

Virtual Coffee Meeting: Management Team + BALTFISH Polish Presidency

DATE: 4th December 2023 TIME: 09.00 – 10:00 CEST

Report

PRESENT:

POLISH Presidency: Filip Podgórski

BSAC: Jarek Zieliński, Nils Höglund, Lise Laustsen, Glenn Douglas, Guillaume Carruel, Ewa Milewska.

APOLOGIES: Teija Aho

The BSAC ExCom Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting held to discuss cooperation between BALTFISH and BSAC on their work priorities, as well as planning of the next BSAC ExCom meeting in January 2024. He recalled that the BSAC had asked the Polish Ministry about the possibility to host an ExCom meeting in the premises of the Ministry of Agriculture, to facilitate the presence of the BALTFISH Presidency.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency stated that in principle the BSAC ExCom meeting could be held in the premises of the Ministry, provided that there is no change in the structure of the Ministry under the new government.

The BSAC ExCom Chair thanked the representative of the Presidency for agreeing in principle to host the BSAC ExCom meeting in January and expressed hope that the Ministry will soon confirm this decision. He stated that the Secretariat will now proceed with technical arrangements for the meeting, being hopeful about the BALTFISH Presidency ability to provide a room for the BSAC meeting in any case.

The BSAC ExCom Chair referred to the work priorities. He informed that the BSAC Chair and Vice-Chair had been invited to a roundtable meeting with the Commissioner on 7th December 2023, to discuss, among others the eel, which is of direct interest to the BSAC.

The EBM WG Chair informed that in his capacity as chair of the HELCOM Expert Group on migratory fish species (FISH M) he had asked the Commission for a joint, Baltic-focused meeting of the Joint Special Group, BALTFISH and HELCOM on eel. He informed that the FISH M will meet on 14th December 2023 (online) to discuss, among others the way forward with regard to the salmon management plan.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency informed that the Presidency stands ready to hold a joint technical group meeting on eel in 2024. In the beginning of next year (9 January 2024), following the decisions on the eel management taken by the European Council in December, in order to discuss the management measures, such as the closed periods for eel in the Baltic a BALTFISH HLG meeting is scheduled. He stated that the Presidency had already asked the Commission for some clarifications with regard to the application of the closed period during a meeting of the BALTFISH held in November. BALTFISH technical group on harbour porpoise will be organised on 10 January 2024. Presidency will seek feedback from Member States on the 4th draft Joint

Recommendation on harbour porpoise. He also referred to other topics on the agenda of BALTFISH - the salmon management plan (Finland to initiate the process) and stickleback (pending results from research projects, carried out in the Baltic Member States). The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency informed that the work programme might be subject to certain modifications in the beginning of 2024, under the new government.

The Executive Secretary referred to the recent BSAC recommendations¹, the priorities of the BSAC work programme still to be tackled², as well as the BSAC upcoming meetings. He promised to share them with the Presidency by mail.

The ExCom Chair stated that the BSAC stands ready to actively participate in the work on stickleback. He referred to possible future discussions on the impact of offshore wind farms in the upcoming BSAC meetings and asked the BALTFISH Presidency to gather information from Member States on the status of development of offshore wind farms and measures applied in their waters.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency pointed out that the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development shares competence on offshore wind farms with the Ministry of Infrastructure and experts from both Ministries should therefore be included in the discussions on measures related to fisheries inside OWF.

¹ Recent BSAC recommendations

- On 7th November, the BSAC ExCom validated and sent to the Commission the [Follow-up on BSAC recommendations concerning the development of offshore windfarms](#).
- On 10th November, the BSAC received the [COM response to BSAC letter on the fishing opportunities and scientific advice](#) for 2024 following the recent BALTFISH Forum meeting. An answer is being prepared.
- On 17th November, the BSAC ExCom validated the [BSAC recommendations on the STECF 2023 Annual Economic Fleet Report](#), the document was sent on 20th November to STECF and the Commission.
- On 24th November, the [BSAC sent a reply to DG Mare to the questionnaire to feed on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation](#)
- Today: BSAC recommendations on the Marine Action Plan will be published and shared with the Commission and Member States.

² Priorities of our work programme still to be tackled

- Potential BSAC recommendations on Actions identified in the CFP Communication
- Seals and cormorants₂ follow up workshop.
- Species interactions: work in the Pelagic and Demersal WG
- Eel (Meeting being planned with HELCOM and BALTFISH)
- Report on monitoring and enforcement of the Landing Obligation with EFCA- pending publication in Spring 2024
- Internal BSAC work ongoing (revision of the Rules of Procedures, elections)

The EBM WG Chair stated that BALTFISH should put OWF on its agenda to share knowledge and best practices in terms of regulations, assessments of impact, monitoring and compensations between Member States.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency agreed that the Fisheries Department of the Polish Ministry could ask the Member States on the status of OWF in their waters and implemented fisheries measures.

The Pelagic WG Chair asked the Presidency on any information regarding the Commission's proposal related to the interpretation of Article 4 of the MAP, as requested by some Member States at the Council meeting in October.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency replied that the Commission has not yet delivered its MAP amendment proposal.

The Pelagic WG Chair drew attention to recently held ICES workshop on establishing a roadmap for possible conservation measures for herring in the Baltic (**WKHERBAL**, 29-30 November 2023) and the need to follow its outcome by both BALTFISH and BSAC.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency stated that he can address Polish members of ICES in the name of the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, asking whether they could provide the workshop report.

The ExCom Chair asked whether a discussion is underway in BALTFISH with regard to interpretation of the new Control Regulation.

The representative of the Polish BALTFISH Presidency underlined that any regulation or legislative act becomes binding only after its official publication in the Official Journal of the EU. He promised to ask BALTFISH control experts whether they are planning to discuss the implementation of the new Control Regulation after its official publication.

The BSAC ExCom Chair thanked the BALTFISH Presidency for the meeting and the information shared with the BSAC.

The meeting considered the dates of the next virtual coffee meeting (15th, 16th or 22nd January) and decided to confirm the date at a later stage.