



North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group (NAPA)

Statement to the press: Fisheries management failures in the Northeast Atlantic propel major brands to turn to Chilean jack mackerel as a sustainable alternative to overfished Northeast Atlantic mackerel

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: Open letter from NAPA to politicians as major brands look to South America for sustainable alternatives to overfished Northeast Atlantic mackerel, following a lack of decisive action towards sustainable pelagic fisheries management

Dear Minister,

As the unified voice of the marketplace for seafood, we are writing to reiterate that the countdown is on for Coastal States to reach a quota sharing arrangement for iconic and globally-important pelagic fisheries in the Northeast Atlantic. The scientific advice is clear. The tools are all at hand. Coastal States only need to grasp them.

We are a collective of over 50 global businesses with a €800 million share of Northeast Atlantic pelagic seafood purchasing. Together, we form the [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA), a pre-competitive coalition advocating for responsible, science-driven management of Northeast Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and Northeast Atlantic blue whiting stocks.

We are concerned that the lack of decisive action on the issues facing these fisheries is putting your fishing industry and your fishing communities at risk. The unpalatable reality is that, in the absence of any resolution, global processing and retail businesses may have no option but to meet their pelagic sourcing requirements from other fisheries. This is not an outcome that NAPA members want, and we consider that the fishing industry deserves better.

As you know, the failure to agree a sustainable allocation of catch quotas by the Coastal States has led to overfishing of each stock (exceeding ICES advice by 30-40%) and the suspension of fisheries from the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) certification programme.



Loss of the MSC eco-label across all three stocks is already having a noticeable impact on global levels of certified fish production. Global sales of MSC-certified products were down 20% in 2021-2022 for canned goods¹, attributed largely to the loss of MSC certification for Northeast Atlantic mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring. Similarly, data supplied by the MarinTrust – a unique international certification programme for marine ingredients – indicates an estimated 6% reduction in global certified marine ingredient production between 2020 and 2021.² The suspension of MSC certification for blue whiting in 2019, an important ‘feed fish’ used within salmon aquaculture, has been cited as the cause of this downturn.

We are starting to see major retailers and manufacturers in Europe sourcing MSC certified sustainable jack mackerel from Chile as an alternative to Northeast Atlantic mackerel. Unlike Northeast Atlantic mackerel, Chilean jack mackerel is sustainably managed and fished: the 15 nations catching Chilean jack mackerel in the South Pacific Ocean, have been able to agree on a sustainable catch quota allocation in line with scientific advice.

Jack mackerel products can already be found on shelves at leading European retailers like Migros (own brand *M-Classic* “MSC Makrelenfilets”), Delhaize (*First State* “Jack Mackerel”) or Albert Heijn (*FishTales* “Hors Makreel in Olie”). Major German seafood brand Followfood is about to launch canned Chilean 'Jack Makrele' in Germany.

Though total volumes imported to Europe are still relatively small, they are currently growing and there is potential for further growth in the future. Chilean jack mackerel annual catch is at 600,000 tonnes and the product is very similar to Northeast Atlantic mackerel in taste and consistency, as well as in Omega-3 saturation.

Ultimately, we are seeking to ensure that your government is fully behind the drive for sustainable pelagic fisheries and that your position at the ongoing sharing discussions will testify to that commitment.

We need to see sustainable fishing in the Northeast Atlantic.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

The North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group

¹ <https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2022/04/25/barcelona-2022/#20799>

² Data supplied by [MarinTrust](#)



****ENDS****

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Notes to Editors:

More on NAPA

The [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA) is a collective of more than 50 global retailers, food service companies, and suppliers with the shared aim of sourcing sustainable and certified seafood in order to supply a growing demand for sustainable, ecolabelled fish products. NAPA's reach extends across the world, attracting members from Asia, Africa, North America, Australia, and Europe. It represents an unprecedented coalition of business leverage, pushing hard to prevent overfishing of three iconic pelagic stocks - Northeast Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and Northeast Atlantic blue whiting. As a collective, NAPA is using its voice to advocate for long-term, science-based



management of these stocks: for prospering oceans and fisheries, and business security. To achieve this, NAPA is seeking an agreement on total allowable catches for Northeast Atlantic pelagic fisheries in line with scientific advice, and for a long-term science-based management agreement.

Further detail can be found at:

- NAPA website: <https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/fisheries-management/north-atlantic-pelagic-advocacy-group/>
- Twitter: [@NAPAFisheries](https://twitter.com/NAPAFisheries)