

[SEPA publishes strategic vision for environmental regulation of the finfish aquaculture sector](#)

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The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has today (3 September 2019) published its strategic vision for environmental regulation of the Finfish Aquaculture sector.

The focus of a seven week consultation in November 2018, including SEPA's most extensive public engagement programme across Scotland, [The Finfish Aquaculture Sector Plan](#) has been informed by feedback from local communities, NGOs, industry and partner agencies with an interest in shaping SEPA's new regulatory approach.

The sector plan is ambitious in its aspirations for an industry where in the future:

- The Scottish finfish aquaculture sector recognises that protecting the environment is fundamental to its success and is foremost in all its plans and operations.
- The sector is a world-leading innovator of ways to minimise the environmental footprint of food production and supply.
- The sector has a strong and positive relationship with neighbouring users of the environment and the communities in which it operates. It is valued nationally for its contribution to achieving global food security.

A key focus of the sector plan is to ensure that all operators in the sector will reach and maintain full compliance with Scotland's environmental protection laws, while working to help as many operators as possible to move beyond compliance.

The sector plan accompanies the launch of [a new firm, evidence-based regulatory framework](#) on 1 June 2019 which strengthens the protection of the marine environment for the people of Scotland.

Terry A'Hearn, Chief Executive of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, said:

"As one of a number of organisations regulating finfish aquaculture, SEPA is clear that our job is to make sure environmental standards protect the marine environment for the people of Scotland and we make sure the industry meets those standards.

"Sector plans are at the heart of everything we do and will shape our

interactions with the businesses we regulate, the communities we serve and crucially, benefit the environment which we protect.

“Across the last two years, we’ve undertaken more science, more analysis and more listening than ever before to ensure we get this right. Alongside our new regulatory framework, which we launched on 1 June 2019, SEPA will not only secure environmental compliance, but seek to enable as many operators as possible to move beyond compliance and develop innovative ways to protect Scotland’s marine environment.”

SEPA’s Scotland-wide consultation received 117 responses and was supported by nine community drop-in events and 28 one-to-one meetings between SEPA specialists and stakeholder groups. A short summary of the consultation feedback has been published alongside the sector plan.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

SECTOR PLAN AND CONSULTATION RESPONSE

SEPA’S AQUACULTURE HUB

FINFISH AQUACULTURE CONSULTATION EVENTS

- Approximately 275 people attended across the nine community drop-in events.
- A total of 28 one to one meetings were facilitated between SEPA specialists and stakeholder groups including, community groups, local fisheries, NGOs and industry representatives.
- Specific round table discussions were also arranged for NGOs, fish farming environmental managers and partner public agencies in addition to the nine community events.
- 117 responses to the consultation received.