

# North Eastern IFCA European Lobster (*Homarus gammarus*) Fishery Status Report 2024



## Landings

Landings data are collected from the MMO iFish2 data set and monthly NEIFCA shellfish catch returns submitted by permitted vessels. These returns include landed weight, the number of active days, fishing effort, and the area fished. A breakdown of key statistics for the European lobster fishery within the NEIFCA district can be found in the Multiple Indicator Framework (MIF) (Table 1).

Landings per unit effort (LPUE) is a key metric for analysing trends in the fishery, allowing for the observation of seasonal variations (Figure 1). LPUE is expressed in kilograms per 100 pots hauled (kg/100 pots). Seasonal variations account for the fluctuations observed in Figure 2.

Lobster landings from NEIFCA-permitted vessels in 2024 were lower than in 2023 (Figure 1), with fishing effort also declining—2.7 million pots were hauled in 2024 compared to 3.3 million in 2023. According to MMO iFish2 data, which includes both inshore and offshore catches within the NEIFCA District, landings fluctuated between 2018 and 2024, reaching a low in 2020 and peaking in 2021. Overall landings reported by MMO iFish2 increased in 2024 compared to 2023 (Figure 1), suggesting higher lobster catches outside the NEIFCA District. Within the district, the average landings per unit effort (LPUE) rose slightly from 15.5 kg/100 pots in 2023 to 16.1 kg/100 pots in 2024 (Figure 2). The average annual market value of lobsters has steadily increased, rising from £13.40/kg in 2018 to £19.10/kg in 2024. Despite reduced catch volumes in 2024, the gross value of inshore lobster landings grew from £7.7 million in 2023 to £8.7 million in 2024 (Table 1).

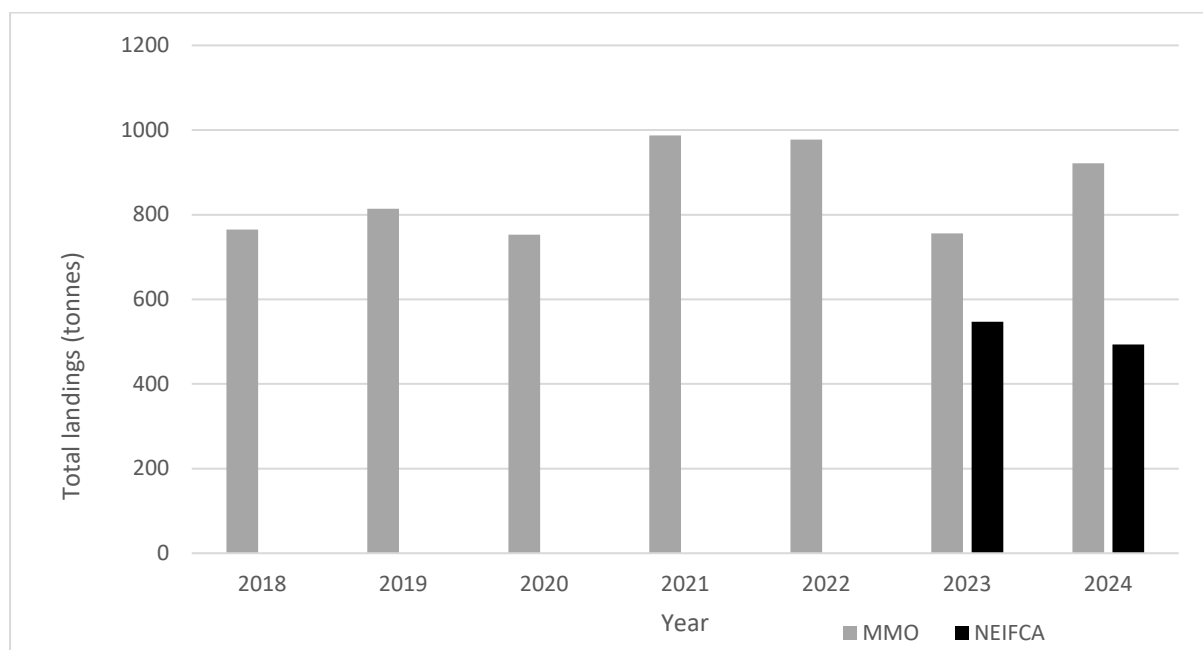


Figure 1: NEIFCA district landings of European lobster (*Hommarus gammarus*) 2018 to 2024. NEIFCA catch returns (black) & MMO iFish2 (grey).

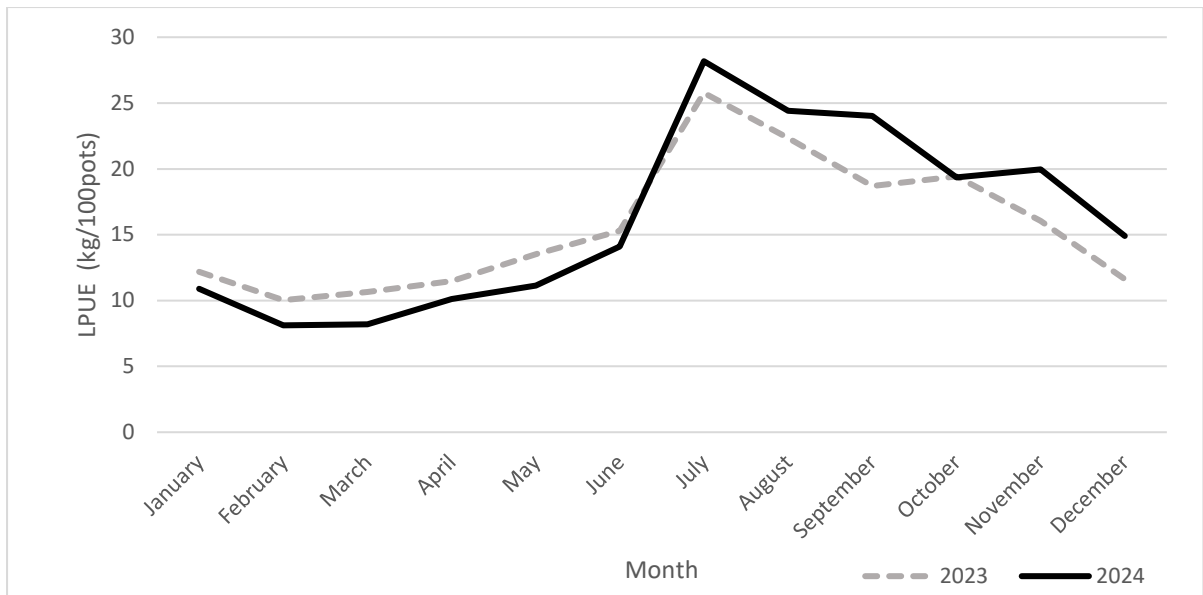


Figure 2: LPUE per month of European Lobster (*Hommarus gammarus*) in 2023 and 2024. Data: NEIFCA catch returns.

### Biometric Data

Biometric data are gathered through quayside sampling at Bridlington, Scarborough, and Whitby, observer trips aboard NEIFCA-permitted vessels, and dedicated NEIFCA surveys (Table 1). These data—primarily size and sex—are used to track trends in the lobster population, both above and below the minimum landing size.

Observer trip data from 2022 to 2024 include lobsters of all sizes and show an increase in mean carapace length, rising from 84.4 mm in 2022 to 91.1 mm in 2024 (Figure 3). However, the average carapace length of landed lobsters above the minimum landing size has declined slightly, from 95 mm in 2018 to 93 mm in 2024.

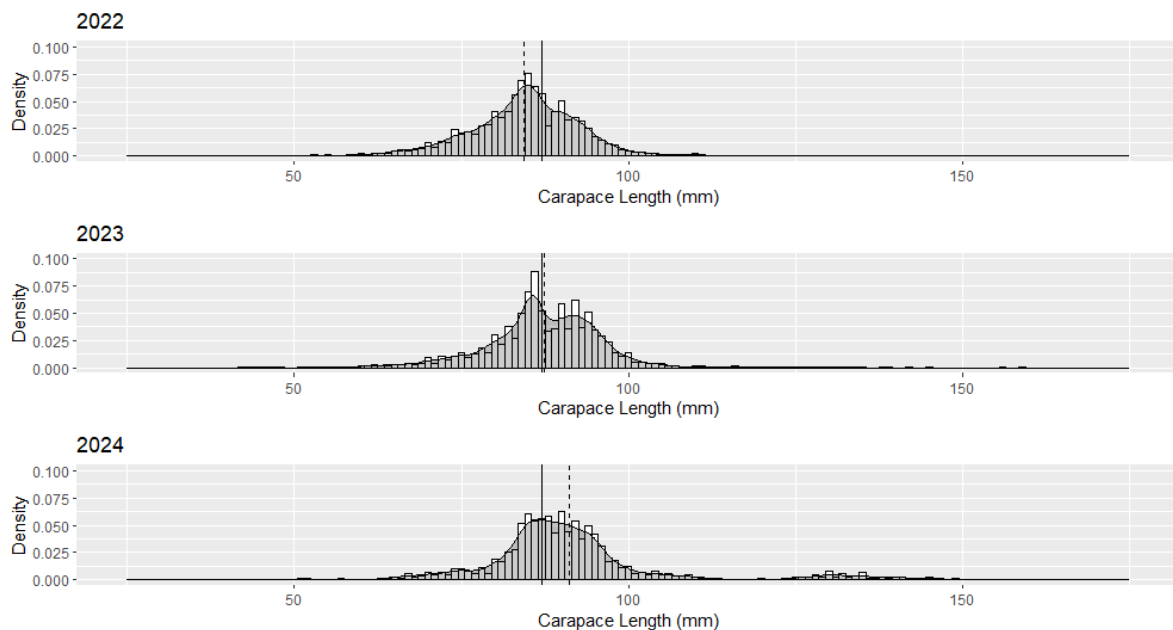


Figure 3: Size frequency of European lobster (*Hommarus gammarus*) between 2022-2024. Black line is MLS (87mm) dashed line is mean. Data: NEIFCA observer trips and offshore surveys.

Table 1. European Lobster (*Hommarus gammarus*) Multiple Indicator Framework.

Fishery Overview	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Value Ref	Data Source
<b>Total Landings</b>	765.174	814.323	752.45	986.955	977.3	755.5013	921.23	Tonnes	MMO
<b>Total Landings</b>						476.684	456.718	Tonnes	NEIFCA Returns
Total Effort (Pots Hauled)	3.09	3.08	2.29	3.2	2.67	N/A	N/A	Million	MMO
Total Effort (Pots Hauled)						3.32	2.72	Million	NEIFCA Returns
Total Effort (Pots Set)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	78	77	Thousand	NEIFCA Returns
Q1 Catch Distribution (% of Annual Total)	6.3	9.3	7.9	5.9	5.9	7.8/7.1	8.1/4.9	Q1 %	MMO/NEIFCA Returns
Q2 Catch Distribution (% of Annual Total)	16.4	17.9	14.5	13.1	15.4	22.8/23.8	16/17.2	Q2 %	MMO/NEIFCA Returns
Q3 Catch Distribution (% of Annual Total)	48.2	56.5	54.7	56.7	57.8	53.7/55.9	53.2/62.4	Q3 %	MMO/NEIFCA Returns
Q4 Catch Distribution (% of Annual Total)	29.1	16.3	22.9	24.3	20.9	15.7/13.2	22.7/15.5	Q4 %	MMO/NEIFCA Returns
<b>Primary Reference Points</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Value Ref</b>	
Mean LPUE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.5	16.1	KG/100 pots hauled	NEIFCA Returns
<b>Economic</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Value Ref</b>	
Average Annual Price	13.4	13.5	13.6	16.4	15.9	16.3	19.1	£/kg	NEIFCA IFCO reports
Gross Catch Value	10.25	10.99	10.23	16.18	15.53	12.46/7.7	17.59/8.7	£ Million	MMO/NEIFCA Returns
No. Active Vessels	268	266	273	259	226	199	192	#	NEIFCA Returns
<b>Biometric Above 87mm (quayside)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Value Ref</b>	
Average Carapace Length M (mm)	96	96	94	95	95	95	94	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Average Carapace Length F (mm)	94	95	95	93	93	93	92	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Max Carapace Length M (mm)	165	149	106	138	146	149	150	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Max Carapace Length F (mm)	162	147	114	148	142	128	133	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Sex Ratio (% Female)	56.6	54.3	55.3	59.6	61.1	52.7	59.4	%	NEIFCA Survey
<b>*Biometric all sizes</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Value Ref</b>	
Average Carapace Length M (mm)	**81	**81	N/A	N/A	83.7	88.5	91	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Average Carapace Length F (mm)	**82	**82	N/A	N/A	84.3	86.3	89	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Max Carapace Length M (mm)	**124	**137	N/A	N/A	118	159	149	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Max Carapace Length F (mm)	**165	**122	N/A	N/A	130	156	149	mm	NEIFCA Survey
Sex Ratio (% Female)	**39.7	**42.3	N/A	N/A	65.4	49.3	46.3	%	NEIFCA Survey
*This section includes all data from observer trips and NEIFCA surveys with sizes below and above 87mm									
**This data was taken from surveys on the NEIFCA vessel NEG3, with used of blocked escape gaps in the pots.									