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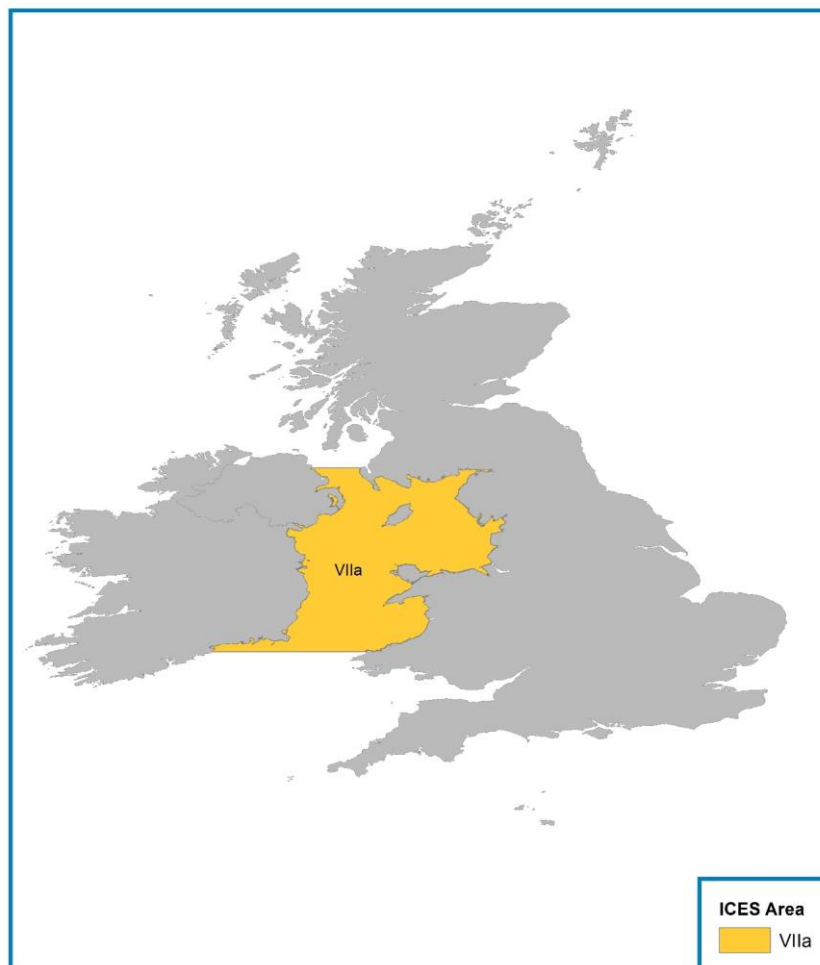


Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**  
[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

Document No.: E508-G-015  
Date of Issue: 8 November 2018

# Landing Obligation Guidance 2019

**Applicable to the Irish Sea Nephrops Fishery**



Contains Collins Bartholomew and ICES data. © Collins Bartholomew copyright and database right 2017.  
ICES Statistical Areas dataset 2010. ICES, Copenhagen



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## Introduction

This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Landing Obligation overview guidance document which explains the general rules. This document explains rules specific to Nephrops vessels fishing in the Irish Sea ICES Area VIIa.

This guidance is written for Nephrops fishing vessels using 70 mm to 99 mm cod-end mesh size. If you are using a larger mesh, you may have fewer restrictions. Please consult your local Fisheries Management Office for further information.

You must ensure that the following rules are complied with:

1. All catches of quota species must be kept on board, landed and counted against quota, except where the exemptions listed below apply.
2. All catches and discards must be recorded in your logbook.
3. Any fish returned to the sea under the exemptions described below must be kept in good condition in order to maximise their survival chances. This includes keeping them wet, handling them carefully and releasing them promptly.



## Survival Exemptions

These exemptions allow you to discard fish under certain conditions based on the likelihood of a fish being able to survive being caught and returned to the sea.

You are permitted to discard certain species of fish provided you comply with the conditions specified in the table below:

<b>Fish Species you can Discard</b>	<b>ICES Area</b>	<b>Conditions</b>
Skates and Rays	VIIa	No Conditions
Nephrops (NEP)	VIIa	If your cod-end mesh size is in the range from 70 mm to 99 mm you can only discard Nephrops if you comply with the selective gear options specified in the table in the section below - <i>Selective Gear Requirements</i> .



## Selective Gear Requirements

Selective gear requirements apply from 1st January 2019 for vessels fishing for Nephrops (*Nephrops norvegicus*) in the Irish Sea ICES Area VIIa.

You must use one of the gear options shown in the table below. For each gear option, technical information on what is required and how to fit the gear correctly may be viewed by clicking on the link of the appropriate gear type.

<b>Fishing Gear Options</b>
<b>You must use one of the gear options listed below</b>
1) SELTRA** Panel.
2) Sorting Grid with 35 mm bar spacing as defined in Annex XIVa of Regulation (EC) 850/98 <sup>1</sup> .
3) CEFAS <sup>2</sup> Net Grid <sup>***</sup> .
4) Flip-Flap Trawl <sup>****</sup> that meets the defined specification.
5) 300 mm square mesh panel* (for fishing vessels of 12 m or more LOA). <b>or:</b> 200 mm square mesh panel* (for fishing vessels under 12 m LOA).

\* Installed in accordance with current technical conservation regulations (EC 850/98).

\*\* **SELTRA Panel**<sup>3</sup>

Is a selectivity device which:

- consists of a top panel of at least 270 mm mesh size (diamond mesh), or of a top panel of at least 300 mm mesh size (square mesh), placed in a four-panel section.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) 850/98 may be viewed at URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31998R0850&rid=1>

<sup>2</sup> The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) is an executive agency of the United Kingdom government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) .../... of XXX establishing a discard plan for certain demersal fisheries in North-Western waters for the period 2019-2021.



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- is at least 3 metres long and is positioned no more than 4 metres from the cod line
- is the full width of the top sheet of the trawl (i.e. from selvedge to selvedge)

### \*\*\* CEFAS Net Grid

Defined as a Net Grid selectivity device developed by The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science for catches of Nephrops (*Nephrops norvegicus*) in the Irish Sea.

The Net Grid comprises a wall of netting within the trawl that creates a physical barrier to whitefish while allowing the passage of Nephrops through to the cod end.

### Specifications to be read along with the illustrations below:

1. The net grid must be situated between the cod end and the existing square mesh panel.
2. The net grid must be fixed within a four-panel box section ("the box section"), which must be inserted into the two panel trawl.
3. The net grid must be positioned at an incline, at the upper end of which, on the top of the box section, there must be a triangular fish escape hole, the base of which must be 28 meshes wide and formed by cutting along the bar from the outer ends till the sides meet.
4. The netting barrier must be laced to the top and both sides of the box section.
5. The lower end of the netting barrier must be laced to the bottom of the box section for 300mm from the relevant selvedge (each bottom outside corner) towards the centre.
6. The net grid must be constructed of not more than 99mm mesh of twisted twine and attached in a square mesh orientation in parallel with the box section.
7. Two rigid pipes must be (loosely) attached vertically, either side of the net grid on the outside of the box section. These pipes may be unclipped to hang free on the trawl in order to facilitate being wound onto the net drum during hauling.
8. The escape hole is a triangular opening with a flat apex cut in the top sheet of the trawl which allows the escape of fish too large to through the net grid.

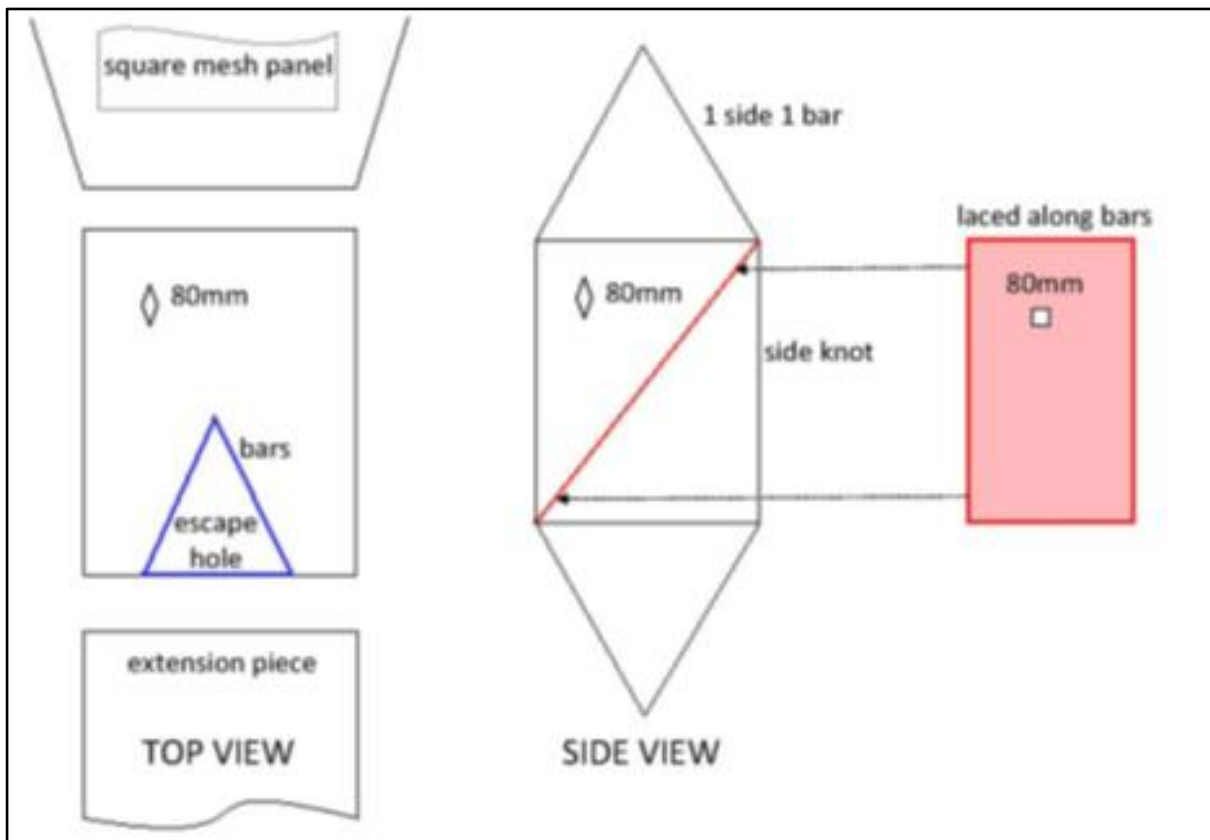


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9. The escape hole is cut 12 meshes from each corner where the net grid is joined to the top panel of the box section (all bar cut) and extends along the top sheet towards the headline into a triangle, leaving five meshes across at its apex.

10. The escape hole should then be strengthened with nylon twine, pulled tight to form a triangle.



## \*\*\*\* Flip Flap Trawl

The Flip-Flap trawl comprises a trawl with large mesh sections to provide for whitefish escape along with a flexible grid that is intended to create a physical barrier to whitefish, especially cod, whilst allowing the passage of Nephrops through to the cod end.

### Specifications:

- 1) All top wing netting must be made of diamond mesh netting of at least 160 mm mesh size.



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- 2) The top sheet netting panel must be made of diamond mesh netting of at least 160 mm mesh size. It must extend across the full width of the trawl and extend towards the rear of the net for at least 8.0 metres (stretched length).
- 3) The internal Flip-Flap 'netting' Grid (FFG):
  - must be made from square mesh netting of no more than 200 mm mesh size and must be positioned no more than 500 mm from the rearmost meshes of the end tapered section
  - has a twine thickness (in the flip flap netting and in attachment to the main body of the net) of no less than 4mm single strand.
  - must be no less than 8 open mesh bars across by 10 open mesh bars deep
  - must have the top half 8 x 5 bar meshes attached to the top netting section between selvages length for length
  - may have the bottom half 8 x 5 bar meshes left unattached across the trawls lower netting section but must have leadline (or similar) of weight no less than 1 kg/m attached around the edges of its full length (selectivity can be increased by attaching the bottom half as well and in that case weights are not required)
  - must have an unblocked fish outlet (with clean meshes all the way around) cut out of the trawls top sheet netting immediately ahead of the FFG
  - must have an opening width of the posterior side of the fish outlet no less than 26 mm x 80 mm diamond meshes (or equivalent) across and cut out to a tip in the forward direction along mesh bars
- 4) In addition a top sheet square mesh panel (SMP) made from square mesh netting of at least 200 mm mesh size must be placed within the end tapered section:
  - the SMP must be no less than 3 metres long
  - the SMP must have no less than 12 open mesh bars across its width
  - the rearmost meshes of the SMP must be no more than 0.5 metres from the forward tip of the unblocked fish outlet

