

**AGREED RECORD OF FISHERIES CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN
UNION AND NORWAY REGARDING FISHERIES IN SKAGERRAK AND KATTEGAT
FOR 2025/2026**

STOCKHOLM

23 JUNE 2025

1. A Norwegian Delegation, headed by Ms. Ann Kristin WESTBERG and A European Union Delegation, headed by Mr. Mael LE DRAST, met in Stockholm on 10 and 11 June 2025 to consult on mutual fisheries relations for 2025/2026. A Norwegian Delegation, headed by Ms. Ann Kristin WESTBERG and A European Union Delegation, headed by Ms. Cristina RIBEIRO, met on 23 June 2025, via videoconference, to conclude the consultations.
2. The Delegations referred to the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between Norway and the European Union on the Regulation of Fisheries in Skagerrak and Kattegat for 2025, signed on 5 December 2024, and, in particular, to paragraphs 12.1 - 12.8, as well as Annex I and Annex III of that Agreed Record.
3. The Delegations agreed to recommend to their respective authorities the following fishery arrangements for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, as outlined in this Agreed Record.
4. **Northern shrimp in ICES divisions 3a and 4a east**
 - 4.1. The Delegations noted that ICES released the advice on Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) in divisions 3a and 4a East for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 on 6 June 2025.
 - 4.2. The Delegations noted that ICES advises that when the EU-Norway LTMS is applied, catches in the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 should be no more than 4 010 tonnes. The Delegations also noted that ICES currently estimates the spawning stock to be below both $B_{trigger}$ and B_{lim} and that the fishing pressure of the stock is below F_{msy} and F_{pa} .
 - 4.3. The Delegations agreed to establish a TAC of 4 010 tonnes for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.
 - 4.4. The Delegations consequently agreed to establish a TAC of 2 807 tonnes for Skagerrak for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

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- 4.5. The Norwegian Delegation informed the EU Delegation of its intention to fix within the quantity given in paragraph 4.3 a quota for Northern shrimp for Division 4a East of 1 203 tonnes for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.
- 4.6. The Delegations recalled that in order to avoid a reduction in survey effort EU covered the two Norwegian IBTS stations in Skagerrak in Q1 2025, in exchange for Norway extending the duration of the January 2025 shrimp survey to 23-24 days.
- 4.7. The Delegations agreed to aim to continue this arrangement for 2026.
- 4.8. The Delegations agreed that there should not be inter-annual flexibility from 2025 to 2026.
- 4.9. The Delegations noted that Norway had offered to host industry representatives on the annual shrimp survey in January 2025, where a total of three representatives together joined the whole survey. The Delegations also noted that this offer will be extended to future annual shrimp surveys.
- 4.10. The Delegations recalled that they had agreed in June 2024 to establish a Working Group of experts to explore and recommend possible technical measures that could contribute to the rebuilding of the stock. The working group has now submitted a report. The Delegations welcomed this report, and took note of its recommendations, which include improving the RTC-regime and increasing selectivity through gear innovations.
- 4.11. In line with the above recommendations, the Delegations agreed to revise the joint real-time closure (RTC) system for Northern shrimp, as outlined in Annex II, as a remedial measure. Revisions to the RTC system include a lower trigger threshold for juvenile shrimp in a single haul the extension of the size and duration of the RTCs, and the termination of the exemption for vessels equipped with size-selective grid. The Delegations agreed to revert with information on the date of entry into force, aiming for it to take effect no later than 1 January 2026.
- 4.12. Furthermore, the Delegations agreed to request the relevant scientific institutes to coordinate scientific trials in the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian fishery in the Skagerrak. Those trials should focus on technical gear modifications for increasing size selectivity to reduce fishing mortality on juvenile shrimp. The Delegations noted that such trials have been conducted by Norway as part of a project on optimizing the shrimp trawl fishery.
- 4.13. The Delegations underscored the need to discuss other recommendations from the report ahead of annual consultations for 2026, with a view to agreeing on possible additional remedial measures deemed necessary for the recovery of the stock. Consequently, the Delegations agreed that relevant managers and experts should meet well in advance of the annual consultations to take this work forward.
- 4.14. The Delegations noted that despite efforts to recover the stock above Blim, ICES currently assesses the spawning stock biomass for Northern shrimp to be significantly below that limit

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reference point. Both Delegations expressed concerns with the status of the stock and agreed that further work on exploring additional measures to protect it from depletion. Consequently, they agreed to further explore in 2026 the scientific basis of a seasonal closure of the fishery during the hatching season.

- 4.15. The Delegations recalled their agreement to finalise the new LTMS available in Annex III once ICES has completed its evaluation of that new LTMS in line with the request included in Annex IV. The Delegations noted that ICES currently estimates the spawning stock biomass to be below both $B_{trigger}$ and B_{lim} . The Delegations therefore agreed to put this task on hold and will inform ICES accordingly.

5. Sprat

- 5.1. The Delegations referred to the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between the European Union, Norway and the United Kingdom, signed on 21 May 2025, on fisheries arrangement for sprat for the fishing season from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. The Delegations recalled that in that Agreed Record it was decided that 18,3 % of the TAC, which amounts to 43 209 tonnes, would be allocated to the Skagerrak and Kattegat.

6. Whiting

- 6.1. The Delegations noted the challenges associated with the management of whiting in Skagerrak and Kattegat (ICES division 3a), which is taken as a bycatch in the mixed demersal fishery and other fisheries. They noted the risks of choke associated with the low TAC for this bycatch stock, compounded by the intermixing of this stock with North Sea whiting in ICES division 3a. The Delegations agreed to revert to this issue during annual consultations for 2026, to discuss potential improvements to the data availability to support future stock assessment, including genetic information.

7. Quotas of the parties

- 7.1. The Delegations agreed to replace Annex I of the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between Norway and the European Union on the Regulation of Fisheries in Skagerrak and Kattegat for 2025, signed on 5 December 2024, with Annex I attached to this Agreed Record.

8. Other

- 8.1. The EU Delegation referred to the ICES advice for North Sea autumn spawning (NSAS) and Western Baltic spring spawning (WBSS) herring for 2026, released on 30 April 2025. ICES notes that 76% of all WBSS herring catches in 2025 are projected to be taken in the eastern part of divisions 4a and 4b, and that these catches should be avoided to allow for the effective recovery of the stock. The EU Delegation further referred to paragraph 13.13 of the Agreed Record of fisheries consultations for the Skagerrak for 2025, signed on 5 December 2024, and information by Norway that they would consider taking spatial or seasonal measures in Norwegian waters where NSAS and WBSS herring intermix.
- 8.2. The Norwegian Delegation reminded the EU Delegation that topic for these consultations was management of Northern shrimp. The Norwegian Delegation further explained that

mixing of stocks, populations and components make management challenging, and that possible additional management measures regarding the North Sea herring complex would be considered in the context of the ongoing discussions on new management model for herring.

For the Norwegian Delegation


Ann Kristin WESTBERG

For the European Union Delegation


Cristina RIBEIRO

TACs AND ALLOCATIONS IN 2025

Catches taken, during the period 1 January to 31 December 2025 in the Skagerrak and the Kattegat of the species mentioned below, shall be limited as follows (metric tonnes, fresh round weight):

SPECIES	AREA ⁽¹⁾	TAC 2025	ALLOCATION TO NORWAY	ALLOCATION TO EUROPEAN UNION
COD	S	2 846	92 ⁽²⁾	2 754
HADDOCK ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾	S + K	5 892	248	5 644
WHITING	S + K	455	8	447
PLAICE	S	20 838	417	20 421
MACKEREL	S + K	pm	pm	pm
PANDALUS ⁽⁵⁾	S	2 807	1 308	1 499
HERRING	S + K	22 793	3 038	19 755
SPRAT ⁽⁵⁾	S + K	43 209	3 241	39 968

⁽¹⁾ Skagerrak (S): the area bounded on the west by a straight line running through the Hanstholm lighthouse and the Lindesnes lighthouse and on the south by a straight line running through the Skagen lighthouse and the Tistlarna lighthouse. Skagerrak and Kattegat (S + K): the area defined as Skagerrak, extended to the southern boundary of Kattegat, and defined as a straight line from Hasenøre to Gribens spids, from Korshage to Spodsbjerg and from Gilbjerg Hoved to Kullen.

⁽²⁾ This quantity does not include catches to be taken with passive gear inside the Norwegian baselines.

⁽³⁾ The TAC for haddock includes both a directed fishery for haddock and by-catches in the industrial fisheries.

⁽⁴⁾ In addition, up to 5% of the haddock quotas of the Parties in ICES subarea 4 (North Sea) in 2025 can be fished in ICES division 3a (Skagerrak-Kattegat).

⁽⁵⁾ To be fished in the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

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**JOINT REAL TIME CLOSURE SYSTEM FOR NORTHERN SHRIMP (*PANDALUS BOREALIS*) IN THE
SKAGERRAK**

1. Source of information

The basic source of information shall be inspections at sea on commercial fishing vessels conducted by control authorities.

2. Targeted inspection resources

A risk-based strategy should be applied to identify areas where there is a risk of catching numbers of Northern shrimp below trigger length which exceed the threshold level. Inspections shall be carried out in particular in these areas to measure whether the percentage of small Northern shrimp exceeds the threshold level, including through Joint Deployment Plans.

3. Trigger length

The trigger length shall be 6.5 cm Norwegian total length – 14.8 mm carapace length, as defined in Appendix iii.

4. Threshold level

The threshold to define samples with excess prawn under the trigger length shall be 20%.

5. Inspection and reporting

- 5.1 Control authorities will inspect Northern shrimp trawl catches using the sample procedure outlined in Appendix i.
- 5.2 If the quantity of Northern shrimp in a haul is less than 100 kg, that haul shall not be taken as a basis for recommending a closure.
- 5.3 Inspection details and the number of prawn in the sample under the trigger level shall be recorded in the report set out in Appendix ii.
- 5.4 If the sampling results from at least 2 hauls taken within a time span of 96 hours show that Northern shrimp below the trigger size is exceeding the threshold level, the body responsible for the sampling shall either, where appropriate, recommend an RTC, or forward the relevant sampling report(s), to the competent authority of the Coastal State which should consider whether a RTC should be established. The decision on the shape of the area should take into account physical factors, *inter alia* depth contours, and other factors such as catch composition, fishing activity etc. However, if the proportion of Northern shrimp under the RTC trigger size is more than 30%, a closure can be established on basis of one sample.

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- 5.5 When the sample results show that the threshold has been exceeded, or in case the Inspection body decides to recommend a closure, the report(s) shall be completed immediately and sent to the competent authority of the Coastal State.

6. Decision to close

- 6.1 The Coastal State shall immediately publish the decision regarding an RTC.
- 6.2 Neighbouring Coastal States may seek cooperation to initiate an RTC closure using sample results on both sides of the border.
- 6.3 If the area to be closed straddles jurisdictions the Coastal State shall without delay inform the neighbouring Coastal State of the findings and the decision to close. The neighbouring Coastal State shall then consider a closure in its waters.
- 6.4 A Coastal State could invite neighbouring Coastal State(s) to take samples on its behalf.

7. Size and shape of the closed area

- 7.1 The geographical boundaries of a closed area shall be based on the following criteria:
- a) The area definition should take into account the haul trajectories that led to the decision for closure, depth curves and other relevant information.
 - b) Shall have an upper area limit of 100 square nautical miles in area 3a.

8. Notification of entry into force of the closure

- 8.1 The Coastal State shall without delay:
- a) Post a notification of the closure on its website including a map, coordinates and the underlying sampling report(s), and
 - b) Inform vessels in the vicinity of the area to the extent possible, and
 - c) Inform the Directorate of Fisheries in Norway or the European Commission (DG-Mare) and FMCs in relevant countries by email. The Notification shall contain information on the date and time when the closure is in force, the coordinates delimiting the closures and web address to find more information.
- 8.2 The relevant FMCs shall inform vessels that are affected by the closure to the extent possible.

9. Entry into force

The closure shall enter into force at midnight UTC on the day of decision. There should be sufficient time between the decision and the entry into force for vessels to be informed.

10. Duration and scope

- 10.1 The area shall be closed for 21 days and automatically reopened.
- 10.2 The closure is limited to the Northern shrimp trawl fishery and does not affect fishing activities targeting other species.

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10.3 The closure shall apply to Northern shrimp trawl vessels flying any flag.

11. Review

The joint Real Time Closure system for Northern shrimp in Skagerrak shall be evaluated and if necessary reviewed no later than three years after the date of the implementation.

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Sampling Methodology

Samples shall be taken and measured in accordance with following provisions.

1. Whenever possible, samples shall be taken and measured in close cooperation with the master of fishing vessel and his crew. The master of fishing vessel and his crew shall be encouraged to participate in the process. They shall also be encouraged to share any information that could be relevant with respect to the delimitation of a closed area.
2. The total catch in the haul shall be estimated.
3. A sample shall be taken in accordance with following procedure:
 - a) The sample must be taken in such a way that it reflects the catch composition of Northern shrimp in the haul. To achieve that, the skipper, or a person he designates, shall assist when sample is taken.
 - b) The minimum size of the sample shall be 2 litres or 1 kg of Northern shrimp.
4. The quantity of Northern shrimp under trigger size shall be calculated as a percentage of the total number of Pandalus.
5. The sampling report form, presented in Annex I - Appendix ii shall be duly completed immediately after the sample has been measured.

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ANNEX I - Appendix ii

REAL-TIME CLOSURES - SAMPLING REPORT TO THE COASTAL STATE						
Northern shrimp in relation to Minimum reference size.						
Inspection/ observation details	Inspection platform	Inspector/obs erver name	Inspector/obs erver name	Date and time (¹) of inspection/ observation	Position (²) of inspection/ob servation	
Fishing vessel details	Name	Call sign	Registratio n number	Flag state	Type of gear Single/Doubl e	Mesh size mm
Selection measures	Grid (for sorting out shrimp)	Grid, mm	Other		Collection bag	Mesh size in collection bag
Fishing operation details	Start	Date and time (¹)	Position (²)			
	Stop	Date and time (¹)	Position (²)	Duration of fishing operation (³)		
Catch details	Estimated total catch in the haul (kg)					
	Estimated Northern shrimp catch in the haul (kg)					
	Size of Northern shrimp sample (kg/litre)					
	Total number of Northern shrimp in sample					
	Number of Northern shrimp below trigger size in sample					
	% of Northern shrimp below the trigger size (number below the trigger size/total number)					

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Observations and additional information	Additional information from other sources, e.g. received from master.
Inspector Signature	Not required if completed electronically and transmitted to coastal state by e-mail
<p>(¹) dd/mm/yy hh mm (local time 24 hours). (²) e.g. 56°24' N 01° 30' E. (³) hh mm.</p>	

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Annex I - Appendix iii

Figure 1. Norwegian total length (mm) (from the front of the eye to the back of the tale) given as function of carapax length (mm).

The size of a Northern prawn shall be measured as shown in Figure 1:

(a) Carapax length: the length of the carapace, parallel to the midline, from the back of either eye socket to the distal edge of the carapace. (conform EU Reg 850/98, annex XIII, for Norway lobster)

(b) Norwegian total length: Measured from the front edge of the eye to the rear edge of the tail. (Forskrift om gjennomføring av fiske, fangst og høsting av viltlevande marine ressurser, Kapittel X § 46.)

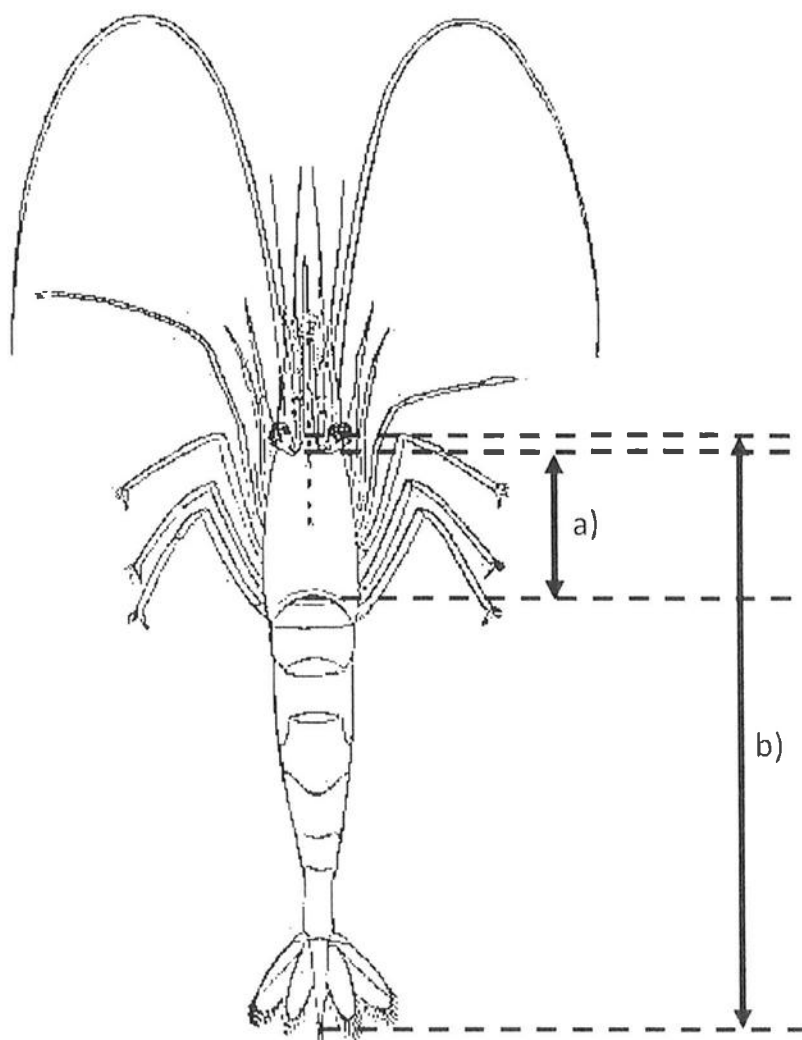


Image: Freshwater and Marine Image Bank

ANNEX III

LONG TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN SHRIMP (*Pandalus borealis*) IN DIVISIONS 3.A AND 4.A EAST (SKAGERRAK AND KATTEGAT AND NORTHERN NORTH SEA IN THE NORWEGIAN DEEP)

The Parties agree to implement a Long Term Management Strategy (LTMS) for the Northern shrimp in the Northern North Sea (Norwegian Deep) and in the Skagerrak and Kattegat.

The objective of this LTMS is to provide for sustainable fisheries with high and sustainable yields in conformity with the precautionary approach.

For the purpose of this long term management strategy, the following definitions shall apply:

- "SSB" means the estimate according to ICES of the Spawning Stock Biomass at the beginning of the TAC year.
- $B_{TRIGGER}$ is the value of spawning stock biomass (SSB) that triggers a specific management action.
- F_{TARGET} is the fishing mortality to be included in the algorithm for the agreed long-term management strategy as a function of variables related to the status of the stock.

The value for $B_{TRIGGER}$ is fixed in the light of the latest available ICES advice. The value of F_{target} is fixed by ICES and fulfilling the following criteria:

1. The Parties shall set a 12 month TAC for northern shrimp for a period between 1 July to 30 June that is consistent with fishing at F_{target} provided that SSB at the start of the TAC year is equal to or greater than $MSY B_{trigger}$.
2. Where the SSB at the start of the TAC year is estimated to be below $MSY B_{trigger}$ the Parties agree that the fishing mortality referred to in paragraph 1 is reduced linearly from $F_{TARGET} \times$ at SSB equal to $MSY B_{trigger}$ to F equal to zero at SSB equal to zero.
3. Overriding the rules set out in paragraphs 1 and 2, the F_{TARGET} should be in line with the criteria specified in the ICES MSY approach for SSB falling below B_{lim} in the year following the TAC year.

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EU-Norway request to ICES for a revision of the Long-Term Management Strategy for Northern shrimp in Skagerrak and the Norwegian Deep

EU-Norway request to ICES to assess elements of a revised long-term management strategy for Northern shrimp in Skagerrak and the Norwegian Deep

In the previous Pandalus LTMS, a 5% downscale of the F target was considered appropriate when applying a maximum 10% banking and borrowing. ICES is requested to confirm if this is still valid given the newly agreed LTMS, the updated assessment model and new perception of the stock.

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