

ICES Request Form

Request from	European Commission, DG MARE C1
Contact within organisation	
Content contact person	
Request announced	
Request received	
Answer deadline client	Date for ICES to make an offer (usually 4-6 weeks after announcement)
Request code (client)	24_05 Baltic pelagic trawling closure
Request code (ICES)	
Request	Closure for pelagic trawling in the central Baltic Sea and derogation thereof for certain sprat fisheries
<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Given the status of the central Baltic herring stock, the Council set as an additional remedial measure functionally linked to the fishing opportunities for 2024 a spawning closure for fisheries using pelagic trawl (article 8 of the Baltic Fishing Opportunities Regulation (EU) 2023/2638). This closure lasts one month and covers the month of April in subdivisions 25 and 26, the period from 16 April to 15 May in subdivisions 27 and 28.2, and the month of May in subdivisions 29 and 32.</p> <p>In February 2024 a derogation from the closure period in subdivisions 25 and 26 was suggested for directed sprat fisheries operated at a water depth deeper than 65 m. It is argued that these fisheries would have herring by-catches of (only) about 4% in April because herring is spawning in shallower coastal areas.</p> <p><u>Request to ICES</u></p> <p>ICES is requested to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) assess if and to what extent the pelagic trawling closure set in Regulation (EU) 2023/2638 is likely to contribute to increasing the spawning stock biomass of the central Baltic herring stock to above MSY Btrigger; 2) assess if and to what extent the above-mentioned possible derogation from the pelagic trawling closure would be likely to impact the effects of the pelagic trawling closure or other conservation measures ICES might suggest under points 4 and 5 here-under on the status of the central Baltic herring stock. 3) provide an overview (including maps) of the spawning migration routes and possible spawning grounds of the central Baltic herring stock and the seasonality of the spawning. <p>ICES is invited to expand its assessment, to the extent feasible and appropriate, and to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) if and how the effects of a pelagic trawling spawning closure on the status of the central Baltic herring stock could be further enhanced; 5) if there are other conservation measures which would have an equal or an even more beneficial effect on the status of the central Baltic herring stock; 6) the possible effects of the measures identified under points 4 and 5 on the herring and sprat fisheries. 	

Background information provided for the assessment in addition to any other relevant data ICES has

- Paper from the Polish National Marine Fisheries Research Institute

Response by ICES

To assess the impact of the pelagic trawling closure and points 1) , 2) and 4) of the request would require highly spatially and temporally resolved and accurate catch data which is not readily available to ICES, and an integration with high-resolution survey data collected in the area and stored at ICES (data portal for Acoustic-trawl surveys). It would also require some displacement assumptions, modelling or predictions which is also not feasible in the short-term.

Point 5 was partially addressed earlier in 2024 through a dedicated workshop and advice;

See [https://doi.org/ 10.17895/ices.advice.25435741](https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25435741)

The following point can be addressed as a technical service in 2024/25:

3) Provide an overview (including maps) of the possible spawning grounds of the central Baltic herring stock and the seasonality of the spawning’.

Planning ICES	August-September 2024 secure relevant independent experts to carry out the work
ICES contact person	
WG(s) involved	Not applicable
Preparation timing	18 November – 18 December 2024 specific work (review of available information and new analyses) to be carried out.
Review group	Not applicable
Advice drafting group	Not applicable
ACOM Webex	Not applicable
Release date	31 January 2025

Grey cells to be filled in by ICES.