



# NORTH ATLANTIC PELAGIC ADVOCACY GROUP (NAPA)

## STATEMENT TO THE PRESS: 'THE STATUS QUO IS UNSUSTAINABLE', SAYS GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN COLLECTIVE, AS THE FAROES ADDS TO THE LIST OF COASTAL STATES SETTING PELAGIC QUOTAS BEFORE SHARING AGREEMENT IS REACHED

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Since February of this year, Northeast Atlantic Coastal States (the EU, UK, Norway, Faroes, Iceland, Greenland, and Russia) have met several times to explore solutions to quota sharing disputes for three lucrative and globally-important pelagic stocks – Northeast Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and Northeast Atlantic blue whiting. These discussions follow the commitment made by all Coastal States back in October 2021: to ensure that total allowable catches for 2022 will be in line with (and not exceed) the scientific advice for each stock.

NAPA has since learned that despite the ongoing sharing discussions, the Faroese Ministry of Fisheries has independently confirmed their fleet's quotas for blue whiting and Atlanto-Scandian herring in 2022. The Faroes now joins the EU, UK, and Norway in setting Atlanto-Scandian herring quotas, and the UK and Norway in setting blue whiting quotas despite the continuing discussions.

While the Faroes have not increased their shares, last year, the total catch by all Coastal States came to 130% of the recommended ICES advice for blue whiting and 139% for Atlanto-Scandian herring – meaning both stocks were overfished by 30% and 39% respectively.

NAPA sees this move by four of the Coastal States as an unsettling indication that, despite what may look like positive progress in collaborative discussions, the status quo for substantial overfishing of these valuable stocks will continue into the future.

*"The status quo is unsustainable," said Dr Tom Pickerell, NAPA Project Lead. "There needs to be movement on quota shares otherwise Coastal States won't stop overfishing these prime Northeast Atlantic pelagic stocks. This is another example of Coastal States stepping away from collective responsibility, and genuine, collaborative decision-making - exactly the situation that [NAPA](#) has been advocating to avoid."*

For the past year, the [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA) has worked across the Northeast Atlantic to drive Coastal States to make more sustainable decisions for these globally important pelagic

fisheries. NAPA members' €800 million share of commercial retail and supply-chain power from across the world sees that even these prized fisheries, often considered to be at the heart of one of the world's most data-rich and sustainable fishing areas, are on the brink of becoming overfished. Through the establishment of a novel policy-based Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) for Northeast Atlantic mackerel and herring, and an equivalent MarinTrust FIP for blue whiting, NAPA is using its collective voice to advocate for an agreement on total allowable catches for these pelagic fisheries in line with scientific advice, and for a long-term science-based management agreement.

*“NAPA is pushing hard to encourage Coastal States to move away from historical patterns of unsustainable quota setting and overfishing. As a member of this 50-strong retail, processor, and supply-chain coalition, we know first-hand that cooperation is fundamental for fair and ethical decision-making. However, we’re not resting on our laurels by simply shouting from the sidelines. We are actively trying to help Coastal States to navigate the challenges ahead of them. NAPA recently published a [Position Paper](#) setting out meaningful steps that Coastal States can take to achieve agreements on total allowable catches for mackerel, herring, and blue whiting. The paper recommends actions including agreeing on a quota allocation system, employing a dispute resolution mechanism, and considering a cap on international catches, which if adhered to, could pave the way for resolving more than a decade of allocation issues.”* **Kenneth Storbank, TripleNine, NAPA partner**

Coastal States’ failure to achieve genuine, collaborative management for these key pelagic stocks has NAPA members extremely concerned – and determined to push for immediate change. **Dave Robb, Sustainability lead for Cargill’s aqua-nutrition business** commented on how important it is that international quota-setting aligns with business’ commitment to sustainability:

*“Cargill is committed to developing sustainable sources of ingredients for aquaculture; marine ingredients are at the core of what we do, and that is the reason why we are concerned about the unilateral definition of pelagic quotas in the North-East Atlantic, before a sharing agreement is reached among Coastal States. The fact that these states, controlling the fisheries of mackerel, herring and blue whiting still do not work collaboratively for the sustainable management and fishing of these stocks represents not only a missed opportunity by them, but a threat to the fishing and aquaculture industries in the region.”*

He continued: *“In 2020 we joined NAPA to highlight the importance of this issue, hoping that the fishery improvement project (FIP) will bring the fisheries to a sustainably managed state. Before the FIP was established we stopped buying blue whiting for almost a year and we have publicly stated we are prepared to stop purchases completely if the FIP fails. We call on the Coastal States to lead the way in multi-jurisdictional fishery management, work collaboratively for sustainable management to support their fishing communities and provide a great example globally.”*

**\*\*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)