



Draft Press Release

Issued by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's Press Office

19th February 2025

SFPA Publishes Fishery Information Notice

Fishery Control Measures for European Lobster in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) recently published an updated Fishery Information Notice (FIN) titled 'Fishery Control Measures for European Lobster in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).' This FIN aims to bring awareness to fishers of their regulatory obligations in respect of European Lobster and provides details on Minimum and Maximum Conservation Sizes, and guidelines on how to measure Lobster, V notched and mutilated Lobster.

The minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) of lobster is 87 mm (carapace length). Lobster size is determined by measuring the length of the carapace, parallel to the midline, from the back of either eye socket to the midpoint of the distal dorsal edge of the carapace. Lobsters below minimum conservation reference size must be returned alive to the sea without delay. It is prohibited for the master or a person in charge of an Irish sea-fishing boat to cause or permit the boat or any person onboard to retain on board, land, or tranship a lobster below the MCRS. No person shall buy, sell, handle, transport, process or store a lobster below the MCRS.

The maximum landing size of lobster is 127mm carapace length. It is prohibited for the master or a person in charge of an Irish sea-fishing boat to retain on board, land, store or tranship a lobster above the maximum landing size. No person shall buy, sell, or process a lobster greater than the maximum landing size. Lobsters above maximum landing size must be returned alive to the sea without delay.

"V notch" is a marking in the shape of the letter "V" cut for the purposes of identification of a particular lobster. A V notched lobster is a lobster bearing a V notch. A 'V notch' may be placed on one or more of the five flaps of the tail fan of a lobster, with the apex of the V positioned inwards from the edge of the flap. It is prohibited for the master or a person in charge of an Irish sea-fishing boat to retain

on board, land, store or tranship a V notched lobster. V notched lobsters must be returned alive to the sea without delay.

A mutilated lobster is a lobster with a tail that has been damaged in such a manner that could hide a V notch. It is illegal to land or sell lobsters that have a mutilated or damaged tail. It is prohibited for the master or a person in charge of an Irish sea-fishing boat to retain on board, land, store or tranship a mutilated lobster. Mutilated lobsters must be returned alive to the sea without delay.

Operators of vessels should familiarise themselves with the FIN. The SFPA is committed to supporting compliance with both new and existing legislation and are available to provide guidance. For assistance or further details on the FIN, please contact: sfpafood&fisheriessupport@sfpa.ie

Ends

Note to Editor

The FIN on the SFPA website under '*Fishery Information Notices / Fishery Specific Information Notice*' or by following this link: [FFSU-FC-FIN-OC-02-25 Fishery Control Measures for European Lobster in the Irish EEZ V2.1](#)

Further Information

About the SFPA

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the sea-fisheries and the sea-food production sectors. It promotes compliance with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, sea-fisheries law and food safety law relating to fish and fish products, verifies compliance and, where necessary, enforces it. Its mandate covers all fishing vessels operating within Ireland's 200-mile limit, over 2,000 Irish registered fishing vessels wherever they operate, and all seafood produced in Ireland's seafood processing companies. The SFPA operates through a network of regional port offices situated at Ireland's main fishery harbours. For further information visit: www.sfpa.ie