



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Carla Montesi

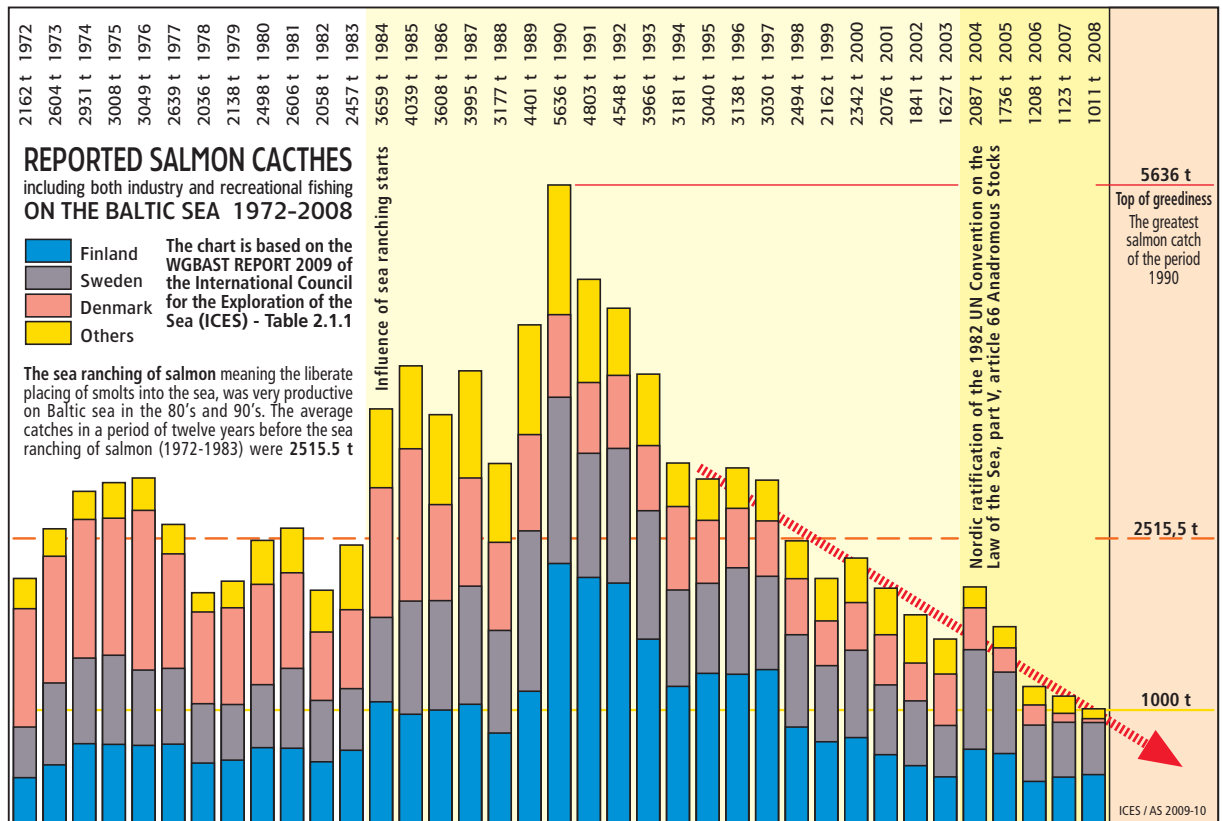
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Dear Ms. Montesi, Thank you for your letter on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2010. The wild salmon of Torne river is a third of the Baltic sea natural salmon stock. It's an essential matter for us so we are not satisfied with the fact that you didn't answer to any of our questions.

You fixed our attention on "*the fact that when drafting its proposal, the Commission is legally bound to base its calculations for all fisheries stocks on scientific advice that is independent from the Commission... and hence the scientific advice is adjusted accordingly*". We are well informed that the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) has in its statement quoted the advice of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), but that STECF can't change ICES recommendation more than 15% according to a rule given by European Commission. How is that independent?

We now know the decision of the Fisheries Council on the 26th of October 2010 resulting in Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of salmon being more than twice the scientific advice of ICES (250 109/120 000). The satisfaction of the Commission was announced in the statement 27/10/2010. TAC of salmon by 250 109 means no limits for sea fishing so the total kill, IUU-fishing and catch wastage included, will be more than 300 000! We have to assume that you are not aware that this kind of harvesting of Baltic Sea salmon stock on the sea will result in a rapid extinction of wild salmon of the rivers here in the northern Baltic sea. Will you accept responsibility for that?

We agree with your argument "*that the legal framework of the EU, including the concept of exclusive and shared competences between the Union and its Member States is in full compliance with international law and is successfully applied in the context of numerous UN conventions*". However we adhere firmly to our view that the basis of sharing TAC of salmon between Baltic countries has to be changed to be in accordance with the Article 66 Anadromous Stocks of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, part V. – Although all countries around the Baltic Sea have ratified it, the basis of the TAC has not been corrected.



As we wrote to the European Commissioner Ms. Maria Damanaki the condition of the wild salmon stock of Torne river is not acceptable. Both the quantity and the percentage of returning salmon have dramatically collapsed in recent years the last summer being the worst for a long time. Only 17200 salmon returned into the river including only about 1000 grilse when the absolute minimum should be at least 10000! The reason is excessive harvesting of salmon on the sea. For instance in 2009 more than 100000 salmon of the wild stock of Torne river were killed on the sea while the river catch on Torne river was only 5800 salmon.

Unlike stakeholders of the sea fisheries, who do not own a litre of the water they fish, the people here at the riverbank have owned their land for centuries being the real stakeholders. So the people here at the river banks of Torne and Muonio rivers have been severely discriminated every year, when Danish and Polish "stakeholders" on the sea have harvested larger quantities of wild salmon stock of Torne river than what has returned to its home river. We refer to the Article 66 Anadromous Stocks of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, part V and we think that our criticism is well justified.

We think we deserve a thorough and well reasoned answers to our questions by the European Commissioner Ms. Maria Damanaki.

Pello the 2<sup>nd</sup> of november 2010

Yours faithfully

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