

Press release: Environment Secretary Michael Gove sets out new approach for UK fishing

Scottish fishermen will have their say on developing a new approach for the fishing industry, Environment Secretary Michael Gove pledged at his first visit to Peterhead.

The Fisheries Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech on Wednesday, offers a chance to take a fresh look at the UK's fishing industry for when we leave the European Union and become fully responsible for access and management of our waters and setting quotas.

In the coming months and years, the government will be working with the industry and marine scientists, as well as the devolved administrations, to preserve and increase fish stocks for their long-term sustainability, and secure prosperity for fishermen across the UK when we leave the European Union.

While visiting Peterhead's bustling harbour and famous fish market, the Secretary of State met skippers and industry representatives from the whitefish, shellfish and pelagic sectors.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

The UK is a proud fishing nation and this industry is crucial for many coastal communities around the Scottish coast and Northern Isles.

That is why I made sure one of my first visits as Environment Secretary was to Peterhead, famous for its fishing heritage, to hear directly from fishermen about what their real priorities are in the upcoming negotiations.

As we negotiate our exit from the European Union, I am determined to secure the best possible deal, making sure we have a sustainable and profitable industry for today's fishermen and the next generation.

The Secretary of State also met Bertie Armstrong, Chief Executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, to discuss the future of fishing for Scotland once we have left the European Union, upcoming negotiations and what the Fisheries Bill could mean for fishing in Scotland.

Bertie Armstrong, Chief Executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation said:

We are delighted with the commitment made to taking back the beneficial control and management of our rich and sustainable seafood resources.

Jimmy Buchan, Business Manager at the Scottish Seafood Association said:

We're delighted to see the appointment of Michael Gove as Environment Secretary due to his strong connections with Scotland, Aberdeenshire and the processing sector. We look forward to working with him to make sure we get a good deal out of Brexit – that means a thriving fishing industry, with a processing sector that supports the communities we live in.

Starting this summer, there will be a period of engagement on the Fisheries Bill with the devolved administrations, fishermen, trade organisations, fish processors and the public to make sure we deliver a deal that works for the whole of the UK, and over time develop an approach which delivers the best outcome for the UK industry.