

LIFE19 NAT/LV/000973 LIFE REEF

Research of marine protected habitats in EEZ and determination of the necessary conservation status in Latvia

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN MPAs: LATVIAN EXPERIENCE

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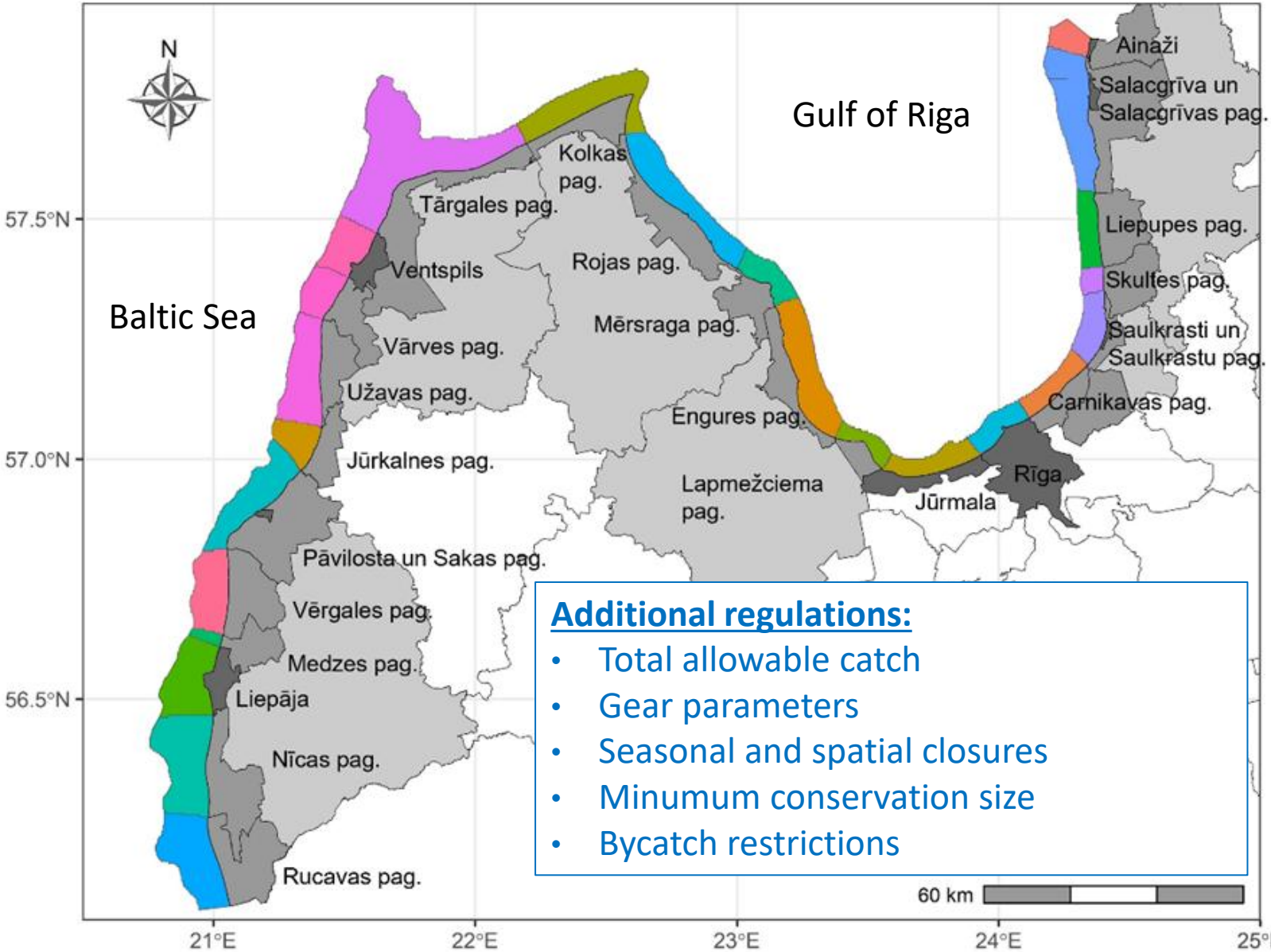
Latvian coastal fisheries – management

Ministru kabineta noteikumi Nr.1375

Rīgā 2009. gada 30. novembrī (prot. Nr.85 26.§)

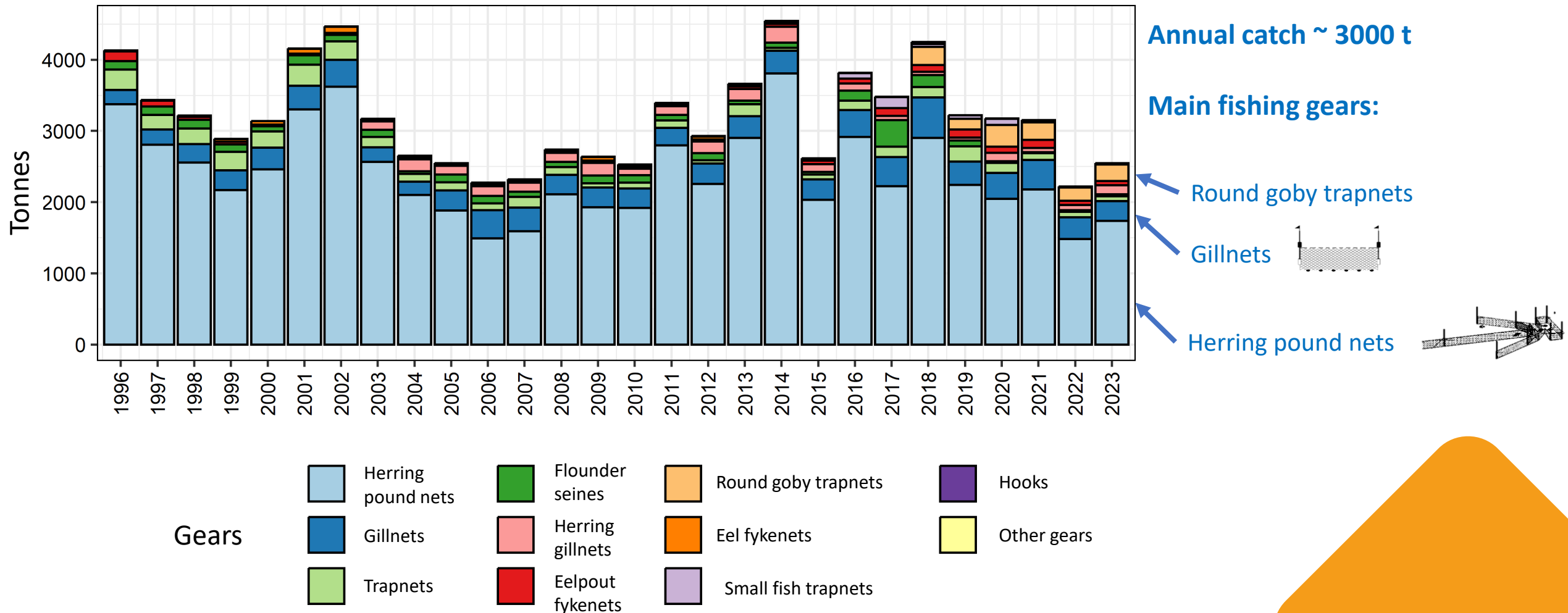
Noteikumi par rūpnieciskās zvejas limitiem un to izmantošanas kārtību piekrastes ūdeņos

Nr. p. k.	Fishing gears										
	Pašvaldība, uz kuras teritorijas piekrasti attiecas limits										
Municipalities	21	53	85	1	196	27	7500	NA	NA	NA	10
	4	2	45	NA	30	5	500	NA	NA	NA	1
	8	11	56	NA	95	53	1600	NA	NA	NA	1
	5	6	10	NA	10	NA	500	NA	NA	NA	NA
	6	24	23	NA	95	20	500	NA	NA	NA	NA
	13	12	40	NA	105	145 ⁴	1100	NA	NA	NA	NA
	12	10	260	2	326	206	3000	NA	NA	NA	6
	2	2	80	1	55	67	2000	NA	NA	NA	3
	10	11	70	5	95	60	2000	NA	NA	NA	10
	32 ⁵	15	28	5	150	45	1000	NA	NA	SN ⁵	3
	1	NA	2	NA	35	10	500	NA	15	SN	NA
	8	20	50	NA	599 ⁶	209	6500	2	121	SN	9
	6	1	22	NA	223 ⁶	62	3700	1	78	SN	10
	NA	NA	7	NA	65 ⁶	28	3200	NA	7	SN	NA



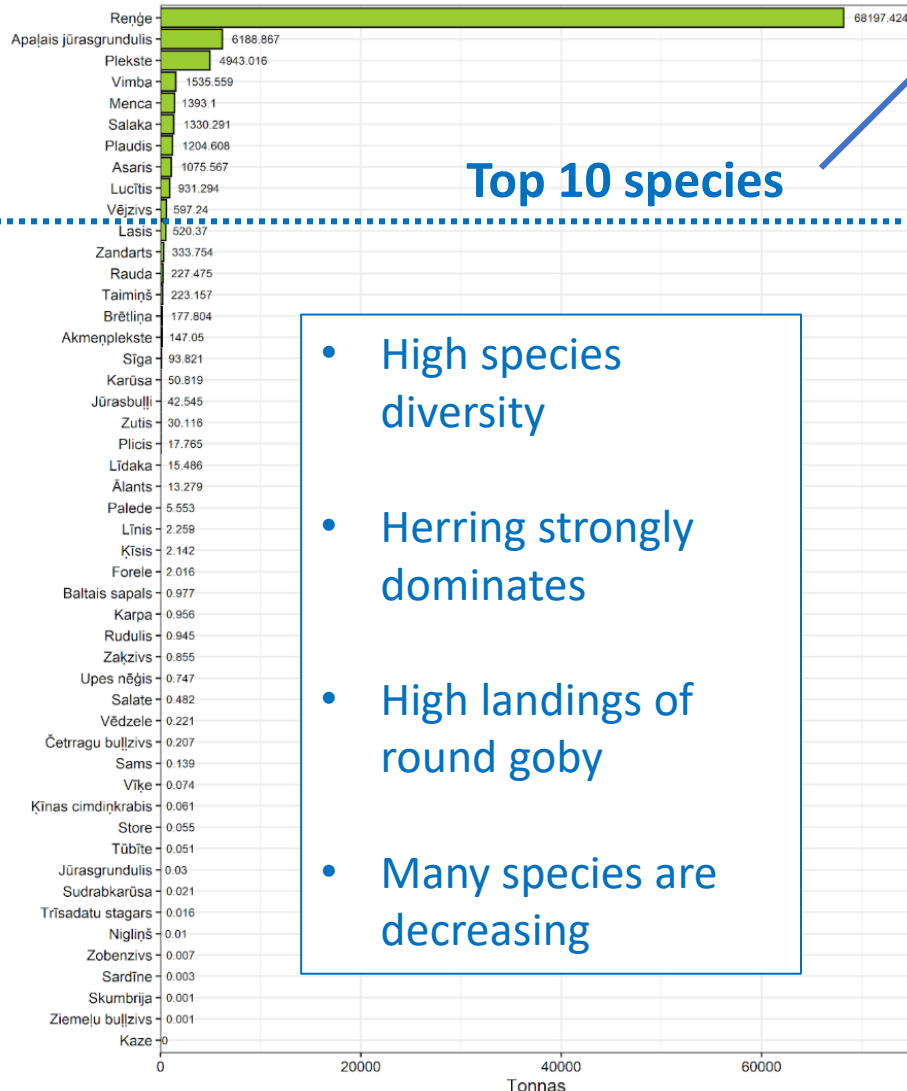


Latvian coastal fisheries – gears and landings





Latvian coastal fisheries – species composition in landings



- High species diversity
- Herring strongly dominates
- High landings of round goby
- Many species are decreasing

Species		Group	Trend
	Herring	Marine	↓
	Round goby	Marine	↑
	Flounder	Marine	↓
	Vimba bream	Migratory	→
	Cod	Marine	↓
	Smelt	Migratory	↓
	Bream	Freshwater	→
	Perch	Freshwater	↓
	Eelpout	Marine	↓
	Garfish	Marine	→

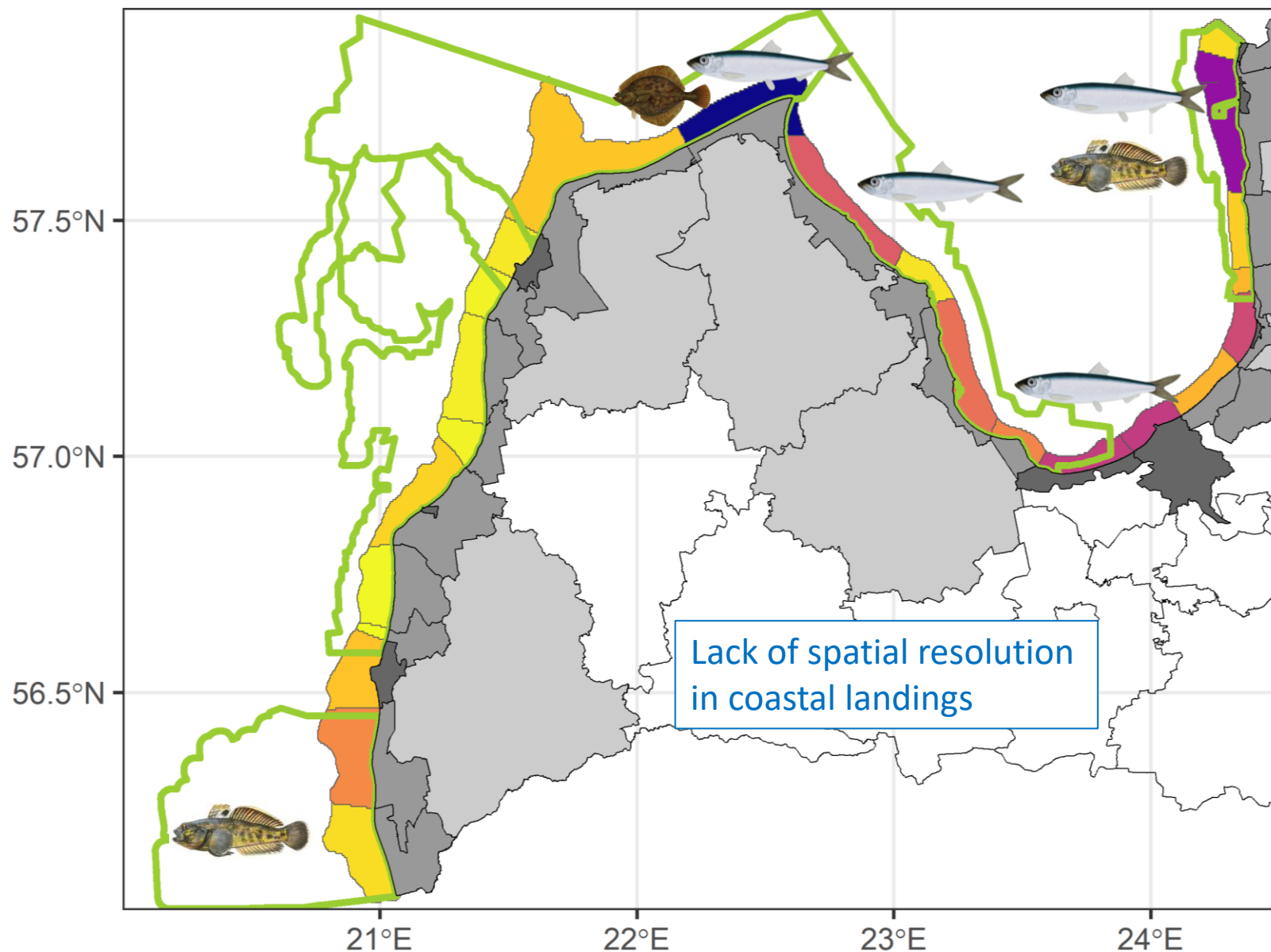
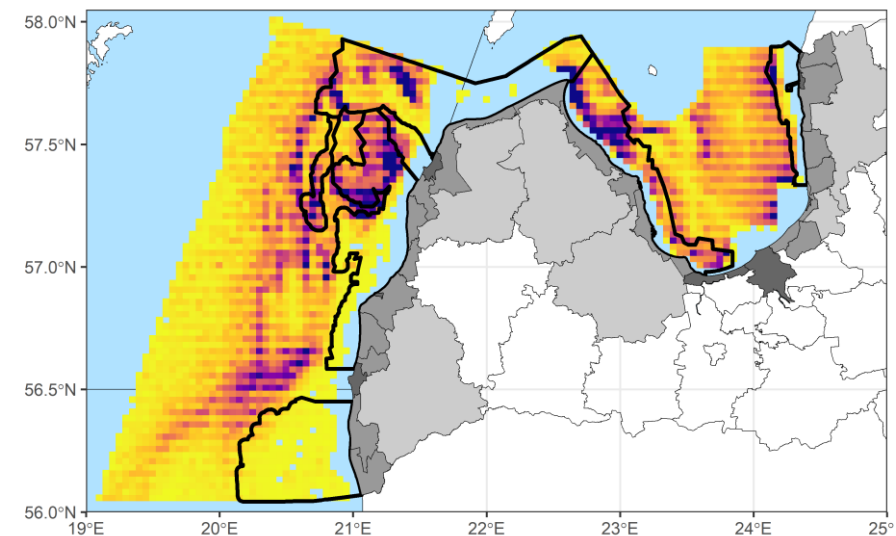
↑	Increasing
↓	Decreasing
→	Stable



Latvian coastal fisheries – spatial distribution of landings

- Higher landings in the Gulf of Riga
- Overlap with MPAs

Offshore landings





Latvian coastal fisheries – potential interactions with MPAs

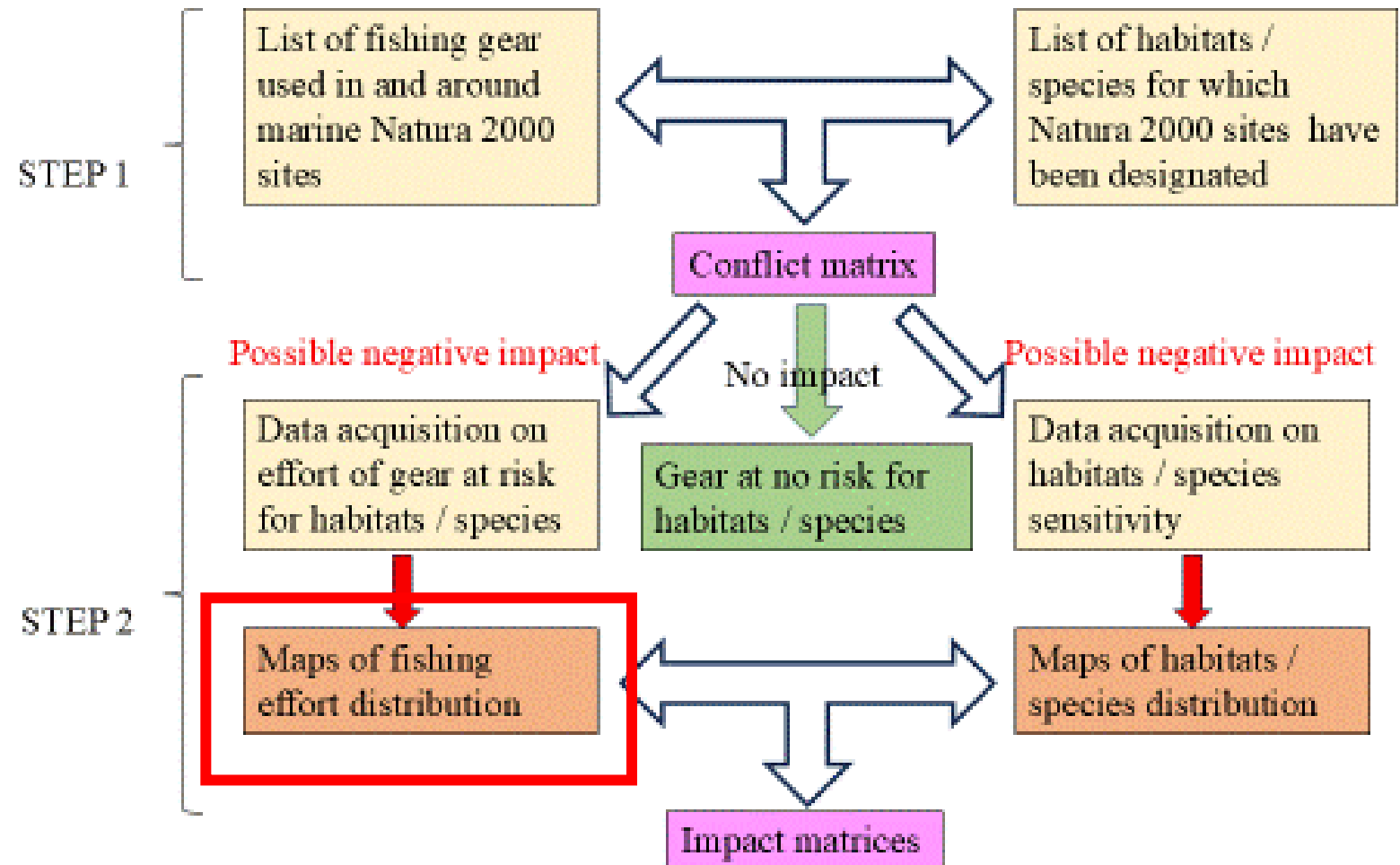
- **Bycatch of birds and mammals**
- **Habitat degradation**
- **Biodiversity loss**
- **Round goby control**





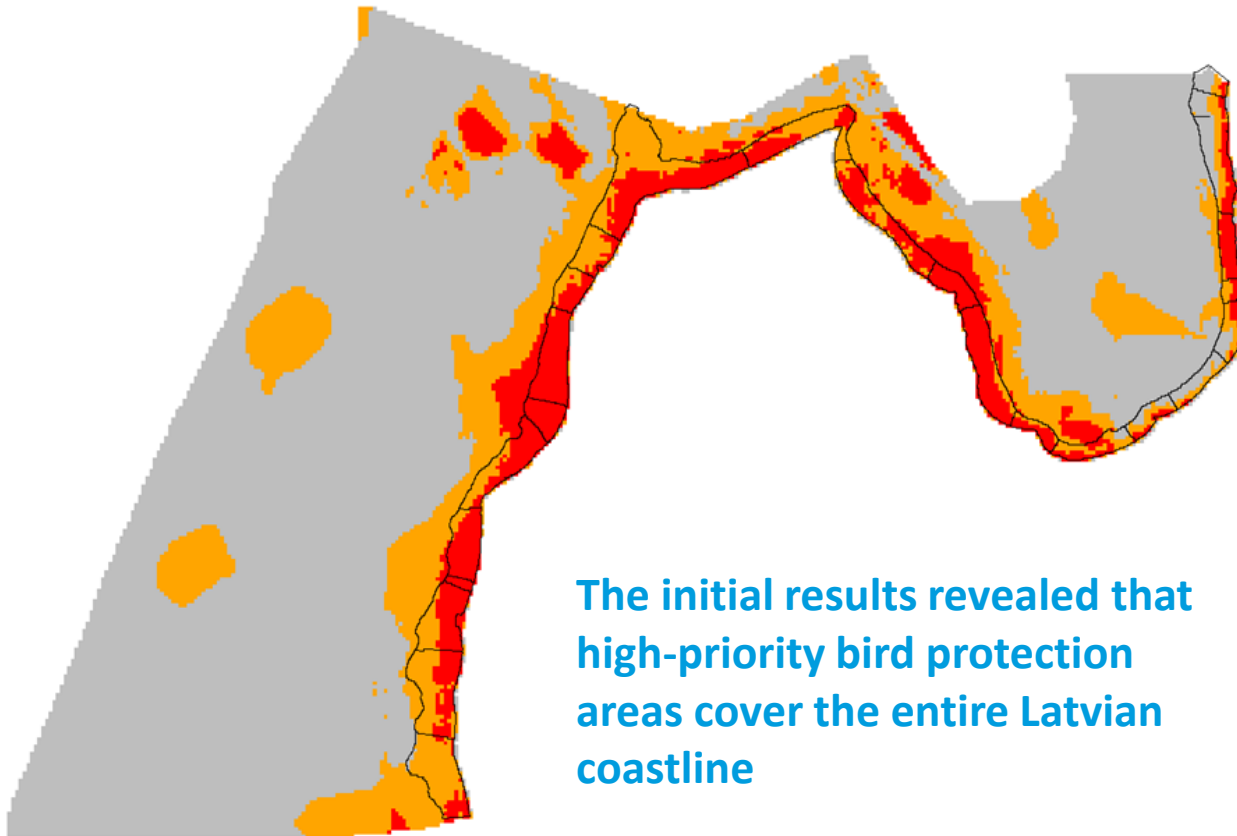
The impact of fisheries

Methodology protocol for
assessing the impact of
fisheries on marine Natura
2000 sites





Identification of high-priority bird protection areas



The initial results revealed that high-priority bird protection areas cover the entire Latvian coastline



Available data on seabird bycatch in Latvia

- 2006-2008. LIFE Nature project “Marine Protected Areas in the Eastern Baltic Sea” LIFE 05 NAT/LV/000100
- 2009-2022. Information from fishers



Stakeholder involvement



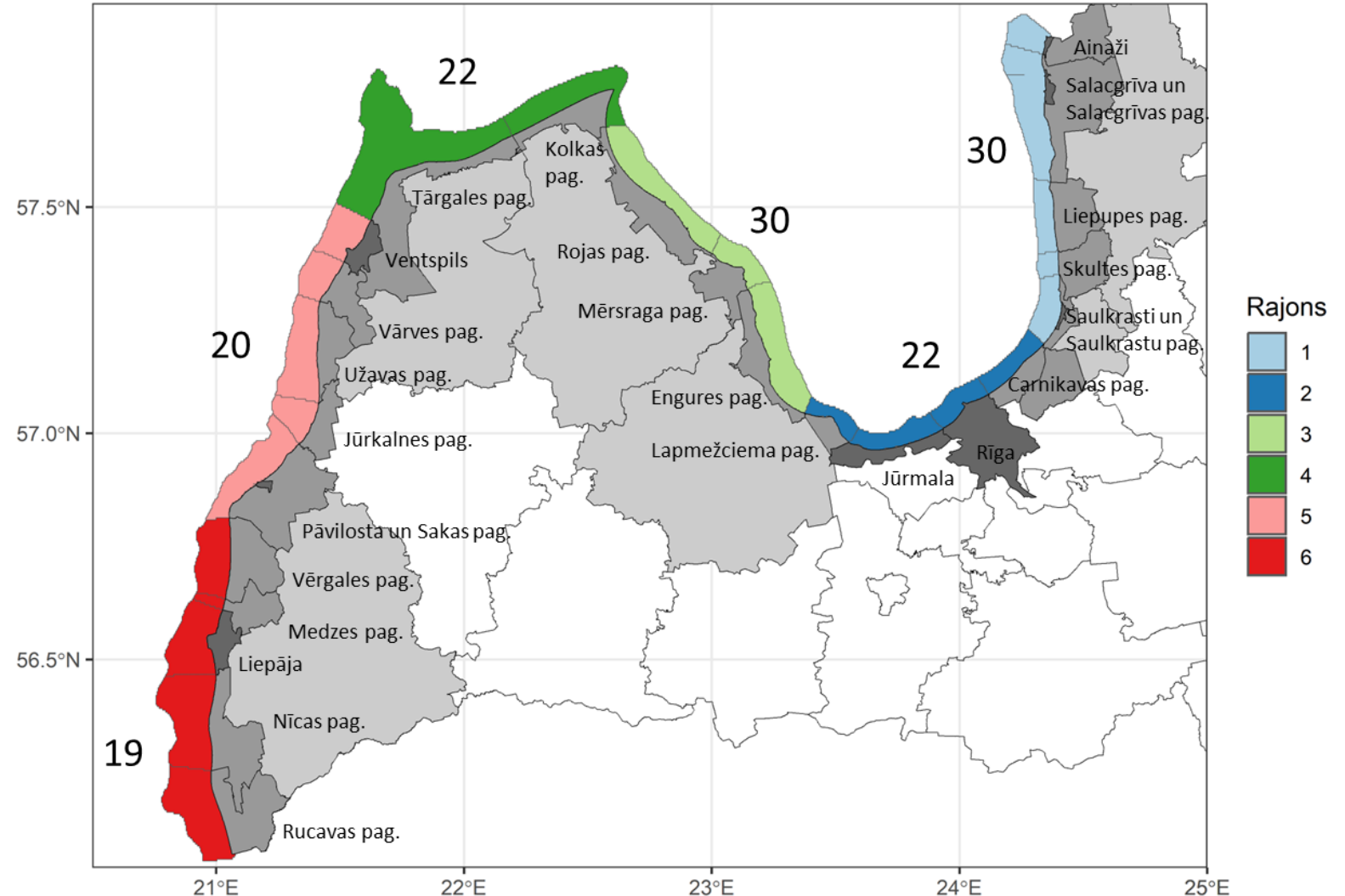


Coastal fisheries monitoring

In 2025 we started on-site monitoring of coastal fisheries to obtain:

- More recent bycatch data
- Information on gear locations

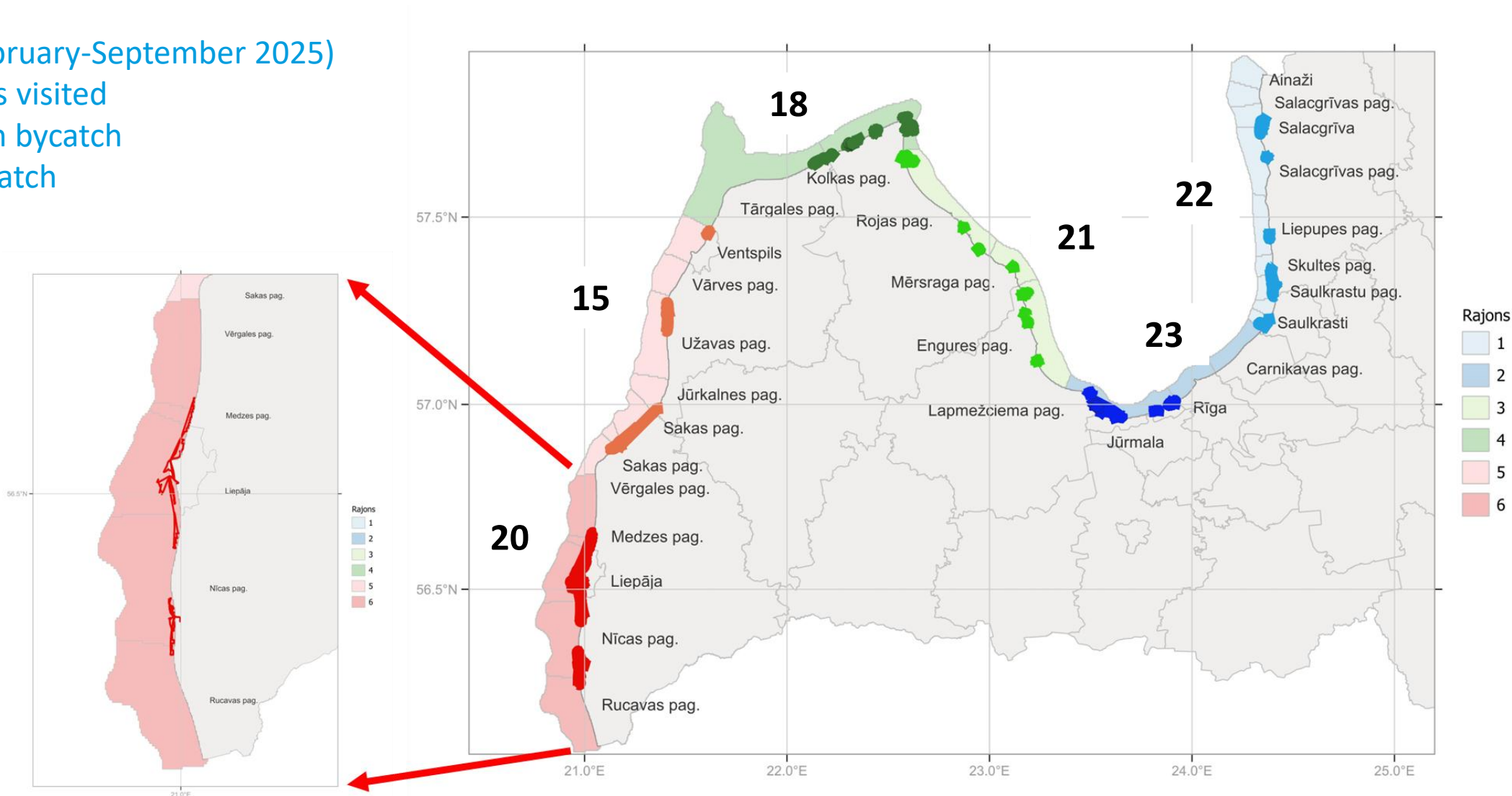
Coastal fishers are selected randomly on a weekly basis (143 companies in total)





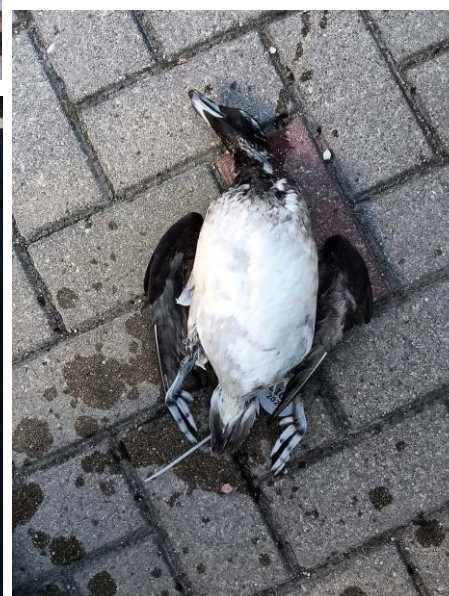
Coastal fisheries monitoring

- 119 trips (February-September 2025)
- 52 companies visited
- 19 seabirds in bycatch
- 2 seals in bycatch





Coastal fisheries monitoring





Coastal fisheries monitoring





Conclusions (so far)

Stakeholder involvement is crucial

Do benefits outweigh the costs?

For some questions there are no immediate answers

Ways forward:

- Regular on site monitoring
- GPS tracking
- Adaptive management system
- Seasonal closures
- Shifting towards more selective fishing gears





Thank you for your attention!

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