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STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

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**2020 No. 152**

**SEA FISHERIES**

**The Edible Crabs (Conservation)  
Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

*Made* - - - - - *22nd July 2020*

*Coming into operation* *22nd August 2020*

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs<sup>(1)</sup> makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 124(1) and (2) of the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966<sup>(2)</sup>.

**Citation and commencement**

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Edible Crabs (Conservation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and shall come into operation on 22nd August 2020.

**Interpretation**

2. In these Regulations—

“the Act” means the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966;

“berried edible crab” means a female edible crab which is bearing eggs;

“edible crab” means crab of the species *Cancer pagurus*;

“foreign fishing boat” means a fishing boat that—

- (a) is not registered in the United Kingdom under Part 2 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995<sup>(3)</sup>;
- (b) is not registered under the law of Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man; and
- (c) is not British owned<sup>(4)</sup>;

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(1) Formerly the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland; see [S.I. 1999/283 \(N.I.1\)](#), Art 3(4); and [2016 c. 5 \(N.I.\)](#), Article 1(2).

(2) [1966 c.17](#), Section 124 was substituted by [S.I. 1981/227 \(N.I.7\)](#), Article 6 and amended by [S.I. 2002/790](#), Article 6 and [2001 c. 4 \(N.I.\)](#), section 1

(3) [1995 c.21](#)

(4) “British-owned” is defined in section 22(1) of the Sea Fish (Conservation) Act [1967 c.84](#)

“size” means the maximum width of the carapace measured perpendicular to the antero-posterior midline of the carapace and shall be measured as shown in the Schedule to these Regulations;

“stock cage” means a containment device used to store crabs at sea or in the waters of a port or harbour.

### **Edible crabs**

3.—(1) Where an edible crab less than 140mm in size is brought on board a sea-fishing boat, it must be immediately returned to sea, as near as possible to the place from which it was taken.

(2) The retention of an edible crab less than 140mm in size in a stock cage is prohibited.

### **Berried edible crabs**

4.—(1) The retention on board a sea-fishing boat, the bringing to land or the landing of a berried edible crab is prohibited.

(2) Where a berried edible crab is brought on board a sea-fishing boat, it must be immediately returned to sea, as near as possible to the place from which it was taken.

(3) The removal of eggs from a berried edible crab is prohibited.

(4) The retention of a berried edible crab in a stock cage is prohibited.

### **Exemptions**

5. The obligations and prohibitions imposed by regulations 3 and 4 shall not apply to a foreign fishing boat or any person operating under the authority of, and in accordance with a permit granted under section 14 of the Act.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.



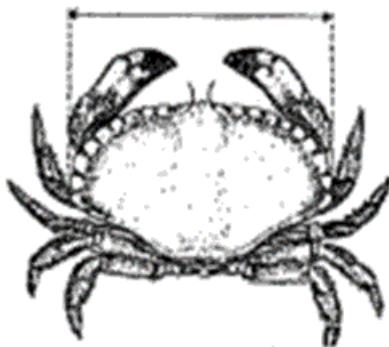
*Claire Vincent*  
A senior officer of the  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and  
Rural Affairs

SCHEDULE

Regulation 2

MEASUREMENT OF THE SIZE OF AN EDIBLE CRAB

*Carapace width*



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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations provide for obligations and prohibitions in relation to edible crabs less than 140mm in size and berried edible crabs in Northern Ireland.

Regulation 3 requires an edible crab less than 140mm in size brought on board a sea-fishing boat to be immediately returned to the sea and prohibits the retention of an edible crab less than 140mm in size in a stock cage.

In relation to berried edible crabs, regulation 4 prohibits their retention on board a sea-fishing boat, bringing to land, landing, retention in a stock cage or the removal of their eggs. Regulation 4 also requires a berried edible crab brought on board a sea-fishing boat to be immediately returned to the sea.

Regulation 5 of these Regulations provides for an exemption for foreign fishing boats or a person granted a permit under section 14 of the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966.