, followed up by consultation carried out by the Secretariat to obtain written input.

Multiannual management plan for salmon

The BSAC has been waiting to get involved in further consultations of a draft plan, which has not been dealt with since the end of 2017. BSAC representatives have taken part at two ICES working groups to evaluate the draft salmon management plan (WKBaltSalMP1 and 11). The BSAC took note that the Commission proposed to withdraw its proposal for a salmon management plan. At the same time, the Commission has encouraged the scientific work being carried out by ICES. The BSAC awaits further developments.

Eel

The BSAC has been unable to make progress or hold meetings on this. The Commission recently published its evaluation on the implementation of the eel regulation.

A revised control regulation

During 2018 and 2019, the Baltic Sea Advisory Council has held three joint working groups to discuss and propose amendments to the revised Control Regulation (Commission's proposal COM/2018/368 final for a control regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1005/2008, and Regulation (EU) No 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control.) It met on 23rd August 2018, 28th January 2019 and 29th October 2019). After approval by the Executive Committee, the BSAC produced recommendations on 11th February 2020.

Producing recommendations on fishing opportunities for 2020

The BSAC met to deal with this and provided recommendations for the Baltic fishery in 2020. The BSAC held a Joint Working Group in Copenhagen, 11th and 12th June 2019 to discuss the ICES advice for the Baltic for 2020. The BSAC recommendations for the fishery for 2020 were adopted by correspondence and sent to DG Mare and Member States on 8th July 2019.

The BSAC representatives took part at the BALTFISH Forum meeting on 4th September 2019 in Helsinki, held by the Finnish Presidency.

Other topics and subjects of relevance to the BSAC

The has dealt with other topics with within existing working groups or specific working groups/seminars, as well as external meetings, and collaboration with other Advisory Councils.

The BSAC has taken every opportunity to follow and participant in relevant scientific and expert work relating to the Baltic. This has included several ICES working groups and workshops, meetings with DG Mare and the European Fisheries Control Agency, HELCOM and with other Advisory Councils, as well as conferences and seminars. The list of external meetings is below. All meetings are reported on.

The Directives on single use plastics and port reception facilities, circular economy

These Directives were adopted during 2019. The BSAC Secretariat gathered input from fisheries representatives on their use of port facilities in ports around the Baltic to take to the workshop organised by the Commission on 18th February 2020. A representative of the BSAC participated in the MRAG consultancy Consortium Study and meeting on circular design of the fishing gear for reduction of environmental impacts on 19th-20th February 2020. The BSAC, NSAC, PELAC and NWWAC co-organised the workshop: Re-Imagining Fishing Gear in a Circular Economy on 28th January 2020 Brussels. The long-term aim is to produce some AC recommendations on this subject, to send to Commission as it prepares further guidelines and initiatives on circular gear. This will be developed in the next BSAC WP year.

Administration

The BSAC has dealt with its internal administrative and budgetary matters during the year: closing one year and starting the new; reviewing and amending the BSAC rules of procedure, which were adopted on 15th May 2019; adopting a best practices document for the development and presentation of BSAC Advice on 3rd September 2019; and receiving updates from the working group chairs of meetings held.

The BSAC has been assisted by a well-functioning Management Team has met six times during the year and this has facilitated planning and evaluation of the BSAC meetings and work. It has provided added structure and support to the planning of the work, for example on the future of the CFP.

BSAC Recommendations/advice and letters sent 2019-2020²

Title	Sent	Reply	Comment
Reply from BSAC to BALTFISH about exemption of plaice from landing obligation http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Reply-from-BSAC-to-BALTFISH-about-exemption-of-pla	21 st June 2019	25 th June 2019	On web
BSAC recommendations about immediate measures for eastern Baltic cod http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-about-immediate-measures-for	24 th June 2019	No reply	On web
BSAC reply to Commission consultation on the Baltic multiannual management plan http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-reply-to-Commission-consultation-on-the-Balti	3 rd July 2019	No reply	On web
BSAC recommendations for the Baltic fishery 2020 http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-for-the-Baltic-fishery-2020	8 th July 2019	No reply	On web
Letter of congratulations from BSAC chair and vice chair to the newly elected chair and vice chairs of the PECH Committee	11 th July 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC recommends basic principles on fisheries management measures http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-basic-principles-on-fisheries-management-meas	11 th July 2019	No reply	On web
BSAC Secretariat reply to Commission Consultation on fishing opportunities	16 th August 2019	No reply	Not on web

² Please find BSAC recommendations on the website <http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations>

BSAC reply to HORIZON Europe Questionnaire	6 th September 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC reply to the EFCA consultation on its 2021-2025 Multi Annual Work Programme	18 th October 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC chair reply to DG Mare Survey: Review of the State aid instruments applicable to the fishery and aquaculture sector	23 rd October 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC chair reply about the EU Agencies Survey Are EU Agencies performance driven? SURVEY: European Fisheries Control Agency	23 rd October 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC chair to the two BSAC WG chairs with input for the HELCOM Sufficiency of Measures Workshop	30 th October 2019	No reply	Not on web
Letter from and reply to DG Mare about small scale fisheries in the ACs www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Letter-from-and-reply-to-DG-Mare-about-small-scale	28 th November 2019	No reply	On web
Letter from all Advisory Councils to DG Mare on budget flexibility - receipt of instalments	3 rd December 2019	22 nd January 2020	Not on web
BSAC letter of support to project proposal EMFASIS support: under the call topic of H2020 "Fisheries in the full ecosystem context"	5 th December 2019	5 th December 2019	Not on web
Joint ACs advice on EMFF funding for scientific research projects www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Joint-ACs-advice-on-EMFF-funding-for-scientific-re	5 th December 2019	No reply	On web
BSAC reply letter to DG Mare on Research in Fisheries on the Horizon Europe: Priorities for research	11 th December 2019	No reply	Not on web
BSAC chair reply letter to DG Mare on Annual report on the implementation in 2019 of the landing obligation	3 rd February 2020	No reply	Not on web
BSAC chair reply letter to Fisheries Secretariat on pelagic landings	7 th February 2020	No reply	Not on web

BSAC Recommendations to Commission proposal on revised control regulation http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-Recommendations-to-Commission-proposal-on-con	11 th February 2020	7 th April 2020	On web
BSAC Secretariat with BSAC gathered input to Commission questionnaire about Port Reception Facilities in Baltic Member States	11 th February 2020	11 th February 2020	Not on web

The meetings held by the BSAC 2019 -2020:

Executive Committee, 14th May 2019, Copenhagen

The Secretariat and ExCom chair presented the draft financial statement for the year 2018-2019, the draft 13th annual report, as well as the draft work programme and draft budget for the year 2019-2020 for approval. They were all approved for recommendation to the General Assembly. The Secretariat gave an update on expenditure. The Secretary also presented the Final technical report 2018-2019 to DG Mare and this was also approved. The ExCom took note of follow-up actions from its previous ExCom meeting, as well as outcomes from working group meetings. The ExCom was reminded of outstanding work regarding a set of draft basic principles from the BSAC concerning fisheries management measures in protected areas and agreed to revise and simplify them for final ExCom approval. The ExCom chair gave an update on ongoing work with the BSAC rules of procedure and best practices. Finally, the meeting took note of information on the EU technical measures dossier and the Commission consultation on the Baltic multiannual management plan.

Meeting reports here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-and-General-Assembly>

General Assembly, 15th May, Copenhagen

The BSAC honorary chair opened the meeting and highlighted the important items on the agenda and for future BSAC work. Ole Toft, Director of Fisheries Denmark addressed the meeting and referred to the challenging situation facing the Baltic fisheries, and highlighted the eastern Baltic cod. He underlined the importance of cooperation between the BSAC, BALTFISH and HELCOM. The BSAC Chair presented the annual report for the BSAC year 2018-2019, and highlighted the amount of work done by the BSAC during the year. The secretary presented the draft financial statement. The General Assembly approved the draft annual report and the draft annual accounts for 2018-2019 and took note of reports from the working groups for the year. It also took note of and approved the proposed work programme and draft estimated budget for 2019-2020 and approved the proposed new

certified auditor for the 2019-2020 accounts. The ExCom chair presented the revised rules of procedure for the BSAC. These were discussed and, after a vote, were adopted by the General Assembly.

Meeting report here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-and-General-Assembly>

Joint Working Group, 11th – 12th June 2019, Copenhagen

The ICES/ACOM vice chair Colm Lordan presented to the WG the ICES advice for the Baltic for 2019, starting with the rules for the advice on fishing opportunities in relation to the specified management objectives and the different stock categories. After the presentation, including questions and answers, the floor was opened for discussion and the initial development of draft BSAC recommendations for the fishery for 2020. Different views on the advice and the fishing opportunities were noted. Western Baltic herring and the two cod stocks were again those stocks that gave rise to most discussion and questions. The Secretariat was asked to produce, after the meeting, draft BSAC recommendations for the fishery in the Baltic Sea in 2020 for further development and finalisation by written procedure. The Working Group addressed the letter from DG Mare concerning eastern Baltic cod and after formulating a recommendation to the ExCom, the Secretariat was asked to produce a draft BSAC reply. The Working Group discussed in sequence the Commission's consultation questions on the Baltic multiannual plan and the Secretariat was tasked with producing a draft reply. The Working Group also took note of the consultation by BALTFISH on its draft recommendation on the derogation for plaice from the landing obligation and members were asked to send input to the Secretariat. Finally, the Working Group took note of forthcoming BSAC meetings.

All the outputs from the working group were developed and finalised by the Secretariat, together with the working group chairs and ExCom chair, and were adopted by written procedure. There was no Executive Committee meeting before the summer recess.

Meeting report here:

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-\(1\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-(1))

Executive Committee and theme session on the CFP, 3rd September 2019, Helsinki

The ExCom took note of the update on expenditure incurred in the first months of the year 2019-2020. Polish fisheries representatives referred to a statement on eastern Baltic cod and the Commission implementing regulation and expressed objection to the closure of the eastern cod fishery until the end of 2019. A German fisheries representative presented a statement of fisheries organisations of the Baltic Sea Fishermen's Association, in response to the Commission's proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2020 the fishing opportunities for the Baltic Sea and drew attention to the severe consequences of the Commission's proposed measures in the Baltic. The ExCom took note of these statements.

BSAC theme session on the CFP: The meeting discussed the future Common Fisheries Policy, in order to produce a communication from the BSAC to the Commission. The aim was to gain an overview of overarching ideas for a management regime in the Baltic, to gather views on regionalisation, as well as views and questions that the BSAC wants to be addressed or discussed prior to an upcoming revision. The moderator of the session invited all participants to take part in the discussion and express their views without constraint. He summed up some key points from the discussions. These concerned a wish to improve work with scientific advice and management; broad support for the general concept of MSY, with a need to look at its application and the influence fishing in the Baltic on MSY; how fishermen can adapt to changing situations or fluctuations in the fishing opportunities; broad support for regionalisation and a need to consider how to improve the current functioning of regionalisation. The representative of DG MARE noted that the BSAC is welcome to propose recommendations on how the functioning of the CFP could, in its view, be improved. The ExCom Chair thanked all participants for taking part, as well as the Commission and the Finnish BALTFISH presidency for their attendance. The work on CFP will continue with a view to reverting to the BSAC ExCom.

Meeting report here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-meeting-on-future-Common-Fisheries-Policy>

Working Group on Ecosystem Based Management, 18th – 19th September 2019

Nils Höglund, Chair of the working group on ecosystem based management stated that the aim of this meeting was to get a better understanding of the processes involved and how to engage with them, as well as of the contents of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and how it links to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and how that relates to the CFP. The BSAC was also expected to feed ideas into the HELCOM work with updating its Baltic Sea Action Plan. Anna Cheilari, DG ENV presented the Commission's Decision on Good Environmental Status and a regionalised approach to the MSFD. She presented the reporting cycles for the Member States and the Commission and talked about GES indicators. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary presented the HELCOM working structure, and the planned work to update the Baltic Sea Action Plan. Ula Linkute, policy officer from DG MARE presented Article 11 of CFP Regulation as a tool for fisheries management measures as well as best practice examples in the North Sea. She gave some examples of the fisheries measures that have been adopted to protect the marine environment in the Baltic and the North Sea. Member States presented their views on the BSAP/MSFD work process and information on the issues they find challenging regarding fisheries and environmental goals. The WG took note of the commitments by the Member States to further the work. The WG agreed on proposals on measures, research or monitoring that should be addressed by and inserted into a new BSAP.

Meeting report here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/Ecosystem-based-management-working-group>

Working Group (Demersal + Pelagic), 29th October 2019, Gdynia

The BSAC Joint Working Group met on 29th October 2019 in Gdynia to continue its work and discussions on the Commission's proposal for a control regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No.768/2005, (EC) No.1967/2006, (EC) No.1005/2008, and Regulation (EU) No.2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control³. This was the third meeting on the subject (prior to this: 23rd August 2018 and 28th January 2019). The BSAC Joint Working Group was chaired by Michael Andersen, Demersal Working Group. The Working Group continued the discussions where it left off at the January meeting. The WG Chair invited all participants to submit written comments to the outstanding Articles of the Commission's proposal, including comments to the Annexes. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a compilation of all the input dealt with/discussed/received to all of the articles dealt with and put together everything from all three WG meetings. The BSAC Executive Committee would have the final approval. A representative of the German Fisheries referred to the outcome of the Fisheries Council 14th + 15th October 2019 and highlighted the difficulties it would present for the fisheries, structures on land, co-operatives and fish processing plants. Several other fisheries representatives shared the concerns expressed and underlined the need for proper management and not micro-management.

Meeting report here:

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-\(2\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-(2))

Executive Committee, 20th January 2020, Brussels

Mr Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment and Oceans, European Commission made an opening statement. He underlined that the Advisory Councils play a fundamental role in the development and implementation of the common fisheries policy and appreciated the role played by the Baltic Sea Advisory Council. He was aware of the difficult situation facing several fisheries in the Baltic Sea.

The Chair informed that the vice chair had stepped down as vice-chair. No nominations were put forward at the meeting for a new vice chair.

Draft budget for 2020-2021, as well as work programmes were approved.

Dr Lotte Worsøe Clausen, Head of Advisory Support at ICES presented the Baltic fisheries and ecosystem overviews and explained their purpose and function with respect to the ecosystem based approach, as well as their contents. Dr Lotte Worsøe Clausen answered questions put forward by participants.

Professor Clara Ulrich, chair of the STECF presented the economic situation of the Baltic fisheries. She explained how the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) works and reports, and what the annual STECF reports contain. Professor Ulrich answered questions put forward by participants.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52018PC0368>

Member States gave information on what plans they have to implement the Commission proposal on the introduction of capacity limits for eastern Baltic cod, data collection and control measures.

The representative of the European Commission informed on the conditions contained in their proposal on the introduction of the support for the permanent cessation of fishing activities through scrapping.

The ExCom Chair thanked the outgoing Vice-Chair for his help and engagement during his term of office.

Andrzej Białas, the outgoing Vice-Chair thanked the management team, especially the Secretariat for being such a great help during his term of office as vice chair.

Meeting report here:

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-meeting-\(5\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-meeting-(5))

4 ACs workshop: Re-imagining gear in a circular economy, 28th January 2020

This workshop was organised by 4 Advisory Councils (BSAC, NSAC, NWWAC and PelAC). The aim was to build on the conclusions from an earlier NWWAC/MAC workshop on Plastics and the Seafood Supply Chain (7/11/19). The workshop brought together members of all the relevant ACs, experts and scientists to explore in detail the impact of the requirements of the Single Use Plastics Directive and the Port Facilities Directive on the fishing sector. After a series of initial presentations, the participants worked together in groups to discuss and answer questions and topics. This was reported back to plenary. Meeting report:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/4ACs-workshop-Re-Imagining-Fishing-Gear-in-a-Circ>

BSAC Secretariat meetings/Management Team meetings

Management Team Meeting, 11th June 2019 Copenhagen

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Chair of the Demersal Working Group, the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group, the Chair of the EBM Working Group, the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur. The Management Team dealt with administrative and practical issues. It was agreed to continue arranging the bulk of meetings in Copenhagen, plus one or two meetings elsewhere. On interpreting, the Secretariat informed that they were doing their our best to provide it for those who really need it. It was agreed that it is a challenge to be fair to all. Some representatives would like it provided. There is a need to discuss and consider how to deal with it. Nils Höglund informed on the needed revision of the current Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the updating of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan. He would like this to be on the agenda of a coming the BSAC Ecosystem Based Management working group.

Pre-meeting and Management Team Meeting, 2nd September 2019, Helsinki

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Honorary Chair, the Chair of the EBM Working Group, the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur (apologies from the Chair of the Demersal Working Group and the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group).

The participants exchanged general views and comments on the preparation for the CFP Theme meeting on 3rd September, as well as thoughts on how to follow up after it.

The Management Team discuss the coming BSAC meetings, as well as external meetings.

Management Team Meeting, 2nd December 2019, Copenhagen

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair (remote), the Vice-Chair, the Honorary Chair, the Chair of the Demersal Working Group, the Chair of the EBM Working Group (remote), the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur (apologies from the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group).

The Management Team discussed whether to draft a statement/declaration for the Commission, Member States and the European Parliament about taking actions in light of October Council decisions on fishing opportunities, to present to the ExCom January 2020 meeting. The Management Team discuss the coming BSAC meetings, as well as external meetings.

Management Team Meeting, Preparatory meeting 30th January 2020, Copenhagen

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair, the Chair of the EBM Working Group (remote), Mogens Schou (moderator for CFP work), the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur (remote) (apologies from the Chair of the Demersal Working Group and the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group).

The Management Team discussed how to continue the discussion on the future CFP during the ExCom meeting in March (CFP theme meeting) and what the final output should be. After some discussion, the Management Team decided that the discussions in the theme meeting should be carried out in small break out groups, to allow all participants to take an active part and avoid long, political statements, and to focus the discussions on the most important issues. The Secretariat and the moderator were asked to prepare a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to the ExCom members at the beginning of March, to fill in as preparation to the meeting.

Management Team Meeting Zoom, 2nd March 2020, Copenhagen

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair (remote), Chair of the Demersal Working Group (remote), the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group (remote), the Chair of the EBM Working Group (remote), Mogens Schou (moderator for CFP work), the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur (remote) (apologies from the Honorary Chair).

The Management Team took note that the Corona virus could have an impact on travelling to meetings, but decided to take no action at the moment.

The Management Team decided to ask the Secretariat to keep sending reminders to the BSAC members to fill in the questionnaire to facilitate the preparatory work. The answers given in the questionnaires will be analysed by the Management Team in advance of the ExCom meeting.

The Management Team took note of the preparation of the coming BSAC meetings and the coming external meetings.

Management Team Meeting Zoom, 27th March 2020, Copenhagen

The meeting was attended by the BSAC Chair, the Honorary Chair, Chair of the Demersal Working Group, the Chair of the Pelagic Working Group, the Chair of the EBM Working Group, the BSAC Secretary and Rapporteur (all remote).

The Management Team discussed how to proceed with the CFP work. The Secretariat had received 25 responses to the questionnaire. Mogens Schou, the moderator had produced a frame document for a BSAC paper, based on input from the questionnaires and BSAC meetings.

The Management Team decided that a physical meeting is needed to hold a proper discussion. Given the current COVID-19 situation, no dates for the new CFP workshop were decided. It could possibly be back to back with another meeting. The Management Team discussed the draft statement on Baltic fisheries and decided to put it on hold. With respect to returning to workplaces and resuming meeting activities, the BSAC Chair stated that the BSAC should follow the guidelines provided by the authorities. The Management Team decided to take the final decision on the Executive Committee and General Assembly, Riga 19th May 2020, as well as the Joint WG 9th + 10th June 2020 at the MT meeting on 14th April 2020.

External meetings during the year where BSAC members took part:

Below is a list of these meetings and the BSAC representatives who took part

Subject	Date	Place	Name	Reported?*
EFCA Seminar on the landing obligation	09.04.19	Vigo	Staffan Larsson	Yes
EFCA Administrative Board	10.04.19	Vigo	Andrzej Bialas	Yes
Marelitt Conference	25-26.04.19	Kołobrzeg	Ryszard Malik	Yes
BALTFISH Eel Symposium	08.05.19	Gothenburg	Michael Andersen, Nils Höglund, Jan Kappel	Yes
BALTFISH Forum	3.6.19	Stockholm	Andrzej Bialas, Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, Secretariat	Yes
Commission workshop on Landing Obligation	14.6.19	Brussels	Michael Andersen	Yes
ICES Workshop on Science with Industry Initiatives WKSCINDI	24-26.6.19	Copenhagen	Michael Andersen, Krzysztof Stanuch, Secretariat	Yes
HELCOM workshop on seal-fisheries interactions	27.6.19	Copenhagen	Flemming Kjærulf, Michael Andersen, Nils Höglund, Secretariat	Yes
BALTFISH Forum	4.9.19	Helsinki	Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, Andrzej Bialas, Steve Karnicki, Nils Höglund, Mart Undrest, BSAC Secretariat	Yes
NSAC webex on circular use of plastics	10.9.19	Webex	Ewa Milewska, Krzysztof Stanuch	Yes

EFCA Advisory and Administrative Board meetings	20+21.10.19	Vigo		Yes
NSAC Focus Group on circular use of fishing gear	31.10.19	Schiphol	Krzysztof Stanuch, Secretariat	Yes
HELCOM FISH 10 and workshop on the Sufficiency of Measures for its revised BSAP	2-4.11.19	Warsaw	Nils Höglund, Michael Andersen	Yes
ICES workshop on salmon management plan WKBaltSalMPI (part 1)	4-5.11.19	Copenhagen	Glenn Douglas Sally Clink	Yes
MAC and NWWAC workshop on Marine Plastics and the Seafood Supply Chain	7.11.19	Brussels	Secretariat	Yes
Commission Inter-ACs meeting and pre-ACs annual mtg with DG Mare	8.11.19	Brussels	Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, Andrzej Bialas, Sally Clink	Yes
Clean Nordic Oceans Final Conference	21-22.11.19	Gothenburg	Sally Clink	Yes
NSAC Focus Group on circular use of plastics	28.11.19	Brussels	Secretariat	Yes
FARNET Seminar Post 2020: Local action in a changing World	2-4.12.19	Brussels	Wolfgang Albrecht	Yes
MIAC, MIACO annual meetings with ICES	16-17.1.20	Copenhagen	Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, Michael Andersen, Nils Höglund	Yes, basically from the MIACO

4ACs Workshop on Circular use of gear	28.1.20	Brussels	Piotr Gruszka, Krzysztof Stanuch, Ewa Milewska, Sally Clink	Yes
EUROFISH 19 th session of the EUROFISH Governing Council	6 th -7 th February 2020	Copenhagen	Sally Clink	Yes
Commission Workshop on Single use plastics +port reception facilities	18.2.20	Brussels	Sally Clink	Yes
MRAG+OSPAR workshop on fishing gear	19-20.2.20	Brussels	Krzysztof Stanuch	Yes
ICES WKBALTIC	25-26.2.20	Copenhagen	Nils Höglund, Sally Clink	Yes
ICES WKREBUILD Workshop on rebuilding plans	24.-28.2.20	Copenhagen	Michael Andersen	Yes
ICES workshop on salmon management plan WKBaltSalMPII (part 2)	24.-28.2.20	Riga	Glenn Douglas, Matti Ovaska	Yes
Danish ministry for environment and food Dialogue meeting on the Baltic	28.2.20	Copenhagen	Secretariat	Yes
ICES WKMIXFISH Workshop on Mixed Fisheries Advice	3-5.3.20	Copenhagen	Michael Andersen	Yes
HELCOM Stakeholder Conference: The BSAC beyond 2021	3.3.20	Helsinki	Malin Lönnroth, Nils Höglund	Yes
HELCOM	11-12.3.20	Gothenburg	Nils Höglund	Yes

Committee on Fish and Environment II				
EFCA Advisory Board meeting	17.3.20	Web conference	Esben Sverdrup-Jensen	Yes
Inter-ACs extraordinary meeting	26.3.20	Web conference	BSAC Secretariat	Yes

*All reports from the meetings have been shared with the BSAC members and in the regular BSAC newsletters. They are available from the BSAC Secretariat.

Scientific experts and special guests invited to BSAC meetings during the year

Executive Committee, Theme session on cod 14th May 2019, Copenhagen

Uwe Krumme, Thünen Institute
Margit Eero, DTU Aqua

General Assembly, 15th May 2019, Copenhagen

Ole Toft, Fisheries Director, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Joint Working Group, 11th – 12th June 2019, Copenhagen

Colm Lordan, ACOM vice chair

Executive Committee and theme session on the CFP, 3rd September 2019, Helsinki

Orian Bondestam, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Natural Resources Department, Finland

Working Group on Ecosystem Based Management, 18th – 19th September 2019

Anna Cheilari, DG ENV
Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary
Ula Linkute, policy officer at DG MARE

Executive Committee, 20th January 2020, Brussels

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment and Oceans, European Commission and his team

Dr Lotte Worsøe Clausen, Head of Advisory Support at ICES
Professor Clara Ulrich, chair of the STECF

+++++

Keeping the BSAC members informed

BSAC members have received regular newsletters from the BSAC Secretariat. There has been a total of 11 during the year. These have also been made available to observers and put on the BSAC website.

The BSAC Executive Committee has received regular letters with updates and notifications: 23 during the year.

+++++++

Provision of meeting rooms

The BSAC Secretariat says a big thank you to HELCOM for providing a meeting room in September in Helsinki on 3rd September 2019.

Baltic Sea Advisory Council members 1st April 2019- 31st March 2020

Fisheries Interests (29)	
The Fishermen's Association of Bornholm and Christiansø	Danish Fishermen Producer Organisation
Danish Fishermen Producer Organisation	Marine Ingredients Denmark
Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation	Estonian Fishermen's Association
Association for Low Impact Coastal Fishery	Finnish Fishermen's Association (Sumonen Ammattikalastajaliitto)
Federation of Finnish Fisheries Associations	German Cutter-and Coastal-Fishermen's Association
Bundesverband der Deutschen Fishindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels E.V.	Association of Fisheries Protection (Fischereischutzverband)
Union of German Cutter Fishery	Lithuanian Fisheries Producers' Association
Latvian Fisheries Association	Association of Fishermen's of Sea- PO
The Confederation of Fishermen and Fish Processors of West Lithuania	Kołobrzeg Group of Producers Fish
National Chamber of Fish Producers	Darłowska Group of Fish Producers and Shipowners
Polish Association of Fish Processors	Fish Producers' Organisation Bałtyk
The Fishermen Fish Producers Organisation ORL-PR	Swedish Fishermen Federation
The Swedish Fishermen Producer Organisation	Fishermen's Federation for Small-Scale Fishery in Sweden
Sweden Pelagic Federation PO (SPF)	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association - Federation of National Organisations of Importers and Exporters of Fish
Åland Islands Fishermen's Association	
Other Interest Groups (13)	
Danish Recreational Fishermen	Fisheries Management Gotland, regional co-management of fisheries
OCEANA	The Fisheries Secretariat
Swedish Society for Nature and Conservation	Coalition Clean Baltic
BalticSea 2020	German Angling Association
Finnish Association for Nature Conservation	CIPS International Confederation for Sport Fishing
European Anglers Alliance	Polish Ecological Club
World Wide Fund for Nature	

Changes to membership during the year: General Assembly

OCEANA informed that it would leave the BSAC at the end of the year. This meant that their representative Andrzej Białas stepped down as vice chair of the BSAC at the end of 2019.

The Fisheries Secretariat informed that Lindsay Keenan was the principle Fisheries Secretariat representative to the BSAC, with Jan Isakson the deputy. Lindsay Keenan left the Fisheries Secretariat during the year. He was replaced by Christian Tsangarides on the Executive Committee.

The Swedish Federation PO: Malin Skog left the SFPO. She was replaced by Tore Johsson to the BSAC. Staffan Larsson left as Executive Committee representative and was replaced by Ewa Lavett, new to the BSAC during the year.

The Fish Producers' Organisation Bałtyk joined the General Assembly during the year.

WWF Justyna Zajchowska left the Executive Committee and was replaced by Matti Ovaska

Note: Members are always encouraged to check the website and make sure the details are correct.

The BSAC chairs and Secretariat

Chairperson of the BSAC ExCom

Esben Sverdrup-Jensen
c/o Baltic Sea Advisory Council
Axelborg
Axeltorv 3, 6th floor
1609 Copenhagen V
es@pelagisk.dk
Tel: (+45) 61660978

There's currently no vice-chair

Honorary chairperson of the BSAC General Assembly

Zbigniew (Steve) Karnicki
c/o National Marine Fisheries Research Institute MIR,
1 Kołłątaja st, Gdynia
zkarnicki@mir.gdynia.pl
Tel: (+48) 58 735 62 36

Demersal Working Group chair

Michael Andersen
Danish Fishermen Producer Organisation
Nordensvej 3
7000 Fredericia, Denmark
ma@dkfisk.dk
(+45) 70206100

Pelagic Working Group chair

Mart Undrest
Estonian Fisheries Association
Tuule 1A,
93816 Kuressaare,
Estonia
undrest@hotmail.com
(+372) 5023860

Ecosystem based management working group chair

Nils Höglund
Coalition Clean Baltic
Östra Ågatan 53
SE-75322
Uppsala
Sweden
nils.hoglund@ccb.se
(+46) 70 560 53 52

The BSAC Secretariat

Axelborg,
Axeltorv 3, 6th floor
1609 Copenhagen V
Denmark
Executive Secretary
Sally Clink
Email: sc@bsac.dk
(+45) 20128949

Rapporteur Information Assistant
Ewa Milewska
Email: em@bsac.dk
(+48) 504172058