

International national key players in Baltic Sea fisheries.

IBSCF

The Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts (the Gdansk Convention), and the establishment of the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission was signed 1973 by Finland, Denmark, both the German states, Poland, Sweden and the Soviet Union: the seven founding Members.

To allow for membership of the European Community, Article 17 of the Convention was amended, authorizing States and "intergovernmental economic integration organizations" to accede. In 1992, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania acceded to the Convention. Denmark, Germany, Finland and Sweden have become members of the European Community and consequently have withdrawn from the Convention in accordance with its Article 19.

Until 30 April 2004, there were six Contracting Parties: Estonia, the European Community, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. As of May 1 2004, all member countries except Russia are EU members and the future of IBSFC is uncertain and may be replaced by a bilateral agreement between Russia and the EC.

The IBSFC meets generally once every year to set TACs and distribute quotas. Scientific advice on TACs comes from ICES. The negotiations are political and have so far almost always resulted in TACs well over the scientific advice. For environmentalists, it shows that there is a lack of a common sense of responsibility for the entire Baltic ecosystem and fish stocks and more of a "run-for-the-catch" scenario. In other words, this phenomenon is known as the tragedy of the commons.

HELCOM

HELCOM is the governing body of the "Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area" - also known as the Helsinki Convention.

HELCOM's main goal is to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution, and to restore and safeguard its ecological balance.

In the light of political changes, and developments in international environmental and maritime law, a new convention was signed in 1992 by all the states bordering on the Baltic Sea, and the European Community. After ratification the Convention entered into force on 17 January 2000. The Convention covers the whole of the Baltic Sea area, including inland waters as well as the water of the sea itself and the sea-bed. Measures are also taken in the whole catchment area of the Baltic Sea to reduce land-based pollution.

Priorities of the HELCOM are: eutrophication, hazardous substances, pollution from land and maritime transportation, environmental impacts of fishery management and practices, protection and conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity.

HELCOM's fisheries activities has so far been focused on restoring wild salmon populations but is also involved in marine protected areas, which could play a very important role in sustainable fisheries.

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, ICES.

ICES is the organisation that coordinates and promotes marine research in the North Atlantic. This includes adjacent seas such as the Baltic Sea and North Sea. ICES act as a meeting point for a community of more than 1600 marine scientists from 19 countries around the North Atlantic. Scientists working through ICES gather information about the marine ecosystem. As well as filling gaps in existing knowledge, this information is also developed into unbiased, non-political advice. Our advice is then used by the 19 member countries, which fund and support ICES, to help them manage the North Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas.

ICES plans and coordinates marine research through a system of committees, more than 100 working groups, symposia, and an Annual Science Conference.

ICES is the prime source of advice on the marine ecosystem to governments and international regulatory bodies that manage the North Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas such as the Baltic Sea. The 19 member countries of ICES are: Belgium, Canada,

Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Baltic Fishermen's Association

The association is a network of the different national fishermen's organization.

CCB

In Helsinki, February 1990, non-governmental environmental organizations from the countries of the Baltic Sea Region united and established Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) in order to co-operate in activities concerning the Baltic Sea. CCB is a politically independent, non-profit association. Currently CCB unites 27 member organizations from Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden. Together the member organisations of CCB have over half a million members in all countries around the Baltic Sea.

The main goal of CCB is to promote the protection and improvement of the Baltic Sea environment and natural resources.

A common denominator for the CCB network is to look for the opportunities, to encourage a new and constructive thinking and to engage people to be part of the solutions instead of being part of the problems. As an international network organization, CCB has the advantage of being able to work both at the international and national policy levels and with concrete field projects. Promotion of Baltic Sea sustainable fisheries practices is a Priority Area for CCB.

National key players in Baltic Sea fisheries.

Estonia

The Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment is the main key player in Estonian fisheries. Fish resources in Estonian waters belong to the Estonian state and the management of this resource is the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Environment has the Fish Resources Department, established in 2001 to replace the Fisheries Board and the Fisheries Department, manages and co-ordinates research, assessment, exploitation, reproduction and protection of fish resources. Fish Resources Department has 14 workers. The Fish Resources Department is trusted with shaping the national fisheries policy. Its main objective is to create a competitive yet sustainable field of economy meeting the requirements of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy. Besides Fish Resources Department there are fishery specialists in the local Environmental Services, whose responsibility is to issue fishing permits, collect fishing statistics and ensure implementation of governmental fishery policy on local level.

The Ministry of Agriculture

As of March 2001, the fisheries matters are divided between two ministries: besides the Ministry of the Environment also the Ministry of Agriculture. Department of Fishery Economics of the latter deals with issues of pisciculture, production, processing and marketing of fish and fish products, structural fishing policy excluding the fishing fleet. The main objectives of the Strategy Department are: to organize and co-ordinate the marketing environment of fishery; to participate in the organization and co-operation of international collaboration in the field of fishery according to internationally and nationally recognized practices; to participate in monitoring the performance of obligations under fishery conventions and international fishery agreements. Department of Fishery Economics has 7 workers.

The Environmental Inspectorate

Environmental Inspectorate is the domain of Ministry of Environment. Minister of Environment canalizes and coordinates the work of the inspectorate. Responsibility of the inspectorate is to organize environmental supervision in Estonia. Due to this Environmental Inspectorate controls performance of fishery legal acts, inspects fishing

harbours and fishing vessels in Estonian waters and makes propositions to the minister about fishing restriction or closures if fish resources are endangered.

The Estonian Marine Institute, University of Tartu

Estonian Marine Institute is the main academic R&D institution on interdisciplinary marine science in Estonia. It was established in 1992 and has today 60 workers. Marine Institute offer explanations about processes which taking place in the Baltic Sea ecosystem, assessment, monitoring and prediction about aquatic living resources condition, to give academic advice about sustainable exploitation and protection of these resources based on scientific researches assess human activities environmental impacts. One of the institute priorities is also to develop international co-operation in marine science area, especially in ICES.

Estonian Fishermen's Association

It is established in 1995 and aggregates fishing enterprises and fishing organisations in Estonia. Today has 66 members. Members are both trawling fishery companies and regional coastal-fishermen unions. Objective of the alliance is to help and protect its member's interests. Henceforward objectives are to improve and secure a stable development of the national fishery.

Regional coastal-fishermen unions

Besides state-wide fishermen alliance where are regional fishermen unions in coastal counties: Pärnu (220 members), Saaremaa (80), Hiiumaa (41), Läänemaa (60), Narva-Jõesuu (70). Important part of Estonian small-scale fishery takes place on big inland lakes Peipsi and Võrtsjärv. Fishermen on the coast of Peipsi have two unions and there is fishermen union on the coast of Võrtsjärv also. Objectives of the regional coastal-fishermen unions are quite same to state-wide fishermen alliance: participate in law making process, forward fishing information to its members and member's proposals to governmental level. In long-future regional coastal-fishermen unions objective is to preserve small-scale coastal fishery alive. Fishermen unions trying more and more start to process the fresh fish their selves. Also they are participating in reproduction activities.

Anglers clubs

Former time's anglers clubs were very popular and the amount of members was huge, but after the collapse of the Soviet system most of the anglers clubs discontinued. Today there are approximately 20 anglers clubs in Estonia. But most of the anglers in Estonia are not members of anglers clubs today. The main activity of anglers clubs is to distribute fishing and environmental acts, explain their contents and promote sustainable fishing. They are also distributing angling permits and information about allowed and banned places for fishing.

Alliance of Estonian Fish Producers

AEFP is a non-governmental organization, whose main goals are to secure a stable economical situation in fish production and to raise Estonian fish products ability to compete on the open market. It has 22 main members, but with subsidiary firms altogether 31 members.

NGOs

Unfortunately the NGOs are not involved to fishery management in Estonia. Fishery management has been restricted to the nongovernmental sector. Estonian Green Movement has been involved in Baltic salmon protection issues – promoting harmful sides of hydropower for migrating species. Estonian Fund for Nature is involved to seal protection and this way also to fishery and seals conflict. Estonian Ornithological Society has been involved in the fishery and bird conflict.

Germany

Here follows a list of the key players in the Baltic region and their representatives. Additionally some further information on their positions about long term fisheries management.

There are four main groups: scientists, fishermen, authorities and NGOs.

1. Scientists:

Federal Research Centre for Fisheries – Institute for Baltic Sea Fisheries.

Dr. Cornelius Hammer (Director), Dr. Peter Ernst (Deputy)

Regional Fisheries Research Centre of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

Hans Joachim Jennerich (Director)

Position: Reduction of fishing effort. They want to see an introduction of lower catch quotas and long-term quota management. The scientists demand a ban on fishing out of the Eastern Baltic Sea cod stock. Additionally we need the introduction of more selective fishing gear to avoid by-catch of small specimen.

2. Fishermen:

Landesverband der Kutter- und Küstenfischer Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Regional fishermen's association).

Norbert Kahlfuss (Manager)

Kutter- und Küstenfisch Rügen GmbH, Saßnitz (Catch and Marketing)

Günther Grothe (Economic Manager)

Saßnitzer Seefischer e.G. (fishing cooperative)

Wolfgang Henckel (Economic Manager)

Position: That the main problems of the fisheries are the low stocks is not common opinion. Some fishermen believe that the situation is not as severe as it seems. Others demand different measures to deal with the overuse of stocks. One suggestion was the real time closure of areas with a lot of by-catch of juveniles. It seems that they prefer a long term management over today's short term (multiannual catch quotas as one example). At the moment we see only few young people deciding to learn the business. Therefore the organisations believe that the german fishing fleet will be much smaller in 10-20 years.

3. Authorities

Regional Fisheries Authorities of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Enforcement and Control).

Thomas Richter (Director)

Ministry for Nutrition, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

Gerhard Martin (Responsible Fisheries)

Position: The regional government (including the Regional Fisheries Authorities) is responsible for enforcement and control. Additionally within the ministry there are decisions about the subsidies for fisheries. There is no clear position on future fisheries management. They decide to subsidise the new herring processing plant on Rügen as ‘their long term’ goal. But this plant need something to process and can add to the pressure to fish.

Federal Office for Nature Conservation

Dr. Jürgen Ritterhoff (responsible for questions about fisheries and nature conservation)

Position: The Federal Agency is now responsible for the developing of the Natura 2000 network of marine protected areas in the Economic Exclusive Zone. They published a map with possible areas for nature conservation. Over the next 7 years management plans will be developed. Because of this, the Federal Agency is now a new key player in Germany. Their goal is also a sustainable use of fish stocks. Main concerns are the ecological problems with specific types of fishing gear. Long term goal is therefore the ban of some kind of fishing techniques and the rebuild of fish stocks.

4. NGOs

WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature).

Heike Vesper, Bremen

BUND Germany (nature conservation association)

Ralf Döring, Greifswald

Position: The main theme of WWF is the possible certification of Baltic fisheries to push the sector towards long term and sustainable use practices. Also BUND works on the introduction of long term fisheries management in the Baltic Sea (within CCB).

Sweden

The Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries is the overall responsible political body for fisheries in Sweden.

The National Board of Fisheries is the central government authority for fisheries conservation and fisheries, sorting under the Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. The Board has its head office in Göteborg. The Board is responsible for issues concerning sustainable use of fish stocks as well as the fishing fleet and fishing profession, including professional fishing licenses, vessel permits and long-term issues like recruitment to the fishery sector. It also deals with issues regarding the long-term development of the fishing fleet, among them, EU requirements aiming at adjusting the size of the fleet to available fish resources. The Board is also responsible for issues concerning the EU market organization, which aims to stabilize income for producers while offering consumers high-quality fish products. The Board issues licenses and distribute the quotas, implementing the fishery policies.

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency is a central environmental authority under the Swedish Government. The tasks, according to the instructions laid down by the Government, are to coordinate and drive forward environmental work nationally and internationally. The Agency sorts under the Ministry of Environment. The Agency's fishery related tasks has mostly to do with the protection of non-commercial fish and other marine species and with marine protected areas.

The County Administrative Boards are the Government's local branches. There are 21 Boards with the authority to establish closed and/or protected areas.

Fishermen's organisations.

Swedish Fishermen's Federation (SFR) is the most influential group of fishermen. They are not the only one, since fishermen with less intensive practices have started independent organizations such as the Coastal Fishermen. There is a dividend between fishermen with more intensive practices and those with less intensive practices are getting wider. Historically, the Fishermen's Federation has had substantial influence on the political and the bureaucratic levels to further their interests. Recent studies indicate that that SFR is perhaps the most influential player in the fisheries arena. The successes of their lobbying campaigns are well known.

The **Fish Business Association** (Fiskbranschens Riksförbund, FR)

FR is the organization of trade and industry in the fishery in Sweden.

Green NGOs. The most important greens are the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), WWF Sweden and The Swedish Anglers Association. Greenpeace Sweden is also involved in the issue. The greens enjoy a high public esteem and increasing political influence, but are behind of the fishermen's organizations in terms of pushing actual changes in the policies.

Lithuania

The governmental institutions:

1. The board of the sea – Government authority.
2. All fishery regulations and quota delivery in the Lithuanian part of sea is assigned to the department of fisheries at the Ministry of Agriculture.
3. Almost all the fishery regulation functions in the territorial waters are assigned to the ministry of environment. All the fishery regulation implementation control functions are assigned to this ministry also.

4. The national fish – culture and fishery research centre at the ministry of agriculture. – this institution has some impact to the fishery and fish – culturing research results.
5. The national food and veterinary office – the control of the quality of the food enclosing fish products.
6. The scientific organizations (the institute of ecology at the Vilnius university, The university of Klaipeda, the national fish – culture and fishery research centre at the ministry of agriculture. According to the recommendations of these organizations the fishery regulation measures and the quotas are being determined.
7. The influence is possible from the office of protected areas at the ministry of Environment and the holders of the water pools, lakes – there is no information if they really have had some influence at any time.

The NGOs

1. The Lithuanian Green Movement
2. The council of fisheries implements the advisory function on fishery policy and strategy. It is established by the Ministry of agriculture. The structure of council is being confirmed by the Ministry.
3. The council of the fish resources at the ministry of environment – the advisory function established by the minister of Environment.
4. The different project implementation supervision groups established at the appropriate ministries.
5. The fish production and fishery related various organizations. Fisher associations. The association of fishery production.
6. The companionships of fishers and hunters. There are lots of such organizations, but their influence is low.

Latvia

After regaining of independence in the beginning of nineties the Ministry of Fishery was established and it was in charge of organising fishery. After reorganisation its functions were transferred to the Ministry of Marine Affairs however after its liquidation the management of fisheries was handled to the Ministry of Transport. Finally the National Board of Fisheries was subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture. The National Board of Fisheries according to its statutes is a state institution that elaborates and implements the national policy of fisheries within the frame of its competence. The Board is cooperating with other state institutions, legal entities and individuals, as well as with respective foreign and international organisations.

The main tasks of the Fisheries Board are following:

- to organise and participate in the development and implementation of national strategies, legal acts, harmonization of national legislation with EU legal acts related to the fishery sector;
- to ensure the inventory and collection of statistical data on fisheries, analyze the data and make market survey;
- to promote the attraction of foreign capital to the fisheries sector in Latvia;
- to provide necessary information on fisheries sector to the state and municipal institutions, as well as other legal entities and individuals;
- to issue the licenses and certificates and manage the fishing vessel list;
- to elaborate on public procurement on the development and research of fisheries sector and organise tenders on the aforementioned services; to control the execution of the contracts and the quality of results;
- to organise the trainings of specialists necessary for the fisheries sector, facilitate increase in their qualification and organise their evaluation;
- to provide consultations and information services in the issues related to fishery;
- fish resources management and regulation of fishing activities under the quota system in the inland, territorial and economic zone waters;
- representing Latvia in IBSFC, ICES, NATO and various FAO groups;
- concluding bilateral negotiations and fisheries agreements;
- participating in negotiations of free trade agreements;

- elaboration of sector development strategies;
- participation in drafting of legal acts and regulations in fisheries, including the implementation of EU legislation into fisheries sector;
- summarizing fisheries information and transmitting required information to relevant authorities;
- maintaining Latvian fishing vessel register data;
- dealing with issues related to fisheries science and restocking of fish resources;
- supervision and registration of fish processors and buyers.

National Board of Fisheries has following rights:

- to demand and receive necessary information from state and municipal institutions, enterprises and organisations operating in the field of fisheries, as well as from legal entities and individuals;
- to invite experts and contract them for specific tasks that are related to the accomplishment of assignments of Board;
- to represent country in international fisheries organisations’;
- to perform task works and provide paid services to legal entities and individuals;
- to constitute special expert committees in order to solve specific issues and ensure better coordination of activities with other parties.

Aforementioned duties and rights of the National Board of Fisheries is just the extract from statutes of the Board that can be interested to fishermen organisations, legal entities and individuals.

The Marine Environmental Board (MEB) is a state institution, part of the Ministry of Environment, implementing state policy in marine environmental protection, development of coastal areas and use of natural marine resources. MEB carries out fisheries control and enforcement in Latvian waters. Specific fisheries control duties include:

- undertaking vessel inspections in territorial and economic zone waters under Latvia’s jurisdiction;

- satellite monitoring of vessels;
- enforcement of fishing vessel logbooks and landing declarations;
- inspection of fishing vessel logbooks and landing declarations;
- issue and cancellation of fishing licenses;
- control of fish landings and first sale transactions at the ports.

The Latvian Fisheries Research Institute (LATFRI) works under co-ordination and supervision of the NBF and performs scientific research of fish resources, as well as participates in the internationally co-ordinated survey of fish resources within a framework of the International Council of the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). The LATFRI is currently responsible for data processing and maintenance of fisheries information systems. The Marine Biology Laboratory of Institute carries out marine and coastal fish surveys and is divided into three groups: the Demersal Fish Sector, the Pelagic Fish Sector and the Hydrologist's Group.

The Latvian Vessel Register of the Maritime Administration of the Ministry of Transport holds register of all vessels in Latvia including also fishing vessels, with an engine power of 55 kW or more. To meet EU requirements, a new Marine Code is expected to be issued, requiring the registration of coastal fishing vessels of under 55 kW. The Marine Code will also contain a requirement for measuring and marking of fishing vessels to be carried out in accordance with EU requirements.

The Food and Veterinary Service (FVS) of the Ministry of Agriculture carries out official controls of fish production enterprises, fishing and factory vessels and port facilities. In the area of market control of fisheries products, the FVS is responsible for the ensuring that landings of fish comply with freshness and size categories. The FVS also has responsibility for monitoring the content of dioxin and other toxins in foodstuffs in Latvia.

The Rural Support Service (RSS) of the Ministry of Agriculture deals with administration of national public aid and EU support in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries, including

SAPARD – EU Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development. RSS administers national and EU support to fisheries, receives, assesses and makes decisions on project applications and maintains records of payments and fund utilization. RSS will be the paying agency for payments under EU FIFG fund when Latvia will join the EU.

The cooperation between the National Board of Fisheries, the Marine Environment Board and NGOs is often formal. The National Board of Fisheries does not attempt to clarify the opinion of NGOs if it suspects that the opinion would differ from the management of the Board. Thereby also information prepared for decision makers at the Consultative Board of Ministry of Agriculture often is one-sided as the National Board of Fisheries serves as a secretariat of the Consultative Board. Alternative solutions often are not discussed if the opinion proposed favours the administration of the Board. Even less efforts to cooperate with fishermen NGOs in evaluating different aspects of monitoring and control of fishery is observed from the side of the Marine Environment Board.

Problem: the communication between state administration experts and fishermen and environmental NGOs is bad. The cooperation in decision taking is mostly based on private contacts. There are several meetings, where only management of Latvian Fisheries Association is invited while representatives of other NGOs are not invited. This is an example on how formal is the requirement for NGO involvement treated.

Poland

Fishery Administration

The Polish Baltic Sea Waters which consist of Internal Waters, Territorial Waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are a State property.

The fisheries administration in Poland is an integral part of a general agriculture administration which is organized in two-level structure. The overall responsibility for fisheries policy lies with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The

position of a regional management and administration authority is held by the three Regional Sea Fishery Inspectors (RSFI) - one on the west - Szczecin, one on the east – Gdynia and one in the middle of the Polish coast – Słupsk. (Fig.1).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

Department of Fishery is responsible for structural policy in the fishery sector. Fisheries Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is granted responsibilities in the area of data collection and processing, collection of fisheries statistics and determination of principles for prompt and efficient filing of statistical reports.

Regional Sea Fishery Inspectorate (RSFI)

Three Regional Inspectorates of Sea Fisheries (RISF) situated in Szczecin, Słupsk, and Gdynia are local authorities in charge of conducting fishery inspection in Poland.

They are obliged to perform the following tasks:

- Protection of maritime resources through *enforcing* legal regulations and establishing permanently and temporary protected areas as well as defining detailed conditions and rules of performing sea fisheries in these areas
- Definition of order and marking of fishing gear
- Supervision and enforcement of sea fisheries legal regulations control of fishing gear and caught sea organisms, control of vessels, conditions of fish storage on land, processing plants, control of permits and licenses to perform fisheries.

Fishermen NGOs

Fishermen organizations are really key players in Poland – e.g. the ministry consults them prior to division of national quota. The three most important are:

- Krajowa Izba Rybacka (Polish Fisheries Chamber),
- Stowarzyszenie Armatorów Rybackich (Fishing Shipowners Association)
- Zrzeszenie Rybaków Morskich (Sea Fishermen Union)

They created a Fishery Crisis Staff (Sztab Kryzysowy Rybo_owstwa) with it's headquarter in Kolobrzeg.

Owners of fish processing plants (producers' organizations) form another group having a big influence on the shape of Polish fisheries.