

Action plan for 2015-2017

To reach balance between the Latvian fishing fleet's capacity and the fish resources for fleet segment VL24-40 m Netters targeting Eastern Baltic Cod.

Taking into account the information mentioned in the Annual report on the Latvian fishing fleet 2013 and 2014 as well as the latest ICES assessment of the Eastern Baltic Cod which showed steady retrospective pattern of underestimation of fishing mortality, as well as the possible impact on the cod fishing netters fleet, Latvia has developed following action plan:

1. The unbalance between the fishing fleet's capacity and the fish resources allocated to Latvia had been revealed for the fleet segment VL 24-40 m Netters. The biological indicator for this fleet segment which was calculated in relation to target fishing mortality for Eastern Baltic Cod ($F_{\text{target}}=0.30$) of the long-term management plan shows that it is still above 1 (Annex Figure 1). The estimated actual fishing mortalities were taken from the assessment in WGBFAS2013 report. Besides it should be pointed out that the assessment of the Eastern Baltic Cod had steady retrospective pattern of underestimation of fishing mortality. This is illustrated by using for the calculation the actual fishing mortalities from the assessment of the previous year (WGBFAS2012) which gives much lower estimates of biological indicator than one year later. In 2014 due to this strong retrospective pattern the assessment of the Eastern Baltic Cod was rejected and new estimates of fishing mortality are not available.
2. Return on Investment (ROI) of VL 24-40m Netters in 2010 and 2011 had low positive values but had a negative ROI value equal -0.1 in 2012. The major factors causing changes in the ROI value was a negative profit for this segment in 2012. The fishing conditions worsened in 2012 when the fishing quota was utilised only by 65%. Evidently the economic indicators have worsened further in 2013 when the utilisation of the fishing quota dropped to 43%. The same or even worsen situation occurs also in 2014 fishing season.
3. The fleet segment VL 24-40m Netters perform very selective cod fishery targeting the biggest individuals from the stock. In the conditions when the growth of the cod and the number of bigger fishes has significantly decreased it would be important for biological reasons to save the bigger fish which is the most significant part of the spawning stock.
4. For time being is impossible to predict any development of the indicators for the remaining fleet segment (VL 24-40m Trawlers) that is also targeting cod because the biological reference points of fishing mortality and spawning stock biomass are unavailable for Eastern Baltic cod. However, since this fleet segment in most cases has fishing quotas also for sprat and herring which constitute the major part of the landings the influence of cod on total biological indicator is of minor importance (Annex Figure 2, Table 2).
5. To reach the necessary balance between fleets capacity and the fish resources the exit (scrapping) of vessels from fishery or fleet segment VL 24-40m Netters therefore is recommended.
6. It is recommended to eliminate the whole VL 24-40m Netters totally as this segment as it is targeting only cod and is unable to switch to other fish stocks in conditions when cod stock is in a bad state. The total number of vessels, their GT and kW for scrapping recommended is shown in Annex Table 1.
7. The exit (scrapping) of VL 24-40 m Netters is planned to be accomplished till 31st December 2017.

Annex

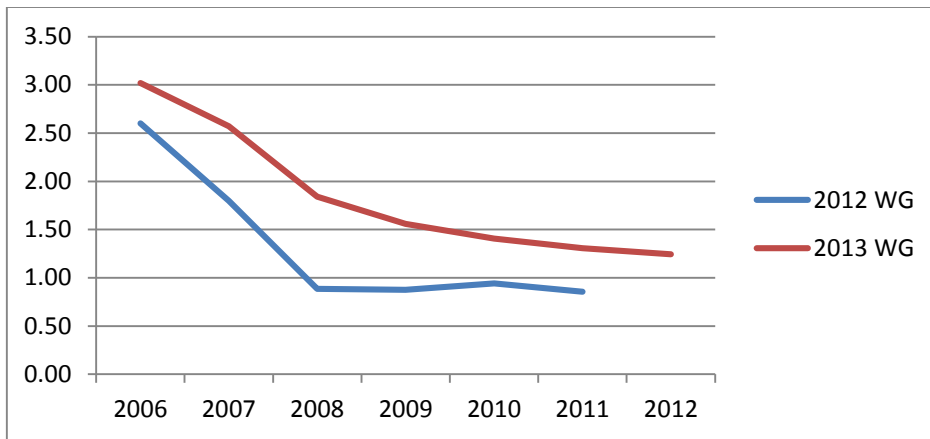


Figure 1. Biological indicator of VL 24-40 m Netters calculated as relation F/F_{target} ($F_{target}=0.30$). VL 24-40 m Netters perform only cod targeted fishery.

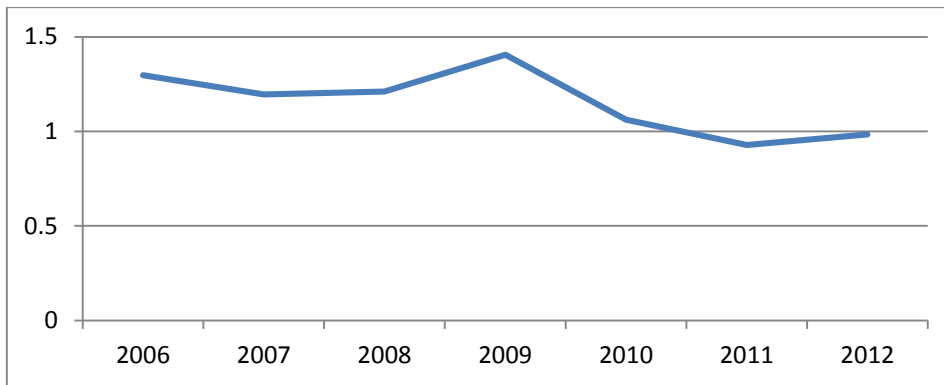


Figure 2. Biological indicator of VL 24-40 m Trawlers calculated as relation F/F_{msy} (for sprat $F_{msy}=0.29$, for herring $F_{msy}=0.26$, for cod $F_{target}=0.30$) and weighted by the landings for each species.

Table 1. Recommended number of VL 24-40 m Netters for exit (scrapping) from the fishery).

Number of vessels	GT	kW
5	457	970

Table 2. Data used and calculations of the biological indicator for VL 24-40 m Trawlers

Year	Fishing mortality			Biological indicator			Landings			Final biological indicator
	sprat	herring	cod	sprat	herring	cod	sprat	herring	cod	
2006	0.36	0.18	0.91	1.24	0.69	3.02	51943	2597	2670	1.30
2007	0.34	0.19	0.77	1.17	0.72	2.57	57941	2987	2109	1.20
2008	0.35	0.20	0.55	1.21	0.76	1.84	55143	3237	2300	1.21
2009	0.42	0.18	0.47	1.44	0.70	1.56	47655	3252	2745	1.41
2010	0.31	0.22	0.42	1.06	0.84	1.41	44019	3606	2595	1.06
2011	0.26	0.17	0.39	0.91	0.67	1.31	32143	2473	3154	0.93
2012	0.29	0.13	0.37	0.99	0.51	1.24	29600	2136	2961	0.98