An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Report on Quota Balancing of 2021 Fisheries – Demersal & Pelagic Stocks

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Introduction

The Quota Balancing Policies for Demersal and Pelagic Stocks was developed by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine as requested by and with the assistance of the Quota Management Advisory Committee (QMAC).

Quota Balancing is for conservation purposes and to ensure coherence between the landing obligation and Ireland's quota management. The landing obligation (as provided for under Regulation (EU) No.1380/2013, Article 15) is about conservation and measures to align its principles with Ireland's quota management system should follow this premise.

The quota balancing policies for pelagic and demersal stocks set out that where a vessel exceeds its catch limit, the excess catch retained on board and landed will be subject to quota balancing. Quota balancing means that a balancing adjustment (i.e. a deduction) will be made from the catch limit of a future fishing opportunity. The quota balancing system for obligated pelagic species incorporates the application of a multiplying factor similar to that applied to Member States in Article 105 of Regulation (EC) 1224/2009 as amended. This means that the greater the extent of overfishing relative to permitted catch, the greater the balancing adjustment that will be made.

Quota balancing by the Department is independent of any action being considered or taken by the control authorities. The Sea Fisheries Protection Authority's (SFPA) role is limited to furnishing the Department with details of approved pairing arrangements, where relevant, and quality assured landing data so that the Department can implement quota balancing.

Quota Balancing of Demersal Stocks for 2021

The Pilot Quota Balancing Policy for Demersal (Whitefish) Stocks (with technical amendment of August 2019) was implemented on 1st June 2020.

Up to 31 December 2021, 5 stocks were subject to Demersal Quota Balancing:

- Haddock in 6a (HAD/5BC6A.),
- Hake in 6 & 7 (HKE/571214),
- Monkfish in 6 (ANF/56-14),
- Monkfish in 7 (ANF/07.), and
- Whiting in 7b-k (WHG/7X7A-C).

From 01 January 2022, four additional demersal (whitefish) stocks became subject to Quota Balancing:

- Haddock in 6b (HAD/6B1214),
- Megrim in 6 (LEZ/56-14),
- Megrim in 7 (LEZ/07.) and
- Pollack in 7 (POL/07.).

The Pilot Quota Balancing Policy for Demersal Stocks Policy & Information Booklet has been updated accordingly.

In 2021, 344 demersal quota balancing statements and 140 demersal authorisations issued to relevant licence holders.

In the 12 month period, (January to December 2021), a total of 79.82 tonnes of demersal stocks, with an estimated overall value of €237,266, were recouped.

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2021 Summary of Demersal Quota Balancing

Total quantities of relevant demersal stocks quota balanced, per month, in 2021						
Fishery Management Period	**No. of Vessels (issued with PROV and FINAL QB Statements)**	**ANF/56-14** *(tonnes)*	**ANF/07** *(tonnes)*	**HAD/5BC6A** *(tonnes)*	**HKE/571214** *(tonnes)*	**WHG/7X7A-C** *(tonnes)*
January*	13	4.129	2.742	0.582		
February*	7	1.002	0.826			
March*	13	0.660	3.676	1.384	1.260	
April*	11	1.224	7.159			
May*	10	2.830	1.333		1.197	
June	22	0.141	7.598	3.040	1.457	1.575
July	18	0.480	3.219		5.775	1.801
August	16	2.625	3.864			4.712
September	16		6.739	0.642	0.247	
October	26	0.458	16.038	0.707	1.320	2.901
November	17	0.198	11.679	0.398	1.438	
December	3		0.737		0.516	
	Total	**13.747**	**65.610**	**6.753**	**13.210**	**10.989**

Total quantities of balancing adjustments recouped, per month, in 2021						
Fishery Management Period	**No. of Vessels (issued with PROV and FINAL QB Statements)**	**ANF/56-14 *(tonnes)***	**ANF/07 *(tonnes)***	**HAD/5BC6A *(tonnes)***	**HKE/571214 *(tonnes)***	**WHG/7X7A-C *(tonnes)***
January	6	0.275	2.470			
February	7	0.174	2.734			
March	5	0.946	3.765			
April	12	4.129	2.742	0.582		
May	7	1.002	0.826			
June	12	0.607	3.676	1.384	1.260	
July	9	0.238	6.469			
August	12	3.869	2.018		1.197	
September	21	0.141	6.238	3.040	1.176	1.575
October	20	0.480	3.221		4.812	1.801
November	15	2.625	3.769			4.712
December	14		4.979	0.642	0.247	
	Total	**14.486**	**42.920**	**5.648**	**8.692**	**8.088**

Quota Balancing of Pelagic Stocks for 2021

Background

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine implemented a pilot quota balancing scheme for pelagic stocks, commencing on 1st January 2018. In the period since 2018, amendments and clarifications were introduced by the Minister to address specific issues that arose.

All such amendments and clarifications were combined in July 2020 to establish a settled policy for the quota balancing of pelagic stocks, including pelagic stocks fished without an authorisation and landed in excess of by-catch allowance, which were also subject to quota balancing for the calendar year 2020.

Quota Balancing of 2021 Authorised Pelagic Fisheries

As of the 16th May 2022, 442 quota balancing statements have issued to vessels who have been authorised to fish in 2021 pelagic fisheries, with over 5,899 tonnes quota balanced and re-distributed at an estimated value of over €3.5m.

Final Quota Balancing Statements have issued for following 2021 authorised fisheries:

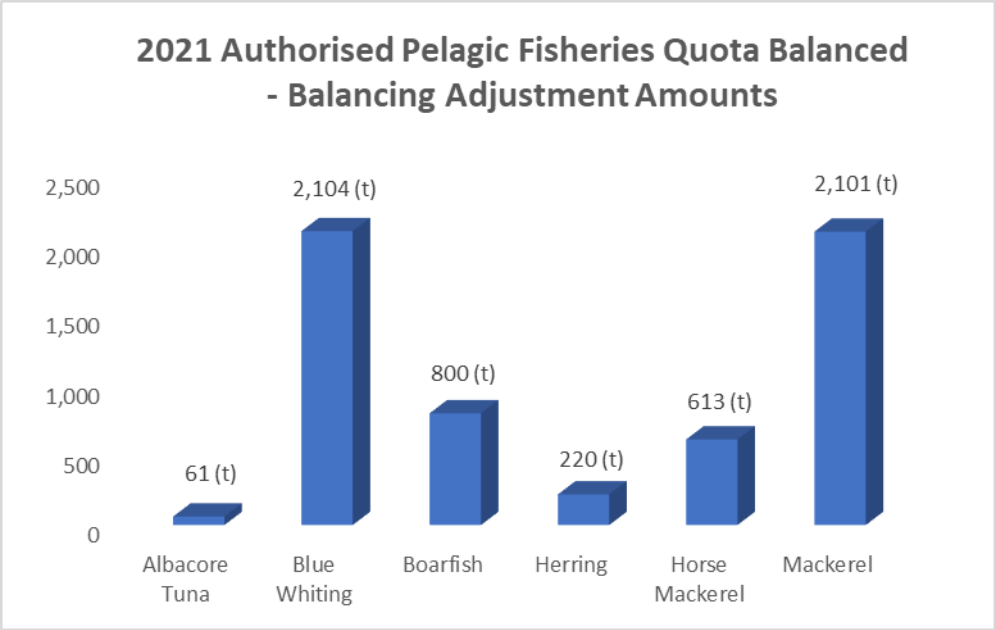
- 2021 Mackerel RSW Pelagic Segment Fishery & 2021 Mackerel Polyvalent Tier 1 & Tier 2 Fishery,
- 2021 Horse Mackerel 29 Fishery, 2021 Horse Mackerel Polyvalent Spring & Autumn Fisheries,
- 2021 Blue Whiting RSW Pelagic Segment & Polyvalent Segment Fisheries
- 2021 Irish Sea Herring Fishery
- 2021 Atlanto Scandian Herring Fishery
- 2021 Albacore Tuna Fishery
- 2021 North West Herring Scientific Spring Fishery
- 2021 North West Herring Scientific Autumn Fishery
- 2021 Celtic Sea Herring Fishery Period 1 and Period 2

In relation to the 2021 Albacore Tuna Fishery, Quota Balancing statements issued only to vessels where quality approved trip data received from the SFPA indicated that a balancing adjustment was necessary.

2021 Celtic Sea Herring Sentinel Fishery Periods 1 & 2 have yet to be quota balanced with approximately 16 vessels eligible for quota balancing.

Table 1 gives a breakdown of the balancing adjustments per stock quota balanced for 2021 authorised fisheries.

Table 1:



Quota Balancing of Vessels that Landed Pelagic Stocks Without a Valid Authorisation/Notification for the Calendar Year 2021

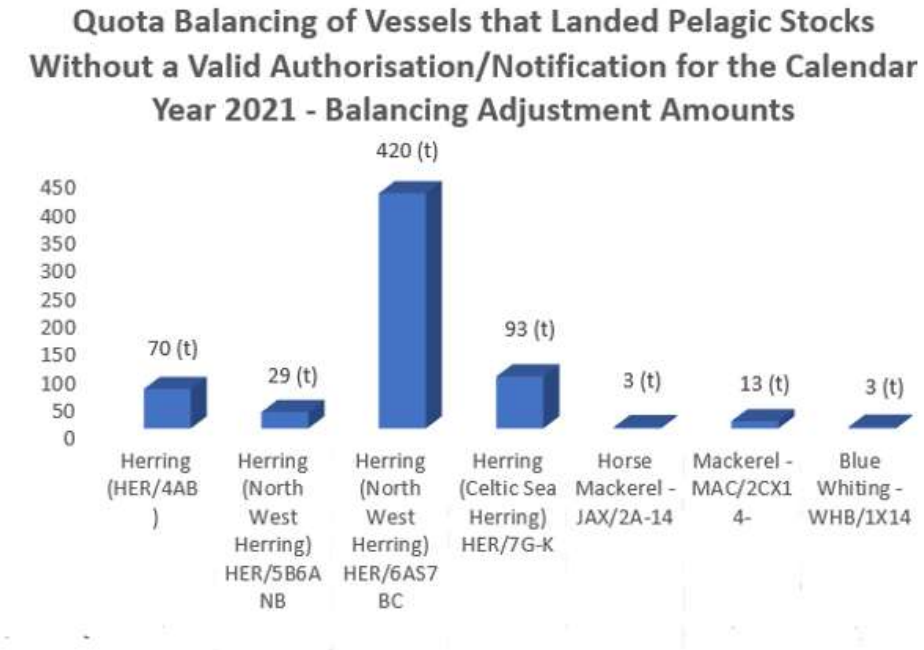
Where a vessel fishes a pelagic stock without an authorisation, the catch landed in excess of by-catch allowance will be subject to quota balancing. The greater the instance per stock that a vessel lands a pelagic fish stock without a valid authorisation/notification, the greater the balancing adjustment that will be made (a multiplying factor will apply).

Where a vessel has landings of a stock(s) under a monitoring quota for which it does not hold a valid authorisation, a higher multiplier will apply to each instance.

22 vessels were issued with Final Quota Balancing Statements for landing Pelagic Stocks without a valid Authorisation/Notification for the calendar year 2021 with over 630 tonnes quota balanced.

Table 2 gives a breakdown of the pelagic stocks for which quota balancing was applied.

Table 2:



Since the commencement of quota balancing of pelagic stocks in 1 January 2018 to the mid May 2022, an overall estimated 20,713 tonnes of pelagic stocks have been quota balanced and re-distributed to an estimated value of €13.3m. See Table 3 & Table 4.

Table 3:

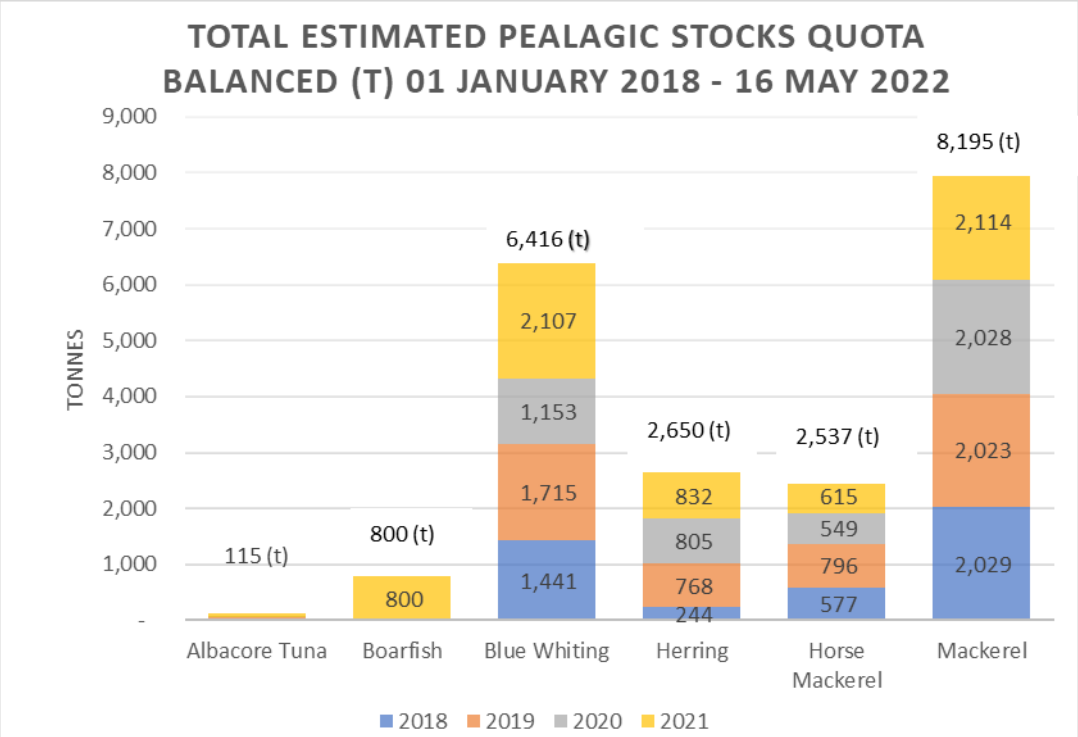
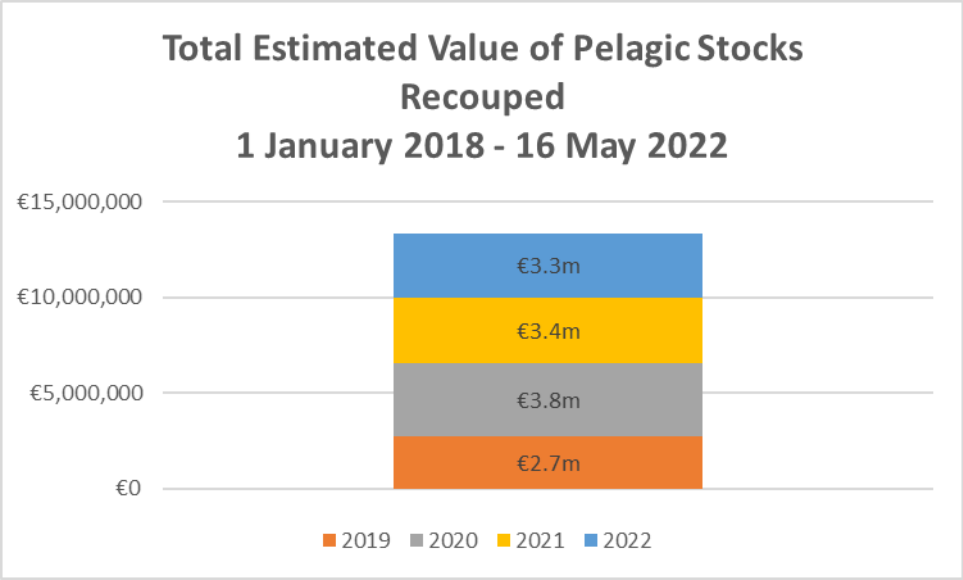


Table 4:



Recoupment of Quota Balancing Adjustments for Landings of a Pelagic Stock without a Valid Authorisation/Notification, in Excess of By-catch Allowance

In accordance with the Minister's consolidated Quota Balancing Policy for Pelagic Stocks, the Department, in 2021, sought the views of the Quota Management Advisory Committee (QMAC) in specific circumstances where a vessel has a balancing adjustment for a pelagic stock that was landed without a valid authorisation/notification in excess of by-catch allowance. These specific circumstances relate to the scenario where a vessel is unlikely to receive a catch limit of that particular pelagic stock in this calendar year or the next calendar year and therefore consideration is given to recouping that balancing adjustment from another pelagic stock, where it is available for that vessel.

Taking into consideration the industry views, the Minister has now approved the procedure for recoupment of such Quota Balancing Adjustments as follows:

Where a vessel incurs a balancing adjustment, following quota balancing of pelagic landings without a valid authorisation/notification, in excess of allowable by-catch:

- recoupment will be applied if the vessel is authorised in the fishery, including if the balancing adjustment is for a stock under a monitoring quota as is currently undertaken;
- as per the policy, where a vessel has a balancing adjustment to be recouped, its catch limit for the fishery would be set at a minimum of 20% of the expected catch limit in order to collect some or all of the balancing adjustment, including for a stock under a monitoring quota.

Where a vessel is unlikely to receive a catch limit of that particular stock within the calendar year or the following year, consideration could be given to recouping that balancing adjustment from another stock within the calendar year or the following calendar year where that is available for that vessel.

Where consideration is given to recouping a balancing adjustment from another stock within the calendar year or the following calendar year, the following procedure will apply:

- the transfer of the balancing adjustment accrued to an area where the stock is under a monitoring quota will not be permitted;

• the order of deduction in recouping the balancing adjustment from another pelagic stock of a similar value will be as follows:

1. Irish Sea Herring (HER/07A/MM)
2. Atlanto Scandian Herring (HER/1/2-)
3. Horse Mackerel (JAX/2A-14)
4. Blue Whiting (WHB/1X14)
5. Mackerel (MAC/2CX14)

• If the recoupment of a balancing adjustment cannot be made from a pelagic stock code, consideration will be given to recouping the balancing adjustment from a **demersal stock code** of a similar value (e.g. Whiting in Area 7 B-K). The views/recommendation of the QMAC will be taken into account in this respect.