

## Fisheries

### Fisheries in the context of BalticSCOPE

Fishing takes place in cross border areas in the South West Baltic such as e.g. the Middle Bank, Kriegers flak and Öresund. Any exploitation or change of use of an area may potentially negatively affect the fisheries. On the other hand, increased protection of fish habitats (via MSP) may strengthen the fisheries. Fishing is not suggested to be the main focus for the project as it is mainly regulated and handled within the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). However it will be necessary to take fisheries into account when spatial solutions are discussed and elaborated. Considering the complexity to collect and analyse cross border information on fisheries there is a need for a thematic group on fisheries. The role of the group would be to compile information on fisheries/habitats for the identified cross-border areas/hot spots (to be identified) and to analyse the impact on fisheries of any change of the use of the sea. The group would preferably consist of experts who work within the national fisheries administration, or can link to the administration. At some stage the project would benefit from input from stakeholders. Possibly the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (RAC) or the national fisheries organisations could participate at some stage.

### Background

Fishing is one of the most important forms of exploiting marine resources with special socioeconomic and cultural importance. Fish also constitutes an important ecosystem service.

Fishing takes place in more or less all waters. Small-scale fisheries is normally conducted in limited areas and sometimes on a stationary basis, while other forms of fisheries are more flexible in nature and are conducted over large areas. Fishing locations vary between seasons, but also depend on how fishing opportunities develop.

Fishing constitutes a traditional activity at sea and is likely to be affected by other new or expanded uses of the sea demanding space. Competition from other sea users may imply less flexibility for the fisheries, sometimes also reduced fishing possibilities.

Fishing is dependent on healthy habitats and migration corridors for the fish during its life span. Other uses may adversely affect these habitats or corridors to the detriment of the fish stocks and hence, the fisheries. Maritime spatial planning may however offer additional opportunities to protect these habitats.

Spatial claims and conflicts relates to steaming to and from fishing locations, fishing locations (static or for non-static gear), fish habitats, nursing areas and blue corridors.

### Fish and fisheries in the Southwest Baltic

#### General:

- Main species caught in Southern Baltic Sea:  
cod, herring, sprat, turbot, plaice, salmon, eel (BaltSEApplan report 26)
- Active and static gear are used
- Commercial fisheries in cross border areas: on/in and around the Southern Middle bank (PL, SE, DK, EE), Kriegers flak (DK, SE, DE?) and Öresund (DK, SE)

- Spawning areas in cross border areas, Öresund – cod (SE, DK), Bornholm basin – cod (SE, DK, PL), Gotland basin –cod historic (SE, EE, LT, LV)
- Leisure fisheries e.g. cod

### **Regulations:**

- The Common Fisheries Policy regulates fisheries
- Some examples of relevant CFP-features:
  - Special rules for fishing in neighbouring countries territorial waters (e.g. SE-DK in Öresund and in the Baltic Sea, DK-DE in the Baltic Sea)
  - Multispecies management plan for cod and herring
  - Cod closure areas (seasonal): Bornholm (cross border), Eastern Gotland (cross border) and Gdansk basins

### **Potential conflicts with other sea uses in the Baltic Sea:**

- Mining and dumping (fh, fl)
- Energy installations including cables (fh, fl)
- Marine conservation (fl)
- Traffic/Safety (static gear/traffic pattern) (fl, fh?)
- Between different types of fisheries (fh, fl)
- Cultural heritage (fl)

fh – fish habitats, fl- fishing locations

### **Planning evidence**

#### *Fishing activity*

There are no comprehensive maps of the fisheries at more detailed level, including data from the different countries readily available. There are however data collected within the CFP and some reports/studies available with some information on fishing activities in the Baltic Sea.

#### Data collection/fisheries management data

There are ample data on the geographical distribution of the fisheries, with the exemption of small scale fisheries (in particular vessels less than 12 meters). For small scale vessels exact fishing locations is not always reported in a detailed way (which is in accordance with EU-legislation). Small scale vessels constitute a very large share of all vessels, but a small share of the total catches. Data is collected nationally, but there is limited planning evidence at regional or sub-regional level available.

Some examples of data

- Catches; vessel, gear, species, quantities, location, time (log books; vessel > 10 meters)
- VMS-signals (vessels > 12 meters), AIS (vessels > 15 meters)
- Landings; vessel, species, quantities, first hand value, port, time
- Vessels; homeport, fishing activities (day at sea, engine)

#### Examples of available information in reports/studies:

- BaltSEAplan: Mecklenburg Vorpommern; study on commercial fisheries in territorial waters, Study on western Poland, species, gear, season, Marxian Analysis for the Pomeranian Bight
- SwAM: Marine Planning, current status report, 2014

- Helcom: Fishing by different gear types, 2007 (maps on-line)
- ICES advice: general information
- NordStream Atlas Map (general)

### *Fish habitats*

There are no comprehensive maps on essential fish habitats/spawning areas etc, but partial and squattered information for certain stocks/areas such as:

- Cod spawning areas: deep areas (e.g. Eastern Gotland basin (low), Bornholm basin/Arcona basin and Gdansk basin (low))
- Herring spawning areas: coastal areas (spring), off shore (autumn)
- Cod spawning area in Öresund (Swedish part), turbot southern Baltic, Swedish interest areas for fisheries