

BSAC Executive Committee
30th January 2018
Danish Agriculture and Food Council
Axelborg, Axeltorv 3, 1609 Copenhagen V
Report

1. Welcome by the BSAC chair

Reine Johansson, the BSAC Chair welcomed all the participants to Copenhagen. He welcomed the MEP Mike Hookem and his assistant, James Pawlowski and the invited guest speaker Christian Bisgaard.

a) Apologies and adoption of the agenda

The Secretary of the BSAC informed that there was a quorum at the meeting (of the participants, 20 ExCom members were present). The participants list includes the apologies received (and is on the BSAC website).¹

The agenda was adopted without changes. Under AOB was noted information on the ICES meeting WKIDEBCA on the eastern cod assessment, a request from Krzysztof Stanuch to amend the Delegated Regulation 2018/47 authorising the use of alternative T90 trawls and the Commission consultation on future funding for the fisheries and maritime sectors after 2020.

b) Adoption of the minutes from the last ExCom meeting (7th November 2017)

There were no comments to the minutes.

c) Two ExCom members to check the minutes

Irek Wójcik (Association of Fishermen's of Sea- PO) and Conrad Stralka (Baltic Sea 2020) agreed to check the minutes.

Lindsay Keenan, the Fisheries Secretariat asked for the names of speakers to be recorded in the minutes of the meetings to make them more accurate.

A fisheries representative noted that the BSAC had agreed in the past to have summary reports of meetings, without mentioning names of participants, unless the specific context requires it. Another fisheries representative said that the BSAC should be focusing on substance and not formalities.

A representative of OIG stated that names should only be recorded with regard to decisions taken at meetings.

¹ [http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-\(2\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-(2))

The ExCom took note of the proposal to record names of speakers in the context of decisions taken at meetings or particular statements made in the conclusions.

On behalf of the Danish BALTFISH Presidency Sonja Feldthaus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the meeting that the BALTFISH Technical Group is meeting today to further discuss the draft Salmon Multiannual Plan and hopefully to prepare a draft, which can be presented to ICES for evaluation.

The BSAC Chair stated that salmon is the item which has been dealt with longest by the BSAC and he asked whether the BSAC will be heard. The BSAC is ready to get involved in further consultations of the draft plan.

Sonja Feldthaus replied that she will relay that message to BALTFISH.

2. From the Secretariat and ExCom Chair

a) Update on expenditure 2017-2018

The Secretary of the BSAC handed out to ExCom members a spreadsheet showing the expenditure up to 31th December 2017. She underlined that allocations in all categories have been spent responsibly. Referring to the Item B meetings, she informed that this has not been fully utilised and there is still money to hold additional meetings until the end of the financial year. It can be assumed that not all budgetary allocations will be fully utilised this year. She also explained that the unspent funds will be returned to the European Commission. However, according to the Commission rules, the unspent part of the funds corresponding to the member contributions can be kept by the Advisory Councils. She promised to check the sum to be recovered from the BSAC by the Commission from last year (2016-2017) and provide this information to the minutes.²

She also informed the ExCom that according to standard EU budget rules, the BSAC will be subject to an external audit in February.

She asked ExCom members to endorse a prolongation of the contract of the BSAC Chair by 2 weeks, from 15 March until the end of March, so as to conform with the start and end dates of the BSAC programming year.

The ExCom unanimously agreed to prolong the contract of the BSAC Chair.

The ExCom took note of the expenditure incurred in the year 2017-2018 until 31st December 2017.

² The Commission will recover €10.765,09 from the BSAC from last year (2016-2017).

b) Draft estimated expenditure and work programme for 2018-2019

The BSAC Secretary noted that the draft estimated budget and work programme for 2018-2019 were submitted to the ExCom today for approval. The aim was to send the application to the Commission by mid-February 2018. She referred to a short explanatory note (Annex 1a) to the draft estimated budget. The planning was based on the expenditures incurred during last year, and followed the budgetary lines and template provided by the Commission. The draft expenditure follows pretty much the planned expenditure for the current year 2017-2018. She explained that the budget was based on the resources of full funding. She thanked members for their timely payment and thanked the Member States for their contributions and commitments. The 10% contribution of own resources has been secured in order for the EU contribution to be paid.

The major change, as raised by the ExCom at its meeting on 7th November 2017, is the provision of funding for interpretation. The draft estimated budget for 2018 - 2019 allows for some interpreting (including technicians and booths - See Item E). Since no more resources are available beyond what the BSAC normally budgets with, resources have been taken from Item B Participation in meetings, Item C Information and preparation of meetings, Item D Operating costs and Item F removal of the provision for scientific consultants. The estimated interpreting costs were calculated on the basis of the best offer prepared by a known and tested Polish interpreting company. The Secretary informed that the rapporteur/Information assistant has confirmed in writing that she is ready to accept an extension of her contract for the year 2018-2019, according to the terms of her contract with the BSAC.

A fisheries representative underlined that the BSAC budget is well prepared and can be fully endorsed. The budget ensures a maximum flexibility.

The BSAC Chair informed the ExCom of the written comments from the Fisheries Secretariat to the BSAC 2018 budget and workplan draft.

The Fisheries Secretariat representative noted that there is only 1 participant accounted for 15 external meetings. The general protocol for the BSAC must be for 2 members (one fisheries and one OIG) to attend each external meeting. He also referred to the category Meeting expenses: lunch and coffee, where the cost per meeting appears high. He underlined that his comments to the budget result from taking seriously his responsibilities as ExCom member.

The BSAC Secretary explained that the planning in the category External meetings was based on the number of participants during the current year. BSAC members attach importance to participation in external meetings and should the need arise, there is full flexibility under item B to allow for additional meetings.

She suggested adding specific reference to this activity in the Work Programme. She also pointed out that the travel expenses of the BSAC Chair and the Secretary are allocated to another budget category, but still within Item B. Referring to the costs of lunch and coffee, she informed that the BSAC does not pay per diem.

Moreover, the costs depend largely on the meeting location within the Baltic. Commission rules allow a 10% and 20% flexibility between the budget items, if required.

A representative of OIG noted that the budget is well prepared. Savings could be made in the category Interpretation by employing local interpreters (savings on travel costs) and deletion of costs allocated to translation. **Another OIG representative** appreciated the fact that sufficient funds have been allocated to interpretation. In his view, this will improve the work of the BSAC.

The BSAC Secretary asked the ExCom members to send their requests for interpretation one month before a meeting.

The ExCom adopted the draft estimated budget 2018-2019 (Annex 1).

The BSAC Chair referred to the work programme for 2018 – 2019 (Annex 2) and asked for comments.

A representative of the OIG asked why the ecosystem-based management group is named sub-group. Moreover, in his view, the proposed activities under the landing obligation should be dealt with by the Demersal Working Group, and not as a Focus Group.

A fisheries representative underlined that the landing obligation is closely connected to the work on selectivity, to which the BSAC has committed itself.

The Chair of the Demersal Working Group explained that the ecosystem-based management group had been established as a sub-group of the Demersal Working Group, because all aspects it deals with are linked to demersal fishery. In his view, it could also function as a separate working group and co-ordinate its work with the Demersal Working Group.

The ExCom decided that the ecosystem-based management sub-group should be re-named as a working group.

The Chair of the Ecosystem-based Management Working Group underlined that the group should aim at producing advice on a number of issues and propose concrete measures. The scope of its work should be general, in order not to limit the problems the group should deal with. He further proposed to deal with certain urgent issues such as, for example, eel under a focus group.

Several participants referred to the work carried out on seal damages in fishery as well as the management of eel in different fora, such as a special seal working group created by Danish and Swedish fishermen, a FLAG project and the Sargasso Committee. Wording was added to the work programme to refer to predator interactions.

A fisheries representative noted that the management of eel should not only be considered at regional level and could be raised at the next Inter-AC meeting to hear the opinion of other Advisory Councils. The discussion must continue in order to find an appropriate solution. Reference to eel was added to the work programme.

The BSAC Chair underlined the need for a pan-European perspective with regard to the management of eel.

The BSAC Secretary proposed to add reference to the planned external meetings to the work programme 2018-2019. This was done.

A representative of the OIG congratulated the Secretariat for good planning, i.e. by preparing a provisional agenda of the BSAC activities in 2018-2019.

The ExCom adopted the work programme for 2018 – 2019, amended according to the agreed discussions by the ExCom. (Annex 2).

3. Proposal to create a working group to deal with recreational cod fisheries in the western Baltic

The BSAC Chair praised the outcome of the BALTFISH BSAC workshop on recreational fisheries. He underlined the importance of co-operating and working together on this issue. He noted that not all BSAC members support the idea of a working group on recreational fisheries. He referred to the comments to the work plan sent by the Fisheries Secretariat, who do not see the need for such a group in BSAC.

Glenn Douglas, European Anglers Alliance noted that his organisation is not ready to support the establishment of a working group in the BSAC. In his view, the management of recreational fisheries is not part of the CFP, but is under the competence of the Member States. Therefore, the BSAC has no clear mandate to deal with this issue. He also raised the question of the lack of representation of several stakeholders involved in recreational fisheries in the BSAC. In his view, a working group held by BALTFISH, with participants from the BSAC, is the right forum to discuss the management of recreational fisheries.

A fisheries representative noted that further clarification should be sought as to whether from a management point of view anglers are covered by the CFP (i.e. in relation to the landing obligation).

A representative of the OIG referred to HELCOM FISH PRO II, which aims at assessing the impact of recreational fisheries.

The BSAC Chair proposed to write a letter to the BALTFISH Presidency asking whether they plan to engage in the work on the management of recreational fisheries in the future. On receipt of their answer, the BSAC will draw its conclusion. On behalf of the Danish BALTFISH Presidency, **Sonja Feldthaus** took note of the proposal to write a letter to BALTFISH on their engagement in the work on recreational fisheries and promised to address this issue to the next meeting of the BALTFISH High Level Group.

The ExCom decided to ask the Secretariat to send a letter to the BALTFISH Presidency asking whether they plan to engage in the work on the management of recreational fisheries in the future.

4. Presentation on Collection of discard in European fishing ports - challenges and opportunities Christian Bisgaard, Member of the Saria Management Committee

Christian Bisgaard, Member of the Saria Management Committee presented “Collection of discard in European ports”³. He noted that by-catches and discards have serious consequences such as a waste of resources and negative impact on the ecosystem and biodiversity. The discard ban has imposed the obligation to land the entire catch. An important question remains to be answered: what happens with the bycatch? Until now, there has been no systematic solution. SARIA/Bioceval has many years of experience in the logistics and valorisation of fish by-products, as well as by-products from other production. SARIA/Bioceval produces fish oils and fish meal in both high-capacity production lines and small specialty production lines. Bioceval fish meal is popular as a source of protein in the pet food industry, in aquaculture, in poultry and in pig feed. In collaboration with the fish industry, SARIA/Bioceval is able to develop a system for collecting bycatches at European harbours. He mentioned MSC and ASC certification standards as a way of adding value to the products than come out of SARIA/Bioceval production. The essential thing is to develop a good logistical network and to establish where and how to collect the by-products.

Several fisheries representative expressed interest in the by-catch collecting system as a possible way of utilising unwanted catches and welcomed the prospect of further discussion at national level and within the organisations. It was noted that a similar project on by-catch products is conducted in Finland with the EMFF funding. Christian Bisgaard’s participation was well received by the BSAC chair and members continued further discussion with him on that issue during the lunch break.

5. The principle of invitations to the BSAC to take part in projects

A representative of OIG stated that the BSAC is approached by many projects seeking support. In his view, it is not the core business for the BSAC to support or get engaged in any project.

A fisheries representative noted that often, scientists seek to co-operate with the stakeholders in the framework of projects. In his view, the BSAC could support some scientific projects, following approval of the ExCom.

The BSAC Chair proposed to decide on any engagement in projects after a two-week hearing and subject to consensus decision by the ExCom.

³ [http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-\(2\)/Presentation_CB_Bioceval_copenhagen2018.pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB](http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-(2)/Presentation_CB_Bioceval_copenhagen2018.pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB)

The ExCom took note that although the BSAC can generally support projects, it should be up to individual members to take part independent of the BSAC. However, if there was a serious project in which the BSAC really should get involved in, it would require a decision by the ExCom. The ExCom decided that the BSAC Secretariat will inform its members on any projects, in which they could become engaged as individual organisations. Any active involvement of the BSAC in a project would require discussion, a two-week hearing and the approval of the ExCom by consensus.

6. AOB

- **Delegated Regulation 2018/47 authorising the use of alternative T90 trawls: amendment proposed by K. Stanuch⁴**

Speaking on behalf of Krzysztof Stanuch, **Irek Wojcik** (Association of Fishermen's of Sea-PO) drew attention to the alternative specifications for the T90 trawl codend as laid down in the Delegated Regulation 2018/47. He underlined that the BSAC had not been consulted on the specifications of the proposed gear. Moreover, the alternative model is not applicable in practice. The mesh size (115 mm), and the number of meshes in the circumference (80 meshes around) as well as the length of the codend (9 metres) will force fishermen to invest in a new trawl. He proposed to add an amendment the text of the specification so as to provide a workable solution. Irek Wojcik reminded the ExCom that the BSAC recommendation on technical measures sent to the Commission in 2015⁵ strongly called for a deletion of detailed rules for gear specifications to provide more flexibility to the fishermen.

The ExCom unanimously agreed to ask Krzysztof Stanuch to prepare a written text of the proposed amendment and to ask the Secretariat to send it to the ExCom for approval. When approved, the proposed amendment will be sent to the Commission.

- **Information on the ICES meeting on eastern cod assessment 23rd- 25th January 2018 (Michael Andersen)**

Michael Andersen, the Chair of the Demersal Working Group referred to a workshop on Evaluation of Input data to the Eastern Baltic Cod Assessment, attended by him and Lindsay Keenan (Fisheries Secretariat). He noted that according to ICES, problems in determining the age of the eastern cod persist. However, an analytical assessment will most probably be ready in early 2019. Therefore, the advice from ICES for 2019 will be based on the precautionary approach, which implies that ICES cannot estimate the actual size of the stock. **Lindsay Keenan** added that the return of tags in the framework of the tagging programme is low.

⁴ Presentation – awaiting Krzysztof Stanuch

⁵ <http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/2015-01-01-BSAC-recommendations-on-technical-measures>

A fisheries representative stated that a low return of tags does not result from the lack of interest of fishermen, but rather from the small size of tags, which make it difficult for the fishermen to spot them on board among number of fish caught.

- **Consultation on future funding for the fisheries and maritime sectors after 2020**

The BSAC Secretary informed the meeting that on 10th January 2018 the BSAC Secretariat received a letter from the European Commission, seeking input on future funding for the fisheries and maritime sectors after 2020. Questions were sent to the BSAC Executive Committee members.

Responses were received from the Association of Fisheries Protection and from the Fisheries Secretariat (answers fully supported by Coalition Clean Baltic and the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation).

The ExCom agreed by consensus that the Secretariat would send them to the Commission as separate responses by these Executive Committee member organisations.

7. Confirmation of the date and venue of the next ExCom

The ExCom decided to hold the next ExCom and General Assembly meetings on 8th (ExCom) and 9th (General Assembly) May 2017 in Copenhagen at the Danish Agriculture and Food Council.

The BSAC chair closed the meeting and expressed his thanks for the two constructive days.