

# INVITATION

## Webinar on "An introduction to Forage Fish in the Baltic Sea"

by The Fisheries Secretariat

15 March 2024 – 13:00 -14:00 CET



### About this webinar

Forage fish are small pelagic species such as European sprat and Atlantic herring. These fish play a key role in the ocean ecosystem as a food source for larger fish including cod and salmon, as well as for marine mammals and seabirds. They are also culturally and economically important – sprat and herring have traditionally been among the most lucrative fisheries on the Baltic Sea. Today, three of the four Baltic Sea herring stocks, Central Baltic herring, Bothnian Herring and Western Baltic herring, are now in poor shape. Only the well managed Riga herring is not declining. Additionally, both Baltic cod stocks, which rely on sprat and herring as prey species, are on the verge of collapse. It is clear that the Baltic Sea ecosystem is in severe distress and the health of forage fish populations is a core cause of this.

In this webinar our marine expert Lina Birgersson will give an introduction to the biology of forage fish and their importance in the Baltic ecosystem and our policy expert Sara Söderström will introduce FishSec's new project: Small Fish – Big Impact. We end the webinar with a Q&A session with experts from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the UK government on the recent UK decision to close the sandeel fishery in the North Sea. Part of the rationale for this decision was the importance of this forage fish as a food source for seabirds and other wildlife.

#### AGENDA

13:00 – 13:05	Opening webinar
13:05 – 13:25	The importance of forage fish in the Baltic Sea ecosystem – Lina Birgersson (The Fisheries Secretariat)
13:25 – 13:40	Introducing Small Fish – Big Impact project – Sara Söderström (The Fisheries Secretariat)
13:40 – 13:55	Q&A with UK experts on the recent closure of sand eel fishing in their waters

You can register for the free event through this link:

<https://forms.gle/Y1a9hchVaKRFy3sa9>

We hope to see you at the webinar and look forward to discussing its content with you.

Kind regards  
The Fisheries Secretariat

