

23 August 2024

Dear Mr Thórdarson,

Re: Northeast Atlantic blue whiting call for action

I am writing on behalf of the [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA). NAPA invites you to work with its membership of world leading retailers, food service companies, and supply-chain businesses to secure the long-term, sustainable management of the North East Atlantic pelagic fisheries. NAPA has recently established species-specific working groups to help deliver more targeted and bespoke advocacy support for its members. On this occasion I am contacting you on behalf of the members of the NAPA blue whiting sub-group. We are specifically seeking solutions to current responsible sourcing challenges facing global aquafeed companies and salmon businesses that rely on Icelandic blue whiting for fishmeal.

Since 2021, NAPA has progressed a blue whiting Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) as part of the Marin Trust Improver Programme. This FIP has been key to enabling feed producers to continue to responsibly source blue whiting within a framework of improvement actions designed to achieve robust fishery management, ultimately creating a pathway for Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certification. The initial three-year FIP is coming to an end in October 2024 and while NAPA members wish to extend the FIP for a further two years, this will only be permitted if there is sufficient evidence that change is likely over that period. As such, we need reassurance that you are committed to delivering an agreed catch sharing mechanism to ensure the long-term sustainability of this fishery.

If the FIP is not extended, there will no longer be a clear route to restore certification of the fishery and businesses will not be able to meet the requirements of the ASC Feed Standard. This in turn will have severe implications for the catching and aquafeed sectors, salmon producers, and consumers. It will also mean that businesses will need to source feed ingredients from other parts of the globe, which will bring about cost increases and carbon emissions challenges. This is an outcome we are working to avoid at all costs.

We understand the complexities of the situation and the challenge presented by the political deadlock. We believe that a nation like Iceland, with its dominant supply of blue whiting and influential position as Chair of the consultations, should be an ally – not a target – in our own advocacy efforts. Therefore, our asks are two-fold:

1. To **meet with you** to discuss these issues and to explore how we can support you to take a leadership role in bringing about improvements to the management of this fishery.
2. To request an opportunity to **present** the global supply-chain's position at the next blue whiting meeting between the Coastal State delegations.

I would be grateful if we could find an opportunity to meet before negotiations resume in September, and would be happy to work with you to find a suitable date.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Aoife Martin
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