



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/C.1/AK/ms

Dear Mr Zieliński,

Thank you for BSAC's letter of 17 October 2023 about the Commission proposal for setting fishing opportunities for the Baltic Sea for 2024, and requests for ICES advice.

Regarding the fishing opportunities, you are aware that the Council found an agreement during its meeting on 24 October 2024, which in many respects differs from the Commission proposal. You can find the details on the Council and the Commission websites. ⁽¹⁾

Regarding your suggestion of a socio-economic impact assessment, I would like to stress that the Commission does not dispute that its proposal would have had a severe impact on fishers in the Baltic Sea and on their families who depend on their businesses to make a living. However, the Commission is bound by law to implement the Baltic Sea MAP as this is the result from negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers in 2016. An impact assessment, while useful, would not have changed this.

Regarding the Commission's relation with ICES, as you know ICES is an independent international organization of which neither the EU nor the Commission are a member. The Commission does not interfere with ICES' internal procedures nor its work, including the production of advice and the organization of benchmarks. ICES usually publishes on the ICES Advice Activities Forum ⁽²⁾ the finalized requests submitted by the advice requesters, including the Commission.

I would note that it is important to find a balanced approach, taking into account also the other work of DG MARE on fishing opportunities. To this end, my services would be

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/10/24/baltic-sea-council-agrees-catch-limits-for-2024/>; https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/baltic-sea-agreement-reached-2024-fishing-opportunities-2023-10-24_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://community.ices.dk/Committees/ACOMForum/default.aspx>

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ready to discuss with BSAC in your regular BSAC meetings ongoing or upcoming ICES requests.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Mr. Antoine Kopp or Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

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