

News story: Scottish Secretary welcomes bolstered Fisheries Bill and funding

Scottish Secretary David Mundell visited Peterhead fish market this morning (Monday 10 December) and announced that the UK Government will table an amendment to legislation which will enshrine its commitment to secure a fairer share of fishing opportunities for UK fishermen.

Mr Mundell also announced £37.2m of extra funding to boost the UK fishing industry during the Implementation Period. Scotland's share of this funding would be £16.4 million.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

It is absolutely essential Brexit delivers for Scottish fishermen and for those in the rest of the UK. It is clear they want to leave the Common Fisheries Policy and do not want any future deal with the EU to link access to our fishing grounds to our access to European markets.

This change to the Fisheries Bill creates a watertight commitment to getting the best possible deal for Scotland's fishermen and their communities and should give them a great deal of confidence about the future.

The extra funding announced today will also help support our fishermen over the implementation period. These announcements are great news for Scotland and will help the sector as it gets ready to take full advantage of the many benefits leaving the EU will have for our fishermen.

The move strengthens the Fisheries Bill to ensure the whole of the UK's fishing industry prospers as we become an independent coastal state.

The amendment would place a legal obligation on Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to pursue a fairer share of fishing opportunities than the UK currently receives under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

The Scottish Secretary at Peterhead Fish Market

This is in addition to the existing European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) funding, which at €243m over seven years is broadly equivalent to £32m a year. The Government and Devolved Administrations have already committed to match the EMFF funding with around £60m, so the extra funding will support more projects and the sector will benefit by a total of £320m.

Mr Gove has also committed that the Government will put in place new, domestic, long-term arrangements to support the UK's fishing industry from 2021, through the creation of four new schemes comparable to EMFF to deliver funding for each nation. The Devolved Administrations will lead on their own schemes.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove:

We are taking back control of our waters and will secure a fairer share of fishing opportunities for the whole of the UK fishing industry as we leave the EU. The amendment to the Fisheries Bill will give legal weight to this commitment.

New funding will boost the industry as we become an independent coastal state, preparing it to receive a greater share of future fishing opportunities.

The new schemes will be introduced after EMFF has closed in 2020. Details of these will be set at the 2019 Spending Review.