

MarinTrust Improver Programme: 6-month update template

In this document the applicant should outline progress made towards the actions listed in the Fishery Action Plan (FAP) as part of the Fishery Improvement Project (FIP). This should be aligned with the MarinTrust Assessment criteria where possible. The progress actions should be updated in the following tables, and the relevant evidence linked to. It is important that evidence documents are publicly available. This will be checked by MarinTrust and then verified by the peer reviewers during the annual peer review process based on evidence submitted by the applicant.

For the 6-month report, it is not required to provide an update on all actions. The FIP is required to provide updates on actions where demonstrable progress has been made since the last reporting (the last 6 months).

FIP name	North East Atlantic Blue Whiting
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Template guidelines

To help ensure the review process can be carried out effectively and efficiently:

- Include specific citations to the evidence that substantiates it. This should include the exact page numbers and paragraph references where the evidence can be found.
- Where possible, include a hyperlink to any evidence referenced.
- Ensure that the supporting evidence documents are easily accessible and well-organised. They should be available in a format that allows for easy navigation, such as a table of contents, bookmarks, or an index.
- Use clear and concise language when referring to evidence to make it easy for readers to grasp why a particular piece of evidence supports a specific progress claim.

Note: MarinTrust will host all evidence documents on the MarinTrust FIP profiles. If there are any confidential and or draft documents that the applicant does not want made public, this should be made clear in the report.

IP 6-month update

Use the below tables to provide an update on actions in the Fishery Action Plan with links to relevant evidence documents. Additional lines may be added where necessary.

Example table

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
M1.1	Provide the original action as outlined in the action plan.	Provide an update on this action since the last report.	Provide a link to any evidence and/or summarise relevant points for actions or updates.	What is the current status of this action (i.e. complete, pending, ongoing)	Provide any additional information here.
M1.2					
Add rows to each table as necessary					

M – Management Framework and Surveillance, Control and Enforcement

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

A – Category A: Data Collection, Stock Assessment, Harvest Strategy and Stock Status

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
A3.2 Total fishery removals of	1. Engagement to Ensure Robust Harvest Strategies Adopted and Implemented	i) NAPA Governance Structure – A new NAPA governance structure is in place . There are now three separate Sub-Groups within NAPA, focused individually on North East Atlantic	* Evidence is grouped into folders according to areas of focus at the below hyperlinks. The	Ongoing	

<p>this species do not regularly exceed the level indicated or stated in the stock assessment. Where a specific quantity of removals is recommended, the actual removals may exceed this by up to 10% ONLY if the stock status is above the limit reference point or proxy.</p>		<p>(NEA) mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and NEA blue whiting. Work on mackerel and herring is addressed through a separate FIP, not detailed here.</p> <p>There remains an overarching NAPA Management Team, with an Independent Chair (Aoife Martin, Seafish), Deputy Chair (Robert Wiltshire, LDH), Blue Whiting Sub-Group Chair (Dave Robb, Cargill), Technical Lead (Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme, IMEC Ltd), and Project Lead (Fiona Birch-Green, Seafish).</p> <p>To promote the enhanced focus of the species Sub-Groups, NAPA now only allows for full, fee-paying membership, and there are no 'partner' or 'associate' members. There are currently 22 fee-paying partners of the Blue Whiting Sub-Group. Companies include those in the aquaculture feed, processor, retail, and supply industries, across Europe and globally.</p> <p>ii) Blue Whiting Sub-Group – The Blue Whiting Sub-Group has met twice online since October 2024 (17/10/24, 5/2/25) to progress actions against the FIP Action Plan. An All-Party NAPA workshop was convened in London (5/12/24) featuring discussions on the future</p>	<p><i>numbers below correspond to the numbering of the folders in the open access sharing location.</i></p> <p>1. Blue Whiting Sub-Group meeting papers – includes: agendas, presentations, meeting minutes, list of Blue Whiting Sub-Group members.</p> <p>2. Sourcing Statements – includes: NAPA Partner updated sourcing statements.</p> <p>3. Coastal States engagement – includes: letters to Coastal States, NEAFC position statements, meeting log.</p>		
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		<p>of blue whiting with Coastal States, catching sector, scientists, and key stakeholders (more detail provided below). The NAPA Chair, Deputy Chair, Technical Lead, and Project Lead have held meetings routinely since 2/24.</p> <p>iii) Growth in Salmon Producer representation – NAPA now has eight partners from the global salmon producing sector – Mowi, SalMar, Leroy, Grieg Seafood, Cermaq, Salmon Group, Aquascot, Scottish Sea Farms. This sector is predominantly based in Norway and a major end user of blue whiting in the form of fishmeal. With these members on board, NAPA now holds 80 percent of the total Norwegian salmon production.</p> <p>iv) Evidence gathering and analysis – NAPA has commenced three projects to gather economic evidence to enhance its advocacy work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA commissioned a future projections analysis for Atlanto-Scandian herring in 2/24, to determine potential stock outcomes under a plausible range of recruitment and exploitation scenarios. 	<p>4. Catching Sector engagement – includes: meeting log.</p> <p>5. Communications Strategy – includes: blue whiting communications strategy, refreshed NAPA branding guidelines, NASF comms campaign materials.</p> <p>6. NAPA Workshop at North Atlantic Seafood Forum Bergen 5/3/25 – includes: agenda, NAPA presentation delivered by Aoife Martin (NAPA Independent Chair), NASF comms campaign materials.</p>		
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		<p>An equivalent analysis will be undertaken for blue whiting, using the latest ICES advice and detailed stock data. A fisheries scientist has been identified to conduct the work, with the aim of completing it by May 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related to the first piece of work, it is intended that a 'Lost opportunities' analysis will be undertaken. Unlike the first project, this work is intended to look back in time, to estimate the additional value that could have been derived from the blue whiting stock if it had been fished at recommended levels. This work is complex in aiming to consider age-class distribution within the stock over time, and the routes to market for the different size-classes of fish. It is intended that an estimate of the economic consequences of the failure to make progress against the FIP aims will also be undertaken, using the data derived from the study. It is highlighted that the loss of value from the blue whiting fishery has been mentioned several times by Coastal State negotiators in recent public meetings, including the 09/24 Coastal State plenary sessions and 11/24 NEAFC 	<p>7. NAPA All-Party Workshop London 5/12/24 – includes: agenda, presentations, attendee feedback.</p> <p>8. Aquafeed industry events and forums – includes: event programmes.</p> <p>9. NAPA website (napafisheries.org) – see News section for latest announcements and published press/media releases.</p> <p>10. NAPA LinkedIn – 48 posts from 10/24-04/25</p>		
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		<p>annual meeting. Discussions are ongoing with potential partners in the work, including the MSC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional key piece of analysis is to determine the volume and value of blue whiting purchasing represented by NAPA partners. The intent is to provide context and weight to NAPA's argument for sustainable management of the blue whiting stock. The work to obtain data from NAPA partners has commenced. <p>v) Sourcing statements – Revised sourcing statements have been requested from NAPA partners and uploaded to the website. Nine updated/new sourcing statements have been received from Blue Whiting Sub-Group members, and other NAPA partners have been reminded of the need to submit these statements.</p> <p>vi) NAPA workshop at North Atlantic Seafood Forum (NASF) – NAPA hosted its second workshop at the NASF in Bergen, Norway, on 5/3/25, attracting over 70 attendees. The 2025 workshop was part of the official conference programme. Building on the 2024 session, the workshop covered</p>			
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		<p>the consequences of blue whiting mismanagement for Norway's salmon, global processing, and retail sectors. Speakers included Tarjei Eide (Managing Director at Cargill), Aoife Martin (NAPA Independent Chair), William Davies (Sofina Foods Europe), Jørgen Skeide (Lerøy Seafood), Tor Eirik Homme (Grieg Seafood), Leif Kjetil Skjæveland (Skretting Norway), Dave Robb (Cargill). To amplify NAPA's presence at NASF, a 'Best Supporting Fish' communications campaign was launched alongside the event, with the tag line "Best Supporting Fish is Worst Supported Fish, say NAPA" to draw attention to the governance and management issues in the fishery.</p> <p>vii) Communications campaigns – Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) has been engaged to design and deliver a bespoke communications and campaigns strategy for the Blue Whiting Sub-Group. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A refreshed communications strategy with renewed focus for the updated FIP ("It's time to push back, not walk away") and blue whiting mismanagement ("Blue Whiting Red Alert"). 			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated NAPA website, with species-specific web pages (coming soon) and news and resources pages. • Species-specific branding to support brand identity (colours and imagery). • Species-specific messaging to cut to the core of the issues pertaining to lack of harvest strategies and ineffective decision-making, whilst also remaining recognisable and visually impactful. • Species-specific campaigns focusing on content published on LinkedIn, aiming to develop a 'continuous drumbeat' of messaging (50 posts from 10/24-04/25). • Targeted press releases, leading to 20 media articles as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fishing News 10/24, - The Fishing Daily 10/24, 10/24, 12/24, 03/25, - Fish Focus 10/24, 10/24, 12/24, 02/25, - World Fishing & Aquaculture 10/24, 03/25, - FiskerForum 10/24, 12/24, 03/25, - Tridge.com 10/24, 10/24, - Undercurrent News 10/24, 03/25, - Fish Farming Expert 03/25, - Hook and Net 03/25. 			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA Technical Lead provided an interview to Seafood Source, leading to a detailed article in 10/24. ‘Best Supporting Fish’ communications campaign for blue whiting to amplify NAPA’s presence at the NASF 2025. <p>viii) Catching Sector engagement – NAPA has continued to build and strengthen relationships with Catching Sector representatives across the Coastal States. The following meetings were held/attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA Technical Lead attended the 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting in person, providing an Opening Statement in the public forum and engaging directly with fishing industry partners from the Coastal States. A Position Statement was also presented to NEAFC. NAPA also endorsed a Joint Observer Statement from six non-governmental organisations – The Pew Charitable Trusts, Blue Marine Foundation, the Marine Stewardship Council, ClientEarth, Accountability.Fish, and NAPA. NAPA All-Party Workshop attended by Ian Gatt (Scottish Pelagic Fishermen’s 			
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		<p>Association), Mia Høgi (The Norwegian Pelagic Association), Tor Bjørklund Larsen (Norwegian Fishermen's Association), Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, (Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation) on 5/12/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with Ian Gatt (Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association) on 16/12/24 and 7/2/25. • Meeting with Dominic Rihan (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation) and Tim Heddema (Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association), both EU catching sector, on 13/2/25. • Meeting with Odd Eliassen (Havsbrun), Faroese catching sector, on 13/2/25. Further to this, NAPA is planning a trip to the Faroe Islands in Q2 2025 to meet with Mr Eliassen, government officials, and salmon farming representatives. • Meeting with Heiðrún Lind Marteinsdóttir (CEO of Fisheries Iceland) on 4/3/25. 			
	2. Dispute settlement legal framework and consultation processes	<p>i) Collective Coastal States engagement –</p> <p>It is noted that Article 18bis of the NEAFC Convention states “The Commission shall make recommendations establishing procedures for the settlement of disputes arising under this Convention”. NAPA heard in</p>		Ongoing	

		<p>the 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting that Russia maintained its objection to the amendment and that, as a result, it remains not in effect for any party. As such, there is currently no formal, disputes resolution process at NEAFC. There is also no formal process at the Coastal States.</p> <p>In this regard, a key meeting was the 2/25 Future Direction of NEAFC (FDN) meeting, where the NAPA Technical Lead joined with other observers (Pew, MSC, Accountability.Fish, Blue) to petition for a new Dispute Resolution Process to be considered. Prior to this, discussions were held with the observer group in 12/24 to confirm attendance and potential options for a submission to the meeting's Chair (UK Coastal States Head of Delegation).</p> <p>NAPA Technical Lead attended (remotely) the available Coastal States pelagic plenary sessions. Most Coastal States negotiations do not have plenary sessions planned.</p> <p>NAPA Technical Lead attended the 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting in person, providing an Opening Statement in the public forum and</p>			
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		<p>engaging directly with Coastal States negotiators and the NEAFC Secretary. A Position Statement was also presented to NEAFC. NAPA also endorsed a Joint Observer Statement from six non-governmental organisations – The Pew Charitable Trusts, Blue Marine Foundation, the Marine Stewardship Council, ClientEarth, Accountability.Fish, and NAPA.</p> <p>NAPA held an All-Party Workshop in London on 5/12/24, attended by eight negotiators/representatives from across five Coastal States – Faroe Islands, Norway, Iceland, UK, and EU.</p> <p>Follow-up meetings with negotiators from the Coastal States were held in early 2025 (see additional detail below).</p> <p>ii) Individual Coastal States engagement – NAPA has expanded its focus to engaging directly with individual Coastal States (as well as collectively) to understand the blockers to reaching agreements and promote the delivery of dispute resolution and effective decision-making processes.</p>			
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		<p>NAPA submitted individual letters to each Coastal State Head of Delegation in 10/24, detailing the urgency of the situation for the stocks and NAPA Partners.</p> <p>Following the NAPA All-Party Workshop in 12/24, three follow-up meetings were held with Coastal States representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with EU negotiating team (Eva Maria Carballeira, Camille Gallouze, Silvia Scalco, Jessica Demblon, Noura Rouissi) on 16/1/25. • Meeting with Faroe Islands representative (Kate Sanderson) on 28/1/25. • Meeting with Iceland negotiating team (Guðmundur Þórðarson, Orri Úlfarsson) on 13/2/25. <p>iii) NAPA Catch Share proposal – NAPA is in the process of developing a proposal for a mechanism to help bring Coastal State catch shares down to sustainable levels over the next two years. This proposal is currently under development and in discussion with the NAPA Steering Group.</p>			
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	3. Effective decision-making processes	<p>i) NAPA All-Party Workshop, 12/24 – NAPA held a pivotal All-Party Workshop on 5/12/24 in London, attended by 55 NAPA Partners, eight negotiators/representatives from across five Coastal States (Faroe Islands, Norway, Iceland, UK, EU), four catching sector representatives (from UK, EU, Norway), scientists, and key stakeholders including the MSC and ASC. Representatives from all Coastal States were invited to attend. This was a key event to discuss positions, blockers, and priorities for action. The critical nature of the FIP deadline and NAPA member commitments to sourcing from sustainable and well-managed fisheries was highlighted in the strongest terms. The event was heralded by many as a strong wake-up call to the Coastal States in attendance.</p> <p>ii) Catching Sector engagement – NAPA has continued to build relationships with Catching Sector representatives from across the Coastal States. The following meetings were held:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA Technical Lead attended the 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting in person, providing an Opening Statement in the public forum and engaging directly with 		Ongoing	
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		<p>fishing industry partners from the Coastal States. A Position Statement was also presented to NEAFC. NAPA also endorsed a Joint Observer Statement from six non-governmental organisations – The Pew Charitable Trusts, Blue Marine Foundation, the Marine Stewardship Council, ClientEarth, Accountability.Fish, and NAPA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPA All-Party Workshop attended by Ian Gatt (Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association), Mia Høgi (The Norwegian Pelagic Association), Tor Bjørklund Larsen (Norwegian Fishermen's Association), Esben Sverdrup-Jensen, (Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation) on 5/12/24. • Meetings with Ian Gatt (Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association) on 16/12/24 and 7/2/25. • Meeting with Dominic Rihan (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation) and Tim Heddema (Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association), both EU catching sector, on 13/2/25. • Meeting with Odd Eliassen (Havsbrun), Faroese catching sector, on 13/2/25. <p>Further to this, NAPA is planning a trip to the Faroe Islands in Q2 2025 to meet with</p>			
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		<p>Mr Eliassen, government officials, and salmon farming representatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Heiðrún Lind Marteinsdóttir (CEO of Fisheries Iceland) on 4/3/25. <p>iii) NEAFC engagement – NAPA Technical Lead attended the 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting in person, providing an Opening Statement in the public forum and engaging directly with fishing industry partners from the Coastal States. A Position Statement was also presented to NEAFC. NAPA also endorsed a Joint Observer Statement from six non-governmental organisations – The Pew Charitable Trusts, Blue Marine Foundation, the Marine Stewardship Council, ClientEarth, Accountability.Fish, and NAPA.</p> <p>iv) Aquafeed Industry Events and Forums –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA attended and spoke at the Aqua Ice Conference in Harpa, Iceland (8/10/24), attended by the Icelandic Minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. NAPA also spoke directly to the Icelandic Organisation for Fishmeal Producers, who own a large share of Icelandic fishing vessels. 			
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPA spoke about its mission and the issues facing blue whiting fisheries at The Norwegian Biotechnology Advisory Board seminar in Bergen (26/11/24) and participated in a panel debate. The Norwegian Biotechnology Advisory Board is an independent body consisting of 15 members and five deputy members appointed by the Norwegian government. • NAPA joined the Pelagic Tuesday event at the North Atlantic Seafood Forum 2025 (4/3/25) (separate to the NAPA NASF workshop) to present to pelagic industry representatives the challenges facing the aquafeed sector if the blue whiting FIP were to fail, including the potential impact on fishermen, aquafeed businesses, and the salmon farming sector. Discussions showed a good level of understanding of the issue and explored the opportunity to develop a solution led by the catching sector. Nobody in the room expressed support for the current mismanagement by Coastal States and failure to negotiate meaningfully. NAPA held follow up 			
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		<p>meetings to explore this opportunity further.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA attended The Sustainable Feed Misson's first annual conference in Oslo (13/3/25). In addition to the open conference there was a separate top-management forum where the Norwegian Minister of Fisheries, representatives from parliament, and key CEO's from both the green and blue sectors were personally invited. NAPA gave a speech underscoring the feed sector's perspective. NAPA highlighted the paradox that the Norwegian government wants to increase the amount of Norwegian ingredients in aquafeed from 8 to 25 percent, against a backdrop of blue whiting sourcing uncertainty, which is by far the largest component of Norwegian marine ingredients. Furthermore, NAPA had a one-to-one conversation with the Norwegian Minister of Fisheries about its concern for the Coastal State negotiations. 			
	4. Ensure Key Data Elements (KDE)	This action will aim to start later in the project.	By year 5, NAPA will aim to ensure KDEs	Pending	

	information is collected on vessels supplying MarinTrust factories		for whole fish are collected – fishing vessel(s), species, catch area, and date of landings. KDEs will be collected through stakeholder meetings with the fishmeal supply chain.		
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B – Category B Stock Status

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

C – Category C Stock Status

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

D – Impacts On Species Categorised as Vulnerable by D1-D3

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

F – Impacts on ETP Species, Impacts on Habitats and Ecosystem Impacts

MT clause	Action in plan	Action update / progress made	Evidence	Status of action	Additional comments
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Additional Information

The following section is for any information provided by the fishery in support of this 6-month update which does not relate directly to any of the information above, but which is relevant to the ongoing monitoring of fishery management status.

The NE Atlantic Blue Whiting FIP is the foundation of NAPA's work to drive sustainability into the management of the blue whiting stock. The FIP was granted an extension in October 2024 for a further two years. Under the extension, there is no departure from the original intention to design this FIP as a “policy FIP”, however there is greater focus on delivering more efficient, effective, and impactful actions building on the solid progress that NAPA has made over its initial three years, irrespective of whether that progress has been reflected at

Coastal State level. In parallel to the blue whiting FIP, in April 2024 NAPA secured a two-year extension to the mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring FIP.