

£6.1 million Fisheries and Seafood Scheme opens for applications

Today (6th April) the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has opened applications for a new grant scheme that will support the fishing and seafood sector in England.

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme will provide £6.1 million over the next 12 months to support England's seafood sector, coastal communities and marine environment.

Initially the fund will focus on projects that help businesses adapt to life outside the EU's Common Fisheries Policy and recover from the impacts of Covid-19.

It will also fund a wide range of projects from providing professional advice to local businesses and encouraging local sales, to making fishing gear more selective of size and species and working conditions safer. In line with the Government's commitment to tackle climate change across all sectors of the UK economy, the scheme will work with the fishing industry to reduce emissions and provide environmental improvements.

Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis said:

We are fully committed to the fishing and seafood sector, and as an independent coastal state we now have a renewed focus to level up coastal communities across England.

Through investment across the catching, aquaculture and processing sectors, the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme will support the long-term sustainability and success of seafood businesses throughout England and will help safeguard our marine environment. I encourage all eligible businesses to apply.

The Marine Management Organisation will administrate the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme on behalf of Defra.

Tom McCormack, Chief Executive Officer of the Marine Management Organisation, said:

MMO continues to support our fishing and seafood industry. We look forward to managing applications to the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme, and helping businesses to develop, adapt and succeed.

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme will match fund projects that aim to:

- Create new opportunities for businesses – such as new local markets and support to sell a wider range of products
- Support business to adapt to new markets and respond to new trading conditions
- Support sustainable innovation – with the potential to boost the traceability of the fish landed and promote environmentally-friendly processing methods
- Protect the environment – with equipment that reduces the impact of fishing on the marine environment
- Improve safety on fishing vessels and on shore – by supporting a high standards of health, safety, hygiene, and working conditions across the seafood sector

MMO and Defra will also continue to engage with stakeholders on a regular basis, to ensure the scheme meets the sector's needs.

At the Spending Review the Government announced £32.7 million was to be split between the UK's fishing administrations. This Scheme draws on the £13.5 million allocated to England to deliver financial support, carry out essential monitoring and support the sustainable management of fisheries and the marine environment.

This fund is in addition to the £23 million recently delivered through the Seafood Disruption Support Scheme and the Seafood Response Fund to seafood exporters, fishing and aquaculture businesses affected by Covid-19 and new trading conditions earlier this year.

For more information and on-line application go to:
www.gov.uk/guidance/fisheries-and-seafood-scheme.