MARKET PLAN

2025 - 2030

Italy

Stockfish

2026

Revised September *2025*

Priority: *Maintain*
Budget: 5,4 mNOK

NORWEGIAN SEAFOOD COUNCIL

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OVERALL SEAFOOD MARKET

The total seafood market in Italy is 1,7 million tonnes (-3% 5Y). Consumption per capita is 29,6 kg annually (-2% 5Y)
Total fish sales for "at-home consumption" was worth €6.5bn in 2024 (same as 2023), while volume was approximately 489 thousand tonnes (-3.8% vs. 2023).
In 2024 there were 1.1 billion servings of fish and seafood out-of-home (OOH) (+3% vs. 23). While servings of fish were down by -1.4%, servings of seafood (e.g. molluscs and crustaceans) increased by 6.6% (Circana, 2024).

THE SPECIES MARKET

- The consumption of stockfish of cod in Italy is 11 thousand tonnes round weight (-26% 3Y). In product weight this was 1804 tonnes in 2024 and was the lowest yearly export volumes recorded to Italy. In recent years, it can be explained by lower quotas and production of stockfish in Norway. In addition, research indicates that preparation difficulties, high prices, and a strong smell and taste are reasons why some consumers do not choose stockfish.
- Approximately 30% of stockfish is eaten at a restaurant or someplace similar (Ipsos). However, many industry players highlight that HoReCa has increased its share after the pandemic, and it is expected that the proportion of consumption out-of-home can increase going forward.
- The most sold product types across regions are soaked fillets and portions. The ready-to-eat is the most common form in Veneto but is according to recent research one of the best answers to preparation difficulties (Nielsen, 2024). According to Nielsen, two of the most fast-growing regions for fixed weight stockfish products are Lombardia and Lazio.
- Stockfish is a product with strong regional preferences and consumption traditions. The most important regions for stockfish consumption are Veneto, Liguria, Campania, Calabria and Sicilia.
- There is a growth in lower priced lightly salted fillets, increasing the competition for baccalà and stockfish (Meros 2023).
- According to Nielsen, 4 out of 10 consumers have substituted stockfish at least once. The main reasons for the substitution: Other products are easier to find (27%), because of the price (26%) and it is hard to find high quality stockfish (26%)

VALUE CHAIN

- The value chain for seafood is extremely fragmented in Italy. E.g. the 3 biggest retail groups (Conad, Selex and Coop) accounts for around 41% of the grocery market. In comparison, the top three retailers in UK and France control around 55–60% of the market. Additionally, within each retail group there are often many different retail chains, regions or cooperatives (e.g. Coop Nord Ovest, Coop Alleanza 3.0., etc.)
- Fish shop remains the most important channel overall for stockfish sales but there are differences between regions: Super-/hypermarkets keep having a higher relevance in Veneto and Liguria compared to the south.
- The foodservice sector is also extremely fragmented. Only 10% of restaurants in Italy are chain-based.

Macro trends (by 2030)

4%	-1%
GDP growth	Population growth

Market shares

1. Norway (100 %)

Share retail/Horeca
(value chain data)

Retail 69%
HORECA 31%

Sales channels retail

1. Super/Hyper/local grocery (38%)
2. Fish shop/delicatessen (39%)
3. Traditional fish market (16%)
4. Ambulating car (5%)
5. Other (1%)

Format of [species] in retail

1. Whole fillet – soaked (23%)
2. Portions – dried (20%)
3. Portions – soaked (18%)
4. Whole –dried (16%)
5. Prepacked – dried (8%)
6. Ready to eat (7%)
7. Prepacked – soaked (4%)
8. Variation of the above (5%)

KEY CONSUMER INSIGHT

- Norwegian stockfish has a dominating position within the minds of Italian consumers with an awareness of 78 percent. Scotland, Iceland and Alaska/US all have an awareness level around 30% despite that non on them produces or exports stockfish to Italy.
- The Seafood from Norway trademark, the term "Stoccafisso Norvegese" or a link to Norway (e.g. flag) is used permanently on some stockfish products. Stickers with the SFN trademark is often used during campaign periods.
- The awareness to the SFN-trademark is 64% (+2,5% vs. 24).
- Stockfish is one of few products in the seafood sector with a PGI.
- Labeling with Country of Origin is increasingly important and the trusted European marks (DOC, DOP, DOCG, IGP) are widely used in Italy as it is recognized as a trusted element of quality.

- Medium users are the biggest group of stockfish consumers and account for 26.8%. They eat stockfish 1-3 times per month
- Light users are the second biggest group with 16,1%. They eat stockfish every second or every third month.
- Occasional/rejecters accounts for 42.5%.
- Heavy users are the third biggest group with 14.6%. They eat stockfish once a week or more often. Calculated in value, this group is most likely the biggest since they are eating stockfish more often than medium consumers.
- Stockfish is consumed regularly at home by many Italians. Soaked and dried varieties are most popular, often perceived to be of Norwegian origin.
- Taste, tradition, health, and value are key drivers. Many seek a tasty, exciting experience that pleases the family while upholding food traditions.
- Purchase decisions are largely planned, with quality being the main factor in brand choice.
- Heavy users of stockfish in Italy prefer more processed options, prioritize sustainability, and are more brand-loyal and planned in their purchases.
- Medium users favor soaked stockfish, frying preparations, and consider taste and tradition even more important.

- 29% of the respondents in the main regions know that stockfish is only dried and not salted, while most people confuses it with Baccalà. 54% thinks that it is salted and dried, while 11% thinks it is salted (Nielsen 2024).

Consumption (self reported)

1. Home (69%)
2. Restaurants (23%)
3. Take away (8%)

Unaided awareness of Country of origin

1. Norway (55%)
2. Don't know (17%)
3. Italy (16%)
4. Iceland (10%)
5. Scotland (8%)

Preference for Country of origin

1. Norway (53%)
2. Italy (26%)
3. Iceland (17%)
4. Scotland (14%)
5. Don't know (11%)

Awareness
Seafood from Norway logo

2025: 64%
2024: 61,5%
2023:

Strategic implications for Norwegian [species] and NSC's market efforts

Italy is the most important market for stockfish consumption. However, it has been a downward trend for years that can be explained by factors such as increased competition (e.g. stockfish being substituted with other seafood products), record high-prices due to lower quotas and production, and changing habits and way of living. Stockfish is considered traditional and a product that you either eat at typical Italian restaurants or at home, often prepared by the grandmother (nonna). Additionally, stockfish has historically been seen as "food for the poor" implying that it is something everyone could afford. Today, the price for stockfish is high compared to many other seafood products, resulting in a gap between the real value and what many consumers think the product should cost. The loyal customers are older, who cooks traditional recipes for their family. **The strategic implication of this is that a repositioning of the product in the minds of the consumer is needed to increase the perceived value and the willingness to pay to secure the position of the product during a time when supply will be affected and prices will increase.**

When families become smaller and the new generations lives a more hectic and modern lifestyle, traditional products like stockfish has also been suffering due to preparation barriers and lack of time. However, there has been introduced more value-added products in recent years, and these products have gained market share both in the traditional regions for stockfish consumption, and regions such as Lombardia and Lazio with big cities such as Milano and Rome leading the way. The reason for increased sales in the latter ones is because many people that used to live in the "stockfish regions" move to these cities. Both retail and HoReCa buys more soaked and ready-to-eat products, but retail is still considered the most important channel, and a key marketing channel for these products. Fish shops and super- and hypermarkets are the most important sales channels, but the more modern channels keeps gaining share. In the north and center of Italy (Veneto, Liguria, Lombardia and Lazio) it is the most important channel for stockfish sales. **The strategic implication of this is that the NSC must activate the products where they are present and focus on areas and products that have shown a growth potential.**

Key challenges/opportunities:

- Increase perceived value and willingness to pay
- Activate products where they are present
- Focus on key areas and products with growth potential

Overall target groups:

The target group lives in the regions of Veneto, Liguria, Campania, Calabria and Sicilia and around big cities such as Milan (Lombardia) and Rome (Lazio). They eat stockfish once a month or more often.

Market goal by **2030**

By 2030, the aim is to increase the value and willingness to pay for Norwegian stockfish and ensure that coming generations eat it in key regions and big cities

NOTE. The market goal has been set in collaboration with NSC's advisory group and reflects a common desired goal dependent on efforts beyond The Norwegian Seafood Council's marketing efforts.

NSC's objectives in **2030**

Objective 1

Consumer:

Consumers in priority markets shall have high awareness and preference for Norwegian stockfish over competing origins

KPI 1: Awareness	*Unaided awareness above 55%*
KPI 2: Preference	*Preference above 55%*
KPI 3: SfN logo awareness	*Above 60%*

Objective 2

Origin labelling

High percentage of origin labelling in retail

KPI 1: Origin labelling	*TBD*

Objective 3

Norwegian seafood industry/exporters

High utility value for the Norwegian seafood industry

KPI 1: Utility value for Norwegian seafood industry	*TBD*

NSCs Objective 1 | 2026

Consumers in priority markets shall have high awareness and preference for Norwegian [species] over competing origins.

KPI 1

Unaided awareness	*2026: Above 55%*

KPI 2

Preference	*2026: Above 55%*
SfN logo awareness	*2026: Above 60%*

Note

Both unaided awareness and preference are at relatively high levels today. Increasing it further without increasing budgets substantially from today's level will be challenging. However, today's budget levels should make it possible to keep the levels high, which would provide a solid platform to reach the shared goal of increasing the value and willingness to pay for Norwegian stockfish and ensure that coming generations eat it in key regions and big cities

Target group

Geography	*Main stockfish regions + big cities*
Size	*Number of consumers in target group*

Description

The target group is born between 1960-1996 (Gen X and Millenials) and lives in the regions of Veneto, Liguria, Campania, Calabria and Sicilia and around big cities such as Milan (Lombardia) and Rome (Lazio). They have an income between 24-120K EUR per year and have at least a high school education. They eat stockfish once a month or more often, and they eat it mostly at home, but occasionally also at restaurants. Their purchase decisions are largely planned, with quality being the main factor in brand choice, but they care about taste, tradition and health. Soaked stockfish are the most popular choice, especially among the ones aged 50-65, while ready-made meals are more common among the younger ones, approximately 30-49. Dried stockfish is still eaten in both age groups. Preferred cooking methods are boiling/steaming, frying and searing/browning.

NSCs Objective 2 | 2026

High percentage of origin labelling

KPI 1: Origin labelling

xxxx	YYYY: TBD

Note

A baseline measurement for origin labelling in Italy is in process. Will be added as soon as possible.

NSCs Objective 3 | 2026 and 2030

High utility value for the Norwegian seafood industry

KPI 1

xxxx	YYYY: TBD

Note

A baseline measurement will be added in 2026.

The NSC shall be present with Seafood from Norway communication throughout the year to secure synergies between the investments for stockfish, salmon and baccalà (saltfish and clipfish).

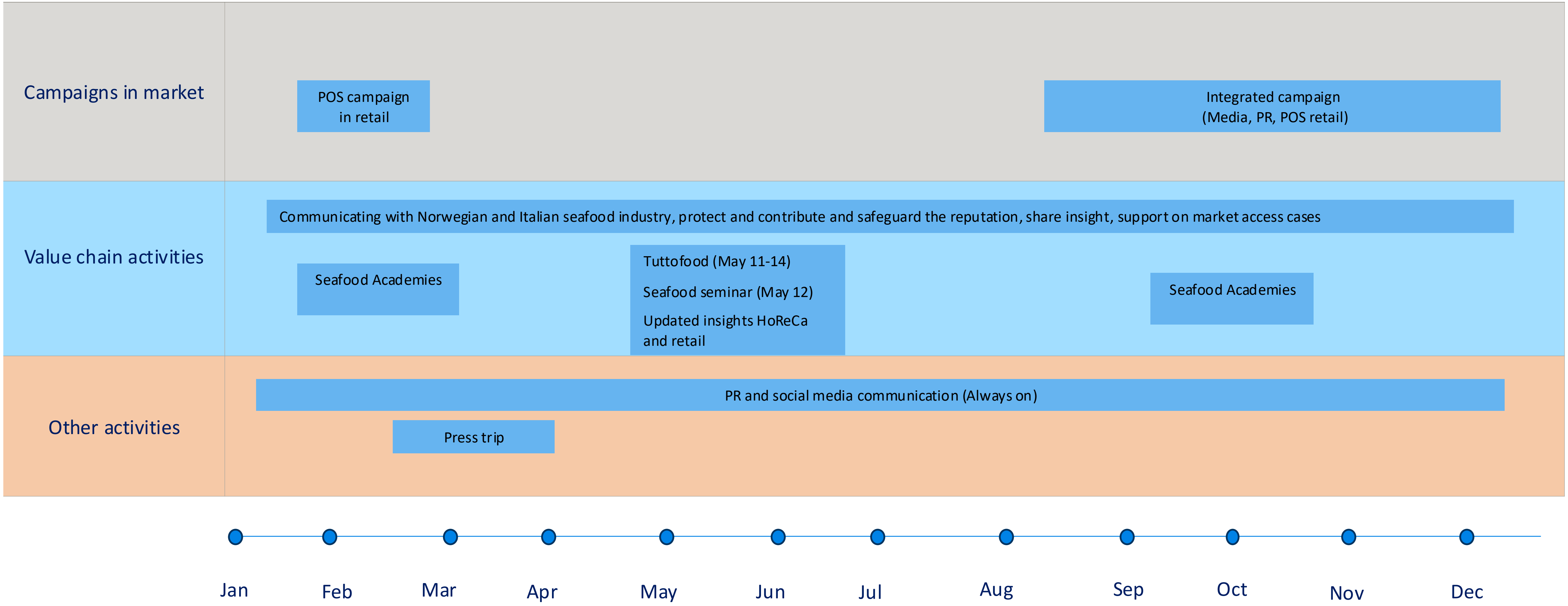
The NSC shall work to increase the real and perceived value of stockfish in selected regions and cities through targeted media campaigns in connection with POS activities in retail. This will be done by strengthening the focus on drivers such as taste and tradition, while working on some of the barriers such as preparation. The primary target group is stockfish consumers in key areas for stockfish consumption that eats stockfish one time or less per month. The NSC will work actively to engage companies to partake in marketing activities and utilize origin labelling to increase the efficiency of NSCs marketing investments. PR initiatives will be used to increase media exposure and to re-position the image of the product.

The NSC shall also contribute with added value to the Norwegian industry and their customers by offering meeting places and updated market insights. The NSC will make sure that campaigns are communicated and coordinated to achieve best possible synergies. The joint marketing program will be presented as a tool towards the Norwegian industry specifically to increase marketing of products, brands, or private label while at the same time strengthening the position of Norwegian stockfish and the SFN-trademark.

5. OVERVIEW OF KEY DELIVERIES AND OBJECTIVES 2025 - 2030| Italy / *Stockfish*

	Baseline	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Objective 2030
Objective 1	Unaided awareness and preference	Unaided awareness above 50%, preference above 50%, and SFN awareness above 60%	Unaided awareness and preference above 55% and 55% respectively, and SFN awareness above 60%	Unaided awareness and preference above 55% and 55% respectively, and SFN awareness above 60%	Unaided awareness and preference above 55% and 55% respectively, and SFN awareness above 62%	Unaided awareness and preference above 55% and 55% respectively, and SFN awareness above 62%	Unaided awareness and preference above 55% and 55% respectively, and SFN awareness above 65%
Key deliveries		B2C campaign Always on social media and PR	B2C campaign Always on social media and PR	B2C campaign Always on social media and PR	B2C campaign Always on social media and PR	B2C campaign Always on social media and PR	
Objective 2	Increase origin labelling	Increase origin labelling (KPI to be decided)	Increase origin labelling (KPI to be decided)	Increase origin labelling (KPI to be decided)	Increase origin labelling (KPI to be decided)	Increase origin labelling (KPI to be decided)	Objective will be set when we have baseline measurement
Key deliveries		Establish baseline for origin labeling	Retail campaigns and academies Increase number of products highlighting Norwegian origin	Retail campaigns and academies Increase number of products highlighting Norwegian origin	Retail campaigns and academies Increase number of products highlighting Norwegian origin	Retail campaigns and academies Increase number of products highlighting Norwegian origin	
Objective 3	High perceived value for the Norwegian salmon industry						Objective will be set when we have baseline measurement
Key deliveries		Seminar, updated market insights, industry communication (newsletters, webinars)	Seminar, updated market insights, industry communication (newsletters, webinars)	Seminar, updated market insights, industry communication (newsletters, webinars)	Seminar, updated market insights, industry communication (newsletters, webinars)	Seminar, updated market insights, industry communication (newsletters, webinars)	

6. OVERVIEW OF MARKET ACTIVITIES 2026 | Italy / *Stockfish*

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