

**31 May 2023**

**Action plan, linked to the 2022 fleet report, to address structural imbalances in the German fishing fleet under Article 22(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the common fisheries policy**

Article 22(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy ('CFP Regulation') requires the Member States to put in place measures to adjust the fishing capacity of their fleet to their fishing opportunities over time, taking into account trends and based on best scientific advice, with the objective of achieving a stable and enduring balance between them. Article 22(2) of that Regulation requires the Member States to prepare an annual report on the balance between the fishing capacity of their fleets and their fishing opportunities in order to achieve that objective.

The 2022 report on the German fishing fleet highlights significant variations in individual indicator values for certain segments of the fleet. In accordance with Article 22 of the CFP Regulation, the indicators used are based on guidelines for the analysis of the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities (Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council, COM(2014) 545 final of 2.9.2014).

In particular, there is a significant decline in important stocks for German fishers such as cod across the Baltic Sea and the western Baltic herring stock. In 2019 the catch quota for cod in ICES areas 22-24 was still some 75% of the 2016 quota, but in 2020 it dropped to a mere 30%. For the 2021 fishing year, the total allowable catch for western cod increased slightly to 853 tonnes, a 5% increase compared to 2020. For the 2022 fishing year, the catch quota was then slashed by a further 88% compared to the previous year, to a mere 104 tonnes of by-catches. The same by-catch quota applies to 2023. The herring quota was still around 34% of the 2016 quota in 2019, but dropped to a mere 12% in 2020. In 2021 the quota for this stock was again slashed to just 869 tonnes, reducing it by half. For the 2022 fishing year there was a further drastic cut of 50%, to a mere 435 tonnes. This quota was, with one exception, allocated as by-catch only to fishing vessels less than 12 meters in length fishing with passive gear. The same by-catch quota applies to 2023. Excessively high TACs and a sharp increase in natural mortality due, among other things, to the changing environmental conditions brought about by climate change are among the main causes of the decline in stocks. By 2021 the German quota for eastern Baltic cod had already collapsed to a mere by-catch of 54 tonnes.

Based on fisheries research assessments, fishing opportunities for western and eastern Baltic cod are not expected to improve substantially in the foreseeable future, whereas the western Baltic herring stock could see a recovery in the medium term following the significant reduction of the herring quota in the Skagerrak/Kattegat management area.

The legal conditions for providing support for the decommissioning of fishing vessels in the Baltic Sea were laid down in Regulation (EU) 2020/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council

of 25 November 2020 amending Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 as regards fishing capacity reduction in the Baltic Sea, and Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 as regards permanent cessation of fishing activities for fleets fishing for eastern Baltic cod, western Baltic cod and western Baltic herring. Under Article 8a(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/1781, support for the permanent cessation of fishing activities in accordance with Article 34 of Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 may be granted only if the action plan referred to in Article 22(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 sets out specific capacity reduction targets for vessels with fishing opportunities for one or more of the three stocks concerned. Under Article 8a(6) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/1781, Member States implementing the permanent cessation measures referred to in the first paragraph must notify the Commission of the annual average total fishing capacity, for the years 2015 to 2019, of all vessels having been allocated fishing opportunities for any of the three stocks concerned. Moreover, Member States must notify the Commission of the total fishing capacity withdrawn from fishing vessels to which fishing opportunities had been allocated for any of the three stocks concerned.

This action plan, drawn up pursuant to Article 22(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, therefore concerns the following Baltic Sea fleet segments for which specific measures are deemed necessary:

## 1 Fleet segments concerned

Table 1: Fleet segments included in action plan

Fleet segment	Explanation	Stocks fished*
PG VL0008A and PG VL0008L (formerly covered by PG VL0010)	Passive gear vessels < 8 m	Baltic Sea stocks
PG VL0812A and PG VL0812L (formerly covered by PG VL0010 and VL1012)	Passive gear vessels 8-12 m	Baltic Sea stocks
DFN VL1218	Static net vessels 12-18 m	Western Baltic herring
DTS VL0812 (formerly DTS VL0010 and VL1012)	Demersal trawlers 8-12 m	Baltic Sea stocks
DTS VL1218	Demersal trawlers 12-18 m	Baltic and Kattegat stocks
DTS VL1824	Demersal trawlers 18-24 m (only Baltic fishing vessels as defined in MAF-BMEL)	Baltic and North Sea stocks
DTS VL2440	Demersal trawlers 24-40 m (only Baltic fishing vessels according to MAF-BMEL)	Baltic and North Sea stocks

\* See Annex 2 to the 2022 fleet report for details.

## 2 Indicator values for the relevant fleet segments in 2022

The indicator values were established in accordance with the Commission guidelines of 2 September 2014. Recommendations are also made for interpreting the results. Based on those requirements, the values were established using a traffic light system to make the results easier to understand. The values were then analysed in combination. The condition of some of the most important fish stocks in Baltic Sea fisheries is a matter of concern. Our assessment therefore puts greater emphasis than in previous years on the SAR (stocks-at-risk) indicator and/or a fleet segment's dependence on a stock in a poor condition.

There are signs of an imbalance in the following fleet segments:

Table 2: Baseline for targets and measures set for the fleet segments concerned

Fleet segment by vessel length	Biological indicators – SHI and SAR	Economic indicators – RoFTA and CR/BER 2019, with 2008-2019 trends	Technical indicator – vessel use (registered/theoretical)	Summary of indicator values
PG VL0008A and PG VL0008L	X	X	X	All indicators taken into account. The segment is in overall imbalance.
PG VL0812A and PG VL0812L	X	X	X	All indicators taken into account. The segment is in overall imbalance.
DFN VL1218	X	X	X	All indicators taken into account. The segment is in overall imbalance.
DTS VL0812	X	X	X	All indicators taken into account. The segment is in overall imbalance with regard to Baltic vessels.
DTS VL1218	X	X	X	All indicators taken into account. The segment is in overall imbalance.
DTS VL1824	X	X	X	The segment is in imbalance only as regards businesses operating in the Baltic Sea.
DTS VL2440	X	X	X	The segment is in imbalance only as regards businesses operating in the Baltic Sea.

### 3 Objectives of the action plan

Under Article 22(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the action plan must set out the adjustment targets and the tools to be used to achieve a balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities, together with a clear timetable and responsibilities for its implementation.

Given the complexity of the indicators used, overall targets are set for all fleet segments and specific measures are laid down for individual segments to implement these requirements.

#### Overall targets:

#### 3.1 Transposition of the legal requirements of the new common fisheries policy to foster a positive investment climate in the fishing industry

The requirements set out in the legal acts revising the common fisheries policy should be promptly transposed by the Federal Government and the federal states to help provide legal certainty in the fishing industry.

Table 3: Objectives and timetable for implementing the legal requirements of the common fisheries policy

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target – quota</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Adaptation of relevant laws and regulations of the Federal Government	100%	ongoing
Adaptation of relevant laws and regulations of the federal states	100%	ongoing

### **3.2 Improvement of the indicators used in order to adopt more targeted measures for adjusting fishing capacity to fishing opportunities**

As regards the use of the indicators set out in the guidelines, the 2022 fleet report points out that these could be made more relevant by adjusting the data and calculation methods used. This issue has also been addressed by the STECF. Funds should therefore be made available for research. Particular attention should be paid to price changes (e.g. a drop in the prices of Baltic Sea products due to substitution with North Sea products) and/or business structures (e.g. operator owns several fishing vessels, possibly in different segments). Among other things, this will minimise the risk of poorly designed measures to reduce excess capacity. Also, findings in the fleet report that concern fleet segments in individual federal states should be specifically summarised and forwarded to them. This will make it easier for the federal states concerned to provide input.

Table 4: Objectives and timetable for any adjustment of the indicators

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target – quota</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Adjustment of common indicators used	none	2023
Summary of findings in fleet report for the federal states concerned, indicating the relevant fleet segments and fishing vessels	100%	ongoing

### **3.3 Modernisation of the German fishing fleet**

Measures provided for under the common fisheries policy and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) are designed to promote and establish sustainable development of fisheries. In this context, fishing businesses should be allowed to modernise their fishing vessels or replace them with more efficient vessels on the basis of innovations within the framework of the Modernisation Notice (Fourth Notice on Fisheries Regulations of 17 June 2014; Official Section of the Federal Gazette of 2 July 2014 B4, see Annex I). The notice only concerns cases in which modernisation or replacement measures result in a reduction in active fishing capacity. This will ensure resource-efficient, sustainable fisheries and safeguard the competitiveness of the German fishing fleet, thereby securing market supply. It will also limit the impact of fisheries on the marine environment.

The following measures can be considered when it comes to modernising fishing vessels or replacing them for operational reasons in order to make fisheries more resource-efficient and thus sustainable:

1. Conversion (use of new fishing techniques) to improve selectivity, energy efficiency and product quality;
2. Modernisation of on-board processing and storage to improve product quality;
3. More selective or energy-efficient gear;
4. Measures to improve the viability of fishing vessels and safety at work on board.

This applies where one or two fishing vessels are permanently decommissioned and replaced by one other fishing vessel, or where an existing fishing vessel is modernised. The replacement fishing vessel must have less fishing capacity than the fishing vessel (or vessels) replaced, but must have sufficient potential to use the full catch quotas allocated to the replaced vessel. The fishing opportunities of the old vessels can only be used by the replacement fishing vessel.

Where two fishing vessels are replaced by one vessel, any unused fishing capacity for which the fishing business is granted a licence may be used for further modernisation and expansion of existing fishing vessels. If quotas change, fishing capacities may, on a case-by-case basis and on application, be used flexibly in the context of relative stability, including for the purpose of commissioning another fishing vessel.

Table 5: Objectives and timetable for modernising the German fishing fleet

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target quota</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>Timetable</b>	<b>Measures taken</b>
Increasing awareness of the new scheme	none		ongoing	Advice to fishing businesses
Providing fishing businesses with targeted advice on the new scheme	none		ongoing	Advice to fishing businesses
Increased use of the scheme	2-3 times a year 4-5 times a year		2015-2016 2017-2023	Used four times in 2015-2016 and four times in 2017-2022 (as at 17 April 2023)

Economic planning in the fisheries sector became more difficult from 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, and from February 2022 the war in Ukraine further aggravated the general economic conditions. In addition, Brexit drastically reduced fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea and complicated planning in the North Sea area. This affects the adaptation of fishing vessels generally.

### **3.4 Actively shifting fishing pressure to maintain small-scale fisheries in the Baltic Sea**

Efforts will be made and every avenue explored to shift fishing pressure from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea or other fishing areas in order to support and maintain small-scale coastal fisheries, which are of vital importance in Germany's Baltic region. This is necessary because the Baltic Sea

offers fewer possibilities than e.g. the North Sea of branching out to other fisheries, due to a limited number of major stocks that can be fished commercially.

In order to allow fishing effort to be shifted from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea, the Federal Government has campaigned for the fishing effort scheme to be abolished for the Baltic Sea and the North Sea.

Table 6: Objectives and timetable for actively shifting fishing pressure

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Target – quota</b>	<b>Timetable</b>	<b>Measures taken</b>
Swapping/shifting fishing opportunities between the Baltic Sea and the North Sea or other fishing areas	No quantified objective	ongoing	Considering international quota swaps in consultation with the fisheries sector
Abolition of the Baltic Sea fishing effort restriction	100%	2016	–
Abolition of the North Sea fishing effort restriction	100%	2018	–

**3.5 Aid restrictions**

EMFF/EMFAF support will only be granted to businesses whose main activity is fishing. This will provide targeted support to the businesses most affected by declining fish stocks and thus loss of income.

**Specific measures:**

**3.6 Suspension of fishing to protect cod stocks in the western Baltic Sea**

The Fisheries Council adopted an unprecedented 88% reduction of the cod quota in ICES sub-areas 22-24 for 2022. In a joint declaration, the Commission and Germany stated that in view of the critical condition of the cod stock, Germany considered it necessary to take emergency measures to protect the stock, such as imposing closure periods of 30 days on German vessels fishing in sub-areas 22-24.

In 2022 the closure period was divided into three 10-day blocks in the fishing seasons from 1 to 31 January, 1 April to 14 May and 1 November to 31 December. During the closure period, fishing was prohibited for the fishing businesses concerned. Affected professional fishing businesses received support under Article 33 of the EMFF Regulation for the temporary laying-up of their vessels. During the laying-up period, all fishing activities (also for non-commercial and scientific purposes) had to be suspended.

As the cod stock remains in a critical condition, a closure period had to be imposed also in 2023.

A closure period of 30 days was laid down for 2023, divided into three 10-day blocks in the fishing seasons from 1 to 15 January, 1 April to 14 May and 1 November to 31 December 2023. During the closure period cod fishing is prohibited for vessels from 8 meters in length. The fishing businesses concerned may be granted support under Article 33 of the EMFF Regulation or under Article 21 of the EMFAF Regulation for the temporary laying-up of their fishing vessels. During

the laying-up period all fishing activities (also for non-commercial and scientific purposes.) had to be suspended.

Closure periods and a temporary laying-up of fishing vessels will continue to be imposed for as long as the condition of the cod stock makes this necessary. Their duration and the segments concerned must be determined on a yearly basis once catch-level recommendations have been made and quotas have been set.

### **3.7 Suspension of fishing to protect herring stocks in the western Baltic Sea**

The Fisheries Council adopted a 50% reduction of the catch quota for herring in ICES sub-areas 22-24 for 2022. In a joint declaration, the Commission and Germany stated that in view of the critical state of the herring stock, Germany considered it necessary to take emergency measures such as imposing a closure period of 30 days on German fishing vessels targeting herring in sub-areas 22-24. In addition, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania also imposed a closure period of 30 days in 2022 on vessels with an overall length of less than 8 metres fishing in certain coastal waters.

The closure period was divided into three 10-day blocks in the period from 16 August to 31 October 2022 for vessels larger than 8 metres and smaller than 12 metres fishing with passive gear. A closure period from 1 October to 31 December was imposed on 8-12 metre vessels fishing with active gear and for vessels larger than 12 metres, which were additionally banned from fishing western Baltic sprat during this period. Herring fishing was prohibited during the closure period. The businesses concerned received support under Article 33 of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation (EMFF Regulation) for the temporary laying-up of their fishing vessels. During the laying-up period, all fishing activities (also for non-commercial and scientific purposes) had to be suspended.

An additional closure period was again considered necessary for 2023, based on the scientific assessment of the condition of the stock.

Herring fishing is prohibited during the closure period. The fishing businesses concerned may be granted support under Article 33 of the EMFF Regulation or under Article 21 of the EMFAF Regulation for the temporary laying-up of their fishing vessels. During the laying-up period all fishing activities (also for non-commercial and scientific purposes.) had to be suspended.

Closure periods and a temporary laying-up of fishing vessels will continue to be imposed for as long as the condition of the herring stock makes this necessary. Their duration and the segments concerned must be determined on a yearly basis once catch-level recommendations have been made and quotas have been set.

### **3.8 Permanent cessation of fishing activities**

The quotas set for Baltic cod and western Baltic herring, which used to be the main species fished by German fishers, are at an historically low level. A rapid recovery is not to be expected in view



of the assessment of stock trends. Fishing opportunities for Baltic cod and herring are therefore not expected to improve in the coming years. Moreover, environmental conditions in the Baltic Sea have changed, resulting in reduced stock productivity overall, at least for western Baltic herring and eastern Baltic cod. This means that the total allowable catch levels seen in the past can no longer be attained, even with the best possible stock management. Only a few fishing businesses have the possibility to switch to other target species or to other fishing areas. In view of this, reducing the capacity of the Baltic Sea fishing fleet is something that cannot be avoided. The fisheries concerned are set out in the following tables:

Table 7: Annual average total fishing capacity of all vessels with fishing opportunities for western Baltic herring

<b>Western Baltic herring</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>GT</b>	<b>kW</b>
2015	7 706	33 497
2016	7 646	33 228
2017	7 298	31 314
2018	7 166	31 147
2019	8 129	33 152
Average	7 589	32 468

Table 8: Annual average total fishing capacity of all vessels with fishing opportunities for western Baltic cod

<b>Western Baltic cod</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>GT</b>	<b>kW</b>
2015	9 646	40 425
2016	9 538	40 078
2017	9 435	39 233
2018	8 866	36 703
2019	9 565	37 607
Average	9 410	38 809

Table 9: Annual average total fishing capacity of all vessels with fishing opportunities for eastern Baltic cod

<b>Eastern Baltic cod</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>GT</b>	<b>kW</b>
2015	8 334	26 491
2016	8 215	26 063
2017	8 148	25 515
2018	7 606	23 170
2019	8 321	24 387
Average	8 125	25 125

Some vessels have fishing licences for several of these fisheries, however, so the above figures cannot simply be added up to arrive at total fishing capacity. Decommissioning will therefore not have the same impact on all three fisheries, as a vessel only needs to have fishing opportunities in one of them to be covered by the decommissioning scheme.

Under Article 22(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the fishing capacity of fishing vessels withdrawn with public aid is not to be replaced. Overall German fishing capacity will therefore be reduced by the capacity withdrawn from the German fleet under the scrapping measure. Fishing

capacity will be reduced both in terms of gross tonnage (GT) and in terms of engine power expressed in kilowatts (kW). The same GT and kW capacity reduction also applies to the fleet to which fishing opportunities for western Baltic herring and western and eastern Baltic cod could be allocated in future.

The aim of the current German scrapping scheme is to scrap at least 10% of the German cod and herring fishing capacity in the Baltic Sea. The fleet structure will thus be adapted to the reduced level of fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea, which is expected to be permanent. This is an important step towards preserving German coastal fishing.

Decommissioning is an option for professional fishing businesses operating vessels in fleet segments that are in imbalance (see Table 2). Businesses will be able to apply for a scrapping premium if they operate vessels in segments that have fishing opportunities for western Baltic or eastern Baltic cod and/or western Baltic herring for the fishing year and if their fishing activity is set to cease permanently. A minimum quota must be released (in the year when fishing is to cease permanently) for each scrapped vessel. The rates of the scrapping measure premium will be scaled according to vessel size (gross tonnage), with a maximum rate for each category. Priority will be given to those vessels that lead to the highest proportionate cod and/or herring quotas being released. No funding is available for part-time fishers who only have a small share of the quota and for whom fishing is not the only source of income, nor for fishing vessels owned by professional fishing businesses that mainly operate in the North Sea. The scheme therefore mainly targets businesses which rely heavily on cod and/or herring fishing and have a high cod and/or herring quota. The businesses that will be able to profit from the measure are therefore mainly those that are disproportionately affected by the quota reductions and that also participated disproportionately in cod and herring fishing using the capacity to be scrapped.

When a fishing business receives a scrapping premium, it must return the basic quotas to which the fishing vessel in question was entitled to the federal authorities. These quotas will be used to improve the financial situation of the remaining fisheries as part of structural adaptations of the sector, also taking into account Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

Capacity of 500 GT was set to be scrapped in 2021/2022 in certain fleet segments in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and Schleswig-Holstein, i.e. 1 000 GT in total. Scrapping 500 GT in each of these two federal states appears sufficient to quickly adapt the fleet to changes in stock productivity, and thus to the available fishing opportunities. It is also necessary to preserve essential onshore and port infrastructure in order for fishing to be maintained in future.

The western Baltic herring stock is vital for many businesses in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, and in Schleswig-Holstein this is the case for western Baltic cod. The quota shares that are freed up through scrapping will be used, in a targeted manner, to support the remaining fishing businesses and offer them prospects for the future.

21 vessels were scrapped in 2022, with a total fishing capacity of 425 GT and 1 465 kW. These vessels held fishing opportunities of 7.4 tonnes of western Baltic cod, 15.4 tonnes of eastern Baltic

cod, 28.6 tonnes of western Baltic herring and 63.2 tonnes of Baltic sprat (figures adjusted to 2023).

The quotas for western Baltic cod and herring and Baltic sprat were allocated on a one-off basis to fishing businesses operating in the Baltic Sea in accordance with the MAF-BMEL guideline promoting measures to adapt fishing activity to fishing fleet development (*Richtlinie zur Förderung von Maßnahmen zur Anpassung der Fischereitätigkeit und der Entwicklung der Fischereiflotte*). The eastern Baltic cod quota is made available to the fishing businesses as general by-catch.

At present it is not expected that by the end of 2023 the capacity reduction achieved through the scrapping scheme will have led to a full balance between fishing opportunities and fishing capacity. How soon this can be achieved depends, to a large extent, on how the cod and herring stocks develop. The main aim of the scrapping scheme is to rapidly adapt the German fleet to the long-term decline in the productivity of Baltic stocks due, among other things, to changing environmental conditions, and to give the remaining businesses prospects for the future. Germany is convinced that, once fleet capacity has been reduced through the scrapping scheme and the freed-up quota parts have been distributed among the remaining Baltic Sea vessels, German fisheries can become environmentally, economically and socially sustainable without any need for permanent subsidies. However, this requires successful management of the western Baltic cod and herring stocks by means of consistent maximum sustainable yield (MSY) management, so that these stocks are allowed to recover sufficiently to sustainably produce the catch levels forecast by the scientists.

## **4 Specific measures by fleet segment**

### **4.1 Passive fisheries, vessels < 8 metres (PG VL0008A and PG VL0008L; part of PG VL0010 until 2021)**

This is a new segment as from 2022. The segment is subdivided into two groups: active vessels (VL0008A) and vessels with limited or no fishing activity (VL0008L).

#### **4.1.1 Passive fisheries, vessels < 8 metres with fishing activity (PG0008A)**

No technical indicator value has been calculated for fleet segment PG VL0008A. As at 31 December 2022 this segment comprised 66 vessels. They are mostly vessels fishing for herring or non-quota species such as perch, pike and zander in the Baltic bays or for flatfish. These vessels caught a total of 3 tonnes of cod in 2022. Their total herring catches amounted to 18 tonnes.

A total of 17 vessels have quota rights for cod (as at 9 May 2023), and 13 vessels have quota rights for western Baltic herring based on relative stability. The quota allocation may, however, change in the course of the fishing year due to national and international quota swaps and redistribution within the fleet.

No comparison can be made with the previous year due to the changes in segmentation between 2021 and 2022.

Table 10: Indicator values for passive fisheries, vessels < 10 m until 2021, from 2022 < 8 m.

<b>PG VL0010 until 2021, PG VL0008A from 2022</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.36	0.36	0.42	0.46	0.45	0.42	0.36	0.00
SAR	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	
SHI	2.56	2.60	2.12	2.36	2.28	1.96	1.34	
CR/BER	1.0	1.23	1.14	0.45	0.13	0.06	-3.28	
RoFTA	0.26	12.4	7.3	-32.2	-60.0	-59.3	-351.1	
Number of vessels (required to keep a logbook)	129	135	116	107	106	100	98	0
GT (vessels required to keep a logbook)	672	721	616	560	565	541	527	0
kW (vessels required to keep a logbook)	6 779	7 407	6 420	5 893	5 854	5 346	5 471	0
Total number of vessels	743	729	691	666	650	631	617	66
GT total	1 516	1 527	1 398	1 317	1 311	1 271	1 238	102
kW total	16 993	17 202	16 268	15 361	15 477	15 227	15 143	1 592

Overall, this segment is in imbalance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

## 2. Marketing support

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF/EMFAF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF/EMFAF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

## 3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities

See the explanations in points 3.6 and 3.7.

## 4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 11: Timetable for passive fisheries, vessels < 8 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2015	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2017	2018	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

### 4.1.2 Passive fisheries, vessels < 8 metres with limited or no fishing activity (PG0008L)

In 2022 this segment comprised a total of 451 vessels, 291 of which were inactive.

A total of 100 vessels had a quota for herring and 86 vessels had a quota for cod (as at 9 May 2003).

Table 12: Passive fisheries, vessels < 8 m (VL 0008L)

<b>PG VL0010 until 2021, VL0008L from 2022</b>	<b>PG from 2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Technical indicator	0	0
SAR	1	
SHI	1.23	
CR/BER	0.02	
RoFTA	-56.4	
Number of vessels		451
GT		608
kW		8 230

Five fishing vessels with a capacity of 18 GT and 147 kW were scrapped in 2022.

The segment is in imbalance overall.

#### **4.2 Passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 metres (PG VL0812A and PG VL0812L; part of PG VL0010 and PG VL1012 until 2021)**

This is a new segment as from 2022. The segment is subdivided into two groups: active vessels (VL0812A) and vessels with limited or no fishing activity (VL0812L).

##### **4.2.1 Passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 metres with fishing activity (PG0812A)**

The German fishing fleet has 50 vessels of an overall length of 8-12 metres engaged in professional small-scale coastal fishing using mainly passive gear (as at 31 December 2022). These vessels operate almost exclusively in the Baltic Sea. The main species fished are herring and flatfish. In total, 35 vessels (as at 9 May 2023) in this segment have quota rights for western Baltic cod and western Baltic herring based on relative stability. The quota allocation may change in the course of the fishing year due to national and international quota swaps and redistribution within the fleet.

No comparison can be made with the previous year due to the changes in segmentation.

Table 13: Indicator values for passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 m

<b>PG VL0812A</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.44	0.43	0.56	0.54	0.55	0.53	0.54	0.55
SAR	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	
SHI	2.44	2.49	2.12	2.16	2.13	1.91	1.04	
CR/BER	0.42	0.61	0.04	-0.15	0.16	-0.12	0.28	
RoFTA	-28.4	-23.5	-79.2	-70.3	-51.1	-67.5	-38.5	
Number of vessels	64	58	58	50	49	45	45	50
GT	695	646	668	579	577	549	532	462
kW	5 570	5 199	5 301	4 751	4 722	4 369	4 323	4 267

Overall, this segment is in imbalance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

##### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

## 2. Marketing support

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF/EMFAF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF/EMFAF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

## 3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities

See the explanations in points 3.6 and 3.7.

## 4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 14: Timetable for passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2015	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2017	2018	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

### 4.2.2 Passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 metres with limited or no fishing activity (PG0812L)

These vessels operate in the Baltic Sea, where they fish species such as herring. In total, 40 vessels (as at 9 May 2023) in this segment have quota rights for western Baltic cod and 51 vessels have quota rights for western Baltic herring based on relative stability.

Table 15: Timetable for passive fisheries, vessels 8-12 m

PG VL0812L	2021	2022
Technical indicator		0.35
SAR	1	
SHI	0.63	
CR/BER	0.02	
RoFTA	-44.3	
Number of vessels		84
GT		584
kW		5 430

12 fishing vessels with a total capacity of 97 GT and 660 kW were scrapped in 2022.

The segment is in imbalance overall.



### **4.3 Passive gear vessels 12-18 m (DFN VL1218)**

The German fishing fleet has five vessels of an overall length of 12-18 metres engaged in professional coastal fishing (as at 31 December 2022). Four vessels mainly fish in the Baltic Sea and one in the North Sea. The main species are flatfish in the Baltic Sea and sole and cod in the North Sea and Skagerrak.

Table 16: Indicator values for static net vessels 12-18 m

<b>DFN VL1218</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.48	0.58	0.40	0.47	0.43	0.34	0.29	0.42
SAR	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	
SHI	1.71	1.79	1.84	1.97	1.74	1.18	0.85	
CR/BER	-1.51	6.65	4.46	0.36	9.19	2.31	-1.98	
RoFTA	-96.9	176.3	107.9	-18.4	197.2	57.1	-136.8	
Number of vessels	5	5	7	5	4	5	5	5
GT	121	132	193	150	124	152	131	119
kW	1 182	821	969	69	590	809	854	690

Overall, this segment is in imbalance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

#### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

#### **2. Marketing support**

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

#### **3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in points 3.6 and 3.7.

#### 4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 17: Timetable for static net vessels 12-18 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2015	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2017	2018	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

#### **4.4 Trawlers 8-12 m (formerly DTS VL1012 and DTS VL0010)**

The German fishing fleet has seven vessels of an overall length of 8-12 metres engaged in professional coastal fishing using mainly demersal trawls (as at 31 December 2022). These vessels fish flatfish and sprat in the Baltic Sea.

The number of vessels has not changed since 31 December 2022. Engine power increased by 1 kW and tonnage fell by 18 GT.

In total, six vessels (as at 9 May 2023) in this segment have quota rights for western Baltic cod and herring based on relative stability. Four fishing vessels have quota rights for Baltic sprat. The quota allocation may change in the course of the fishing year due to national and international quota swaps and redistribution within the fleet.

Table 18: Indicator values for demersal trawlers 8-12 m

<b>DTS VL0812</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.45	0.34	0.31	0.71	0.80	0.51	0.53	0.43
SAR	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	
SHI	2.55	2.28	1.94	1.61	2.00	2.22	0.48	
CR/BER	0.41	0.29	0.81	0.97	0.41	-0.14	-1.04	
RoFTA	-57.7	-4.7	-21.7	-2.1	-31.1	-54.9	-114.4	
Number of vessels	10	10	6	8	4	7	7	7
GT	154	156	94	112	52	96	107	89
kW	1 425	1 433	744	853	358	686	706	707

Overall, this segment is in imbalance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment’s quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

### **2. Marketing support**

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

### **3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in points 3.6 and 3.7.

### **4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 19: Timetable for demersal trawlers 8-12 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2015	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2017	2018	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

### **4.5 Demersal trawlers 12-18 m (DTS VL1218)**

The German fishing fleet has 15 vessels of an overall length of 12-18 metres engaged in professional coastal fishing using mainly demersal trawls (as at 31 December 2022). With the exception of one vessel, these vessels fish only in the Baltic Sea. Their catches include flatfish such as dab, flounder and plaice in addition to sprat. The number of vessels has decreased by four

since 31 December 2022. Tonnage fell by 116 GT and engine power by 600 kW. In total, 12 vessels (as at 9 May 2023) in this segment have quota rights for western Baltic cod and herring based on relative stability. Ten fishing vessels have quota rights for Baltic sprat. The quota allocation may change in the course of the fishing year due to national and international quota swaps and redistribution within the fleet.

Table 20: Indicator values for demersal trawlers 12-18 m

<b>DTS VL1218</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.52	0.53	0.57	0.68	0.66	0.62	0.59	0.60
SAR	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	
SHI	2.86	2.63	2.26	1.88	1.77	1.85	0.9	
CR/BER	0.74	0.57	0.81	1.37	1.54	0.25	0.14	
RoFTA	-10.7	-18.9	-18.9	17.7	24.0	-41.2	-35.5	
Number of vessels	28	27	20	17	18	19	19	15
GT	826	866	655	548	623	649	649	533
kW	4 694	4 918	3 765	3 109	3 328	3 428	3 378	2 778

Overall, this segment is in imbalance with respect to all Baltic Sea vessels according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

### **Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

### **2. Marketing support**

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

### **3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in points 3.6 and 3.7.

#### 4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities

In 2022 one more vessel was scrapped, with a capacity of 36 GT and 217 kW.

See also the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 21: Timetable for demersal trawlers 12-18 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2015	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2017	2018	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

#### 4.6 Demersal trawlers 18-24 m (DTS VL1824)

The German fishing fleet has 11 vessels of an overall length of 18-24 metres engaged in professional coastal fishing using mainly demersal trawls (as at 31 December 2022). These vessels fish in the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. In the North Sea the main species are plaice, Norway lobster, common shrimp, turbot and sole. In the Baltic Sea the main species are plaice, dab, flounder and sprat.

The number of vessels in this segment increased by one compared to 2022. As a result, tonnage increased by 226 GT and engine power by 368 kW.

Table 22: Indicator values for demersal trawlers 18-24 m

<b>DTS VL1824</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.60	0.65	0.68	0.66	0.60	0.60	0.59	0.56
SAR	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	
SHI	1.41	1.46	1.4	1.21	1.55	1.45	0.75	
CR/BER	1.32	2.91	1.59	3.49	2.93	0.57	0.95	
RoFTA	12.3	66.2	33.6	82.4	60.7	-19.5	1.1	
Number of vessels	16	13	13	11	14	11	10	11
GT	1 724	1 444	1 544	1 293	1 621	1 276	1 144	1 370
kW	3 485	2 824	3 118	2 529	3 192	2 529	2 308	2 676

This segment is in balance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report. However, fishing opportunities remain very limited for fishing vessels fishing only in the Baltic Sea. Currently cod and herring are available only as by-catch in the western Baltic. Baltic sea vessels are therefore in imbalance.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

### **2. Marketing support**

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

### **3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in point 3.7.

### **4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities**

In 2022 two vessels were scrapped, with a fishing capacity of 274 GT and 441 kW.

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 23: Timetable for demersal trawlers 18-24 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2017	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

### **4.7 Demersal trawlers 24-40 m (DTS VL2440)**

The German fishing fleet has 11 vessels of an overall length of 24-40 metres engaged in professional coastal fishing using mainly demersal trawls (as at 31 December 2022). One fishing vessel in this length class fished only in the Baltic Sea, but the main fisheries are in the North Sea area. In the Baltic Sea the main species are plaice, flounder and sprat.

Table 24: Indicator values for demersal trawlers 24-40 m

<b>DTS VL2440</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Technical indicator	0.66	0.70	0.70	0.51	0.57	0.76	0.75	0.79
SAR	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	
SHI	1.22	1.23	1.3	1.35	1.36	1.21	0.94	
CR/BER	2.02	2.24	1.25	1.18	1.06	0.87	1.06	
RoFTA	31.1	31.2	23.6	5.5	0.7	-6.2	5.6	
Number of vessels	10	9	8	11	14	12	11	11
GT	2 768	2 343	2 172	2 992	4 410	3 947	3 685	3 814
kW	5 295	4 275	3 835	5 505	7 822	8 048	8 075	8 979

This segment is in balance according to the indicators analysed in the 2022 fleet report. However, fishing opportunities remain very limited for fishing vessels fishing only in the Baltic Sea. Currently cod and herring are available only as by-catch in the western Baltic. Baltic sea vessels are therefore in imbalance.

**The following specific measures are being implemented to improve the indicator values:**

### **1. Shifting relevant fishing opportunities to coastal fisheries**

Under the current action plan quotas can be shifted only up to the 2023 fishing year, as fishing opportunities for the commercially most important stocks may change from one year to the next under the TAC Regulation.

Shifting fishing opportunities improves the segment's quota situation, making it easier to manage any further quota reductions in the context of fishing Baltic stocks at MSY level. The measure being implemented is set out in more detail below.

For the 2022 and 2023 fishing years, the BLE aims for an arrangement where North Sea-based fishing businesses use their fishing opportunities in the North Sea only and not their quota rights for Baltic stocks. The Association of German Coastal and Cutter Fishers and producer organisations are consulted by the BLE and are actively involved.

### **2. Marketing support**

Appropriate measures are being taken under the EMFF to strengthen direct marketing by fishers and producer organisations in order to improve income levels. Funds are also made available under the EMFF for generic advertising aimed at improving the image of small-scale fisheries and encouraging consumers to pay higher prices.

### **3. Temporary cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in point 3.7.

### **4. Permanent cessation of fishing activities**

See the explanations in point 3.8.

Table 25: Timetable for demersal trawlers 24-40 m

Measure	Start	End	Responsibility
Shifting relevant quotas	2017	ongoing	BLE
Marketing support	2016	ongoing	Federal states
Temporary cessation of fishing activities	2017	2023	BMEL, BLE, federal states
Permanent cessation of fishing activities	2021	2022	BMEL, BLE, federal states
If applicable, further measures to be applied	2021	2021	BMEL, BLE, federal states

## 5 Flanking measures

The following flanking measures are being implemented to make the action plan more effective:

- In accordance with point 4 of this action plan, the federal states and the fishing industry are consulted on developments in the various fleet segments as part of consultations on annual quota allocations pursuant to Section 3(3) of the Sea Fisheries Act (*Seefischereigesetz*) with a view to identifying new targets and/or measures.
- There are regular exchanges of views on fleet development at regional level during talks between the federal government and the federal states.
- The BLE has implemented a one-off fleet adjustment programme with the primary objective of making fishing businesses more effective, and the secondary objective of further reducing the size of the fleet. A total of 10 applications were received, nine of which were approved. Under this approval process, quota rights could be transferred from one fishing vessel to another within the same fishing business without the need to adjust fishing capacity. This meant that the fishing vessel ceding its fishing rights had to be deleted from the fleet register. The deregistered vessels belonged to six different fleet segments:
  - PG VL0008: 2
  - PG VL0812: 3
  - DTS VL0812: 1
  - DFN VL0812: 1
  - DTS VL1218: 1
  - DTS VL1824: 1
- The BLE and the Thünen Institute arrange working meetings to evaluate the results of the action plan and agree on any adjustments required. The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the federal states are advised accordingly.

## 6 Evaluation of results

All the relevant central-government and federal-state authorities will take part in the evaluation of the action plan at the end of the current EMFF funding period. The relevant industry associations are also involved. The BLE is currently drawing up a report with input from the federal states and the Thünen Institute based on the targets and measures described.