

POSITION PAPER OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Chapter 8: "Fisheries"

Setting the time frame for the process of adoption and implementation of the European Union's *acquis communautaire*, the Government of Latvia adopted 1 January 2003 as the date on which Latvia will be prepared for accession to the European Union.

Latvia, after taking into account its specific requests laid down in this position paper, accepts in full the EU Common Fisheries Policy and the *acquis communautaire* in the area of "Fisheries" and will implement it before 1 January 2003. Latvia reserves the right to revise and discuss questions related to the development and changes of the current EU Common Fisheries Policy within the accession period.

Where it is possible, Latvia is ready to adopt and fully implement Community legislation before 1 January 2003. Certain provisions of *acquis communautaire* applicable exclusively to the Member states will be fully implemented as from the date of accession.

Situation in sector

The entrepreneurial activities in the Latvian fisheries sector are tightly connected with the exploitation and protection of living natural resources in Latvian waters, as well as linked to the actions necessary for conservation of biodiversity. Fisheries is a sector, which has important local raw material base – fish resources of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga.

By 1 January 2000, 13 430 people were employed in fisheries (in fishing – 6967, in fish processing – 6208 and in aquaculture – 255), which constitutes 1,2% of the total economically active population in Latvia (in fishing –0,63%, in fish processing –0,55% and in aquaculture – 0,02%).

Main indicators of fisheries sector

Indicator	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Ratio in Gross Domestic Product (%)	2,30	3,40	3,12	2,48	2,06
Ratio in total export (%)	8,50	9,00	5,30	3,10	2,90
Export (in tonnes)	124 111	134 683	124 736	106 710	127 925
Import (in tonnes)	32 240	44 700	58 000	37 627	26 811

Source: The State Statistical Board

Fish product ratio in the total export has been gradually decreasing during last years, while external trade balance of fish products remains positive and in 1999 it comprised +17,14 mil. LVL (28,57 mil. EUR).

Fisheries policy and strategy

In order to determine the priorities of the fisheries sector in the future while taking into account the development of market trends, necessity to increase possibilities for preservation of working places, as well as to ensure full and sustainable utilisation of local natural resources, proper use of intellectual potential and possibilities provided by the infrastructure of the coastal fishermen's

villages, two sub-programmes of the national development program for the fisheries sector (1995–2010) were elaborated in 1998:

- The Baltic Sea and Coastal Waters Fishing Fleet Development Programme (1998 - 2000);
- Fish Processing Industry Development Programme (1998 - 2000).

The sub-programmes provide measures for the modernisation of fishing fleet and fish processing sector, subsequently increasing quality and value added of fishery products. The sub-programmes determine that sustainable development of fisheries sector is directly dependent on the implementation of the following activities:

- Full utilisation of the fishing quotas accessible to Latvia for the production of competitive fishery products for domestic and international market, with simultaneous promotion of integration of Latvia's fisheries sector into the EU Common Fisheries Policy and the introduction of its common principles in the processing and sale of fishery products;
- Implementation of long-term restructuring of the sector by the development of qualitative up-to-date and flexible technologies in fish processing and fishing enterprises, mainly using the local raw material of fish, but in case of market demand to be capable to diversify production – by use of imported raw material;
- Achieve balance of the number of fish processing and fishing enterprises in conformity with the fish resources available and in accordance with the market possibilities (particularly export) for the fishery products produced;
- Full compliance of fish processing and fishing enterprises with the EU sanitary and hygiene requirements upon Latvia's accession to the EU.

The above-mentioned sub-programmes will be revised by the end of 2000, mainly anticipating the status of realisation of activities, ensuring sustainable future development of the sector, simultaneously promoting sector's integration into the EU.

The legal basis

In order to harmonise the national legislation with the EU requirements, the following legislation acts have been adopted in Latvia:

- ?? The "Fishing Law" (12.04.1995) with the amendments (17.02.2000), which wholly or partly harmonise the requirements of the following EU normative acts: 3760/92/EEC, 3759/92/EEC, 3690/93/EC, 2210/93/EEC, 1382/91/EEC, 2090/98/EEC, 779/97/EC;
- ?? The law "On the Continental Shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Latvia" (02.02.1993) (3760/92/EEC, 3317/94/EC);
- ?? The Regulations No 55 of the Cabinet of Ministers (17.02.1998) "Commercial Fishing Regulations in the Territorial Waters, Economic Zone Waters of the Republic of Latvia and the Gulf of Riga" (2847/93/EEC, 3760/92/EEC, 3094/86/EEC, 3690/93/EEC, 894/97/EC, 88/98/EC, 1382/91/EEC, 2807/83/EEC, 779/97/EC, 3317/94/EC, 414/96/EC);
- ?? The Regulations No 387 of the Cabinet of Ministers (06.10.1998) "Regulations on Fish Catch Landing Control in the Ports of Latvia" (2847/93/EEC, 1382/91/EEC, 3094/86/EEC);
- ?? The Regulations No 89 of the Cabinet of Ministers (17.03.1998) "Regulations on Hygiene Requirements and Freshness and Size Criteria in Fishing Products Production and Offer in the Market" (91/493/EEC, 92/48/EEC, 94/356/EEC, 3759/92/EEC, 2406/96/EC);

- ?? The Regulations No 21 of the Cabinet of Ministers (16.01.1996) “Regulations on the Lease of Waterbodies and Commercial Fishing Rights and the Order of Use of Fishing Rights” (3760/92/EEC);
- ?? The Regulations No 19 of the Ministry of Transport (29.06.1999) “Ordinance on Latvian Ship Register” (2090/98/EEC).

Latvia has joined the following international conventions in the field of fisheries:

- ?? 1973 Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts (Latvia joined on 10 September 1991);
- ?? 1964 Convention on International Council for Exploration of the Sea (Latvia joined on 10 September 1991);
- ?? 1977 Convention on future Multilateral Co-operation in the North-West Atlantic fisheries (Latvia joined on 3 June 1992);
- ?? 1974 Helsinki Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Latvia joined on 3 March 1994).

The harmonisation of national legislation with the *acquis communautaire* continues and it is planned to elaborate and adopt the following legislation acts as fast as possible, but not later than 31 December 2002:

- ?? Regulations on vessel capacity measurement (harmonising legislative acts: 2930/86/EEC, 1381/87/EEC);
- ?? Regulations on marketing of fishery and aquaculture products (3759/92/EEC, 104/2000/EC);
- ?? Regulations No 55 of the Cabinet of Ministers (17.02.1998) “Commercial Fishing Regulations in the Territorial Waters, Economic Zone Waters of the Republic of Latvia and the Gulf of Riga” will be amended, involving the requirements of such EU normative acts: 2847/93/EEC, 897/94/EC, 1489/97/EC.

Administrative structures

There are following administrative institutions in the fisheries sector, the functions of which corresponds to the directions set down in the EU Common Fisheries Policy:

- ?? The National Board of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture (development of fisheries policy and sector’s strategy, elaboration of fisheries legislation, implementation of *acquis communautaire*, representation of sector interests and safeguarding of allocation of national quota at the international fisheries organisations, realisation of intergovernmental fisheries agreements, regulation and limitation of fishing activities and lease of fishing rights, organisation of fish product market, registration of fish buyers, maintenance of data base of fishing vessel register);
- ?? Marine Environmental Board of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (fishing control in the waters of Latvian jurisdiction, issuing of fishing licences, fish landing control at ports, provision of functioning of vessel satellite monitoring centre);
- ?? Ship Register of the Latvian Maritime Administration of the Ministry of Transport (general registration of the Latvian vessels, including fishing vessels);
- ?? State Veterinary Service of the Ministry of Agriculture (control of fish processing enterprises, fishing and processing vessels, inspection of fresh and chilled fish freshness and size categories);

?? State Sanitary Inspection of the Ministry of Welfare (fish product retail and public catering control);

?? Rural Support Service (administration of state aid in fisheries sector and in future the administration of the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG));

?? Latvian Fisheries Research Institute (evaluation of fish resources and elaboration of scientific recommendations for resources management).

For full implementation of market intervention mechanism for fresh and chilled fish, a producers' organisation is anticipated to be established upon accession to the EU.

Common Fisheries Policy

Resources management and control

1. Internal resources

After accession to the EU Latvia requests to maintain access to the existing fishery resources.

Latvia declares, that the volume of the national fishing quota after accession to the EU should be proportional to the existing Latvian quota at the IBSFC, which is set down since 1993 and corresponds to such percentage quantity of the total allowable catch (TAC), which is set annually in the Baltic Sea: for cod – 6.77%, for salmon – 12.93%, for herring – 6.86%, for sprat – 12.44%.

Fishing regulation in the Baltic Sea is carried out according to the rules of the International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC), while fishing regulation in the Atlantic Ocean, where Latvian fishing vessels are fishing, is carried out according to the rules of the North-west Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) and the North-east Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). The evaluation of resources for setting of TAC and distribution of quotas in the Baltic Sea and in the northern part of the Atlantic Ocean are carried out according to the recommendations of the International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES). Taking into account, that Latvia is a member state of the above-mentioned international organisations (IBSFC, ICES, NAFO) and co-operates with the NEAFC, it should be considered, that the rules and principles of conservation, management and exploitation of resources are similar in both the EU and Latvia.

Latvia accepts that the EU takes over the existing competence to represent Latvia's interests at the IBSFC and NAFO, as well as points out, that according to the ICES basic principles Latvia will represent itself at this organisation after accession to the EU.

Historically Latvia has been fishing in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga already before the World War II. After the war and until 1991 Latvia received its fishing limits as a share of the Soviet Union quota in the Baltic Sea. In 1992, Latvia became an independent contracting party of the IBSFC and since 1993, Latvia has national allocations of quotas in the Baltic Sea.

Latvian national quotas allocated by the IBSFC (in tonnes)

Species	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Salmon	420	388	323	291	265	265	265
Cod	2 710	4 060	8 124	11 170	12 200	9 478	8 530
Sprat	43 500	87 000	62 200	62 200	68 420	68 420	58 220
Herring	38 400	38 400	38 400	38 400	38 400	38 400	32 650

Source: International Baltic Sea Fisheries Commission (IBSFC)

Latvia requests to set down special provisions for the fishing in the Gulf of Riga after accession to the EU, declaring that fishing in this area in the exclusive economic zones should be granted only for the countries, which have historically and traditionally fished in this fishing area. As well as Latvia would like to maintain 12 nautical mile zone of territorial sea waters from the baseline in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga, where fishing will be limited to and allowed only for the Latvian fishing vessels.

The Article 3 of the Convention on the Law of the Sea provides that each coastal state has a right to determine their own territorial waters within a 12 nautical miles limit from the baseline.

According to the Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Latvia "Law of the State Border of the Republic of Latvia" the territorial sea waters of the Republic of Latvia are 12 nautical miles from the baseline.

Latvia considers, that such position corresponds to the principle of relative stability, which is one of the basic elements for distribution of fish resources and is based on historically established and internationally approved maintenance of fishing possibilities. Moreover, it is vitally necessary to secure the biological stability of fish stocks in the Gulf of Riga, where coastal district population is especially dependent on the fisheries.

The stocks of herring in the Gulf of Riga are biologically separated from the other stocks in the Baltic Sea. The ICES evaluates the stocks in the Gulf of Riga separately from the other stocks of the Baltic Sea and annually submits to the IBSFC the recommendations for the regulation of fishing for herring in the Gulf of Riga.

Based on the Latvian and Estonian proposals, the question on the international regulation of fishing for herring in the Gulf of Riga is being acknowledged at the IBSFC in the last years. Taking into account the principle of eco-system approach to herring stock protection and fishing regulation, it is already proposed fully separate the regulation of fishing for herring in the Gulf of Riga by evaluation and introduction of separate allowable catch.

Following a traditionally based situation and historical records on this fishery, as well extremely sensitive eco-system in the Gulf of Riga, fishing in the Latvian territorial and economic zone waters in this area has been carried out only by Latvian fishers, but fishing in the Estonian waters has been carried out only by Estonian fishers.

The current fishing effort and the number of fishing vessels in the Gulf of Riga fully utilise the fish stocks in these waters. The fishing effort in the Gulf of Riga is being regulated in the framework of Latvian and Estonian mutual agreement on the limit of fishing vessel number and introduction of common fishing provisions. Any changes in this situation and rapid increase of fishing effort in the Gulf of Riga may cause a negative impact on stability of fish stocks and their natural reproduction possibilities, as well as of the future fishing possibilities and activities in this region.

Latvian catch in the Gulf of Riga by species (in tonnes)

Species	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Herring	13 073	13 481	14 209	13 554	14 050	17 016	17 362	21 116	16 125	20 511
Sprat	1 562	1 460	1 282	1 328	648	8 378	7 034	6 187	3 543	3 146
Flounder	66	135	88	89	173	200	121	104	106	88
Salmon	181	120	74	52	33	41	51	64	60	56
Trout	-	-	-	-	10	7	6	3	5	4
Pike-perch	68	53	79	48	33	34	53	20	17	24
Whitefish	21	11	6	4	3	3	4	4	5	5
Vimba	73	50	33	49	37	50	46	41	73	93
Bream	33	29	17	33	68	80	89	67	54	71
Smelt	294	265	505	351	122	351	384	331	200	172
Eelpout	8	14	20	79	164	143	139	80	41	33
Perch	45	61	32	54	34	37	34	21	21	35
Other species	343	152	91	60	38	16	57	128	100	34
Total catch	15 767	15 831	16 436	15 701	15 413	26 356	25 380	28 172	20 350	24 272

Source: UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (ANO FAO)

The Latvian legislation in the area of fishing control is basically harmonised with the EU requirements. The development of the legislation on certain issues, as well as their full practical implementation, will be ensured before the accession to the EU.

Fishing control in the Baltic Sea and landing control at the Latvian ports is already being performed by the Marine Environmental Board, which summarises the data from landing declarations. The National Board of Fisheries summarises the data from first sales notes and performs the registration of fish buyers.

Amendments in the current legislation will be made in nearest future, which foresee the establishment of the satellite-based fishing control system in Latvia. During 2000, all the vessels applying for further fishing possibilities in the EU waters will be equipped with the data transmitters. It is planned to establish fishing monitoring centre in the Marine Environmental Board within the framework of technical support project of the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries.

2. External resources

After accession to the EU, Latvia intends to maintain its share of “block-quota” for fishing in the NAFO region and use current national quotas for shrimp fishery (allocated fishing days), as well as declares its interests to fish for Greenland halibut in the NAFO region by using “others” quota.

Latvia joined the NAFO in 1992, but there is still no separate national quota allocation (except certain fishing days for shrimp fishery). The “block-quota” remains in this region between the Russian Federation and the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia). Latvia invites the EU to support its activities for solving of this issue within the framework of the NAFO. Otherwise, this problem can complicate inclusion of Latvia’s national quota into the common EU quota.

The licences for year 2000 for Greenland halibut fishery have already been issued for Latvian fishers and the NAFO secretariat has received Latvia's notification to fish for Greenland halibut in the NAFO region by using the certain quota possibilities of countries without national allocations under "others" quota.

Latvia's fishing possibilities in the NAFO fishing area within the frames of the former Soviet Union quota (1990-1992) and "block-quota" (1993-2000) (in tonnes)

Species	Region	Quota										
		1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Cod	3M	-	1 270	1 270	1 270	1 078	1 078	1 078	588	196	-	-
	3NO	2 221	1 624	1 624	1 218	716	-	-	-	-	-	-
Redfish	3M	34 625	34 625	29 777	20 775	18 005	18 005	18 005	18 005	18 005	13 850	13 850
	3LN	10 900	6 104	6 104	6 104	6 104	6 104	4 796	4 796	-	-	-
American plaice	3M	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000	500	-	-	-	-	-	-
	3LNO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yellowtail	3LNO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Witch	3NO	1 950	1 950	1 950	1 950	1 170	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capelin	3NO	15 000	15 000	15 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Squid	3+4	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	5 000	2 500	1 133

Sources: North West Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO)

Latvia's activities for shrimp fishery in the NAFO fishing area

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number of vessels	-	2	4	4	4	2	3	4
Limit of fishing days	-	-	-	544	490	490	490	490
Actual number of fishing days	-	190	649	504	439	402	438	
Catch (tonnes)	-	324	679	1 253	997	1 191	3 080	

Source: NAFO

Latvia's catch in the NAFO fishing area (in tonnes)

Species	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
NAFO (total)	13 316	6 293	7 472	8 791	473	1 026	1 253	997	1 191	3 080
Redfish	4 956	3 369	7 441	8 502	149	304	-	-	-	-
Capelin	2 011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mackerel	65	648	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cod	11	13	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland halibut	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American plaice	1	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Squid	93	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shrimps	-	-	-	-	324	679	1 253	997	1 191	3 080
Hake	5 292	3 043	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other species	1 047	126	-	289	-	43	-	-	-	-

Source: ANO FAO

Latvia declares its interests fishing for redfish, mackerel and herring in the NEAFC regulatory area.

Latvia has historically used possibilities to fish in the NEAFC regulated fishing area. However, taking into account small catch quotas for so called "co-operative" countries, fishing in the last few years had practically discontinued.

Latvia's catch in the NEAFC fishing area (in tonnes)

Species	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
NEAFC (total)	15 360	19 868	16 157	27 073	18 699	6 014	1 317	-	-	-
Blue whiting	14 501	15 419	10 742	10 328	2 582	-	-	-	-	-
Macrorus	-	2 539	1 684	2 176	675	-	-	-	-	-
Redfish	-	1 093	780	6 803	13 205	5 003	1 084	-	-	-
Horse mackerel	140	109	457	2 803	-	6	-	-	-	-
Mackerel	256	331	640	3 424	1 508	534	233	-	-	-
Other species	463	377	1 854	1 539	729	471	-	-	-	-

Source: ANO FAO

Latvia declares its interests for fishing in the waters off the African coast and in the Southwest Atlantic.

Latvian fishing vessels have historically used possibilities of fishing in the Central-east Atlantic (exclusive economic zone waters of Senegal, Morocco and Mauritania).

Latvia's catch in the Central-east Atlantic (in tonnes)

Species	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Horse mackerel	46 842	40 236	33 947	34 799	34 764	38 824	14 818	4 881	8 710	14 284
Sardinella	54 634	29 739	-	-	7 083	17 032	24 209	6 497	6 064	15 031
Sardine	39 757	45 442	8 011	7 878	1 387	-	474	-	-	-
Anchovy	19 149	19 275	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mackerel	18 317	14 649	3 953	2 612	4 056	3 494	3 765	1 931	2 562	3 123
Other species	29 453	43 405	25 675	17 927	18 399	23 352	20 445	4 709	5 194	10 914
Total catch	208 152	192 746	71 608	63 216	65 689	82 702	63 711	18 018	22 530	43 352

Source: ANO FAO

Latvian fishing vessels historically have fished for squid in Central-west Atlantic (see figures in a table of the Annex "Latvia's national quotas and catches (1990-1999)").

International agreements in fisheries

Latvia has concluded fisheries agreements with the United States of America, the Government of Denmark and the Faeroe Islands, the European Union, the Russian Federation, as well as the memorandum of understanding with Canada.

Latvia is aware that from the accession to the EU, the European Community will take over the execution of the agreements concluded by Latvia.

Latvia declares its interests to maintain the fishing possibilities provided by the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Latvia on co-operation in the fisheries sector, concluded on 21 July 1992.

According to the agreement with the Russian Federation, annual protocols on co-operation are concluded each year. It provides fishing possibilities in the Baltic Sea, as well as co-operation in protection, reproduction and research of fish resources. Each year Latvia can fish 150-200 tonnes for cod by using its own quota in the exclusive economic zone waters of the Russian Federation, while Russian fishing vessels can fish for 2000 tonnes of sprat and 100 tonnes of herring by using their own quota in the Latvian exclusive economic zone waters.

After accession to the EU, it would be rather important to keep the co-operation possibilities provided by this agreement, also taking into account that the European Community has not concluded such agreement with the Russian Federation.

Latvia declares its interests fishing for blue whiting in the economic zone of the Faeroe Islands.

According to the Agreement, concluded on 3 November 1992, between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Government of the Faeroe Islands on mutual fisheries relations between Latvia and Faeroe Islands the quota exchange activities were carried out in 1993-1995. Latvia allowed for fishing vessels of the Faeroe Islands to fish for 300 tonnes of cod, 2 500 pieces of salmon, 2 000 tonnes of sprat and 2 000 tonnes of herring in Latvian waters of the Baltic Sea each year, while Latvian fishing vessels were allowed to fish for 7 000 tonnes for blue whiting with a limit of 10% by-catch of mackerel in waters of the Faeroe Islands.

Following economical constrains and restructuring of Latvia's high seas fishery, the activities have been discontinued during the last years.

Market Policy

Latvia announces its interest for enrolment of sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) into the list of fish species (Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000 of 17 December 1999 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products), **to which the intervention mechanism for fresh and chilled fish market can be applied.**

The freshness and size criteria for fish products, as well as the check procedure for fish freshness and size categories has been set in the legislation of the Republic of Latvia. The EU legislation regarding the practical implementation of market intervention mechanism of fresh and chilled fish will be introduced in Latvia before the accession to the EU.

The division of competence between the ministries on state supervision and control of food-stuff circulation is set by the Cabinet of Ministers. The State Veterinary Service of the Ministry of Agriculture performs the fishery product control within the food stuff cycle from the very yield until retail sale, including freshness and size category control of fresh and frozen fishery products. The Sanitary Inspection of the Ministry of Welfare carries out control of fishery products for retail sale and public catering.

To assure that introduction of intervention mechanism for fresh and chilled fish complies with the EU principles, the establishment of producers' organisations is envisaged. However, during pre-accession period it is inexpedient for Latvia to establish producers' organisations compliant to the EU requirements, because the Latvian fishers have insufficient economic interests and gains from market intervention. Latvia has a quite different structure of fish market for the operation of such organisations as there are no auction markets and in the near future, no financial aid from the state is anticipated to introduce the intervention mechanism for fresh and chilled fish market. It has to be noted that the only fish species fished by the Latvian fishers, towards which the intervention mechanism refers to, are cod and herring, which are being fully sold on the basis of agreements concluded between fishers and fish buyers.

The sprat constitutes a great amount in Latvian catch structure, but the EU intervention mechanism for fresh and chilled fish market does not refer to these fish species. Unlike the EU, Latvia mainly uses sprat for production of products for human consumption.

Structural Measures

Latvia declares its interests to apply for the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance upon accession to the EU.

It is envisaged to establish the legislative basis for introduction of the EU structural measures in fisheries by the end of 2002.

During 2000, it is planned to improve the basis of national legislation for Latvian fishing vessel register and introduction of fisheries information system in accordance with the National Programme for Adoption of *Acquis*.

It is planned to accomplish the full unification of the existing information systems into the common integrated fisheries information system in compliance with the EU requirements in 2006. It will comprise the information on fish catches, landings, first sale, transportation, fish prices, fishing licences, data from the fishing vessels' register and other information necessary for fisheries sector.

The Latvian fishing fleet is comparatively small as concerning the number and the capacity of fishing vessels and still corresponds to available fish resources. At the same time, it has to be noted that Latvia has already been regulating the number of fishing vessels for several years and does not plan to increase it.

250 fishing vessels are fishing beyond the coastal waters in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. 12 fishing vessels are engaged in high seas fishery. The average age of the fishing vessels is 25 years. Approximately 380 rowing boats and 425 motorboats fish with passive fishing gears (nets, trap nets, seines) in the coastal waters.

The activities of the fishing vessels fishing in the coastal waters within 2 nautical mile zone or in the depth up to 20 metres and in inland waters, under principles and overall understanding used by the EU Member States could be recognised as an amateur fishery. Nevertheless, the coastal fishing boats used for fishing by licensed entrepreneurial fishing companies are foreseen to be included into the fishing vessel register and will be affected to the influence of structural measures. Latvia has commenced the registration of the fishing vessels in compliance with the EU requirements.

The activity of fishing and fish processing enterprises has a particular significance in a regional context, because the enterprises along the coast of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga are traditionally involved in fish processing and fishing. The fish processing and fishing enterprises in coastal villages and towns are the ones providing the residents of local and adjacent areas with employment, as well as local municipalities with the significant part of their tax revenues.

In Latvia, there are 114 fish processing enterprises registered at the State Veterinary Service.

In 1999, the EU veterinary inspectors checked the conformity of the State Veterinary Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and the listed Latvian fish processing enterprise compliance to the requirements of the European Council Directive No 91/493/EEC. Consequently, Latvia was included into the EU list of the third countries allowed to export fishery products for human consumption to the EU (Decision of the European Council No 2000/85/EC). At the moment 9 fish processing enterprises and 4 freezer vessels are included into the list, confirmed by the European Council, having rights to export fishery products to the EU (EC Decision 2000/88/EC).

For the improvement of fish processing and marketing the fish processing enterprises will use the means of the EU pre-accession structural fund (SAPARD) anticipated for agricultural and rural development in the time period from 2000 until accession.

The current situation and planned activities for alignment of fish processing and fishing vessels compliance with the EU hygiene requirements will be reviewed and discussed particularly in chapter 7: "Agriculture" (issues of veterinary control).

The issues related to the safety and health protection at working places will be reviewed and discussed in chapter 13: "Social policy and employment".

State Aid

In compliance with the “Law on Agriculture” (24.10.1996) and annual orders of the Ministry of Agriculture on the state aid allocation it is envisaged to allocate the state subsidies in the form of a state aid for the promotion of further development of the fisheries sector. The subsidies are used for the aims compliant to the EU objectives of structural funds in fisheries. The state aid is mainly used for modernisation of fishing vessels specifically in accordance with the EU hygiene demands and development of fishing in the Baltic Sea and the coastal fishing in the Gulf of Riga and inland waters.

The administrative system for state aid administration complying with the EU principles will be introduced in pre-accession period over the implementation of the SAPARD programme. It is directly connected with practical readiness of Latvia to administer in the future the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance – FIFG upon accession to the EU. It is anticipated to use the means of this fund to render the aid for the following directions:

- Renovation, modernisation of fishing fleet and structural adjustments, assuring the implementation of multi-annual guidance programmes for fishing fleet;
- Socio-economic activities including the aid for fishers' early-retirement;
- Protection of living water resources, development of aquaculture, fishing ports facilities, fish processing and marketing and inland water fishery.

In details this issue will be reviewed and discussed in chapter 21 “Regional policy and structural instruments”.

General, supply and research

Latvia declares its interest to participate in the work of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (established by Commission Decision No 93/619/EC of 19 November 1993), which co-ordinates scientific, technical and economic research for the fisheries and aquaculture sector upon accession to the EU.

Taking into account the aforementioned the Republic of Latvia proposes to open the negotiations on specific requests in the chapter 8 “Fisheries”.

LATVIA'S NATIONAL QUOTAS AND CATCHES (1990-1999) IN TONNES

	1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999	
	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch	Quota	Catch
Catch in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga (total)	-	57 808	-	57 790	-	46 289	-	37 157	-	77 423	-	57 113	-	71 786	-	86 123	-	78 109	-	78 147
Salmon	-	607	-	481	-	268	420	243	388	130	323	139	291	151	265	169	265	125	265	166
Cod	-	5 381	-	2 641	-	1 250	2 710	1 333	4 060	2 379	8 124	6 471	11 170	8 741	12 200	6 187	9 478	7 778	8 530	6 914
Sprat	-	16 142	-	17 672	-	17 388	43 500	12 553	87 000	20 132	62 200	24 383	62 200	34 211	68 420	49 314	68 420	44 858	58 220	42 834
Herring	-	34 318	-	33 288	-	25 845	38 400	21 949	38 400	22 676	38 400	24 972	38 400	27 523	38 400	29 330	38 400	24 417	32 650	27 163
Other species	-	1 360	-	3 708	-	1 538	-	1 079	-	739	-	1 148	-	1 160	-	1 123	-	931	-	1 070
High-seas catch (total)	-	407 137	-	355 588	-	110 468	-	104 180	-	91 554	-	91 567	-	70 322	-	19 015	-	23 721	-	46 421
NAFO	-	13 316	-	6 293	-	7 472	-	8 791	-	473	-	1 026	-	1 253	-	997	-	1 191	-	3 080
NEAFC	-	15 360	-	19 868	-	16 157	-	27 073	-	18 699	-	6 014	-	1 317	-	-	-	-	-	-
Central and East Atlantics	-	208 152	-	192 746	-	71 608	-	63 216	-	65 689	-	82 702	-	63 711	-	18 018	-	22 530	-	43 341
South-west Atlantics	-	19 365	-	23 011	-	11 637	-	5 029	-	6 693	-	1 825	-	4 041	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other fishing zones	-	150 944	-	113 670	-	3 594	-	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inland water catch	-	129	-	525	-	551	-	553	-	495	-	514	-	536	-	544	-	501	-	610
Aquaculture	-	2 235	-	2 685	-	641	-	339	-	560	-	525	-	380	-	345	-	284	-	467
Total catch (in tonnes)	±	<u>467 309</u>	±	<u>416 588</u>	±	<u>157 949</u>	±	<u>142 229</u>	±	<u>138 665</u>	±	<u>149 719</u>	±	<u>143 024</u>	±	<u>106 027</u>	±	<u>102 615</u>	±	<u>125 645</u>

Source: IBSFC, NAFO, ANO FAO