



Brussels,
MARE D4/TR D(2012)

NOTE TO THE FILE

Subject: Definition of new FAO area codes

1. THE BUSINESS ISSUE

Denmark (DNK) in cooperation with other Member states (MS) operating in the Skagerrak and Kattegat (Ska/Katt) areas has raised an issue about how to report fishing activities in those areas using EU-ERS messages.

Currently, there are only two ways to report the location of catches: based on the FAO area codes or ICES rectangles.

In the official FAO area code list¹, there is only one code defined for both areas: the FAO division: 27.3.a - Skagerrak and Kattegat (Division IIIa). Therefore there is no way to distinguish Ska/Katt areas.

ICES rectangles could not be used to report catches because the fishing area borders do not overlap the ICES rectangles.

All MS involved in that sector are used to work for years with national codes extending the FAO division code i.e. 27.3.as for Kattegat and 27.3.an for Skagerrak. MS would like to see now those national codes recognized as such by the FAO.

2. THE CODIFICATION

(1) FAO Codification

FAO codes are based on a hierarchical structure: areas are divided into subareas, divisions, subdivisions and units. The codes proposed by MS correspond to FAO divisions but as there is already an official division covering both areas (27.3.a), a logical partition of that division must result into subdivisions areas for Skat/Katt with respectively the **27.3.a.n** and **27.3.a.s** codes.

¹ Published on our MDR : http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/control/codes/index_en.htm

(2) ICES codification

ICES² defines already fourth subdivisions of the IIIa area:

| | |
|-------|-----------------------------|
| IIIaE | Skagerrak and Kattegat East |
| IIIaK | Kattegat part of IIIa |
| IIIaN | Skagerrak part of IIIa |
| IIIaS | Kattegat part of IIIa |

Unfortunately there is no map available to identify clearly the boundaries of those subdivisions.

3. THE PROPOSAL

The following codes may be proposed to FAO for an update of the FAO areas list:

27.3.a - Skagerrak and Kattegat (Division IIIa) : Official FAO code

27.3.a.n: Skagerrak

27.3.a.s: Kattegat

27.3.a.w: area in western of Skagerrak

4. COMMENTS

1. The most important issue for DG MARE is to identify the Skagerrak and Kattegat areas with the codes from our proposal. On the other hand, other sub-areas or even the 27.3.a.w area could be redefined depending on the definition of the partitions of the IIIa area by ICES;
2. The exact borders of the Skagerrak and Kattegat is not an issue for the proposal. The Ska/Katt fishing zones are indeed defined by COM in the TAC&Quota regulation³

² : <http://vocab.ices.dk/>

³ Council R. 44/2012 – Article 4

but it is not compliant with international borders defined by the IHO⁴. The following map shows clearly the discrepancies. It is a political issue that cannot be solved in the framework of this proposal. The borders of the partitions of the 27.3 area must be defined by FAO/CWP & ICES.



- 1. Continuous red line: IHO border
 - 2. Dotted red line: TAC border
 - 3. Dotted blue line: border between FAO 27.III. and 27.IV
 - 4. Continuous blue line: Border of Skagerrak defined by TAC & IHO
- Ellipse: third part of the 27.3.a area not covered by Ska/Katt (27.3.a.w in the proposal)

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D4

⁴ *Limits of Oceans and Seas (Special Publication N°23), 3rd Edition 1953* - International Hydrographic Organisation, Monte-Carlo, 1953