

# Hanstholm's high fish prices attract foreign landings

## says new director of port

WITH a background in town planning, Hanstholm's newly appointed port director, Birgitte Juhl, brings a fresh vision to port management.

She says that an aim for the future is to further internationalise the port to take advantage of its good price for fish.

"We are already shipping Norwegian fish to the auction in Hanstholm, as fishermen in Egersund send their fish here and we are hoping to add more transport links to make the port even more international, possibly with Holland and the UK," she says.

"We are always looking to attract more foreign landings to Hanstholm and what brings them here is prices, prices, prices and the services available here.

"Often we can see an average kg. price on the auction here that is half a Danish krone higher than at other auctions in Denmark and that's what brings the landings here."

Birgitte Juhl says that this higher price is generated by the concentration of buyers and processors in Hanstholm.

"Hanstholm's market share in fresh fish for the first half of the year is already up by 30% over the



German and UK-registered vessels tied up after landing their catches in Hanstholm.  
Inset: Birgitte Juhl, Hanstholm's new port director.

same period last year and it's not unusual to see 300 tonnes of fish on the auction here on days when the other auctions have hardly anything to sell," she says.

Birgitte Juhl tells FNI that the improvements to the auction and facilities in Hanstholm have paid off

and a great deal has been done to increase what is available.

This has brought several overseas operators to Hanstholm, including French trawlers and German trawler operator Kurterfisch, which now runs most of its vessels from the port throughout the year.

Birgitte Juhl is the first woman to be appointed to such a post in Denmark, taking over as Norwegian operator fjord Line has decided to pull out its ferries from its route to Hanstholm, making a substantial dent in the port's transport links with Norway.

She tells FNI that there are plans for the port to separate ferry and fishing areas – and hopes for a new ferry operator to move in next spring. The plans also involve extending freight capacity so that 210 metre vessels can be docked instead of the present limit of 165 metres.

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High prices on the fish market are bringing more international vessels to land in Hanstholm.

## Sales boom follows ITQs

BUSINESS for Hanstholm shipbroker West Ship has been brisk since the introduction of ITQs for more Danish fisheries.

A great many vessels have been scrapped and quotas and licences amalgamated, with West Ship handling 150 deals in 2007 and 50 so far this year.

Thor kil Grøn of West Ship says: "We expect the quota price will rise every year, depending on the banks and other factors. This year we saw quota sales stop when the fuel price went up. When it dropped a little lower, quota sales picked up again."

He tells *FN* that in Hanstholm the banks have been very positive towards investment and a dozen or so local fishermen were quick to take the opportunity to invest in tonnage and the accompanying quotas.

"We expect to also see more newbuildings. There has already been one in Hanstholm and their results have been very positive. There's also a new trawler being built for Hirtshals next year, but they will be operating from Hanstholm," says Thor kil Grøn.

He says that business will probably go back to a normal level next year.

A serious problem with the system is that although quotas can be aggregated, the Hanstholm quayside has a three-deep row of fishing vessels tied up that are not going back to sea and the same situation, although not as serious, exists in other ports.



Shipbroker Thor kil Grøn of West Ship expects vessel sales to return to normal after activity due to the change to ITQs in Denmark.

This is due to uncertainty over the days-at-sea allocations for these vessels, with their owners unwilling to scrap the tonnage until a decision is made on the transfer of the days to active vessels.

"These boats can't be scrapped because of the days that are attached to them and it probably won't be until there is an accident – a pollution incident or one of them sinking – that any action will be taken on this," says Thor kil Grøn.

"It's a burden for the owners of these vessels, as they still have an obligation for maintenance, harbour dues, insurance and other costs."

He tells *FN* that there have been far-reaching changes in the Danish fleet over the past year and it is still too early to predict how it will develop.

"This is the first year they are able to fish on their own quotas and we will see how they manage, whether or not they need to buy in more quota to last the year."



Elderly tonnage at the quayside in Hanstholm. There are many unwanted vessels that cannot be scrapped while they have days at sea attached



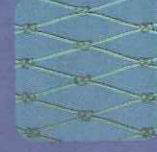
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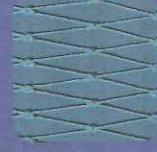
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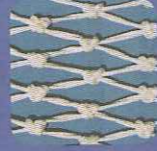
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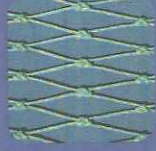
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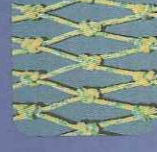
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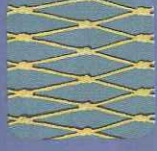
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