

Follow-up of government measures for the marine environment

Committee on Environment and Agriculture



Follow-up of government measures for the marine environment

Foreword

On 21 February 2008, the parliamentary Committee on Environment and Agriculture decided to follow up and evaluate central government measures in the field of the marine environment. The follow-up has focused on describing measures being taken and examining the results and consequences that can be identified so far. The follow-up has also included studying cooperation between various authorities, systems for follow-up and evaluation and international cooperation in the field.

The follow-up has been carried out by the Committee's follow-up and evaluation group. The group comprises the following members: Sven Gunnar Persson (Christian Democrats), Jan-Olof Larsson (Social Democratic Party), Wiwi-Anne Johansson (Left Party), Erik A. Eriksson (Centre Party), Tina Ehn (Green Party), Rune Wikström (Moderate Party) and Lars Tysklind (Liberal Party). The background materials were, at the request of the group, prepared in the Riksdag Administration by the Research Service's Evaluation and Research Function, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

The report of the follow-up and evaluation group has been published in the series *Reports from the Riksdag* (Report 2008/09:RFR3). The follow-up was presented to the Committee in November 2008 and considered by the Committee in Committee Report 2008/09:MJU1. In December 2008, the Riksdag decided to approve

the Committee's assessments on the follow-up of government measures to improve the marine environment.

This brochure contains a summary of the results of the follow-up and the assessments of the follow-up and evaluation group.

Introduction

Background

The Swedish Riksdag has considered issues relating to the marine environment and has highlighted various related problems on a number of occasions. A whole series of inquiries have been conducted on the subject in recent years and it can be noted that a number of measures are currently being taken in this connection. A number of Government bills with a bearing on marine environment issues have also been announced by the Government.

In the light of this, the Committee on Environment and Agriculture has carried out a follow-up of government measures on the marine environment. The follow-up has focussed on describing the measures taken and their results and consequences on the marine environment. Part of the task has been to study cooperation between various authorities, systems for follow-up and evaluation and international cooperation in the field.

Purpose and delimitations

The purpose of the follow-up has been to give the Committee more in-depth background materials for its consideration of the 2009 Budget Bill, and for its consideration of motions and the announced Government Bill on marine policy. The group is aware that it can be very difficult to establish direct causal links between measures taken and observed effects on the marine environment. The follow-up has therefore not included any own analyses of the results of various measures. Neither has it included any evaluation of the actual results of the current marine environment initiatives.

Focus

The group has based its follow-up on a number of questions. What measures are various authorities taking for the marine environment and what results and consequences have been identified so far? How is cooperation organised between the various authorities working with marine environment issues at the local, regional and national levels? How are the systems for follow-up and evaluation arranged? What is done in the EU and other international cooperation?

Government measures for the marine environment

A point of departure for the follow-up has been the overall goal of environmental policy to pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved. The Swedish Riksdag has approved various environmental quality objectives and interim objectives in the field of environmental policy. These include that the maritime areas located to the west of Sweden (the Sound, the Kattegat and the Skagerrak) and Baltic Sea should have a production capacity that is sustainable in the long term and that biological diversity is to be preserved. Industries, recreation and other use of marine, coastal and archipelagic areas are to be pursued in such a way that sustainable development is promoted. Particularly valuable areas are to be protected from intrusions and other disturbances. Another point of departure for the group's follow-up has been the Committee's previous statements.

The group notes that the marine environment is an area of current interest not only in the political debate but also among the public, in various organisations and in the media. Issues relating to the marine environment have furthermore been the subject of various inquiries in recent years. Special measures for the marine environment are also being taken at present, and the Government has announced that a marine policy bill will be presented to the Riksdag in the spring of 2009.

The group has made the assessment that the situation in our seas remains serious although measures have been taken to improve the marine environment for a number of years. Numerous problems remain both in the Baltic Sea, the Sound, the Kattegat and the Skagerrak. The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has previously made the assessment that the environmental quality objectives relating to the marine environment will not be reached within the stated time and that continued, more intensive measures are therefore required to save our seas. The group is of the opinion that this assessment still applies and it therefore wants to emphasise that it is especially important to follow up the results of measures already taken.

The group notes that a large number of commissions of inquiry on marine-related issues have been conducted in recent years. These have presented a great many proposals for measures and goals. At the same time, the group notes that the follow-up reveals considerable impatience among the various actors in the field and that many are of the opinion that few concrete measures have been taken in practice.

The group has made the assessment that in recent decades, a number of measures have been implemented that have had a direct impact on the marine environment. These have, in particular, included measures in the field of legislation, such as bans on certain pollutants and tougher requirements as regards wastewater treatment. Many of the measures taken have been long-term in nature and it can take many years before the results are clear, especially in open-sea areas. At the same time, further measures are necessary, especially as regards eutrophication, fishing and marine-area protection. In view of the major environmental problems facing our seas, the group considers that more needs to be done. The group points out that it can be important to invest in marine environment measures that give rapid and clear results, for example by limiting fishing of species that are currently below safe biological limits. What is most important, however, is measures that will have a long-term impact on environmental problems in our seas. The group

therefore wants to emphasise strongly the importance of persistence, good planning and a long-term perspective.

As regards legislation, the follow-up has shown that there are problems of compliance with the regulatory framework. The group notes that it is difficult for central government and municipal authorities to monitor compliance with much of the existing regulatory framework. There is not always time for this task and it is difficult, in purely physical terms, to supervise everything that happens in the sea, in coastal areas and in other areas that affect the marine environment. The group wants to point out that the problems for our seas often originate on the land and that it is important that measures are taken there.

It has become clear in the course of the follow-up that there are great differences between Sweden's various marine areas, particularly as regards environmental problems. The preconditions and marine environment problems vary in different parts of the seas, and this is important to take into account in continued work in the field. The great variations between, for example, the Gulf of Bothnia, the Baltic proper and the maritime areas located to the west of Sweden require great flexibility. In the opinion of the group it is therefore important to adapt measures to local conditions and circumstances.

Current marine environment measures

The group notes that problems in the marine environment are topical not only because of political debate but also because of interest from the public, media etc. In the opinion of the group, this is also necessary in order to achieve results in efforts to improve the marine environment.

In 2007, the Swedish Government initiated measures to improve the marine environment, earmarking an initial SEK 0.5 billion for the period 2007–2010. In the most recent Budget Bill, the Government has proposed that the funding be increased to SEK 1 billion during this term of office. The follow-up shows that the current

measures have helped to bring the attention of the public authorities and other actors to the state of the marine environment and that the actors included in the follow-up are in favour of highlighting the issue. At the same time, the group wants to emphasise that it is far too early to evaluate the actual effects of the measures. This follow-up has therefore concentrated on following up how the work is progressing and how various actors view current and planned measures.

Various opportunities and problems with the current marine environment investment have been highlighted in the follow-up. The follow-up shows that the measures have sent clear signals that the marine environment issue is important and that this has been observed by central government authorities and other actors in the field. The establishment of a specific appropriation for the marine environment has clarified the need for investing special resources in the field. At the same time it can be noted that there is an enormous need for resources if concrete measures are to be implemented. Here, the group wants to point out that the Government, during the course of the follow-up, has proposed increased resources to measures for the marine environment in the 2009 Budget Bill.

In the follow-up it has emerged that funding has so far largely been used to carry out new commissions of inquiry. The group notes that some criticism has been directed towards certain measures, including the reduction of sprat to promote populations of predatory fish such as cod and oxygenation of the deepwater. Several actors have stated that these are short-term measures that do not have more than a limited local impact. The group considers it too early to assess how relevant this criticism is. In order to solve the problem of eutrophication etc., long-term change is needed and the inflow of nutrients from the land needs to be drastically reduced. Together with measures relating to fishing, this can give good results in the future. In the opinion of the group it is important to address the fundamental problems in the marine environment. The group has also noted that some criticism has been voiced regarding the Government's detailed control of marine environment measures. The

group considers it important that continued efforts take into account the points of view expressed by various actors. The group also wants to emphasise the need to evaluate earlier measures before new measures are taken and that a long-term perspective, good planning and persistence are important in this context.

Eutrophication and a lack of oxygen

Excessive input of nutrients from the surrounding land areas and from the atmosphere leads to eutrophication of the sea. The follow-up contains a review of the measures taken at central government level to deal with eutrophication.

The Swedish Riksdag has decided that the objective is that levels of eutrophic compounds in land and water are not to have a negative impact on human health, on the conditions necessary for biological diversity or the potential for versatile use of land and water. The follow-up has shown that it is difficult to achieve this goal for various reasons, including that much of the burden on the sea comes from other countries, the recovery period is long and large-scale natural processes affect the spread of nutrients.

The group notes that it is the Baltic proper that has the greatest problems with eutrophication. In the follow-up, it has emerged that the discharge of eutrophic compounds has decreased, but the major problems of eutrophication in the marine environment remain. Discharge reductions have been achieved primarily through measures in municipal wastewater management and industry, but also in agriculture and individual drains. The follow-up has shown that the reduction of discharges has primarily been from point sources, while diffuse leakages of nutrients are more difficult to deal with. Although the problem of eutrophication remains, there is much that indicates that the problem would be even worse if no measures had been taken.

The group notes that there is considerable awareness of the problem of eutrophication and a frustration among many actors that so few practical measures have been taken. In the follow-up, many ac-

tors have pointed out that they themselves are not responsible for the implementation and that there is a lack of funding. At the same time the Baltic Sea Action Plan is very clear in its demands that discharges of nutrients be reduced.

In the follow-up, it has become clear that it is often very difficult to establish direct causal links between measures taken and the observed effects on the marine environment. It can often take a long time before measures taken have an impact on the environment in the sea. An example is that measures to address the problem of eutrophication have shown results in various bays, but that it is still difficult to see results out in the open sea. The follow-up shows that there is also some uncertainty as to what measures should be taken, for example, to deal with eutrophication. This uncertainty has to do with what measures are the most cost-effective and what measures are suitable for different parts of our marine environment.

Agriculture is the single greatest Swedish source of eutrophication, followed by atmospheric deposition and wastewater from water treatment plants. The group notes that various measures have been taken in the field of agriculture since the late 1980s, which has contributed to reduced emissions of nitrogen and phosphorus in the sea. However, the environmental measures have not been sufficient to improve the situation for the marine environment. In the opinion of the group, it is important that the responsible authorities continue their work with this issue so that Sweden can fulfil its commitments under the Baltic Sea Action Plan. The group wants to point out that measures to address both atmospheric deposition and diffuse land-based sources are necessary.

In the follow-up various problems connected with wetlands and border zones are highlighted, for example that newly constructed wetlands have not always been placed where they have the greatest possible benefit and have had a smaller purification effect than expected. The group notes that new wetlands are needed, primarily in agriculturally-intensive areas near the coast, where land prices are also the highest. The group notes that several actors have pointed out that subsidies are important, but insufficient. There are also

limited resources for maintenance and evaluation of the artificially constructed wetlands. In the opinion of the group, it is important to study the problems that have emerged in the Committee's follow-up in greater detail, and to continue to follow up and evaluate the impact of constructed wetlands and border zones.

The group notes that the follow-up shows that municipal wastewater management works well when it comes to the eutrophication problem. Measures in municipal wastewater management have led to reduced discharges of eutrophic compounds, in particular phosphorus but also nitrogen. Locally, eutrophication problems in coastal areas have been reduced and the water quality has improved. As regards individual drains, the follow-up has shown that the regulatory framework makes clear demands but that it is estimated that just over half of the drains do not meet the minimum standards. Municipalities with many outflows do not have sufficient resources to be able to monitor individual drains. The group notes that the issue of individual drains is difficult to deal with by the municipalities, maybe especially in summer cottage areas that are in the process of being converted to permanent residential areas. It is also expensive for individual property owners to adjust their drains to reduce discharges of eutrophic compounds to the sea. At the same time the group has, in the follow-up, highlighted the fact that it is unclear how cost-effective it is to adjust individual drains to reduce the problem of eutrophication. The group considers it important that central government authorities receive sufficient resources to be able to assist county councils and municipalities with this issue and that knowledge in this field increases.

Toxic compounds

Harmful chemical substances are spread in the manufacture and use of various products. Toxic compounds affect the marine environment in various ways. In the follow-up, the problems that toxic compounds cause in marine environments are described, as well as central government measures to deal with these.

The Riksdag has adopted the objective that the environment is to be free from compounds and metals that were created in or produced by society and that can threaten human health or biological diversity. In the Committee's follow-up it has emerged that levels of several known toxic compounds have fallen notably in the marine environment as a result of measures taken in recent decades. The group notes that the legislation has placed greater demands on industry and wastewater management plants, and that a number of compounds have either been banned or strictly limited. Industry and agriculture have thus limited the use of toxic compounds, and emissions from industry and incineration plants have fallen as new, enhanced technology has been introduced. At the same time the group notes that toxic compounds are still a major problem in the marine environment. Levels of various compounds remain high, for example, in the bottom sediment, even though many of them are banned. In the opinion of the group further improvements and reductions in the use of toxins, for example, in industry and agriculture, are needed. It is important to have a strong chemicals legislation and that all actors work to limit the amount of toxic compounds.

The group notes that measures have been taken to reduce the use of toxins, for example, in agriculture. The group considers it important to continue working to raise awareness among farmers of the problems associated with pesticides etc.

The group also wants to highlight that new toxic compounds are appearing all the time, posing new risks to the marine environment. As regards municipal wastewater management, the follow-up shows that it is difficult to cleanse wastewater of new toxic compounds and pharmaceutical residues. It can be noted that the municipal wastewater management plants do not have the necessary technology to separate these toxins. At the same time, the group is aware that it is expensive to rebuild wastewater plants when new toxic compounds emerge all the time. In the opinion of the group it is therefore very important to continue efforts to reduce the inflow of toxins to wastewater management plants, for example, by working more generally

to reduce the use of toxins in society. An example raised in the follow-up is the occurrence of chemicals in imported textiles. When these are washed they end up via our drains in watercourses and finally in the sea. The follow-up has shown that there is an awareness among the responsible authorities of the problems with new toxins. The group especially wants to emphasise the importance of further work with the more general problem that the import of products containing environmentally hazardous substances involves.

Another problem area is pharmaceutical residues that reach the sea via our drains. The group notes that wastewater management plants are not constructed to break down pharmaceutical residues and that it has emerged in the follow-up that more knowledge is needed before it is possible to decide what measures need to be taken. The group wants to stress that this is an important issue relating to the marine environment, and highlights how important it is that environmental considerations have a strong bearing when pharmaceuticals are tested.

The group further notes that knowledge of the long-term health and environmental effects of toxic compounds is limited in many cases, and that environmental monitoring shows that there is considerable uncertainty in assessments of the toxic compound situation in the sea. In the assessment of the group, it is important to increase knowledge of toxic compounds in our seas and the way in which they affect our environment and health. The group also wants to point out the importance of good monitoring in the chemicals area. In the follow-up the fact that there are problems with monitoring has been highlighted. It is, for example, difficult to monitor compliance with the stricter rules on the use of boat-bottom paints among pleasure boats on the east coast.

The issue of toxic compounds left by old industries in the form of polluted areas has also been highlighted as a major problem with a bearing on the marine environment. The Riksdag has adopted the objective that all polluted areas involving acute risks in the case of direct exposure and such polluted areas that threaten important water catchments or valuable natural environments are to be examined

and, if necessary, measures taken by the end of year 2010. In the assessment of the group, it will not be possible to fulfil this interim objective in the stated time. Post-treatment of polluted areas is a relatively new field which is both multidisciplinary and complex. There are a large number of polluted areas and many of them are found along the coastline. Remediation involves huge costs and responsibility for funding is often unclear. The group notes that more rapid remediation is needed to fulfil the Riksdag's objective. It is important that measures are primarily taken where the environmental and health risks are the greatest, and not solely where funding is available. The group also wants to emphasise how important it is that knowledge of polluted areas and their impact on the environment and our health is improved. In the opinion of the group, it is important to highlight the problems associated with polluted areas in continued work with the marine environment.

Oil discharges and marine litter

Oil discharges and marine litter are problems in the marine environment. In the follow-up, the problems that oil discharges and marine litter cause in marine environments are described, as well as central government measures to deal with these.

The Swedish Riksdag has adopted the objective that through stricter legislation and increased monitoring, oil discharges and chemicals from ships are to be minimised to negligible levels by the year 2010. The group notes that the Environmental Objectives Council considers that it may be possible to fulfil this goal. The number of noted oil discharges has decreased somewhat in recent years, but the risk of accidents has increased on account of increased oil tanker traffic.

The group notes that increased shipping also involves a greater burden on marine ecosystems, at the same time as shipping has environmental advantages over other forms of transport. The follow-up shows that several measures have been taken in recent years to limit discharges from shipping and to take care of marine litter. The

international regulations have led to a reduction in the number of noted discharges, but it is clear from the follow-up that there are shortcomings as regards compliance with the regulations. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has reported that the actual discharges in the Swedish zone of responsibility are at least twice as big as confirmed discharges. As regards oil discharges, the Swedish Coast Guard's aerial surveillance has increased and it is believed to have contributed to reduced oil discharges. However, the group notes that the risk of being discovered is still small and the risk of a penalty being imposed is even smaller. In the follow-up the group also highlights the fact that the water pollution fee is not sufficiently high to have a deterrent effect. There are still a great number of oil discharges every year. The group therefore wants to stress the importance of continued measures to prevent such discharges.

The group notes that international efforts to prepare for the drawing up of international regulations is taking a long time and is often characterised by compromises between different countries, with different views of measures to improve the marine environment. It emerges from the follow-up that several actors consider that this work is progressing too slowly. While the group can understand this, it also wants to emphasise the importance of joining the world's shipping nations in common regulations. The shipping industry is, to a great extent, international, and there may be a risk that ships are re-flagged if some countries independently implement more stringent rules. This will not lead to any improvements in the marine environment. This means that special rules for ships bearing a Swedish flag should, to the greatest possible extent, be avoided. The group therefore wants to stress the importance of continued long-term, international efforts to reduce the negative impact of shipping on the environment.

In addition to international efforts, measures have also been taken in Sweden, including environmentally differentiated port and channel tariffs, which in the opinion of the group have had good results in encouraging shipping companies to go ahead in environmental efforts. In the follow-up it has also emerged that various measures

have been taken to reduce accidents at sea, by exercising controls and monitoring of shipping. The group notes that new technology helps to reduce the risk of collisions and that the shipping industry has asked for more and better monitoring of traffic in the Baltic Sea. The group also notes that it emerges from the follow-up that there are indications that preparedness for oil accidents can be improved. This is an issue that is important to highlight in continued work to improve the marine environment.

As regards marine litter, the group notes that there are international regulations. Ports are obliged without extra charges to receive refuse from ships. In the follow-up it has emerged that there are differing opinions of how well this system works. On the part of the shipping industry, for example, it has been said that the ports have too few waste disposal plants, that it is too complicated to dispose of waste there and that inspections should be carried out in ports to address the problem of marine litter. The group notes that large amounts of refuse are still dumped at sea. In the opinion of the group it is important to continue work to facilitate the reception of refuse in ports.

As regards waste from pleasure boats, the group notes that there are still no bans on releasing waste into sea. The group notes that there have been discussions for more than ten years about implementing a ban on discharges of waste from toilets from pleasure boats. The group is aware that total levels of discharges from pleasure boats may be regarded as small, but it is still a problem of principle that such discharges are permitted. In the opinion of the group, this is an issue that should be solved so that Sweden can achieve better compliance with the Helcom's recommendations. To be able to achieve this, it is important that the infrastructure for receiving waste from pleasure boats corresponds to the need. In the opinion of the group, the follow-up shows that the infrastructure and reception system may need to be improved.

Biological diversity and fishing

The marine environment contains a wealth of habitats and species of animals and plants. The situation for several fish stocks today is critical. In the follow-up the problems associated with biological diversity and fishing, as well as the measures taken at central government level are described. Among other things, the problems associated with discards of fish are highlighted. The Swedish Board of Fisheries recently presented a proposal on introducing a ban on discards of fish that may be landed.

The Riksdag has adopted the objective that biological diversity is to be preserved and used in a sustainable way, for present and future generations. At a general level, however, there is much to indicate that the loss of biological diversity is continuing, be it at a somewhat slower rate. In general, many of the marine and coastal biotypes around Sweden are judged to be in great need of measures in order to prevent further damage.

In the marine environment it can be noted that the status of several fish stocks is critical. The group notes that criticism has been voiced about fisheries policy measures and their consequences for fish in our seas. Several actors say that the EU's fisheries policy has failed in managing fish stocks, that over-capacity in the fishing fleet remains and fishing quotas do not follow the scientific advice from ICES. The group notes that there are a number of ongoing measures in the framework of the current system aimed to improve the situation for fish resources. Here, the group would like to refer to the opinions that the group expressed last year in the Committee on Environment and Agriculture's follow-up of the results and consequences of the fisheries policy measures. It was stated there, that it is important that Sweden continues to highlight the problems that the common fisheries policy entails and that it is important to have an overall view of continued measures for the role of fish in the ecosystem. In the opinion of the group, it is still very important to highlight the consequences of fishing on the marine environment and to take the necessary measures.

The group especially wants to bring attention to the problems associated with discards of fish. The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has stated that the amount of fish that are discarded is so great that measures need to be taken. Discards lead to such a great fishing mortality that this can, in many cases, be said to be a direct threat to fish stocks. The group notes that the problems previously pointed out by the Committee remain. The group notes, further, that efforts are being made to stop discards both in Swedish fisheries management and in the EU. In the opinion of the group it is of utmost importance that this issue is given great emphasis in continued efforts.

As regards the spread of exotic marine species, for example, through ballast water, the group notes that the Ballast Water Convention is an important measure, but that it has yet to be ratified. In the opinion of the group, it is important that work with this issue is pushed forward. The problem of exotic marine species needs, for example, to be highlighted as part of national environmental monitoring.

As regards other work with biological diversity in the marine environment, the group notes that this is an issue that has been somewhat overshadowed in recent times. The group wants to point out here that Sweden has committed both to preserve and to use our biological diversity in a sustainable way, in accordance with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and that it continues to be important to highlight this issue.

Marine nature conservation and protection of sea shores

Our sea shores have gradually become exposed to greater exploitation. In the follow-up the problems that increased use of coasts and the sea cause in marine environments are described, as well as central government measures to deal with these.

The Riksdag has adopted the objective that by no later than 2010, at least half of the marine areas that are worth protecting and at least

70% of our coastal and archipelagic areas with high natural and cultural value shall have long-term protection.

The group notes that the number of marine nature reserves has increased, among other things as a result of targeted additional resources. At the same time, it notes that work to create protected marine areas is progressing slowly, but that the number of protected areas has increased in recent years. Neither the current spread of protected marine habitats nor the prognosis for year 2010 fulfils the goal of a representative network. It is further difficult to account for the level of protection as a percentage in the way set out in the goal. The follow-up shows that a small share of the resources for area protection have been used for marine-related areas. In the opinion of the group it is important that work with area protection continues and that it leads to a representative protection of various marine and coastal environments, where the entire ecosystem is taken into consideration.

The group also notes that most marine areas that have received protection so far have been granted protection status on the basis of nature conservation values that are applied to the land. A lack of knowledge about marine environments has made it difficult to point out the areas that are most valuable and in need of protection. In the opinion of the group the water perspective should be afforded greater importance in the future, which also means that we need greater knowledge of the environment beneath the surface of the water. Furthermore, there should be a greater geographic spread of protected areas. In this context, it can be mentioned that the group's follow-up has shown that compensation for encroachment is regarded as low by many, and that monitoring of protected areas may be a neglected area. These are issues that should be highlighted in continued work with the marine environment.

The group is aware that there are many different interests in our coasts, which can lead to conflicts of interests when protected areas are to be established or sea shore protection issues to be discussed. The follow-up has shown that exploitation of the coast has increased despite a greater number of protected sea shores, and that

there is heavy pressure for exploitation of the sea shore. The group also highlights the fact that surges from shipping has caused erosion along the shoreline in certain areas. In the follow-up it is noted that there is not always time for monitoring and follow-up of sea shore protection. The group considers that a clearer follow-up of the use of coastal and marine areas is needed and of how the protection of sea shores has progressed. The group also wants to highlight the importance of physical planning in maintaining the protection of sea shores. It can be noted that the municipalities' planning activities as regards coastal waters vary. Municipalities often prioritise traditional issues in their planning work. In the opinion of the group, it is important that the water perspective is highlighted in physical planning. The group considers it important to carefully weigh nature conservation interests against other interests. An important basis for such considerations may be various types of marine inventories. It is important to establish where the marine values exist and where it is possible to, for example, continue to build.

The Riksdag has adopted the goal that noise and other disturbances from boats are to be negligible within particularly sensitive and identified archipelagic and coastal areas by no later than the year 2010. In the follow-up it has emerged that certain measures have been taken to reduce disturbance from noise but that it continues to be difficult to monitor whether, for example, jet-skiers comply with the regulations. The group notes that work with areas of consideration has progressed slowly but has now started.

Central government governance of the marine environment

The Riksdag and the Government define the overall goals and direction of Swedish central government activities, while various authorities are responsible for the implementation of activities. In the follow-up the central government governance of the marine environment and the way in which various authorities cooperate and collaborate on marine environment issues are described.

Central government initiatives for the sea and marine environment are not only governed by the environmental objectives, they are also affected by objectives and measures in a great many policy areas. In the follow-up a number of conflicting objectives have become clear, both between objectives for different policy areas and between the different environmental objectives. In the opinion of the group it would be desirable if a deeper analysis of the conflicting objectives was undertaken.

In the follow-up various problems associated with the government's governance of the authorities' marine environment efforts are identified. The group wants to emphasise the importance of good planning in the governance of public administration and the need for a more long-term perspective and greater sustainability in work with the marine environment. Several authorities have stated that it is unclear what is expected of them as regards measures to improve the marine environment. The group points out that for a number of authorities, marine environment issues are not a major aspect of their activities. The marine environment is also, in many cases, a relatively new part of their activities. One issue that has been highlighted concerns a wish for greater clarity in the Government's appropriation directions, for example, as regards tasks involving more than one authority. At the same time it has emerged that there is a tendency towards excessive detailed control by the Government in appropriation directions. The group notes that governance involves a difficult balance as regards how clearly objectives and measures are to be set out. Management by objectives and results is based on the Government setting out objectives and reporting requirements, while the authority chooses the most effective measures for achieving the objectives and reports back in its annual report etc. It is also necessary to balance the local perspective and knowledge of the authority's own activities with the national perspective and the need for an overall view.

In order to be able to plan, implement and administrate long-term measures to save our seas, it is important that the authorities are provided with the necessary instruments. In the follow-up it has,

for example, become clear that it takes a long time to launch various measures. An important issue that has been highlighted in the follow-up is the need for multi-year budget frameworks. The group notes that in the 2009 Budget Bill, the Government proposes the authorisation of decisions on contributions that involve the need for future appropriations until the year 2015.

In the opinion of the group it is justifiable to invest in measures that produce noticeable results, in particular so as to maintain public faith in management of the marine environment. At the same time the group also considers it important to invest in measures that produce long-term results. The balance between short-term and long-term measures is difficult but important to take into consideration. In many cases the effects of measures are only seen in the long-term, especially out in the open sea. For this reason it is important to continue to distinguish between the effects that various marine policy measures have in the open sea and in archipelagos and bays.

As regards the governance of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the group notes that the Agency has been assigned an increasing number of tasks. In the follow-up it has emerged that the work load has increased and the Agency been forced to use programme appropriations to hire consultants since they have been unable to employ more staff. The knowledge acquired through consultants disappears once the assignment is completed. This also means that programme funding is used for administration. In the opinion of the group, this is a problem that requires attention.

In the follow-up it has emerged that there are coordination problems in the Government Offices, e.g. with the preparation of appropriation directions and assignments to authorities. Responsibility for various aspects of the marine environment is divided between different ministries, and in the opinion of the group it is unfortunate that the different ministries give different signals. In order to achieve good results in overall marine environment work, it is important that governance of public administration is clear. The group notes that wishes have been expressed in the follow-up that there

should be a more permanent coordinating function across the ministries for marine environment issues.

There are a large number of central government and municipal authorities and other actors that, in various ways, deal with issues relating to the sea and marine environment. The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has, in various contexts, brought attention to the need for coordination between the relevant authorities. The follow-up has shown that responsibility for the marine environment is divided between different authorities, with different focuses and objectives. No one authority considers itself to have a clear overall responsibility for the marine environment and for coordination of central government measures. The follow-up shows that there is an ambition to cooperate and collaborate, but the group notes that the marine environment is such a large, complex and many-sided area that, in practice, it is very difficult to cooperate and collaborate. Marine environment aspects feature in a number of different issues dealt with by authorities at the local, regional and central levels.

For the last couple of years there has been a coordination group for the heads of the relevant authorities – Samhav. The follow-up has shown that it has, until now, worked well as a forum for information and for solving certain problems, but in the opinion of the group it has perhaps not had a major impact on the daily work with the marine environment in the various authorities. In the opinion of the group, not all issues and problems in the field of the marine environment can be solved through the type of cooperation between authorities that Samhav represents. The group notes that the issue of the further development of Samhav is currently being discussed.

In the opinion of the group, cooperation and collaboration between the various actors need to be improved and the various conflicts of interests need to be solved. The follow-up has shown that a number of different issues have a bearing on how the environment in our seas develops. For this reason it is important that the relevant authorities continue to develop a working method in which environmental aspects are naturally integrated into day-to-day activities. The group notes that this is an issue of a more overall nature,

which does not purely concern the marine environment, but also how the central government can direct activities towards greater environmental consideration.

The group also wants to bring attention to the fact that greater demands for cooperation and collaboration also require the authorities to be able to make available resources for this purpose. If an authority wants to increase its involvement in marine environment issues, resources need to be reprioritised from another area of the authority's activities, which can often be difficult. If the central government wants a greater focus on marine environment issues in the authorities, this also requires clear governance on the part of the Government.

The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has pointed out the importance of local participation, broad cooperation between actors and regional coordination. The follow-up has shown several good examples of good results from local involvement in marine environment work. In the opinion of the group it is important that local populations, local associations and, in particular, municipal administrations become more involved in efforts in this area.

The group wants to emphasise that the Water Directive and the work of the five Water Authorities include work with the marine environment. In the follow-up it has emerged that Sweden's work in the field of water has initially had a number of problems, in particular as regards organisation. The lack of a national water authority has meant that work in this field has had a relatively weak position with unclear roles and an unclear mandate in relation to other authorities. National coordination of the water authorities' work has not been formalised but is based on personal commitment on the part of the various water authorities. In the opinion of the group it is important to achieve a clear organisation and a clearer division of responsibilities between different actors at different levels. It is especially important to clarify the role of the municipalities. There is considerable local interest in marine environment issues, and it is important that this as well as local knowledge and skills are made use of in work in the field of water.

Knowledge of the marine environment

Knowledge about the environment under surface of the sea is limited, as is knowledge about the results that various measures to improve the marine environment produce. The follow-up describes how the state, by means of follow-up, environmental monitoring, supervision and research acquires knowledge about the marine environment and the results of various central government measures.

Knowledge about the marine environment and the impact of various measures is limited. In the follow-up it has emerged that knowledge of the environment below the surface of the sea is more deficient than knowledge of the environment on land. At the same time it has become clear in the follow-up that there is sufficient knowledge to be able to take measures, especially as regards reducing discharges of, for example, eutrophic and toxic compounds. Like most actors working with the marine environment, the group wants to emphasise the lack of certain knowledge cannot serve to prevent anything from being done.

The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has, in various contexts, pointed to how important it is that follow-up and evaluation of the effects of measures taken in the marine environment are carried out in order to improve measures. It has, however, emerged in the follow-up that there is still uncertainty about the effects that various measures have on the marine environment and the problems that need to be solved. The group notes that it is difficult to evaluate the results of the various measures taken by the central government for the marine environment. The follow-up has shown that it is difficult to link effects to specific measures, partly because the results can only be seen after a number of years, and are, at the same time, affected by a number of different factors. The sea is a complicated ecosystem, which is why, in the opinion of the group, caution needs to be taken in general as regards the implementation of various measures that affect the ecosystems. It can be difficult to foresee the effects that various measures have on the ecosystem of the sea. The group notes that follow-up and evaluation are not a pri-

ority area in the various authorities. At the same time the follow-up has shown that there is a great need to be able to assess the effects of various measures in relation to the objectives and how much the measures cost, in particular in view of the limited resources available. A number of actors have also expressed that there is a desire to develop work here.

In the light of the fact that both the Riksdag and the Government have stated that the marine environment is a priority area and that measures in the area can be both expensive and very complicated, it is, in the opinion of the group, crucial that knowledge about the results and consequences of various measures increases. In the opinion of the group, it is necessary to develop a culture that is more based on follow-up and results in the field of the marine environment. This can partly be achieved by means of improved national governance of follow-up efforts. One way is by clarifying the Government's requirements that the authorities should report back. The group notes that the Riksdag has already expressed to the Government the wish that a separate structure for reporting of results in the marine environment be established. In the opinion of the group it is important to continue to follow up results of measures in this field in, for example, annual presentations to the Riksdag in the Budget Bill.

The group notes that there are gaps in our knowledge of the situation in the marine environment. One reason is that environmental monitoring has been developed over a long period for various purposes and with funding from various sources. The task of monitoring is shared by several actors. A lack of coordination between national, regional and local monitoring means, for example, that marine environmental monitoring is not comprehensive but has a number of gaps. It can also be noted that recipient control makes up a large part of the part produced. The follow-up shows that the combined results of monitoring are not followed up and analysed to a sufficient extent. It is furthermore difficult to use the results of the environmental monitoring to analyse the effectiveness of various measures. The group notes that knowledge of the marine environ-

ment is also acquired within the framework of various monitoring initiatives. The group notes, here too, that a lot of information is collected but that it can be difficult to gain access to it and that it is not compiled at a more aggregated level.

In the opinion of the group, it is important that further measures are taken to increase the use of the results of joint environmental monitoring. The group also wants to point to the need to establish high standards as regards the quality of the various parts of monitoring initiatives, including recipient control. It appears, for example, to be important to link environmental monitoring to research, in particular to ensure that the results of monitoring are made good use of. The group especially wants to emphasise the importance of making available data that has been collected. This places considerable demands on coordination between different data-collecting and data-storing authorities and actors. In the context it is important to sort out how access is to be funded and to what extent the costs are to be charged to uses of collected data on the marine environment. As regards access to bathymetric data, the follow-up shows that problems in the area seem to be on their way to being sorted out, which the group considers to be very positive.

During the course of the follow-up and, for example, in connection with a visit to the Askö Laboratory in Trosa, the group noted that a new marine environment institute was established on 1 July 2008. The task of the institute is to compile and carry out syntheses of research and environmental monitoring. The group assumes that the Marine Environment Institute's findings will also be used by the Committee on Environment and Agriculture in its future work on marine environment issues.

International cooperation

The environmental status of our seas is not only linked to how we in Sweden deal with environmental issues, it is also largely connected to the way in which other countries deal with, for example, emissions of toxic and eutrophic substances, and how Sweden, together

with other countries, succeeds in bringing about international regulations relating to fisheries, shipping etc. International work in the field of the marine environment is described in the follow-up.

The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has, in various contexts, pointed out the importance of international cooperation and cooperation in the EU in the field of the marine environment. The group notes that there is considerable international cooperation in which Swedish authorities and other actors participate. At the same time the follow-up also shows that this international work is progressing slowly in certain cases, and that many people feel that it has produced few concrete results. It is regarded as frustrating that certain international conventions are not binding and that they are not observed. At the same time the group wants to emphasise the importance of continued work in various international arenas, as many marine environment problems need to be solved at the international level.

The follow-up has shown that plenty is being done in the field of the marine environment, e.g. in the EU, Helcom, Ospar and the IMO. Problems occasionally arise in connection with the way in which Sweden is represented in various international organisations. The group considers it important to address this problem and that coordinated Swedish positions are prepared prior to meetings. This is an issue that highlights the need for greater national coordination in marine environment issues. As regards work with the Marine Directive, the follow-up has shown that it is necessary for authorities at different levels to be involved in related work at an early stage. It is important that the various actors keep themselves updated and are aware of the impact that a new directive will have on the authorities.

The group notes that there is no established international network for the authorities in different countries as regards marine environment issues. The follow-up shows that the bilateral cooperation that exists between authorities is sporadic and often linked to specific projects. In the opinion of the group, this means that their cooperation lacks a long-term approach.

Follow-ups (in Swedish) from the Committee on Environment and Agriculture (MJU)

- Förutsättningar för småskalig livsmedelsproduktion – En uppföljning (Report 2005/06:RFR3, Committee Report 2005/06:MJU8)
- Uppföljning och analys av resultatredovisningen för politikområdet Livsmedelspolitik (Committee Report 2005/06:MJU2)
- Uppföljning och analys av regeringens resultatredovisning för fiskeområdet (Committee Report 2006/07:MJU2)
- Uppföljning av de fiskepolitiska insatsernas resultat och konsekvenser för företag inom fiskeområdet (Report 2007/08:RFR3, Committee Report 2007/08:MJU2)
- Uppföljning och analys av regeringens resultatredovisning för fiskeområdet och livsmedelsområdet (Committee Report 2007/08:MJU2)
- Uppföljning och analys av resultatredovisningen för havsmiljöområdet (Committee Report 2007/08:MJU1)
- Uppföljning och analys av regeringens resultatredovisning för livsmedelsområdet (Committee Report 2008/09:MJU2)
- Uppföljning och analys av regeringens resultatredovisning för havsmiljö och klimat (Committee Report 2008/09:MJU1)
- Uppföljning av statens insatser inom havsmiljöområdet (Report 2008/09:RFR3, Committee Report 2008/09:MJU1)

The follow-up reports (in Swedish) are available on the Riksdag website (www.riksdagen.se) and may be ordered from the Riksdag Printing Office (postal address 100 12 Stockholm, Sweden tel. +46-8-786 58 10, fax. +46-8-786 61 76 or e-mail ordermottagningen@riksdagen.se).

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