

2022 Coastal States – Summary of Outcomes

Background

Coastal States consultations on Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for North-East Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH) and blue whiting took place on 14th October (ASH and blue whiting) and 17th October (mackerel). In addition, Coastal States mackerel sharing discussions were scheduled for 18th-19th October.

NAPA attempted to join the closing plenaries of each of these meetings.

North-East Atlantic Mackerel

There was not a closing plenary session on the 17th in relation to the coastal state consultations on mackerel as not all parties were in a position to sign the agreed record.

Discussions on the 18th began with a continuation of discussion on the TAC for 2023. There was broad recognition of the advice from ICES, with most Parties indicating their support for setting the TAC at this level. Parties discussed a sharing arrangement for the stock over both days. These were constructive talks, with good progress being made in exploring solutions. Parties will continue sharing discussions at the start of November before signing any agreed record on a total catch limit.

We will provide further updates in due course.

Atlanto-Scandian Herring (ASH)

Parties agreed to set the TAC for ASH in line with the headline advice from ICES, equating to a TAC of 511,171 tonnes, a -14.60% decrease compared to 2022.

Blue Whiting

Parties will reconvene to continue discussions on the TAC for blue whiting over the coming weeks. There are current divergent views on the TAC level, with the UK supporting a TAC constraint principle.

Summary

In previous years, there has been quick agreement to follow the ICES advice and set a TAC accordingly. As previously noted, while this sounds good, all it means is that no party (or agreement between parties) will exceed this level. This only 'works' if there is a multilateral agreement between all parties – which is our first ask.

This time there has been much more debate; we have heard that numbers were being discussed for a sharing arrangement for mackerel, and the UK were keen to set a TAC for blue whiting that was below the ICES advice.

We also heard that the delegates had been receiving letters from NAPA Partners, and this was having an impact.