

## Developing fisheries

Fishing industries are being developed through national policy and the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy. Both have as their objective the sustainable and multipurpose use of fish resources. The Structural Programme for the Fisheries Industry and different regulatory means have been used to achieve objectives. About 15 million euros a year is spent on developing fisheries in Finland, with the EU supplying about half of the total.

The development of basic production, i.e. fishing and fish farming, is hampered by numerous factors, some of domestic origin and some related to the Common Fisheries Policy. The Common Fisheries Policy regulates the size of the member states' fishing fleets, among other things. This is hardly necessary in Finland's case. Fishing could be increased for several species in Finland. Professional fishermen operating along the coast do not always receive permits to fish in private waters that are underfished, however. The development of fish farming is hampered by the strict environmental permit system.

As a result of problems in developing basic production, structural aid has mainly gone to fish factories and wholesalers, where investments have been possible. Some of the firms that have received aid are quite profitable, and projects probably would have been carried out without aids. Fish factories now have overcapacity. Factories that have received aids have had to close as a result of changes in the market situation.

The audit found that aid measures do not play a key role in developing fisheries, however. The fisheries administration's resources should be shifted more towards promoting basic production, which would also help ensure jobs in fish factories. The state should take steps to help professional fishermen gain access to private waters and encourage fish farms to locate in areas that are better suited for this purpose.

Salmon fishing in its present form does not produce the maximum social benefits. Recreational fishermen's share of the salmon catch should be increased. Permits should be required for salmon fishing. This would allow limited salmon resources to be shared in an appropriate way by professional and recreational fishermen. It would also reduce fishing along the coast on a part-time basis, which lowers full-time fishermen's income and the development of fishing tourism.