



B7 Baltic Islands Network **Rügen Chairmanship 2011**

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Statement

B7 Fishery Conference: “Maintaining of the traditional coastal fishery with regard to current EU-fisheries policy” 24th of May 2011, Sassnitz

Tourism is an important business area on all B7 Baltic Sea Islands. Tourists come and visit the seven large islands to relax and to experience things they miss in their all-day working life. A special experience for all tourists on islands is of course to see the daily life in smaller and bigger Baltic Sea harbours.

Knowing that fewer and fewer fishermen will be working in these harbours in future, processing their catches and selling it from their own fishing boats is a situation that even the hotel and restaurant owners in the islands don't even want to think about.

For that reason the politicians from all B7 Baltic Sea Islands decided to take care of this specific issue this year, to lobby for the maintaining of traditional coastal fishery in the Baltic Sea Area and to attend to the problems of the local fishermen.

It was the intention of the B7 Steering Committee members to bring together all involved institutions and persons to work out common approach for improving the situation of small scale fisheries now and in the future.

The B7 Fishery Conference on 24th of May 2011 in Sassnitz was a special platform to discuss reasons for the current difficult small scale fisheries situation, future perspectives of fishermen in the Baltic Sea area as well as motivation aspects of young people to work as fishermen.

The latest EU regulations and quotas and their practical implementation by the national authorities were special items of discussion. Here, the details are particularly important: As a possible solution the B7 politicians defined the stricter differentiation between small scale fisheries and the industrial fishery. Disconnecting the quota regulations for these two groups could simplify the situation for the fishermen, even if all are aware of the increasing administrative efforts.



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In the past the EU postponed the development of a herring fishery management plan several times. At the moment it is said that it should be completed till the end of 2011. B7 recommend their national responsible ministries to speak up for the suspension of the quota regulation for small scale fisheries till the management plan is presented.

Another obstacle is the connection of quota and fishing vessel which due to the funding rules makes it more complicated to replace old fishing vessels. In terms of the insufficient funding of necessary replacement investments for fishing vessels and essential operating tools the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection will be requested to give up its cautious position.

On behalf of B7 Steering Committee:

June, 2011

Uwe Ahlers
B7 President 2011