



# pesc*info*



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## Editorial

### CHANGE OF COURSE FOR PESCA INFO

The 20<sup>th</sup> edition of PESCA Info you have before you is the last in the series. Two years after it came into being, we have decided to change the formula of our periodical publication, providing you with a newsletter that is more thorough, complete and – we trust – more in line with your expectations.

As you well know, PESCA Info was a first for the Directorate-General for Fisheries. We launched the newsletter to establish a regular link with the fishing world, particularly as part of the implementation of the PESCA Community Initiative in favour of areas dependent on fishing. From the outset, however, the topics dealt with in PESCA Info were widened to tackle other aspects of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), since we considered it essential to provide the fishing sector with information beyond structural aspects. After all, if the structural actions are to be relevant and effective, they need to enter into the general spirit of the CFP and be in line with other measures, such as those relating to the conservation of fisheries resources and markets.

However, it is difficult to be exhaustive or to deal with issues in depth in a mere four pages. As the PESCA Community Initiative comes to an end, we have decided to redesign our publication to satisfy a readership that has proved more varied and eager to be kept informed than we initially envisaged.

I do not wish to give too much away about our new magazine, which will be delivered to your letterbox in the next few months. Suffice it to say you will find everything that was of interest in PESCA Info, plus what was missing on account of the format, i.e. more wide-ranging information and a more attractive layout.

Thank you for the interest you have shown in PESCA Info throughout its publication. I hope to see you all on board for the launch of our new magazine.

A. Cavaco,  
Director General

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### *Region of the month*

## Hantsholm: host port for foreign trawlers



Located on the north-west coast of Jutland, Hantsholm is Denmark's top landing centre for fishery products for human consumption in terms of value. Unlike most of the country's other ports, pelagic species are of secondary importance here: Hantsholm actually specialises in deep-water fish caught by both Danish and foreign boats.

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The history of this village, built on a headland overlooking a low, sandy windswept coastline, is noteworthy. At the local museum, maps of the model town in the last century are on display; its promoters planned to create a major trading and fishing port close to the main fishing zones of Danish fleets. Cancelled, then remodelled to reflect the style of the early century and further delayed by both World Wars, the project only came into being in 1967. The fishing hamlet dominated by a lighthouse would become a planned village for newcomers rather than a major town.

The port soon aroused interest among the neighbouring fishermen from North Jutland, who were happy to be able to save considerable time at sea. Facilities were developed to house not only local boats, but all those from other ports wishing to land their catches here as well. Danish cutters and distant-water trawlers were soon joined by foreign vessels attracted by the port's strategic location, auction centres, storage facilities and related ship-repair services.

Today, landings from foreign boats account for half of the tonnage and a third of the output value passing through the auction centre. German trawlers are the main contributors, closely followed by Swedish, Norwegian, British and, to a lesser extent, Belgian, Polish and Faeroese vessels.

The port's success has also attracted numerous processing industries, three of which employ over a hundred people each: "Taabel", specialising in packaged fish dishes for the catering industry, and shrimps; "Pandalus", involved in fresh fish (filleting) and frozen fish (in blocks); and "Hesselholt",

processing fish and shrimps in various forms. For the largest firms, Hantsholm is just one source of supply. However, they do appreciate the advantages Denmark's leading auction centre has to offer and the storage facilities available.

Apart from sales at auction, partnerships have emerged between different sectors of the industry, leading to supply contracts being concluded. Landings of fresh fish have been joined by those of frozen products, bringing more foreign vessels to the port from the same countries as those mentioned above, in addition to distant-water trawlers from Iceland and Canada. Finally, while the fish-meal industry is a minor one, it contributes to a diversification of stocks.

#### **Questions put to Jes Holm Sorensen, Director of Hantsholm auction centre**

*Pesca Info (P.I.): How do you explain the attraction of Hantsholm?*

*Jes Holm Sorensen (J.H.S.):* One of the first advantages of Hantsholm is its good location, close to important fishing grounds in the North Sea, but the flexibility of the harbour facilities, the good infrastructure and suitable services are also attractive to both national and foreign fishermen. We can also talk about the effort to promote quality and the goods prices at the fish market.

*Pesca Info (P.I.): Do you hold electronic sales and do you have links with other auctions?*

*(J.H.S.):* No. Here, we use traditional auction sales; the buyers want to see the fish and test the quality of sea-products every day.

We just ask the boats which are coming in to announce the time of arrival and to give information about their catches 24 hours before landing. There are about one hundred buyers here who export 99% of their fish products, mainly to Germany.

#### **Data sheet Hantsholm**

- *Location:* County of Viborg, Denmark
- *Fleet:* 20 distant-water trawlers, 3 seiners, 100 inshore fishing vessels
- *Type of fishing:*
  - industrial: bottom trawls;
  - non-industrial: bottom trawls, nets, pots.
- *Output:*
  - *species:* cod (*Gadus morhua*), saithe (*Pollachius Virens*), plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), monkfish (*Lophius sp.*)
  - *volume:* (1997) 160 126 t, including 105 262 t for industry and 54 864 t for human consumption (including 31 120 t under auction)
  - *value:* 520.1 million Danish kroner (**EUR 69.8 million**) including 441.6 million Danish kroner (**EUR 59.2 million**) for human consumption (including: 336 million Danish kroner – **EUR 45 million – at auction**)
- *Employment in fishing:* sea-fishing (approx. 400 full-time jobs)
- *Processing:* 20 companies (between 700 and 800 equivalent full-time jobs)





### **Common Fisheries Policy**

## **Health matters in the field of fishing and aquaculture**

Health matters relating to fishing and aquaculture products contain two aspects:

- human aspects, covering public health and consumer protection, and
- aspects relating to animals and the diseases they can contract, which can lead to considerable financial losses for producer firms.

### **Consumer protection**

As with all products intended for human consumption, those from fishing and aquaculture are subject to regulations aimed at protecting consumers. Consumers should be able to find products free of pathogens, which can cause food poisoning. These regulations apply both at production level in the EU and to imports from outside the Community.

The regulations relate to conditions for the production, packaging, storage and transport of fish in the EU. They are behind the standardisation of fishing boats, shellfish buildings and fish-trade plants.

As regards imported products, the EU leaves it to third countries to inspect their own firms, though it also carries out inspections on a regular basis. This enables a list to be drawn up of third countries which can export their goods to the EU. Some countries may be temporarily excluded from the list.

Inspections should attempt to achieve a balance between the need to supply the markets and EU consumer safety.

In the field of aquaculture, the policy of inspection applies to the whole production chain. For example, the regulations seek to classify zones according to quality criteria determining the conditions for marketing, such as systematic authorisation, the obligation to pass through purification systems, a total ban on sales, etc.

The laws relating to aquaculture are complex, which is why several of the Directorates-General of the European Commission are involved in its development and supervision. For example, DG III (Industry) is involved in pharmaceutical aspects, DG VI (Agriculture) in veterinary laws, DG XIV (Fisheries) in structural assistance, DG XII in research and DG XXIV in food inspection.

### **Health aspects relating to aquatic animals**

Diseases afflicting fish and other aquatic breeding species may lead to mortality and considerable losses for fish-farmers. A regulation has established measures to prevent contagion. It also specifies production zones and approved farms from which the transfer of live animals to other breeding sites is authorised.



### **PESCA on the spot**

## **A fishing school in Thyborøn, Denmark**

The fishing school in Thyborøn offers a two-year course for young seamen and an adult training course.

In the early 1990s, a new training course involving safety at sea was set up. The course breathed new life into the school's teaching of the theory and practice of fishing. This teaching won the school recognition and popularity, leading to its affiliation to the National Office for Maritime Affairs.

The downside to this success was an acute shortage of facilities and training equipment. Financial assistance from the PESCA Initiative to the tune of EURO 670 000 helped to pay for new teaching materials and student facilities. The overall financing (50% PESCA and 50% State) provided the school with suitable premises and a school boat of 42 GRT. The school now has capacity for 50 students a year and shares its resources with the fishing schools from which it originates, to their mutual benefit.

New mixed funds between PESCA and the Danish government of EURO 827 000 will enable the completion and consolidation of the project on the site of the fishing port, providing an essential link between theory and practice.

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### Interview of the month

## Interview with Dr John Godfrey, Vice chairman, Consumers in Europe Group

*Editor's note: intended as a medium for freely voiced opinions, the PESCA bulletin reflects the views held by professionals. Articles express the opinions of the authors alone.*

*Pesca Info (P.I.): What do you think about the representation of the interests of producers and consumers in the CFP?*

**John Godfrey (J.G.):** The common resource of fish in the sea has been both the livelihood of fishermen and a prime source of highly nutritious food for the consumer. It used to be particularly valuable for the poor as good protein at a far lower cost than meat. Consumers have not much impact on policy because the problems of the CFP are complex and technical. Fishermen have had to master the complexity, but as fish is only one food among others, consumers have not made their case heard.

Fishermen have been protected from the worst financial effects of scarcity by rising prices for the little they are able to catch; but the point has now been reached when fish cannot be sold at a higher price, because it would no longer compete with meat. This is bad for the consumer who could have more and cheaper fish if the stocks were adequately conserved. The survival and breeding of species, valuable as human food, are still being damaged by industrial fishing and should be prevented.

*P.I.: Yes, but there are also other reasons for fish availability!*

**J.G.:** Certainly! The reproduction of fish may be facing yet one more hazard. The survival of fish could vary depending on climate change, which can affect recruitment as well as pollution. So the effect of overfishing may vary a lot according to conditions. The management of stocks must therefore be more cautious. For many species, stability will be better if several year classes contribute to the breeding stock. For instance, the recent advice that one year's better recruitment to the cod stocks in the North Sea was grounds for a larger TAC seems not to be biologically wise. The better reproduction seems likely to have been due to a happy set of environmental circumstances, rather than a stable improvement in the breeding stock of cod.

*P.I.: What measures do you suggest to resolve the problems that the fisheries sector encounters?*

**J.G.:** Reform of the CFP based on scientific evidence, with the best advice from all sides, is urgent for all concerned. The Commission's proposals for reform have not yet taken proper account of the interests of consumers; but the main impediment to progress has been the Council of Ministers, which regularly waters down or rejects policies for better conservation that the Commission has proposed. For the long haul, fishermen and consumers are on the same boat – and need to be hauling in the same direction.



### Newsflash

#### **“SEAFRONT Zeebrugge” (Belgium) hosts Expo '98**

This year, the maritime theme park “Seafront” at Zeebrugge on the Belgian coast is hosting an exhibition of DG XIV on the Common Fisheries Policy. The exhibition was first presented at the European Union pavilion at Expo '98 in Lisbon.

*Address: Seafront, Vismijnstraat 7,  
B-8380 Zeebrugge, tel.: 32-50- 55.14.15  
<http://www.seafront.be>*

#### **Third “PESCA” Thematic Conference in Galicia, Spain, on 5 and 6/11/1999**

This conference, organised by DG XIV, will gather representatives from European, national and regional public authorities, the industry and all sectors concerned to review the prospects for the development of European aquaculture.

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