

**AGREED RECORD OF FISHERIES CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN  
THE EUROPEAN UNION, NORWAY AND THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR 2021**

**16 MARCH 2021**

- 1** A European Union Delegation, headed by Mr Fabrizio DONATELLA, a Norwegian Delegation headed by Ms Ann Kristin WESTBERG, and a Delegation from the United Kingdom headed by Mr Colin FAULKNER, met virtually in the period from 11 January to 16 March 2021 to consult on mutual fisheries relations including the management of joint fish stocks in the North Sea for 2021. These consultations marked the start of a new, trilateral management regime for North Sea stocks between the European Union, Norway and the United Kingdom.
- 2** The Heads of Delegations agreed to recommend to their respective authorities the fishery arrangements for 2021 as outlined in this Agreed Record, including Annexes I to V and Table 1.
- 3** The Delegations agreed that management measures and sharing of stocks as per Table 1 are without prejudice to possible future arrangements between the parties.
- 4** The Delegations underlined their determination to cooperate, in their mutual interest, in securing continued responsible fisheries and ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the marine living resources for which they are responsible.
- 5** The Delegations agreed that the scope of this Agreed Record should be the management of fish stocks in the North Sea (ICES Area 4) and associated areas where relevant.
- 6** The Delegations noted that further arrangements by the Parties, including arrangements for access, quota transfers and other conditions for fishing in the respective zones of fisheries jurisdiction, may be regulated by bilateral arrangements.
- 7** The Delegations agreed to share information relevant to stocks of joint interest on a timely and transparent basis, for example relating to quota transfers and zonal access. The Delegations further noted the benefits of continued close collaboration and information exchange.
- 8** The Delegations agreed that it was necessary to establish a trilateral framework agreement to underpin their cooperation on the management of North Sea fish stocks, and that negotiations for such an agreement should begin in 2021.
- 9** The Delegations acknowledged that, because of the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020, progress on some aspects of the cooperation on fisheries management had been delayed but undertook to renew their efforts where possible in 2021.

**10 JOINTLY MANAGED STOCKS**

- 10.1 The Delegations agreed, as an ad hoc approach for 2021, to consider cod, haddock, saithe, whiting, plaice and North Sea herring to be jointly managed stocks in the North Sea (ICES Subarea 4) and associated areas where relevant. Each Party's share of each stock for 2021 is shown in Table 1.
- 10.2 The Delegations acknowledged that although all Parties have introduced legislation that prohibits most forms of discarding of fish, discards still remain a serious problem and may be contributing to the current poor condition of some stocks.
- 10.3 The Delegations agreed to work towards improving exploitation patterns and reducing unwanted catches and discards through the use of technical measures to improve the selectivity of fishing gear; closed seasons and areas; as well as any other appropriate measures. They acknowledged the usefulness of complementary technical measures to achieve those objectives.
- 10.4 The Delegations noted that the system of inter-annual quota flexibility, as set out in Annex II, for the quotas of herring, haddock, saithe, whiting and plaice shall apply in 2021.
- 10.5 The Delegations noted that Annex II concerning quota flexibility needs to be revised and agreed to consult during the course of 2021.
- 10.6 In light of the de minimis and high survivability exemptions contained in the EU landing obligation, the EU Delegation informed the UK Delegation and the Norwegian Delegation of its intention in 2021 to continue to adjust from the EU quotas the estimated amounts of the discards.
- 10.7 In light of the de minimis and high survivability exemptions contained in its landing obligation, the UK Delegation informed the EU Delegation and the Norwegian Delegation of its intention in 2021 to continue to adjust from the UK quotas the estimated amounts of the discards.

## **11 LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

- 11.1 The Delegations agreed to work together in 2021 to consider and set priorities for joint long-term management strategies for jointly managed stocks.

## **12 COD**

- 12.1 The Delegations discussed the ICES advice for 2021, noting that based on its MSY approach ICES advises that total catch and projected landings in 2021 should not be more than 14,755 and 12,632 tonnes, respectively. The Delegations noted that according to the latest ICES assessment, the stock is at a low level: ICES consider the biomass to be below  $B_{lim}$ , the fishing mortality has declined since 2001, but has been increasing since 2016 and since 2018 is above  $F_{lim}$ . The Delegations further noted that incidence of discarding remains significant, with levels of discards projected to be around 14% of total catch (by weight) for 2021. ICES estimates that discards and below minimum size (BMS) landings are 10.1% (by weight) of total catches for 2019.
- 12.2 The Delegations noted that the cod assessment during recent years (since 2017) faces some challenges. These challenges have resulted in a downscaling of spawning stock biomass (SSB) and an upward revision of the fishing pressure (F) in the assessment. The Delegations noted that ICES commenced preparations for an assessment benchmark in

2020 and agreed to make the relevant scientific support available for that benchmarking exercise in 2021.

- 12.3 The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC in 2021 of 15,911 tonnes for cod in Subarea 4, Division 7.d, and Subdivision 20 (North Sea, Eastern English Channel, Skagerrak). This constitutes a decrease of 10% compared to the TAC in 2020.
- 12.4 The resulting TAC for ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) is 13,246 tonnes (83.25%), the TAC for Subdivision 20 (Skagerrak) is 1,893 tonnes (11.90%), and the TAC for ICES Div. 7.d (English Channel) is 772 tonnes (4.85%).
- 12.5 The Delegations agreed that, in addition to the TAC level as referred to in paragraph 12.3, additional measures aimed at the protection of juvenile and adult cod are essential in order to restore the cod stock by reducing unwanted catches and discards and lower fishing pressure. In this respect the Delegations recognized the work of a Working Group on technical measures from 2019 and agreed that that group's report remains a useful basis for continued cooperation with the view to improve the utilisation of the cod stock.
- 12.6 The Delegations agreed to continue to cooperate on defining and designing appropriate measures, acknowledging that differences in national regulations and fishing patterns might make joint and identical regulations difficult. Nevertheless, cooperation should ensure that the measures are as coordinated and efficient as possible.
- 12.7 The Delegations agreed to continue the closures of spawning grounds as described in Annex IV.
- 12.8 The Norwegian Delegation explained that three areas had been closed in the Norwegian Economic Zone from 1 July to 31 December 2020 in order to protect juveniles and small cod. The aim is to continue such closures in 2021. The Delegation also informed the other Parties that ways of reinforcing the monitoring of these areas will be considered. In addition, the current real time closure system might be revised and made more efficient.
- 12.9 The UK Delegation explained that a National Cod Avoidance Plan had been established in UK waters, which aims to recover the stock to sustainable levels. The plan introduces a variety of measures in different areas of UK waters of the North Sea. The measures include a 120 mm baseline in Scottish waters (with a smaller mesh on mud grounds for the nephrops fishery), as well as real time closures and real time reporting to protect high abundances of cod of all ages. These are in addition to existing seasonal closures in UK waters for the protection of spawning aggregations of cod.
- 12.10 The EU Delegation explained that it intends to continue with the cod avoidance measures introduced in 2020 again in 2021. These measures include specific selectivity measures, area closures for protection of spawning aggregations of cod as well as the possibility for member states to introduce National Cod Avoidance Plans. Such plans will be assessed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries.

### **13 HADDOCK**

- 13.1 The Delegations noted that according to the ICES MSY approach, catches in 2021 should be no more than 69,280 tonnes. This represents an increase of 66% compared to 2020. ICES estimates that discards and BMS landings are at 15.2% of total catch (in weight) in 2019, and ICES projects discard rates of 31% of total catch (by weight) in 2020.

- 13.2 The Delegations noted that ICES estimates the 2019 year class to be the largest since 2005. Such a large incoming year class, while welcome, will lead to an increased risk of catching undersized fish. The Delegations also recognized that increased effort on haddock might lead to more unwanted catches of cod, which clearly should be avoided.
- 13.3 The Delegations therefore agreed to establish a TAC for 2021 in ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea), Division 3.a. (Skagerrak and Kattegat) and Division 6.a. (West of Scotland) of 50,182 tonnes. This is 28% lower than the ICES  $F_{msy}$  advice, but still represents a 20% increase compared to the TAC for 2020.
- 13.4 The Delegations agreed that the resulting TAC for ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) is 42,785 tonnes (85.26%), the TAC in Subdivision 20 (Skagerrak) is 2,630 tonnes (5.24%), and the TAC in ICES Div.6a is 4,767 tonnes (9.50%).

#### **14 SAITHE**

- 14.1 The Delegations noted that according to the ICES MSY approach, total catches in 2021 should be no more than 65,687 tonnes. The SSB has fluctuated without trend and has been above MSY  $B_{trigger}$  since 1996. Fishing mortality (F) is estimated to be above FMSY presently. Recruitment (R) has shown an overall decreasing trend over time with the lowest levels in the past 10 years. ICES estimates that discards and BMS landings are 4.4% of total catch (by weight) in 2019.
- 14.2 The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC for saithe in ICES Subareas 4 (North Sea) and 6 (Rockall and West of Scotland), and in Division 3.a. (Skagerrak and Kattegat) for 2021 of 65,687 tonnes. This constitutes a decrease of 25% compared to the TAC for 2020.
- 14.3 The Delegations agreed that the resulting TAC for ICES Subareas 3.a (Skagerrak) and 4 (North Sea) is 59,512 tonnes (90.60%), and that the TAC for ICES Div. 6.a is 6,175 tonnes (9.40%).

#### **15 WHITING**

- 15.1 The Delegations noted that the SSB has fluctuated around, and is now just above, MSY  $B_{trigger}$ . Fishing mortality (F) has been above FMSY throughout the time-series. Recruitment (R) has been fluctuating without trend and in 2019 recorded the highest level since 2001. The Delegations recognized that a large fraction of the catch in 2021 will continue to consist of discards and BMS landings. ICES estimates that discards and BMS landings are 34% of total catch (by weight) in 2019.
- 15.2 The Delegations noted that ICES advises that when the MSY approach is applied, catches for 2021 in ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) and Div. 7.d (Eastern English Channel) should be no more than 26,304 tonnes.
- 15.3 The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC for whiting in 2021 at 26,304 tonnes. This is an increase of 19% compared to 2020.
- 15.4 The Delegations noted that the whiting stock in the North Sea (ICES Div. 4) and the whiting stock in the Eastern Channel (ICES Div. 7.d) are assessed as one single stock. The split between the TACs for ICES Div. 4 and 7.d has traditionally been based on the relative human consumption catches from the two areas during the previous year, as

provided in the ICES advice. The Delegations agreed to look into this methodology further in 2021.

- 15.5 Based on this approach, the Delegations agreed that the resulting TAC for ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) is 21,306 tonnes (81.00%), and that the TAC for ICES Div. 7.d is 4,998 tonnes (19.00%).

## **16 PLAICE**

- 16.1 Based on the MSY approach ICES advises that total catches in 2021 should be no more than 162,607 tonnes. The Delegations noted that ICES estimates that discards and BMS landings are 43% of total catch (by weight) in 2019.

- 16.2 The Delegations noted that the stock of plaice in the North Sea and Skagerrak is at a high level. The SSB is well above MSY  $B_{trigger}$  and recruitment in 2019 is estimated to be the second highest in the time-series. Since 2008, fishing mortality has been estimated at around FMSY.

- 16.3 The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC for plaice in ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) and Subdivision 20 (Skagerrak) in 2021 at 162,607 tonnes. This is a decrease of 2.3% compared to 2020.

- 16.4 The Delegations agreed that the resulting TAC for ICES Subarea 4 (North Sea) is 143,419 tonnes (88.20%) and the TAC in Subdivision 20 (Skagerrak) is 19,188 tonnes (11.80%).

## **17 HERRING**

- 17.1 The Delegations noted that ICES advises that when its MSY approach is applied, the overall catches of the stock in the Skagerrak and Kattegat, eastern English Channel and North Sea in 2021 should be no more than 365,792 tonnes.

- 17.2 The Delegations recognised that the overall recruitment has been at a low level since 2002 and that it would be appropriate to limit the catches of juvenile herring in order to help rebuild the stock. The Delegations also noted that in 2021 a significant proportion (42%) of the advised catches consists of older herring (7+) outside the age range (2-6) over which FMSY is calculated; fishing mortality over these older herring may not therefore be limited by FMSY (age 2-6).

- 17.3 The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC for 2021 of 356,357 tonnes for the A fleet, a decrease of 7.4% compared to 2020. They also agreed that by-catches of herring in other fisheries (the B fleet) would be limited to 7,750 tonnes in 2021. They also noted that the TACs for the C and D fleets should not exceed 21,604 and 6,659 tonnes respectively.

- 17.4 The Delegations noted that following the above approach, which is calculated based on an  $F(0-1) = 0.042$  and  $F(2-6) = 0.22$ , would result in catches for 2021 consistent with the ICES MSY approach.

- 17.5 The Delegations agreed that several issues relating to the management of herring need to be discussed and resolved in order to achieve an optimal utilisation of the stock. Most importantly, new models for TAC setting should be explored. The Delegations therefore agreed to start consultations for a management strategy for North Sea herring during 2021, based on the Terms of Reference for the Working Group set out in Annex V.

## **18 OTHER JOINT STOCKS (NOT JOINTLY MANAGED)**

18.1 The Delegations agreed that there are several stocks, not covered in Table 1 that, based on their migration pattern, are shared stocks and consequently should be jointly managed. This includes inter alia Hake, Anglerfish and Norway Pout. The Delegations agreed to start preparations in 2021 for consultations on sharing and other management issues, with a particular emphasis in 2021 on developing a shared evidence base where experts provide a factual analysis of stock distributions.

## **19 CATCH INFORMATION**

19.1 The Delegations agreed to inform the other Parties, on a monthly basis, of their vessels' catches of the jointly managed species in the North Sea, by fisheries jurisdiction.

19.2 The Delegations agreed that the catch information as of 31 October, including inter-annual quota flexibility, should be attached to Agreed Records.

## **20 MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE (MCS) MEASURES FOR JOINT STOCKS**

20.1 The Delegations noted that for a comprehensive management regime, efficient and trustworthy MCS measures are crucial, and that strategic and operative MCS cooperation between the inspections services of the Parties is a prerequisite to improve compliance and to achieve a level playing field. Hence, the Delegations welcomed initiatives to improve dialogue and exchange experience between the inspection services to increase the general understanding of the Parties' MCS regimes.

20.2 The EU and Norwegian Delegations referred to the previously agreed work plan by EU and Norway for 2019-2022 and the 2018 decision to establish a Working Group on MCS of Fisheries on Joint Stocks in the North Sea (NS MCS WG). The EU and Norwegian Delegations also referred to the reports from the meetings of the Working Group hosted by the EU on 25-26 June 2019 and by Norway in February 2020.

20.3 The UK Delegation referenced its previous involvement in this important work as an EU member state and its intention to remain fully involved in this workstream, including with the MCS working group and the work plan already established.

20.4 The Delegations agreed that the work plan outlined in Annex III would constitute the basis for working on MCS in Fisheries on Joint Stocks in the North Sea, and agreed to establish a Working Group (NS MCS WG).

20.5 The Delegations agreed that monitoring, control and surveillance of the joint stock of North Sea herring is covered by the relevant measures concluded for the four species covered by the coastal State agreements, without prejudice to the consideration of additional or specific measures recommended by the NS MCS WG.

## **21 ELECTRONIC REPORTING**

21.1 The Delegations noted that further steps were taken at the 2020 Annual Meeting of The North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) towards introducing electronic exchange of vessel position data and fishing activity data within NEAFC based on the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic business (UN/CEFACT) Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (FLUX) International Standard. They agreed that the relevant recommendations in NEAFC should be taken into

consideration when revising existing agreements on electronic exchange of vessel position data and fishing activity data using the FLUX standard.

21.2 Furthermore, the Delegations took note of the need to revise and establish electronic notification and authorisation schemes based on the UN/CEFACT FLUX International Standard and establish harmonised arrangements on the exchange of aggregated catch information.

21.3 The Delegations noted that it would be possible for individual vessels to conduct fishing in multiple zones in one fishing trip. The Delegations also noted that when this occurred, exchanging information from the complete fishing trip (port to port) would strengthen MCS in the North Sea. In particular, they discussed the added value of sharing information from ERS and VMS messages, and confirmed their ambition to introduce such exchange of information from vessels fishing in the North Sea when fishing in each other's waters.

21.4 However, the Delegations noted that they would revise the existing arrangements on electronic exchange of vessel position data, revising and establishing electronic notification and authorisation schemes, and revising existing arrangements of electronic exchange of fishing activity data. The Parties reaffirmed their shared interest to consider where trilateral arrangements for electronic exchange of data could be relevant. They agreed that their respective experts should meet before 1 July 2021 to exchange information on the development of the bilateral arrangements and discuss relevant trilateral arrangements.

Place and date

For the Norwegian Delegation

For the European Union Delegation

Ann Kristin WESTBERG

Fabrizio DONATELLA

For the Delegation of the United Kingdom

Colin FAULKNER

**CONDITIONS FOR FISHERIES BY THE PARTIES IN 2021**

**I. JOINT STOCKS**

1. The Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for the stocks mentioned in Table 1 for 2021 shall be as indicated in that table. If ICES make new scientific recommendations, the Parties will review these TACs.
2. The TACs referred to in paragraph 1 shall be divided between the Parties as indicated in Table 1.
3. Each Party shall inform the other Parties of allocations granted to a third country for fishing of the stocks referred to in Table 1.
4. The Parties shall supply each other with monthly catch statistics for fishing on the stocks referred to in Table 1 by their own vessels. Communication of these statistics for the preceding month shall take place at the latest on the last day of each month.

**II. FISHERY REGULATIONS**

1. The Parties will inform each other of their respective fishery regulations in the North Sea.
2. A Party intending to introduce or amend fishery regulations, applicable to vessels of the other Parties, shall duly inform the other Parties of such intentions.

**INTER-ANNUAL QUOTA FLEXIBILITY**

- The Inter-annual quota flexibility scheme as described in this Annex is applicable for the quotas of herring, haddock, saithe, plaice and whiting established in this Agreed Record.
- Each Party may transfer to the following year unutilised quantities of up to 10% of the quota allocated to it. The quantity transferred shall be in addition to the quota allocated to the Party concerned in the following year. This quantity cannot be transferred further to the quotas for subsequent years.
- Each Party may authorise fishing by its vessels of up to 10% beyond the quota allocated. All quantities fished beyond the allocated quota for one year shall be deducted from the Party's quota allocated for the following year.
- Complete catch statistics and quotas for the previous year should be made available to the other Parties no later than 1 April in the format as set out below. The Delegations agreed that in order to ensure transparency in the operation of inter-annual quota flexibility, more detailed information on catch utilisation shall be exchanged.
- The inter-annual quota flexibility scheme should be terminated if the SSB is estimated to be under the precautionary biomass level ( $B_{pa}$ ) and the fishing mortality is estimated to be above the precautionary mortality level ( $F_{pa}$ ) the following year, or if the SSB is estimated to be below  $B_{pa}$  in two consecutive years.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A WORKING GROUP ON  
MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE OF FISHERIES ON JOINT STOCKS FROM 2019 TO  
2023**

The objective of the Working Group is to cooperate, exchange information and best practices related to control of joint stocks, in mutual interest in securing continued responsible fisheries and ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable exploitation of the marine living resources for which the Parties are responsible.

The scope of the Working Group are mainly fisheries for cod, haddock, saithe, whiting, plaice and herring in the North Sea.

The MCS Working Group should:

- 1 Compare existing inspection practices and guidelines with the view to recommend best practices for:
  - Sea inspections (e.g. gear, catch composition, discard ban/landing obligation).
  - Landing inspections.
- 2 Compare relevant topics with the view to, as appropriate, recommend best practices such as:
  - Weighing requirements, including sampling plans etc.,
  - Logbook, landings, sales documentation and traceability requirements.
- 3 Conduct missions (exchange of inspectors) to identify inspection best practices, weighing and documentation practices as appropriate.
- 4 Consider the need and topics for training or workshops for inspectors taking advantage of other fora or meetings.
- 5 Exchange experience on other relevant issues such as discard ban/landing obligation, post landing inspections, procedures and practices, including as regards enforcement measures further to the identification of violations.
- 6 Exchange experience on existing risk assessment methods and consider the possibility to share relevant output data related to risk assessment (identified risks and risk handling)

In addition, the NS MCS WG should also focus on monitoring, inspection and surveillance for the control of the cod and cod-related fisheries in the North Sea to ensure compliance with technical measures and catch registration obligations.

If there are any other relevant issues, which the Working Group believes would result in a more efficient Monitoring, Control and Surveillance of fisheries in the North Sea, the Working Group could explore these as appropriate.

## TENTATIVE WORK PLAN FOR THE MCS WG NORTH SEA

Task	2019	2020 / 2021	2022	2023
1. Sea Inspections	Compare	Rec best practice	-	-
2. Landing inspections	Compare	Rec best practice	-	-
3. Weighing requirements	-	-	Compare	Rec
4. Logbook, landing, sales data and traceability requirements	-	-	Compare	Rec
5. Training/Workshop as appropriate	Training TBD	Training TBD	Training TBD	Training TBD
6. Exchange inspectors/missions (as appropriate)	Missions TBD	Missions TBD	Missions TBD	Missions TBD
7. Post Landing Inspections	-	Compare	Rec best practice	-
8. Risk assessment	Exchange experience and exchange relevant output data (strategic level)	Exchange experience and exchange relevant output data (strategic level)	Exchange experience and exchange relevant output data (strategic and tactical level)	Exchange experience and exchange relevant output data (strategic and tactical level)

## SEASONAL AREA CLOSURES TO PROTECT SPAWNING COD

The following areas in the table below will be closed for all gears excluding pelagic gears (purse seine and trawl), for the identified time period:

Time Limited Closures				
No	Area Name	Coordinates	Time period	Additional Comment
1	Stanhope ground	60° 10N - 02° 00E 60° 10N - 02° 45E 60° 25N - 01° 45E 60° 25N - 02° 00E	01 January to 30 April	
2	Long Hole	59° 07.35N - 0° 31.04W 59° 03.60N - 0° 22.25W 58° 59.35N - 0° 17.85W 58° 56.00N - 0° 11.01W 58° 56.60N - 0° 08.85W 58° 59.86N - 0° 15.65W 59° 03.50N - 0° 20.00W 59° 08.15N - 0° 29.07W	01 January to 31 March	
3	Coral edge	58° 51.70N - 03° 26.70E 58° 40.66N - 03° 34.60E 58° 24 00N - 03° 12.40E 58° 24 00N - 02° 55.00E 58° 35 65N - 02° 56.30E	01 January to 28 February	
4	Papa Bank	59° 56N - 03° 08W 59° 56N - 02° 45W 59° 35N - 03° 15W 59° 35N - 03° 35W	01 January to 15 March	

Time Limited Closures				
No	Area Name	Coordinates	Time period	Additional Comment
5	Foula Deeps	60° 17.5N - 01° 45W 60° 11.0N - 01° 45W 60° 11.0N - 02° 10W 60° 20.0N - 02° 00W 60° 20.0N - 01° 50W	01 November to 31 December	
6	Egersund Bank	58° 07.40N - 04° 33.0E 57° 53.00N - 05° 12.0.E 57° 40.00N - 05° 10.9E 57° 57.90N - 04° 31.9E	01 January to 31 March	(10 x 25 nm)
7	East of Fair Isle	59° 40N - 01° 23W 59° 40N - 01° 13W 59° 30N - 01° 20W 59° 10N - 01° 20W 59° 10N - 01° 28W 59° 30N - 01° 28W	01 January to 15 March	
8	West Bank	57° 15N - 05° 01E 56° 56N - 05° 00E 56° 56N - 06° 20E 57° 15N - 06° 20E	01 February to 15 March	(18 x 4 nm)
9	Revet	57° 28.43N - 08° 05.66E 57° 27.44N - 08° 07.20E 57° 51.77N - 09° 26.33E 57° 52.88N - 09° 25.00E	01 February to 15 March	(1.5 x 49 nm)
10	Rabarberen	57° 47.00N - 11° 04.00E 57° 43.00N - 11° 04.00E 57° 43.00N - 11° 09.00E 57° 47.00N - 11° 09.00E	01 February to 15 March	East of Skagen (2.7x4 nm)

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A WORKING GROUP ON HERRING**

The group's main task is to recommend how to optimally and sustainably utilise the North Sea Autumn Spawning Herring (NSAS) in the North Sea and explore methods for TAC setting.

The working group shall also make recommendations for management models, including TAC setting for the herring in Skagerrak and Kattegat, where NSAS herring mix with western Baltic spring spawning (WBSS) herring stocks.

The working group should also look at the current practice of setting separate TACs to cover by-catches in other fisheries. Important elements to consider are fishing areas and seasons, exploitation pattern as well as bycatches in other fisheries.

In particular, the Working Group shall:

1. For an appropriate range of reference years defined by the group
  - a. Describe the development of the herring fisheries in the North Sea.
  - b. Describe the catch composition in the herring fisheries (by type of fleet, age, stock, quarter, and ICES subdivision).
  - c. Describe the development of relevant herring stocks (WBSS herring) and species caught together with NSAS.
  - d. Describe the development and impact of management measures.
2. Elaborate on any specificities that may explain certain important development traits.
3. Suggest a management model that secures that the exploitation of NSAS herring stock is sustainable, and at the same time practical and controllable.
4. Explore/consider different models where catches of stocks are kept separate and in which all landings (also bycatches) within a management area are counted against stock specific TACs.

The working group shall submit its recommendations preferably before 1 October 2021.

**TABLE 1**

**2021 QUOTAS FOR JOINTLY MANAGED SHARED STOCKS IN THE  
NORTH SEA**

Species	ICES Area	TAC	Sharing					
			Norway		EU		UK	
			%	Tonnes	%	Tonnes	%	Tonnes
<b>Cod</b>	4	13,246	17.0	2,252	39.03	5,170	43.97	5,824
<b>Haddock</b>	4	42,785	23.0	9,841	14.21	6,080	62.79	26,865
<b>Saithe</b>	4, 3a	59,512	52.0	30,946	37.30	22,198	10.70	6,368
<b>Whiting</b>	4	21,306	10.0	2,131	31.30	6,669	58.70	12,507
<b>Plaice</b>	4	143,419	7.0	10,039	66.53	95,417	26.47	37,963
<b>Herring</b>	4, 7.d	356,357	29.0	103,344	52.56	187,301	18.44	65,712