

**AGREED RECORD OF FISHERIES CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE FAROE ISLANDS, ICELAND,
NORWAY AND THE UNITED KINGDOM ON THE MANAGEMENT OF MACKEREL IN THE NORTH-
EAST ATLANTIC**

15 December 2025

1. A Delegation from the Faroe Islands, headed by Ms Ingibjörg Tummassardóttir PETERSEN, a Delegation from Iceland, headed by Dr Guðmundur Þórðarson, a Delegation from Norway, headed by Ms Ann Kristin WESTBERG, and a Delegation from the United Kingdom (UK), headed by Mr Colin FAULKNER, met in London in October and November 2025 to consult on fisheries relations with respect to the management of North-East Atlantic mackerel.

2. The Delegations noted the following bilateral agreements that form an integral part of this Agreed Record:

- the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between the Faroe Islands and the United Kingdom on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic of 15 December 2025;
- the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between Norway and the United Kingdom on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic of 15 December 2025;
- the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between Iceland and Norway on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic of 15 December 2025;
- the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between Iceland and the Faroe Islands on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic of 15 December 2025; and
- the Agreed Record of Fisheries Consultations between the Faroe Islands and Norway on the management of mackerel in the North-East Atlantic of 15 December 2025.

3. The Delegations decided to recommend to their respective authorities the arrangements as set out in this Agreed Record.

4. QUOTA SHARES

4.1 The Delegations noted with regret that, despite intensive efforts, it had not yet been possible for the six coastal States to the stock to agree a fully comprehensive, long-term quota-sharing arrangement between them for the stock. They confirmed their willingness to continue engaging in good faith in further intensive consultations involving all coastal States to agree such an arrangement, and to convene such consultations rapidly.

4.2 In the absence of that fully comprehensive arrangement, the Delegations noted the importance of implementing at pace and on an interim basis a suite of responsible management measures, as set out in this Agreed Record, as an immediate response to the declining state of the stock. They further noted that, while discussions to agree quota shares

for all coastal States continued in parallel, such measures would bring significant benefits to the long-term condition of the stock.

4.3 In this context, the Delegations decided that their ‘coastal State shares’ of the TAC would be as follows:

Faroe Islands:	13.35 %
Iceland:	12.50 %
Norway:	28.24 %
The UK:	25.36 % ^{1 2}

4.4 The Delegations further decided to implement their bilateral arrangements as reflected in paragraph 2 of this Agreed Record, that form an integral part of this Agreed Record. After a series of bilateral quota transfers between the parties, and other adjustments, have taken place, the Delegations decided that their ‘net shares’ of the TAC would be as follows:

Faroe Islands:	12.00 %
Iceland:	10.50 %
Norway:	26.40 %
UK:	30.55 % ³

4.5 These quota shares would be without prejudice to any additional bilateral arrangements between Delegations outside of these reflected in paragraph 2, that form an integral part of this Agreed Record.

5. ANNUAL TAC-SETTING

5.1 The Delegations noted the ICES advice on North-East Atlantic mackerel, presented to the coastal States at their meeting in London on 16 October 2025, and agreed that 299,010 tonnes should represent the Total Allowable Catch for mackerel in the North-East Atlantic for 2026 and agreed that they would set their respective quotas in line with the net shares set out in paragraph 4.4.

5.2 The Delegations further noted the importance, wherever possible, of adhering to the terms of a long-term management strategy for the stock when setting TACs in the future.

5.3 The Delegations decided that, as a part of a discussion on reaching a comprehensive quota-sharing arrangement, they will consider relevant measures for fishing parties, such as establishing a Stock Protection Reserve at a level that would be decided each year.

¹ Rounded to two decimal places.

² For the purposes of this interim arrangement and subsequent quota transfers between coastal States, the share for the UK is as set out in para 4.4. This is without prejudice to the share the UK receives from the EU-UK Trade and Cooperations Agreement (TCA), which from 2026 onwards is 27.8343%.

³ Rounded to two decimal places.

6. INTER-ANNUAL QUOTA FLEXIBILITY

- 6.1 The Delegations decided that each party may transfer to the following year unutilised quantities of up to 10 % of their respective quota based on the net share set out in paragraph 4.4 (including from 2025 to 2026). The quantity transferred shall be in addition to the quotas of the party concerned in the following year based on the net share set out in paragraph 4.4. This quantity cannot be transferred further to subsequent years.
- 6.2 The Delegations also decided that each party may authorise fishing by its vessels of up to 10 % beyond their respective quotas, based on the net share set out in paragraph 4.4, it has set for that year. All quantities fished beyond the set quota for that year will be deducted from the party's allocated quota for the following year.
- 6.3 The Delegations noted that if a long-term management strategy is agreed, the arrangements on annual quota flexibility in that strategy would supersede those in this Agreed Record.

7. LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 7.1 The Delegations decided to send a request to ICES to evaluate the draft long-term management strategy outlined in Annex 1. They underlined their desire to see that strategy in operation in time for the autumn 2026 consultations for setting the 2027 TAC for the stock.

8. SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

- 8.1 The Delegations noted that contribution to science is vital for obtaining a robust evidence base on the abundance and distribution of the stock, which is needed to both generate advice on how to manage the stock sustainably and to establish a basis for quota shares. The Delegations confirmed that they would continue to contribute significantly to the major international dedicated mackerel surveys used in the stock assessment in ICES.
- 8.2 The Delegations welcomed the updated report on the distribution of mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic, presented at the coastal State meeting on 16 October 2025, and agreed on the importance of updating that report annually and in a timely manner.

9. DURATION

- 9.1 The Delegations noted that, unless they mutually decide otherwise, the arrangements set out in this Agreed Record would apply throughout 2028.
- 9.2 The Delegations indicated they would continue to apply these arrangements after 2028, except where:

- (i) one of the parties provides at least 12 months' notice to the others of their intention to withdraw from these arrangements; or
- (ii) the parties mutually decide on different arrangements.

15 December 2025

For the Delegation of the Faroe Islands

For the Delegation of Iceland

Ingibjörg Tummassardóttir PETERSEN

Guðmundur ÞÓRÐARSON

For the Delegation of Norway

For the Delegation of the United Kingdom

Ann Kristin WESTBERG

Colin FAULKNER

Annex 1: Request to ICES for a long-term management strategy

The 4 parties jointly request ICES to advise on the long-term management strategies on Northeast Atlantic Mackerel. A request is provided below.

ICES undertook, and provided, a long-term management strategy (LTMS) evaluation of the mackerel stock in 2020 (WKMSEMAC) (ICES, 2020). The subsequent catch history, changes in assessment structure and reference points (WKBMACNSSH 2025a) have resulted in the advised framework for the 2020 LTMS no longer being precautionary.

ICES is requested to identify appropriate precautionary combinations in its response to the parties request to ICES to evaluate a multi-annual management strategy for mackerel in the North East Atlantic using:

- A range of B_{trigger} from three to six million tonnes with a range of target Fs up to F_{lim} .
- A harvest control rule with a fishing mortality equal to the target F when SSB, at spawning time in the year before the TAC is to be set, is at or above B_{trigger} .
- In the case that the SSB is less than B_{trigger} at spawning time in the year before the TAC is to be set, the TAC shall be fixed consistently with a fishing mortality that is given by:
$$F = F_{\text{target}} * \text{SSB} / B_{\text{trigger}}$$

Long term goals:

- Maximise yield
- Minimising the risk of falling below B_{lim}
- Achieve stability of catches

All alternatives should be evaluated with and without a constraint on the inter-annual variation of TAC. When the rules would lead to a TAC, which deviates by more than 20% below or 25% above the TAC of the preceding year, the Parties shall fix a TAC that is respectively no more than 20% less or 25% more than the TAC of the preceding year. The TAC constraint shall not apply if the SSB at spawning time in the year for which the TAC is to be set is less or equal to B_{trigger} .

The constraint mechanism shall be tested separately from and in combination with 10% banking and borrowing mechanism. Banking and borrowing should be suspended when SSB is below B_{trigger} .

In addition, to include scenarios using:

On the assumption that there is no agreed LTMS and the advice is based solely on the MSY approach: Catches which are consistently 10, 20 and 30% above the annually advised MSY approach value, with no stability constraints.

Evaluation and performance criteria

Each alternative shall be assessed in relation to how it performs in the short term (5 years), medium term (next 10 years) and long term (next 25 years) in relation to:

- Average SSB
- Average yield
- Indicator for year to year variability in SSB and yield
- Risk of SSB falling below B_{lim}

The approach should be based on the methodology that has been used to evaluate the mackerel stock (ICES, 2020) and the methodology recently used for North Sea herring (ICES, 2025). The evaluation should be conducted to identify options that are robust to alternative operating models including but not limited to:

- a) Investigating alternative plausible recruitment dynamics and scenarios,
- b) The potential impact of density dependent growth.

Deadline for ICES

The special request on the full feedback approach should be finalised by ICES in due time before the ICES WG WIDE meeting in August 2026 and coastal States Negotiations on NEA mackerel in October 2026.

References

ICES. 2020. Workshop on Management Strategy Evaluation of Mackerel (WKMSEMAC). ICES Scientific Reports. 2:74. 175 pp. <http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.7445>

ICES. 2025a. Benchmark workshop on Mackerel and Norwegian spring-spawning herring (WKBMACNSSH). ICES Scientific Reports. 7:64. 509pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.29279615>

ICES. 2025. Workshop on Management Strategy Evaluation for North Sea Herring (WKMSEHerring). ICES Scientific Reports. 7:53. 179 pp. <http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.28868798>