



THE FUTURE OF MSC CERTIFIED COD

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2026



AGENDA

- MSC & whitefish overview
- Northeast Arctic cod: Challenges & Opportunities
- Canadian cod: A Recovery Story
- Market perspectives: The Future of Cod
- Cava and Cod





Whitefish and (especially) cod in the MSC program

Jay Lugar, Head of Fisheries Outreach

23 April 2026 – Seafood Expo Global, Barcelona



The MSC has set an ambitious target of engaging over a third of the global wild seafood catch in our programme by 2030. We believe that is not only achievable but also essential.

Main take home

1

Whitefish category affirmed MSC's position in the global fishery

2

Whitefish "proved the concept" of seafood sustainability labels

3

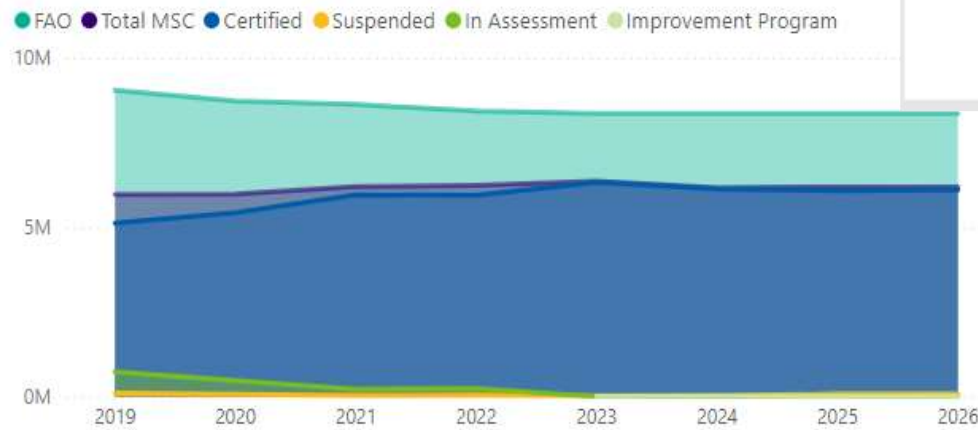
Cod is second largest whitefish by catch in MSC after pollock



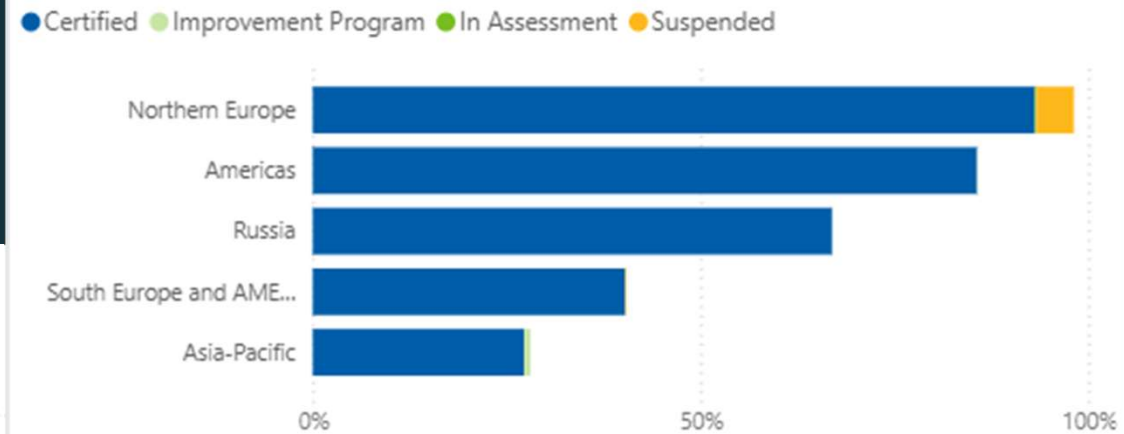
Whitefish in the MSC Program

- 6.11 M metric tonnes of MSC certified catch
- 223 engaged fisheries including 2 in MSC Improvement Program

Historical MSC marine capture compared to FAO marine capture

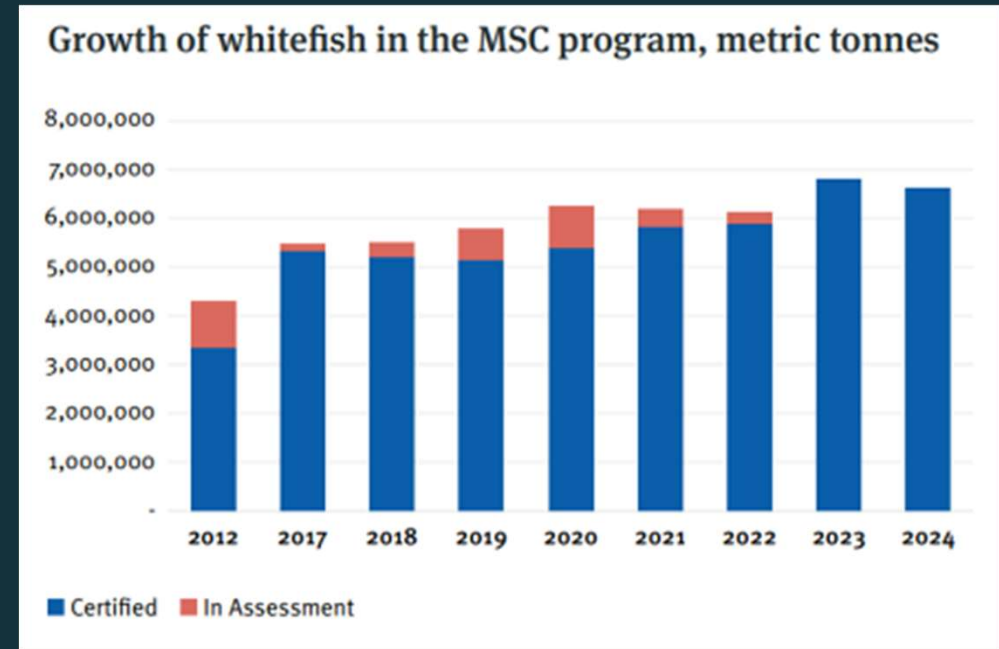
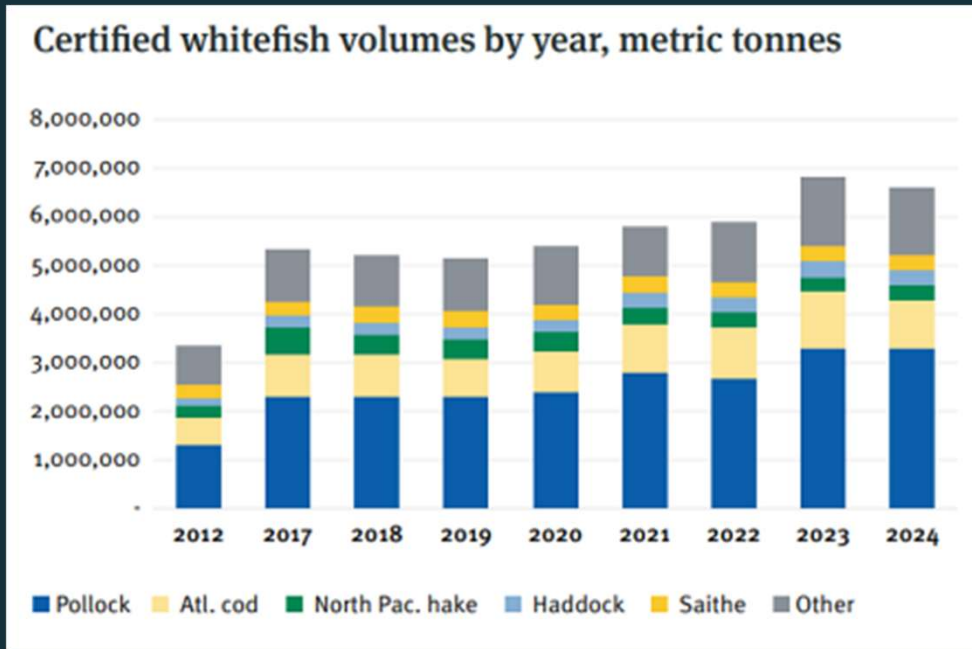


Latest MSC Capture Percentage of FAO by Vessel Country and Catch Status



- Over 70% of global catch engaged
- 66 species in total
- 43% of catch engaged in MSC

Global MSC whitefish fisheries



- Pollock is nearly 50% of whitefish in MSC. Cod was 15-20% until recent drop to 11%



(Source: Page 5 in the 2025 MSC Whitefish Yearbook: [msc-whitefish-yearbook-2025.pdf](https://www.msc.com/whitefish-yearbook-2025.pdf))

And now to cod – why cod?

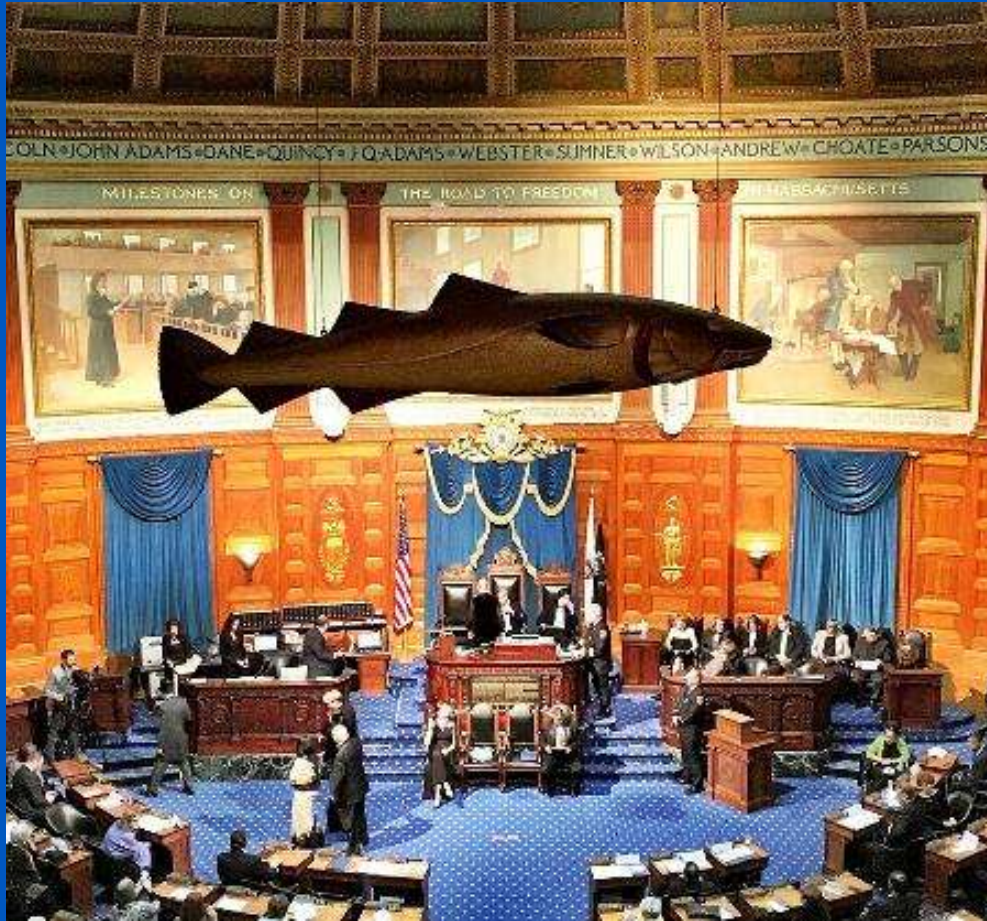
Cod is iconic in many country markets – it's history and culture.

- MSC in the UK witnessed this first hand when North Sea cod became certified and especially when it lost its certification.

In eastern North America this is also true.

- The State of Massachusetts honours its early dependence on cod with “Sacred Cod”: a 4-foot wooden effigy hanging there since 1727.
- In Newfoundland & Labrador in Canada you may also know they have a long history with cod, but in fact their history is with “fish” because this is how they refer to cod -- merely and only as “fish.”
- Tor is going to speak about this in Norway too.

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Source: Wikipedia.org

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And now to cod – why cod?

Cod is iconic in many cultures.

- MSC in the UK became certified

In eastern North America

- The State of Massachusetts has a "Sacred Cod" since 1727.
- In Newfoundland, they have a long history with cod because this is the main industry.
- Tor is going to be a fisherman.



Source: Quinlan Bros. Ltd

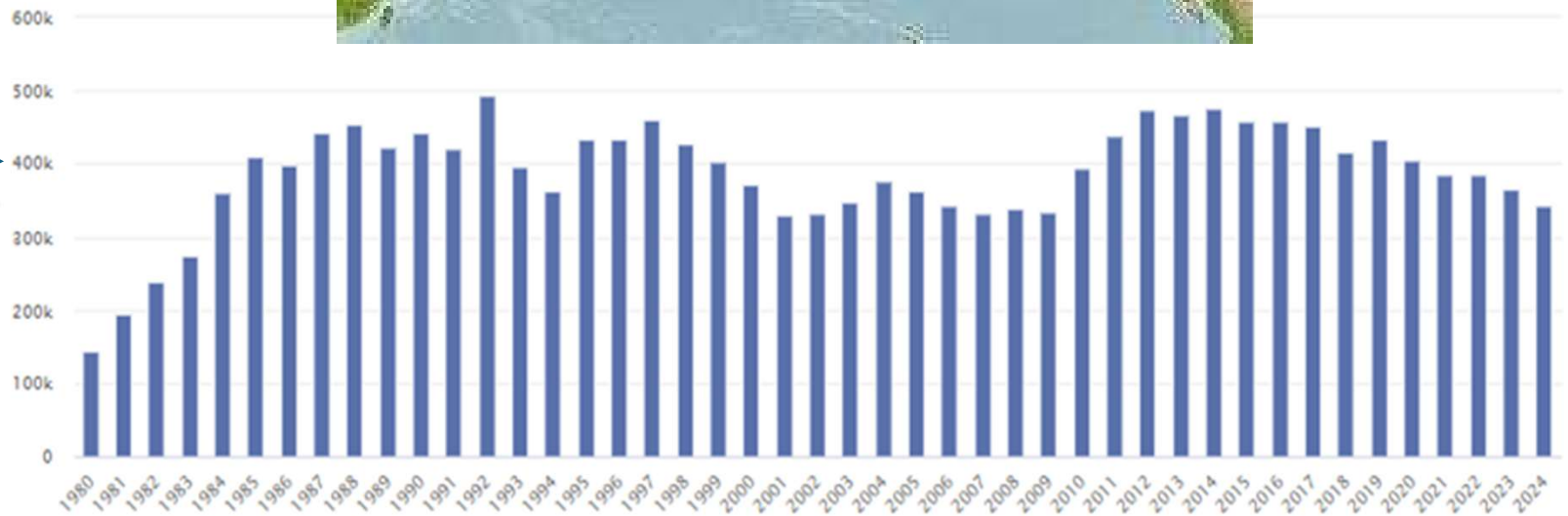
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Pacific cod distribution and global catch history



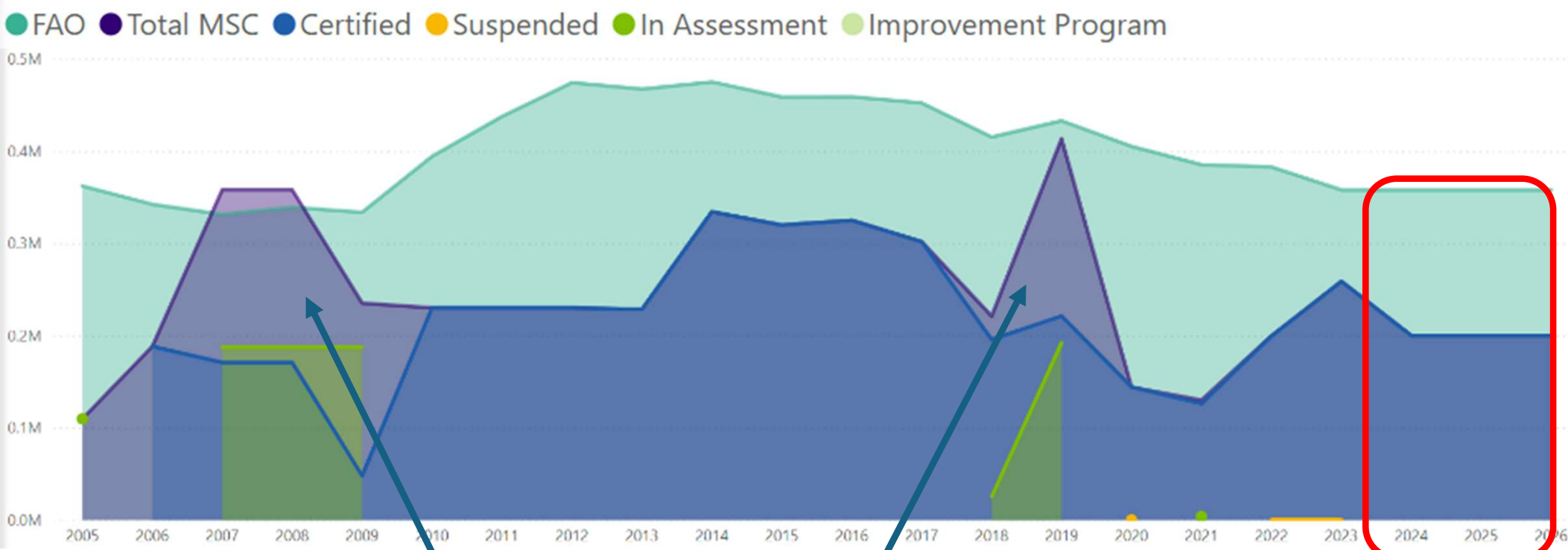
400 k mt →



Global capture production of Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*) in tonnes from 1950 to 2024, [FAO](#)

Pacific cod engaged in MSC and FAO capture

73% = MSC engaged portion of FAO capture (2023)



Anomaly with in-assessment catch categorization

Updates not yet received

MSC certified Pacific cod fisheries, incl withdrawn

Western Bering Sea
Pacific cod and Pacific
halibut longline
(2022 certified)
33,000 – 45,000 mt in
recent years

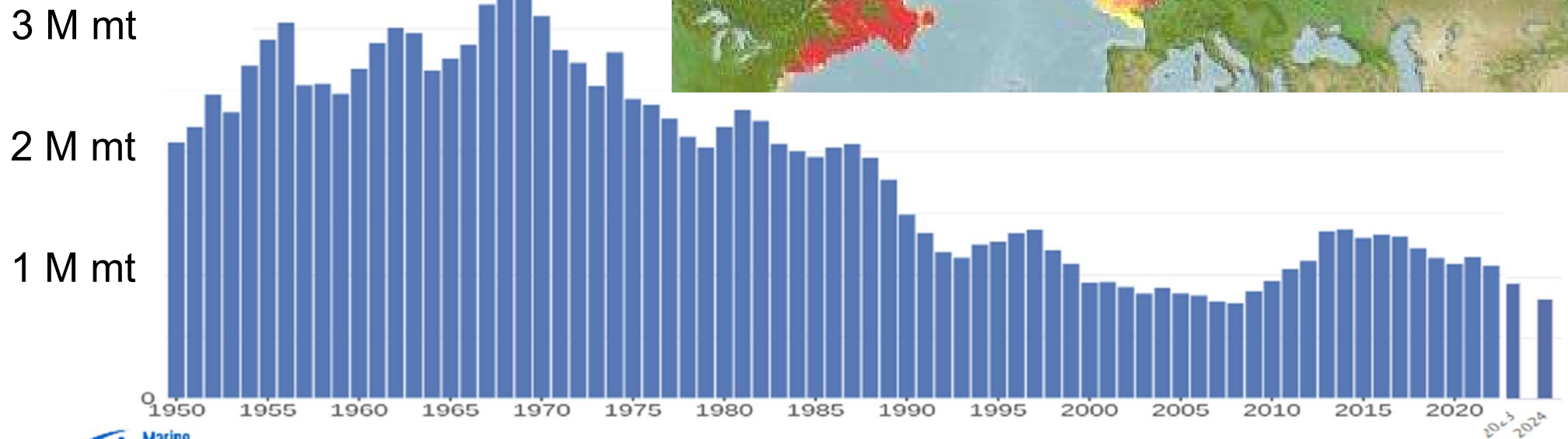
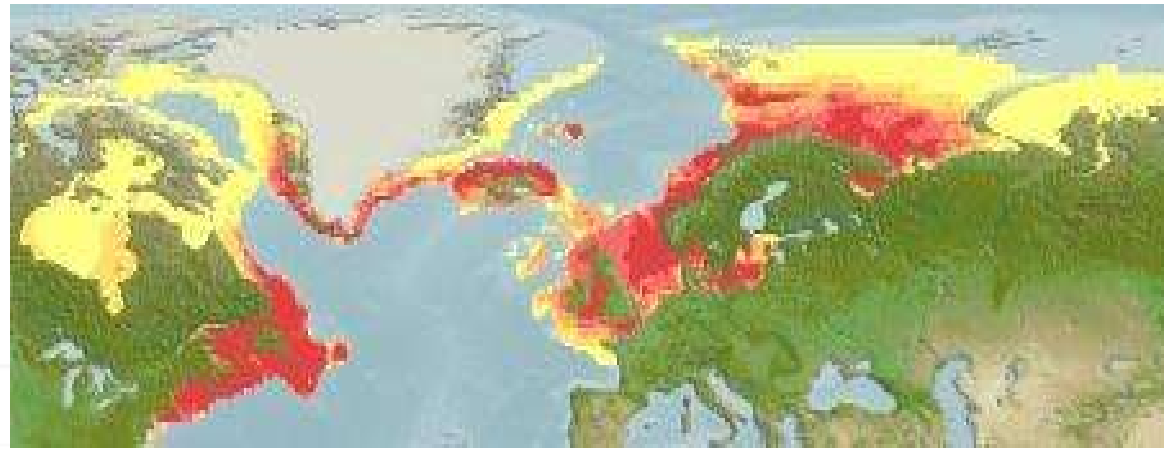
KZB-herring JSC Western
Bering Sea and East
Kamchatka Pacific cod
(2019 certified)
~2900 to 23,000 in recent
years

BSAI and GOA
Pacific cod
(2010 certified)
~108 k mt in 2024-6

US West Coast limited
entry groundfish trawl
(UoC withdrawn 2020)



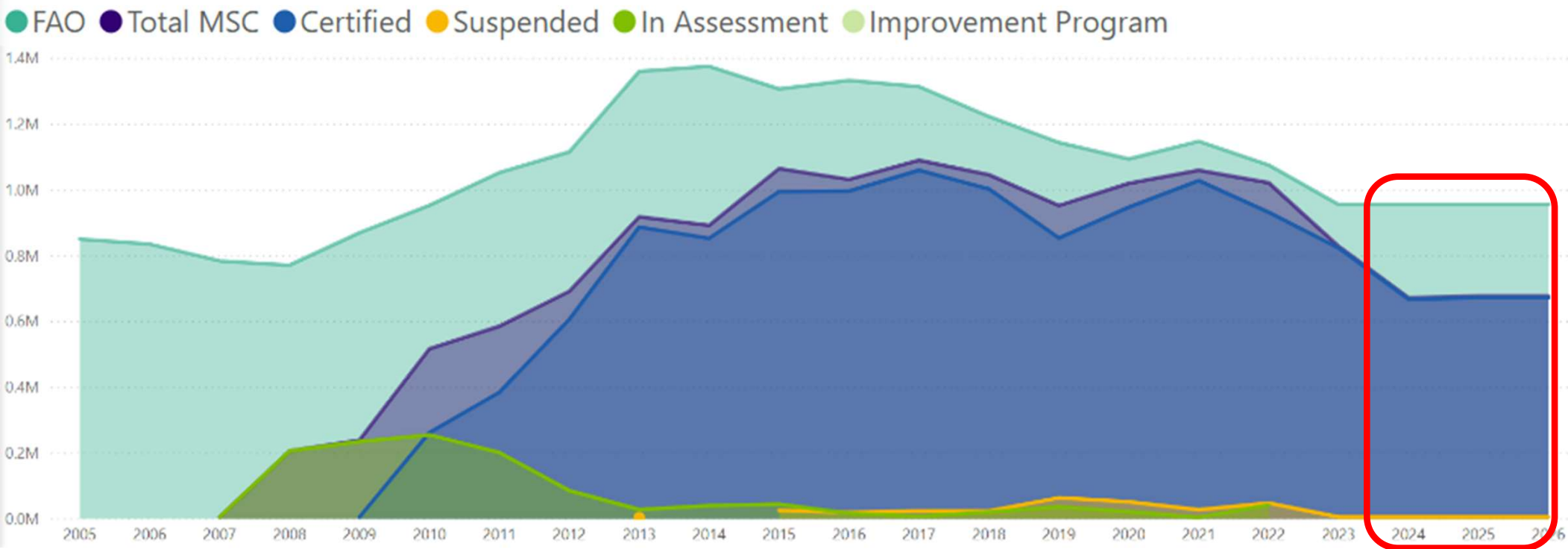
Atlantic cod distribution and global catch history



Global capture production of Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*) in million tonnes from 1950 to 2024, [FAO](#)

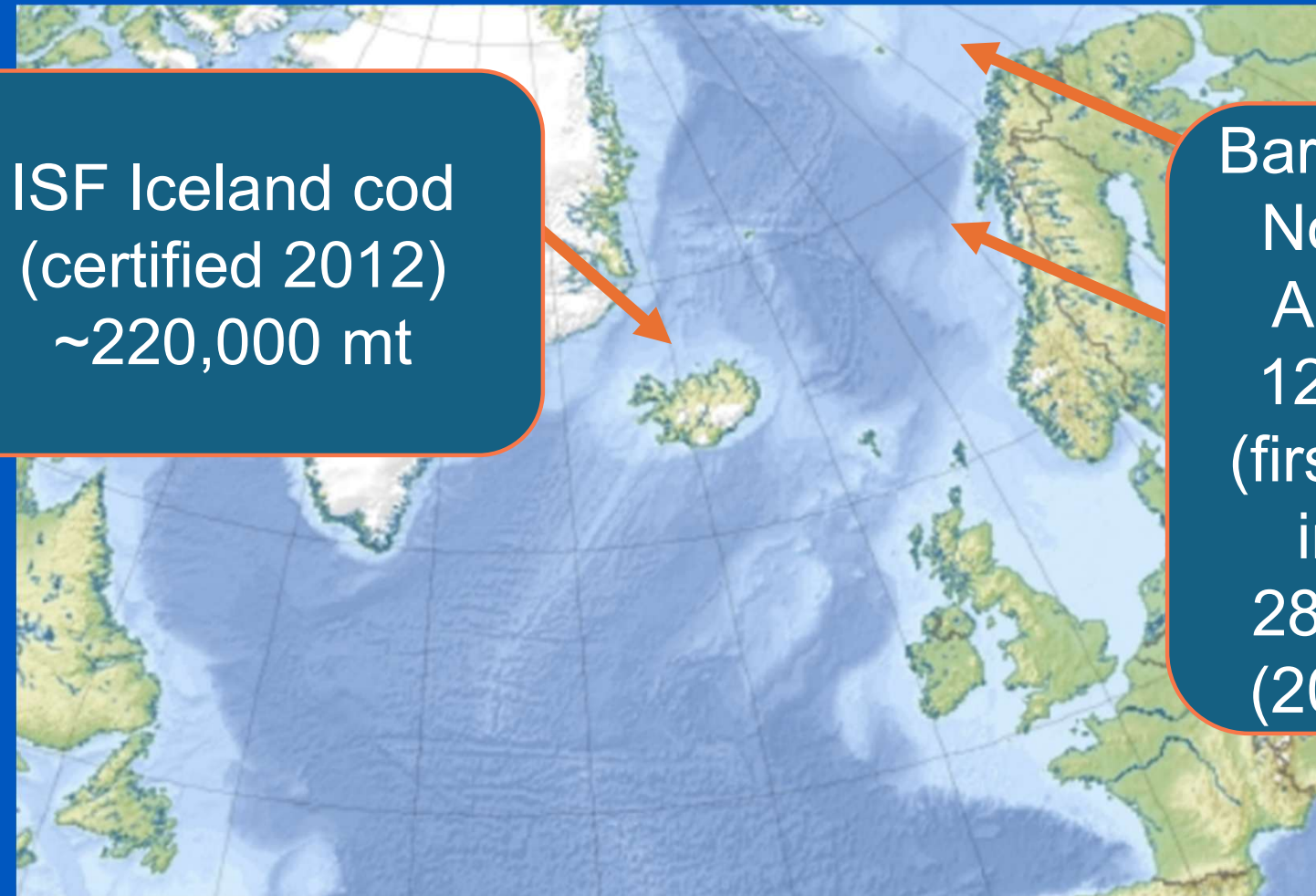
Atlantic cod engaged in MSC and FAO cod capture

86% = MSC engaged portion of FAO capture (2023)



Updates not yet received

MSC Certified Atlantic cod fisheries



ISF Iceland cod
(certified 2012)
~220,000 mt

Barents Sea /
North East
Arctic cod
12 fisheries
(first certified
in 2009)
285,000 mt
(2026 TAC)

MSC certified Barents / Norwegian Seas cod

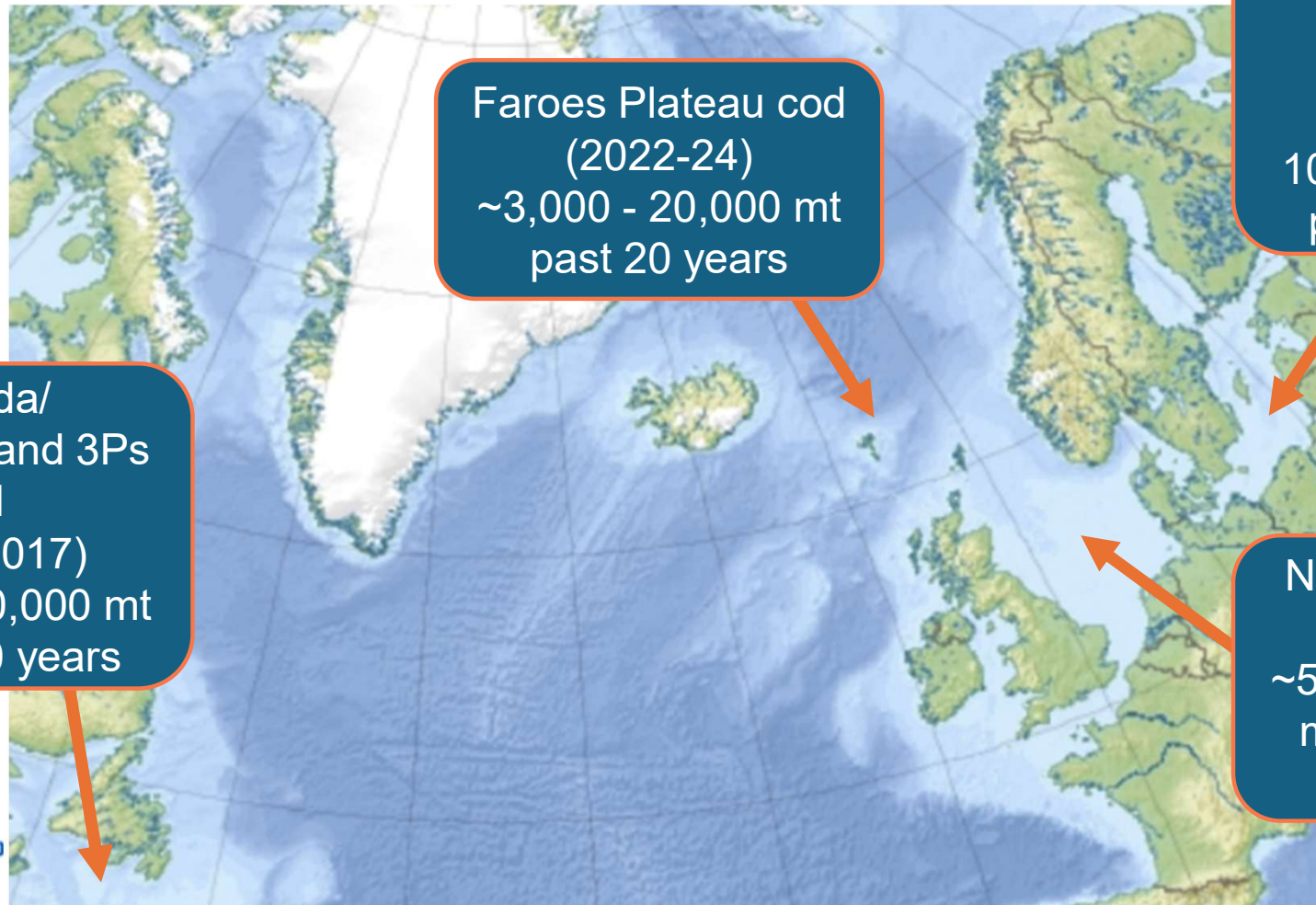
Fishery name	Country	Recent Catch (2023)
Norway North East Arctic cod	Norway	161,430
Barents Sea cod, haddock and saithe	Russia	108,071
FIUN Barents & Norwegian Seas cod and haddock	Russia	96,278
GELA Ltd North East Arctic cod, haddock and saithe	Russia	3,559
Murmanseld 2 Barents Sea cod and haddock	Russia	11,996
North-West Fishing Consortium Norwegian & Barents Seas cod, haddock & saithe	Russia	27,409
Estonia North East Arctic cold water prawn and cod	Estonia	3,275
FISF Faroe Islands North East Arctic cod, haddock and saithe	Faeroe Is	15,706
Greenland cod, haddock and saithe trawl fishery	Greenland	2,994
North Atlantic cod and associated species demersal fishery	Spain, UK	8,476
UK Fisheries Ltd/DFFU/Doggerbank Northeast Arctic cod, haddock and saithe	UK, Germany	18,645

The Future – What's coming or potential?

Fishery	Country	Appx. Catch (mt)
Canada 2J3KL Northern Cod	Canada	40,000 - 75,000
Greenland cod (east and west)	Greenland	~30,000
NAFO 3M cod	EU countries	15,000

Fisheries in FIPs		
Canada Newfoundland 3Ps	Canada	1,500 - 20,000
UK North Sea cod and whiting – trawl and seine (inactive)	UK	5,000 - 10,000
Others		
Return of previously MSC certified fisheries	(next slide)	

Return of withdrawn Atlantic cod fisheries?





THANK YOU