

16 July 2024

Dear Vidar,

Re: Leadership needed for the future of Northeast Atlantic blue whiting

We, the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group, write to express our disappointment at the stunted progress for Northeast Atlantic blue whiting during recent Coastal State negotiations in Oslo, from 27-28 May.

We want to underscore the severity of the situation facing the blue whiting fishery, and the value and importance of the stock to the world's fishmeal industries. The threat this poses to salmon production in particular, and to the secure supply of seafood across Europe and the world, is tangible.

As an alliance of more than 50 world-leading seafood organisations – supported by the catching sector and salmon producers – we are stating clearly that the security of many of our businesses, and therefore the future of the industry at large, relies on the sustainable management of the blue whiting stock.

Feed producers need to source fishmeal and oil from either certified fisheries, or fisheries that are engaged in a Fishery Improvement Project (FIP). Such a requirement is now central to compliance in the two key certification schemes for the industry – the ASC Feed Standard and Global G.A.P. Compound Feed manufacturing standard. In 2021, NAPA launched a new class of policy FIP in direct response to the suspension of Marine Stewardship Council and MarinTrust certification for blue whiting. The aim of the FIP is to drive progress towards a sustainable, science-based sharing agreement for this stock.

The blue whiting FIP is due to end in October 2024: just a few short months away. With no resolution to the political deadlock around blue whiting management in sight, the future of the fish feed industry is uncertain. Three industry giants and integral members of our board – Biomar, Cargill, and Skretting Norway – will no longer source blue whiting if the FIP fails and no agreement is reached. Without a FIP in place, the market will play no future part in this fishery. Additionally, salmon companies would find it difficult to use any uncertified marine ingredients in their feed, making it imperative to resolve this problem.

The time for leadership and accountability is now. We offer you our support with this mission and hope to be able to work with you to achieve a sustainable future for blue whiting and the industries that depend on it. We welcome the opportunity of progressing discussions over the coming months.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aoife Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aoife Martin
Independent Chair of the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group

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