

# NAPA Blue Whiting Sub-group

Chair: Dave Robb, Cargill

Date: 28 May 2025



# Welcome and Introductions

**Dave Robb**

# Observance of Competition Law

**You are reminded that you will at all times refrain from discussing any information which is confidential to your company and/or which is likely to affect the commercial strategy or activities of your company.**

You are in the best position to judge what is, and what is not, commercially sensitive or confidential and so responsibility lies with you in the first place.



# Meeting Agenda

**Welcome and Introductions (Dave) – 5 minutes**

**Overview of NASF 2025 and recent advocacy (Dave/Fi) – 15 minutes**

**Blue Whiting FIP update (Fi) – 10 minutes**

**NAPA recognition (Fi) – 5 mins**

**Communications update (MWC) – 15 minutes**

**NAPA future work priorities (Dave/Fi) – 15 minutes**

**Members discussion (All) – 15 minutes**

**Upcoming diary dates 2025/26 (Fi) – 5 minutes**

**AOB – 5 minutes**

# Blue Whiting Sub-group



SALMON  
GROUP



Salmon  
sector



HOFSETH



CERMAQ



INTERFISH Ltd

MØWI



TripleNine



# Overview of NASF 2025 and recent advocacy

**Dave Robb / Fi Birch-Green**

# North Atlantic Seafood Forum 2025

**NAPA session title:** Blue whiting management failures and consequences for the Norwegian salmon industry

## Speakers:

Tarjei Eide (Managing Director at Cargill)

Jørgen Skeide (Feed Manager at Lerøy Seafood)

Tor Eirik Homme (Feed and Nutrition Director at Grieg Seafood)

Will Davies (Group CSR Manager at Sofina Foods Europe)

Leif Kjetil Skjæveland (Sustainability and Public Affairs Manager at Skretting Norway)

Dave Robb (Aqua Nutrition Group Sustainability Lead at Cargill)

Aoife Martin (NAPA Independent Chair)



# North Atlantic Seafood Forum 2025

## Key themes/insights:

The seafood sector's reputation hinges on sustainable management of supply chains

Multiple industries – including the catching sector and salmon aquaculture – are at risk of severe negative economic impacts if blue whiting quotas are not equitably shared to keep catches within scientific limits

NAPA will keep making its presence felt at international gatherings, such as NASF, to amplify the voice of the marketplace

It is essential that countries work together to achieve long-term, robustly managed pelagic fisheries

Post-event networking valuable for catching sector engagement

# North Atlantic Seafood Forum 2025

## **Pelagic Tuesday:**

Hjalmar Hatun – Faroe Marine Research Institute

Erling Kare Stenevik – IMR

Heidrun Lind Marteinsdottir – Fisheries Iceland

Gisli Gislason – MSC

Dave Robb – Cargill



# North Atlantic Seafood Forum 2025

## Pelagic Tuesday:

“No Deal, No Dinner”

Failure of Coastal States and NEAFC system to deliver a deal: industry frustration

No consequences seen – but now stocks are declining

2 strong year classes of blue whiting are being over-fished hard with nothing behind

There can be no good actors: shared stocks, so all nations are contributing to over-fishing

Management challenges revolve around:

Climate change

Stock size fluctuations (recruitment and distribution)

Ecosystem considerations

Uncertainty in assessments and advice

Fishing being so much greater than ICES TAC

Basis of agreement includes: catch history, biology + ecosystem, dependency, etc.

# Recent advocacy: Catching Sector

## Ireland and Netherlands – London, 13 February 2025

**Ireland** – Dominic Rihan, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation

Deeply despondent, little optimism

Blue whiting is the easiest of the three stocks to fix. Herring = political (Norway versus EU)

Really upset about the trilateral agreement between UK, Norway and Faroes – attempt to build up historical fishing levels through access to UK waters...did then admit 'EU not perfect'

**Netherlands** – Tim Heddema, Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association

Very unhappy with the trilateral agreement and didn't want it extended to four parties including EU.

Claimed that 'only EU and Iceland want a multi-lateral agreement'

Through the trilateral, the 'UK is taking stolen goods from Norway' (i.e. Norway bumps up its quotas but needs UK access to catch them)

From a fishers' perspective everything is fine as a) the price is going up and b) demand is increasing

Negotiators are naïve about the importance of certification, particularly for aquaculture. Catching sector has little involvement with negotiations

# Recent advocacy: Catching Sector cont.

## Faroe Islands – London, 14 February 2025

**Faroe Islands** – Stefan I Skorini, Notaskip (Faroese Pelagic Organisation)

Remembers the impact in 2021 when feed companies stopped buying blue whiting

Their fishermen do not want this to happen again

Fishers pay resource taxes on quotas – so need to maximise sales price on quota

Clear link between blue whiting, herring and mackerel quotas

For Faroese, herring is the most important species to get agreement on

Good stock condition of blue whiting hampers the discussion – what is the problem?

Agrees that a NAPA visit to Faroes to meet catching sector, farming and government would be useful

# Recent advocacy: Catching Sector cont.

## Denmark and Iceland – Bergen, 4 March 2025

### Denmark – Esben Jensen, Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation

Catching sector excluded from NEAFC. Not happy with NEAFC ‘meetings to agree principles rather than make agreements’

Relationship between different countries’ catching sectors has deteriorated in recent years

EU / UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement is the elephant in the room

The catching sector hasn’t had a clear threat from its customers

Norway suspected to be pursuing EU membership

### Iceland – Heidrun Lind Marteinsdottir, Fisheries Iceland

Relatively little offered up, but echoed points around exclusion of catching sector from NEAFC talks and that the relationships have deteriorated between representatives from different countries (regular forum meetings in London descended into permanent discussion around Brexit)

Accepted that the situation was concerning...and more so for herring than mackerel (‘we’re only 5 mins away from no quota at all’)

BW is most challenging for Iceland – would want to focus on herring and mackerel

# Recent advocacy: Catching Sector cont.

**Norway – Nina Rasmussen, Fiskebat, Norwegian representative who presented at NASF in Bergen, 4 March (replacing Audun Marak)**

Overall blue whiting is very well managed – maybe not lately

Faroes is the main problem for blue whiting...and mackerel

Fisheries scientists have often got things wrong in the NE Atlantic

Goal has to be to get better science

Norway has worked to reduce fishing through the trilateral agreement and isn't to blame

Key points are:

Zonal attachment

Catch history

# Recent advocacy: Coastal States

## EU

HoD (Eva-Maria Fernandez) and wider team – Online via Teams, 16 January 2025

Furious about the tripartite agreement between UK, Norway and Faroes

‘EU not the problem, sustainability is enshrined in our constitution’

Viewpoint that the EU has sacrificed enough, other Coastal States need to do the same

## Faroe Islands

Kate Sanderson (Head of Representation) – met with Aoife, 28 January 2025

Listened to NAPA’s challenges around engaging with Faroese catching sector

Offered to support and facilitate connections where possible

# Recent advocacy: Coastal States cont.

## Iceland

Head of Delegation (Gudmundur Thordarson) – London, 13 February 2025

Accepted that the decline in mackerel biomass is concerning

Saw some benefits from tripartite agreement: sets relative shares between the UK, Norway and Faroes, but also used the term ‘laundering of unilateral quotas’

Iceland’s ask for 16.5% could be reduced...and suggested 12.5% - access to other waters (as per Norway / Faroes into UK) would help and trade off with other species possible

Blue whiting viewed as the easiest of the three species to fix. ‘Domino effect’ with other species following: EU is key, the Norway and Faroe Islands

But no proposals had been made in the CS negotiations on blue whiting for years

- Limited appetite for a deal whilst stock was in good shape

- May change with reducing biomass

More optimistic in tone than others we met with – basics of a deal with UK, Norway, Faroes not that difficult.

# Blue Whiting FIP update

**Fi Birch-Green**

# Blue Whiting FIP update

Blue whiting FIP 6-month progress report submitted to MarinTrust in April, covering Oct 24 to Apr 25.

## Key highlights:

NAPA workshop in London in December 2024, with strong attendance from NAPA Partners, Coastal States, Catching Sector representatives, scientists and key stakeholders, including the MSC and ASC.

1-2-1 meetings with Coastal States negotiators and Catching Sector representatives, to reassert NAPA's asks and better understand the blockers to a sustainable sharing arrangement.

Continued advocacy at the highest level by issuing letters to Coastal State Ministers and HoDs.

Targeted communications strategy including species-specific campaigns, press interviews and website refresh.

NAPA Partners reviewed and revised their sourcing statements, to bring them in line with the current state of play in pelagic fisheries management.

**Outcome: No change to D rating (*some past progress*)**

MarinTrust confirmed they had no follow up questions and have accepted the report ([available on the FIP profile on the MarinTrust website](#) and [NAPA website](#)).

# Mackerel and Herring FIP update

The mackerel and herring FIP 6-month progress report was submitted to Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) in March, covering the period from July to December 2024.

## **Outcome: FIP rating upgraded to C (some recent progress)**

The FIP rating has changed from D (some past progress) to C (some recent progress), in recognition of the updated NAPA partners'/companies' commitments to **sourcing policies in line with the NAPA objectives** including their **time bound commitments** and further actions dependent on coastal states agreement in line with ICES advice to manage the stocks with the next year.

*“SFP recognises the progress made in this last report, despite the pending and ultimate outcome, and hence the FIP rating is justified as C.”*

# NAPA recognition

**Fi Birch-Green**

# NAPA recognised as top seafood lobbying industry association

NAPA came top (with an **A-**) in a study of the biodiversity-related lobbying efforts of 12 of the main seafood industry associations.

InfluenceMap, a UK-based NGO best known for its investigations into climate lobbying, released the [report](#) on 10 April.

The report is one of the first assessments of the global seafood industry's lobbying efforts.

Gathered data from 2020 through March 2025 from a wide range of sources, including public statements, media reports, financial disclosures, voluntary environmental disclosures, regulatory consultation comments, freedom of information act requests, company websites and social media.

Each piece of data contributed to the relevant company or lobby group's score in one of 11 categories aligned with the 2022 UN treaty goals.

[InfluenceMap Oceans Under Threat](#)

[World's top seafood firms lobby against ocean conservation measures: Report](#) (Mongabay)

Industry Association	Region	Sector	Performance Band	Engagement Intensity	Company Members
North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group	Global	Fisheries	A-	11%	BioMar, Bolton Group, Northeast Nutrition (subsidiary of Cargill), Cooke, Labeyrie Fine Foods, Mowi, Skretting (subsidiary of Nutreco), Thai Union Group
SeaBOS	Global	Fisheries	B-	12%	Cargill, Charoen Pokphand Foods (CPF), Dongwon Industries, Kyokuyo, Maruha Nichiro, Cermaq (subsidiary of Mitsubishi Corporation), Nissui, Nutreco, Thai Union Group
Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise	Norway	All Sectors	C	7%	Austevoll Seafood, Mowi, SalMar
FoodDrinkEurope	EU	Consumer Staples	C-	21%	Cargill, Nomad Foods
Japan Business Federation (Keidanren)	Japan	All Sectors	D+	11%	Kyokuyo, Marubeni, Maruha Nichiro, Mitsubishi Corporation, Nissui
Sjomat Norge	Norway	Fisheries	D	15%	Austevoll Seafood, BioMar, Mowi, Nutreco, SalMar
Pacific Seafood Processors Association	United States	Fisheries	D-	13%	Alyeska Seafoods and Westward Seafoods (subsidiaries of Maruha Nichiro), UniSea (subsidiary of Nissui), Trident Seafoods
US Chamber of Commerce	United States	All Sectors	E	22%	Cargill
Europêche	EU	Fisheries	E-	27%	Parlevliet & Van der Plas
National Fisheries Institute	United States	Fisheries	E-	18%	Leroy Seafood (subsidiary of Austevoll Seafood), Cargill, Cooke, StarKist (subsidiary of Dongwon Industries), Bumble Bee Foods (subsidiary of FCF Co), High Liner Foods, Nissui, Nueva Pescanova, Pacific Seafood, Red Chamber, Royal Greenland, Thai Union Group
West Coast Seafood Processors Association	United States	Fisheries	F	9%	Pacific Seafood, Trident Seafoods

## North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)

- **North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group (NAPA)**'s advocacy is focused on policy intended to limit biodiversity loss due to overexploitation, and specifically on advocating extensively for Coastal States to manage stocks of North East Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and North East Atlantic blue whiting in line with scientific advice. This includes through [positions](#) on their website, accessed in October 2024, a [position statement](#) in advance of the meeting of the NEAFC in 2023, an [open letter](#) to the Norwegian Government in 2024 and numerous [blog posts](#) and [media articles](#) in 2021-2024.
- Several individual companies have also advocated for the NEAFC to set stringent quotas. In a [sourcing statement](#), accessed October 2024, **Bolton Group** called for the NEAFC to align its quotas with scientific advice. According to [reporting](#) by Seafood Source in 2023, **Cargill**, **Skretting** (subsidiary of Nutreco), **Mowi** and **BioMar** advocated for the total allowable catch (TAC) for the North Atlantic blue whiting to be reduced in line with scientific advice.

# Communications update

MWC

# NAPA future work priorities

Dave Robb / Fi Birch-Green

# NAPA future work priorities

## Alternative catch share proposal

Steering Committee has met four times since 10 April, to explore an alternative catch share proposal.

### Purpose:

Reflecting lack of confidence in coastal state processes

Concern that we won't reach a resolution in time

Perception amongst negotiators that they are 'answerable' to the catching sector

Supply chain ramifications either not understood or not seen as a valid threat

After four years is there an alternative approach?

### Principles:

Most be seen to be fair to all

Reflects that there are concessions and compromise required by all – including NAPA

Approach must be replicable across all three stocks

Can be embraced by the 'whole' supply chain

# NAPA future work priorities

## Visit to The Faroes

Remains a challenge to engage with the Faroes – Ministers, negotiators, industry

Engagement with UK Representative (Kate Sanderson) has been helpful but not getting traction we need

Suggestion that NAPA goes to Faroes – Kate Sanderson has offered to support and we have made contact with Havsbrun

# NAPA future work priorities

## Interim asks for mackerel

NAPA has identified key stepping stones towards the ultimate goal of a comprehensive sharing agreement. We are calling for all countries to take these interim actions, which would go a long way towards bringing total catches closer to scientifically recommended limits:

1. Limit fishing on the High Seas to no more than 10% of their total catch
2. Focus on direct human consumption for the use of whole fish
3. Limit the use of banking and borrowing to 10% of their available quota

Advocacy approach for interim actions currently under discussion within the mackerel sub-group.

# Members Discussion

All

# Upcoming diary dates 2025/26

**Fi Birch-Green**

# Upcoming diary dates 2025/26

**Next Coastal States meeting on blue whiting:** 10-11 June 25 at NEAFC HQ in London

**Next Coastal States meeting on mackerel:** 12-13 June 25 at NEAFC HQ in London

**Next Blue whiting sub-group meeting:** 22 September 25, 11.00-12.30

**Publication of ICES advice for widely distributed stocks 2026:** 30 September 2025

## **Blue whiting FIP reports:**

Annual reports: October 2025 and October 2026

6-month report: April 2026

## **FIP end dates:**

Blue whiting FIP: October 2026

Mackerel and herring FIP: April 2026

**AOB**

**Thank you**

# Contact

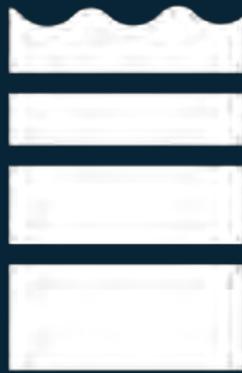
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