

BSAC Executive Committee

26th October 2023

National Marine Fisheries Research Institute,

Kołłątaja 1, 81-332 Gdynia, Poland: in person and online via Zoom

Report

1. Welcome by the BSAC ExCom Chair Jarek Zielinski

a. Apologies, quorum, AOB, and adoption of the agenda

The ExCom Chair welcomed all in-person and online participants. He thanked Piotr Margoński, Director of the National Marine Research Fisheries Institute for providing the meeting room.

There was a quorum for the meeting. The participants list is on the website¹

Under AOB was noted a point by the ExCom Chair: proposal to hold a Focus Group on the Technical Measure Regulation on 13th November 2023, online, to deal with the Commission's questionnaire² on the implementation of Technical Measures Regulation, an information on an Energy Transition Partnership Finance workshop, and another point by the Executive Secretary to remind members that there is an ongoing consultation from BALTFISH on 5 MPA areas.

The agenda was adopted.

There was a tour-de-table.

b. Adoption of the [report from the last ExCom meeting](#) (29th June 2023) and review of the action items

The Executive Secretary informed that no comments had been provided to the report.

The ExCom adopted the minutes of the ExCom from 29th June 2023. The report was uploaded to the BSAC website.

The Executive Secretary presented the progress report on the action points from the last ExCom. He focused on the pending questions from BSAC to DG MARE from the June ExCom and the answers received from DG Mare.

With reference to the links between the Communication and the Farm2Fork strategy, DG Mare answered that both documents are interlinked, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the CFP Communication call on the sector to become more resilient and sustainable. The Farm to Fork Strategy requests the Commission to step up efforts to bring fish stocks to sustainable levels via CFP and where implementation gaps remain, among others, the Commission is asked to re-assess how the CFP addresses the risks triggered by climate change. In this very same strand and following the mandate of the F2F, the CFP Communication reports on the functioning of the CFP. It gives an overview of efforts that are needed from the EU institutions, Member States and stakeholders in order to reap the

¹ [Past Meetings - Baltic Sea Advisory Council \(bsac.dk\)](#)

² Questionnaire on the second report of implementation of EU Regulation 2019/1241.

full potential of the CFP in terms of sustainability of fish stocks as well as resilience of the sector and coastal communities dependent on those stocks. It recognises the impact of climate as one of the major challenges that fisheries is facing today. One of the principles and objectives of the Fisheries and Oceans Pact³ set by the Communication is to continue research and innovation, aimed in particular at ensuring that the sector contributes to climate neutrality.

The Commission informed that the question on the need for clarification on size or species selectivity and the kind of improvement needed according to the Communication will be answered at a later stage and proposed a specific presentation to BSAC on the topic. **The Executive Secretary** proposed to put a point related to selectivity on the agenda of one of the upcoming BSAC meetings.

With reference to the question on why are subsidies from EMFAF on engine replacement reserved to <24m vessels, DG Mare responded that this condition is the choice of co-legislators and pointed to the public communication⁴ adopted by the Commission to comment the agreement between co-legislators.

The Executive Secretary informed that the answers received from DG Mare will be send to the ExCom members by mail.

c. Two ExCom members to check the minutes

Peter Breckling (Union of German Cutter Fishery) and Glenn Douglas (European Anglers Alliance) agreed to check the minutes.

2. From the Secretariat

a. Brief status on expenditure and admin. for 2023-2024

The Executive Secretary presented a brief status of expenditures. The BSAC had run out of cash at the end of July because of the delay in the payment of the grant by the Commission and some reimbursements along with salaries had to be delayed to early August as the first payment of the grant was received on the last day of July. He informed that spendings are on track with 41% spent on 30th September. The accounting has been switch to fully digital in line with the incoming new requirements of the Danish law.

The ExCom took note.

b. Update on the closing of year 2022-2023

The Executive Secretary informed that after receiving the outstanding payment from the Commission for the year 2022-23, the accounts for the previous financial year had been closed.

The ExCom took note.

³ A 'FISHERIES AND OCEANS PACT' TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE, CFP Communication, pp.20--21

⁴ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT pursuant to Article 294(6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union concerning the position of the Council on the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund

c. Update on the new website

The Executive Secretary informed that the new website has been operational since the summer. He referred to the fact that the transition to the new website had not been easy and asked the members to inform the Secretariat on any issue encountered when visiting the website. He also pointed to some innovations, such as the possibility to search for recommendations with keywords, as well as the possibility to register to meetings.

The ExCom Chair thanked the Secretary for the efforts undertaken with regard to the accounting and the new website.

The ExCom took note.

3. Reports from meetings and future meetings

• FG Energy transition

Peter Breckling, the Chair of the Focus Group on energy transition informed that the FG met three times in April, June and September to produce a comprehensive draft recommendation. The recommendation was sent to members and validated by the ExCom at the end of September. The recommendation was presented to the Commission and Member States during the Our Baltic Conference in Palanga on 29th September. He underlined that the energy transition is high on the EU political agenda.

In its recommendation the BSAC recognises the need to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and move to renewable and low-carbon energy sources as quickly as possible, however, it is fundamental to take into account the specific situation of the Baltic fisheries, resulting from very limited fishing opportunities. The problem of capacity ceilings needs to be addressed, as well as access to funding for the transition.

The ExCom Chair appreciated the outcome of Focus Group and thanked the FG Chair for his work.

The ExCom took note.

• Focus Group on the Rules of Procedure

The Executive Secretary informed that following the conclusions at the General Assembly, the Focus Group met on the 28th August 2023 to discuss and make progress on some points of the new Rules of Procedure. In parallel, the ExCom asked the Commission to provide guidance on how to apply Article 4(7), second phrase, of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242⁵. A reply from the Commission is awaited.

The ExCom Chair thanked the BSAC Honorary Chair and the Volunteer working at the BSAC Secretariat for their efforts in revising the Rules of Procedure.

The ExCom took note.

⁵ Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242⁵, as amended by Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/204. The requested guidance concerned the application of the following rule: “*The number of representatives of small-scale fleets should reflect the share of small-scale fleets within the fishing sector of the Member States concerned.*”

- **Reports from Working Groups**

The Executive Secretary informed that the BSAC Working Groups had met online at the end of September. The discussions focused on the BSAC recommendations on the Action Plan and the CFP Communication. Extended time was spent on the actions identified as a priority. He pointed out that the CFP Communication had not been discussed in detail due to time constraints in all 3 WGs. The draft recommendation on the Action Plan was discussed in all 3 WG and these recommendations could be sent to the members for additional, limited comments and clarifications.

Demersal Working Group

The Executive Secretary informed that following the outcome of the WG, the Secretariat had prepared a letter on cod closure asking for scientific data through test fishing. The letter was validated by the ExCom on 26th October.

EBM Working Group

The EBM WG Chair informed that the discussions in the WG had focused around the Action Plan. Following a discussion of the action referring to the eel, the WG decided to send a letter to the Commission requesting to include eel on the agenda of the Joint Special Group, as an important topic to be discussed by both fisheries and environmental ministries and stakeholders, and asking to publicly share the draft update of the Eel Management Plan guidance document. The Member States were also addressed to put stronger focus and a faster pace in implementing national eel management plans, in particular concerning the upstream measures, to improve the habitats and ensure river connectivity. The WG also decided to prepare another letter to the Commission as a follow-up on BSAC recommendations concerning the development of offshore windfarms, welcoming the non-recurrent request from the Commission to ICES on OWF and putting emphasis on the need to further investigate the cumulated effects of offshore wind farms. Some input to the letter had been received from members and the letter will go through another validation round in the ExCom and after adoption, it will be sent to the Commission.

Pelagic Working Group

The Pelagic WG Chair informed that the WG had decided to draft a letter as a follow up to the Commission's presentation of the fishing opportunities for 2024 at the BALTFISH Forum in the beginning of September. The letter asked to include socio-economic considerations in the proposals concerning the fishing opportunities, decisions on TACs, asked the Commission for more transparency in requesting scientific advice and recommended to the Commission to ask ICES to evaluate the new method behind setting reference points for central herring. The WG decided to draft another letter to the STECF Secretariat and BALTFISH, asking the STECF to make use of the provisions of the Commission's Decision on setting up STECF ^{6,7} allowing to invite experts with specific competences to take part in the work of the STECF.

⁶ Article 6 point 3 of Commission Decision (2016/C 74/05):. [Commission Decision of 25 February 2016 setting up a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries \(europa.eu\)](#)

The ExCom took note.

The ExCom decided to ask the Secretariat to send the validated letters prepared by the WGs to the Commission.

The ExCom decided to ask the Secretariat to circulate the draft BSAC recommendations on the Action Plan to the ExCom and decided that the actions from the CFP Communication will be discussed by the BSAC at a later stage.

- **Our Baltic Conference, 29th September 2023**

The ExCom Chair informed following BSAC's request to the Commission, the ExCom Chair was invited to the Our Baltic Ministerial Conference, held on 29th September in Palanga. The BSAC was specifically invited to discuss the energy transition and present its advice on the topic. The full speech of the Chair is available on the BSAC website⁸ in the News section.

The ExCom took note.

- **Joint Special Group, 6th October 2023**

The ExCom Chair referred to the first meeting of the Joint Special Group (JSG) on the EU Action Plan on 6th October 2023. The BSAC was represented by the ExCom Chair and the EBM WG Chair. The representatives of all the ACs and other stakeholders took part in the meeting online as only Member States representatives were invited in person. The JSG is to be a platform for environment and fisheries ministries in the Member States to work together across the Ministries portfolios. The Joint Special Group will play an important role in implementing the Action Plan. It gathers the European Commission, Member States and stakeholders. The first meeting of JSP was chaired by DG Environment. The Member States presented how they already collaborate and highlighted the good collaboration with Advisory Councils. The stakeholders were given limited time to address the meeting at the end of the meeting. The BSAC ExCom had validated a letter that welcomed the Joint Special Group and recommended to include eel on the agenda.

The ExCom Chair underlined that in view of their advisory role, the ACs should be given adequate time slots for interventions during the meetings with the Commission.

The EBM WG Chair underlined that the JSG meeting was intended primarily as a meeting between the Commission services and the national administrations of the Member States. He pointed out that the ACs do not have a special place in that setting and are invited to participate as observers. In his view, the BSAC should follow closely the development of the JSG and propose topics for discussion, involving offshore windfarms operators, shipping, tourism etc. such as for example offshore wind farms. He strongly advised that a joint AC letter should focus on InterAC meetings. The setting of InterAC meetings should allow to have a comprehensive exchange between the Commission services and the ACs.

⁷ External experts possessing particular and relevant scientific knowledge may be invited to contribute to the work of the STECF or EWGs with the approval of the Commission. External experts invited to participate in STECF Plenary sessions will not be considered as members of the STECF and will have no right to vote.

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/51238/2022.08.07+-+STECF+Rules+of+procedure.pdf/f018e298-28f3-4259-9f92-9a5b0f438101>

⁸ News section, [BSAC invited to Our Baltic 2.0 Conference - Baltic Sea Advisory Council](#)

He proposed to ask the Commission to avoid pushing more and more topics to the InterAC meetings as this partly negates the more regional or specialised focus that the ACs were created for.

The ExCom took note that following the JSG and InterAC meetings, the BSAC proposed to draft a joint AC letter referring to stakeholder input and highlighting the need to give adequate time slots for interventions of individual AC representatives during the ACs meetings with the Commission. Once all the Advisory Councils have approved the letter, it will be sent to the Commission.

- **Inter-AC meeting, 10th October 2023 (online)**

The ExCom Chair informed that on 10th October 2023 the Commission organised a meeting of the Advisory Councils. Following a general presentation of the current work of DG MARE, the InterAC meeting allowed for discussion on the functioning of the Advisory Councils. There was also a specific agenda item on the new Control Regulation.

The ExCom Chair referred to the fact that during the meeting, the BSAC Executive Secretary had highlighted that the BSAC would have welcomed a specific presentation of the new Control Regulation to the BSAC ExCom, allowing the BSAC members to ask questions to the Commission on the new regulation. The Commission explained that it was not able to give such presentation to all Advisory Councils due to limited resources.

The EBM WG Chair expressed the opinion that InterAC meetings should give more time for proper interventions of all ACs on topics of direct relevance. He strongly underlined that the BSAC members should be given the possibility to have a comprehensive exchange with the Commission services on such important legislative files as the new Control Regulation, as it had been the case in the past, during the implementation of the current regulation.

A representative of DG Mare took note of the BSAC request for proper exchange with the Commission on important files such as the Control Regulation and promised to pass the message to his colleagues.

A fisheries representative from Poland expressed the opinion that InterAC meetings should allow for a discussion on how the ACs assess the performance of the CFP and the advice provided by ICES. It would also be relevant to hear the opinion of other ACs on whether their recommendations are taken into account by decision makers.

The EBM WG Chair underlined that BSAC representatives at InterAC meetings should have a mandate to speak on behalf of BSAC members.

The ExCom Chair proposed to raise the question of the need to assess the performance of the CFP to other ACs during a meeting of ACs Chairs and secretariats that was scheduled before the MIAC meeting in January.

He also stated that the annual meetings of the ACs with ICES (MIAC and MIACO) give an opportunity to discuss the matters related to scientific advice. He encouraged the BSAC members to provide written input to these meetings in due time, to the BSAC Secretariat.

The ExCom took note.

- **BALTFISH Forum meeting, 5th September 2023 (hybrid)**

The Executive Secretary referred to the first BALTFISH Forum meeting held under the Polish Presidency on 5th September 2023. Representing the BSAC were the ExCom Chair (in person), the Vice Chair (in person), the EBM Working Group Chair (remote) and the BSAC Secretariat (in person). The meeting gave an opportunity for the ExCom Chair to present the BSAC recommendation on the fishing opportunities for 2024. It was also the occasion to listen to the positions of the Member States and interventions by scientists who participated in the ICES benchmark process for pelagic species. He informed that the BSAC Management Team met with the BALTFISH Presidency in two virtual coffee meetings to get more information on the AGRIFISH Council decisions on TACs and quota for 2024 negotiations in view of the Council.

The ExCom Chair expressed gratitude to the Polish Presidency for good communication through virtual coffee meetings.

The ExCom took note.

- **Meeting with the Commissioner before October Council**

The ExCom Chair informed that the BSAC Chairs met the Commissioner on 18th October 2023 to present the BSAC recommendations on fishing opportunities for 2024. The meeting was held online due to a security alert following a terrorist attack in Brussels. The meeting allowed for an honest discussion with the Commissioner. The BSAC representatives presented the agreed BSAC recommendation on the fishing opportunities in 2024 as well as the latest letters from the Working Groups⁹. He thanked DG Mare for assisting the BSAC in organising the meeting.

The ExCom took note.

- **EFCA Advisory Board meeting, 19th October 2023, online**

The BSAC Vice-Chair informed on the meeting of EFCA Advisory Board held on 19th October, online. The meeting was attended by EFCA Executive Director, EFCA Heads of Unit, EFCA Advisory Board and representatives from each Advisory Council including the BSAC Vice Chair. The goal of the meeting was to discuss issues affecting the ACs, primarily concerning EFCA's work during the current and coming period, autumn 2023 - spring 2024¹⁰. **The BSAC representative commented on previous BSAC work on issues directly of interest for EFCA including several BSAC recommendations.** EFCA Executive Director informed that the EFCA compliance evaluation report on the Baltic Sea 2019 - 21 will be published in spring 2024. A new patrol vessel from EFCA will be in Gdynia and open for member visits on the 29th of November.

The ExCom Chair recalled that the BSAC held an ExCom meeting in June 2023, in Vigo, in the premises of EFCA, to further enhance cooperation between BSAC and EFCA. He referred to the fact that a visit to the patrol vessel on 29th November in Gdynia could be an

⁹ [LINK](#) to the report from this meeting

¹⁰ [BSAC report on EFCA Advisory board meeting, October 2023 - Baltic Sea Advisory Council](#)

occasion to show the BSAC members how EFCA operates and exchange views of topics of interest. He asked the BSAC members to provide input to this meeting.

A fisheries representative from Poland asked whether there EFCA had any input to the Implementing Act to the Technical Measures Regulation¹¹, in order to avoid practical problems in implementing the technical measures.

A representative of DG Mare replied that he will pass this question to his colleagues in the control unit.

The Vice Chair underlined that the new Control Regulation will allocate more tasks to EFCA in terms of inspections.

The ExCom Chair proposed to ask specific questions related to the work of EFCA during the meeting on 29th November in Gdynia. He asked the members to send the questions in advance of the meeting to the BSAC Secretariat. He proposed to reiterate the request to the BALTFISH Presidency to set up a working/focus group between BALTFISH and BSAC to discuss the draft Implementing Act to Regulation 2019/1241.

The ExCom took note.

4. Outcome of the Climate Change webinar

See the [report of the webinar](#)

The ExCom Chair referred to the webinar on climate change, organised by the BSAC in May 2023. The webinar was chaired by the Pelagic and EBM WG Chairs. It featured many scientific interesting presentations. He asked the ExCom to decide whether there is a need for a BSAC draft recommendation stemming from this webinar and for another webinar on climate change.

The EBM WG Chair referred to the recording and report of the webinar available at the BSAC website¹². The scientists sent an alarming message that climate change has a substantial impact on the Baltic ecosystem, as well as fisheries management. He stated that another dedicated meeting on this topic would permit to look further into the areas relevant to the BSAC and asked the ExCom for guidance.

The Pelagic WG Chair agreed that the BSAC should continue to look at new research on climate change, also in the context of Baltic MAP.

A fisheries representative from Poland referred to the statement made by a German scientist: “the Baltic Sea goes its own way whether there is fisheries or not”. In his view, not all fisheries management decisions can be explained by climate change. Focus should be put on the effects of climate change that can be mitigated.

The representatives of recreational anglers underlined that climate change also affects anglers as well as management of recreational fishing. However, climate change cannot be blamed for all the on-going changes in the sea and in rivers. He referred to the fact that salmon is also affected by rising water temperature. If this trend continue, invasive species will replace cod and salmon.

¹¹ draft Implementing Act to Regulation 2019/1241

¹² [Past Meetings - Baltic Sea Advisory Council \(bsac.dk\)](#)

A representative of the OIG underlined that the BSAC should continue to gather intelligence on significant impacts of climate change on fish populations in terms of shifts, especially in spatial distribution, in order to propose solutions to better adapt the fisheries management.

The EBM WG Chair agreed that discussion on the impact of climate change should be continued by the BSAC whenever relevant, with experts. One of the issues that should be brought forward is the fact that due to the effects of climate change, fisheries management units no longer match assessment units.

The Pelagic WG Chair proposed to have another webinar on climate change next year.

The ExCom decided that the discussions on the impact of climate change on Baltic fisheries and ecosystem should be pursued with adequate effort in the framework of WGs.

5. Preparation of the meeting between ICES and Advisory Councils (MIAC – MIACO) [I/D/A]

See [the first set of questions proposed](#)

The Executive Secretary informed that the BSAC is coordinating the preparatory work for the MIAC meeting on 18th January 2024 between all ACs. The ACs had been asked to submit specific issues they would like to discuss with ICES by the beginning of November, including small explanatory paragraphs. He also informed that the BSAC Secretariat had prepared draft questions that the ExCom might want to raise to ICES, based on the discussions of last year and on proposals from the BSAC Chairs. He asked the BSAC members to provide further input to the MIAC/MIACO meetings.

A small scale fisheries representative proposed to include a question on reference points, referring to when and how will ICES provide the B_{MSY} reference point? He underlined that providing B_{MSY} is needed for the managers to ensure that harvested stocks are above MSY levels (in line with the CFP) and for the majority of fishers to have sufficient catch availability. He also proposed to ask ICES what efforts are made to better estimate the natural mortality levels due to impact of predators such as seals and cormorants (on the cod stocks) or prey availability. He also proposed to ask ICES to better explain the F_{Eco} concept and exemplify how it could be used in the Baltic.

The ExCom Chair proposed to ask ICES to clarify the interpretation of Article 4.6¹³ of the Baltic MAP, referring to setting the fishing opportunities.

A representative of DG Mare recalled that at the Council meeting, Member States had decided to ask the Commission to clarify the interpretation of certain Articles in the Baltic MAP. He stated that the Commission will reply to this request in the near future.

The Executive Secretary asked the BSAC members whether ICES should be asked again to advise on the effects of the possible extension of the exemptions of cod closures for gillnets fishing flatfish from 20 to 30m depth should be raised again in MIAC meeting. He

¹³ Article 4.6 Fishing opportunities shall in any event be fixed in such a way as to ensure that there is less than a 5 % probability of the spawning stock biomass falling below the limit spawning stock biomass reference point (Blim) set out in particular in Annex II, column B

recalled that at the last MIAC meeting in January 2023, ICES referred to the lack of specific data on bycatch of cod at 20 m and 30 m depths for active and passive gears.

The EBM WG Chair stated that in the light of the lack of specific data, the BSAC should urge the Member States to allow scientific test fishing to be carried out to find evidence that there is no cod bycatch between 20 and 30 m depth.

A small scale fisheries representative from Poland underlined that the proposed amendment to the derogation on closures to protect cod spawning, changing the depth at which vessels fishing with gillnets can fish from 20 metres to 30 metres, adapts the derogation to the present conditions in the Baltic Sea and is of utmost importance for small scale vessels. Due to the increase in water temperature in the Baltic flatfish targeted by small scale fishers can only be found in deeper waters, below 30 metres. Therefore, the proposed amendment to the derogation will allow the fishers to make full use of the existing abundant resources of flatfish. He strongly urged all fisheries managers and decision makers to consider the extension of the derogation for gillnetters from 20 to 30m without any further delay.

A fisheries representative from Poland supported the above statement and pointed out that closures should be restricted to spawning areas and time when spawning takes place. He looked forward to ICES replies to all the questions asked by the BSAC, also those asked in the past, remaining without any answer.

Another fisheries representative from Poland called for test fishing to be carried out at depths up to 50 m, to find evidence that there is no cod bycatch at these depths.

A fisheries representative from Denmark supported the position expressed by Polish fishers. He stated that the problem of seal predation needs to be tackled in order to preserve coastal fishery.

The Executive Secretary stated that depending on the number of questions to ICES received from other ACs, the BSAC might have to prioritise the questions received from members.

A small scale fisheries representative from Germany underlined that that since passive gears have no negative effect on spawning, the depth at which they could fish could be extended to 30 m.

The ExCom decided that the final list of questions addressed to ICES, submitted by BSAC members will be adopted by written procedure by 7th November 2023. The BSAC Secretariat will compile all agenda points and explanatory paragraphs received from other ACs and include them in the agenda of the MIAC meeting.

6. ExCom decision on future eel recommendations (ICES advice out on 1st November)

The EBM WG Chair referred to the fact that, at its last meeting, the EBM WG had agreed to send a letter to the Commission, advising the Joint Special Group to put the European eel on its agenda. In the letter, the BSAC also asks the Commission to publicly share the draft update of the Eel Management Plan guidance document. The BSAC recommends that the Commission also enquires on how the agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction or “High Seas Treaty”, recently signed by the EU, could help protecting eels throughout their life cycle. He also stated that since BALTFISH and HELCOM have eel on

their agendas, the BSAC could ask them to coordinate the efforts and organise a joint meeting to move eel protection forward.

With reference to future discussions on eel, he pointed out that the BSAC had not succeeded in reaching consensus on all the measures related to the eel, but it is unanimous in calling for stronger focus and a faster pace in implementing national measures with respect to anthropogenic, non-fisheries-related sources of mortality.

A representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency supported the proposal to organise a joint BSAC-HELCOM-BALTFISH meeting on eel, possibly in December 2023, online, or in person in Poland or Finland. The date should be confirmed with HELCOM.

The ExCom decided to hold a joint meeting with BALTFISH and HELCOM to discuss eel, date to be confirmed at a later stage.

7. Presentation of the Council decisions on TAC and quota (Council meeting October 2023), BALTFISH Presidency

The ExCom Chair welcomed Piotr Margoński, Director of the National Marine Research Fisheries Institute.

The Executive Secretary presented the decisions of the AGRIFISH Council on 23rd October 2023 on 2024 Baltic TACs and quota¹⁴.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency referred to Bothnian herring, for which the Council had decided to set the 2024 TAC at a level 31% lower than in 2023. The rationale behind this decision is that the stock is just below $B_{trigger}$ and there is no need to close targeted fishery, as proposed by the Commission. Additional national remedial measures will be applied by Sweden and Finland. For western Baltic herring, the Council decided to rollover the 2023 TAC and the derogation for vessels below 12 m using static gear will remain in place. For central herring, the Council decided to set the 2024 TAC at a level 43% lower than in 2023, with some additional remedial measures, including closures of pelagic trawl fishery in SD 25-26 in April, in SD 27 and 28.2 from 16 April to 15 May, and in SD 29-32 in May, in order to protect herring during spawning. The closures are to be applied in different periods in different parts of the Baltic depending on the spawning time of herring. For western cod, the Council decided to set the bycatch TAC at 340 t (a 30% decrease of the 2023 TAC instead of -72% decrease proposed by the Commission), in order to cover unavoidable bycatches. For plaice, the Council decided to rollover the 2023 TAC, along with the Commission's proposal. For sprat, the TAC was reduced by 10%. Recreational fishing for cod was prohibited in SDs 22-26. **Recreational fishing for salmon was limited** to no more than one specimen of adipose fin-clipped salmon retained per fisher per day. For herring in the Gulf of Riga, the Council followed the ICES advice (-17% decrease as compared to 2023 TAC). This decrease is related to the decrease of the central herring TAC, taking into account the fact that some central Baltic herring migrates from the Main Basin into the Gulf of Riga and that some Gulf of Riga herring migrates out of the Gulf of Riga into the Main Basin.

¹⁴ [Link to the table with TACs](#)

A fisheries representative from Estonia underlined that herring in the Gulf of Riga has been increasing in recent years. Additional management measures, such as additional 1 month ban and kilowatt ceilings have contributed to a healthy biomass for the stock. The TAC is decreased only because of herring migration to/from the central basin. After low herring catches registered in 2022, the catches in 2023 have improved and herring seems to be in a better condition.

The representative of Danish administration thanked the Polish BALTFISH Presidency for their excellent work prior to the Council, which had resulted in reaching compromise solutions. She welcomed the Council decision on setting a higher bycatch quota for western cod than the bycatch TAC recommended by the Commission, allowing plaice fishery to continue and also setting sprat TAC at a higher level, while still respecting scientific advice. She also referred to serious measures applied to recreational fishery and expressed hope that the fishing opportunities for recreational fishers could be reinstated as soon as possible.

A representative of recreational anglers expressed deep disappointment that a total ban on recreational fishing for cod has been implemented for the first time in the entire Baltic despite additional management measures proposed by anglers to reduce the impact of recreational fishing on cod. He underlined that the situation will not change unless selective gears to reduce bycatch of cod in commercial fisheries are implemented.

A small scale fisheries representative underlined that in his view the decisions taken by the Council are far from being satisfactory. He expressed deep disappointment with the levels of TAC for Bothnian herring and the TAC for sprat. Such high TACs are contradict the opinion of some scientists. With respect to sprat, he questioned the mismatch between the TAC for sprat set at 201,000 tonnes and the TAC of central herring set above 40,000 t, taking into account the 60:40 ratio between the species in mixed fisheries of sprat and herring. He pointed out that a high TAC for plaice is an incentive for massive unaccounted mortality of cod in flatfish fishery.

A fisheries representative from Poland referred to the benchmark on Baltic pelagic stocks¹⁵ and the minority statement on the estimation of Blim for central Baltic herring stock, presented by Polish and German scientists. He asked why the minority position had not been taken into account in setting the fishing opportunities.

A scientist from Poland explained that it is not unique that minority statements appear in the conclusions of benchmarks conducted by ICES. ICES makes all efforts to implement the best science and the role of a benchmark workshop is to introduce new type of data. There is no voting in ICES, scientists try to convince each other with scientific arguments. He stated that his colleagues had not been convinced with the value of Blim proposed at the pelagic benchmark (70% higher than previous one). In their opinion, a 70% change in the value of Blim compared to the change in assessment should be well justified as it may have a large impact on the management of the stock. Therefore, although the minority group did not find convincing scientific reasons for such a high change in Blim, they had failed to convince other members of the expert group in the benchmark workshop. The majority of the members had decided to apply a new assessment model as well as updated

¹⁵ [Benchmark Workshop on Baltic Pelagic stocks \(WKBALPEL\) \(figshare.com\)](#) ; report p. 62

fishing mortality and biomass reference points. He stated that ICES had not recommended to apply the provisions of Article 4.6 of the Baltic MAP¹⁶, and close the targeted fishery for central and Bothnian herring. He referred to the fact that Article 5 of the Baltic MAP contains sufficient remedial measures to be applied when the stocks fall below the minimum SSB reference point.

A representative of DG Mare stated that prior to proposing the fishing opportunities for 2024, the Commission had analysed thoroughly Article 4.6 and came to conclusion that the targeted fisheries for central and Bothnian herring should be closed on these legal grounds. In view of the fact that ICES was not in a position to provide the level of unavoidable by-catches of central and Bothnian herring in other fisheries, the Commission proposed to set the TAC levels based on estimations by the Commission services in light of existing information.

A fisheries representative from Poland asked the Commission representative what were the basis for a 23% decrease of the sprat TAC in the Commission's proposal for the fishing opportunities. He pointed out that such decrease had not been recommended by ICES.

A representative of DG Mare replied that the Commission had proposed to set the TAC for sprat at the lowest point of the F_{MSY} range (-23% compared to 2023). He underlined that the Commission does not interfere with the ICES advice process and applies the advice as it stands.

A representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency explained that during the negotiations in the framework of BALTFISH HLG, the TAC for sprat was proposed at the level slightly above F_{MSY} lower value, taking into account the proposed TAC for central herring.

A small-scale fisheries representative from Germany referred to the fact that management measures are not effective with respect cod. Young cod of 25-30 cm disappear somewhere outside fishing nets and this problem needs to be investigated.

A representative of DG Mare stated that according to ICES there are different hypotheses as to where cod disappear. One of them is that cod may be deprived of oxygen in lower water layers.

A fisheries representative from Germany stated his fisheries organisation does not agree with the total ban on recreational fisheries in the Baltic. He strongly underlined that implementation of such drastic measures should be accompanied by a socio-economic impact assessment. He stated that the application of EBM approach to fisheries management calls for taking into account the impact of predators on fish stocks. According to recent scientific research, cormorants consume more cod than fisheries.

A representative of DG Mare explained that according to ICES, the recreational catches in 2022 amounted to 288 tonnes of cod, representing about 70% of total commercial and recreational catches. The ICES advice was for a total of 24 tonnes in 2024. For this reason,

¹⁶ [REGULATION \(EU\) 2016/ 1139 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL - of 6 July 2016 - establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation \(EC\) No 2187 / 2005 and repealing Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1098 / 2007 \(europa.eu\)](#)

the Commission had proposed to ban recreational fishery in the Baltic. He added that the Council shared this opinion and agreed on a ban of recreational fishing for cod in 2024.

A representative of the OIG expressed disappointment with the Council decisions and the ongoing discussion. He stated that the present crisis situation calls for more responsible decisions. Despite bad experiences from the past, the decision-makers continue to disregard the provisions of the Baltic MAP in relation to central and Bothnian herring.

A small scale fisheries representative asked what will be the consequences if a Member State runs of its quota allocation for herring, which is likely to happen if there are no quota swaps between Member States.

A representative of DG Mare replied that if Baltic pelagic fishery runs out of quota, then the fishery will be closed. In the case of Member States, national authorities are responsible for the decision to close the pelagic fishery, depending on the amount of bycatches in mixed fishery. With reference to salmon in the Main Basin, he stated that after some discussion, the Council had decided to go along the Commission's proposal and this quota is permitted for Union fishing vessels in SD 31 in areas within four nautical miles measured from the baselines during the period from 1 May to 31 August. The Commission, Sweden and Finland signed a declaration concerning management of salmon fisheries in SDs 29N and 30. He also informed that the Commission is working on certain modifications to the Baltic MAP, in order to allow clearer interpretation of certain Articles.

A scientist from Poland referred to the fact that ICES had not been in a position to provide the level of unavoidable by-catches of central and Bothnian herring in other fisheries sprat fishery. The level of herring bycatch in sprat fishery depends on the season and region.

A representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency stated that the TAC for Bothnian herring had been set at 55,000 t, that is in the middle of the range proposed by ICES, in accordance with the safeguards set in Article 5.1 of the Baltic MAP.¹⁷

A representative of the OIG stated that in view of the degraded state of the herring stock in SDs 30-31 the TAC should be set at MAP range F_{lower} (48,824).

A fisheries representative from Poland recalled that the need to include species interrelations between herring and sprat in the Baltic MAP had been already raised during the preparation of the plan. He underlined that the interspecies relations should be taken into account in the stock advice and decisions on the TACs. In his view, the Baltic MAP should also be revised accordingly. He also underlined the need for a mixed species advice for the Baltic.

8. Discussion on BSAC actions on the Baltic Sea MAP follow up of the workshop

See the [BSAC Baltic MAP workshop report](#)

The ExCom Chair referred to the fact that the BSAC will be consulted in 2024 on the evaluation of the implementation of the Baltic Multiannual Plan as the Commission has to carry its evaluation before July 2024.

¹⁷ Article 5.1 Baltic MAP: The conservation reference points expressed as minimum and limit spawning stock biomass levels that are to be applied in order to safeguard the full reproductive capacity of the stocks concerned are set out in Annex II.

The ExCom agreed to return to this matter at a later stage, after the Commission moves forward with the clarification of the Articles that have been discussed during the Council-Commission negotiations or when receiving the formal invitation to participate in the consultation.

9. Presentation of the STECF Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet, Raul Prellezo, principal researcher at AZTI, member of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) of the European Commission

Raul Prellezo, presented the Baltic chapter of the 2023 report¹⁸. The 2023 Annual Economic Report (AER) on the EU fishing fleet provides a comprehensive overview of the latest information available on the structure and economic performance of the EU Member States fishing fleets. The base year is 2021 (including the forecast and nowcasting procedures). The AER contains an overview, divided by type of fisheries, national chapters, regional chapters and annexes. He referred to the Baltic. The dependency on the area for all national fleets was similar in 2020. The Lithuanian fleet showed low dependency rate due to the distant water fleet operating in other areas. Most German, Danish and Swedish vessels operate in both the Baltic and the North Sea. In 2021 the total number of vessels operating in the Baltic decreased by 12%. The fleet with 4,597 active vessels generated EUR 173 million in revenue, a decrease of 12% compared to 2020. However, overall, the EU Baltic Sea fleet was still profitable in 2021, generating a EUR 6 million net profit (-42%), which was unequally distributed amongst MS. Baltic small scale fleet SSCF had 92% of the vessels (4 228 vessels) in 2021, total employment in the small scale sector amounted only to 2 043 FTE or 62% of the total. SSCF in the Baltic accounted for 8% of the landed weight and 26% of the value and the profitability is presenting a continuous deteriorating scheme. In 2021, Baltic large scale fleet (LSF) generated a revenue of EUR 131.4 million, 14% less compared to 2020. As consequence, gross profit and net profit generated by the LSF decreased substantially by 37% and 46%, respectively. The number of people employed by the LSF decreased by 6% (FTE and total jobs). The profitability of the SSCF improved slightly, though remaining negative, from net losses of EUR 18.9 million in 2020 to net losses of EUR 9.9 million in 2021. Raul Prellezo presented the trends for the Baltic fleet. For both SSCF and LSF, the trends are negative in terms of value of landings, GVA, number of vessels, days at sea, gross profit and expected to fall down to the value of 2014. For the SSCF there is an increasing trend for the gross profit.

He turned to the forecast for 2022: A bad year due to increase in fuel costs (especially during the first semester of the year). More landings in weight are expected (for the overall EU fleet) but mean prices (in real terms) are expected to be lower. Probably not as bad as we predicted last year but profits at overall EU level are close to zero.

Forecast 2023: A recovery of the profitability is expected. More landings in weight are expected (for the overall EU fleet) but mean prices (in real terms) are expected to be lower (as in 2022). It seems that the fishing sector is not able to adapt to the inflation rates of the economy. Fuel costs expected to be reduced (compared to 2022) so it seems that values of 2021 are likely to be seen.

¹⁸ [STECF 23-07 - AER 2023.pdf](#)

Comments on the Baltic: there are big differences among LSF and SSCF. SSCF accounts for 92% vessels, 75% of fishers and 62% of FTE, but only 8% of the landings (although with an average price 3 times higher), 26% of the value of them and 24% of the GVA. This last is clearly biased because profits are negative. The landings of LSF are of lower value. The situation for the SSCF has improved (although is still negative).

Herring followed by perch and eel are the three most important species in terms of landing value for the SSCF. In all cases the landings value has increased (in real terms) compared to 2020. This is relevant given that the landings in weight have decreased. This is driven mainly by the increase of herring prices. The contribution of cod in total revenues of SSCF has decreased from 37% in 2008 to 2% only in 2021 as a result of the deteriorated stock status.

For LSF - herring and sprat are the two most important species in terms of landings value accounting together the 84% of the value of landings. In all cases the landings value have decreased (in real terms) compared to 2020. This is driven mainly by the reduction of herring landings, while prices have been relatively stable (a small decrease in herring). The contribution of cod in total revenues of LSF has decreased from 20% in 2013 to 1% in 2021.

Replying to a question by **a small scale fisheries representative from Germany**¹⁹ whether the subsidies have been deducted from the operating results of the LSF vessels, **the STECF representative** answered that subsidies have not been included in the economic analysis. The fish prices come from selling markets.

A fisheries representative from Germany underlined that the Baltic fisheries is under severe crisis at the moment and it is particularly important to present updated economic analysis along with biological data on the stocks, to support the management decisions. He also asked how large scale and small scale fleets are defined in the AER.

The STECF representative replied that STECF produces a comprehensive overview of the latest information available on the structure and economic performance of the fishing fleets. All efforts are made to make sure that the economic analysis relates to the past year, not 2 years back. However, not all economic data is available from one year to another. Time is need for companies to close the accounting, and for the STECF to collect data and produce an analysis.

¹⁹ **Comment of small scale fisheries representative from Germany submitted by mail after the meeting** on 30th October: In general, the business owner is responsible for this assessment. He will have to align his business with economic criteria if his business is to be viable. This does not require an assessment by the EU administration. Since this assessment is nevertheless carried out and has an impact on the eligibility and possibly on the quota allocation, it is of particular importance. Therefore, it is required that this assessment is based on correct data adapted to the respective circumstances. This was not the case here. It is also noteworthy that the last overview presented on the occasion of an ExCom meeting in Brussels in January 2020 showed the same deficiencies. The demand presented at that time (the same as today) apparently had no effect. Subsidies were again not factored out, although they do not represent an operating result. The prices are the wholesale prices, from which, as is well known, no small-scale fisherman can survive because of his low quota allocation. The only way out, self-marketing of catches, where up to 6 times higher prices can be achieved, was not taken into account. In this respect, the analysis gives a one-sided picture to the disadvantage of small-scale fisheries. The assessment of economic viability (§ 3 SFG) and all subsequent decisions (e.g. promotion or quota allocation) therefore lead in the wrong direction. The disproportion in the findings is obviously due to the design of the assignment by DG-Mare. For the aforementioned reasons, an assessment of economic efficiency adapted to local conditions is to be demanded as long as it has the effects described above.

Replying to a question on the definition of small-scale and large scale fleets used in the AER, **the STECF representative** stated that in the AER small-scale fleet includes fishing vessels of an overall length up to 12 m, using non-active fishing gear. The large scale fleet include all the remaining vessels.

A fisheries representative from Poland asked about the source of the data on fuel prices.

The STECF representative answered that data on fuel prices comes from EUMOFA²⁰, which prepares a monthly evolution of fuel costs.

The ExCom Chair proposed to invite a representative of the Commission to present EUMOFA to one of the BSAC meetings.

A small scale fisheries representative noted positive developments with regard to the small scale fleet, including high added value and employment, as well considerable reductions in negative profitability. He pointed out that the fishing effort of the small scale fleet used in the 2023 AER is still calculated using days at sea, giving place to misinterpretation. He recalled his comment to the 2022 AER that one day at sea for a small-scale vessel does not equal one fishing day of a trawler.

The STECF representative took note of the criticism with relation to the fact that days at sea is not a good indicator to calculate the fishing effort, especially for small vessels. He informed that the STECF makes efforts to improve the calculations, but this requires time to change data calls.

A fisheries representative from Germany underlined that the AER needs to better reflect the current situation and not the situation from two years ago. Some future trends would also be useful in supporting management decisions.

The STECF representative stated that in the last 10 years 35% of fishing vessels in the EU have disappeared. There is a clear downward trend in the number of fishing vessels and this trend will continue.

A fisheries representative from Poland referred to the question he had asked last year related to the possibility to calculate the break-even point for different species and different fleet segments²¹, to estimate how much fish need to be caught to reach the break-even point, taking into account the operational costs, including the fuel costs. Such analysis would show the decision makers what is the minimum quota needed to sustain the fleet.

The STECF representative repeated his answer from last year that the calculation of the break-even point from economic perspective at the EU level is not possible and would not be very useful. However, such calculation could be done at the sea-basin level or for different fleet segments, broken down by vessel length. The AER has not done such calculations. A request to include such calculations should be part of the terms of reference of the AER.

²⁰ [EUMOFA - European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture](#)

²¹ The break-even point is the level of production at which the costs of production equal the revenues for a product.

The ExCom Chair thanked the STECF representative for his presentation. He expressed the hope that the dialogue on the socio-economic aspects of the Baltic fleets between the Commission, STECF and the BSAC will continue as the AER has direct impact on management decisions.

A representative of DG Mare stated that the BSAC could request the Commission to amend the Terms of Reference of the AER.

The ExCom Chair encouraged the BSAC members to submit questions to STECF and proposals to the Terms of Reference of the AER to the BSAC Secretariat.

A representative of the OIG proposed to ask STECF to answer any questions submitted by the BSAC in the presentation of the AER next year.

The ExCom decided that the BSAC secretariat will prepare a draft letter to STECF with the remarks made during the meeting. In addition, any questions to STECF as well as proposal for the terms of reference of the AER should be submitted to the BSAC Secretariat. ExCom will then adopt this letter and send it to STECF.

10. Discussion on the new Control Regulation

See [the Fisheries Control Regulation Agreement](#) and the [summary for the European Parliament](#)

The Executive Secretary informed that the Commission presented the new Control Regulation in the InterAC meeting on 10th October 2023. All AC members received an observer link. The Commission informed that it is not possible for them to present the new Regulation to every AC. During the InterAC meeting, he informed the Commission that the BSAC members would appreciate direct exchange of views on the important topics, such as the Control Regulation. A presentation during an InterAC meeting, with no possibility to ask direct questions, does not satisfy the need of the members. Such approach does not allow members to raise questions on the presentations and properly exchange with the Commission.

The Executive Secretary presented the new Control Regulation on the basis of the Commission's presentation given at the InterAC meeting on 10th October 2023.

The initial proposal by the Commission was launched on 30 May 2018.

After 5 years of intense negotiations between the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, the political agreement was reached in May 2023. The Regulation will be formally approved in November and will enter into force in January 2024. Some provisions will be applicable immediately, others in 6 months, the majority after 2 years, some even later. The revision was a complex process and included amendments to 6 regulations²². Amendments covered several topics such as digitalisation, new control tools, external fleet, sanctions, derogations and traceability.

Digitalisation. The main changes applied to small scale fleet: after 2 years VMS system and electronic catch reporting for vessels 12- 15 m, after 4 years VMS and electronic catch

²² Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (Fisheries Control) • Regulation (EU) No 2009/473 (EFCA) • Regulation (EC) 1005/2008 (IUU Regulation) • Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 (Mediterranean Regulation) • Regulation (EU) No 2016/1139 (Baltic Sea MAP) • Regulation (EC) No 2017/2403 (SMEFF)

reporting also for vessels below 12 m. In 2 years, electronic catch reporting will be applied in recreational fishing for all quota species. From 2030 electronic catch reporting will be implemented for more species, subject to scientific advice.

New control tools such as REM (CCTV) will be obligatory onboard vessels > 18 m at high/very high risk of illegal discards from 2028. Continuous monitoring of engine power for certain categories of vessels will be implemented in 2028. Logbooks will have a unique fishing identification number and will be expanded to include an obligation to report bycatch of sensitive species and lost gears.

Sanctions will be harmonised. There will be 2 categories of serious infringements: serious infringement per se (objectively pre-identified as serious) and infringements qualified as serious on the basis of harmonised criteria. Minimum levels of minimum sanctions or standard rates for serious infringements will be implemented.

In the Baltic, margin of tolerance rules are also modified with a transitional period of 4 years.

There are new traceability rules, with, among others, the obligation to record and make available traceability information in a digital way.

What is next: the development of IT rules for small scale and recreational fishery will be launched. The Commission will review the existing implementing act (Regulation 404/2011) to be split in Implementing and Delegated Act and adopt new rules as necessary. The Commission will also organise ad hoc consultations, including the Advisory Councils. The representative of DG Mare asked for more coordination across the ACs on matters related to control. She underlined that the new Regulation does not include a regionalised approach and therefore it is important for the ACs to reflect the same spirit in the work.

The EBM WG Chair informed that during the InterAC meeting he had asked the Commission whether any derogations to the rules are foreseen for the small scale boats operating on part-time basis. The Commission replied that there will be no derogations for part-time boats.

A fisheries representative from Poland questioned the proposed 20% margin of tolerance. In his view, such a rule is unrealistic in mixed pelagic fisheries, and very often, fishers will not be able to maintain the proposed margin of tolerance and will be punished for this with high penalties.

The EBM WG Chair referred to the fact that during long revision process, the new regulation has been misshaped by the EU institutions and the European Parliament. There is a need to further clarify the new rules, especially to those who will be directly affected by them. He strongly urged the Commission to dedicate some time to direct discussions with the BSAC on the issue. As an alternative he proposed to ask the Member States to delegate their control experts to discuss the new provisions with the BSAC.

The ExCom Chair reiterated the request to have a discussion with the representatives of Commission's Control Unit on the new Control regulation. He pointed to the specific situation of Baltic fisheries, with regional differences in the eastern and western parts. He underlined that the BSAC members would appreciate a dedicated discussion with the Commission's representatives on the new legislative file.

A representative of DG Mare promised to pass the request of the BSAC to hold a discussion on the new Control Regulation to his colleagues.

The ExCom took note.

11. AOB

The Executive Secretary informed that the Commission's questionnaire²³ on the implementation of Technical Measures Regulation had been sent out to BSAC members. The Secretariat received one set of written comments by the deadline of the 26th October 2023.

The ExCom decided to hold a Focus Group on the Technical Measure Regulation evaluation questionnaire on the 13th November 2023, online, to provide consolidated response to questionnaire. The Secretariat will distribute the invitation, ToR and agenda of the meeting.

The Executive Secretary reminded the BSAC members on the ongoing consultation of draft BALTFISH Joint Recommendation on 5 MPA areas with some no take areas and some measures on harbour porpoise. The BSAC members are expected to provide answers by 30th October.

The Executive Secretary informed that Energy Transition Partnership Finance workshop will take place on 28th November. The ExCom Chair will attend. The BSAC members are requested to inform the Secretariat if they want to attend.

The Executive Secretary also informed that the invitation to the EFCA patrol vessel during its visit to Gdynia will be sent by EFCA in the coming days.

12. Closing of the meeting by BSAC ExCom Chair

The ExCom Chair thanked all participants for good discussions and interpreters for their excellent work.

Action Items from the meeting:

Follow-up to the questions to the Commission communicated in the June ExCom	Secretariat to send the Commission's answers to the ExCom members by email. The ExCom decided to ask the Commission to come specifically to discuss selectivity during one of the upcoming BSAC meetings.
Letters from the WG	The ExCom decided to ask the Secretariat to send the validated letters prepared by the WGs to the Commission.
BSAC recommendations on the Action Plan	The ExCom decided to ask the Secretariat to circulate the draft BSAC <u>recommendations on the Action Plan</u> to the ExCom and decided that the actions from the <u>CFP Communication</u> will be discussed by the BSAC at a later stage.
Joint AC letter on	The BSAC will continue the drafting and validation procedure

²³ Questionnaire on the second report of implementation of EU Regulation 2019/1241.

stakeholder input	with the other ACs and BSAC ExCom
Question to other ACs on the performance of the CFP	The ExCom decided that the question of the performance of the CFP could be raised with other ACs during a meeting of ACs Chairs and secretariats that was scheduled before the MIAC meeting in January.
EFCA patrol vessel visit to Baltic port	The ExCom decided that questions to EFCA should be sent to the secretariat in advance of the meeting. The objective of the visit of the control vessel on the 29th November was to have a discussion and explain EFCA's role to BSAC members.
ExCom decision on future eel recommendations	The ExCom decided to hold a joint meeting with BALTFISH and HELCOM to discuss eel, date to be confirmed at a later stage.
MIAC questions	The BSAC ExCom members will be given an additional time to review the final list of questions from BSAC to ICES until the 7th November.
Outcome of the Climate Change webinar	The ExCom decided the discussions on the impact of climate change on Baltic fisheries and ecosystem should be pursued in the framework of WGs
Discussion on BSAC actions on the Baltic Sea MAP follow up of the workshop	The ExCom agreed to return to this matter at a later stage, after the Commission moves forward with the clarification of the Articles that have been discussed during the Council-Commission negotiations or when receiving the formal invitation to participate in the consultation.
Presentation of the STECF Annual Economic Report	The ExCom decided that the BSAC secretariat will prepare a draft letter to STECF with the remarks made during the meeting. In addition, any questions to STECF as well as proposal for the terms of reference of the AER should be submitted to the BSAC Secretariat. ExCom will then adopt this letter and send it to STECF.
Focus Group on the Technical Measure Regulation	The BSAC will hold a Focus Group on the Technical Measure Regulation evaluation questionnaire on the 13 th November 2023