

Fisheries Information Notice 4 of 2016 Protection of Stocks in the Celtic Sea



The Sea Fisheries Protection Authority has issued Fisheries Information Notice 4 of 2016 entitled “Protection of Stocks in the Celtic Sea”.

LEGISLATION

References:

EU 850/98	Conservation of fishery resources through technical measures for the protection of juveniles of marine organisms
EU 737 of 2012	Protection of Stocks in Celtic Sea
EU 741-2015	(amdt 737-2012) Celtic Sea TCM
SI 231 of 2015	SEA-FISHERIES (CELTIC SEA TECHNICAL MEASURES) REGULATIONS 2015

Determination No 23 of the need for an Authorisation for certain Fish Stocks.

Introduction

In 2012 the European Commission introduced additional conservation measures requiring the deployment of square mesh panels in trawl and seine gears on vessels operating in the Celtic Sea to effect conservation of the haddock and whiting stocks in that area. The measures have been modified with effect from 29th May 2015.

Modifications:

A vessel operating with a mesh size of between 70-119mm is required to have a square mesh panel (SMP) of 120mm.

Exemptions

The requirement for use of square mesh panels does not apply to vessels:

- operating gear of mesh size greater than 120mm
- Beam trawls

Applicable area and effective date

With effect from 29th May 2015 all fishing vessels operating bottom trawls or seine nets in ICES areas VIIg & VIIf and those parts of VIIj & VIIh which lie north of latitude 50°N and east of longitude 11°W, as shown by the shaded area in (fig.1) are required to have a 120mm SMP inserted.

Derogations

The 2015 regulation provides for a number of derogations on the type, size and placement of the Square Mesh Panel (SMP) or alternative. Any vessel wishing to avail of the derogation may do so if authorised.

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Dept. for Agriculture Food and the Marine has published Determination 23.

Fish Stock or Group of Fish Stocks	Type of Boat
All stocks in International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) divisions VIIIf and that part of VIIg that lie east of 8° W	All vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines not using a cod-end mesh size of between 70 and 119 mm with a square-meshed panel of a mesh size of at least 120 millimetres

Derogation in the Celtic Sea East of 8° West

To avail of this derogation a fishing vessel using a cod-end mesh size of between 70 and 119 mm whose catch in any fishing trip in the area east of 8° West in the Celtic Sea comprises at least 55 % whiting may use a square-mesh panel of a mesh size of at least 100 millimetres if they deploy bottom trawls or seines of a single mesh size equal to or larger than 100 millimetres.

Technical measures for square mesh panels.**Rules on the mesh size of the Square Mesh Panel (SMP)**

Fishing vessels using a Cod end mesh size of 70-119mm shall use SMP of at least 120mm.

Rules on placement of the mesh size of the Square Mesh Panel

The SMP shall be placed into the top panel of the Cod end, the rearmost edge of the square mesh panel which is the part of the square mesh panel closest to the cod line; shall be no more than 9 meters from the Cod line.

By way of derogation to the rules on the placement of the SMP, the square-mesh panel may be placed farther from the cod-end if a different combination of gear and device is assessed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) as having the same or higher selectivity characteristics for cod, haddock and whiting. This derogation is limited to vessels which must have been issued with a **specific fishing authorisation** by their flag Member State prior to going to sea.

Alternative to the Square Mesh Panel

*By way of derogation, fishing vessels using a cod-end mesh size of between 70 and 119 mm may use, instead of a square-mesh panel of a mesh size of at least 120 millimetres, a gear or device assessed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) as having the same or higher selectivity characteristics for cod, haddock and whiting. This derogation is limited to vessels which must have been issued with a **specific fishing authorisation** by their flag Member State prior to going to sea.*

Technical rules SMP**The rules for SMP are as established – main technical regulation 850/98**

The requirements for square mesh panels under Art 7(2) of EC Reg 850/98 will also apply to the now required square mesh panels in the Celtic Sea, namely that the square mesh panel:

- Shall not be obstructed in any way by either internal or external attachments;
- Shall be at least three metres in length except when incorporated into nets towed by vessels of less than 112 kilowatts, when it must be of at least two metres in length;
- Shall be constructed of knotless netting or of netting constructed with non-slip knots, and shall be inserted in such a way that the meshes remain fully open at all times while fishing;
- Shall be constructed so that the number of meshes in the anterior row of meshes of the panel is equal to or greater than the number of meshes in the posterior row of meshes in the panel.

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In addition to the above:

- in any net in which a square-meshed panel is inserted in an un-tapered portion of the net, there shall be at most five open diamond meshes between each panel side and the adjacent selvedge's of the net.
- in any net in which a square-meshed panel is inserted, wholly or partially, into a tapered portion of the net there shall be at most five open diamond meshes between the posterior row of meshes in the square-meshed panel and the adjacent selvedge's of the net.

Celtic Sea

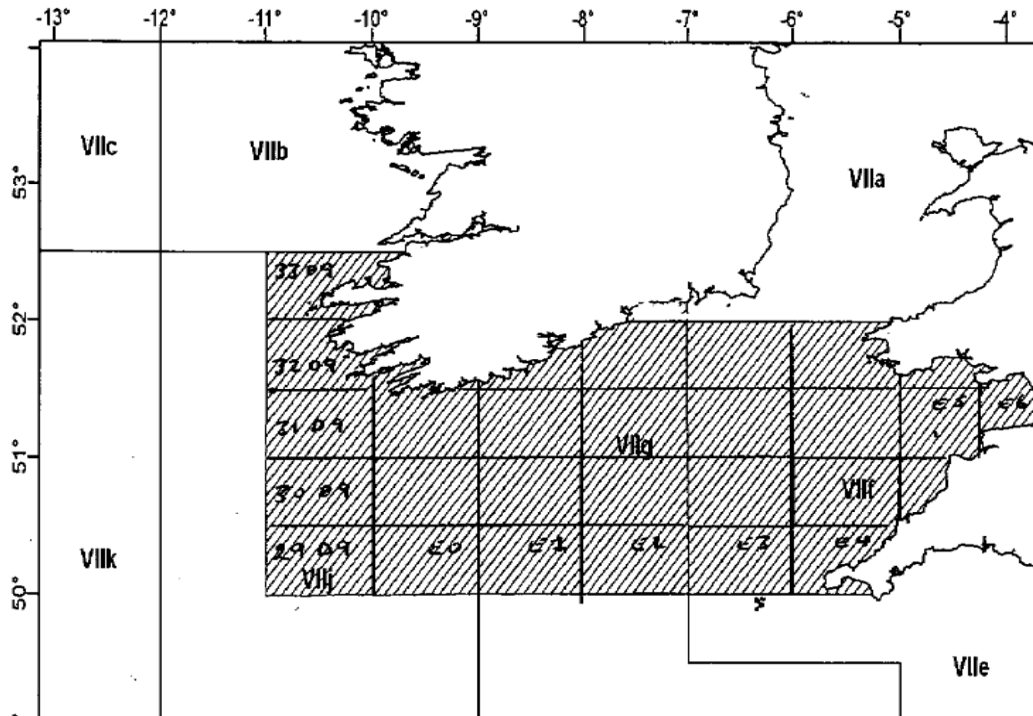


Fig.1

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