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cc: BALTFISH Member States, Fisheries Council, European Parliament Fisheries Committee

Ref: BSAC/2023-2024/23

Copenhagen, Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

**Subject: Baltic Sea Advisory Council recommendations on the energy transition of the Baltic Sea fisheries sector**

Dear Ms Vitcheva,

On behalf of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC), please find attached the BSAC recommendations on the energy transition of the Baltic Sea fisheries sector. Subsequently to 3 focus group meetings, the consensus document was adopted on the 27<sup>th</sup> September. Background information is considered first, the BSAC recommendations are then presented. It also includes an Annex with details on EMFAF programs in the Member States.

The BSAC recommendations build on previous recommendations of other Advisory Councils and put forward Baltic specific remarks.

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 point out that any spending on greening an industry must be based on a solid and viable future for the business and company at hand. The Baltic Sea ecosystem is experiencing a regime shift and several of the fish stocks are in a state of decline, and to invest funds at this stage is a risky venture.

On the basis of the above considerations, the BSAC has adopted the following recommendations:

Infrastructure requirements

- Member States should invest in the development of infrastructure in ports and develop green energy logistics to support the transition.

Financial support for the transition

- Member States should align their operational programmes to ensure that the energy transition of the Baltic fleets is supported by appropriate access to funding.
- The Commission should coordinate work on access to funding opportunities foreseen in the Action Plan and the Communication on Energy Transition to ensure that such access will become coherent across Member States.

- Member States and the Commission should create investment schemes for green technology and transition.

#### Overcapacity and capacity ceiling

- The Commission should look more closely at the capacity rules and their impact on energy transition, especially the definition and calculation of capacity. The BSAC has identified a set of issues presented in the full recommendation.
- Member States and the Commission should setup voluntary exit schemes for specific fishing fleet segments as an efficient way to reduce carbon emissions.
- Member States and the Commission should help fishers diversify their activities and attract a new generation of fishers where there is a sustainable future.

#### Pilot projects and research

- The Commission and Member States, together with their research institutes, should launch pilot projects. More details are available in the full recommendation.

#### Broader considerations

- Member States and the Commission should promote seafood as part of sustainable, climate-friendly food consumption, following the concept of “Planetary Health Diet”.
- Member States and the Commission should consider the entire life cycle of fisheries products and value-chain actors that also have to make efforts to reduce their energy consumption.

#### Governance and outreach

- Member States and the Commission should involve all stakeholders (policymakers, engine manufacturers, fisheries representatives, NGOs etc.) in order to ensure the legitimacy and the acceptability of the energy transition measures.
- The Commission’s *Study on technologies available for each specific fleet segment*, foreseen in the Energy Transition Communication, should consider issues of vessel size, gear, power, costs, and usability.

Finally, the BSAC stands ready to further work on the topic with the support of experts. It will engage in the Energy Transition Partnerships and closely follow the discussions.

As always, we appreciate the participation of your colleagues at our meetings<sup>1</sup>, open dialogue and explanations. We look forward to receiving your reply to our recommendations.

Kind regards,



Jarek Zieliński  
BSAC Executive Committee Chair

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, [the presentation of the Commission communication on the Energy Transition of the EU Fisheries and Aquaculture sector on the 17th April 2023.](#)