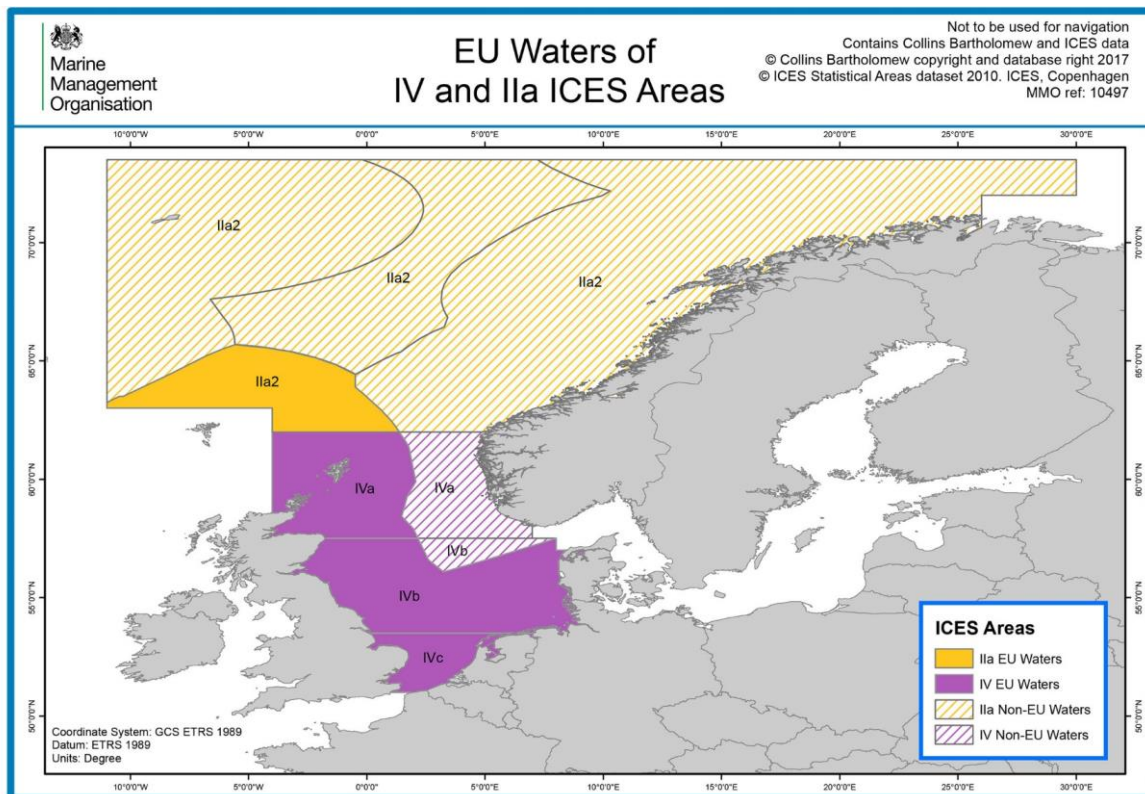




Landing Obligation Guidance 2019

Applicable to the North Sea Nephrops Fishery





Introduction

This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Landing Obligation overview guidance document which explains the general rules. This document explains rules specific to Nephrops vessels fishing in the North Sea in ICES Areas IIa and IV, but does not include Norwegian waters. Norwegian discard rules must be followed if fishing in Norwegian waters.

Please refer to your licence in relation to UK specific gear requirements in this fishery.

Please consult your local Fisheries Management Office for further information.

You must ensure that the following rules are complied with:

1. All catches of quota species must be kept on board, landed and counted against quota, except where the exemptions listed below apply.
2. All catches and discards must be recorded in your logbook.
3. Any fish returned to the sea under the exemptions described below must be kept in good condition in order to maximise their survival chances. This includes keeping them wet, handling them carefully and releasing them promptly.

Survival Exemptions

These exemptions allow you to discard fish under certain conditions based on the likelihood of a fish being able to survive being caught and returned to the sea.

You are permitted to discard certain species of fish provided you comply with the conditions specified in the table below:

Fish Species you can Discard	ICES Area	Conditions
Skates and Rays	IIa and IV	No Conditions
Nephrops (NEP)	IIa and IV	No Conditions



De minimis Exemptions

The *De minimis* exemption allows a small percentage of the total catch of certain species to be discarded because it is difficult to completely avoid unwanted catches.

It is important that discards are recorded in your logbook. *De minimis* exemptions may be withdrawn where discard levels are too high.

The following species can be discarded under *De minimis* rules subject to conditions:

Fish Species you can Discard	ICES Area	Conditions
Whiting (WHG) below the minimum size of 27 cm	IV	Cod-end mesh size of 80 mm to 99 mm.
Cod (COD) below the minimum size of 35 cm	IV	Cod-end mesh size of 80 mm to 99 mm.
Plaice (PLE) below the minimum size of 27 cm	IV	Cod-end mesh size of 80 mm to 99 mm. Use of SepNep* Trawl mandatory.

* 'SepNep' means an Otter Trawl where:

- the net is separated horizontally by a panel which separates the trawl into two cod-ends. The mesh size of the separation panel must be 105 mm or less.
- the upper cod-end has a minimum mesh size of 120 mm and is fitted with a separation panel
- the lower cod-end has a mesh size in the range 80 mm to 99 mm
- an optional selection grid with a bar spacing of 17 mm or larger may be added. However, it must be constructed so as to allow small Nephrops (*Nephrops norvegicus*) to escape.