



# 55th Annual Conference

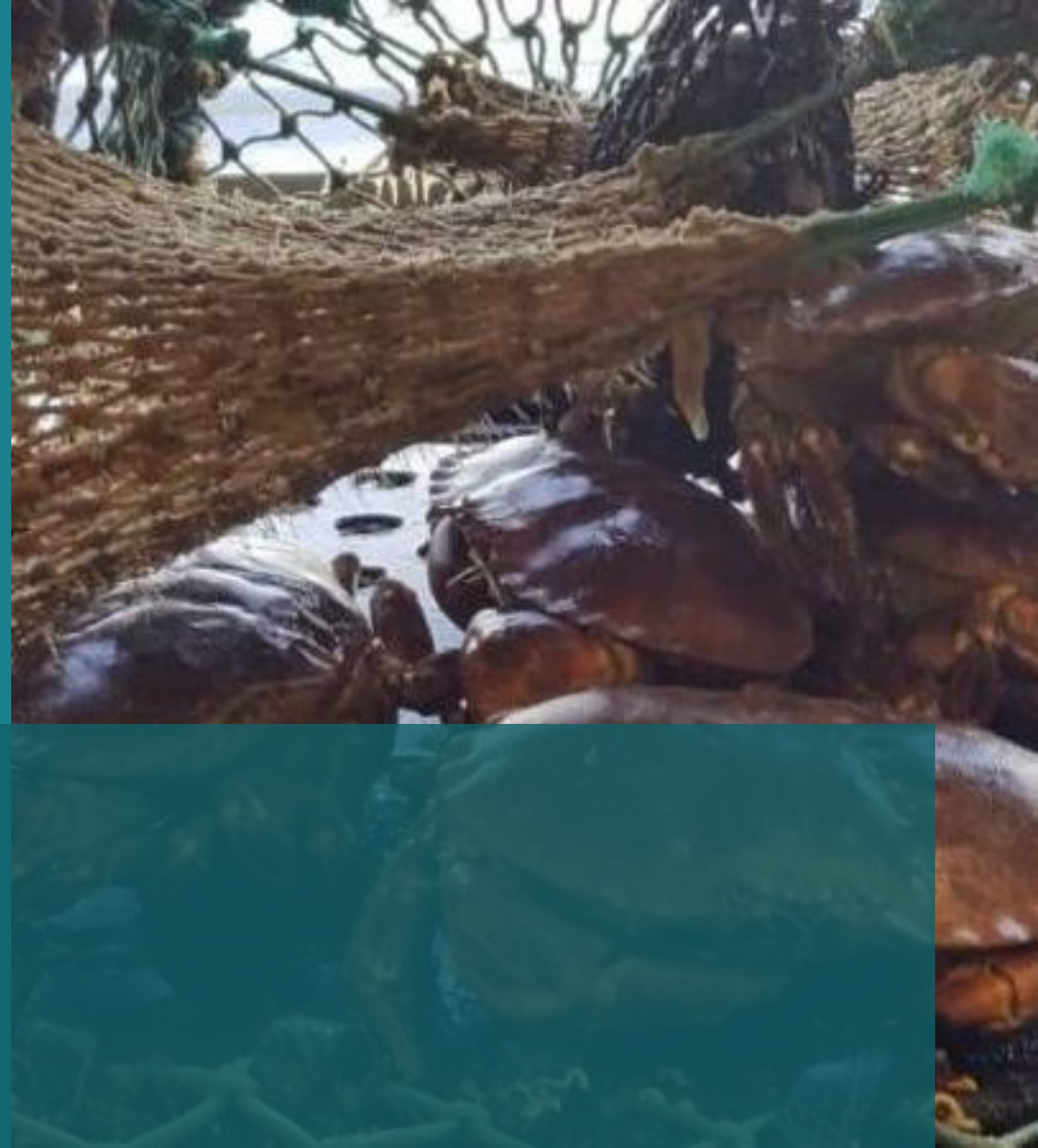
Shellfish Association of Great Britain

#SAGB55

# Eastern Central North Sea brown crab FIP

Alex Caveen (AC Marine Ltd)

SAGB conference, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025



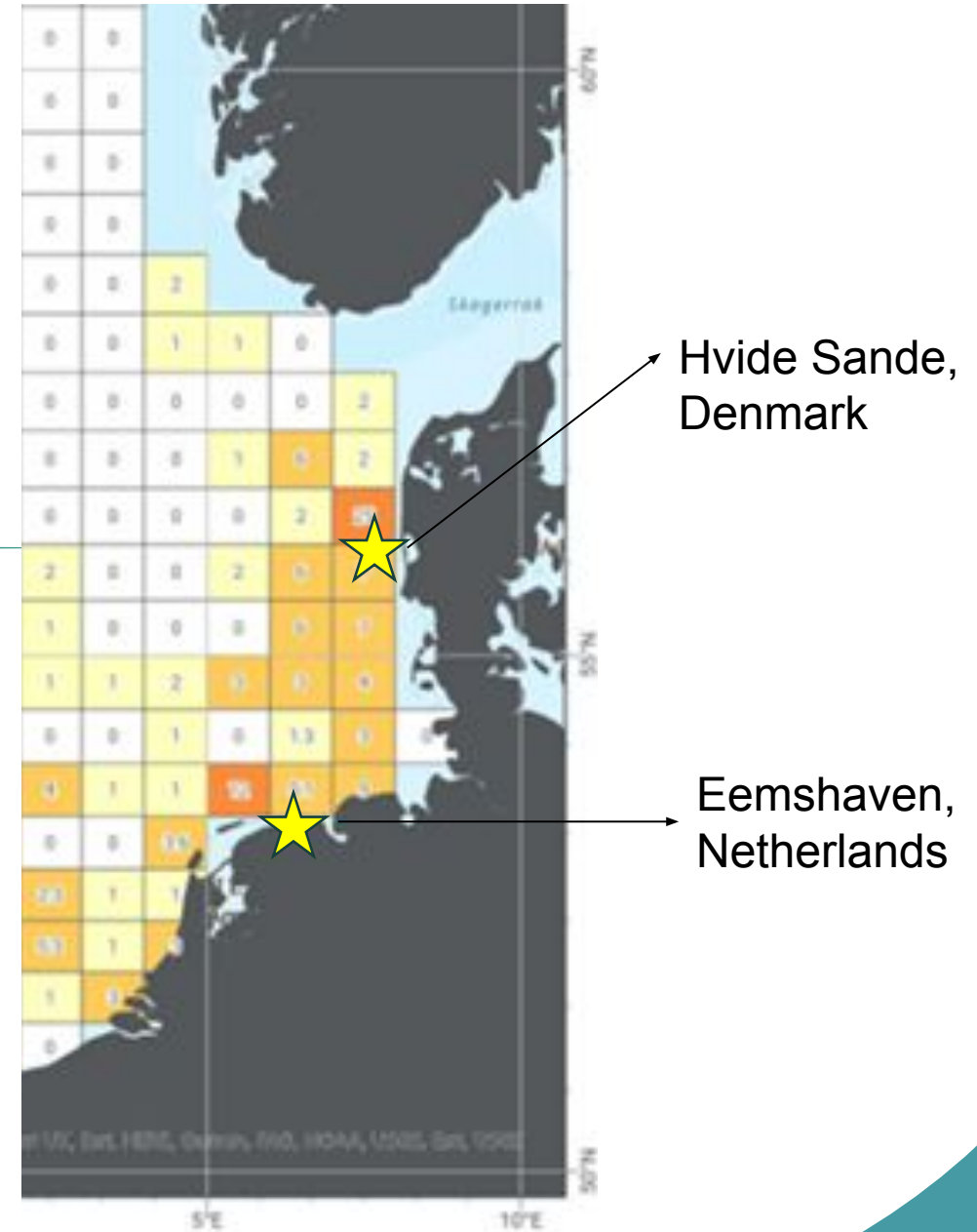
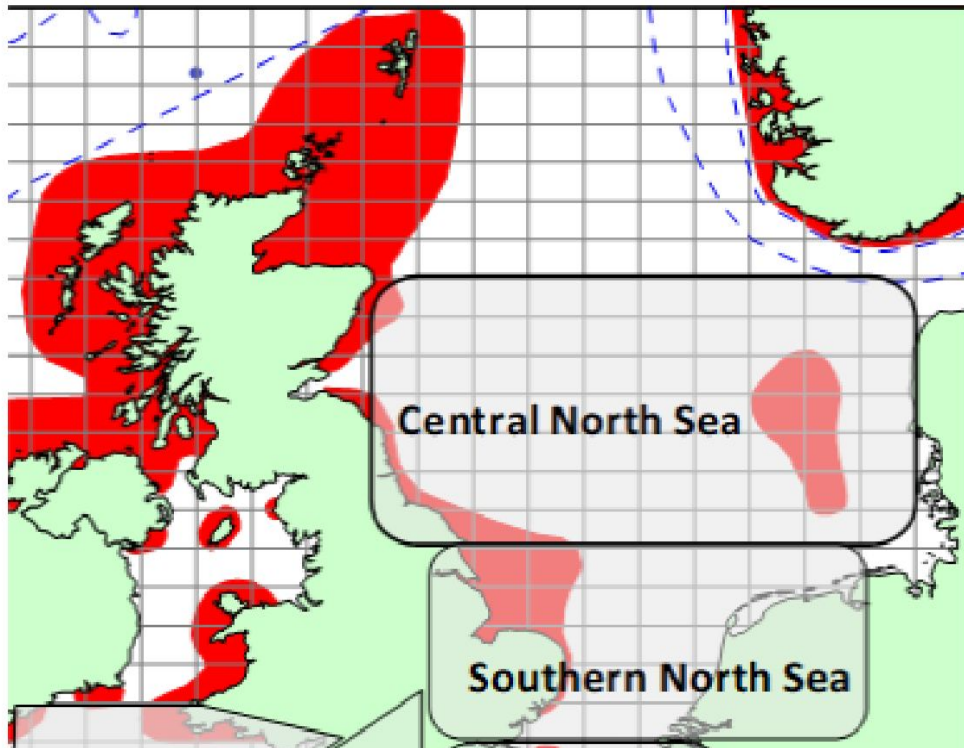


# Eastern Central North Sea FIP

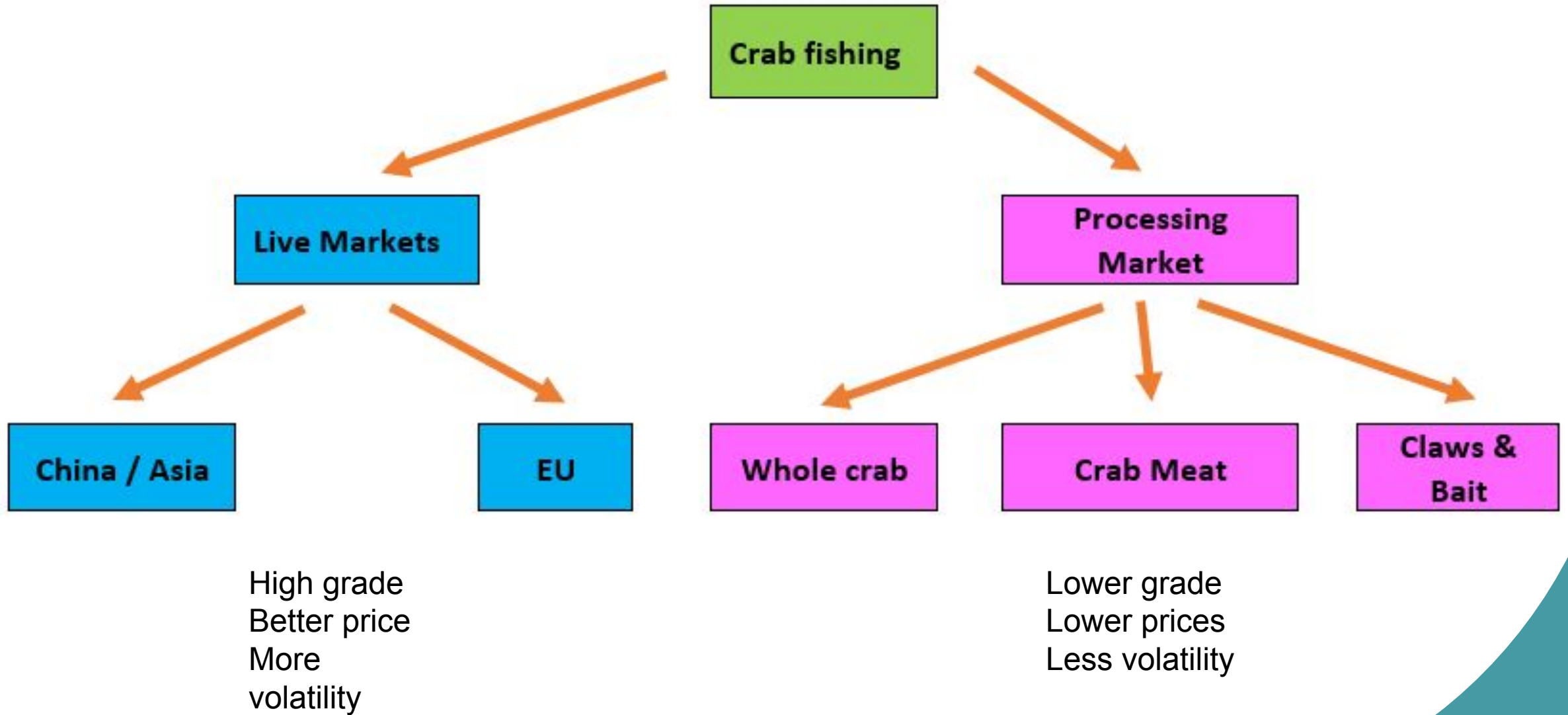
The creation of a demonstrably sustainable fishery to ensure a long term economically viable fishery, opening new markets and demonstrating how vivier boats can lead the way on North Sea Brown Crab sustainability



# The FIP area



# Market context





# FIP information

**A new Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) for brown crab has been set-up in the Eastern Central North Sea.**

New England Seafood International (Blue Sea), Sea Farms and Macduff shellfish along with brown crab vivier vessels operated by Brown and Bright shellfish, McBride Fishing, Ocean Fleet Seafood Europe, and Hitromat have agreed to finance the FIP activities for 2025/26. A few UK retailers and a food service company have also committed to providing financial backing.

The FIP will improve data collection from catching vessels for the purpose of stock assessment and start facilitating discussions with fisheries managers in the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany regarding the development of a harvest strategy for brown crab in the eastern central North Sea.

After 2-years the intent is that the FIP will enter the In-transition to MSC programme.

Further information will be uploaded onto this webpage in due course, including vessel list, MOU, policies and procedures. Please get in touch with the project manager, **Alex Caveen** if you have any questions.



<https://shellfish.org.uk/brown-crab-fip/>

# Preassessment outcomes

Component	Performance Indicator (PI)		Weight	Score
Outcome	1.1.1	Stock status	0.500	60-79
	1.1.2	Stock rebuilding	0.500	<60
Management	1.2.1	Harvest strategy	0.250	60-79
	1.2.2	Harvest control rules & tools	0.250	60-79
	1.2.3	Information & monitoring	0.250	60-79
	1.2.4	Assessment of stock status	0.250	>80

**P1**

Governance and policy	3.1.1	Legal &/or customary framework	0.333	>80
	3.1.2	Consultation, roles & responsibilities	0.333	>80
	3.1.3	Long term objectives	0.333	>80
Fishery specific management system	3.2.1	Fishery specific objectives	0.250	60-79
	3.2.2	Decision making processes	0.250	<60
	3.2.3	Compliance & enforcement	0.250	>80
	3.2.4	Monitoring & management performance evaluation	0.250	<60

**P3**

In-Scope species	2.1.1	Outcome	0.333	60-79
	2.1.2	Management strategy	0.333	<60
	2.1.3	Information/Monitoring	0.333	<60
ETP/Out of Scope Species	2.2.1	Outcome	0.333	60-79
	2.2.2	Management strategy	0.333	<60
	2.2.3	Information/Monitoring	0.333	<60
Habitats	2.3.1	Outcome	0.333	>80
	2.3.2	Management strategy	0.333	60-79
	2.3.3	Information strategy	0.333	>80
Ecosystem	2.4.1	Outcome	0.333	>80
	2.4.2	Management strategy	0.333	>80
	2.4.3	Information	0.333	60-79

**P2**

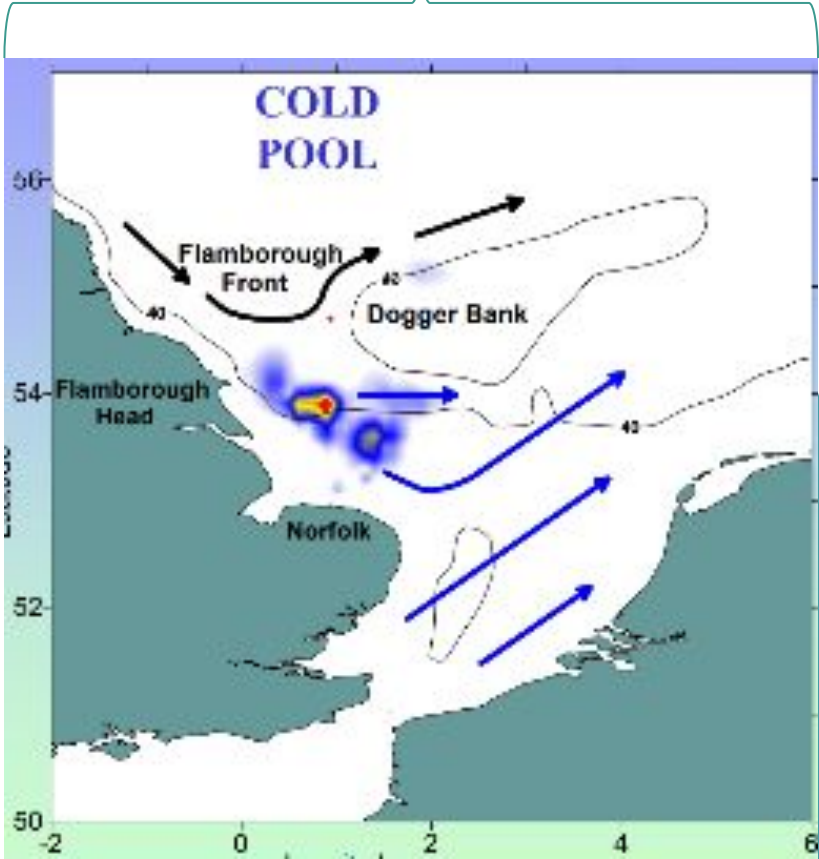


# Stock sustainability challenges

Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)	At the MCRS, around 100% of males and 97% of females landed should be sexually mature.
Discarding	High discard survival assumed to be > 90%.
Exploitation rate	Between the MSY and reference point limit for males and females
Stock size	Between the minimum and MSY reference point for females, at the limit reference point for males
Confidence	Expansion of the fishery may be masking scale of declines in stock

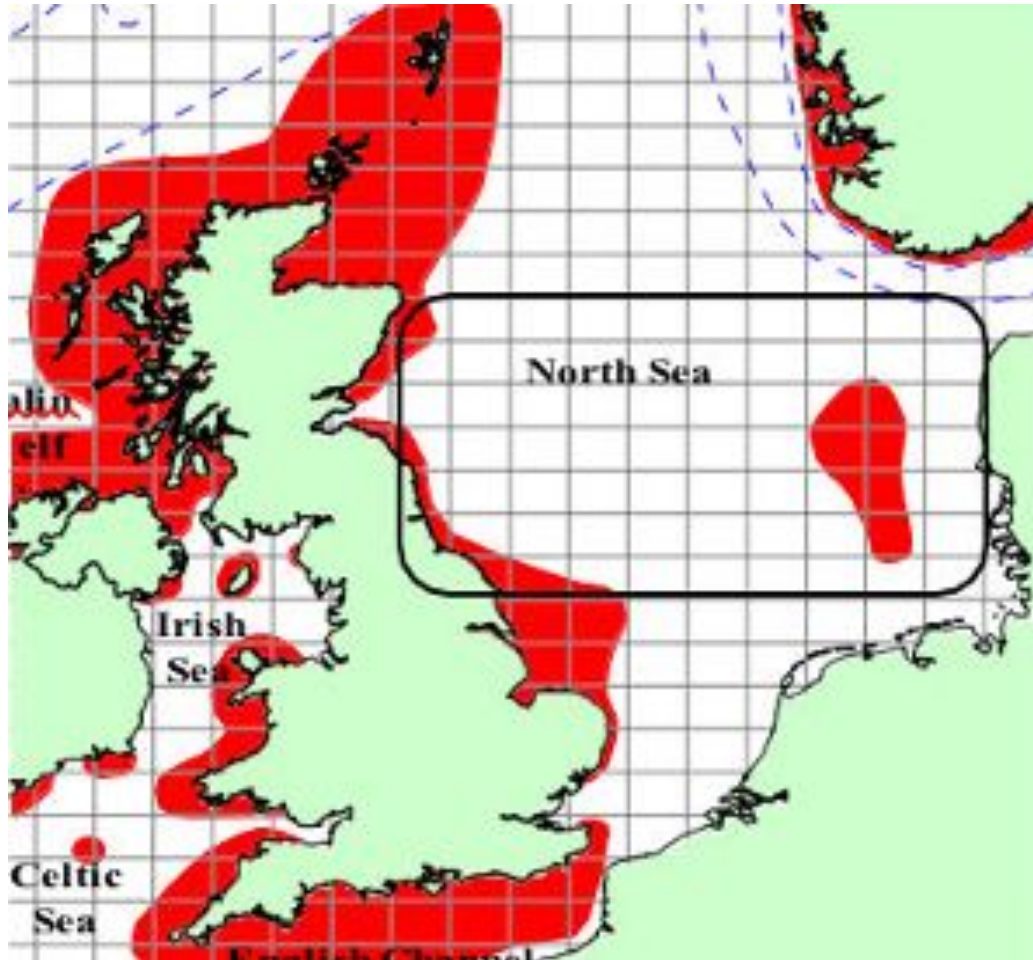
Fishery overexploited, and effort likely increasing

Larval drift from west to east, though stock biology poorly understood





# Management challenges



Fishery straddles the EEZs of Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark

Any development of a harvest strategy would require support from these countries (and crab fishing vessels)

# Key activities for 2025

- Standardised collection of LPUE from each vessel
- Actual CPUE and length-based data to be determined from additional sampling of reference strings
- Synthesis of knowledge on stock biology and oceanographic data to provide further insights into stock dynamics
- Outreach with fisheries scientists and managers in Netherlands, Denmark and Germany, engage with ICES WGCRA B
- Develop social policy, and engage with GGGI to develop protocols for managing ghost / end of life gear and entanglement risks
- **Increase interest and buy-in from the supply chain and key markets**





# Thank you and any questions?

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