

NORTH ATLANTIC PELAGIC ADVOCACY GROUP (NAPA)

Africa responds to NAPA's call for sustainability in Northeast Atlantic pelagic fisheries

The North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group (NAPA) has announced its first member company from Africa as the latest addition to its supply chain coalition. Woolworths South Africa follows the accession of the first member from Japan earlier this summer, demonstrating ever-increasing global recognition of NAPA's message and the far-reaching impacts of certification loss for supply chain businesses across the world.

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NAPA's call for joint Coastal States' action on collaborative management of Northeast Atlantic pelagic stocks is being heard all over the world.

*"We are delighted to welcome Woolworths South Africa to our collective of supply chain businesses who are vocal about their investment in a long-term, sustainable future for seafood from the Northeast Atlantic. As our first member company from Africa, the global importance of NAPA's mission is becoming increasingly clear - buyers, processors and consumers everywhere want to see Coastal States take cooperative action to agree quotas in line with scientific advice and commit to long-term management plans for these vital, valuable stocks" says **Dr Tom Pickerell, NAPA Project Lead.***

[NAPA](#) was launched in 2019, in response to loss of MSC certification for Northeast Atlantic mackerel, blue whiting, and Atlanto-Scandian herring, and an emergent trend for unilateral quota-setting above the scientific advice within the Northeast Atlantic region. Since its inception, NAPA has attracted over 40 members – covering food service businesses, processors, buyers and retailers – representing more than EUR 244 billion in pelagics purchasing power.

*"Reinstating the sustainability credentials of Atlantic mackerel, herring and blue whiting could not be more critical. As a leading retail business, we choose to take a responsible approach to sourcing seafood – to help safeguard environmental sustainability and offer better food choices for our customers. Joining NAPA's coalition of like-minded supply chain businesses provides a powerful platform on which to speak out – to draw attention to the serious environmental situation unfolding in the Northeast Atlantic, and to highlight the very real business implications that the current lack of sustainability creates for the global marketplace." – **Gert le Roux, Woolworths Aquaculture and Fisheries Specialist***

This October, Coastal States in the Northeast Atlantic met to negotiate shared-stock management agreements for mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and blue whiting. Historically, there have only been four years since 1997 in which all NEAFC parties agreed on pelagics management. Fast forward to 2021 – these countries are collectively exceeding fishing limits for these stocks by up to 40%. NAPA is using its global influence to call on Coastal States to put aside their national interests and commit to sustainable management measures for the collective good.

NAPA is taking its intentions a step further, developing a bespoke policy FIP for mackerel and herring, and a MarinTrust ‘improver programme’ for blue whiting, the latter being launched just last week. These initiatives aim to drive political will for cooperative decision-making and sustainable quota agreements, with the ultimate goal of establishing robustly managed fisheries.

NAPA members, including the likes of Young’s Seafood, Asda, Waitrose and Sainsbury’s, and now retailers in both Asia and Africa, are issuing sourcing statements - many indicate that they will drastically review their purchasing decisions from these fisheries if the deadlock on sustainable management can’t be broken by Coastal States. Some have even indicated that they will stop sourcing from the region if an agreement can’t be reached.

In the wake of this month’s Coastal States negotiations, **Aoife Martin, NAPA Chair**, commented: *“Political leadership and collaboration are needed now more than ever. In writing individual letters to Fishery Ministers and Heads of Delegations concerning their position, NAPA members are confronting the problem head on. It really is a case of Governments listening to the marketplace AND the science, and we hope to see real change in the coming weeks”*.

Find out more about NAPA:

<https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/fisheries-management/north-atlantic-pelagic-advocacy-group/>

Find out more about the policy FIP for NEA mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring on FisheryProgress.org here: <https://fisheryprogress.org/fip-profile/northeast-atlantic-ocean-mackerel-and-herring-hook-line-trawl-and-purse-seine>

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Notes to Editors

The below is additional quotable content on the NAPA policy FIP, to be attributed to NAPA as a collective if used.

- **So, how will the policy FIP work?**

The policy FIP is a concept designed, scoped and executed by NAPA to drive sustainability in Northeast Atlantic mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring fisheries. Using the framework of a traditional, science-based FIP as a guide for driving policy / political action towards the desired, sustainable outcome.

Responding to the removal of MSC certification for both of these fisheries in 2019 (mackerel) and 2020 (herring), the policy FIP uses the framework of MSC assessment to identify specific areas for action, leading to a programme of work and engagement to be undertaken between 2021-2024. The FIP was published on FisheryProgress.org in April 2021.

A MarinTrust FIP for blue whiting was launched in October 2021.

- **How will NAPA members drive this forward?**

Chaired by Aoife Martin of Seafish and run by Project Lead, Dr Tom Pickerell of Tomolamola Consulting, NAPA members meeting regularly to review priorities, assess progress against goals and determine approaches to advocating for sustainable pelagics management in the NEA. Individual members will support the policy FIP through their own correspondence with Coastal States ahead of the CS meeting in October 2021, as well as collectively - through NAPA. Members share their perspectives on the market and their expertise to make NAPA a powerful collective voice. NAPA members represent the majority of Northeast Atlantic pelagics purchasing.

- **Do the FIPs expect certain catch levels?**

The FIPs call for Coastal States to follow ICES advice for total catches for the stocks covered. Total quota taken collectively by each of the Coastal States should not exceed the ICES advice.