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Newly elected BSAC ExCom chair Esben Sverdrup-Jensen

Photo S. Karnicki

Youthful and ready with a fresh perspective

After a few months of uncertainty for the Baltic Sea Advisory Council, since back in May this year, General Assembly members were unable to decide on a chair for the Executive Committee, members elected by consensus Esben Sverdrup-Jensen from the Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation (DPPO) as BSAC Executive Committee chair. This happened on 6th November 2018 at the meeting of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council's Extraordinary General Assembly at the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute in Gdynia.

The youthful Esben Sverdrup-Jensen (he recently turned 40) comes to the job with considerable experience of and insight into fisheries.

He grew up in the northern Jutland fishing harbour of Hirtshals, so he soon got used to salt and sea air in his lungs and developed a strong awareness of and feel for the fishing community there.

Esben has a university degree in political science from Copenhagen University. He started work in 2007 at the Danish Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries and gained detailed experience of fisheries through work in various departments dealing with fisheries issues. His academic CV was strengthened through post-graduate studies in public administration and geography from the University of Roskilde.

In 2011 he moved to the private sector and directly into the fishing industry, when he became Deputy Director of the Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation (DPPO), which is a producer organisation for the Danish pelagic fishing companies. This is a major organisation based in Hirtshals, and with offices in Copenhagen, fishing pelagic species such as herring, mackerel and horse mackerel for the human consumption market, as well as sprat, sandeel, blue whiting and Norway pout for the production of fish meal and oil. The DPPO has eleven vessels, fishing in EU waters as well as much further out in international waters. Its EU fishery includes quotas of herring and sprat in the Baltic. In 2013, Esben took on the responsibility as chief executive officer for the DPPO.

The Danish Pelagic Producer Organisation is a relatively new member of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council, which it joined in 2016. At the General Assembly meeting, the Honorary chair of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council expressed the hope that with Esben as new chair, this will bring a fresh perspective to the job as chair of the Executive Committee.

Esben Sverdrup-Jensen also brings with him considerable experience of working with the Advisory Councils, since the DPPO has been member of the Pelagic Advisory Council since it was created. Esben is chair of one of the working groups of the Pelagic AC.

Esben Sverdrup-Jensen sees it as a great honour and privilege to lead the BSAC through difficult times. His aim is to bring the members closer together through civilised dialogue. At the General Assembly meeting he asked all the BSAC members to work together with him to take the BSAC to new levels and deliver sound advice.