



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF  
TRADE, INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES

North Star

Your ref

Our ref

Date

17/261

03.02.17

**Harvesting of snow crab on the Norwegian continental shelf**

Dear Sir,

Reference is made to letter dated 3 February 2017 where you refer to the decision of East Finnmark Court in the case of the Lithuanian vessel «Juros Vilkas». In this regard you raise the following question:

"Is Norway's domestic prohibition to catch snow crab still in force for the part of NEAFC regulatory area west of the boundary line set by Norway-Russia Treaty 2010 for the vessels having licenses issued in accordance with NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement?".

We can confirm that the regulations you refer to are still in force. For easy reference, the regulation on the prohibition of catch of snow crab is available here:

<https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2014-12-19-1836?q=snøkrabbe>

Snow crab is a sedentary species. According to the international Law of the Sea, only Norway as the coastal State can validly issue licenses for harvesting of snow crab on the Norwegian continental shelf. Currently, Norway has not consented to any licence being issued by any other country or to any foreign vessel. Any presumed licence issued by a foreign authority without the express consent of Norway is contrary to international law as well as domestic Norwegian law and will be regarded as having no legal effect.

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In your letter, you make a reference to the decision of east Finnmark District Court in the Juros Vilkas case. Please be aware that the time of appeal in that case is still running, thus the sentence is not legally valid.

Norway expects everyone to follow applicable regulations in Norwegian maritime areas, and the regulations will be enforced as previously.

Yours sincerely,

Yngve Torgersen  
Acting Director General

Elisabeth N. Gabrielsen  
Deputy Director General

*This document has been signed electronically and therefore it is not signed by hand.*

**Adressliste**  
North Star