

From Villain to Facilitator

The hated and loved Red King Crab



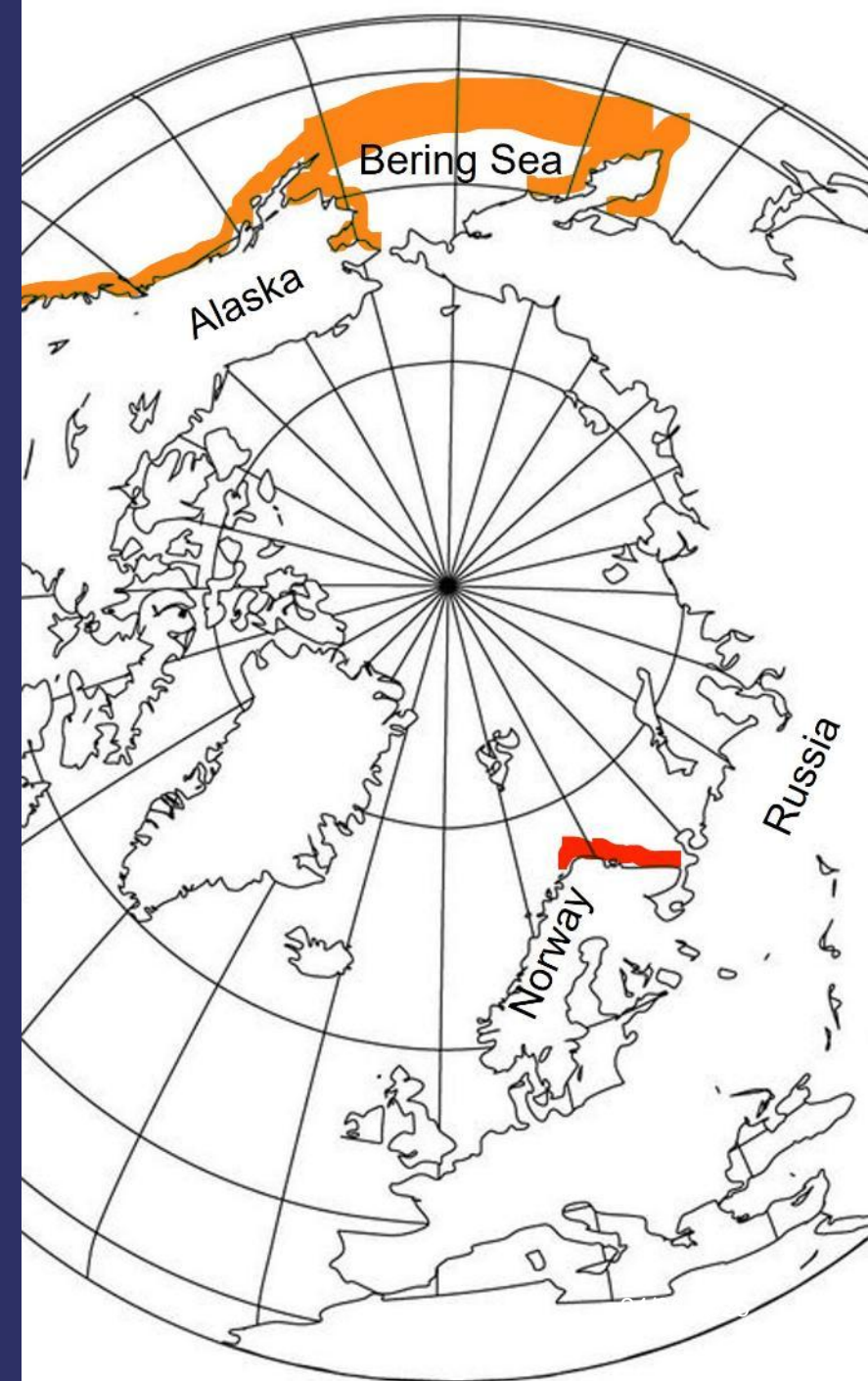
Tina Thesslund



Red King Crab *Paralithodes camtschaticus*

Kamchatka crab

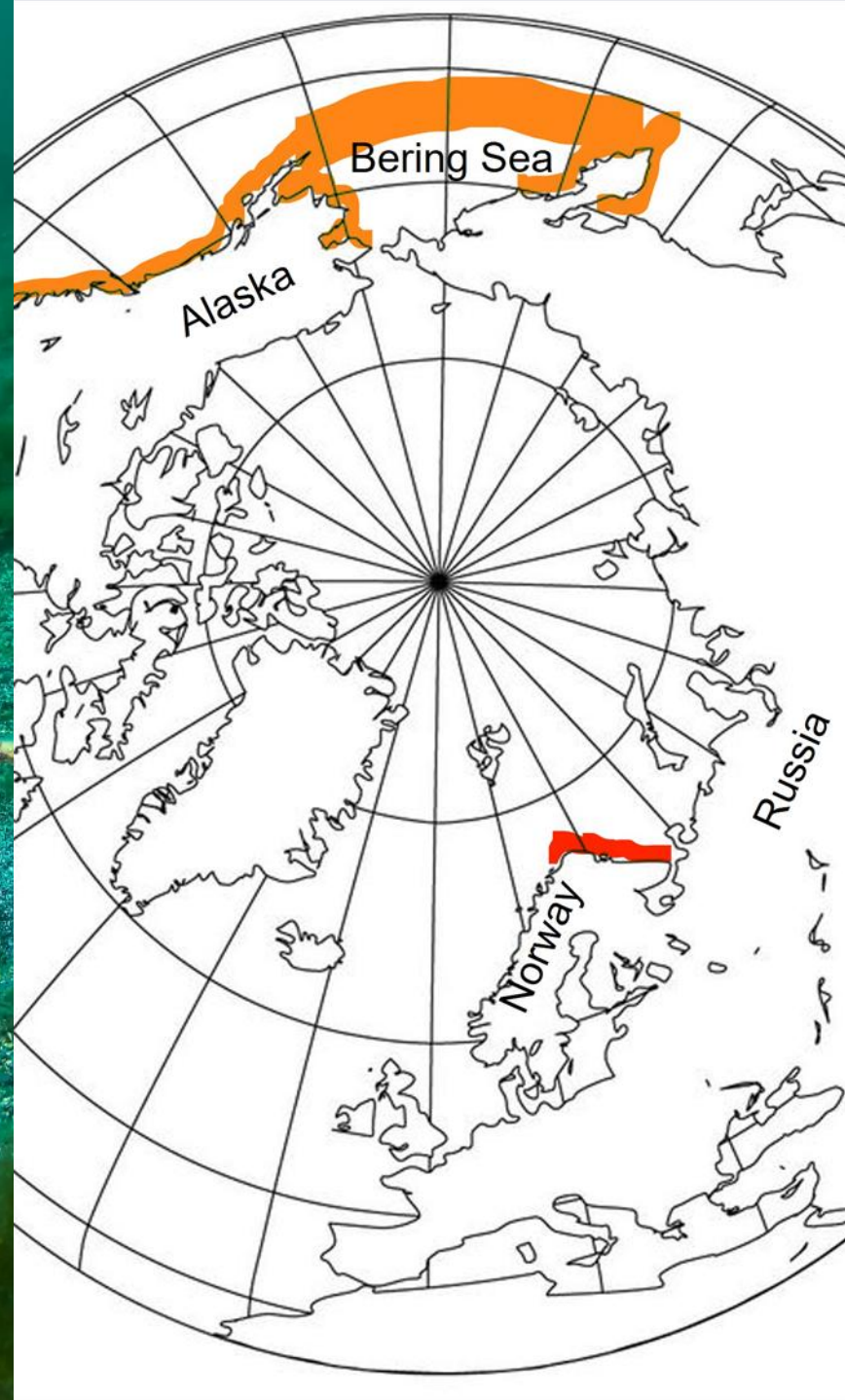
- Cold water crab $< 8^{\circ}\text{C}$ with natural habitat in Bering sea/northern Pacific Ocean
- Depth 20-300 m
- Is an opportunistic omnivore
- Up to 15 kg, (above 5 kg are rare today)
- Planktonic larval stage
 - Effectively spread with water currents



Red King Crab

Invasive, Alien Species

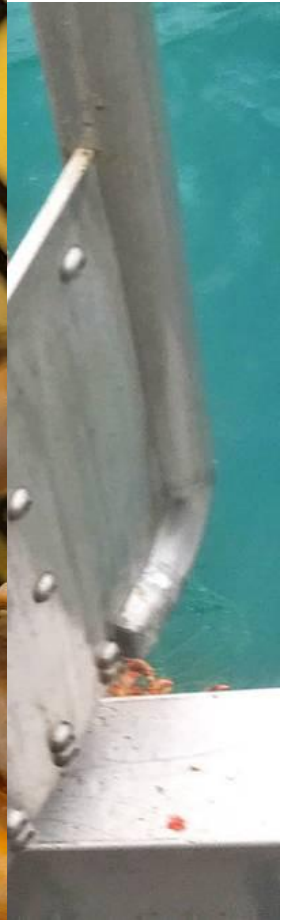
- Introduced into Murmansk area 1960
- First observation in Norway, Varanger 1976
- Abundant in Norwegian waters 1990 ish
- Black listed!



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Photo: Erling Svensen/Artsdatabanken

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“The King Crab leaves the seafloor barren”

Spreads diseases Alters the ecosystem



Structural and functional changes of soft-bottom ecosystems in northern fjords invaded by the red king crab (*Paralithodes camtschaticus*)



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SENCKENBERG

“MARINE BIODIVERSITY UNDER CHANGE”

Effects of the invasive red king crab (*Paralithodes camtschaticus*) on soft-bottom fauna in Varangerfjorden, northern Norway

Eivind Oug • Sabine K. J. Cochrane • Jan H. Sundet • Karl Norling • Hans C. Nilsson



Crab-22: how Norway's fisheries got rich
- but on an invasive species

High Value Species

REGALIS

68° NOORD
SEAFOOD PASSION

Live Norwegian P **159,90 €***

\$685.00

Inhalt: 1 Kilogramm
Preis inkl. MwSt. zzgl. Versand

55 €/kg

Kongekrabbe - hann

Levende - Fersk

Størrelse	Konservering	10.03 - >>
Over 3,2 kg	Fersk	404.00 kr/kg
2,2-3,2 kg	Fersk	399.00 kr/kg
1,6-2,2 kg	Fersk	354.00 kr/kg
0,8-1,6 kg	Fersk	66.00 kr/kg
Under 0,8 kg	Fersk	fri pris

Red King Crab in Norway

Fishery

- 2002 Commercial fishery started
- *Regulated and divided*
 - *Quota* fisheries East of 26° E
 - *Decimation* West
- Has to be landed alive
 - Onboard processing is prohibited

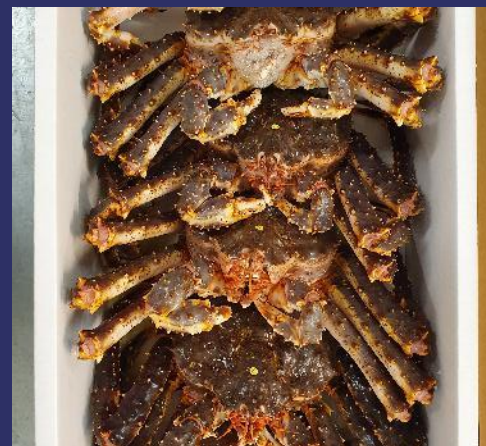


Fishery in Norway

- Coastal fleet restricted
 - Active in other fisheries
- ~ 973 vessels per 2025
- Quota 1570 t (2025)
- Pot fishery
- Legal size 13 cm ~ 1,5 kg.
- Male crabs (quota area)



Norwegian King Crab Industry



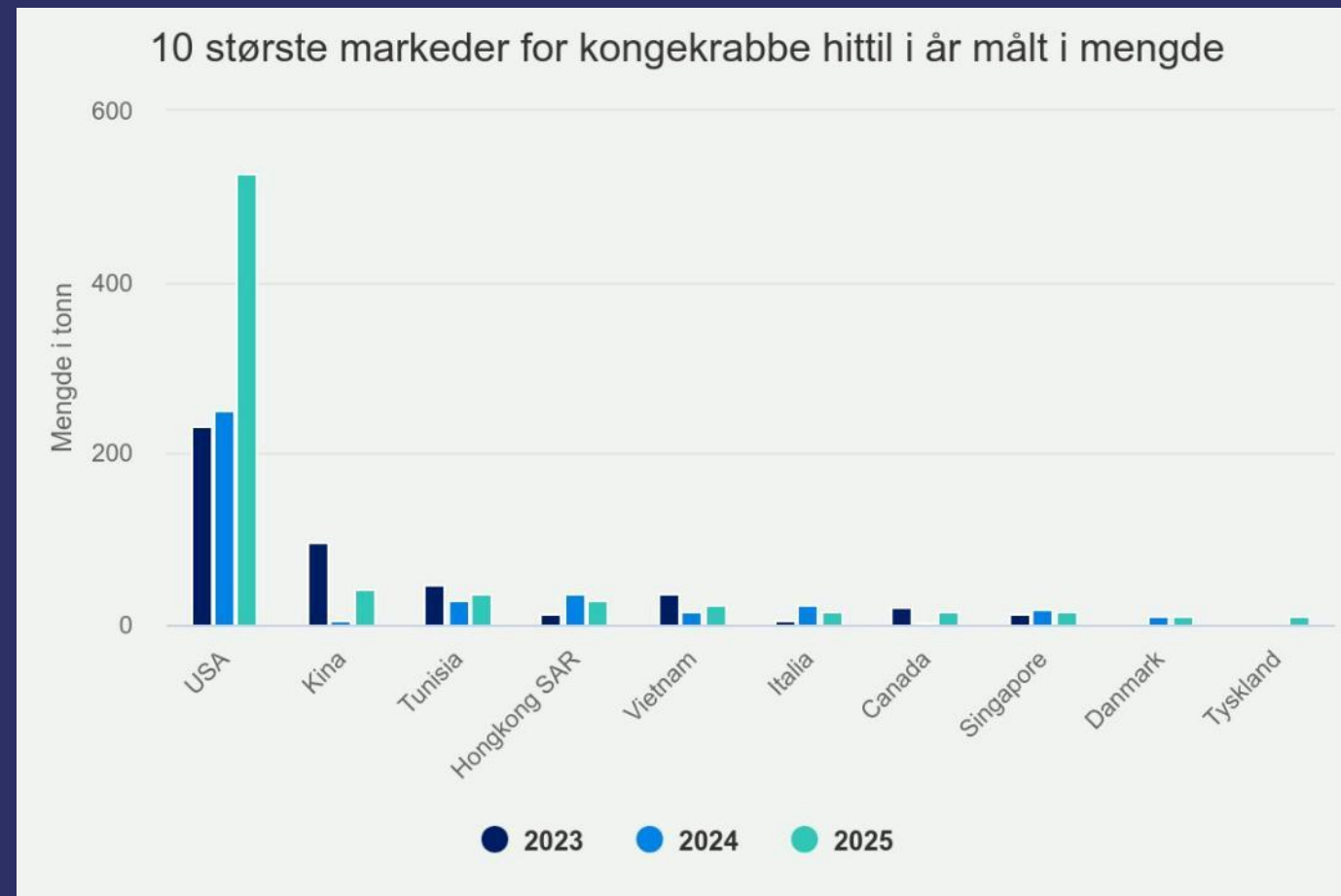
Edmund Mongstad



Norwegian King Crab Industry

- 70% exported live
 - By air freight

- Export value ~72 mill € 2024
- Exported 1500 t (2024)
- USA, Hongkong, Kina
 - collapsed stocks and war in Ukraine



Future

Opportunities and challenges

- Free fishing zone
 - Small undersized crab. What to do?
- Sustainability
 - Damaged crab
 - Declining stocks (*Should we care...Blacklisted...*)
 - Transport (carbon footprint)
- Climate change
 - Is it a winner?



Future

New villains in the same area. Introduced in the 1960.....

...3.5 mil. Pink salmon this season



Future

New alien species

Snow Crab Potential to reach 100 000 t

