

My contribution to the Statement on UK Shellfish Exports, 8 February 2020

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con): Will the Secretary of State work with fish and general food retailers to promote and sell more of our great fish and other food products to domestic consumers? Will that in mind, will he urgently make grants available to expand cleansing facilities for shellfish, because we will need them for the domestic market?

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

(George Eustice): I very much agree with my right hon. Friend. It is important that we build domestic demand. Indeed, many fish processors say that demand in the European Union is flat anyway because of the coronavirus and the lockdown, while UK retail demand remains quite buoyant for some species, although sadly not for all—in particular, the shellfish sector is quite reliant on export trade.

He is right that we should do more to promote fish, and we are working on a project with Seafish that the Government will co-fund to help build demand in exactly the way he outlines.