

SWEDISH MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

Marine Policy and Public Affairs

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Statement

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Halland County Administrative Board
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Laying of smaller stone blocks for the purpose of hindering the damaging effects of demersal trawling in the Natura 2000-areas Fladen and Liilla Middelgrund

Introduction

The Swedish Maritime Administration has a collective responsibility for the maritime sector and works for an accessible maritime traffic system, high quality of transport, safe maritime traffic, good environment, regional development and an equality transport system. From and including the 1st of January 2009, the new public authority, the Swedish Transport Agency will work amongst other things with supervision, authorisation and standardisation, for maritime traffic. Questions that concern maritime traffic should therefore continue to be addressed to the Swedish Maritime Administration and the Swedish Transport Agency.

Greenpeace has notified Halland County Administrative Board that they want to place trawling obstructions in the form of approximately 300 smaller stone blocks in Natura 2000 – areas Fladen and Lilla Middelgrund. Attached to the notification is an Environmental Impact Assessment for each area which reports the measures and their effects.

According to the report the stones will be placed one by one at a depth of 22-35 meters at a distance apart of approximately 40-50 meters. The size of the blocks is circa 1m³ and initially they will be placed on sand and shell deposit bottom. The Swedish Maritime Administration is lacking a report on how the placing will be carried out.

Maritime safety viewpoint

Maritime traffic is not mentioned anywhere in EIA despite the fact that the main sea-lanes to the Baltic pass through the area. See attached nautical chart showing the tanker and cargo ships that passed through the area during one week in the summer of 2007. Route T is a sea-lane on the nautical chart which is indicated by light buoys, there the heaviest ships with the deepest draught pass. The placing of blocks should not be a hindrance for maritime traffic. The suggested placing depth of 22-35, seems to be sufficient on the assumption that one presupposes average water level.

The work that is described in the report appears to affect bottom-set topography and other data entered on the nautical chart. When the work is completed, all changes must be reported

to the Swedish Maritime Administration to be noted on the nautical chart
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Further views on the matter

Since , according to the information, there is no trawling prohibition in the areas, the Swedish Maritime Administration deem that as a first step, in consideration of the effect there will be in connection with the placing of the stones, a trawling prohibition should be introduced in both the areas.

Dealings in this matter, which was decided by the head of Maritime Policy and Public Affairs, Tage Edvardsson, involved the head of the Infrastructure Unit, Ulf Svedberg and the administrator for the West Coast Maritime traffic area Per-Gunnar Skoglund, also Environmental Executive Officer Thomas Åhsberg who submitted the report.

Tage Edvardsson

Thomas Åhsberg