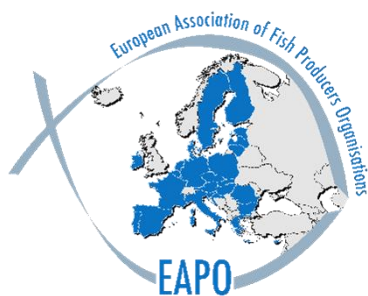


European Association of Fish Producers Organisations
Association Européenne des Organisations de Producteurs dans le secteur de la pêche



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Mr. Virginijus SINKEVIČIUS

European Commissioner
Environment, Oceans & Fisheries
European Commission
1049 BRUSSELS

EAPO23-55

Oostende, 14 September 2023

EU Transparency Register number: 46491656228-65

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

Subject: Meeting request on Central Baltic Herring Fishing Opportunities for 2024

I am contacting you on behalf of the members of the European Association of fish Producers Organisation (EAPO) with regard to the Commission's proposal to extend the closure for targeted fisheries in the Baltic Sea, as well as on the Central Baltic herring, to limit the TAC to unavoidable bycatches and on the advice for sprat fishery in the year 2024.

Fishermen and fishery-related local societies around the Baltic Sea have been faced with the cumulative impact of both climate change and non-fisheries related anthropogenic impacts. These have led to a series of decreasing TACs over the last few years. Herring representing up to 90 % of landings in certain areas, Baltic Sea fishers were taken by surprise by the Commission's proposal to close the target fishery and to limit the TAC to unavoidable bycatches.

As discussions surrounding fishing opportunities for Baltic Sea fisheries and more specifically for central Baltic herring and sprat in 2024 are coming to an end, we believe it is crucial to engage in a constructive dialogue to address the concerns and interests of the united Baltic fishing sector communities. We kindly request the possibility of scheduling a meeting with you and your esteemed team at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter in detail.

We have noted public information about the high-level meeting "Our Baltic Conference", organized in Palanga (Lithuania) on the 29th of September 2023 which, on your invitation, will bring together ministers from the 8 EU countries surrounding the Baltic Sea. EAPO members would be more than happy to meet there if you share the opinion that this would be the most appropriate and convenient option; time wise and location wise.

We look forward to receiving more information with regard to your availability in view of coordinating a Baltic Sector delegation for this important meeting. We remain at your disposal for any additional information or clarification you may require.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Esben Sverdrup-Jensen'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E' and 'S'.

Esben Sverdrup-Jensen
President