

[World news story: Bids open for projects to tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade \(IWT\)](#)

- The IWT CHALLENGE FUND aims to help developing countries by reducing demand, strengthening enforcement and improving criminal justice, and providing alternative livelihoods. The deadline for Stage 1 applications is Thursday 10 July. Information on how to apply can be found [here](#).
- The DARWIN INITIATIVE – a programme funded by the UK's Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) aims to protect biodiversity and the natural environment in developing countries. The deadline for Stage 1 applications is Tuesday 24 July. Information on how to apply can be found [here](#).

The British Embassy strongly encourages environmental and conservation organisations working in Guatemala and/or Honduras to apply. According to official statistics species such as exotic birds (macaws), reptiles (iguanas), and mammals are seeing their numbers rapidly decline as a direct consequence of IWT.

To address this issue the United Kingdom aims to build coalitions by engaging with the private sector, NGOs and academia. We also believe it is important to harness technology and innovation, and ultimately to close markets for illegally traded wildlife products. Project proposals may draw on any of these objectives.

[Notice: RG7 4PR, AWE PLC: environmental permit issued](#)

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: AWE PLC
- Installation name: Aldermaston Carbon Activity
- Permit number: EPR/WP3436UJ/V002

[Press release: Sea change for migrating smolts](#)

The Environment Agency has carried out underwater sonar surveys to check for young salmon using a new route across the Tees Barrage gates.

And the results show the juveniles – known as smolts – successfully making their journey from spawning grounds upstream out to sea.

It follows changes to the operation of the Tees Barrage in 2015, which means on every tidal cycle the gates are lowered to allow fish to pass both upstream and downstream.

Surveys have shown the barrage gates are the main route for salmon migrating upstream and the automation of the gates has resulted in an extra 1,500 hours per year of fish passage for returning adult salmon to reach their upstream spawning grounds.

It's in addition to the other routes that salmon use including the Barrage's navigation lock, the Denil fish pass, the fish pass in the white water rafting centre, and the main canoe slalom.



Downstream migration improved

Phil Rippon, Fisheries Technical Specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

As well as improving the routes for returning adult fish we are also looking to improve the downstream migration of these precious fish and maximise the number of smolts reaching the North Sea.

By lowering the main barrage gates at set times, it means that as well as providing an additional upstream route for adult salmon we are providing a much easier route for the young salmon moving downstream as well. It is known that the sooner the smolts reach the sea the better their survival chances are, resulting in more returning adult fish.

Our recent work using an underwater sonar has shown large numbers of smolts using the gates to pass successfully downstream. It's really positive to see yet more evidence that salmon are spawning upstream and these youngsters have been living in the river for up to 3 years before they move out to the sea.

Every year smolts, which are between 1 and 3 years old, leave the river to start their feeding migrations to the sea – travelling as far as Greenland – where they will spend up to three more years as an adult salmon before returning to the river to spawn.

Smolts are vulnerable throughout their migration and only around 5% of those that leave the river will return to spawn the next generation of salmon.

[Underwater sonar footage of River Tees smolts crossing the Tees Barrage](#)

Steering group

The Tees Barrage Fish Pass and Operation Steering Group, made up of Tees Barrage owners the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency, Angling Trust, Salmon & Trout Conservation Trust, Tees Rivers Trust, Industries Nature Conservation Association and Tees Barrage International White Water Centre, oversees the monitoring and research of fish and seal populations and carried out action to improve fish passage.

Research to understand the preferred routes through the barrage for fish and how to make it easier for them while reducing seal predation has been the focus of recent surveys.

Last year also saw the use of an acoustic deterrent device (ADD) to deter seals from entering the navigation lock, which showed promising results. Phil added:

We're working really hard together with our partners to understand how fish naturally try to pass through the barrage and then to make

it as easy as possible for them. We've changed the way the main gates and navigation lock operate to allow more fish passage, and we'll be using an acoustic deterrent device again this summer.

We want as many fish as possible to make it upstream to their spawning grounds to ensure the River Tees continues to improve.

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[News story: Reduced limit for North Sea nephrops fishing explained](#)

The Marine Management Organisation and Defra are providing advance notice of a reduction in the quarterly catch limit for North Sea nephrops for quarter 3 only. This is being reduced from 20 tonnes to 4 tonnes per vessel. The changes are part of a package of measures to cut fish mortality in the Farne Deeps and help long-term recovery of the stock.

Vessels fishing against the under 10 metre and over 10 metre pool allocations for North Sea nephrops will be subject to the new limit from 1 July to 30 September 2018.

The change is happening because the Government believes it is fair that all

sectors should contribute to the reduction in overall fishing effort on Farne Deeps nephrops and to developing a sustainable nephrops fishery that will secure future stability and profitability for local fishermen.

In 2015 ICES advice showed that the Farne Deeps nephrops stock was in danger of collapse and recovery measures were introduced from 1 April 2016. ICES advice published on 30 June 2017 demonstrated that stock abundance was increasing but that catches were still notably above the stock's maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

Nephrops fishing activity in the Farne Deeps is usually highest in the winter period, however Cefas analysis identified a pattern in the last two years of unusual and significant effort targeting nephrops in quarter 3 when the inshore fleet usually engage in a mixed fishery.

The planned catch limit (20 tonnes) for the fourth quarter, when the recurring winter nephrops fishery begins, is not affected.