

News story: Golden opportunity for Scottish fishing industry

UK Government plans to make the fishing industry much more sustainable and profitable have been welcomed by the Scotland Secretary.

Fishing is a hugely important industry for Scotland, which is home to almost half of the UK's fishers – an estimated 4,823 people.

[The Fisheries White Paper – 'Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations'](#) – charts the course for managing fisheries after Brexit.

It outlines how powers to be proposed in the Fisheries Bill, which will be introduced in this session of Parliament, will give the UK full control of its waters and the ability to set fishing opportunities.

It also proposes a suite of measures to improve the sustainability of the fishing industry, supporting the next generation of fishermen while protecting the UK's precious marine environment.

Scotland Secretary David Mundell said:

Leaving the EU provides us with a golden opportunity to develop Scotland's fishing industry and ensure it has a thriving and sustainable future. This white paper is an important step towards achieving this.

Our vision for UK fisheries can only be delivered if all four parts of the UK work in partnership with one another. The UK Government will continue working closely with the Scottish Government and other devolved administrations to develop a fishing policy that works for the whole of the UK.

It is right that we are taking back control of our waters. Scotland's fishing industry has a bright future outside of the EU.

While the UK will continue to abide by Common Fisheries Policy rules during the implementation period, from 2020 we will be negotiating access to waters and fishing opportunities as an independent coastal state.

The white paper sets out a number of methods to explore fairer allocation of fishing opportunities, such as zonal attachment – which is based on distribution of fish stocks, rather than historical data.

Sitting at the heart of the white paper is the UK Government's commitment to sustainable fisheries, including ending the wasteful discarding of fish and making clear vessels will only be allowed to fish in our waters if they adhere to our high sustainability standards.

The paper also commits to publishing an annual statement setting out the health of fish stocks and based on the latest scientific evidence. If stocks are struggling, the four UK fisheries administrations, including Scotland, will work together to put in place a comprehensive recovery plan to restore them to healthy levels.

The UK Government will continue to work with the Devolved Administrations to develop a new UK framework for fisheries management, which will maximise their power to manage their fisheries while maintaining the overall coherence of the UK's approach.

It will also ensure compliance with international obligations to manage our shared resources sustainably. Access to waters and fishing opportunities will be negotiated on an annual basis. This is consistent with the approach to fisheries taken by other coastal states including Norway.

Interested parties are invited to share their views on proposals outlined in the white paper during a 10 week consultation.