



VIRGINIJUS SINKEVIČIUS
Commissioner for Environment
Oceans and Fisheries

Brussels,
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Mr. Mikhail Durkin
Executive Secretary
Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB)
Östra Ågatan 53,
SE-753 22 Uppsala
SWEDEN

Dear Mr. Durkin,

Thank you for your letter of 25 September 2020 on the important topic of better protecting the harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea from being by-caught in fishing operations.

You ask me to urgently implement measures to protect these vulnerable animals in the Baltic Sea. Be assured that I take this matter very seriously. As European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries it is my objective to ensure that EU legislation is upheld and enforced. That is what European citizens expect from us.

The Commission can introduce emergency measures and we are seriously considering that possibility. Apart from that, I am convinced that it is necessary to work out in parallel long-term solutions at the local and regional level between marine conservationists, fishers and administrators.

We have therefore asked the stakeholders in the Baltic Sea, who work together in the Baltic Sea Advisory Council and the regional Member State group Baltfish, to develop a joint recommendation with concrete measures to be put in place urgently to better protect harbour porpoises. We are actively engaging with Baltfish and continue pushing them towards a robust joint recommendation in accordance with the ICES advice of 26 May 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Virginijus Sinkevičius