



North-East Atlantic Commission

*Joint statement on behalf of the European Union and
Norway regarding the management of the Fisheries in the
Teno Watercourse*

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management of the Fisheries in the Teno Watercourse***

The Agreement between Norway and Finland on the Fisheries in the Teno Watercourse came into force in 2017. There are multiple genetically unique salmon stocks in the river, and regulations under the agreement aim to reduce the fishing mortality by one third. This is expected to improve the status of weak stocks within a 15 year-period. In addition to ensuring the sustainability of the stocks, the regulations are designed to allow traditional Sami fishery to continue with reduced fishing days per season, and to reduce the tourist rod fishery substantially by setting an annual maximum number of angling licenses available. To safeguard fishing rights of the Sami and the local population in the negotiations, the Sami Parliaments of Norway and Finland, as well as local fishing rights holders, who largely are Sami, were represented throughout the whole negotiation process.

In 2020, the salmon catches were at a historical low level. Low catch numbers were confirmed by fish counts accomplished with various techniques (sonar, video, snorkelling). Monitoring which includes smolt counting one year versus number of returning 1 SW salmon the year after, indicates that the survival rate at sea has decreased dramatically recent years, with low pre-fishery abundance as a result. In the latest annual report from the Norwegian-Finnish common working group for monitoring and research on the salmon stocks in the river Tana, the group concludes there has been no exploitable surplus from the river in 2019 and 2020. Norwegian and Finnish authorities therefore prepare for strong fishery restrictions in 2021.

In 2020, Finland and Norway started negotiations to renew the periodic fishing rule for years 2022- 2028, with an important starting point to ensure the recovery of the weak salmon stocks also when using the renewed fishing rule. The recent knowledge about the stocks implies that the assumptions for recovery need to be re-assessed, with a possible new starting point for recovery that might lead to even stronger fishery regulations.

Local stakeholders are involved in the management processes as well as in the renewal process of the fishing rule.