

News story: Update on seasonal closure for North West queen scallop fishery

A working group, including representatives from the fishing industry, is encouraging fishermen to voluntarily avoid targeting queen scallops in the Irish Sea (ICES area VIIa) and waters West of Scotland (ICES area VIa) until after 31 July 2018.

[This follows an earlier, seasonal closure between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018](#) which the Marine Management Organisation put in place for conservation reasons.

The seasonal closure will be enacted each year until further notice and is designed to protect the stocks during the spawning period. This closure was supported by respondents to a UK-wide [consultation held between 11 October 2016 and 2 January 2017](#) by Marine Scotland.

The working group was formed as a result of correspondence from some queen scallop fishermen and processors about the fishery. It includes fishermen, processors, fisheries administrations and scientists. The group aims to assess the current status of the fishery and, if appropriate, develop management measures and reduce long-term risk.

Following significant discussion, the working group considered that in the short term a voluntary closed season until 31 July 2018 should be introduced.