



Taulov, 9th March 2019

Joint statement

Dutch and Danish fishers: Cooperation more important than ever

The Danish Fishermen's PO and the VisNed together with the Nederlandse Vissersbond met on 8 March 2019, in Taulov, Denmark, about co-existence at sea and cooperation.

The meeting was a follow-up on the meeting held in Taulov on February 27th, 2018 where steps were taken to improve the co-existence at sea between Dutch and Danish fishers through focusing on communication and troubleshooting.

Both parties were pleased that cooperation and dialogue between fishers in general has improved in 2018. Furthermore, the parties found it very satisfactory that the number of incidents at sea in the North Sea involving Dutch and Danish vessels has decreased and the handling of the incidents has improved considerably.

Gillnetters and beam trawlers must respect each other

Danish Gill netters and the Dutch beam trawlers interests in using the same fishing grounds do now and then cause incidents. However, dialogue is the key to successful co-existence. The Danish gillnetters and the Dutch beam trawlers must inform each other about their fishing activities to avoid incidents. To facilitate this, the fishers have set up a joint platform using WhatsApp to inform about fisheries activities in the North Sea – and the fishers are urged in all ways to communicate.

The dedicated WhatsApp group was set up prior to the season in 2018. In case of incidents or conflict the organisations should be notified by fishers immediately, enabling them to sort the situation out at the shortest possible notice. Both parties agreed that the system has proven efficient.

Compliance

Compliance of fishers is essential, this includes full AIS coverage, as well as respecting boundaries of restricted areas. All fishers want level playing field. VisNed has repeated their declaration of 2017 that it is of utmost importance for Dutch fishers to behave as guests in Danish waters. Both VisNed and Vissersbond will take sanctions against their members who repeatedly show irresponsible behavior.

The Skagerrak

Both the Dutch and Danish fisheries organizations stressed that also fishers in the Skagerrak must improve the co-existence at sea and cooperation. Not only should a Skagerrak WhatsApp group be formed using the experience from the North Sea – the dialogue must be improved – in the interest of both the Dutch and the Danish fishers. Therefore, it was agreed to set up a meeting in Thorup Strand, Denmark, later in the spring 2019 to discuss ideas on how to improve co-existence in the Skagerrak.

Continued cooperation

The Danish and Dutch fisheries organizations agreed to continue the fruitful cooperation and meet at least once a year or when deemed necessary. The revision of the technical measures in the EU and the Brexit could create the need for a new meeting in 2019.

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