

Greenpeace Poland

PRESS RELEASE

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Large boulders underwater barrier against poaching Greenpeace and small scale fishermen reminds: overfishing devastate our fisheries!

At sea near Kolobrzeg Greenpeace activists with a two-masted yacht Beluga secured sea bottom against illegal trawling. The boulders weighing from 500 kg to 1 tonne were placed within 3 nautical miles of the coast. Although in accordance with the Polish law zone 3 nautical miles shall be exempt from bottom trawling, not all fishermen comply with the ban. Placing rocks on the seabed will be continued.

The aim is to draw attention to and prevent further poaching and destructive fishing, and in this way support those fishermen who fish responsibly and suffer losses due to illegal trawling.

"Overfishing, dumping overboard unwanted fish and habitat destruction are killing the ecosystem, especially in the case of the Baltic Sea, which is, like the Great Barrier Reef and the Galapagos Islands, given the status of Particularly Sensitive Sea Area". - Says Magdalena Figura, coordinator for the Ocean campaign . "Lack of accountability among some fishermen who prefer a quick profit to sustainable fisheries, leads to the devastation of the marine environment and does not provide opportunities to rebuild herds." – adds Figura.

The information Greenpeace has acquired , shows that despite the ban, in a restricted area within 3 nautical miles bottom trawling is conducted. Trawlers catch mostly small fish (family sandeel) fish meal for fur animals. Those fish do not have quotas - which means that they can be fished without any limits. Since these species are food for the cod, fishing them deprives the cod from its food source. It has a very negative impact not only on the cod stocks, but also other species such as sprat and herring.

"Our future is at stake. When they trawl out near the shore, catch all they meet on their way and destroy the sea bottom. They also destroy our nets "- say the fishermen from Dzwirzyno. "If they fish out all the small fish, the cod will not have enough to eat. As this goes on, we will not have anything to fish. The zone free from trawling should be no 3, and at least 6 miles offshore. "- They add.