



# pesc*info*



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## "The fisheries policy can be effective only with the participation of the whole sector"

*Notice to readers:* As this year begins, we have asked Mrs Emma Bonino, European Commissioner for Fisheries, to make a concise assessment of the past year and talk to us about the main dossiers concerning the Fisheries Policy in 1998. Owing to the importance of this interview, it will appear in the columns reserved for the editorial and the "Common Fisheries Policy" and "Interview of the month" headings.

### The Editor

*P.I. (Pesca Info):* Commissioner, just over a year ago, by issuing the first edition of Pesca Info, you advocated a strategic alliance between the European Institutions, fishing experts and the Member States to carry out the necessary restructuring of the fisheries sector within a concerted framework. In your opinion, has progress been made in this direction over the past 12 months?

Little by little, the messages that the Commission incessantly repeated over recent years - for instance, that "too much fishing kills fishing" or that you must "not only stop fishing too much but also too small" - are starting to be heard. It is encouraging to see how this has been the case at the last Council of Ministers, where certain Member States requested, as a precautionary measure, a reduction in Commission proposals or, further, that more and more representatives wished to see a tightening of the controls to provide better adherence to the established rules.

1997 was an important year for the common fisheries policy. Major progress, even if insufficient, was made in essential dossiers such as the technical measures aiming at protecting juveniles and reducing discards, restructuring fishing fleets with the adoption of multiannual guidance programmes for the period 1997-2001 or, further, the introduction of new TACs and the adoption of new scales of assessment for TACs not allocated to date.

*(The interview is continued on page 3)*

## Contents

- Special edition containing an interview with Mrs Emma Bonino, European Commissioner
- Region of the month: Sassnitz, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany)
- PESCA on the spot: network of fishing communities in Sweden
- Newsflash

### *Region of the month*

## Sassnitz, fishing and tourism for Rostock's successor



Sassnitz is on the east coast of the Island of Rügen in the direction of the Danish Island of Bornholm, south-west of the Baltic Sea. Subsequent to the collapse of fishing in Rostock, this port is today the leading landing centre of the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Land.

*(continued on page 2)*





This region's coast corresponds to that of former East Germany. Its integration into the market economy has been a veritable trauma for the fishing world. At the end of the 1960s, Rostock had accommodated trawlers from Sassnitz and had become the ex-Democratic Republic's leading fishing port; while still accommodating 45 large industrial deep-sea fishing trawlers in 1989, in 1992 there were only six and only one at the end of 1997. In the same lapse of time, manpower in industrial fishing went from 8,000 sailors to 150! In Rostock, today, the quays are being redeveloped and the warehouses renovated, but the large trawlers to be seen there have Russian colours and are registered in Kaliningrad!

Sassnitz has rediscovered its role of the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Land's leading port. However, it now accommodates only approximately 10, 20- to 30-m and approximately 20, 10- to 20-m vessels. Non-industrial fishing has not been any more spared by the crisis: its manpower went from 1,900 fishermen in 1991 to 650 today. However, craftsmen, living in the country and owning their own houses, suffered less than the industrial fishing crews, city dwellers and tenants. They found it easier to adapt to this coast's new key activity: tourism.

In fact, Berlin and Hamburg are less than 300 km away and the tourist trade is in full expansion. Housing estates and hotels are being built along the entire coast and each port has its fleet of boats for excursions. Tourism is thus apparent even at the heart of Sassnitz's fishing port in the form of a museum with boats which are afloat, but above all by way of the fleet of vessels reconverted to

leisure activities: sea fishing and discovery activities. It is an impressive sight: from the long pier which protects the docks, one quay accommodates more than approximately 10 over-12-m boats for this purpose. While being a minority activity in other European fishing ports here it takes on remarkable proportions!

Nevertheless, renovation works are visible. Fishing activities remain in existence, especially with respect to cod (*Gadus morhua*) - whereby catches are less restricted by quotas than natural conditions (ice, salinity variations) - and flounder (*Platichthys flesus*), flat fish that can withstand heavy desalination. On the other hand, very few herring are to be found here, whereas they are the main species caught in the Land. The factors limiting the catches of these two species are mainly price, which is often too low. Fishery products are generally exported; herring to Denmark, cod and flounder to The Netherlands.

#### **Questions put to N. Kahlfuss of the Producer Organization of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**

*Pesca-Info (P.I.): What are the interactions with the other Baltic Sea countries?*

*N. Kahlfuss (N.K.):* Many of our boats fish east of the Island of Bornholm, but have never encountered problems with the Danes. There are more problems when the latter approach our coasts, as the situation is more complex in the zone between 3 and 12 nautical miles. We have no interactions with our Polish neighbours in the absence of a specific arrangement. On the other hand, there is a fisheries agreement with the Baltic States

and some of our boats have caught cod there.

*P.I.: The tourist trade appears to be important. Does it provide outlets for local fishing?*

*N.K.:* Certainly, but there are sea-fishing prohibitions for fishermen involved in small-scale fishing, precisely in the summer months. The regulation should be adapted more to different cases; it should not be the same for small and large vessels.

#### **Data sheet Sassnitz**

- *Location:* Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany)
- *Type of fishing:* trawler, gill nets
- *Fleet:* 9 vessels over 20 m (out of 13 in the Land), 20 between 10 and 20 m (out of 110), 39 less than 10 m.
- *Fishing zones:* large vessels: Baltic Sea and occasionally the North Sea, medium-sized vessels: coastal waters of the Baltic, small vessels: coastal waters and lagoons.
- *Production:*
  - *volume:* 4,200 tonnes for Sassnitz in 1996, including 3,150 for cod, 2,800 t in 1997 (15,000-20,000 t in 1995-1996 for the whole of the Land)
  - *value:* 5,5 million DM in 1996, 4,6 million in 1997 (i.e. ECU 2,8 and 2,3 million, respectively) for Sassnitz. Between 20 and 22 million DM in 1995-1996, for Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (between ECU 10 and 11 million)
- *Number of fishermen:* 150 for Sassnitz, 650 for the Land
- *Number of processing firms:* 1 large canning factory and a filleting-factory project in Sassnitz.