

The North East Atlantic mackerel and Atlanto- Scandian herring Fishery Improvement Project

Six month update

North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group (NAPA)

Reporting period: July 2025 to December 2025

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Overview and summary of key activity

The NAPA Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) for North East Atlantic mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring was designed, scoped, and executed by NAPA to drive sustainability into these iconic pelagic fisheries.

For more than a decade, Coastal States decision-makers have been unable to agree collectively on sustainable quota shares for North East Atlantic mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring. This has led to years of unilateral quota setting and overexploitation. Even with the scientific evidence and long-term management strategies available, a lack of cooperation between Coastal States stands in the way of securing a sustainable future for mackerel and Atlanto-Scandian herring fisheries.

The FIP was first established in April 2021 but then extended in April 2024. With this extension, NAPA's advocacy approach and activities have grown and evolved. NAPA recognised that more targeted and constructive engagement with individual Coastal States was critical for communicating NAPA's asks, consequently, NAPA redoubled its efforts to engage directly with Ministers and Coastal States negotiators. NAPA has also taken a strengthened approach to engaging with the Catching Sector at a national level (rather than collectively) to leverage additional stakeholder assistance and specific detail that will be useful in achieving the FIP's goals. The creation of species-specific sub-committees (for herring and mackerel respectively) has provided a more agile organisation with more focus on the issues concerning individual stocks. Furthermore, the continued development of a supporting evidence base by NAPA, aims to demonstrate the biological and socio-economic consequences of failing to reach sustainable catch share agreement/s in unequivocal terms.

This 6 monthly update on FIP progress covers the period July 2025 to December 2025. Key highlights from this period are as follows:

- NAPA held a collaborative, All Partner workshop in London in December 2025, with attendance from NAPA Partners, Coastal States representatives, Catching Sector representatives and key stakeholders, including the MSC and ASC.
- NAPA developed an alternative sharing arrangement proposal for each species, based on the historical pattern of fishing in each fishery, to determine what may be considered a fair share going forward for each fishing Party.
- NAPA held numerous 1-2-1 meetings with Coastal States negotiators and Catching Sector representatives, to reassert NAPA's asks, present our alternative sharing arrangement, and better understand the issues preventing the adoption of an agreed, sustainable approach to sharing the resource.
- NAPA continued to advocate for change at the highest level by issuing letters to Coastal State Ministers and Heads of Delegation.
- NAPA transitioned into a stand-alone, not-for-profit company, registered with Companies House, with the Chair, Deputy Chair and Steering Group members from the previous structure becoming the Directors of the new company.

NAPA's activities and progress are detailed against the FIP Action Plan and evidence to support this report is provided in Appendix 1.

FIP Description

There are two fisheries covered by this Fishery Improvement Project (FIP): the North East Atlantic (NEA) mackerel fishery, and the Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH) (also known as the Norwegian spring spawning herring) fishery. Both fisheries are prosecuted mainly using pelagic (midwater) trawls and purse seines deployed from large, offshore vessels. Coastal vessels also use mechanised handlines.

These fisheries are managed mainly through the Coastal States processes (i.e., for mackerel through negotiations between Iceland, the European Union (EU), the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Norway and the United Kingdom (UK), and for herring through negotiations between Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Norway, the Russian Federation and the UK), with the component of the fishery that occurs in international waters managed through the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).

NEAFC was formed to recommend measures to maintain the rational exploitation of fish stocks in the North East Atlantic Ocean, Greenland Sea, Barents Sea and adjacent areas of the Arctic Ocean. Most of this area is under the fisheries jurisdiction of NEAFC's Contracting Parties (Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (DFG)), the EU, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation), but four areas (including a zone under sea ice adjacent to the North Pole) are international waters and constitute the NEAFC Regulatory Area.

The allocation of national quotas is based on allocation keys negotiated historically in connection with the establishment of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) or negotiated in the framework of NEAFC, the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission (JNRFC) or in bilateral agreements between the EU (European Commission at the time) and Norway and the Faroe Islands. Many of these allocations were established when the 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) were established in the late 1970s. These keys are largely based on the Coastal States' fishing records during the period 1971–76.

However, NEA mackerel and ASH are migratory stocks that move between international and Coastal State waters during the year. Changes in abundance and in these movements from the late 2000s meant that the fish spent more time in areas where previously they did not occur or only occurred rarely. This led to demands from some countries for changes to the catch sharing arrangements to reflect the new situation; subsequently, there was a break down in the established sharing arrangements and quotas were set unilaterally. The parties have not been able to reach agreement on catch sharing for mackerel since 2007 and for ASH since 2012, and total catches of both species during the subsequent period have routinely exceeded scientific advice. The continued lack of agreement has resulted in overfishing and puts the stocks at risk of collapse.

North East Atlantic Mackerel

All Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certificates for North East Atlantic (NEA) mackerel were suspended in March 2019. The suspensions took place originally after the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice showed the stock (Spawning Stock Biomass – SSB) to be below the MSYBtrigger reference point. Although the ICES advice was revised, subsequently, to show the stock (SSB) above the MSYBtrigger reference point, the relevant MSC Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) nevertheless concluded:

"The outcome of harmonisation during the 2nd surveillance audit is that despite the change in mackerel stock status with the SSB currently above the MSYBtrigger, PI 1.2.2 Harvest Control Rules & Tools score remains < 60 and the fishery still fails, for the following reasons:

The current level of exploitation does not provide evidence that the tools used to implement the generally understood HCRs are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation.

There is a continuing dispute over mackerel quota allocation resulting in annual catches well in excess of the advised catches. There is an absence of long-term management strategy for the mackerel agreed by all parties involved in mackerel fisheries. Therefore, it could not be concluded with confidence that the management agency can and will act effectively and in a timely manner to reduce exploitation rate if the point of recruitment impairment is approached.

Despite the change in mackerel stock status with the SSB currently above the MSY BTrigger and the improvement in the management of the advised catch, with current and predicted exploitation level together with low recruitment, the stock is nevertheless predicted to continue to decline. Therefore, there is a reason to conclude that such high level of exploitation will lead to a situation where the stock is likely to fall below sustainable level in the foreseeable future.

Therefore, the suspension of the fishery certificate is not lifted."

The relevant CABs concluded that the reinstatement of certification is reliant on the effective adoption and implementation of the Harvest Control Rules (HCRs).

Atlanto-Scandian Herring

For Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH), independent assessors identified the risk to future stock health and set conditions against their certification in 2015, requiring states to reach a quota-sharing agreement by November 2020. This was not achieved and these fisheries lost their MSC certificates on 30 December 2020. The latest expedited audit (Aug 2020) revealed that the fisheries require the following:

- The fishery needs to demonstrate that the harvest strategy is achieving its objectives and that overall quotas are within sustainable limits.
- The ongoing allocation dispute needs to be resolved.
- The fishery should work with the EU, the Pelagic Advisory Council, other certified or suspended Units of Certification (UoCs) in the fishery and/or other parties as appropriate to support the resolution of the dispute between the Coastal States and to re-establish an effective international cooperation and dispute-resolution mechanism for the fishery.

Background of the NEA Mackerel and ASH FIP

After the MSC certificates of NEA mackerel and ASH were suspended, the [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA) was established to advocate for more robust, precautionary management of both stocks, to ensure they could return to being MSC certified. Through NAPA, the Fishery Improvement Project for NEA mackerel and ASH commenced in April 2021 and was scheduled to run for three years.

The focus of the FIP was threefold:

- 1) That robust and precautionary harvest strategies are in place
- 2) That dispute settlement processes exist
- 3) That effective decision-making processes are in place

The mackerel and herring FIP ran together with another NAPA FIP focused on NEA blue whiting, another important pelagic stock for which Coastal State agreements on catch sharing had collapsed. The blue whiting FIP was scheduled to complete in October 2024, but the NAPA structures and dialogues were the same for all three stocks.

The original timeline for completion of the mackerel and herring FIP was ultimately not met, with Coastal States negotiations still underway and without a comprehensive sharing arrangement or a disputes resolution process in place.

In recognition of the importance of the stocks and the potential for breakthrough in the ongoing Coastal States and NEAFC negotiations, NAPA applied for an extension to the NEA mackerel and ASH FIP. The application for a two-year extension was accepted, and the FIP is now scheduled to run until April 2026.

A key aspect of the updated FIP is that it is not intended to replicate the original FIP, with two additional years of work. Instead, the updated FIP is designed to take a more focused, species-specific approach and to seek to use more targeted use of the leverage that exists within the NAPA membership. More details are provided on the following pages.

FIP Breakdown

FIP Objective	FIP stakeholders are implementing management improvements with a goal to re-certify the FIP fisheries against the MSC Standard by 2026.
FIP Type	Comprehensive
FIP Stage	Stage 3: FIP Implementation
Start and Projected End Dates	Original FIP: April 2021 – April 2024 Extended FIP: May 2024 – April 2026
Next Progress Report Due	December 2025
Species	Common Name – Atlantic Mackerel Scientific Name – <i>Scomber scombrus</i> ----- Common Name – Atlanto-Scandian Herring Scientific Name – <i>Clupea harengus</i>
Gear Type	Midwater Trawl Purse Seine-Unassociated Hydraulic Hook & Line
Location	FAO Fishing Area 27 (Atlantic, Northeast)
Regional Fisheries Management Organization	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)
Latest Progress Rating	C (some recent progress)

FIP Stocks and provisional MSC scoring

Detailed scoring information for each stock included in the FIP is outlined in the table on the following page, noting that scoring was not updated between the original and updated FIP, as significant changes were not expected.

It is also noted that the mackerel stock was subject to a [Benchmark assessment](#) in 2025, and the stock was subsequently [reassessed by ICES](#) in September 2025 using data available to that point in time. This new assessment determined that the mackerel stock status has declined, from being just above MSYBtrigger in 2024 to being just below Blim in 2025. This is very likely to result in a change of score for PI 1.1.1 (potentially to <60 for not meeting PI 1.1.1 Sla at SG60), but this has not been confirmed through independent assessment.

The ASH stock was also subject to a [Benchmark assessment](#) in 2025, and was also subsequently [reassessed by ICES](#) in September 2025 using data available to that point in time. This new assessment determined that the ASH stock status has declined somewhat, from being just below MSYBtrigger in 2024 to being midway between MSYBtrigger and Blim in 2025. This should not result in a change to the existing score for PI 1.1.1, but again this has not been confirmed through independent assessment.

Principle	Component	Performance Indicator	NEA Mackerel - UoA 1	ASH - UoA 2
1	Outcome	1.1.1 Stock status	>80	60-79
		1.1.2 Stock rebuilding	N/A	>80
	Management	1.2.1 Harvest Strategy	60-79	60-79
		1.2.2 Harvest control rules and tools	<60	<60
		1.2.3 Information and monitoring	>80	>80
		1.2.4 Assessment of stock status	>80	>80
2	Primary species	2.1.1 Outcome	>80	>80
		2.1.2 Management	>80	>80
		2.1.3 Information	>80	>80
	Secondary Species	2.2.1 Outcome	>80	>80
		2.2.2 Management	>80	>80
		2.2.3 Information	>80	>80
	ETP Species	2.3.1 Outcome	>80	>80
		2.3.2 Management	>80	>80
		2.3.3 Information	>80	>80
	Habitats	2.4.1 Outcome	>80	>80
		2.4.2 Management	>80	>80
		2.4.3 Information	>80	>80
	Ecosystem	2.5.1 Outcome	60-79	60-79
		2.5.2 Management	<60	<60
		2.5.3 Information	>80	>80
3	Governance and Policy	3.1.1 Legal and customary framework	60-79	60-79
		3.1.2 Consultation, roles and responsibilities	>80	>80
		3.1.3 Long term objectives	>80	>80
	Fishery specific management system	3.2.1 Fishery specific objectives	>80	>80
		3.2.2 Decision making processes	>80	<60
		3.2.3 Compliance and enforcement	>80	>80
		3.2.4 Management performance evaluation	>80	>80

FIP Actions and Progress Update

6 month update – July 2025 to December 2025

Action	Task 1.1	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
1. Engagement to Ensure Robust Harvest Strategies Adopted and Implemented	1.1. Review the structure of NAPA: Governance; Delivery; Funding with the aim to enhance Engagement through streamlining of Operations	New Governance structure in place for NAPA with focus on being agile and adaptable to different challenges as they may arise; new funding arrangement which supports an agile approach; Ability to redirect funds towards priorities as determined through the Steering Committee and the mackerel and herring sub-groups;	The structure of NAPA to be examined critically in relation to the financial model and the governance structure. NAPA structure to be refreshed with a view to making it more streamlined and impactful thereby improving the opportunities for influencing the responsible actors involved with NEA pelagic fisheries management. Impact to be delivered in such a way that there is more of an advanced focus on the 3 individual species as separate entities rather than a simple mixed pelagic fishery. Supports all other tasks, both previous and additional. NAPA Members Sourcing policies to be reviewed and strengthened.	01/04/2024	30/06/2024	Meeting minutes; documentation; New Governance structure in place for NAPA, within which sits a different funding model; Additional opportunities for delivery associated with that funding model (e.g. partial outsourcing of research provision); Likely: Appointment of a vice-Chair for NAPA; Separate sub-groups for mackerel, herring and blue whiting that sit beneath the Steering Committee; Meetings which address the specific detail of the individual species and permit more focused discussions on the realities of continued overfishing for NAPA Partners and their businesses.	Meeting minutes; documentation; New governance structure published (e.g. on the NAPA website); reviewed/refreshed sourcing statements for the NAPA Members in place that are clear on the implications for sourcing/procurement if agreements are not reached within the lifetime of the FIP extension (to April 2026). Press Releases.	Foundation for a more customised approach to influencing key decision-makers is in place, including strengthened sourcing statements; Coastal States Resolution in place and agreed by all parties, referring to agreement to fish annual quotas at or below scientific advice; Progress on resolutions within the 2-year timeline can be identified by agreement/s in place for several parties rather than all (e.g. within 12 months; all within 24 months). Progress on multi-annual agreements is clearly presented by Coastal States.
	<p>Update December 2025</p> <p>The new NAPA Governance structure has been in place for more than a year. There are three separate Sub-Groups within NAPA, focused individually on North East Atlantic (NEA) mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH) and NEA blue whiting. Work on NEA blue whiting is addressed through a separate FIP, not detailed here.</p> <p>There remains an overarching NAPA management team, with an Executive Chair (Aoife Martin, Seafish) and Technical Lead (Dr. Rob Blyth-Skyrme, IMEC Ltd). For reasons of reduced funding availability, Seafish was required to withdraw support for the NAPA project during this current reporting period, and so Fiona Birch-Green, the Project Lead, had to leave the management team in September 2025. At a similar time, NAPA started the transition to a stand-alone, not-for-profit company. NAPA is now registered with Companies House (19/11/2025), with the Executive Chair (Aoife Martin), Deputy Chair (Robert Wiltshire) and Steering Group members from the previous structure becoming the Directors of the new company.</p> <p>The Chair of the NEA Mackerel Sub-Group is Chris Shearlock (Thai Union), and the Deputy Chair is Héctor Fernández (Bolton Group). The ASH Sub-Group has not appointed a Chair and Deputy Chair, and so the NAPA Executive team fulfils this function.</p>							

To promote the enhanced focus of the Sub-Groups, NAPA now only allows for full, fee-paying membership, and there are no ‘partner’ or ‘associate’ members. At the end of December 2025, there were 57 members of NAPA in total, of which 44 have an expressed interest in NEA mackerel and ASH. These companies include those in the aquaculture feed, processor, retail and supply industries, across Europe and globally. Two new members of NAPA are Hiddenfjord (a leading Faroese salmon producer) and Popp Feinkost (a well-known and forward-thinking German food company).

NAPA member meetings held include:

- Mackerel Sub-Group: online, 3/10/25
- Herring Sub-Group: online, 7/10/25
- Online Steering Committee meeting: 9/10/25
- In person Steering Committee meeting 19/11/2025
- All-Partner meeting: London, 3/12/25.
- The NAPA Executive team met regularly over the period

Revised or new sourcing statements have been requested from NAPA partners. 33 updated/new sourcing statements have been received in the period, and other NAPA partners have been reminded of the need to submit these documents. All available sourcing statements are provided from links on the [NAPA website](#).

Task 1.2	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
<p>1.2. Communication to continue with Coastal States representatives to promote adherence to exploitation levels consistent with meeting the requirements of Principle 1. Make more use of economic evidence and stock projections to enhance NAPAs advocacy work so that it is harder to ignore or dispute the risks that Coastal State inaction is creating for these fisheries and communities. Examples will include a socio-economic analysis of</p>	<p>6-monthly review points on general performance against the objectives of NAPA; Particular focus on the communications strategy</p>	<p>NAPA will use data and information analysis (e.g. the recent Blim analysis) to build on the scientific evidence base for the influencing of Coastal State representatives in their discussions. This will be on a species specific basis. Conduct Blim analysis for mackerel. Steering Committee and sub-Groups will enable an ongoing prioritisation exercise taking into account developments at the Coastal State negotiation level, and also at the scientific level (e.g. ICES).</p>	01/05/2024	30/04/2026	<p>NAPA shall provide documented evidence of all related correspondence, analyses, actions, meetings, representations etc. By the end of 2025, NEAFC shall formally adopt appropriately precautionary harvest control rules for the NEA mackerel and ASH stock that ensures the exploitation rates are reduced as the limit reference point is approached and is expected to keep the stock fluctuating around the target level and robust to the main uncertainties. The selection of harvest control rules shall take into account the main uncertainties. Progress may be observed that sits below a full comprehensive sharing</p>	<p>Targeted, focused advocacy that is based on scientific and economic evidence will be more impactful in discussions with CS representatives and NEAFC. NAPA Communications are enhanced with the addition of specific and up-to-date data and information. Expanded evidence base provides a broader resource for the NAPA Partners to enhance their own communications. Catching Sector</p>	<p>In advance of the 2026 Coastal States negotiations and NEAFC meetings, the catching sector aligns on calls to action that reflect NAPA priorities. Catching sector influences decision-makers in a synergistic manner to NAPA. More collaborative and targeted engagement with the catching sector should help build a coalition of support and enhance the reach and effectiveness of NAPAs advocacy work. Catching sector organisations publicly endorse the approach taken by NAPA.</p>

<p>the impact on businesses of failure to reach agreements (e.g. jobs; revenue generation; support for remote communities; food security impacts). This material will be used in our engagement with CS representatives; Ministers, civil servants and others; and to strengthen NAPA Partners members strengthen sourcing policies.</p>					<p>agreement for all Coastal States, where, for example bilateral and triateral agreements in place show clear evidence of a desire to fish within the limits of scientific advice.</p>	<p>communications reflect NAPA's own communications and aims.</p>	
		<p>NAPA will seek to escalate the communications with Coastal State representatives through direct communications and meeting with government Ministers and civil servants; NAPA Partners will review and strengthen their sourcing policies and ensure that these exhibit demonstrable actions in the event that comprehensive agreements are not reached. Sourcing policies will show clear actions that NAPA Partner businesses will take where agreements are not reached.</p>			<p>Reports; Communications (articles, social media); Clear, concise sourcing statements from NAPA Partners with demonstrable actions; Strategies that show clear prioritisation of issues and actions to address these. Updated Sourcing Strategies show clear, unambiguous actions that will be taken should the FIP be unsuccessful in achieving its objectives.</p>	<p>Targeted, focused evidence base will be more impactful in discussions with CS representatives and NEAFC. NAPA Communications are enhanced with the addition of specific and up-to-date data and information. Expanded evidence base provides a broader resource for the NAPA Partners to enhance their own communications.</p>	<p>2024 and 2025 NEAFC Annual Meetings show clear examples of progress towards a comprehensive sharing agreement; as above: Progress on resolutions within the 2-year timeline can be identified by agreement/s in place for several parties rather than all (e.g. within 12 months; all within 24 months).</p>

Update December 2025

To inform advocacy approaches, three key pieces of analysis were planned in 2025:

- 1) On the basis of declining SSB and high fishing mortality, and in the absence of any new, strong year classes as presented in the [2023 ASH assessment](#), NAPA commissioned [a future projections analysis](#) for ASH in February 2024, to determine potential stock outcomes under a plausible range of recruitment and exploitation scenarios. The analysis indicated that the stock was highly likely to decline to less than the limit reference point by 2026 without an exceptionally strong year class entering the fishery in 2024 or 2025. For the updated FIP, it was intended that the analysis for ASH would be updated, and potentially an equivalent analysis undertaken for NEA mackerel, using the latest ICES advice and detailed stock data. Initially, this work was intended to be delivered through a new, independent analysis, but it was decided subsequently to conduct the analysis in-house. Given the new stock assessment process and outcomes of the [2025 benchmark assessment process](#), this work had been delayed from the last FIP reporting period. However, the new [ASH stock assessment](#), published in September 2025, indicated a change in stock outlook for ASH, with growth in the stock predicted based on strong year classes in 2021 and 2022 that are soon to recruit to the fishery. As such, at the present time, with reduced immediate risk to ASH, this analysis has been delayed indefinitely.
- 2) Related to the first piece of work, it was intended that a 'Lost opportunities' analysis, would be undertaken. Unlike the first project, this work was intended to look back in time, to estimate the additional value that could have been derived from the ASH and NEA mackerel stocks if they had been fished at recommended levels. This work is complex in aiming to consider age-class distribution within the stock over time, and the routes to market for the different size-classes of fish. It is intended that an estimate of the economic consequences of the failure to make progress against the FIP aims would also be undertaken, using the data derived from the study. It is highlighted that the loss of value from the ASH and / or NEA mackerel fisheries has been mentioned several times by Coastal State negotiators in recent public meetings, including the 09/24 Coastal State plenary sessions and 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting. This work was also delayed, with discussions that were

ongoing with potential partners, including the MSC. With the focus on other aspects of the FIP (mainly, the development and advocacy around NAPA's alternative catch sharing arrangement, detailed in 2.1, below), and with the complexity of this proposal, this has also been delayed.

- 3) An additional key piece of analysis is to determine the volume and value of purchasing represented by NAPA partners. The intent is to provide context and weight to NAPA's argument for sustainable management of the pelagic stocks. This work was started by [MarFishEco](#) in Autumn 2025, with a focus on blue whiting as the species with the least complex product and supply chain. The work was scheduled to conclude in early 2026, and a decision to move to ASH and NEA mackerel will be taken subsequently if the analysis is deemed useful.

In 2025, NAPA embarked on its busiest ever period of engagement with national representatives, meeting most of the Coastal States several times in the first half of 2025, and meeting again in this current reporting period. Meetings provided an opportunity to reassert NAPA's asks, to better understand the issues preventing the adoption of an agreed, sustainable approach to sharing the resource, and to advocate for a comprehensive solution. NAPA set up and engaged directly in **ten meetings** with individual Coastal States between July and December 2025, attended the Coastal States plenary sessions, interacted with Coastal States representatives at the NEAFC meeting and then again at the NAPA All-partners meeting in December. These are detailed in the [NAPA Meeting Log](#), and listed below:

Coastal States meetings

- EU delegation: 19/08/25 (Pawel Swiderek and Camille Gallouze; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- Faroese delegation: 20/08/2025 (Faroese delegation; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- Icelandic delegation: 21/08/25 (Guðmundur Þórðarson and Þorvarður Atli Þórsson; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- UK delegation: 11/08/2025 and 15/08/2025 (Colin Faulkner with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- Norwegian delegation: 28/08/25 (Ann-Kristin Westberg (Head of Delegation), Elisabeth Sjørdahl, and Brungot Lena; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- Norwegian Minister for Fisheries: 18/09/2025 (Marianne Sivertsen Næss; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee).
- Greenland delegation: 01/10/2025 (Iben Funch Døj, Head of Delegation, online meeting with NAPA Exec. team).
- Scottish Government delegation: 02/10/25 (Catherine Whitby, Harriet Wilson; online meeting with NAPA Exec. Team).
- UK Delegation, to discuss the new four party mackerel agreement: 18/12/2025 (Colin Faulkner)
- NAPA has also attended most of the available Coastal States pelagic plenary sessions since January 2025. It is noted that most Coastal States negotiating meetings do not have plenary sessions planned, but those that do are usually advertised at very short notice.

Coastal States Ministers

- NAPA submitted letters to the Fisheries Ministers of each of the Coastal States, 7/25, detailing the urgency of the situation for the stocks and NAPA, and laying the groundwork for presenting the NAPA catch sharing proposal (detailed in 2.1, below) later in the year ([example letter](#) to Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, Minister of Industries, Iceland).

NEAFC meeting,

- NEAFC Annual meeting, 11/11/2025 (Presented the [NAPA proposal](#) for a sharing arrangement, and met Coastal States representatives opportunistically).

NAPA All-Party meeting, 3rd December 2025

- NAPA held an All-Party meeting 3/12/25, attended by negotiators from Greenland and Faroes, Norway, Iceland, the UK and the EU. As with last year, this was a key event to discuss positions and priorities for action. The critical nature of the FIP deadline given sourcing timelines and NAPA member commitments to sourcing from sustainable and well-managed fisheries was highlighted.

Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) was engaged to design and deliver a bespoke Communications Strategy for each of the NAPA Sub-Groups. In the previous period, this included a brand refresh, with renewed focus (“It’s time to push back, not walk away”) and an updated [NAPA website](#), with news and resources pages. In the current reporting period, this work has continued, and includes:

- Species-specific messaging to cut to the core of the issues pertaining to lack of harvest strategies and ineffective decision-making, whilst also remaining recognisable and visually impactful.
- Species-specific campaigns focusing on content published on LinkedIn, aiming to develop a ‘continuous drumbeat’ of messaging ([32 mackerel and/or ASH-specific posts](#), July-December 2025).
- Targeted press releases, leading to articles including those in The Fishing Daily [10/25](#), Fish Focus [10/25](#), World Fishing [10/25](#), [10/25](#), FiskerForum [10/25](#), Undercurrent News [10/25](#), SeafoodSource [10/25](#), Oceanographic Magazine [10/25](#), and The Grocer [10/25](#).

Revised or new sourcing statements have been requested from NAPA partners. 33 updated/new sourcing statements have been received in the period, and other NAPA partners have been reminded of the need to submit these documents. All available sourcing statements are provided from links on the [NAPA website](#).

Task 1.3	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
1.3. During negotiations for TACs and sharing arrangements, arrange meetings with catching sector (“roundtable”) to encourage a management solution. Broadened catching sector engagement through more targeted and more frequent meetings. Also	National Catching Sector meetings held for each of the Coastal States;	Catching sector roundtable meetings may continue but the focus will shift to regular (quarterly?) bilateral meetings to be held with national catching sector representatives to understand positions; agree actions on mutually agreed objectives; Seek agreement on alignment of key messages between both parties for use in broader communication;	01/05/2024	30/04/2026	Meetings documentation (Agendas; Minutes); Sharing of communications and messages; Catching sector priorities and actions are documented and fed into SC and sub-group meetings for agreement on alignment and additional collaboration.	NAPA shall provide documented evidence of all related correspondence, analyses, actions, meetings, representations etc. In advance of the 2026 coastal states and NEAFC meetings, the catching sector has	Catching sector influences decision-makers in a synergistic manner to NAPA. More collaborative and targeted engagement with the catching sector should help build a coalition of support and enhance the reach and effectiveness of NAPAs advocacy work.

<p>exploring opportunities for collaborative advocacy.</p>		<p>Enhancement of key messages and general communications through the NAPA Partners and their networks. Clarity and alignment in delivery of communications across a broadening partner network.</p>				<p>been stimulated by NAPA to align on calls to action that align with NAPA priorities. Catching sector communications clearly show echoes of NAPA's communication strategy, as well as evidence of reaching different audiences.</p>	<p>More collaborative and targeted engagement with the catching sector should help build a coalition of support and enhance the reach and effectiveness of NAPAs advocacy work. Improved understanding of Catching sector positions and the opportunity to extend NAPA messaging through this network as they have their own liaison and discussions with CS Representatives)</p>
<p>Update December 2025</p> <p>It continues to be the case that a key element of the NAPA engagement is with the pelagic fishing industry of the Coastal States. NAPA has continued to seek to strengthen its approach to engaging with the pelagic Catching Sector at a national level (rather than collectively) to extend NAPA's reach and enhance influence from within the supply chain. NAPA has sought meetings with individual Producer Organisations, many of whom share a common position regarding the need for sustainable catch shares and long-term management strategies, and who may be open to exploring opportunities for collaborative advocacy.</p> <p>Meetings undertaken with Coastal State representatives in May-June (reported on previously) provided an opportunity firstly to reassert NAPA's three core asks (i) TAC set at no more than the ICES advice, ii) a comprehensive sharing arrangement to be put in place, and iii) a dispute resolution process to be agreed), and then to better understand the issues or blockers to meeting these objectives according to each Coastal State. Meetings were then undertaken in August-October to present the NAPA catch- sharing proposal to the catching sector representatives. A NAPA Meeting Log is provided as evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU catching sector: 19/08/2025 (DPPO, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association; online), 15/09/25 (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association; online) and 27/09/25 (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation). • Icelandic catching and aquaculture sectors: 20/08/2025 (Brim, online), 21/08/2025 (LHF, online), 27/08/2025 (Fisheries Iceland, online), 29/08/2025 (Arnalax), 15/09/25 (Fisheries Iceland, online) and 19/09/2025 (FirstWater, online). • Norwegian catching sector: 25/09/25 (Fiskebat; online). • EU Long Distance Advisory Committee (LDAC): 15/10/25 – NAPA presented its catch sharing proposal. • NEAFC Annual meeting: 11/11/2025 (Presented the NAPA proposal for a sharing arrangement, and met Catching Sector representatives opportunistically). • NAPA held an All-Party meeting 3/12/25, attended by fishing industry representatives from the UK and the EU, with representatives from the other Coastal States invited but unable to attend. The critical nature of the FIP deadline given sourcing timelines and NAPA member commitments to sourcing from sustainable and well-managed fisheries was highlighted. • Faroese catching sector: 8/12/2025 (Notaskip (Faroese Pelagic Association), Faroese Fishing Vessel Association; online). • UK catching sector: 11/12/2025 (SPFA; online). <p>-----</p>							

NAPA met with the NEAFC Secretariat (Mr. Darius Campbell) 13/08/2025, MSC (Erin Priddle, Camiel Derichs, Laura Rodriguez) 01/10/2025, ASC (Esther Luiten, Aisla Jones) 07/10/2025 and the EU Long Distance Advisory Committee (15/10/2025) to present the model catch sharing arrangement proposal and hear feedback.

Task 1.4	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
1.4. Lobby all parties in seeking a joint solution within the framework of a long-term management plan highlighting market consequences of inaction. Use our economic analysis and individual business case studies to create impactful the impact on businesses and wider communities. Activity will also highlight the impact of food security and climate change implications from sourcing from other fisheries.	Where progress is made for within year agreements (see 1.5.), then NAPA will ensure clear, consistent and robust messaging to the CSs and others regarding the need for a Long Term Management Solution.	Use the science to show longer term impacts as a mechanism for applying more influence in seeking multiannual agreements;	01/05/2024	30/06/2025	Reports and other documents that show clear understanding of Catching sector positions and the opportunity to extend NAPA messaging through this network (as they have their own liaison and discussions with CS Representatives); NAPA documentation that indicates a thorough understanding of positions and the adoption of strategic approaches that are designed in a way to adopt the strengths of those positions in enabling successful CS negotiations.	NAPA shall provide documented evidence of all related correspondence between the market and decision-makers. NAPA partners continue to publish clear positions on sourcing NEA mackerel and ASH including consequences of FIP failure. Press Releases across NAPA networks extend through to Catching Sector representatives and beyond.	NAPA partners continue to publish clear positions on sourcing NEA mackerel and ASH including consequences of FIP failure. Improved understanding of Catching sector positions and the opportunity to extend NAPA messaging through this network as they have their own liaison and discussions with CS Representatives). Comprehensive sharing agreement/s are achieved either partially or in full, and published by the Coastal States and NEAFC.
		Ensure that information regarding the impacts of a lack of long term agreement provides a lack of security for fishery management in all communications					
		NAPA will undertake a socio-economic analysis to present information regarding real-world impacts to businesses and communities from any changes in sourcing policies that are likely to result from continuing lack of comprehensive agreement/s.					

Update December 2025

To inform advocacy approaches, three key pieces of analysis were planned in 2025:

- 1) On the basis of declining SSB and high fishing mortality, and in the absence of any new, strong year classes as presented in the [2023 ASH assessment](#), NAPA commissioned [a future projections analysis](#) for ASH in February 2024, to determine potential stock outcomes under a plausible range of recruitment and exploitation scenarios. The analysis indicated that the stock was highly likely to decline to less than the limit reference point by 2026 without an exceptionally strong year class entering the fishery in 2024 or 2025. For the updated FIP, it was intended that the analysis for ASH would be updated, and potentially an equivalent analysis undertaken for NEA mackerel, using the latest ICES advice and detailed stock data. Initially, this work was intended to be delivered through a new, independent analysis, but it was decided subsequently to conduct the analysis in-house. Given the new stock assessment process and outcomes of the [2025 benchmark assessment process](#), this work had been delayed from the last FIP reporting period. However, the new [ASH stock assessment](#), published in September 2025, indicated a change in stock outlook for ASH, with growth in the stock predicted based on strong year classes in 2021 and 2022 that are soon to recruit to the fishery. As such, at the present time, with reduced immediate risk to ASH, this analysis has been delayed indefinitely.
- 2) Related to the first piece of work, it was intended that a ‘Lost opportunities’ analysis, will be undertaken. Unlike the first project, this work was intended to look back in time, to estimate the additional value that could have been derived from the ASH and NEA mackerel stocks if they had been fished at recommended levels. This work is complex in aiming to consider age-class distribution within the stock over time, and the routes to market for the different size-classes of fish. It is intended that an estimate of the economic consequences of the failure to make progress against the FIP aims would also be undertaken, using the data derived from the study. It is highlighted that the loss of value from the ASH and / or NEA mackerel fisheries has been mentioned several times by

Coastal State negotiators in recent public meetings, including the 09/24 Coastal State plenary sessions and 11/24 NEAFC annual meeting. This work was also delayed, with discussions that were ongoing with potential partners, including the MSC. With the focus on other aspects of the FIP (mainly, the development and advocacy around NAPA’s alternative catch sharing arrangement, detailed in 2.1, below), and with the complexity of this proposal, this has also been delayed.

- 3) An additional key piece of analysis is to determine the volume and value of purchasing represented by NAPA partners. The intent is to provide context and weight to NAPA’s argument for sustainable management of the pelagic stocks. This work was started by [MarFishEco](#) in Autumn 2025, with a focus on blue whiting as the species with the least complex product and supply chain. The work was scheduled to conclude in early 2026, and a decision to move to ASH and NEA mackerel will be taken subsequently if the analysis is deemed useful.

Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) was engaged to design and deliver a bespoke Communications Strategy for each of the NAPA Sub-Groups. In the previous period, this included a brand refresh, with renewed focus (“It’s time to push back, not walk away”) and an updated [NAPA website](#), with news and resources pages. In the current reporting period, this work has continued, and includes:

- 1) Species-specific messaging to cut to the core of the issues pertaining to lack of harvest strategies and ineffective decision-making, whilst also remaining recognisable and visually impactful.
- 2) Species-specific campaigns focusing on content published on LinkedIn, aiming to develop a ‘continuous drumbeat’ of messaging ([32 mackerel and/or ASH-specific posts](#), July-December 2025).
- 3) Targeted press releases, leading to articles including those in The Fishing Daily [10/25](#), Fish Focus [10/25](#), World Fishing [10/25](#), [10/25](#), FiskerForum [10/25](#), Undercurrent News [10/25](#), SeafoodSource [10/25](#), Oceanographic Magazine [10/25](#), and The Grocer [10/25](#).

Task 1.5	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
1.5 6-monthly Steering Group Reviews of Progress against actions.	6-monthly review point meetings; interim milestone for a commitment from at least 3 states to achieving a sharing agreement within the next 12 months and/or a reduction in overfishing by at least 50%.	6-monthly review of progress by the NAPA Steering Committee on progress and continuing alignment with NAPA's goals. Demonstrable progress must be shown within the first 12 month period. This may be a percentage reduction in total catch towards scientific advice, or a sub-group of (at least 3) Coastal States agreeing to fish to scientific advice.	01/05/2024	30/04/2024	Minutes, reports and other documents; NAPA Steering Committee and sub-groups are exhibiting clear elements of agile management in the way that they respond to issues, crises and other actions. Demonstrable progress must be shown within the first 12-month period. This may be a percentage reduction in total catch towards scientific advice, or a sub-group of (at least 3) Coastal States agreeing to fish to scientific advice.	Minutes, reports and other documents show clearly NAPA progress on topics that are directly relevant to the establishment of a comprehensive sharing agreement for the Coastal States on mackerel and herring..	Starting from April 2024, and continually over the period of the following 24 months, there is clear evidence of progress towards a sharing agreement. This may be through, for example, the establishment of partial sharing agreements (bilateral/trilateral) that are in place in 2024/2025, moving towards a full agreement in 2026. Formal publication of such an agreement is made by the Coastal States and NEAFC.

Update December 2025

In June 2024, the UK, Norway and the Faroe Islands entered into a three-year agreement on NEA mackerel, covering national quota agreements, zonal access and scientific cooperation. These three countries together took, on average, 45-61% of the total catch of NEA mackerel in the last 10 years ([ICES 2025 advice](#)); importantly, the agreement was linked to a cut in the overall potential catches of NEA mackerel by the three countries of around 10%. In December 2025, Iceland joined, such that four of the six Coastal States are now included in the [new, multi-party agreement](#); together, the

<p>four parties have accounted for an average of 60-72% of the total catch from the stock in the last 10 years. The agreement includes a commitment from the four parties not to ‘bank or borrow’ more than 10% of a quota from one year to the next, was extended to cover 2028, and is expected to further contribute to reducing the overall fishing pressure in the fishery.</p> <p>In 2025 a benchmark assessment was undertaken for NEA mackerel, and the new ICES advice was provided for the stock in September 2025. This showed that NEA mackerel has declined from just above MSYBtrigger to just below Blim, such that the advice was for a TAC of 174,357 t for 2026; compared to 2025, this would represent a 70% cut in the advice and a 77% cut in the catch. The four parties in the multi-party agreement have agreed to a total TAC of 299,010 t, however, this has not been agreed by the other parties (i.e., Greenland and the EU, and the Russian Federation, which is not a Coastal State), and at the end of December 2025 the Coastal States together had not agreed a TAC for 2026.</p> <p>In 2025, a benchmark assessment was also undertaken for ASH, and the new ICES advice was provided for the stock in September 2025. This showed that the ASH stock has also declined somewhat, from being just below MSYBtrigger to being midway between MSYBtrigger and Blim; however, two years of strong, incoming year classes have been identified that are predicted to support growth in the stock, and so the TAC has been raised to 533,914 t for 2026; compared to 2025, this would represent a 33% increase in advice and a 23% increase in the catch. This advice was accepted by the Coastal States (ASH agreed record). Nevertheless, it is recognised that the agreement does not constitute a sharing arrangement and unilateral quota setting is again likely to result in overfishing.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>NAPA member meetings held include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mackerel Sub-Group: online, 3/10/25 • Herring Sub-Group: online, 7/10/25 • Online Steering Committee meeting: 9/10/25 • In person Steering Committee meeting 19/11/2025 • All-Partner meeting: London, 3/12/25. • The NAPA Executive team met regularly over the period 								
Action	Task 2.1	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
2. Dispute settlement legal framework and consultation processes	2.1. NAPA reviews and produces a document summarizing the coastal states’ and NEAFC’s dispute settlement protocols. More focused engagement with NEAFC on the development of a more detailed dispute settlement agreement; Review of the 2004 EU Proposal and its relevance to the current situation; possible/likely provision of suggested text for Coastal States to reach		Whilst a dispute settlement text has been provided this is not as detailed as required and further work should take this forward. It also needs to be highlighted and publicised as a mechanism for CSs to use in working towards an overall comprehensive agreement.	01/05/2024	31/12/2025	NAPA shall provide a written critique of coastal states’ and NEAFC’s dispute settlement protocols and updated guidelines for consultations. Evidence for progress may be shown via the route of draft document; agreed draft document; final document; signed agreed final document.	Evidence of NAPA’s engagement with NEAFC on the Dispute Settlement Agreement which shows progress over time. Publication of a Draft and/or final Dispute Settlement document. This shall clarify the approach to be taken where there is obvious intransigence in the position of one or more Coastal States in reaching a	Formal publication of partial, or full sharing agreements between Coastal States that achieve, or show progress towards, fishing at levels consistent with scientific advice
		Draft a formal dispute resolution mechanism to address future issues within 6 months, and prior to the	NAPA should seek to ensure that a Dispute Settlement Agreement is a cornerstone of the work of NEAFC’s Working Group on the Future Development of NEAFC, and ensure actions around this are delivered. NEAFC has recently returned its					Ensure the March 2017 draft “Guidelines for Coastal State Consultations in the North East Atlantic” adopt the following text relating to dispute resolution (NEAFC, 2017; Chapter 9 – Mediation, para 25) <i>If agreement</i>

<p>agreement in disputed quota allocations.</p>	<p>NEAFC 2024 Annual Meeting</p>	<p>attention to the work of this WG, and potentially dispute settlement agreements could fall within the remit. This work should also involve publicising the detail around the current agreement, and what needs to be done to reach an improved dispute settlement agreement.</p>				<p>comprehensive sharing agreement. Draft document tabled at NEAFC meetings, and included in documentation (e.g. in an annex) for discussion.</p>	<p><i>on a Framework Arrangement is not reached, the coastal States should consider engaging a mediator. Any decision on engaging a mediator, including the choice of the person and the terms of reference of his/her role, should be made by consensus.</i></p> <p>Dispute Settlement Agreement protocols are included within the agenda of NEAFC WG on the Future Development of NEAFC meetings; this work delivers an agreement that is signed off by all parties in NEAFC. There is to be clear evidence of moving towards this outcome over time.</p>
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Update December 2025

Over the course of 2025, the NAPA Executive Team and Steering Committee developed an alternative catch share proposal based on historical catches and quota shares. The purpose of the proposal is to help break the current negotiating stalemate, reflecting a lack of confidence in Coastal State processes, concerns that a resolution will not be reached in time, and the obvious lack of an effective mediator in the negotiations. Development of the proposal was informed by four principles: 1) Recognition that concession and compromise would be required by all parties, including NAPA, 2) It must be seen to be fair to all and clear where parties have gifted (compromised) and where they have gained, with no extreme gains or losses, 3) It should be replicable across all three species, and 4) It can be supported by the whole supply chain. Using these four principles as a basis, the proposal adopted a consistent approach for each of the three NAPA species (NEA mackerel, ASH and blue whiting), whilst using catch and declared TAC data for each species, separately. The approach taken is outlined briefly, below, and given in more detail in [this example](#) presentation, to Iceland.

For the NAPA proposal, two different analytical approaches were taken for catch data: 1) Weighting (30:70 and 50:50) the average annual catch shares for each party over two periods – a) the last period in which a comprehensive sharing arrangement was in place between parties, and b) the more recent period in which there was no comprehensive sharing arrangement in place, and 2) Determining the average annual catch share for each party in two reference periods (the last 10 years and the last 20 years). Declared TAC data were also incorporated into NAPA’s analysis because it was identified that the declared TAC may be viewed as an asset, including where it may be swapped for fishing opportunities elsewhere. As such, using the full extent of available data, a third approach determined the average annual declared TAC share for each party in two reference periods (the last 5 years and the last 10 years).

Each of the three approaches (two using catch data and one using declared TAC data) were deemed to have limitations or issues that meant they appeared to favour or unreasonably penalise different parties. As such, a fourth and final approach was developed, which averaged and smoothed the results from the original three analyses to derive a final figure for the share for each party for each stock. These ‘Approach 4’ figures were then compared against the average catches for each party in the last five years, which were considered the ‘status quo’ levels. The results showed that the maximum gain for any party across the three species (NEA mackerel, ASH and blue whiting) would be for the EU (+3.6% of the NEA mackerel share) and the maximum loss would be for Norway (-2.1% of the NEA mackerel share). The swing for blue whiting was smaller (maximum, +2.4% for Norway, -1.4% for Iceland) and the swing for ASH was the smallest (maximum, +0.8% for Greenland, -1.4% for the Faroes). NAPA considers that these results reflect the extended history in each fishery and demonstrate a close fit to the four principles the proposal was based on.

In this current reporting period, NAPA has engaged directly with the catching sector, Coastal State Ministers and negotiators, NEAFC, and NGOs to review and refine the proposal. NAPA’s aim is to present a credible, balanced, and actionable plan to the Coastal States in early autumn, ahead of the annual negotiations.

- NAPA met with Coastal States representatives (detailed in 1.2, above), catching sector representatives (detailed in 1.3, above)
- NAPA submitted letters to the Fisheries Ministers of each of the Coastal States, 7/25, detailing the urgency of the situation for the stocks and NAPA, and laying the groundwork for presenting the NAPA catch sharing proposal later in the year ([example letter](#) to Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, Minister of Industries, Iceland).
- NAPA also wrote to the NEAFC Secretary, Mr Stefán Ásmundsson, 7/25, with a similar [letter](#) to that sent to the Coastal States Ministers.
- In light of the poor stock status of mackerel that was perceived to have increased the sense of urgency for gaining a comprehensive agreement, a decision was taken to wait to follow-up with Ministers on the NAPA catch sharing proposal to allow time for Coastal States discussions to be held. Follow-up letters will be sent in early 2026, however.
- NEAFC Annual meeting: 11/11/2025 (Presented the [NAPA proposal](#) for a sharing arrangement, and met Catching Sector representatives opportunistically).
- NAPA held an All-Party meeting 3/12/25, attended by negotiators from Greenland and Faroes, Norway, Iceland, the UK and the EU.
- Further, follow-up meetings with negotiators from the Coastal States are planned for 2026.

Finally, it is noted that Article 18bis of the NEAFC Convention states “The Commission shall make recommendations establishing procedures for the settlement of disputes arising under this Convention”. NAPA heard in the 11/25 NEAFC annual meeting that Russia maintained its objection to the amendment and that, as a result, it remains not in effect for any party. As such, there is currently no formal, disputes resolution process at NEAFC nor within the Coastal States process. It is noted that both fora are hindered by the difficulty of working with the Russian Federation at the present time. Nevertheless, even if a new comprehensive catch sharing proposals are adopted, the establishment of a disputes resolution process remains a priority for NAPA, to avoid reaching this same situation again in future.

Task 2.2	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
2.2. Lobby a coastal state (i.e. UK) to initiate negotiations for a mechanism, for cooperation and dispute resolution between the Coastal States which is effective in agreeing an appropriate management mechanism consistent with the management plan. Expanded to include all CSs and the Chairs of each of the pelagic species WGs in particular in a manner that extracts specific information relating to their positions and	Targeted communications strategy relevant to individual Coastal State/s; Formal (and public) alignment with organisations which hold similar ambitions	All Coastal States are to be contacted individually regarding the pelagic stocks by NAPA; NAPA will use the information generated to develop a detailed understanding of the positions across the CS Delegations, which in turn will be used for a targeted approach for influencing views (including describing impacts from NAPA Partner sourcing policies);	01/05/2024	30/06/2025	NAPA shall provide documented evidence of all related correspondence, analyses, actions, meetings, representations etc. NAPA will produce (internally) papers that provide summaries of CS' positions, and associated analysis.	By the end of Q1 2025, NEAFC shall provide a transparent mechanism for the resolution of legal disputes which is considered to be effective in dealing with most issues and that is appropriate to the context of the fishery. This draft document will enable agreements between Coastal States at bilateral and multilateral levels. NEAFC is seen to be working actively in support of achieving an	By the end of 2024, NEAFC shall establish the Working Group (or similar) on Allocation Criteria, and this is communicated by NEAFC.
		NAPA will - in particular - contact the Chairs for each of the pelagic species Working Groups in order to understand the dynamics of the meetings, develop an overview of each CS's positions, and feed into					By the end of Q1 2025, NEAFC shall provide a transparent mechanism for the resolution of legal disputes which is considered to be effective in dealing with most issues and that is

<p>provides a detailed overview of blockers and enablers in the negotiations. This detail will support a targeted approach to advocacy.</p>		<p>the meetings information of relevance that may support the move towards a comprehensive agreement.</p>				<p>overall comprehensive agreement for the NEA pelagic stocks/is seen to be aligned with NAPA's goals.</p>	<p>appropriate to the context of the fishery. By the end of 2025, NEAFC shall impose binding arrangements, rather than guidelines, for contracting parties, that results in an agreement that ensures adherence to the harvest strategy by the parties prosecuting the fishery.</p>
<p>Update December 2025</p> <p>In 2025, NAPA embarked on its busiest ever period of engagement with national representatives, meeting most of the Coastal States several times in the first half of 2025, and meeting again in this current reporting period. Meetings provided an opportunity to reassert NAPA's asks, to better understand the issues preventing the adoption of an agreed, sustainable approach to sharing the resource, and to advocate for a comprehensive solution. NAPA set up and engaged directly in ten meetings with individual Coastal States between July and December 2025, attended the Coastal States plenary sessions, interacted with Coastal States representatives at the NEAFC meeting and then again at the NAPA All-partners meeting in December. These are detailed in the NAPA Meeting Log, and listed below:</p> <p>Coastal States meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU delegation: 19/08/25 (Pawel Swiderek and Camille Gallouze; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • Faroese delegation: 20/08/2025 (Faroese delegation; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • Icelandic delegation: 21/08/25 (Guðmundur Þórðarson and Þorvarður Atli Þórssón; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • UK delegation: 11/08/2025 and 15/08/2025 (Colin Faulkner with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • Norwegian delegation: 28/08/25 (Ann-Kristin Westberg (Head of Delegation), Elisabeth Sjørdahl, and Brungot Lena; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • Norwegian Minister for Fisheries: 18/09/2025 (Marianne Sivertsen Næss; online meeting with NAPA Exec. team and Steering Committee). • Greenland delegation: 01/10/2025 (Iben Funch Døj, Head of Delegation, online meeting with NAPA Exec. team). • Scottish Government delegation: 02/10/25 (Catherine Whitby, Harriet Wilson; online meeting with NAPA Exec. Team). • UK Delegation, to discuss the new four party mackerel agreement: 18/12/2025 (Colin Faulkner). • NAPA has also attended most of the available Coastal States pelagic plenary sessions since January 2025. It is noted that most Coastal States negotiating meetings do not have plenary sessions planned, but those that do are usually advertised at very short notice. <p>Coastal States Ministers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPA submitted letters to the Fisheries Ministers of each of the Coastal States, 7/25, detailing the urgency of the situation for the stocks and NAPA, and laying the groundwork for presenting the NAPA catch sharing proposal (detailed in 2.1, above) later in the year (example letter to Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, Minister of Industries, Iceland). <p>NEAFC meeting,</p>							

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEAFC Annual meeting, 11/11/2025 (Presented the NAPA proposal for a sharing arrangement, and met Coastal States representatives opportunistically). <p>NAPA All-Party meeting, 3rd December 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA held an All-Party meeting 3/12/25, attended by negotiators from Greenland and Faroes, Norway, Iceland, the UK and the EU. As with last year, this was a key event to discuss positions and priorities for action. The critical nature of the FIP deadline given sourcing timelines and NAPA member commitments to sourcing from sustainable and well-managed fisheries was highlighted. 							
Action	Task 3.1	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
3. Effective decision-making processes	3.1. Communication to continue with Coastal States representatives to promote delivery of exploitation levels consistent with meeting the requirements of Principle 1. More specific intelligence gathering on factors related to CS representatives positions. For example, where States are known to be consistently blocking negotiations, then NAPA will prioritise communications accordingly to those positions in a manner that will carry improved chances of impact and influencing the pathway to a successful agreement.							Partial, or full sharing agreements between Coastal States that achieve, or show progress towards, fishing at levels consistent with scientific advice
		Targeted communications strategy relevant to individual Coastal State/s: Nuanced messages appropriate for individual actors	Extract more detailed information on the CS negotiations in relation to Blockers, Positions and Policies; Utilise this detail for influencing via targeted communications;	01/05/2024	30/04/2026	NAPA shall provide documented evidence of all related correspondence, analyses, actions, meetings, representations etc. By 30/4/26 the end of the third year, coastal states are setting TACs that do not exceed ICES advice.	Publication of summary documents on positions available: 2024; 2025.	By 30/4/26, coastal states are setting TACs that do not exceed ICES advice and unilateral TACs are not being set..
								Agreements are published formally, and these present solutions on an annual and multi-annual basis.
<p>Update December 2025</p> <p>NAPA has shifted its focus to engaging directly with individual Coastal Staes (rather than collectively) to promote the delivery of dispute resolution and effective decision-making processes. By tapping into specific intelligence on cultural fishing references and domestic seafood trends, more targeted, bespoke and constructive engagement with individual Coastal States has been possible. Actions taken are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAPA met with Coastal States representatives (detailed in 1.2, above) and catching sector representatives (detailed in 1.3, above) 								

- NAPA submitted letters to the Fisheries Ministers of each of the Coastal States, 7/25, detailing the urgency of the situation for the stocks and NAPA, and laying the groundwork for presenting the NAPA catch sharing proposal later in the year ([example letter](#) to Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, Minister of Industries, Iceland).
- NAPA met with the NEAFC Secretariat (Mr. Darius Campbell) to discuss the proposal and opportunities to present to Coastal States (13/08/2025).
- NAPA also wrote to the NEAFC Secretary, Mr Stefán Ásmundsson, 7/25, with a similar [letter](#) to that sent to the Coastal States Ministers.

Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) was engaged to design and deliver a bespoke Communications Strategy for each of the NAPA Sub-Groups. In the previous period, this included a brand refresh, with renewed focus (“It’s time to push back, not walk away”) and an updated [NAPA website](#), with news and resources pages. In the current reporting period, this work has continued, and includes:

- Species-specific branding to support brand identity (colours and imagery).
- Species-specific messaging to cut to the core of the issues pertaining to lack of harvest strategies and ineffective decision-making, whilst also remaining recognisable and visually impactful.
- Species-specific campaigns focusing on content published on LinkedIn, aiming to develop a ‘continuous drumbeat’ of messaging ([32 mackerel and/or ASH-specific posts](#), July-December 2025).

Targeted press releases, leading to articles including those in The Fishing Daily [10/25](#), Fish Focus [10/25](#), World Fishing [10/25](#), [10/25](#), FiskerForum [10/25](#), Undercurrent News [10/25](#), SeafoodSource [10/25](#), Oceanographic Magazine [10/25](#), and The Grocer [10/25](#).

Task 3.2	Milestones	New/Additional Subtasks	Start date	Finish date	Project Management - Evidence of Progress (Internal NAPA)	Evidence of completion (FIP - Internal)	Outcomes (FIP - External)
3.2. Engagement with national pelagic catching sector representatives in order to extend NAPAs reach and develop enhanced influence from within the supply chain. Should the Catching Sector in all or some Coastal State nations decide to go down the route of an MSC Improvement Programme approach, NAPA will also support this. (NAPA has already been in discussions on this topic for several months)	Stakeholder mapping exercise/output across the Catching Sector organisations relevant for the CSs.	Meetings with catching sector representatives to be held in advance of annual negotiations in an effort to understand positions (across all CSs); Use this information for targeted communications;	01/05/2024	31/12/2025	Summary documents; Articles and communications across media/social media. Catching sector is being seen to influence decision-makers in a synergistic manner to NAPA, as evidenced via communications, social media, general advocacy work and similar.	The catching sector has been prompted by NAPA to align on calls to action that align with NAPA priorities on TACs not exceeding advice. Press articles show clearly that the Catching Sector is in alignment with NAPA's goals.	By Q4 2024, and showing continual progress thereafter, the Catching sector is seen to influence decision-makers in a synergistic manner to NAPA. Communications show clear evidence of progress towards a comprehensive sharing agreement.
	Industry meetings,	Analyse potential effects on markets via various scenarios of continued overfishing; reaching comprehensive agreement/regaining certification; Use this information in support of influencing all decision-makers;					

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It continues to be the case that a key element of the NAPA engagement is with the pelagic fishing industry of the Coastal States. NAPA has continued to seek to strengthen its approach to engaging with the pelagic Catching Sector at a national level (rather than collectively) to extend NAPA’s reach and enhance influence from within the supply chain. NAPA has sought meetings with individual

Producer Organisations, many of whom share a common position regarding the need for sustainable catch shares and long-term management strategies, and who may be open to exploring opportunities for collaborative advocacy.

Meetings undertaken with Coastal State representatives in May-June provided an opportunity firstly to reassert NAPA's three core asks (i) TAC set at no more than the ICES advice, ii) a comprehensive sharing arrangement to be put in place, and iii) a dispute resolution process to be agreed), and then to better understand the issues or blockers to meeting these objectives according to each Coastal State. Meetings were then undertaken in August-October to present the NAPA catch-sharing proposal to the catching sector representatives. [A NAPA Meeting Log](#) is provided as evidence:

- EU catching sector: 19/08/2025 (DPPO, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association; online), 15/09/25 (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association; online) and 27/09/25 (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation)
- Icelandic catching and aquaculture sectors: 20/08/2025 (Brim, online), 21/08/2025 (LHF, online), 27/08/2025 (Fisheries Iceland, online), 29/08/2025 (Arnalax), 15/09/25 (Fisheries Iceland, online) and 19/09/2025 (FirstWater, online).
- Norwegian catching sector: 25/09/25 (Fiskebat; online).
- EU Long Distance Advisory Committee (LDAC): 15/10/25 – NAPA presented its catch sharing proposal.
- NEAFC Annual meeting: 11/11/2025 (Presented the [NAPA proposal](#) for a sharing arrangement, and met Catching Sector representatives opportunistically).
- Faroese catching sector: 8/12/2025 (Notaskip (Faroese Pelagic Association), Faroese Fishing Vessel Association).
- UK catching sector: 11/12/2025 (SFPA; online).

NAPA held an All-Party meeting 3/12/25, attended by fishing industry representatives from the UK and the EU, with representatives from the other Coastal States invited but unable to attend. The critical nature of the FIP deadline given sourcing timelines and NAPA member commitments to sourcing from sustainable and well-managed fisheries was highlighted.

NAPA met with the NEAFC Secretariat (Mr. Darius Campbell) 13/08/2025, MSC (Erin Priddle, Camiel Derichs, Laura Rodriguez) 01/10/2025, ASC (Esther Luiten, Aisla Jones) 07/10/2025 and the EU Long Distance Advisory Committee (15/10/2025) to present the model catch sharing arrangement proposal and hear feedback.

Mindfully Wired Communications (MWC) is delivering a bespoke Communications Strategy for each of the NAPA Sub-Groups including a focus on the environmental and economic impact of management failure in the pelagic fisheries. This includes:

- A brand refresh with renewed focus for the updated FIP ("It's time to push back, not walk away").
- An updated [NAPA website](#), with news and resources pages.
- Species-specific branding to support brand identity (colours and imagery).
- Species-specific messaging to cut to the core of the issues pertaining to lack of harvest strategies and ineffective decision-making, whilst also remaining recognisable and visually impactful.
- Species-specific campaigns focusing on content published on LinkedIn, aiming to develop a 'continuous drumbeat' of messaging ([32 mackerel and/or ASH-specific posts](#), July-December 2025).
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Appendix 1: NAPA Mackerel and Herring FIP Progress Reporting

To ensure that FIPs are making progress, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) has developed the "FIP Tracker". This tracks the progress of FIPs against their indicators and collates evidence of progress. FIP evaluators can then use this evidence to measure the rate of progress that a FIP is demonstrating, and reward the FIP with a progress rating (A-E).

Information from the FIP Tracker is presented in this document. It is supported by the evidence of progress for the NAPA Mackerel and Herring FIP in 6 month intervals. The evidence can be accessed via the external link, below:

- [NAPA Mackerel and Herring FIP Progress Reporting Evidence](#)

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