

With regard to a catastrophic situation of Baltic fish caused by excessive and uncontrolled industrial fishing for fish meal, we call upon the representatives of European Commission, European Parliament, scientists and all the environmental organizations to take immediate and decisive action aimed at saving the Baltic Sea ecosystem through introduction, without delay, legal solutions that will result in an immediate end to excessive and long-standing pelagic fishing for fish meal, which is then used to feed farmed Norwegian salmon. In order to restore an earlier biological balance in our sea we need to remove the main causes of Baltic Sea degradation as soon as possible and stop fishing for fish meal forever.

We are aware of the fact that such course of action, however necessary, will meet a fierce opposition from fish meal lobby, which for many years has successfully influenced the European Commission, which issued legal acts permissive to this kind of fishing, the effects of which we can now see in the Baltic in the form of unprecedented destruction of fish resources, which has for many years been leading fishermen across the Baltic Sea towards bankruptcy. This practice has to stop, as its continuation puts at risk not only fish resources, but also thousands of Baltic fishermen facing economic problems and having no alternative to their current profession.

In spite of this concern being voiced for many years, no-one has, as yet, taken any activity within the European Commission, EU Council or BALTFISH, who undertake despicable activities aimed at further hiding from the European public opinion the sad truth about catastrophic situation of fish stocks in the Baltic Sea and undermining of ICES advice without undertaking any scientific research that would confirm the current catastrophe in fish resources.

The EU institutions introduce political deals and solutions which are contrary to ICES advice, for example the EU Council agreed to decrease cod TAC by 20%, in spite of the ICES scientists calling for a 56% reduction. The effects of this particularly harmful political activity can be seen in the Baltic ecosystem today through the following biological changes:

1. In the Baltic Sea, the cod above 40 cm length are now practically extinct, which means a deep degeneration of spawning stock which put the very existence of Baltic cod population in danger (lack of significant elements of Baltic cod spawners has already resulted in two bad recruitment years).
2. In the Baltic Sea, excessive and uncontrolled industrial fishing has been carried out for many years, which are the main cause of lack of food and starvation carnivorous fish which causes their extinction (cod, founder, lamprey, fourbeard rockling)
3. The excessive industrial fishing has resulted in significant dispersion of prey for demersal fish and a decrease in spawning efficiency of pelagic fish themselves, which already threatens their population.

We consider therefore that since all Baltic fishermen (Swedes, Germans, Latvians, Danes, Estonians, Lithuanians) have an unequivocal position on this matter and it is consistent with the position of many scientists, the EU institutions must draw appropriate conclusions and take decisive steps to save the Baltic ecosystem and fishermen that fish in this sea. Lack of reaction to further degradation of our sea may lead to a situation observed in New Founland fishing grounds, where overfishing cod prey up to this day does not allow to recover the cod population and other fish species. Leaving our

postulates without reaction and allowing for a complete extinction of the Baltic Sea would also be an utter failure of European Union itself and its institutions responsible for finding legal solutions on fisheries.

We are satisfied at current determination in the activities of Polish government concerning the preservation of fish stocks and fisheries both at national and Union for a, which fills us with hope for real effects in recovering fish stocks in the Baltic Sea.

Addressees

1. European Commission DG MARE
2. European Parliament (Mr Jarosław Wałęsa MEP)
3. Ms. Prime Minister Beata Szydło
4. Environmental Organizations
5. ICES
6. BALTFISH
7. BSAC

Attachments

1. Article "The fodder problem of the Baltic Sea"
2. List of signatories