

COUNTRY NOTE ON NATIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS SWEDEN

Part 1: Characteristics of the fishing sector

1. Sweden has a long coastline – almost 10 000 kilometres, a shelf area of more than 150 000 square km and about 100 000 lakes with a total area of some 40 000 square km. There are also many rivers. The west coast borders the Kattegat and the Skagerrak, and the south and east coast border the Baltic. The Baltic Sea with its brackish water has gradually become Sweden's most important fishing area.

Capture fisheries and consumption

2. The fishing sector in Sweden is decreasing – landings (value as well as quantity), vessel numbers and numbers of fishermen are all decreasing. At the same time, the prices of fish for consumption have increased, the amount of fish used for reduction has declined and exports of fish and fishery products have increased.

3. The principal species are herring, sprat and cod, but salmon, crustaceans, eel, flatfish and several freshwater species are also important. The variety of species is greater on the west coast than in the Baltic. Generally speaking, most Atlantic species are represented in the western waters.

4. In 2003, the most important species in domestic ports, in terms of value, were cod (34%), herring (16%), shrimps (13%), and Norway lobster (12%).

5. Fish consumption in Sweden has been fairly stable during the last few years while catches of commercially important species have declined. This has led to an increase in imports. There has, however, been a tendency towards a declining consumption of fresh fish. On the other hand, the demand for ready-made products keeps increasing.

Employment in the fisheries sector

6. In 1994, the Swedish fisheries sector employed about 3 500 professional fishers, including part-time fishers. A considerable decrease in employment in the catching sector has occurred and in 2003 there were only 2 066 licensed fishers and 669 unlicensed. The decrease reflects primarily the increased efficiency of vessels and the decline in the fish stocks.

7. As regards the processing industry, the number of companies are fairly stable while the numbers of employed has decreased. In 2002 there were 173 companies and approximately 1 800 employees. During 1999, consumption of fish and fish products amounted to 155 million kilos with a value of approximately SEK 9 226 million.

8. In 2003 there were 580 people employed in the aquaculture sector and the production had a value of approximately SEK 151 million. The most important species in aquaculture is rainbow trout (76% in value terms), arctic char (9%), and eel (7%) all of which is mainly delivered to domestic markets.

Part 2: Management regime

Legal framework

9. As Sweden is a member of the European Union, the Common Fishery Policy (CFP) and its legislation is direct applicable. The general principles governing the national fishery policy are established in a Parliamentary Act. This act also authorises the Government to issue legal acts in order to supplement the CFP and to regulate the fishery not covered by the CFP. The Government has forwarded this authorisation to the National Board of Fisheries together with general principles and guidelines.

Institutional set-up

10. The central administration of fisheries policy is divided between the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Board of Fisheries (NBF). The Ministry draws up the framework of the fishery policy and represents Sweden at international negotiations. The NBF is the executive branch of the administration and responsible for the implementation of the fisheries policy and for giving technical advice to the government. At the regional level, the 21 county administrative boards include fisheries experts.

11. A large part of the fisheries research and development is carried out by the NBF at its three institutes of marine, coastal and freshwater research. Research is also undertaken at the universities and other public institutions.

12. The Coast Guard carries out the fisheries control and surveillance at sea and in harbours in co-operation with the NBF.

13. In public waters, the responsibility for management lies with the government and the regional or local authorities. Normally, waters around the coast and in the lakes are privately owned up to 300 meters from the shoreline meaning that conservation and management rests on the owners. In lakes, many private water-owners have created fishing management areas with uniform fishing rules and marketing of recreational opportunities for the public. Angling is allowed along the coast and in the four big lakes. Along the western and southern coast, fishing is allowed for the public and for professional fishers in privately owned waters with a limited number of gears.

Regulating the fishing fleet

14. Access to fishing is limited by vessel permits and professional fishing licenses issued by the NBF. Licences for professional fishing are granted for individuals and the vessel permit is required for all fishing vessels of a length of more than five metres. All information on the permit and the licences is registered in a database linked to catch reports. Effort is defined as capacity, in tonnage or engine power, multiplied by activity expressed in days at sea, and can be regulated through the allocation of special fishing permits stating the terms of access and specific fisheries.

Management measures

15. Total allowable catches (TAC), fishing effort and licences, technical measures and control and enforcement are the management measures most commonly used. At the moment no market-like instruments, connected to the actual fishing, are in use. There is, however, a project on going at the NBF where different management measures including market-like instruments are analysed with the intention of finding management instruments that are suitable for Swedish circumstances.

16. Due to the fact that the CFP regulates the size of the Swedish fishing fleet, a trade in tonnage has developed. By buying tonnage it is thus possible to increase your right to participate in the fishery even if you cannot buy actual quotas.

Part 3: Description of fisheries where market-like instruments are in use

17. No market-like instruments are in use in Sweden so this heading is not applicable.