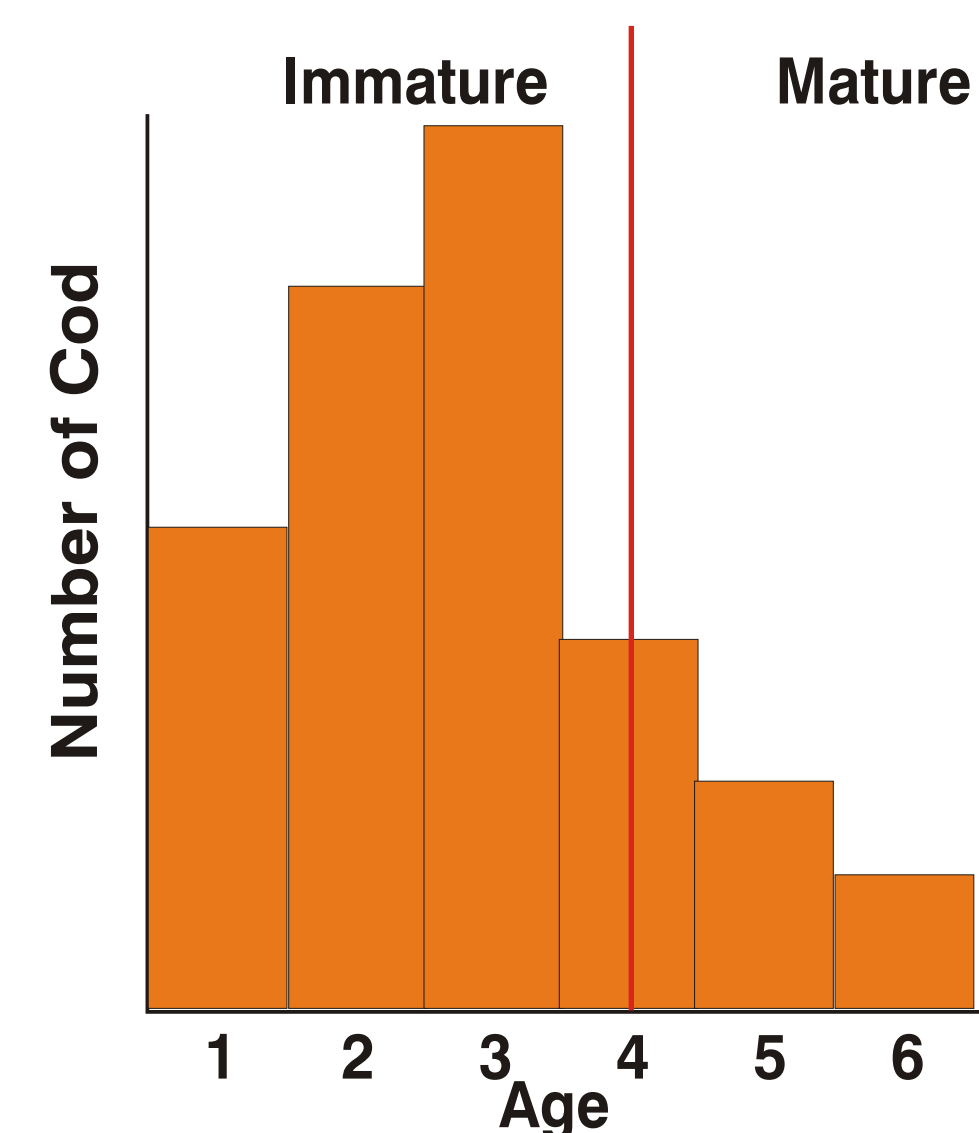


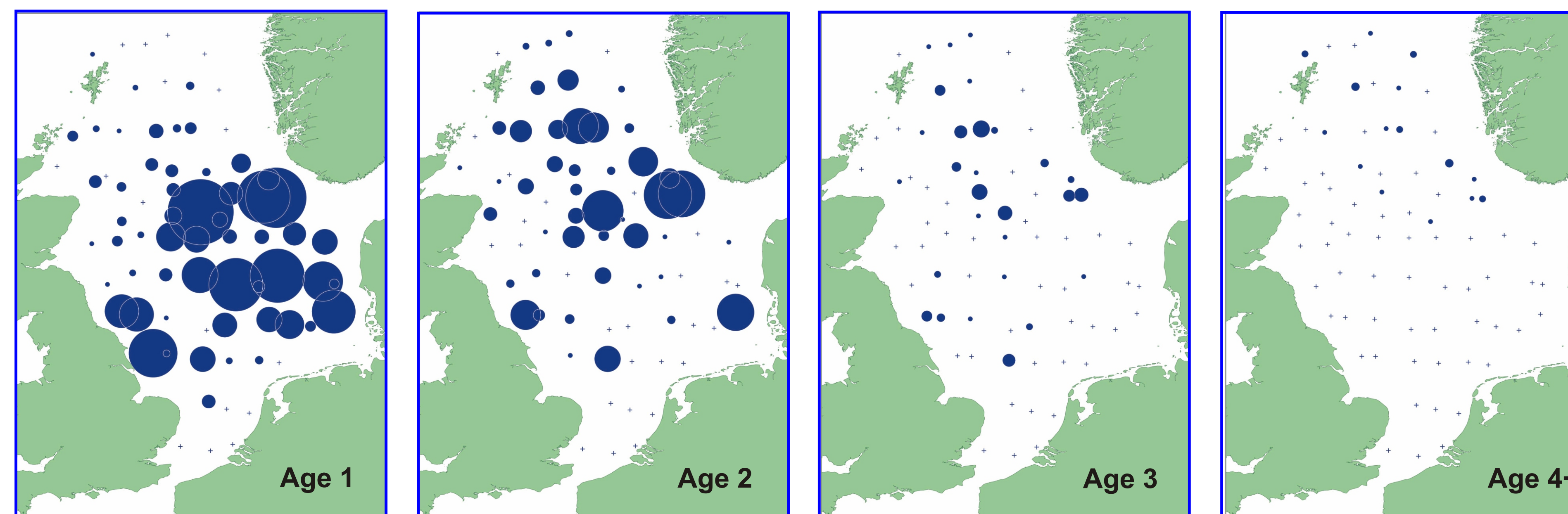
# REBUILDING THE NORTH SEA COD STOCKS

## The Problems

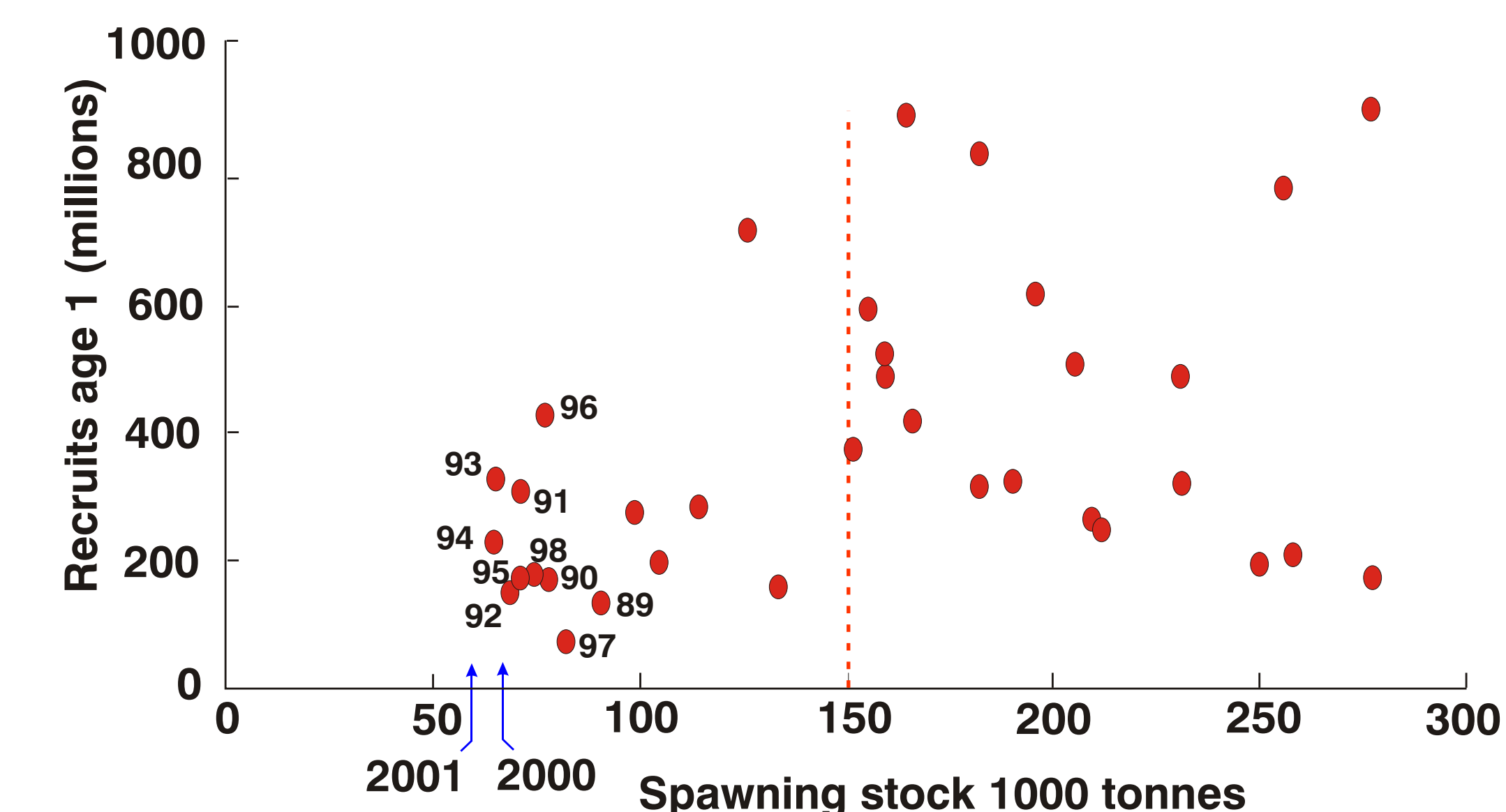
Many cod are caught before they can breed



Very few cod survive to spawn



At 70,000t the spawning stock is well below the 150,000t needed for sustainability



## The Remedy

Rebuild spawning biomass by  
- reducing fishing rate  
- reducing the catch of immature cod

In December 2000, the EU agreed to develop a *rebuilding plan* to run for five years

## The Rebuilding Plan

### Step 1. Cut the Total Allowable Catch (TAC)

TAC 2000 = 81,000t

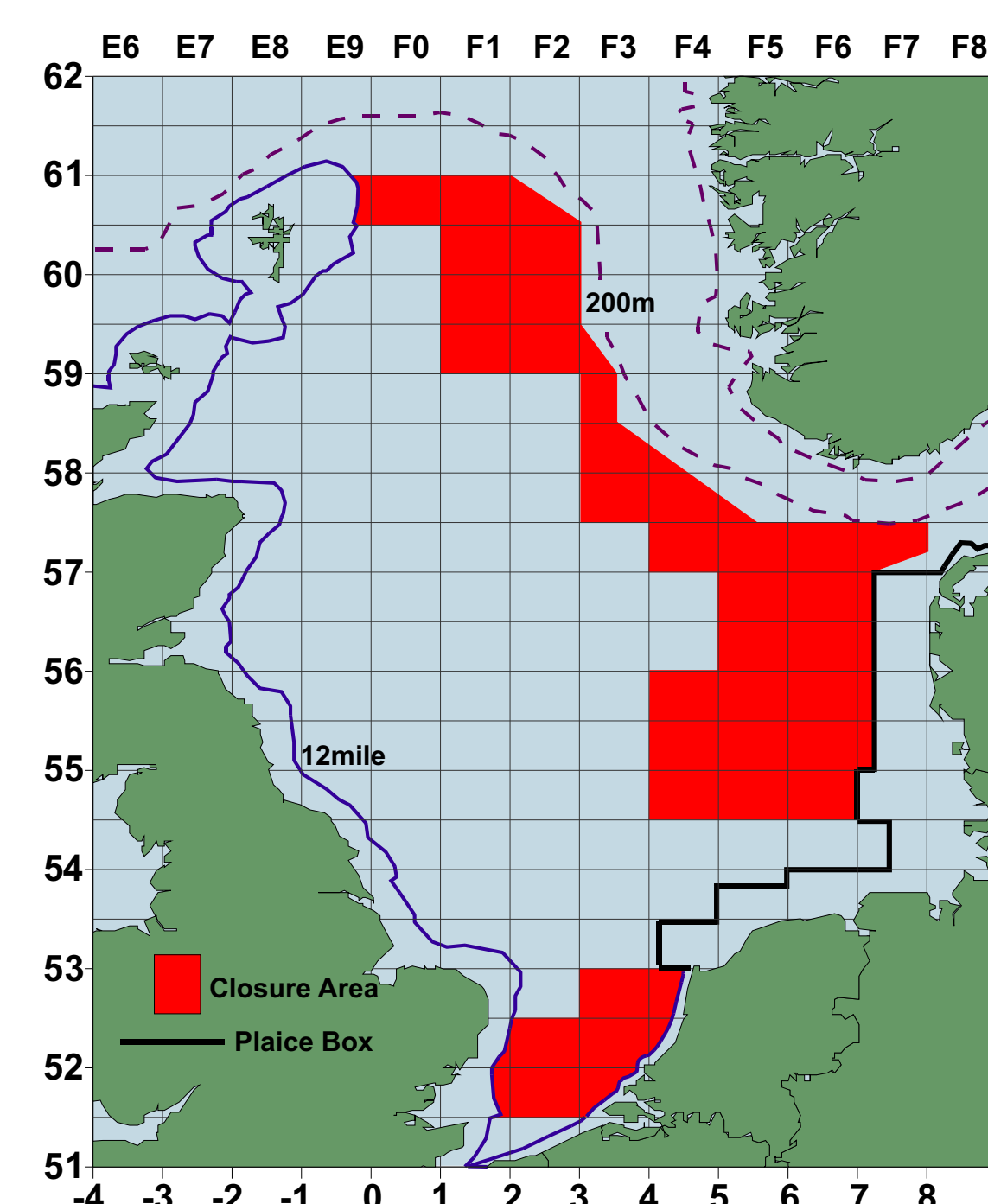
TAC 2001 = 48,600t

This aims to cut fishing rate by half and it should be kept low

### Step 2. Reduce the capture of spawning fish

Cod spawn diffusely over a wide area in winter (Southern North Sea) and spring (Northern North Sea)

In February 2001 the EU agreed to close the red area to cod fishing until the end of April. (Any future closure in the Southern North Sea should start earlier)



### Step 3. Increase the mesh size of trawls

The present mesh size (100 mm) retains too many 1-3 year old fish, which are too young to have spawned.

To allow these to escape in future, trawl mesh size should be significantly increased and square mesh escape panels fitted

BUT this is opposed by fishermen in the UK mixed fisheries, since large meshes allow too many haddock and whiting to escape.

It could be several years before we know whether these measures are effective

