

Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.



Update on UK Environmental legislation

Presentation to: Third Meeting of the Common Dolphin Group

15 November 2022



Fisheries Act 2020

- **Sustainability:**

environmentally sustainable over the long term, provides economic and social benefits, contributes to food security, economically viable fleet capacity

- **Precautionary:**

exploitation restores and maintains the biomass of stocks above levels capable of producing MSY

- **Ecosystem:**

environmental impacts and the incidental catch of sensitive species are minimised and, where possible, eliminated

- **Scientific Evidence:**

relevant monitoring is undertaken and management is based on best scientific advice

- **Bycatch:**

Bycatch of fish below minimum conservation reference advice and non-target fish is avoided/eliminated, all catches are recorded

- **Climate change:**

adverse effects of fishing and aquaculture are minimised, and the industries adapt to climate change

draft Joint Fisheries Statement

- Fisheries management in the UK is largely devolved.
- The JFS sets out the agreed policies for achieving, or contributing to the achievement of the fisheries objectives.
- *'The national fisheries authorities are committed to working with the fishing industry to minimise, and where possible eliminate, the unwanted bycatch and entanglement of sensitive species including cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), seals, seabirds, and elasmobranchs (sharks, skates and rays). Through the upcoming UK Bycatch Mitigation Initiative, the fisheries policy authorities will commit to actions that improve scientific monitoring and research, develop and adopt effective mitigation measures, support fishers to implement mitigation measures, and work with international partners to reduce the bycatch of sensitive species globally.'*
- Public consultation held January-March 2022. Finalisation of JFS expected imminently.

Implementing bycatch reduction ambitions

- Since March 2022 all fishing vessel licences contain a mandatory requirement to report marine mammal bycatch within 48 hours of return to port.
- **Marine Wildlife Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (August 2022)**
 - Improve understanding of bycatch and entanglement of sensitive marine species through monitoring and scientific research.
 - Identify “hotspot” or high-risk areas, gear types and/or fisheries for bycatch and entanglement in the UK in which to focus monitoring and mitigation.
 - Develop, adopt and implement effective measures to minimise and, where possible, eliminate bycatch and entanglement of sensitive marine species.
 - Identify and adopt effective incentives for fisheries to implement bycatch and entanglement mitigation measures.
 - Work with the international community to share best practice and lessons learned to contribute to the understanding, reduction and elimination of bycatch and entanglement globally.

Marine Wildlife Bycatch Mitigation Initiative

- **UK Bycatch Monitoring Programme**

- Established 1996 and lead by Sea Mammal Research Unit (St Andrews).
- Since 2022 a consortium approach has been adopted:
 - SMRU, Cefas, Marine Scotland Science, Scottish Fishermen's Federation, National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations and UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.
- Aim is to work more closely with the catch sampling programmes to ensure those data are fit for inclusion in assessments, that expertise in marine mammals, seabirds, fish/elasmobranchs is retained, and how EM could be incorporated into the programme.

- **Clean Catch UK**

- Draws on knowledge from both scientists, fishermen and NGOs to develop practical solutions.
- Research in South West trialling pingers, acoustic reflectors and the Clean Catch Self Reporting app.
- Bycatch Mitigation Hub
 - Outlines possible measures to reduce bycatch and entanglement. Not all measures listed are proven to be effective nor have they all been trialled in UK fisheries.

Environment Act 2021

- **Environment Act requires the development of long term legally binding targets:**
 - Air quality (particulates)
 - Water (storm overflows)
 - Nature and biodiversity (species abundance, nature recovery and conservation strategies, biodiversity net gain)
 - Waste and resource efficiency (plastic packaging tax)
- **This excludes marine indicators as the Good Environmental Status indicators previously developed are considered equivalent.**
- **Establishes Office of Environmental Protection (England), Environmental Standards Scotland and Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales which replace CJEU.**

Thank you

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