



European Economic and Social Committee

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All eyes on the Baltic

The start of the Swedish presidency of the EU on July 1st has helped to put the Baltic Sea into focus. The Baltic Sea is one of the prioritised themes for the Swedish Presidency. One of the issues on the agenda will be the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, requested by the Commission in 2007, and which has recently been adopted. And one key issue for the Baltic Sea is of course fisheries.

The BS RAC, the Swedish Ministry of Agriculture, and the European Economic and Social Committee are jointly holding a conference called: "Baltic Sea Fisheries: Lessons Learned and Future Perspectives." It will take place on 1st – 2nd October, and will take place at the Grand Hotel Saltsjöbaden on the outskirts of Stockholm. The aim of the conference is to give focus to issues facing the Baltic - especially at a time when discussions on the reform of the CFP will be well underway. The Swedish Ministry of Agriculture and the European Economic and Social Committee are supporting the costs towards this conference.

We are proud that all 8 Baltic EU ministers responsible for fisheries around the Baltic have confirmed that they will attend. Germany will be represented by a secretary of state. They are encouraged to set aside the first half day to discuss the future of fisheries and the environment of the Baltic Sea. The Commissioner for Maritime Affairs Joe Borg has also confirmed and accepted to present a view from the Commission on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and the challenges it presents for the Baltic Sea and for the BS RAC. Eva Kjer Hansen, Danish minister for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Kazimierz Plocke, Secretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, will step up to the podium and give their personal reflections on the future perspectives for the Baltic Sea fishery and the environment.

Experts and key people working directly or indirectly with fisheries have been invited to give presentations on fisheries control, the state of the stocks in the Baltic, integrated management, the environment and scientific cooperation. There will a case history of how new fisheries management methods have been introduced in Denmark, and there will also be a view from the market sector.

It is hoped that this conference will be as successful as the BS RAC conference held in 2007 on control and compliance and which produced the Copenhagen declaration on combating unreported cod fishery in the Baltic Sea. The aim at this conference is also to produce a ministerial declaration.

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To register for the conference, find the invitation here:

<http://www.bsrac.org/archive/Stockholm%20Conference/InviteALL.pdf>