

Members were welcome to send contributions by the end of September 2020. We didn't get anything.

Please let us have any news by last week of October if you want it to be included.

BSAC news and meetings

BSAC Executive Committee meeting on 4th September 2020

This virtual meeting, morning only, was attended by 50 (!) participants, including interpreting and technical assistance. It focused on the Commission's proposal for fishing opportunities in the Baltic for 2021.¹ The Commission's proposal was published at the end of August. It was important, in that it gave ExCom members the chance to comment on and react to the Commission's proposal. At the same time, the Secretariat noted and compiled BSAC reactions for the ExCom chair to convey to the BALTFISH meeting which took place a few days later. The ExCom report is on the website:

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-\(4\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-(4))

The compilation of BSAC positions is here:

[http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-for-the-Baltic-fisheries-2021/BSACpositions-fishingopportunities2021COMPILEDTOTESBENOK-\(2\).pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB](http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-for-the-Baltic-fisheries-2021/BSACpositions-fishingopportunities2021COMPILEDTOTESBENOK-(2).pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB)

At the end of June, the BSAC finalized its recommendations for Baltic fisheries for 2021. The Commission replied to them at the end of August, without going into detail:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/BSAC-recommendations-for-the-Baltic-fisheries-2021>

Also, from the Executive Committee meeting – requested by the chair, the Secretariat compiled input from fisheries representatives and recreations/anglers of experience with and recommendations for the use of closed areas in the Baltic. These were sent to BALTFISH on 14th September 2020:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Letters-to-BALTFISH-about-closed-areas>

The BSAC ecosystem based working group 21st and 22nd September 2020

This was another virtual meeting, and interpretation provided. This was another well attended meeting (we counted 56 taking part at some or all of the meeting). The main aim of the meeting was to deal with some of the most relevant proposals coming out of the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, as well as developing recommendations to avoid bycatch of Baltic harbour porpoise. It also dealt with stickleback – a new and important subject for the BSAC. Right at the end of the meeting, the question as to whether there was a need for a salmon multiannual management plan in the Baltic was needed. A report is not yet quite finalised. You can see all the informative presentations made at the meeting. These cover: stickleback, the HELCOM activities, and harbour porpoise, as well as some more in-depth articles on stickleback:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/Ecosystem-based-working-group>

We're very grateful to the experts for taking part at the working group.

The very next Executive Committee meeting, Tuesday 27th October 2020

This will also be a virtual meeting, instead of the hoped for meeting in Vigo to meet representatives of the European Fisheries Control Agency. Please find invitation and draft agenda here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-TENTATIVE-and-TBC>

please sign up as soon as you can.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_1522

An external evaluation of the BSAC: work in progress

The consultancy Oxford Research was selected on the grounds of proximity (based in Copenhagen, and provides easier access to the BSAC, and getting information from the Secretariat), and the provision of a more comprehensive offer. The ExCom approved the offer. The management team held a kick-off meeting on 23rd September 2020 and work starts very soon in developing a survey for BSAC members to answer.

The BSAC intends to follow up on the work it started on providing input to a reform of the Common Fisheries Policy: how, when and where

Since the BSAC met to work on this back in September 2019, things ground to a halt due to COVID-19. A meeting planned for March this year was cancelled due to COVID. The Secretariat has been working and prepared a draft text to be dealt with by specific CFP Focus Groups. There will be three separate on-line focus groups, meeting possibly towards the end of 2020, or at the latest in January 2021. The focus groups will be facilitated by the members of the Management Team. So, we look forward to picking up where we left off.

Membership

Update on ExCom membership from Danish Pelagic PO

Lise Laustsen is back from maternity leave and resumes her seat on the ExCom for the DPPO.

Waiting for a new member to the BSAC: SAJKS - the Association of Recreational Fishing Ships

This organisation, based in Kołobrzeg, has 30 members. The aim of SAJKS is to represent the interests of its organisation, which comprises recreational ship owners. They're operating from various ports in Poland.

BSAC output recommendations from the BSAC and replies

BSAC recommendation on mitigation measures to prevent bycatch of harbour porpoise

BALTFISH has asked for input by 30th September 2020.

The BSAC is working on finalising the recommendations.

Meanwhile, DG Mare has written to the BSAC ExCom chair to underline the importance of this subject and to ask for the views of the BSAC. Read the letter and the reply from the BSAC chair here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Letter-to-BSAC-from-DG-Mare-about-harbour-porpoise>

Commercial, sports and recreational fisheries experience of and recommendations on use of closed areas

As mentioned above, a compilation of input from fisheries representatives and recreational/anglers/sports fishermen with closed areas in the Baltic. This was sent to BALTFISH and then updated with one more member afterwards.

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Letters-to-BALTFISH-about-closed-areas>

Several Advisory Councils sent advice to the Commission on the single use plastics directive and fishing for litter

And Mare Director General Charline Vitcheva sent a reply in the middle of September. See here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/BSAC-Statements-and-recommendations/Multi-AC-advice-on-on-Single-Use-Plastics-Directiv>

We can look forward to a follow-up meeting towards the end of the year.

BALTFISH/Member States news and meetings

The BALTFISH Forum on 7th September 2020 under the Estonian Presidency

This meeting covered a lot of agenda points. It was the first meeting under the Estonian Presidency, and the chairman started off presenting the planned work programme for the six months. The BSAC ExCom chair took the opportunity to raise stickleback and the concerns brought up by several ExCom members about the growing population in the Baltic.

Also on the agenda was a BALTFISH Presidency proposal for mitigation measures to prevent bycatch of Baltic Proper harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea fisheries. Read the BSAC report here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/Letters-to-ExCom/BALTFISH070920reportbySecretariatFINAL.pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB>

Commission news and meetings

We just heard: The Commission has withdrawn its proposal for a multiannual plan for salmon

DG Mare just informed that it's withdrawn its proposal.

See here a list of withdrawn proposals. The salmon one is number 7 on page 1.

[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020XC0929\(02\)&from=FR](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020XC0929(02)&from=FR)

DG Mare newsletter of 2nd September 2020

It includes the news on the fishing opportunities in the Baltic for 2021

And the Euronews film on what's wrong with the eastern Baltic cod and the challenges this poses for the fisheries sector. Well worth seeing.

https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/mare/newsletter-specific-archive-issue.cfm?newsletter_service_id=114&newsletter_issue_id=24917&pdf=true&fullDate=&lang=default

And here's the Mare newsletter of 30th September

It includes reference to the aid for Baltic fishing fleet reductions, and the COM report on the Baltic multiannual plan.

https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/mare/newsletter-specific-archive-issue.cfm?newsletter_service_id=114&newsletter_issue_id=25798&pdf=true&fullDate=&lang=default

News on the support for Baltic fisheries: EU reaches provisional agreement on reducing fishing fleet in the Baltic with support from EU funds

23rd September 2020

This goes back to the October 2019 Fisheries Council meeting when due to substantial reductions in fisheries for western Baltic herring and eastern Baltic cod, the Commission and ministers agreed to help those most affected. The Commission put forward a proposal – it focused on eastern Baltic cod. After talks and negotiations in co-decision, agreement reintroduces permanent cessation for vessels, but under certain conditions, and until the end of the current EMFF period 2014-2020. It will be for fleets fishing, or which used to fish, for eastern and western Baltic cod and western Baltic herring. Read:

https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/fisheries-eu-reaches-provisional-agreement-reducing-fishing-fleet-baltic-support-eu-funds_en

The EU Council also reports on it here:

22nd September 2020

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/09/22/informal-deal-on-measures-to-support-fishermen-and-sustain-fish-stocks-in-the-baltic-sea/?amp;utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Informal+deal+on+measures+to+support+fishermen+and+sustain+fish+stocks+in+the+Baltic+Sea

The “Our Baltic” Conference Monday 28th September 2020

The Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevičius organised a high-level conference on possible actions to redress the situation concerning the Baltic. In the declaration signed at the meeting, the Ministers expressed deepest concern for the predominant pressures on the marine environment that has led, amongst other impacts, to the degradation of the biodiversity of the Baltic Sea, among others unsustainable fishing patterns particularly in areas where active bottom trawling has taken place. They agreed that, without further steps and efforts to tackle these pressures immediately and effectively, there will be no further improvement in the state of the Baltic Sea and of its coastal areas. Go here to find agenda, information on speakers, and the ministerial declaration:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/our-baltic-conference_en

And please find a short report from BSAC Secretariat here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/getattachment/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest/OURBALTICCONFERENCE28092020BSACreport.pdf.aspx?lang=en-GB>

Facts and figures on the Common Fisheries Policy

26th June 2020

It states here that fishing is a noble profession, but it's often tough, yet deeply satisfying. The booklet here informs on the complex and captivating universe of European Union fisheries. There are key facts from across the entire chain, ranging from production to consumption. It informs on fishing fleets, aquaculture and trade. And find out about what the European Union does to ensure the environmental, economic and social sustainability of EU fisheries, and the role it plays in doing the same around the world. Facts and figures here:

https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/cda10e39-ba77-11ea-811c-01aa75ed71a1?fbclid=IwAR300d8hlpp0ojZ6yvn6M5f6srZupcmaAG54Whlmzv3On9Ov4b_c_g-pstA

Baltic Sea: Commission adopts report on the Baltic multiannual plan (for cod, herring and sprat)

14th September 2020

Ahead of this autumn's negotiations on fishing opportunities for 2021, the Commission has adopted a report taking stock of the multiannual plan (MAP) for the Baltic Sea. Overall, the Commission considers that the MAP has been helpful in implementing the common fisheries policy, notably for setting fishing opportunities, although the Baltic Sea also faces wider challenges that affect ecosystems and fisheries.

“The report on the multiannual plan for the Baltic Sea clearly demonstrates the complexity of managing fish stocks in an environment with multiple and constantly evolving pressures. I have called the Our Baltic conference later this month to agree a comprehensive approach, so that we can turn around the situation in the Baltic Sea and put it on a long-term sustainable footing. We cannot blame the fishing sector alone, we must address various pressures on the Baltic Sea altogether”, said Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries.

There are references to the input provided by the BSAC on pages. 6-8, and 10-11. See here:

https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/baltic-sea-commission-adopts-report-multiannual-plan_en

FARNET

8th September 2020

The latest guide can be found at “Forward-looking strategies for fisheries areas”

<https://farnet.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=765ddc153895d89c26648f4e4&id=5e470596ad&e=e232823791>

The guide aims to help FLAGs develop more focused and ambitious local strategies to respond to a variety of new challenges facing fisheries areas. It provides tools for critical reflection on the past and drawing lessons for the future on the contents of local strategies, integrating cooperation into local development strategies, and the planning FLAG activities.

The August issue of the EUMOFA Monthly Highlights has now been published.

Download here:

<https://www.eumofa.eu/documents/20178/401562/MH+8+2020+EN+final.pdf/fb6e00cd-c96a-97c3-116b-6edadf320fac?t=1599469676568>

EUMOFA general is here:

<https://www.eumofa.eu/en/market-analysis#monthly>

European Parliament news and meetings

Web streamed meetings of the Committee on Fisheries:

There was a Committee meeting on Tuesday 22nd September

They dealt with the Commission's report on the multiannual management plan in the Baltic

Monday 28th September

There were a lot of third country fisheries agreements and a look at the budget for 2021

On Thursday 1st October 2020

More third country agreements and under AOB will be the proposal on capacity limits for the cod fishery in the Baltic and the Commission presenting its proposal for the fishery for 2021

Agenda:

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/PECH/OJ/2020/09-28/1213531DA.pdf

Next meeting 12th October 2020.

The September PECH newsletter is here:

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/211606/Trawler%20September%202020.pdf>

Working document on on the consequences of rising seawater temperatures for fish stocks and fisheries (this is an own initiative by PECH)

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/PECH/DT/2020/09-01/1209644EN.pdf

Motion for a European Parliament Resolution: More fish in the seas?

About measures to promote stock recovery above the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), including fish recovery areas and marine protected areas (2019/2162(INI))

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/PECH/PR/2020/09-01/1202523EN.pdf

EFCA Control Agency news and meetings

EFCA holds its Advisory Board meeting on 9th October 2020

All Advisory Councils will meet online with the EFCA representatives. Invite and agenda here:

[http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/EFCA-Advisory-Board-meeting-\(4\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/EFCA-Advisory-Board-meeting-(4))

Vacancy for the function of Executive Director of EFCA: deadline for applications 9th September 2020

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:C2020/231A/01&from=EN>

https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/index_en

News from other ACs

The AC Secretariats will get together by virtual means on 1st October 2020

They'll talk about experience so far with virtual meetings, which look set to last for a while yet; guidelines updated by the Commission on managing the finances and administration of the ACs, as well as recent exchanges of letters about membership of some of the ACs.

ICES and science

For full information of ICES work, go to www.ices.dk

ICES held a Workshop on Fisheries Management Reference Points in a Changing Environment September 2020

It met to:

- a) Review the robustness to environmental and ecological change (e.g. environmental, density dependent or ecological shifts in productivity and distribution) of the current ICES concepts for estimation and application of fisheries target, range and limit reference points.
 - b) Define appropriate changes in estimation and application of fisheries target, range and limit reference points; within the framework of the management objectives of robustness of advice, precautionarity and yield, in response to:
 - i. environmentally induced changes in stock productivity,
 - ii. change in species interactions,
 - iii. stock density induced changes in stock productivity,
 - c) Propose a step wise approach to making appropriate changes in target, range and limit reference points
- The Workshop will report by 23 October 2020

An ICES Workshop on the Future of Eel Advice WKFEA November 2020 to February 2021

It will work by correspondence (2 November 2020–29 January 2021) and meet from 1–5 February 2021, at ICES HQ in Copenhagen, Denmark, to discuss the current advice framework, consider options for future assessment and advice needs, and draft a roadmap towards recommendations for a new or adapted advice framework on fishing opportunities and potentially other anthropogenic pressures on European eel. It will provide recommendations for advice and potential approaches to deliver those recommendations to ICES, GFCM and EIFAAC. To achieve this aim, the WK will address the following ToRs:

ToR 1: Does the current advice include recent methodological advances and current knowledge?

ToR 2: What are the options for improving the evidence base and adapting advice?

ToR 3: Scope the needs for advice and the concepts with the requesters, in order to determine the feasibility for requesters to meet their management objectives.

ToR 4: What is the future of eel assessment and advice?

WKFEA will report by 28 February 2021 for the attention of ACOM.

An ICES Workshop on the Inclusion of Discard Survival in Stock Assessments (WKSURVIVE) February 2021

It will meet 9–11 February 2021 to:

Progress and extend the work of the dissolved ICES WGMEDS (Working Group on Methods to Estimate Discard Survival)

Explore the feasibility and utility of incorporating new discard survival estimates in stock assessments in principle.

Review the various approaches taken to integrate discard estimates in current assessments in the context of applying discard survival estimates.

Present case studies which aim to explore the implications to stock estimates and reference points of introducing discard survival estimates, or potential error caused by using inaccurate discard survival or omitting discarding entirely.

Maintain the work of WGMEDS in developing discard survival assessment methods and to progress understanding of the factors effecting discard survival.

Decide whether a new ICES Working Group would receive sufficient support and provide the correct mechanism to progress the objective of utilising discard survival evidence in stock assessments.

Develop guidance to assist benchmark workshops and assessment expert groups to determine whether the available survival estimates are sufficiently robust and representative to be utilised.

Develop methods to combine the results of survival studies on a given stock conducted with different gears, seasons, areas and handling methods to derive an overall best survival estimate of discards for the stock.

Propose standard approaches to including discard survival in catch scenarios for different assessment types.

Agree methods for presenting discard survival information in the advice sheets for the different ICES stock categories (1-6).

WKSURVIVE will report by 1st March 2021

Bycatch of protected and potentially vulnerable marine vertebrates – review of national reports under Council Regulation (EC) No. 812/2004 and other information

22nd September 2020

ICES summarizes bycatch information and provides advice on the likely impacts of fishery bycatch to marine mammals, seabirds and marine turtles in 2018, based on bycatch data reported by EU Member States under Council Regulation (EC) No. 812/2004 and other information. However, ICES notes that the current state of knowledge, together with data collection schemes and reporting formats, does not allow for robust assessment of Protected, Endangered, and Threatened Species (PETS) bycatch and evaluation of fishing effects.

<http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2020/2020/byc.eu.pdf>

ICES has published its report from the Workshop on fisheries Emergency Measures to minimize bycatch of short-beaked common dolphins in the Bay of Biscay and harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea (WKEMBYC)

https://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Expert%20Group%20Report/HAPISG/2020/WKEMBYC_2020.pdf

ICES held a webinar on the impacts of COVID -19 on fisheries, markets, communities and management

It was on 16th September

It was difficult to hear all of it live

But you can see and hear it all now:

http://ices.dk/events/webinars/Pages/webinar_2020.aspx

HELCOM

HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan Update workshop on biodiversity, including extraction of species and spatial measures, for the consideration of proposed new actions. was held on 31st August – 2nd September 2020 (most relevant for the BSAC). It held the workshop was convened to evaluate proposed new actions for the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP). Key background information to the workshop were the results of the analysis of sufficiency of measures (SOM analysis) that is carried out to support the BSAP update and the synopses on new actions for the updated BSAP that have been submitted to HELCOM. At the workshop commonly agreed criteria The workshop took place online. The **Notes from the HELCOM BSAP UP workshop on biodiversity**, including extraction of species and spatial measures, for the consideration of proposed new actions (HELCOM BSAP UP WS-BIO 2020), have been made available on the HELCOM Meeting Portal. Or you can contact us – we've got them all.

HELCOM FISH 12-2020

The Twelfth Meeting of HELCOM Group on Ecosystem-based Sustainable Fisheries (FISH 12-2020) will be organised on **11th -12th November 2020**. Documents for the Meeting will be made available in due course on the FISH 12-2020 Meeting Site. See draft agenda here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/HELCOM-FISH-12>

HELCOM GEAR 23-2020

The 23rd Meeting of the HELCOM Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach, (GEAR 23-2020), will be held online, 9th -11th November 2020. As part of the first half day of the meeting, an informal session is planned for informal exchange of Contracting Parties' national experiences in MSFD implementation. The Meeting will consider:

- regional coordination in relation to MSFD, specifically to the update of MSFD PoMs,
- progress on the update of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, including sufficiency of measures,
- scoping and planning for HOLAS III and associated processes.

See draft agenda here:

<http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/External-events/HELCOM-GEAR-23>

Other information/reading

Read about liverworm in cod - latest research from DTU Aqua research student

Jane Behrens Senior researcher at DTU Aqua shares with us a research article from PhD student Marie Plambech Ryberg on liver worm in cod. She encourages us to share it.

Attached 

More on cod – the eastern: the DOCUMENTARY on COD

Denis Loctier, Euronews, wrote to the BSAC Secretariat:

It's been a long time since you kindly helped me with the contacts for the Baltic cod story — the COVID pandemic wreaked havoc on our production plans, but I'm glad to say the story is being finalised and will go on air and online next week. Thanks to your help, and despite the very unusual circumstances, we could arrange this filming in Kołobrzeg, where Ryszard Malik very kindly assisted us with all necessary contacts, and at DTU Aqua, where we could talk to several researchers. The 8-minutes long story will go on air starting on 20:50 CET on Tuesday next week. It will of course be simple and concise, since this TV story must remain short and generally accessible, but I hope it will nevertheless help the public better learn of the eastern Baltic cod problem and its complex causes. Here's the approximate airing schedule of Ocean on Euronews (changes are possible in case of breaking news and other emergencies):

The same evening, the programme will be published in multiple languages on our website:

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/09/01/fishermen-in-poland-fear-for-their-jobs-as-cod-numbers-decline>

Focus on cod and seals: From Danish Fishing News Fiskeritidende – take a tour around Denmark and go to Bornholm

24th September 2020

Listen to a fifth generation fish retailer from Århus who's travelling around Denmark finding out about the fish and fisheries that provide his shop with fish. This time he's on the island of Bornholm. He talks to two fishermen who say: There should be room for fishermen and seals on Bornholm. It's a film in Danish.

Watch how the herring is smoked just like it's always been, see how it's served. Fisherman Bo talks about fishing from Bornholm: catching and selling fish. But there's no fish to catch because of seals and lower quotas. He began by selling fish direct from the boat. Then bought a van to drive round on the island. Not many fish shops on Bornholm. Tourists come and ask for the fish. They don't know about the problems fishermen have with seals. Fish stocks gone down.

Now getting supplies from other parts of Denmark. So very few local supplies. So what to do? Regulate the seals. According to Bo, it's due to the seals. He talks about how the seals behave. Also the parasites.

Then there's Henning: - he normally fishes, but nothing right now, due to seals. And again, the parasites. He says with a population of 60.000 seals. Each one eats 5 kilos of cod per day. That's 300 tonnes a day. So takes them two days to eat the Danish quota. In Denmark it's allowed to shoot 40 seals. Up to now they've shot 32. But it can have a scaring effect on the seals. There must be room for seals, fish and fishermen. He sets a figure of 10.000 seals: that would be better balance. Film link next page:

https://fiskeritidende.dk/nyheder/fiskeri/2020/september/der-skal-vaere-plads-til-baade-saeler-og-fiskere-paa-bornholm/?utm_source=youngcrm&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=Nyhedsbrev+uge+39+2+2020+

Fisheries management: Read about Pulling mechanisms and pushing strategies: How to improve Ecosystem Advice Fisheries Management advice within the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy

This is in Science Direct. It looks at Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), and asks: to what extent can the needed advice be provided? And how prepared is the management system to integrate ecosystem advice?

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S016578362030268X>

Two news items on stickleback

1. Marine Ingredients (MID) has an article on stickleback

2nd September 2020

They talk about the changes that have taken place in the Baltic ecosystem since the 1970's, from the large populations of predator fish such as cod, pike and perch, to now being dominated by prey fish such as herring, sprat and stickleback. This development is described in a recent article: "*A spatial regime shift from predator to prey dominance in a large coastal ecosystem*" (Eklöf *m.fl.* 2020)."

Marine Ingredients see this as an opportunity to increase catches of the prey fish sprat and stickleback, in order to restore the ecosystem balance of the Baltic. They refer to the practice in Denmark to restore lakes by fishing up prey fish and releasing predator fish such as pike. The same thing could be done in the Baltic. See the MID short article here and access the science article:

<https://maring.org/news-events/hundestejler-en-ny-fiskeriressource-i-oestersoeen/>

2. More on stickleback: Marine news from Stockholm University 3/2020, September

A spatial regime shift to stickleback dominance

27th August 2020

Large numbers of three-spined stickleback have gradually taken over larger parts of the Baltic Sea's coastal ecosystem, shows a new scientific study. Stickleback is a small prey fish common in aquatic food webs across temperate Europe. The stickleback contributes to local ecosystem 'regime shifts', where young-of-the-year pike and perch decline in individual bays, and these shifts gradually spread like a wave from the outer archipelago into the mainland coast.

This disturbing change is shown in a unique study conducted by researchers from Stockholm University, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the University of Groningen (Netherlands), which is now published in the scientific journal *Communications Biology*.

<https://www.su.se/ostersjocentrum/english/research/habitats-and-biodiversity/plant-fish/a-spatial-regime-shift-to-stickleback-dominance-1.512847>

There are some reactions to the Commission's proposal for TACS for the Baltic for 2021:

The Fisheries Secretariat has its own reaction to the Commission proposal on the fishery in the Baltic 2021

1st September 2020

<https://www.fishsec.org/2020/09/01/commission-proposal-on-fishing-opportunities-in-the-baltic-sea-for-2021/>

The Baltic Fishermen's Association Statement on the EU Commission's proposal for the fishery in the Baltic in 2021

The Secretariat of the BFA shared with the BSAC its above statement in reaction to the Commission's proposal. See here: <http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

Commission propose major cuts: Baltic Eye reports

10th September 2020

The European Commission proposes cuts for most commercial fisheries in the Baltic Sea next year. That confirms that the situation is dire for both fisheries and the marine environment, according to fisheries experts at the Stockholm University Baltic Sea Centre.

<https://balticeye.org/en/fisheries/commissions-suggested-quotas-for-2021/>

There's a focus on eel here

Fisheries Secretariat focuses on European eel in three ways:

1. HELCOM is revising targets on eel

18th September 2020

<https://www.fishsec.org/2020/09/18/helcom-is-revising-targets-on-european-eel/>

2. On the ICES advice on eel for 2021

25th September 2020

<https://www.fishsec.org/2020/09/25/ices-advice-on-european-eel-for-2021/>

3. And that the EU Eel Regulation not yet in target with the Lisbon Treaty

25th September 2020

<https://www.fishsec.org/2020/09/25/eel-regulation-not-yet-in-line-with-lisbon-treaty/>

Then there's bottom trawling

The Fisheries Secretariat shares the information on the WWF call for a partial ban on bottom trawling

28th September 2020

This was publicised in connection with the EU conference on Our Baltic and reports on the WWF call on ministers to reconsider bottom trawling. The link then goes to the WWF website.

<https://www.fishsec.org/2020/09/28/wwf-is-calling-for-partial-ban-on-bottom-trawling-in-the-baltic/>

The WWF calling for a ban on bottom trawling in the Baltic

28th September 2020

It also features in something called Nord News:

<https://nord.news/2020/09/28/wwf-criticism-of-bottom-trawling-in-the-baltic-sea/>

Biodiversity and what MSC thinks

United Nations Report on Biodiversity – and its link with Marine Stewardship Council

See this media advisory note on the fifth UN Global Biodiversity Outlook

15th September 2020

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2020/pr-2020-08-23-gbo5-en.pdf>

The UN report looks at developments from 2010 to 2020

The findings are gloomy. But the UN report highlights that life in the sea can be maintained or rebuilt in areas where there is good fisheries management. It also notes that sustainable fishing depends on healthy ecosystems, and that the increase in MSC certified fisheries is a clear step in the direction towards reaching the biodiversity targets and the global UN target number 14 life under the sea.

The Marine Stewardship Council picks up on it and highlights that consumers can make choices.

<https://www.msc.org/media-centre/news-opinion/news/2020/09/15/what-does-the-un-s-new-biodiversity-report-mean-for-sustainable-fishing>

Marine Stewardship Council meeting on 7th – 10th September - sustainability assessment of the Poland flatfish (flounder, turbot and plaice) trawl, gillnet and longline fishery and Polish pelagic fishery against the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification standard.

The certifying body, SAI has recently completed draft reports for the Polish flatfish fishery and herring and sprat fishery - the Announcement Comment Draft Reports (ACDR), which have been uploaded and is available for review and download on the MSC website

<https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/poland-flatfish-trawl-gillnet-and-longline/>

<https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/poland-herring-and-sprat-midwater-trawl-and-gill-net/@assessments>

These reports were discussed during the on-line site visit organised by SAI on 7th – 10th September 2020. All key stakeholders from the Polish Ministry, scientific institutes, NGOs, fishermen organisations, fisheries inspectorates participated and answered questions from SAI on fisheries management.

The next step is the publication of the Public Comment Draft Reports for both pelagic and flatfish fisheries in the end of October 2020. The assessment processes will hopefully be finalised in the beginning of 2021.

Coalition Clean Baltic on cleaning up the Baltic, and on harbour porpoise

1. CCB: European nations under pressure to save the critically endangered Baltic harbour porpoise

11th September 2020

At a meeting of northern European nations held online this week, the issue of the critically endangered harbour porpoise population in the Baltic Sea was discussed and debated. The population in the central Baltic Sea numbers in the low hundreds and needs urgent action to stop it from going extinct. Recently, the EU Commission has put pressure on the member states to implement strict measures to protect the porpoises.

<https://ccb.se/2020/09/european-nations-under-pressure-to-save-the-critically-endangered-baltic-harbour-porpoise/>

2. Clean Games Baltic Cup 2020: a one-hour challenge to clean the Baltic Sea region

18th September 2020

For the second year, on 19th September, people from all over the Baltic Sea Region will take part in the Clean Games Baltic Cup [1], a one-hour challenge aiming at cleaning up and collecting the most amount of garbage from green and coastal areas.

The tournament will be interactive through the use of a mobile app [2], allowing the participants – divided into different teams – to follow a map where the littered areas in their cities are marked. The teams will compete with each other in their city and also in the whole tournament, while the organizers will give them the scores. All results and rating will be available in an online scoreboard and the winner will get the cup.

<https://ccb.se/2020/09/clean-games-baltic-cup-2020-a-one-hour-challenge-to-clean-the-baltic-sea-region/>

Find out more about pelagic fisheries in the Baltic and other waters from Swedish Pelagic Federation PO

In Swedish, but there's a lot on the website. They mention the recent MSC certification of pelagic fish in the Baltic and how much that means to Swedish fisheries and which vessels. There's a Swedish calendar showing when Swedish fisheries take place during the year, and there's a map overview:

<https://www.pelagic.se/>

Going small scale: The Association for Low Impact Coastal Fishery PO

On their website with news for September, they refer to the need to change some of the provisions on the coastal management system in Denmark, that fishermen following a regulation scheme for less active vessels in the western Baltic don't have enough cod; there's an article by FSK biologist Hanne Lyng Winther on ongoing work to develop a Danish label for fish caught using low impact gears, and finally, on an event they held early September together with WWF at the quayside in Copenhagen to talk about: are low impact fisheries part of the solution (to the challenges facing the marine environment, overfishing, consumer access to fish). In Danish:

<http://skaansomtkystfiskeri.dk/nyheder/>

The Danish label for fish from coastal fishery and using low impact gears is on the way

The Danish administration is working on finalising rules for those who want to apply for the label. It will be free of charge to apply for it.

The Danish newspaper Fishing News had an article on it 5th September 2020, with some critical viewpoints from some fishermen and a comment from one of the directors of the Danish Fishermen PO: he's positive about strengthening coastal and low impact fisheries, but finds it strange that the label will include imported fish. The Danish ministry reply that the label mustn't discriminate against other EU countries. Above named biologist Hanne Lyng Winther replied to the article in Fishing News 19th September 2020. A link to the draft Danish government order here:

<https://prodstoragehoeringspo.blob.core.windows.net/d12757ef-5718-49d1-8b7b-cc22e81d89ce/Udkast%20til%20bekendtg%C3%B8relse%20om%20m%C3%A6rkningsordning%20for%20fisk%20fanget%20kystn%C3%A6rt%20med%20sk%C3%A5nsomme%20redskaber.pdf>

3 bits of Angling news – from European Anglers Alliance

1. They report on an event on angling tourism and its contribution to EU tourism, after COVID-19

16th September 2020

<https://www.eaa-europe.org/news/14374/recfishing-forum-event-on-angling-tourism-the-report-is-available.html>

2. Focus on the EAA member Danish Sportfishing Association

22nd September 2020

<https://www.eaa-europe.org/news/14387/introducing%e2%80%a6-the-danish-sportfishing-association.html>

3. An event on biodiversity and hydropower: a green deal for migratory fish? 28th October 2020

29th September 2020

<https://www.eaa-europe.org/news/14414/next-recfishing-forum-event-biodiversity-and-hydropower-a-green-deal-for-migratory-fish.html>

There's a new girl in town: Someone starting up: BW2030

This is all about the new organisation Baltic Waters 2030: New organisation to save cod in the Baltic

From the website of Swedish Fishermen PO

28th September 2020

The SFPO inform about this new organisation, based on Gotland, and which will be working for a cleaner Baltic. One of its main goals is to release small cod into the Baltic

The founder of the organisation is Ann-Sofi Mattson, who's donated a large part of the funding for BW2030.

<https://www.sfpo.se/nyheter/ny-stiftelse-ska-radda-torsken-i-ostersjon>

<https://balticwaters2030.org/>