



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR FISHERIES AND MARITIME AFFAIRS  
Conservation Policy

Brussels, 12.07.2007 D 7957  
FISH/A/2/SS/mhr D(2007)

Mr Reine J. JOHANSSON  
Baltic Sea Regional  
Advisory Council  
H.C.Andersens Boulevard 37  
DK-1553 København V

*Dear Reine*

Dear Mr Johansson,

Thank you very much for your letter and the enclosed additional recommendations on the multi-annual plan for cod in the Baltic Sea from the BS RAC from 30 May.

The recommendations were taken into account during the discussions with Member States in the Council Working Party. The discussions in the Council Working Party generally aim at the preparation of the adoption of a Commission proposal by the Council of Ministers. Potential changes to a proposal are commonly considered during these discussions upon request by Member States in order to develop consensus on the text. Concerning the Multi-annual plan for the Baltic cod stocks, potential modifications were evaluated during the discussions in the Council Working Party as well but not agreed prior to the presentation of the proposal to the Council of Ministers in Luxemburg 11 June. A revised formal Commission proposal was therefore not prepared and a further consultation of the BS RAC not considered.

Political agreement on the proposal has been reached at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Luxemburg, 12 June and the formal adoption of the final text by the Council will take place within the next months.

With reference to your recommendations and comments on the plan itself I am glad to inform you that a provision to ensure financial compensation under the European Fisheries Fund has been included. I can herewith confirm to you that the effort management regime has indeed been changed and is now based on a combination of closed periods during the summer and a days absent from port regime. A derogation to allow fishing during the summer ban periods for the small scale fleet (8-12m) for 5 days per month has been included in accordance with the overall limitations on fishing effort. The provisions on control and monitoring have been changed in correspondence to the modifications in the effort scheme and are in accordance with your recommendations except for the margin of tolerance which remains 8% for cod.

Member States will have to publish information on their respective control implementation schemes on their website each year until the end of January. If the BS RAC would like to receive information on the National control programmes beyond the control reports by the Commission, which are published on the DG Fish website, I recommend requesting this information from the National authorities.

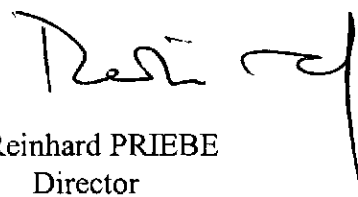
Article 9 on the recovery of fishing days has been deleted from the plan. However, reductions in fishing capacity in most recent years will be considered in the development of the Baltic TAC and quota regulation for 2008.

Due to scientific evidence of low cod catches in Subdivisions 27 and 28, an evaluation procedure for these subdivisions has been included to determine regularly whether an inclusion of these areas in the effort limitation scheme deems necessary. Respective control provisions do, however, apply to these areas as well.

The definition of the two management areas for cod in the Baltic Sea is based on the scientific evidence of the existence of two distinct cod stocks in the Baltic Sea not on management purposes as such. In order to assess the status of the individual stocks it is necessary to facilitate the allocation of catches and thus fishing mortality to the individual stocks. It is, however correct that misreporting is hampering not only the assessment of the stocks but also the management of the cod fisheries. Therefore a set of control and monitoring measures have been included in the multi-annual plan. In light of the commitments by Ministers and stakeholders at the BS RAC conference on control and compliance in Copenhagen, 28-29 March I am quite confident that this problem will be solved in the near future.

Finally I would like to point out to you that STECF is evaluating the capacity/resource balance on an annual basis. The respective reports can be found at their webpage. The responsibility for the fleet management remains to a large extent with the Member States. It is therefore not foreseen to develop objectives for National capacities on a Community level in more detail than outlined in the current policy. However, the Commission does intend to request the development of a common methodology for the definition of National capacity targets by STECF this year.

Yours sincerely,



Reinhard PRIEBE  
Director