

FishingFocus

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Technical measures

In March the European Commission issued its proposal to overhaul the EU fisheries technical measures legislation relating to how, when and where fishermen operate in EU waters of the North East Atlantic, Black Sea, Mediterranean and Baltic Seas.

The proposal sets the EU-wide objectives, targets, common standards and rules, such as prohibited fishing methods, general gear use, and measures to protect sensitive species. It meets environmental objectives and reflects the aims of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy, including regionalisation and the landing obligation.

The Annexes to the proposal include baseline technical measures for each region/sea which can then be further adapted by interested Member States under the regionalisation provisions. The measures will be included in multi-annual plans.

Member States, including the UK, have generally welcomed this proposal and the move to increase regionalisation, with much-needed simplification of the current legislation. Initially, we'll consult informally with stakeholder representative groups to inform the UK perspective during the early EU discussions on the proposal. Later, we'll run a formal consultation to ensure everyone with an interest has an opportunity to contribute their views as the proposal moves towards agreement in the European Parliament and Council – which may be well into 2017.

① You can find out more about the [proposal](#) and you are welcome to email early views and comments to the CFP management team at: cfp@defra.gov.uk



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



A recurring theme of this issue is our links with the European Union.

We've included, on pages 3 and 4, a copy of Defra's factsheet explaining how 'Being part of the EU is better for fish and seafood'.

EU multi-annual management plans will allow us to work more effectively than ever with those countries which share our seas. The European Commission's proposal to overhaul the fisheries conservation measures will give a further boost to regionalisation, simplification and sustainability.

The Marine Management Organisation explains on page 6 about the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This is open to grant applications for projects including improving health and safety on vessels; enhancing the quality or value of catches; investing in port and harbour infrastructure; and helping processing of seafood or investments in aquaculture. Further funds will support blue growth.

These are all steps towards achieving clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas.

Amy Holmes
Director, EU, Marine and International

MCZs: next steps

Our aim for the third tranche of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) is to complete the Blue Belt, filling all remaining ecological gaps in the network of Marine Protected Areas. We'll be drawing sites mainly from the remaining recommendations made by Regional Project stakeholders. If there are gaps identified within the network that can't be filled by any of the remaining recommended sites then Natural England and JNCC will develop alternative options.

As with the first and second tranche, we'll work closely with local and national marine stakeholders throughout this year before the formal consultation. These discussions will help us understand the benefits and impacts of designating potential sites and to consider options for achieving the conservation aims while minimising the impact on sea users. We'll then select sites for formal consultation in late summer 2017 and designate sites in 2018. In the consultation we'll provide as much information as possible on what the management measures could be to help stakeholders to understand what designation will mean for them.

Bass fishing regulations

All bass caught now by recreational anglers must be released. From 1 July 2016 recreational anglers can keep one bass a day above 42cm in length. Anglers must release any bass under 42cm in size immediately. Bass should be landed carefully to give female bass the best chance to spawn after release. These rules are vital to help the recovery of bass stocks.

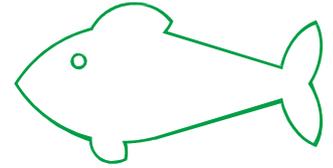
① You can find out more about [bass fishing regulations](#).

Fishing for litter

The final report of the evaluation of the Fishing for Litter project has been published. The project encourages fishermen to bring ashore marine litter which has been caught up in their nets while fishing. Vessels are given bags to collect the litter. Filled bags are deposited on the quayside and staff at participating harbours move the bags to skips for monitoring, collection and disposal.

① You can find out more about [Fishing for litter](#).

Being part of the EU is better for: **Fish and seafood**



Trade

EU - the biggest export market
for UK fish and seafood

UK fish & fish products

£1.01 billion → **EU**

worth exported
(2014)

almost **double the £550 million**
exported to all other countries

EU - major source of fish imports
for our processing industry
and consumer demand

← **EU**

- shrimps & prawns: £94 million
- cod: £82 million
- tuna: £51 million

Marine and fisheries issues don't just affect one country, they affect the whole of Europe. We need to work together on shared solutions.



Access rights to fish

Europe shares its fishing waters – fishing beyond our waters is worth **£100 million** to the UK.

The EU negotiates access and quota agreements outside the EU that are worth millions to the UK:

Value of EU negotiated deals to the UK (Norway/Faroes):

£20 million
Norway

£3 million
Faroes

If we leave the EU we wouldn't automatically control our fishing waters:

- we would need to renegotiate access and quota in the areas we fish outside our waters
- without collective EU negotiation it would be challenging to get the favourable access and quota rights we have now
- we would still have to share rights to fish in UK waters because cooperation with other States would need to continue



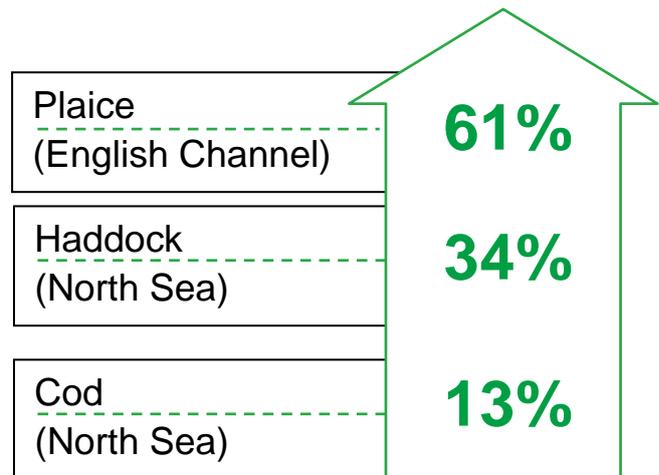
By staying in Europe we have a place at the negotiating table and can lead and influence decisions to better protect fish, seafood and the marine environment.

EU REFERENDUM continued

UK leading the way

We were at the forefront of reforming the Common Fisheries Policy, leading to better outcomes for our fishing industry:

- regionalised decision-making
- a legal commitment to fish sustainably
- a ban on the wasteful practice of discarding
- science and evidence led decision making on quotas
- EU policies have already paid off, allowing significant quota increases this year:



① You can download a copy of the [factsheet](#).

Baltic multi-annual plan

The EU has agreed a multi-annual plan for the Baltic Sea and the Commission will be publishing the final text soon. Multi-annual plans are strategic, high level documents that leave the development of detailed technical measures to Member States in the regions concerned.

The Baltic multi-annual plan is important to us because it provides a model for multi-annual plans in the sea basins where UK fishermen operate, such as the North Sea. These plans will include fishing mortality targets in the form of ranges, to deliver fishing at maximum sustainable yields by 2020 at the latest. These will enable the European Council to set specific annual quotas and to make trade-offs to optimise maximum sustainable yield across inter-related stocks. We expect the Commission to publish a proposal for a North Sea multi-annual plan in July and for the North West Waters in November 2016.

Fisheries Science Partnership

Defra and Cefas are seeking tenders for four 2016/17 Fisheries Science Partnership (FSP) projects relating to the potential for an exemption to the requirement to land undersized sole caught in inshore small scale fisheries; a fisheries science strategy for industry-generated data; self-sampling and electronic monitoring of elasmobranch catches in the Bristol Channel; and reducing whiting bycatch in the south west otter trawl fishery. We're also inviting tenders for the continuation of the Western Channel Sole time-series.

① You can find out more about [FSP projects](#). The deadline for receipt of tenders is Friday 10 June 2016.

Overview

As Seafish heads into year two of the 2015/2018 Corporate Plan and with new CEO Marcus Coleman at the helm, we're looking to build on the success of many of our key projects such as the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS), Seafood Week, safety training and recruitment.

As well as the high profile work, there is still plenty of bespoke work going on to support various parts of the industry – most recently the scallop industry and aquaculture.

Economic analysis of scallop fishing vessels

We've recently published the results of an economic analysis of scallop fishing in ICES Area VII by UK vessels of 15m and over length. The research was carried out in response to requests by the Scallop Industry Consultation Group, Defra and the MMO.

The analysis provides information to assess trends in the profitability of the sector in recent years and to support decision-making around management for scallops in Area VII.

The objectives of the analysis were:

- to provide a greater understanding of the drivers and factors affecting the profitability of the Area VII 15m and over scallop fleet;
- to determine if there has been a negative impact on the profitability of the 15m and over scallop fleet since implementation of the EU Western Waters Effort Regime; and
- should the analysis highlight a negative impact on the profitability of the 15m and over scallop fleet, to help determine its causes and whether intervention is needed.



We're also working on a similar analysis for scallop fishing vessels of under 15m in length and expect to publish the report by the end of the year.

Aquaculture toolbox

Aquaculture is growing in the UK and England's industry is particularly diverse with enterprises that have mostly remained fairly small scale and close to local markets. With increasing drivers of food and nutritional security, a growing population and increasing demand for healthy products the English industry must increase production to meet these needs.

New and improving technologies and innovative initiatives are emerging that hold promise for future growth and Seafish has worked with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) to support its Aquaculture Regulatory Toolbox for England.

Hosted on the Seafish website, the toolkit brings together Cefas guidance on regulatory requirements for aquaculture businesses in England into a single portal covering both existing and emerging sectors. It includes summary information with links and contacts on the types of licences, authorisations and permissions required to set up and run aquaculture businesses in England. This work forms part of the Seafish Domestic Aquaculture Programme, supporting the industry across the UK.

① You can see the [Economic analysis report](#) and the [Aquaculture toolbox](#).

Applications for EMFF grants

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) initially opened in January for applications focusing on CFP reform; improving health and safety on vessels; enhancing the quality or value of catch; investing in port and harbour infrastructure; and helping processing of seafood or general investments in aquaculture. The remaining measures will be opened soon.

MMO panels consider EMFF applications for projects costing £100,000 or over. Applications for the first panel closed on 29 March and the panel will meet in the week of 6 June 2016. For this panel, the MMO received triple the number of applications expected: 15 applications, although only 5 applicants had expressed their intention to submit an application. Commenting on the first panel applications, Michelle Willis (MMO, Chief Finance Officer) said:

“Our first panel application deadline was a key step in gauging the success of the opening of the EMFF scheme in England. I’m so pleased that the significant interest shown in the EMFF scheme before it opened has translated into actual applications received now it’s open”.

The second EMFF panel will be held in the week of 22 August 2016, with a deadline of 24 June 2016 for applications. The third EMFF panel will be held in the week of 7 November 2016, with a deadline of 9 September 2016 for applications.

① You can find [information and guidance](#) on submitting an EMFF application.

Blue growth funding

The European Commission is investing over €7.5 million to boost innovation and create jobs in the marine and maritime sectors. [Innovation in the Blue Economy](#) recognises that innovation in sectors like aquaculture, biotechnology or ocean energy is vital for the blue economy to thrive. However, the drive for innovation is being held back by a lack of highly skilled professionals, under-investment in knowledge and technology, and slow progress from research results to the commercial stage. The Commission therefore has three calls for proposals under the EMFF:

1. Blue Careers: to equip job-seekers with skills necessary for the marine and maritime economy; re-train those willing to join the sector; and help people already working in the blue economy to progress in their career. It can also be used to make maritime professions more visible and to attract young talent, in particular women.
2. Blue Labs: to promote innovative "laboratories", where students and recent postgraduates team up with experienced tutors from the local business community and the public sector to address maritime and marine issues. This could mean, for example, developing new technologies to eliminate marine litter like microplastics or nanomaterials; building unmanned robotic systems to discover and protect underwater cultural heritage; or finding out how marine micro-organisms can be used to break down hazardous substances.
3. Blue Technology: to encourage public-private partnerships that will support the transfer of new technologies and research results into commercial applications and coordinate strategic investment at sea-basin level.

① You can find out more at: [Calls for proposals: Blue Careers in Europe](#), [Blue Labs - innovative solutions for maritime challenges](#), [Blue Technology - transfer of innovative solutions to sea basin economies](#)

Next phase of marine planning begins

The MMO has begun the next phase of marine planning in the north east, north west, south east and south west of England.

In these four areas the MMO started the marine planning process in April with events across the country from Bamburgh in the north east to Falmouth in the south west. Over 400 people attended the events, hearing from their local MMO marine officer about marine planning; what it will mean for the future of their seas and coast; and how they can get involved. There were also presentations on the [Marine Information System](#) – an interactive, digital tool, which combines marine plan policy with supporting data and evidence, providing access to hundreds of data sets.



The MMO has also published [Statements of Public Participation](#) and the [Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report](#). During April and early May the MMO has been seeking views on these key documents, which establish the principles of engagement and sustainability that underpin the whole marine planning process.

The Statement of Public Participation sets out to whom, when and how the MMO will engage with stakeholders during the development of the marine plans. It also explains how stakeholder feedback, views and opinions will be used to develop the marine plans.

The Sustainability Appraisal provides an independent assessment of the marine plans at each stage in their development, ensuring that economic, social and environmental sustainability is at the core of the marine plans. The scoping report is the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal, setting out the issues to be included in the appraisal.

Following these consultations, the next stage of developing the marine plans will be a call for issues with supporting evidence starting in July. The call will provide the opportunity for stakeholders to feed their specialised and local knowledge into the process, highlighting each area's specific needs and challenges.

The call for issues with supporting evidence will also include a number of workshops which the MMO will hold in early summer. Drawing on the knowledge of a wide range of stakeholders is crucial to understanding the intricacies and complexities of each area's specific needs and issues. Building a comprehensive understanding of these issues, as well a detailed understanding of available evidence, is essential to developing robust marine plans.

The marine plans will guide activity in the marine area, ensuring activities happen at the right time and in the right place to enable sustainable growth. Building on the work and knowledge of the East Marine Plans and the draft South Marine Plans, this next phase will complete the network of marine plans so that all England marine areas have plans by 2021.

① If you'd like to find out more about marine planning or would like to receive invitations to issues and evidence workshops, please email planning@marinemanagement.org.uk

SALE OF FISH

MMO campaign to combat illegal sale of fish

The MMO has launched its “Looks fishy? Don’t risk it” campaign to highlight that buying fish through illegitimate sources damages the fishing industry, fish stocks and the long term future of the marine environment.

The MMO is working with the National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations, the Angling Trust, the British Hospitality Association, Seafish and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities to encourage people to be vigilant about the sources of seafood they buy. The campaign is targeting consumers, restaurants and – via Seafish – fish and chip shops.



The media, online channels and stakeholder organisations will be used to raise awareness of the [registered buyers and sellers rules](#) and to encourage the reporting of any suspicions of illegal activity directly to Crime Stoppers.

Commenting on the campaign Neil Wellum, MMO Head of Compliance and Control said:

“Under the Registration of Fish Buyers and Sellers Regulations 2005, enforced by the MMO, you can buy small quantities of fish for your own personal consumption direct from a registered and licensed fishing vessel. Fish caught by recreational anglers can’t legally be sold and you shouldn’t buy this.

This is not simply a question of legality; we want people to be sure they are getting quality produce and the scheme also aids traceability of fish from the point it was brought ashore. Seafood with questionable provenance may not only have legal and environmental implications, it could also be of low quality or not even safe to eat.

We hope that by raising awareness among the public and hospitality industry we may deter them from buying fish from untrustworthy sources.”

① You can find out more about the [campaign](#) online or you can phone the MMO on 0300 1231032. Anyone suspecting illegal activity should report it to Crime Stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. A cash award may be available.

FishingFocus – Your views

If you have any comments on Fishing Focus, please email: fishingfocus@defra.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Fishing Focus, Defra Marine and Fisheries, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR. You can read previous issues of [Fishing Focus](#).