

# Baltic Sea: Council decides on how much can be fished in 2019

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On 15 October 2018 the Council agreed on next year's **total allowable catches (TACs) and member states' quotas for the ten commercially most important fish stocks in the Baltic Sea.**

The Council decided to increase fishing opportunities for **plaice (+43%), sprat (+3%), Western cod (+70%), and herring in the Gulf of Riga (+7%).** The Council also rolled-over the TACs for **main basin salmon,** and decided to decrease the future amounts to be fished for **Central herring (-26%), Bothnian herring (-7%), Western herring (-48%), Eastern cod (-15%), and salmon in the Gulf of Finland (-3%).**

Thanks to this agreement, 7 out of 8 stocks for which complete scientific advice was available will be fished in line with the principle of maximum sustainable yield (MSY), covering 98% of fish landings in volume.

The 2020 deadline we set ourselves for achieving the sustainability of our fisheries resources is getting closer. Today's decision is another important step towards meeting this goal, whilst at the same time respecting the socioeconomic viability of our coastal communities.

*Elisabeth Köstinger, Austrian federal minister for sustainability and tourism and president of the Council*

## The agreement in detail

Based on a Commission proposal, the agreed quantities take into account the commitment to meeting the objectives of the **Common Fisheries Policy (CFP),** including the **achievement of MSY,** as well as **scientific advice** provided in particular by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). The provisions of the **multiannual management plan for the Baltic sea** have also been closely followed.

In addition to setting TACs and national quotas on some species, the Council confirmed the extension to 2019 of some **management measures currently in**

**place** to improve the state of the stock **Baltic cod** (bag limitations in **recreational fisheries for the Western cod** and closure period from 1 to 31 July, with derogations for small coastal fisheries for the Eastern cod).

In the context of discussions on fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea, the Council also:

- introduced an inter-area flexibility for **salmon** from subdivisions 22-31 (main basin) to 32 (Gull of Finland) for those member states requesting it, together with measures to address misreporting of catches
- fixed the EU quota for **Norway pout** for the next fishing season running from 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019 to 50 000 tonnes, thereby guaranteeing continuity in the fisheries of this short lived species
- agreed on an in-year amendment to the TAC for **anchovy** and the modification of the TAC period that will now last until 30 June 2019

Preparatory work conducive to finding swift agreement was carried out at regional level through **BALTFISH**, a body providing a platform for discussion on important fisheries issues in the Baltic Sea, currently under Swedish chairmanship.

**Council agreement on 2018 catch limits in the Baltic Sea**

2019 TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCHES (TACS) IN THE BALTIK SEA

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