

If you do have any news, let's hear from you before end of May 2021.

## **BSAC news and meetings**

### **Management Team (MT) meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

The Management Team met on 14th April 2021. A report was sent to the ExCom. Contact Secretariat.

### **Following up on the external evaluation of the BSAC 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

This Working Group met on 26<sup>th</sup> April. Report to follow.

The **Terms of Reference** that were agreed were:

To review the evaluation report and its recommendations

To improve the performance of the BSAC

To promote the impact and influence of the BSAC

To describe solutions to the recommendations made

To propose actions for the BSAC to implement

Full reporting and drafts for actions as well as draft code of conduct for BSAC members will be submitted to the ExCom. There will be a follow up meeting soon.

### **Further work on CFP reform 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

It was agreed at the final CFP Session to create a Drafting Group to draft a BSAC white paper on CFP reform. All Management Team members will be part of the Group. One ExCom member signed up. It will meet on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May at 11:00 – 13:00**. The MT asked the Secretariat to send a reminder to the BSAC members to give them the opportunity to take part. SO, YOU STILL HAVE ONE MORE CHANCE TO LEND A HAND TO THIS WORK

### **A BSAC Joint Working Group to hear the ICES Advice for the Baltic fisheries for 2021 Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – this is going to be challenging**

ICES ACOM Vice-Chair Colm Jordan has accepted the invitation to take part at this annual BSAC meeting to deal with the ICES advice for the Baltic fisheries. The ICES advice is released on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Deadline to sign up Tuesday 1st June 2021.

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-\(3\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Joint-Working-Group-(3))

### **A very special Executive Committee meeting with EFCA + ICES confirmed Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

EFCA and ICES will take part at this meeting. The morning session will be with EFCA. The afternoon session will be with ICES

The BSAC Chair wrote to BSAC members and observers to inform them and ask them to get their thinking hats on and send questions for the meeting. The questions had been prioritised due to the limited time. If there are issues that do not get covered, this will be pursued in writing. Draft agenda, questions to EFCA and ICES from BSAC members here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/Executive-Committee-meeting-with-EFCA>

### **No physical BSAC ExCom and General Assembly meetings in May this year**

Due to covid, the BSAC will follow the same procedure as last year: the approval of annual report and expenditure for the year ended 31.3.21, and the adoption of the draft estimated budget and work programme for the new year will be done by written procedure and use of voting slip. The Executive Committee has been consulted and accepted to extend their term of office until a physical meeting can take place in September for elections to take place. The Honorary Chair and ExCom Chair have also accepted to do this.

### **BUT there WILL be a real Executive Committee and General Assembly on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021**

Please note the date. There will be all the elections. Meeting rooms at the Danish Food and Agriculture Council are booked! Cross fingers.

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

### **BSAC on the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the Commission Technical note on protected areas 30% and 10% and strict protection**

The BSAC wrote to DG Environment: to express interest in taking part in the DG ENV meeting on this, to call for transparency on who takes part, to pursue the wording on extractive activities in the Commission technical note, and to invite DG Environment to a coming BSAC meeting to explain the work of the Marine Expert Group and the processes related to marine protected areas and targets. Please find it here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-letter-to-DG-Environment-about-EU-Biodiversit>

### **Stickleback**

In February, the BSAC sent out recommendations for a trial fishery for stickleback in the Baltic. The BSAC Secretariat was informed that industry initiatives related to a trial fishery for stickleback are on-going in several Member States. Sweden has already informed that it would like to come to a BSAC meeting to present its work. Reminder of the BSAC recommendations:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendation-on-a-trial-fishery-for-stickle>

## **What some BSAC member organisations have been reporting on in April**

### **Association for Low Impact Coastal Fishery PO (FSK PO) on the Danish label for fish caught using low impact gears**

31<sup>st</sup> March 201

Last November, a new state consumer label was launched for fish caught using low impact gears and from healthy stocks.

FSK PO have made a new page “NaturSkånsom” (hard to translate – “nature protective”) – where you can read about the label and see what fish species are covered by the new label, what gears are allowed, what the label means and where can you buy the fish. Author of this newsletter hasn’t yet been able to track down any of the fish bearing the label, but we’ll keep you posted. Note some fish species in the Baltic are covered.

Here it is:

<http://skaansomtkystfiskeri.dk/naturskaansom-2/>

### **Coalition Clean Baltic**

**EU Scientific body confirms stronger bycatch measures are needed to protect Bay of Biscay common dolphins and Baltic Proper harbour porpoises**

15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

NGO concerns over EU countries’ inadequate response to the bycatch of protected species have now been confirmed by the evaluation of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) (see that below)

With respect to the measures proposed by France, Spain and Portugal to reduce bycatch of common dolphins in the Bay of Biscay, it concludes that measures are insufficient to prevent the many thousands of incidental killings recorded every year. Regarding measures for the Baltic Proper harbour porpoise brought forward by Baltic Member States, STECF highlights that these proposals have the potential to reduce incidental catches in marine protected areas but they leave out crucial measures recommended by scientists to minimise bycatch of this critically endangered species in the wider region.

Now the ball is in the European Commission’s court to decide on the proposed measures. NGOs call on the European Commission to reject these inadequate measures and require Member States to urgently revise their proposals according to the entirety of the [scientific advice](#) and uphold their legal obligations to prevent bycatch.

### **Danish Fishermen PO on the future of Baltic fisheries, marine plan and on rubbish:**

1. DFPO President on the Baltic – fisheries in the Baltic need some clarity – now 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Svend-Erik Andersen writes an article about the Baltic. In March this year a load of mayors wrote to the government to express concerns about the marine environment in the Baltic and the Belt area – creating challenges for the fishermen. Danish Minister for the Environment has written to say that there's a need for stronger efforts to reduce release of nitrogen into the sea and to work on marine plans. Great stuff, writes the President, but when will this happen? He also refers to the work on the future of the Baltic fisheries - which began in January 2020 with a big conference (BSAC was there and reported). The aim was to produce proposals for an action plan for future fisheries in the Baltic. Svend-Erik refers to the challenges facing the Baltic fisheries and that DFPO has written to the administration to request a scrapping scheme for Baltic. This is not enough, and he underlines the real importance of hearing how far work has come with the action plan for the future of Baltic fisheries.

### **2. The Danish government's marine plan is public – the aim is to protect 19 marine areas**

DFPO reports on the initiative, has maps to show the areas designated (according to Marine Strategy Directive and Birds Directive). Some areas around Bornholm are included. DFPO refers back to its agreement with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation on protected marine areas – including an area south of Bornholm and which the Danish government doesn't have on its list of proposed areas.

### **3. On marine litter - new campaign by the fishermen to help towards a sea without litter 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – with information leaflets**

Fridges, containers, plastic remains – all the stuff that fishermen catch in their nets and bring ashore. DFPO are working together with several ports and harbours around Denmark, as well as recreational and sports organisations and the authorities on a new campaign to inform about marine litter and how to deal with it. DFPO have produced information leaflets on best practices to follow. Fishermen in DFPO are encouraged to take part.

All this news, and lots, lots more from Fishing News. [ikj@dkfisk.dk](mailto:ikj@dkfisk.dk)

### **Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation – Seaspiracy – the docufilm**

14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Apart from the ongoing concerns about Brexit and its consequences for the fishery, access to resources and loss of earnings, they report on the Netflix film Seaspiracy with the heading: Management of the marine resources is the responsibility of all. They comment that it's positive to have a debate on sustainable fishery. For those who live from harvesting the surplus of nature so as to feed and growing world population with sustainably caught fish, it's necessary to take responsibility for management and protection of the marine resources. At the same time, the director and producer of the film juggle with fact, fiction, feelings and drama, and the narrative crosses global, regional and local levels. They refer to an article that the TV and radio company Danmarks Radio have written after having checked whether the documentary film is fact or fiction.

<https://www.dppo.dk/2021/04/14/seaspiracy-forvaltningen-af-havets-ressourcer-er-et-faelles-ansvar/>

DPPO will over the coming weeks address some of the issues raised in the film. Go further down for under reading for more on Seaspiracy.

### **The Fisheries Secretariat**

### **Danish fishers and conservationists jointly propose marine reserves**

28<sup>th</sup> March, 2021

After months of negotiations, the Danish Society for Nature Conservation, DN, and the Danish Fishermen Producer Organisation, DFPO, present a historical proposal for ensuring a significant protection of the Danish sea. The proposal will ensure 10 percent untouched sea – no take Marine Protected Areas – in the North Sea, the Skagerrak, and the Baltic Sea, and is now handed over to the Danish government ahead of the Marine Spatial Plan negotiations. Decades of trench warfare between green organisations and the fishing industry is now put on hold. At least if it is up to the two big interest organisations.

[Danish fishers and conservationists jointly propose marine reserves – The Fisheries Secretariat \(fishsec.org\)](https://www.fishsec.org/)

### **European Anglers Alliance - Effectively protecting 30% of the EU's sea area by 2030: recreational anglers are part of the solution**

**21<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

This webinar discussed the role that recreational fishing can play in achieving these objectives. It came at an important time to inform the work of the European Parliament's report on the Biodiversity Strategy and the European Commission's draft technical note on criteria and guidance for protected areas designation.

It's not possible to listen to the webinar after the event, but they produced a press release from the event:

[EAA - Effectively protecting 30% of the EU's sea area by 2030: recreational anglers are part of the solution \(eaa-europe.org\)](https://www.eaa-europe.org/)

And Thomas Tessier, Forum Secretariat, European Parliament Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment (which is supported by the European Anglers Alliance (EAA) and the European Fishing Tackle Trade Association (EFTTA).) informs that they're currently finalising a comprehensive report on the meeting, which should cover all the important details. Who are they:

<https://www.eaa-europe.org/european-parliament-forum/>

### **European Anglers Alliance – Biodiversity Strategy: the PECH Committee is taking a step in the right direction**

**27<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

On 17 March, the Fisheries (PECH) Committee of the European Parliament adopted its opinion on the "EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives." The PECH Committee opinion should inform the work of the Environment (ENVI) Committee which is leading on this file.

The opinion focuses mainly on the Biodiversity Strategy's objectives related to fisheries, including to legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's sea area and to strictly protect at least a third of the protected areas. It also makes some recommendations for the upcoming Commission's Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems.

Echoing the conclusions of the Council adopted in October 2020, which highlighted that the stricter level of protection may allow for certain human activities, the PECH Committee went further and recognised that establishing Marine Protected Areas does not have to be incompatible with the practice of some sustainable activities, including extractive ones.

While the European Commission recommends categorising recreational fishing, including angling, as an extractive activity that should not be allowed in strictly protected areas, the PECH opinion calls on the Commission to distinguish between different types of fishing gear and to take into account fishing efforts instead of adopting a blanket approach by sector to determine which activity should be restricted.

EAA and EFTTA have emphasised that recreational angling can be a very selective activity, and, in the case of catch-and-release, even a non-extractive one.

[EAA - Biodiversity Strategy: the PECH Committee is taking a step in the right direction \(eaa-europe.org\)](https://www.eaa-europe.org/)

### **German Cutter-and Coastal-Fishermen's Association and Union of German Cutter Fishery – fischerblatt Magazine March 2021**

Nothing specific to the Baltic in their March issue. They report on the agreed TACs and quotas for other waters than the Baltic. They feature the 2020 report on satellite monitoring and logbook reports by fishing organisations in Germany. And there's reporting on the vote in the European Parliament on the Commission's revised Control Regulation – on the cover of the magazine is a sign: "no thank you to cameras". Finally, news on asbestos: this is still a problem on German vessels. [info@deutscher-fischerei-verband.de](mailto:info@deutscher-fischerei-verband.de)

### **More from some Polish BSAC members on harbour porpoise**

Members of the Association of Fishing Boat Owners in Kołobrzeg and the Organisation of Fishing Boat Owners – Fish Producers, gathering small scale fishermen from the ports of Kołobrzeg, Unieście, Mielno, Chłopy, Ustronie Morskie oraz Dzwirzyno, have sent a letter to the Commissioner about harbour porpoise and proposed mitigation measures.

Please find the letter on the website:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

### **Swedish Pelagic Federation PO**

Have been updating its website. All in Swedish, but lots of nice photos

<http://www.pelagic.se/>

### **Swedish Fishermen PO on “predatory fishing must stop”**

26th April 2021

There's loads of news on the website of the SFPO, regularly updated

One news item refers to a Parliamentary debate on industrial trawling, and the proposal to move the limit in trawling further out to sea. During the debate, there was a question from one member of parliament as to whether there are any plans to stop bottom trawling in the Baltic, and what plans the government has to help fish stocks recover. The MP pointed to industrial trawling in the Baltic as the major culprit. In her reply, the minister said there was a need to take a holistic approach, which includes looking at the marine environment, predation (e.g. seals) and unsustainable fishery. Fishery is regulated within the EU. She referred to public money that has been spent on improving the marine environment, and ongoing research into the stocks. Other MPs took part in the debate. Concerns were raised about seals, the risk of trawlers fishing up barrels containing poison, as well as the commercial trolling fishing taking place in the Baltic. Link to SFPO:

<https://www.sfpo.se/nyheter/-rovfisket-maste-stoppas->

Link to an article in the newspaper Skärgården (newspaper for the Stockholm archipelago)

<http://www.skargarden.se/rovfisket-maste-stoppas/>

### **WWF**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2021

### **Of the 22 coastal Member States in the EU, only six have met the EU's 31 March deadline to submit their plans for the sustainable use and conservation of their seas - and those six plans are extremely patchy.**

While Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, the Netherlands and Portugal all met yesterday's deadline - set by the EU back in 2014, in its Maritime Spatial Planning\* (MSP) directive - some of the maritime spatial plans are incomplete. Portugal, for example, leaves out the Azores archipelago entirely, as this section is still being developed. In Denmark, while the plan is considered legally binding, the relevant authorities are still engaged in public consultation.

As for those Member States who missed the deadline, while some, like Estonia, France, Poland, Spain and Sweden are slightly delayed, others, like Greece and Italy, are a long way off from developing and adopting their plans. In Germany, although a plan has been in force since 2009, the updated plan based on the EU Directive will only be adopted later in the year. Similarly, although Lithuania and Malta have plans in force, they are from 2015 and not the result of the MSP directive.

[https://www.wwf.eu/what\\_we\\_do/oceans/?uNewsID=2717941](https://www.wwf.eu/what_we_do/oceans/?uNewsID=2717941)

### **WWF are holding a seminar on Marine Spatial Planning 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

#### **"Marine Spatial Planning, a solution for our ocean: How an ecosystem based approach can achieve healthier seas"**

It will be co-hosted by Morten Petersen MEP (Renew) and Grace O Sullivan MEP (Greens) 09.30 – 11.00 CET. See here to sign up:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/marine-spatial-planning-a-solution-for-our-ocean-tickets-146729890051>

PS: Happy birthday, WWF – it's [60 years](#) since they were founded. 29.4.21

## **BALTFISH/Member States news and meetings**

### **Harbour Porpoise - a second Joint Recommendation to come from BALTFISH**

BALTFISH has to develop a second Joint Recommendation on mitigation measures to prevent bycatch of harbour porpoise. They have to do this by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. The recommendations have to deal with additional mitigation measures (including where appropriate the use of ADDs) outside the areas covered by the first Joint Recommendation. BALTFISH also has to agree on more detailed control measures linked to the control of the mitigation measures. It is going to be a short Joint Recommendation.

BALTFISH is planning to consult the BSAC.

**BALTFISH Forum** next BALTFISH Forum is planned on 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 (to be confirmed). Latvia takes the Presidency over from Estonia from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

**Swedish draft proposal for fisheries conservation measures in marine protected areas in the Baltic Sea and in the Kattegat under Articles 11 and 18 – CFP Basic Regulation (actually related to harbour porpoise)**

A representative from the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management has just written to inform about this. They have been working on it for a while. According to CFP BR Article 44 (3), the Advisory Committees should be consulted on joint recommendations according to Article 18 of the BR. In the ongoing work with implementing fisheries conservation measures in Swedish marine protected areas within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy Articles 11 and 18, the next process will cover four marine protected areas in the Baltic and in the Kattegat designated mainly for the *protection of harbour porpoise* but also for other conservation targets:

- Hoburgs bank och Midsjöbankarna (Baltic Sea)
- Sydvästskånes utsjövatten (Baltic Sea)
- Havet kring Ven (Baltic Sea)
- Nordvästra Skånes havsområde (Kattegat)

The areas concerned consist of Natura 2000 sites and for some areas HELCOM MPAs and national designations (nature reserves). Sweden issued a series of data calls during 2020 and early 2021 for the concerned marine protected areas. The following Member States were involved in the data call: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. All Member States have responded to the data call within the due date or notified short delays.

At the same time, there are efforts ongoing for the protection of the Baltic population of harbor porpoise among concerned Member States, and the BSAC has been consulted accordingly.

Within BALTFISH, a Joint Recommendation was elaborated and sent to the EU-Commission, in which the marine protected area Hoburgs bank och Midsjöbankarna (Hoburgs Bank and Midsea Bank) are included.

Even if this Swedish marine protected area is designated mainly for the protection of harbour porpoise, other conservation targets require additional conservation measures. Sweden has therefore included this area in its draft proposal based on Articles 11 and 18 of the Common Fisheries Policy. The Swedish regional process will be coordinated in accordance with Articles 11 and 18 of the Common Fisheries Policy, the terms of reference for the Scheveningen North Sea FISH-ENVI technical expert group and the terms of reference for the CFP-article 11 Baltic technical expert group (working under BALTFISH). The North Sea Advisory Council and the Baltic Sea Advisory Council will be consulted accordingly later in the process. One of the areas is covered by NSAC and the other three by BSAC.

## **Commission news and meetings**

### **The next Inter-ACs meeting – the ACs meet DG Mare 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

This will be from 14:30 to 18:30. Invitation and draft and revised agenda are here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/Inter-ACs-meeting>

The BSAC will be there.

### **STECF report published in March 2021 – and we're back to harbour porpoises again**

#### **To read, among other:**

Evaluation of the BALTFISH Joint Recommendation on mitigation measures to prevent by-catch of Baltic harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea

The Member States of the BALTFISH Regional Group have provided a Joint Recommendation with the aim of reducing accidental catches of harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea.

STECF analysed the "Report on ad hoc analysis of a Joint Recommendation for measures to reduce cetacean by-catches in the Bay of Biscay (ToR 1a), and Joint Recommendation mitigation measures to prevent by-catch of Baltic Proper harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) in the Baltic Sea fisheries (ToR 2)" and found the report of the ad hoc contract concise and much helpful in the process of compiling the STECF response to the Commission request. STECF notes that EU Regulation (EC No 2019/1241) aims to ensure that incidental catches of sensitive marine species that are a result of fishing are minimised and possibly eliminated (objectives set out in Article 3, paragraphs 2(b)). This includes those species listed under Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC. The objective is that such incidental catches do not represent a

threat to the conservation status of these species. Article 2(d) of the Regulation requires that fisheries management measures for the purposes of complying with Directives 92/43/EEC, 2000/60/EC and 2008/56/EC are in place, in particular with a view to achieving good environmental status in line with Article 9(1) of Directive 2008/56/EC, and with Directive 2009/147/EC. In addition, the target set out in Article 4 Paragraph 1(b) obliges Member States to ensure that incidental catches of marine mammals, marine reptiles, seabirds and other non-commercially exploited species do not exceed levels provided for in Union legislation and international agreements that are binding on the Union. STECF acknowledges that both ICES (2020) Advice and the BALTFISH Joint Recommendation are aimed as a step forward towards achieving these objectives. STECF understands though that not later than 1 June 2021, the current Joint Recommendation will be supplemented by a second Joint Recommendation from BALTFISH regarding additional mitigation measures. STECF notes that both the ICES (2020) and the BALTFISH Joint Recommendation are based on the SAMBAH (2016) study, which mapped the probabilities of presence of harbour porpoise in the Baltic and the associated risk of bycatch. According to this study, occurrence of the harbour porpoise is highest in the south-western and western waters in the Baltic Sea but rare in the eastern and northern waters (east of longitude 20° E and north of latitude 60° N (Figure 6.4.1). STECF observes that ICES advised for the Baltic harbour porpoise management unit a combination of spatial-temporal closures and application of acoustic deterrent devices (ADDs/pingers) in static net (i.e. trammel net, gillnet, and semi-driftnet) fisheries. Spatial closures to fisheries with static nets were recommended in areas of higher probability of detection of Baltic harbour porpoises rather than recommending the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers). Outside these areas, ICES identified some Natura 2000 sites and other areas where static net fisheries should be fully closed.

STECF notes in areas of higher probability of bycatch of Baltic harbour porpoises, ICES recommend closing the areas rather than requiring the use of acoustic deterrent devices (pingers). STECF notes that the rationale for this is that pingers are not 100% effective at avoiding bycatch. Pingers have been shown to reduce the bycatch rate of harbour porpoise by 50–80% in operational fisheries with static nets, in comparison to nets without pingers (Orphanides and Palka, 2013). However, there are also concerns about the wide use of pingers, with studies showing that the long-term use of pingers can have negative sideeffects like habituation over time, and a reduced foraging efficiency of deterred porpoises (Beest et al., 2017; Dawson et al., 2013; Kindt-Larsen et al., 2019; Kyhn et al., 2015). STECF additionally notes that the costs related to the deployment, running and monitoring of pingers and their reliability should be considered.

[https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/plenary/-/asset\\_publisher/oS6k/document/id/2851300?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fstecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu%2Freports%2Fplenary%3Fp\\_p\\_id%3D101\\_INSTANCE\\_oS6k%26p\\_p\\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\\_p\\_state%3Dnormal%26p\\_p\\_mode%3Dview%26p\\_p\\_col\\_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p\\_p\\_col\\_pos%3D1%26p\\_p\\_col\\_count%3D2](https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/plenary/-/asset_publisher/oS6k/document/id/2851300?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fstecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu%2Freports%2Fplenary%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_oS6k%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_pos%3D1%26p_p_col_count%3D2)

The BALTFISH Joint Recommendation is here

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-concerning-mitigation-measure>

### **STECF report on criteria and indicators to incorporate sustainability aspects for seafood products in the marketing standards under the common market organisation**

From the STECF Plenary meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Revision of the marketing standards is included under the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. STECF was asked to identify suitable criteria and indicators to assess potential for inclusion in regulatory marketing standards – this for fishery and aquaculture products. 60 page report here:

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/2744605/STECF+20-05+-+Sustainability.pdf/1a5deba3-8386-4aac-ae2-8654bd5877f4>

It contains a series of conclusions see page 11. STECF considers it meets the ToFR for the work, that substantial work is needed to further develop it, that the revision of the CMO regulation should include more detailed information, a scoring system applied must be transparent, further detailing is needed, the work here shows that there is potential here for further development.

BSAC member Union of German Cutter Fishery has drawn attention to this report and highlights the category red light for all fish caught with trawled gears touching the seafloor, and points out the fact that it is based on expert judgement; no scientific evidence or data needed.

## **DG Mare annual 2021 Seminar on Fisheries Science: Supporting fisheries with marine protected areas, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021**

27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

The seminar will include an introductory presentation about how MPAs can benefit fisheries. The scientists involved will offer insights into the outcomes, lessons learnt and recommendations from their work. Finally, different stakeholders will take part in a panel discussion to explore several aspects of MPAs and their benefits for fisheries.

[https://ec.europa.eu/oceans-and-fisheries/news/2021-seminar-fisheries-science-supporting-fisheries-marine-protected-areas-2021-04-27\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/oceans-and-fisheries/news/2021-seminar-fisheries-science-supporting-fisheries-marine-protected-areas-2021-04-27_en)

## **Two consultations open for feedback**

The Commission has just published a **ROADMAP** for an **Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems**. This initiative is an action that was announced in the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy. This roadmap is open for feedback for **4 weeks**. This initiative is very relevant for the work that is being carried out under the MSFD. The feedback you provide will be considered to further develop the initiative.

The consultation is open 15.4.21 – 13.5.21'

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12953-Action-plan-to-conserve-fisheries-resources-and-protect-marine-ecosystems->

The Commission has published a **ROADMAP for the review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)**, launching the process to examine its achievements and shortcomings, explore options for improvement and propose possible amendments. The roadmap is open for feedback until the 6 May 2021 through the [Have your say](#) portal. A 12-week online public consultation will then be launched in Q2 2021. We also intend to have dedicated discussions in the context of the Common implementation strategy.

The consultation is open 8.4.21 -6.5.21

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12898-Protecting-the-environment-in-the-EU-s-seas-and-oceans>

## **Biodiversity Strategy and the Commission Technical note on protected areas 30% and 10% and strict protection**

DG Environment provided a report from the meeting of its Marine Expert Group, held in February 2021. It's on the BSAC website here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

The BSAC is not invited to the meetings of this expert group, and that the problem of deleting reference to fishing from the relevant paragraph of the Commission technical note as incompatible with strict protection has not been resolved.

As mentioned above, the BSAC wrote to DG Environment to express interest in taking part and call for transparency on who takes part, to pursue the wording on extractive activities in the technical note, and to invite DG Environment to a coming BSAC meeting to explain the work of the Marine Expert Group and the processes related to marine protected areas and targets.

## **More environment: the BSAC Secretariat took part in:**

### **DG ENV Meeting of the Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES),**

22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021

The BSAC took part as observer.

The Member States according to the Marine Strategy Framework, planned updating work on the 11 GES Descriptors for the next round of reporting, and the planned work to review the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Three things of note: The Joint Research Centre analysis of the Member States' reports on the different Descriptors – note the one on D3 commercial species; ICES presented its advice for Descriptor 3 to the EU request for advice on developing appropriate lists for commercially exploited fish and shellfish; and the just started review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The BSAC report is here, and the JRC Report on D3 and the ICES advice:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

The BSAC referred to the fact that the BSAC is the only AC present at the meeting. The meeting is very interesting for the BSAC. We know there are many challenges in working with the MSFD. The review process is extremely important. The BSAC encouraged DG ENV to come and talk to the Advisory Councils about the review process. There has to be an inter-linking between CFP and MSFD revision processes. The Advisory Councils want to take part. HELCOM is updating its BSAP. There are actions extremely relevant to MSFD.

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

### **DG Environment is holding the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of its Marine Strategy Coordination Group on 28th May 2021.**

The BSAC Secretariat will join and follow.

### **EUMOFA Impact of seafood imports on the EU Small-Scale Coastal Fleet**

14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

This study explores the impact of seafood imports on the EU small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF) – vessels under 12 metres that use passive gear (i.e. non-towed). They looked at 13 cases, one of them was cod in southern Sweden. Hard to give you a summary, read report here:

[https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/445440/public\\_Impact+of+imports+on+SSCF.pdf/3d18cb36-c8d8-dcc4-4b3b-74c9be785cca?t=1618403942755](https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/445440/public_Impact+of+imports+on+SSCF.pdf/3d18cb36-c8d8-dcc4-4b3b-74c9be785cca?t=1618403942755)

### **European Parliament news and meetings**

**The PECH Newsletter „Trawler – April 2021“** prepared by the Secretariat of the Committee on Fisheries is now available on the PECH website.

**Parliament urges EU to take drastic action to reduce marine litter** Boosting recycling in the fisheries sector and substantially cutting the use of plastics are key to clean our seas, say MEPs. In a report adopted on Thursday by 646 votes in favour, 3 against and 39 abstentions, MEPs stress that marine litter, and especially micro and nano plastic, “poses a serious threat to a number of marine animal species”, as well as to fishermen and consumers. They highlight that an average consumer of Mediterranean shellfish ingests around 11 000 fragments of plastic every year. The fishing sector is estimated to lose between 1 and 5% of its revenue because of marine pollution. Fisheries and aquaculture waste accounts for 27% of marine litter. Therefore, Parliament urges the EU to accelerate the development of a circular economy in this sector by phasing out expanded polystyrene packages and improving marine waste collection and recycling channels. Research on sustainable materials and new designs for fishing gears are also key.

More information:

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/pech/home/newsletters>

Next meetings of the Committee on Fisheries: 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Look for the agenda here:

<https://emeeting.europarl.europa.eu/emeeting/committee/en/agenda/202105/PECH>

### **News from other ACs**

#### **Brexit – impact on the Advisory Councils – the BSAC reply on the Baltic**

The PELAC took the initiative on a letter AC to the Commission to express concerns about Brexit and the need to involve stakeholders.

The BSAC sent a separate letter supporting the vital importance of stakeholder participation in future post-Brexit fisheries management structures. The potential secondary impacts in the Baltic, both in terms of policy and fishery were underlined. “Seen from the Baltic, the post-Brexit situation does not have a direct impact. Nevertheless, the BSAC would like to underline the potential of secondary impacts, both in terms of policy

and fishery. The impact on policy is in terms of the extra resources being used by the Commission to deal with and manage post-Brexit. The fisheries impact may be in terms of increase in fishing pressure from North Sea vessels seeking compensation for lost fishing opportunities, but also for Baltic vessels trying to compensate for the dire situation in the Baltic by seeking new opportunities in the North Sea.” BSAC letter here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-letter-to-DG-Mare-about-post-Brexit>

**The EU’s proposal for a revised control regulation: the North Western Waters Advisory Council, NWWAC and the Commission’s explanatory note**

The Commission wrote an explanatory note going into the details of some provisions in the Control Regulation. The NWWAC reviewed and discussed the Commission’s explanatory note on the proposal for a revision of the EU-fisheries control regulation. They also express concern at the lack of Commission participation at recent AC meetings. They want DG MARE to address this issue and to look into sending a clear signal of support of the sector to Europe’s fishers and to the general public.

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

The BSAC Executive Committee has been informed and invited to comment. The Management Team took note of the NWWAC letter to the Commission objecting to the explanatory note. The Management Team decided that the BSAC should not send any comments to the explanatory note. LIFE sent a letter on behalf of the four small-scale fisheries members of the BSAC. LIFE writes that it does not feel that there are any issues arising from the Explanatory Note that fall within the remit of the BSAC to respond to.

The NWWAC letter and the LIFE letter are on the website:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

**EFCA Control Agency news and meetings**

**EFCA: New Executive Director appointed**

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

Today, the Administrative Board of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) appointed Dr Susan Steele as the agency’s new Executive Director.

An Irish national, Dr Steele has extensive experience in fisheries management and control. She has served as the Executive Chair and CEO of the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority of Ireland since 2013. Prior to that, she was Head of Innovation at the Seafood Development Centre and Head of Aquaculture and Business Training of Ireland’s Seafood Development Board. She holds a PhD from the National University of Ireland, as well as an MBA, a Master’s in Education (M. Ed) and a Bachelor’s in Marine Biology.

Dr Steele has been appointed to a five year term. Under the supervision of the Administrative Board, she will be responsible for the management of the Agency.

**The Administrative Board also adopted EFCA’s 2020 Annual Report.**

In 2020, EFCA’s activities included the operational coordination of fisheries control across the EU, assisting the Member States in improving the culture of compliance with the common fisheries policy (CFP), and participating in the European cooperation on coast guard functions. EFCA also had to adapt its business model in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The annual report is here:

<https://www.efca.europa.eu/en/content/annual-report-2020>

**Remember to check out EFCA news:**

<https://www.efca.europa.eu/en>

**ICES and science**

**From ICES on data management**

12<sup>th</sup> April 2021

ICES is pleased to announce that we have now been accredited for our Data Management under the CoreTrustSeal programme (an international, community based, non-governmental, and non-profit organization promoting sustainable and trustworthy data infrastructures).

This is an important step for ICES in delivering on the priorities of the Advisory, Science, and Strategic plans on quality assurance and a transparent evidence base for the knowledge generated in ICES.

Find out more about what this accreditation means for ICES data management:

<https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/Stamp-of-approval.aspx>

**Coming up – the ADGBS 2021 - Baltic Sea Advice Drafting Group 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

Ciaran Kelly will be chairing. Leading to the Baltic advice 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

And don't forget to check the ICES website:

<https://www.ices.dk/Pages/default.aspx>

**Other meetings and news of activities**

**EUROFISH Webinar “Market diversification: Breaking into foreign seafood markets during the pandemic” on 18 May 2021**

The International Organisation for the Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe (EUROFISH) is organising a webinar “**Market diversification: Breaking into foreign seafood markets during the pandemic**” on 18 May 2021.

The event is being organised primarily for the EUROFISH member countries.

More information about the webinar is in the attached background note and the agenda.

Participants from Baltic Sea Advisory Council are cordially invited to attend the webinar. I kindly request you therefore to distribute this invitation to your networks.

Attendance at the webinar is free, but participants are expected to register ([www.eurofish.dk/webinar-diversification/](http://www.eurofish.dk/webinar-diversification/)) by 15 May 2021.

To show your support for the event, I earnestly request you to nominate a representative from the Baltic Sea Advisory Council to participate. I am at your disposal for any further information that you may need on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact Ms Aleksandra Petersen ([aleksandra.petersen@eurofish.dk](mailto:aleksandra.petersen@eurofish.dk)) if you have technical questions regarding the webinar.

Kind regards,

Marco Frederiksen

Marco Frederiksen Ph.D.

Acting Director

Eurofish International Organisation

See details of the webinar here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/EUROFISH-webinar>

**HELCOM**

**HELCOM 13th FISH Group met on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

The BSAC Secretariat participated and prepared a report.

HELCOM also made a report.

The BSAC reported to HELCOM and informed that it fully supports cooperative work with HELCOM and BALTFISH. BSAC members can bring experience and expertise to the work. It is important for the BSAC to see the draft recommendation on harbour porpoise as soon as possible to be able to give feedback on mitigation measures. Stickleback is a new issue and the BSAC has produced advice. Salmon is an important issue and the BSAC agreed that a salmon management plan is needed in the Baltic. The BSAC informed of its coming BSAC meetings.

HELCOM will be holding a specific workshop to deal with and assess commercial fish – it should be in August and together with ICES. There has been a project in HELCOM on sturgeon. The aim of the project is to help rehabilitation of sturgeon. Success depends significantly on good cooperation with fishermen and relevant authorities. Poland said a few words and called on members to supply relevant information. A new meeting will be in May. The main conclusion is the need for cooperation with the fisheries sector. The BSAC confirmed that the work of EG STUR would be relevant to present at a coming BSAC Working Group meeting. The BSAC report is here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

### **HELCOM is starting its third assessment of the Baltic: HOLAS III – state of the Baltic**

It's reported on in the FISH 13 report. But here a message from HELCOM on its data call:

With reference to HELCOM HOD 59-2020 decision 6.16, for the preparation of the Third State of the Baltic Sea report (HOLAS III), data collection for the assessment period of 2016-2021 is carried out from 2021 until end of May 2022. HELCOM Third State of the Baltic Sea report (HOLAS III) preparatory phase is ongoing and Data call for assessment has been prepared by HELCOM Secretariat. There is a HELCOM HOLAS III Data call document. The data call is grouped into sections:

1. "Speeded schedule data call" to facilitate early reporting of regularly collected monitoring data for the assessment period 2016-2021 and to contain all required parameters for indicator-based assessments.
2. "Ad hoc data call" to complement regular data collection, for indicators without existing data flows and to feed into spatial and pressure and impact assessment

According to HOLAS III timeline, **the monitoring data for 2021 should be reported by end of May 2022**. Monitoring data for 2016-2020 should be reported using the established data reporting deadlines.

**The requested data specified in "2. Ad hoc data call", should be reported by end of May 2022**. Reporting of already available data, e.g. prior 2021, is encouraged to be reported well in advance of 31 May 2022, preferably already during 2021.

Contracting Parties of HELCOM are requested to coordinate nationally and organize reporting of requested data as specified in the Data call document, associated annexes and the reporting resources (templates and guidance specified in Annexes).

Data call document here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

### **HELCOM VASAB 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on Maritime Spatial Planning Working Group**

The Group met online on 20-21 April 2021, the report is now available on the [HELCOM-VASAB MSP WG 22-2021 Meeting Site](#).

### **HELCOM is having its 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Group on Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach (GEAR 24-2021), 18-20 May 2021**

Agenda broad, lots of documents, dealing with i.a. HOLAS III, listing coastal and commercial species, bycatch in commercial fisheries. <https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/GEAR%2024-2021-876/default.aspx>

### **Other information/reading**

#### **EUROFISH Magazine April edition 2021**

It has two articles from DENMARK:

1. Electronic monitoring could be a tool: convincing fishers to have cameras onboard is an uphill battle
2. Creating an opportunity from crisis: how COVID has led to an entrepreneur promoting products on social media and selling them from his webshop

And a bonus article – guest pages with Kenn Skau Fischer Managing Director of the DFPO and “A voice for Denmark’s fishermen” - he talks about Brexit, electronic monitoring, the impact of COVID, the cod stocks in the Baltic, landing obligation, MSC, attracting young fishers to the profession, and his vision for the future.

<http://eurofishmagazine.com/magazine-issues/item/806-eurofish-magazine-issue-2-2021-march-april>

### **LIFE – from the North Sea and a finger on the pulse**

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

**The European Court of Justice dismissed the latest Dutch attempt to halt the ban on pulse trawling.**

Electric Pulse fishing substantially increased the fishing capacity of the Dutch beam trawl fleet by an unmeasured amount, enabling it to fish in fragile, relatively shallow coastal and estuarine areas which are the breeding and nursery grounds for many species.

The use of such a technology by a privileged few Dutch vessels gave them a huge advantage over the majority of other fishing activities, distorting competition in their favour.

More: <https://www.linkedin.com/.../finger-pulse-european-court.../>

### **FitHydro – exploring more fish-friendly hydropower**

31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021

An international conference on fish-friendly hydropower was held in mid-March to mark the end of the EU-funded research project FIThydro that began in 2016. The project set out to explore potential strategies and measures that could reduce the negative effects of hydropower installations in fish using existing and innovative technologies.

[FitHydro – exploring more fish-friendly hydropower – The Fisheries Secretariat \(fishsec.org\)](#)

### **Stockholm University and Baltic Eye on industrial trawling**

19<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Its heading is: Industrial trawlers are allowed to fish for herring within the Swedish trawling limit

The trawling limit was created to prevent an intensive coastal fishery. The report says that on long stretches of the coast of Sweden it's still allowed to trawl within the limit. According to the authorities there is no scientific basis for denying the access. This is an article with a map and links to other articles. In Swedish:

<https://balticeye.org/sv/hallbart-fiske/tralgransen/>

Baltic Eye had another article on Baltic herring in March 2021

### **More of the Swedish trawling for herring has moved closer to the coast – in English**

9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

<https://balticeye.org/en/policy-briefs/reduce-coastal-trawling-to-protect-the-baltic-herring/>

### **How healthy is the Baltic? – the Coastal Union Germany EUCC-D reports**

31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Just after we sent out the March newsletter, this news came in. From EUCC-D Küsten Newsletter 2/2021. In German, informing on news from the sea and coast, developments in Germany and a look to Europe. One item is just how healthy is the Baltic? Scientists have been taking measurements and they've developed a Baltic Health Index BHI. The Baltic gets a total of 76 out of 100 possible health points. The worst problems are: water pollution, surplus of algae and plant materials and the sea's ability to store carbon. In terms of marine health, the Baltic would get a school report of “satisfactory.” In brief the news is here:

<https://www.eucc-d.de/meldung-detail/items/wie-gesund-ist-die-ostsee.html>

The scientific article in German is here:

<https://www.allianz-meeresforschung.de/news/wie-gesund-ist-die-ostsee/>

And look who's behind it:

Prof. Dr. Christian Möllmann  
Universität Hamburg  
Fachbereich Biologie / Marine Ökosystemdynamik  
Tel.: [+49 40 42838-6621](tel:+4940428386621)  
E-Mail: [christian.moellmann\(at\)uni-hamburg.de](mailto:christian.moellmann@uni-hamburg.de)

EUCC – who are they, what do they report, here:

<https://www.eucc-d.de/startseite.html>

### **Europêche: fishers call for priority access to the COVID-19 vaccine**

21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

Develop a specific vaccine protocol for fishers, they say, since they're at the cornerstone of seafood supply and food security in Europe

<https://europeche.chil.me/post/fishers-call-for-priority-access-to-the-covid-19-vaccine-347879>

### **Sustainable Fisheries and Seaspiracy**

#### **The science of sustainable seafood, explained – focus on: The science of Seaspiracy**

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021

This is about *Seaspiracy*, the Netflix Original film and addresses the misinformation presented in the film. It starts with "Misinformation" and is followed by "Truth":

<https://sustainablefisheries-uw.org/science-of-seaspiracy/>

### **A report from scientific institute DTU Aqua shows that nutrients and phosphorous are the biggest threats to the marine environment.**

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency has funded a project "*Effects on the quality elements defined by the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) of other pressure factors than excess nutrient load and climate change*" with the aim to identify a number of environmental pressure factors other than excess nutrient loading and climate change that potentially can affect the quality elements of the WFD. The project has resulted in 8 independent reports that are summarized in this study. Author Professor Jens Kjerulf Petersen

It's dated January 2021, but Danish Fishing News reported on it on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

<https://fiskeritidende.dk/nyheder/fiskeri/2021/april/kvaelstof-og-fosfor-er-den-stoerste-trussel-mod-havmiljoet/>

DTU Aqua:

<https://orbit.dtu.dk/en/publications/andre-presfaktorer-end-n%C3%A6ringsstoffer-og-klimaforandringer-sammen>

### **DTU Aqua and BARREEF – coastal protection and increasing biodiversity**

21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

This project aims at finding out how measures put in place to protect the coastline from storm damage and erosion can also help to protect and increase biodiversity. It's innovative and never been tried before in Denmark on this scale. About 4,000 cubic metres of stone will create reefs which can protect the shore and create habitats for marine life. The article is in Danish, plus a map and diagram:

[https://www.aqua.dtu.dk/nyheder/2021/04/4000-kubikmeter-granitsten-skal-beskytte-dyr-og-kyster?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=mail&utm\\_campaign=](https://www.aqua.dtu.dk/nyheder/2021/04/4000-kubikmeter-granitsten-skal-beskytte-dyr-og-kyster?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=mail&utm_campaign=)

### **DTU Aqua Last, but not least: a dream come true: a new research vessel for Denmark**

19<sup>th</sup> April 2021

A donation of 50 million DKK from the AP Møller Fund will go towards funding the construction of a new research vessel. The present one Dana IV is 40 years old and due for retirement.



Here's the news, in Danish

<https://www.aqua.dtu.dk/nyheder/Nyhed?id={B1A757DE-A403-46BF-97F8-55A18ABC819A}>