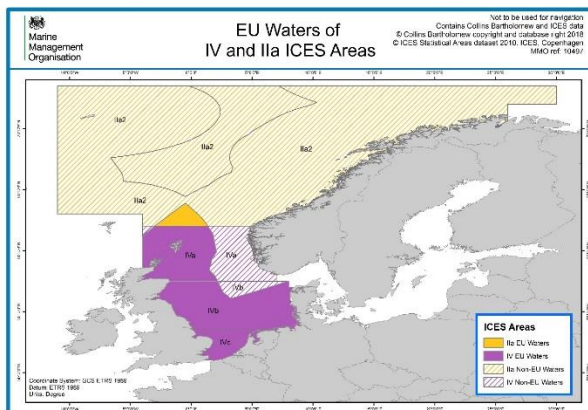




# Fishing gear requirements and Landing Obligation guidance 2019

Applicable to Demersal Towed Gears  
Fishing in the North Sea

(Excluding Nephrops Vessels and Beam Trawlers)



## Introduction

This document explains rules on the fishing gear you should be using in the North Sea when fishing for demersal species with towed gear (other than Beam Trawls or fishing for Nephrops). It also summarises which Landing Obligation exemptions are available to you.

This guidance is for all sizes of fishing vessel (including those under 10 metres). It does not cover IFCA byelaws – please consult your local IFCA for further information.

General fishing gear rules:



# Marine Management Organisation

- All mesh sizes given in this document are minimum sizes. You can choose to use a larger mesh than that stated.
- The baseline mesh size in this area is now a 120mm codend and this must be used where catches exceed 20% of cod haddock and saithe combined.
- Twine thickness requirements are 5mm maximum for double twine and 8mm maximum for single twine codends.
- Square mesh panel must be fully fitted within 18m of codline.
- If you have a catch of less than 20% of cod, haddock and saithe combined, then you may use a mesh size below 120mm as specified below:

## Gear selectivity requirements

All mesh sizes specified are the minimum.

| <b>Fishery</b>  | <b>Gear(s)</b>      | <b>ICES Area</b> | <b>Conditions</b>                       |
|---|---------------------|------------------|---|
| Whitefish fishery   | All demersal        | IVa              | 120mm codend                            |
| Plaice and Sole and non TAC species                                   | All demersal trawls | IVb              | 100mm codend and 90mm square mesh panel |
| Mixed demersal fishery including Skates and Rays, and non TAC species | All demersal trawls | IVc              | 80mm codend and 90mm square mesh panel  |
| Sole (minimum 40% sole)   | All demersal trawls | IVc              | 80mm codend and 80mm square mesh panel  |



| Fishery         | Gear(s)            | ICES Area | Conditions   |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------|--|
| Pelagic species | All pelagic trawls | All area  | At least 16mm (smaller mesh allowed for sandeel fishery) |

## Landing Obligation exemptions

In the table below is a brief summary of exemptions from the Landing Obligation for these fisheries which allow you to discard fish. All quantities of fish discarded under the Landing Obligation must be recorded in your logbook, but will not come off your quota.

We recommend that you also read the relevant [landing obligation guidance](#) for further information.

| Species you can Discard                         | Fishing Gear   | ICES Area | Conditions   |
|---|----------------|-----------|--|
| Skates and Rays                                 | All Gears      | All       | No Conditions  |
| Dover Sole (SOL) below the minimum size (24 cm) | Otter Trawlers | IVc       | <p><b>All conditions listed below must be met:</b></p> <p>Minimum codend mesh size of 80 mm.</p> <p>Fishing takes place no more than 6 Nautical Miles (NM) from the coast.</p> <p>The depth of water is no more than 30 m.</p> <p>The fishing vessel is no more than 10 m long (LOA).</p> <p>The towing time is less than 1.5 hours duration.</p> <p>Maximum engine power is 221 kW.</p> |
| Plaice (PLE)                                    | Danish Seine   | IV        | No Conditions  |



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|----------------|--------------------------------------|------------|--|
| Plaice (PLE)   | Otter Trawlers<br>(or pair trawlers) | IV         | Minimum codend mesh size<br>of 120 mm.<br>Discarding only allowed<br>from 1 <sup>st</sup> November to 30 <sup>th</sup><br>April inclusive. |
| Nephrops (NEP) | Otter Trawlers                       | IV and IIa | Minimum codend mesh size<br>of 80mm  |