

## North-East Atlantic: Conservation and enforcement measures agreed for 2021



[1]

20/11/2020

The North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) gathered, via video conference, for its annual meeting from 10 to 13 November 2020. During the meeting, the European Union and the other NEAFC contracting parties reached agreement on a number of conservation and management measures for 2021 covering several fish stocks such as blue whiting, Atlanto-Scandian herring, redfish in Irminger Sea, Rockall haddock, blue ling, spurdog and orange roughy.

Based on scientific advice and to improve the sustainability of the stock, contracting parties established a zero total allowable catch (TAC) for redfish in the Irminger Sea. Although scientific advice for the North Arctic indicates that the redfish TAC for 2021 could be increased by 18% (to 66,158 t) compared to 2020, no decision has been made at NEAFC level. For mackerel, for which the coastal states consultations for 2021 are still ongoing, the contracting parties agreed to reconvene after their conclusion in order to discuss the adoption of a NEAFC Recommendation for 2021. The validity of the closed area for blue ling and haddock fisheries has been extended, while the prohibition of fisheries targeting picked dogfish / spurdog (*Squalus acanthias*) and orange roughy has been extended until 2022 and 2024 respectively.

NEAFC also launched its standard recurring advice request to International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). [2] for 2021 and agreed to submit special requests to ICES to assess the level of bird by-catch and discards in fisheries taking place in the NEAFC area. In addition, following an EU proposal, NEAFC agreed to request advice from ICES defining the fisheries that use collection bags in the NEAFC Regulatory Area and assessing their impact on species caught and bycaught.

The delegations also agreed on a number of control and enforcement measures. As part of efforts to strengthen the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU) NEAFC updated its IUU vessels' list, which now includes IUU vessels listed by the 14 major Regional Fisheries Management Organisations. NEAFC continued the technical preparations for the full implementation of the international standard for the electronic transmission of fishing logbook and position information. In addition, NEAFC decided to clarify the requirements in the NEAFC Scheme relating to cooperating non-contracting party (CNCP) status, also establishing a distinct category for those with actual fishing activity in the area.

This was the first annual meeting that the United Kingdom attended as a contracting party following its accession to the Convention in October 2020.

**NEAFC's Press release** [3]

### Background

The North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for fisheries management in the North-East Atlantic. The European Union is a contracting party, along with Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, and, since October 2020, the United Kingdom.

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[1] [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/newsroom/fishing-boat-ireland-400\\_71894.jpg](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/newsroom/fishing-boat-ireland-400_71894.jpg)

[2] <http://www.ices.dk/Pages/default.aspx>

[3] [https://www.neafc.org/system/files/AM-2020\\_Press-statement.v1\\_0.pdf](https://www.neafc.org/system/files/AM-2020_Press-statement.v1_0.pdf)