



## Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Continuation of the project on Baltic-wide assessment of coastal fish communities in support of an ecosystem-based management

FISH-PRO III 1-2019

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### Background

HELCOM FISH-PRO II prepared a compilation of information on coastal recreational fisheries in the HELCOM countries. The compilation was considered by FISH 6-2017 that noted that FISH-PRO can support the updating of the information also in the future.

This document contains the latest version of the compiled information on coastal recreational fisheries in the HELCOM countries, as background for discussions on recreational fisheries impact evaluation.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to recall the compiled information on coastal recreational fisheries in the HELCOM countries.

## Coastal Recreational fisheries in the Baltic Sea countries

### Introduction

A questionnaire was sent to the participants of FISH-PRO II in January 2015. Replies were received from Denmark, Sweden, Åland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia), Lithuania, Poland and Germany. Information on recreational fisheries in Russia (Kaliningrad) was presented at the meeting of FISH-PRO II 2-2015.

The information compiled in 2015 was reviewed and updated in 2017 with comments provided by Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia and Poland. The summarized information is described below, and more detailed replies are presented in the annexed table (**Annex 1**). The questions presented in the questionnaire are in italics.

### Questionnaire results

*1) Is there any monitoring or recent surveys on the recreational fisheries in the Baltic Sea in your country? Which method is used in the monitoring (questionnaires, numbers of licenses etc.) and at which frequency are the surveys carried out?*

Surveys on recreational fisheries in the Baltic Sea are carried out on a regular basis in Denmark, Sweden and Finland including Åland, annually in Denmark and Sweden, and every two years in Finland. In other countries (Latvia, Poland, Estonia, Germany, Russia), there is no regular monitoring of anglers' catches but the numbers of fishing licenses are monitored in Poland and Estonia. The number of issued licenses for angling in coastal waters is known for part of the German coast (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern waters), but hard data on fish actually caught are not available. However, there is data on anglers' catches from occasional studies based on interviews or questionnaires. In addition, catch data is available from specific areas in Estonia, e.g. from salmon rivers. In Poland there is currently no general monitoring of recreational fishing (including all allowed fishing methods) carried out. The National Marine Fisheries Institute in Gdynia is carrying out a board observer programme (Multi-Annual Programme of Fishery Data Collection, responding to the requirements of the EU Data Collection Framework - DCF).

Recreational fishery (using gill nets, long lines etc.) is more intensively monitored in Latvia and Estonia. In Latvia, the subsistence fishermen have to fill in daily logbooks as do the commercial fishermen. In Estonia, the obligation to report catches is often ignored.

*2) Recreational fisheries catch and effort data starting from the beginning of 2000s (if available). If there is no monitoring, please give a rough estimate of the recreational fisheries catches compared to commercial fisheries?*

In Denmark, the recreational catches are clearly smaller than the commercial catches, although there is a high variation between areas. In Sweden and Finland the significance of recreational fisheries is larger, and the catches of most desired species (perch, pike, pikeperch, sea trout) clearly exceed the commercial catches, or are at least on the same level (pikeperch and whitefish in Finland). In Estonia there is obligation to report data on the catches of passive gears, but this obligation is often ignored, which decreases the reliability of the data. Thus the significance of recreational fisheries in relation to commercial catches is not well known in other countries than Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. In Germany, the cod catch of anglers is of the same magnitude as the commercial cod catch. In Latvia, the flounder catches of recreational fishermen may be significant.

*3) Which kind of licenses are needed for recreational fisheries?*

In some countries angling without reel is free (Sweden, Finland, Estonia). For other gear types licenses and permits from water owners are needed, and often the license is for a restricted number of gear units (see

the Appendix table for details). In Germany, anglers have to pass an exam to get a license. In Russia, there is free access for recreational fishermen to common waters without any licenses, but access to private or rented area depends on the owner.

*4) Which gear types are allowed/used in the recreational fisheries?*

In almost all countries recreational fishermen are allowed to use also passive gears such as gill nets and fyke nets. However in Poland only angling and spearfishing is allowed. In Germany only "hobby fishermen" (having a former job in fishery) are allowed to use passive gears, anglers are only allowed to use rods and sinking bait nets, the latter being rarely used (in particular for catching fish bait).

In Russia, recreational fishermen are not allowed to use any nets, and the number of hooks is restricted to 10.

*5) Most important target species*

The fish species mainly targeted by recreational fishermen are largely the same in all countries, but there are some differences depending on the type of the coastal waters. There are freshwater species such as perch, pike and pikeperch, migratory species such as sea trout and whitefish, and marine species such as cod, salmon, herring, and various flatfish species. In Denmark, Latvia, Poland and Germany also garfish (*Belone belone*) and European eel are important.

*6) Which management measures are used in the recreational fishery? Are there catch regulations (bag limits), minimum or maximum size limits for given species, restricted effort?*

Bag limits limiting the daily catch of a certain species are in place in Sweden, Latvia, Poland and Germany reported daily quotas for e.g. sea trout, salmon, pike and other species. In Finland, a daily quota for salmon was established in 2016. More common are limitations of the effort, mainly as numbers of fishing gear and hooks used. Minimum size limits are applicable in most countries also covering most commonly caught target species e.g. cod, salmon, sea trout, pikeperch, pike and also several other species. In connection with the minimum size limits mesh sizes of gillnets are often regulated. Other management measures include closed areas or seasons, mainly to protect the spawning of the target species. Specific restrictions can be set by water owners.

*7) Significant changes in recreational fisheries or catches during recent decades?*

In Sweden and Finland, the development of recreational fisheries is largely similar. The use of gillnets and other passive gears has become less popular, and rod fishing takes a larger proportion of the catches than before. The equipment for rod fishing is very effective and species-specific methods and lures are available.

In Finland, a new Fishing Law came into force in the beginning of the year 2016, which caused changes concerning the national fishing license and minimum size limits of some fish species, and fishing bans for some threatened species in the sea area.

In the Polish marine waters, rising popularity of recreational fishing is notable. Availability of specialized equipment and fishing methods has increased. There are also conflicts between anglers and commercial fishermen.

In Lithuania, salmon and sea trout fishing in marine waters has increased. There has also been a considerable increase in recreational fishing of cod in the Baltic Sea during the past decade.

Thus the recreational fishing may apparently affect the fish stocks in coastal areas and should be more intensively monitored. The monitoring of marine recreational catches has been a legal requirement for all

EU Member States since 2002 continuously, see (EC) No 1639/2001 | EU 2008/949 | 2010/93/EU | C(2013) 5243 | (EU) 2016/1251. In the Baltic Sea, this covers cod, salmon, sea trout and eel. In addition, eel stocks need to be monitored and managed according to the European Eel Regulation (EG) 1100/2007. Despite the legal obligation to monitor marine recreational fisheries the available data is still patchy.

## Annex 1. Results of the questionnaire by country

Country	Denmark	Sweden	Åland	Finland
Monitoring of recreational fisheries	Annual interview survey (combined telephone and internet recall survey). EU obligations to monitor recreational catches of cod, eel and sea-trout. Relative catches of these species to commercial fisheries are estimated.	Annual questionnaires (sent out three times a year). Results reported every fourth year, since 2014 annually.  Starting in 2015 more intensive monitoring in focus areas.  2017: Sweden is nowadays also conducting surveys among recreational fishermen in the Sound and Southern Baltic Sea with focus on cod	Surveys every two years (Åland included in the national surveys of Finland).	National surveys every two years, from some years also other surveys
Data availability or significance vs. commercial fisheries?	Anglers: >70 % fish in marine waters.  Data available: cod and eel catches from 2009 and for sea-trout since 2010.  Eel 80-116 t annually (Commercial landings in 2011 was 370 t). Cod: 1231 -1666 t annually (mostly angling). Recreational catch of cod was 4.5 % of total yield.	For perch, pike and pikeperch recreational catches 90-95% of total catches. Whitefish 65%, trout 80%, salmon 20 % of the total catches.	Catches 2012 (data not available for 2014): Perch 92 tons (commercial 134 tons) Whitefish 28 tons (commercial 53 t) pike 33 tons (commercial 15 tons)  Total 228 tons (commercial 302 tons)	Catch and effort data available by sea area. Catches in 2000 - 2014: Perch 1800-3000 tons Pike 900-2300 tons Roach 400 -1300 tons Whitefish 300-900 tons Pikeperch 300-600 tons Sea trout 100-300 tons The recreational perch, pike and roach catches are multifold compared to the commercial catches; sea trout about double, and whitefish and pikeperch catches roughly on the same level

Country	Denmark	Sweden	Åland	Finland
				as the commercial catches.
Licenses	License is needed for rod or angling fishing for persons between 18 and 65 y. Passive gear fisheries (eg. gillnets, fykenets) have to pay a license that is slightly higher than the angler license and is obligatory for all. This license allows fishing with 3 gillnets plus 3 fykenets or a total of 6 fykenets. The catch cannot be sold.	Free angling (except MPAs). Gillnets or other passive gears permits from water owners.  In public waters restricted number of nets or pots allowed for anyone	License from water owner, no general license.	Angling without reel, and rod fishing from ice are free; for other fishing license is needed for persons between 18 and 65 years. The license involves the right to fishing with one rod and reel; for gillnets, fyke nets etc. permits from water owners are needed.
Gear types	Anglers: rod and reel  Passive gears: gillnets, fykenets	Gillnets, fyke nets, pots, rods and reels (no strict restrictions)	Gill nets, rods, small fyke nets, short long lines	Gill nets, rods, small fyke nets, wire traps, short long lines
Target species	Anglers: Sea trout, garfish (Belone belone), cod, salmon, various flatfish species.  Passive gear: eel caught in fykenets, flounder (Pleuronectes flesus) caught in gillnets.	Pike, whitefish, perch, pikeperch, sea trout, salmon, cod, herring, flounder, plaice, turbot.	Perch, whitefish, pike	Perch, pike whitefish, pikeperch, sea trout, bream and other species, e.g. Baltic herring
Catch quotas or effort restrictions	Effort restrictions (gear number and size).	Pike 3 fish per day (Bothnian Bay not included). Kattegat 2 fish per day for salmon and sea trout. Limitations for the number of	No quotas	Salmon: quota 2 salmon per fisher and day. Fishing ban for grayling, and sea trout with adipose fin in Gulf of Finland and in the whole sea area from 2019. Maximum number of gillnets is 8 per fisher;

Country	Denmark	Sweden	Åland	Finland
		passive gears.		also local restrictions of effort, e.g. numbers of gillnets
Minimum size limits	Size limits (minimum sizes of fish)	Pike length 40-75 cm TL.  For pikeperch, grayling, salmon, sea trout and cod minimum size limits for angling.	pike 55 cm pikeperch 37 cm salmon 60 cm sea trout 50 cm bream 42 cm whitefish 35 cm	pikeperch 42 cm salmon 60 cm (in northern Bothnian Bay 50 cm) sea trout with adipose fin 60 cm sea trout without adipose fin 50 cm (originates from stocking) grayling 35 cm (totally protected in the sea area)
Other restrictions	Closed periods, area restrictions in coastal areas, gillnets not allowed closer than 100 m to coastline and protected areas around all river mouths.	River mouths and waters < 3 meters depth passive gears not allowed in the Gulf of Bothnia (to protect sea trout, salmon, whitefish, eel). Protected spawning areas/ times or migrations along the coast for different species. Salmon with intact adipose fin have to be released.	Fishing of pikeperch prohibited 1-25 July.  The water owners can set different regulations: closed areas or seasons, higher minimum sizes, restricted number of gears.	The water owners can set different regulations: closed areas or seasons, higher minimum sizes, restricted number of gears
Others		Fishing with passive gears has become rarer, fishing with rods and reels more common. More effective equipment for rod fishing, almost 2 million sport fishermen. Local impacts on ecosystem are likely.		Similar development as in Sweden: fishing with passive gears is less popular as before, rod fishing specifically targeted for e.g. pikeperch, perch or pike has become very effective, fishing tourism from inland areas is

Country	Denmark	Sweden	Åland	Finland
				common.

Country	Latvia	Estonia	Lithuania
Monitoring of recreational fisheries	No monitoring of anglers' catches, daily logbooks in subsistence fishery  Questionnaire on anglers will be carried out again in 2017 and 2018	Numbers of licenses continuously monitored. Other data from areas of special interest (salmon rivers etc.)	No monitoring
Data availability or significance vs. commercial fisheries?	Data from subsistence fishery from 1993, data from angling in 2007 and 2012	Obligation to report data on catches from gillnets, longlines or areas of special interest (data not reliable as often not reported).	No data on recreational catches
Licenses	License is needed for rod fishing or angling for persons between 16 and 65 years, gear-specific limited licenses for subsistence fishing.	No license for angling without reels. Daily licenses for other rod fishing. Separate licenses (limited numbers) for gillnets, longlines and special areas.	Licenses needed for recreational fishing; daily licenses in salmon and sea trout rivers.
Gear types	Only rods and spear fishing allowed. In subsistence fishery (own consumption) also gillnets, trap nets etc.	Gillnets, longlines, rods, live bait, harpoon guns	Rods and traps for crayfish

Target species	Perch, flounder, sea trout, cod, garfish and several other species. In recent years also – invasive round goby.	Pike, pikeperch, sea trout, salmon, perch, whitefish, flounder	Inland and Curonian lagoon: almost all freshwater species (e.g. perch, pikeperch, pike, bream etc. Baltic Sea: e.g. cod, flounder, perch, round goby, smelt, garfish, salmon and seatrout.
Catch quotas or effort restrictions	10 kg/day for perch, flounder and smelt, 1 individual of salmon and sea trout, 10 individuals of cod (+ several other quotas in subsistence fishery)  Restricted number of fishing gears		7 kg bag limit for the Curonian Lagoon, since 2015 smelt is not limited. Baltic Sea: 1 salmon, 1 sea trout, 1 whitefish; 5 turbot, 15 cods  Restricted effort (number of rods/hooks)
Minimum size limits	Perch - 19 cm (only in coastal areas of Baltic Sea and Gulf of Riga); salmon - 60 cm; sea trout, pike and eel - 50 cm; pikeperch – 45 cm; cod - 35 cm and several other size limits for different species	TL (cm)  Perch 19 (only in sea), pikeperch 44 (sea), pike 45, salmon 60, sea trout 50, whitefish 35, flounder 21 (ICES area 28) or 18 (ICES areas 29 and 32)  See e.g. <a href="http://www.kalateave.ee/et/kalapuuk/kutsealine-puuk/kalade-alamoodud">http://www.kalateave.ee/et/kalapuuk/kutsealine-puuk/kalade-alamoodud</a> for complete list	Minimum size limits for several species

Other restrictions	No fishing allowed during spawning time and river mouths	Gillnet mesh size limitations, no fishing allowed during spawning time on certain areas and river mouths. (See <a href="http://www.kalateave.ee/et/kalanduse-teabekeskuse-trukised1/3739-veebi-janutiseadme-rakendus-kalapuugipiirangud">http://www.kalateave.ee/et/kalanduse-teabekeskuse-trukised1/3739-veebi-janutiseadme-rakendus-kalapuugipiirangud</a> for details)	Closed seasons for some species related to their spawning seasons
Others			Increase in salmon and sea trout fishing in marine waters. Considerable increase in recreational fishing of cod in the Baltic sea during the past decade.

Country	Poland	Germany
Monitoring of recreational fisheries	No monitoring of catches before	Annual monitoring of marine recreational catches in the German Baltic Sea, since 2005 as multispecies survey (data collection initiated in 2002)   Specific surveys for specialized recreational fisheries, e.g. eel, salmon, sea trout
Data availability or significance vs. commercial fisheries?	Number of angling licenses annually, data available since 2004. Data from the questionnaire interviews with participants of organized fishing cruises. Data from onboard observer monitoring programme relating to cod catches since 2004.	Available time series data for cod from 2005 onward.  Marine recreational catches relevant for cod, salmon and sea trout
Licenses	Individual licenses, or ship owners or for the organizer of the fishing event	Individual licenses obligatory, applicants need to pass an examination (annual fee required)  In addition to license, a coastal fishing permit is required for recreational fishing in coastal waters of the Baltic Sea.
Gear types	Only angling and spearfishing allowed	Only angling allowed (rod and line, sinking bait nets allowed but rarely used); “hobby fishermen” who had a former job in the fishery are allowed to use limited numbers of gillnets, hooks and eel baskets.
Target species	Cod, sea trout, salmon, garfish, sea trout, bream, eel, herring, flounder	Marine: Cod, sea trout, salmon, herring, flatfish, garfish, eel Estuaries & lagoons: pike, perch, pikeperch, pike, herring, sea trout, eel
Catch quotas or effort restrictions	Limits of daily catch of each species per one angler, limited number of rods (one rod per person).	Limits of daily catch in numbers of valuable species, limited number of rods, limited number of hooks Limited number of gears for recreational passive gear fishermen.
Minimum size limits	Individual size limits for several species (more details in the document 4.2).	Minimum landing sizes

Other restrictions	Protected spawning seasons/areas.	Spawning closures, area closures
Others	<p>Rising popularity of recreational fishing in the Polish marine waters. Availability of specialized equipment, fishing methods. Increasing conflict between anglers and professional fishermen. Currently developed new Law on Marine fisheries provides a number of changes in the recreational fishing in the Polish marine waters. It implies significant pricing of fishing licenses and the rules of reporting the catch (see document 4.2).</p>	<p>Based on a nationwide telephone-diary survey in 2015 the numbers of anglers fishing in the Baltic Sea is estimated at 163,000. Some fishing methods have increased over time, e.g. salmon trolling. Others have decreased, e.g. charter boat fishing with a shift towards private boat fishing. Fluctuation of total fishing effort seems limited, however new regulations might change this.</p>