



## **BALTIC SEA CALL TO ACTION**

**Newsletter September 2025**

### **Summary**

- **The EU Commission's proposal for herring quotas in the Baltic Sea is a step in the right direction.**
- **We have published three debate articles concerning fishing in the Baltic Sea**
- **The EU's evaluation of its multiannual plan on fisheries in the Baltic Sea shows that the plan has failed miserably.**
- **Consultation meeting with the Government Offices**
- **Achieving a preparedness quota can be an important piece of the puzzle.**
- **The website is now also available in English, and more languages are in the pipeline.**
- **Why is herring so important for salmon?**
- **Now it is possible to make a contribution to our work.**

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### **The European Commission's quota proposal**

The EU quota proposal for 2026 was published in mid-August ([EU quota proposal 2026](#)). They propose a reduced quota of herring in the Gulf of Bothnia by 62% and that the quota for herring and sprat in the Central Baltic Sea remains unchanged. As for the collapsed herring stock in the western Baltic Sea, it is only allowed as bycatch today. The Commission wants to reduce this further with the introduction of newly approved more selective fishing gear. All the proposed quotas are clearly lower than the advice ICES has given and the proposals for herring are very close to the proposal developed by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, WWF, FishSec, Baltic Waters, Coalition Clean Baltic and Fältbiologerna, among others.

At a consultation meeting on 2 September with the Government Offices, the Baltic Sea Call to Action explained that we, like the above-mentioned organizations, are cautiously optimistic and believe the proposal is a step in the right direction, even if we want to restrict fishing even more. In addition, we also said that coastal, small-scale fishing for human consumption should not be subject to any restrictions on its fishing.

Now we really hope that the Fisheries Ministers around the Baltic Sea follow the EU's proposal when they make their decision in October. However, given how they have done in previous years, we are very uncertain. It is important that Peter Kullgren now contacts, explains, and argues with his colleagues now before the decision is made.

### **The EU's evaluation of its multiannual plan on fisheries in the Baltic Sea shows that it has failed**

The EU's Multiannual Plan (MAP) started in 2018 and has been in use until today. In this assessment, which came out in August, they show that it has not succeeded in rebuilding the collapsed cod stocks and the herring in the western Baltic Sea. The reason for this, they believe, is due to too small fish stocks, deteriorating environmental conditions, uncertain calculations,

and a political unwillingness to follow scientific advice. The evaluation recommends seven measures to improve fisheries management in the Baltic Sea. Sixty (60) pages of the [EU evaluation of the MAP](#) worth reading.

### **Why herring is so important for salmon**

Finnish researchers have now found a plausible explanation for why herring is so important for salmon population growth in the Baltic Sea and the Baltic Sea rivers ([Keinänen et al 2025](#) ; [Finlands Natur 2025](#)). The stock of wild salmon in the Baltic Sea has declined sharply. In the previously salmon-rich rivers of northern Sweden, there have been sharp reductions in fish that go up the rivers and in the same way a sharp reduction in smolts that come into the Baltic Sea from these rivers. A lack of thiamine, a B vitamin that is essential for salmon eggs to survive, has long been a suspected cause, but it has been unclear why there has been thiamine deficiency in salmon now. It turns out that while the herring is relatively rich in thiamine, thiamine is not as available in the fatter sprat. So, when the herring disappears in the Baltic Sea, the salmon is forced to eat more sprat and thus a thiamine deficiency occurs. When the salmon then go up into the rivers to spawn, they lay roe with poorer survival. Hence less salmon. Smaller herring stocks in the Baltic Sea – salmon eat more sprat – this results in thiamine deficiency in salmon – which leads to poorer reproduction – and fewer adult salmon. Everything is connected in the Baltic Sea's food web.

### **It is now possible to make a contribution to the work of the Baltic Sea Appeal**

All work on the Baltic Sea Call to Action has so far been carried out by volunteer work in our working group and expenses for website, sending out newsletters, travel and overnight stays have been entirely paid for by our own private wallets. Now that we have become so many and that we are now also invited to various meetings with decision-makers at different levels, the costs have risen.

We have received requests from you about opportunities to be able to make a voluntary contribution to our work and now on our [website](#) there is an opportunity to Swish a voluntary contribution. We will still pay for the work in Baltic Sea Call to Action with our own money but are grateful for voluntary contributions that help to continue our work to save the Baltic Sea herring. We thank you in advance for all contributions, both large and small.

### **Debate articles**

As we have told you in our Extra Newsletter, we have now received three debate articles in the national media. We have got "Save the herring with a contingency quota" and "The minister must take responsibility for the herring" in Svenska Dagbladet and "Listen to what the research says – reduce the fishing quota of herring in the Baltic Sea by at least 50 percent." in Sydsvenska Dagbladet and Helsingborgs Dagblad. The articles have attracted good attention, and we now also notice that what we say matters to people. But we are continuing to work on new articles about several aspects of the fishing of herring and herring in the Baltic Sea.

### **Something new is in the works**

In about a couple of weeks, we will present something completely new that we will present in an Extra Newsletter. We don't want to say anything more now but keep your eyes open. When it comes, we would like you to help us spread it on your networks.

### **We continue to grow!**

When we include the number of members and employees in the supporting associations, the other organizations, and companies, we are over **160,000** and in addition we now also have support from more than **1900 private individuals**.

During the month, we have brought in **4 new associations and companies** that support the petition and are now up to **a total of 123**. The new ones are:

- **Färjestadens Cykelaffär AB**
- **Gårdsbäcken AB**
- **Kullens Fiskareförening**
- **Skåre byalag**

Please continue to spread our Baltic Sea Call to Action among friends, acquaintances and everywhere! The more supportive members we represent, the greater the weight we have when we meet decision-makers at various levels.

### **Links worth reading**

Here are some interesting links for those who want to know more about herring fishing in the Baltic Sea. *To limit the length of the Newsletter, several interesting previous links have been removed. If you want to see them, then go to our previous Newsletters which you can find under News on our website [www.ostersjouppropet.se](http://www.ostersjouppropet.se).*

[\*\*Baltic Waters: Important signals from the EU Commission on fishing quotas in 2026\*\*](#)

[\*\*Baltic Waters: A hopeful look back at the past six months\*\*](#)

[\*\*Baltic Sea Centre: The European Commission's proposal - A step in the right direction\*\*](#)

[\*\*Baltic Sea Centre: ICES advice may lead to illegal herring quotas\*\*](#)

[\*\*Baltic Waters: Herring - our most readily available crisis food\*\*](#)

[\*\*Baltic Waters: International role models lead the way towards sustainable fish stocks in the Baltic Sea\*\*](#)

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