Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme supports fishing industry

News story

Projects approved under the £1 million grant scheme supporting innovative ways to sell fish and shellfish across England.

The Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme was set up in April to help fund projects that will increase the sale and consumption of locally caught seafood. It was a competitive scheme, judged by an independent panel of fishing industry, government and Marine Management Organisation representatives.

The panel has now approved a total of 20 projects that have the potential to deliver significant collective benefits for the seafood industry in England.

The panel has awarded funding to businesses based across the country who submitted a range of innovative ideas to support their local fishing and seafood businesses get their products to market, including new processing operations, on-line auction and sales websites, and local transport solutions.

Projects were selected that could demonstrate they brought the greatest benefit to the industry as a whole, working across communities and regions, or with partners.

Some examples are:

- In the South West, Newlyn Fish Market was awarded funding to create an electronic, cloud-based auction platform meaning local buyers can continue to ‘attend’ auctions and purchase catches.

- In the South East, Yorwarth’s Fresh Fish in East Sussex was awarded funding for processing equipment to be used in a newly created hub to process and distribute locally caught inshore fish. This will mean orders could be distributed quickly and continued to provide a sales

outlet for the local inshore fishing fleet.

- In the North East, Riley’s Fish Ltd in North Shields was awarded funding for a refrigerated vehicle allowing them to support fishermen by providing an outlet for their catch to be sold.

A full list of successful applications under the DSSS has been published.

Guidance has also been published on the further support available for the fishing industry.

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Update letter to residents on developments in response to the Grenfell Tower fire: 12 June 2020

The Secretary of State for Communities, the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP writes to bereaved and survivors to mark 3 years since the Grenfell Tower tragedy and update on progress being made in relation to building safety, the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and social housing.

Bluefin tuna in the UK

Government response

Information on the current rules applicable to Bluefin tuna in UK waters

Atlantic Bluefin tuna is a highly migratory species managed at an international level by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Regional Fisheries Management Organisation competent for managing Atlantic Bluefin tuna. Separate Bluefin stocks are understood to exist across different areas of the Atlantic. For several years Eastern Bluefin tuna appeared more or less absent from UK waters.

Sightings by scientists conducting surveys, and by members of the public on fishing vessels and leisure boats suggest potentially increased incidence of Eastern Atlantic Bluefin tuna in UK waters in recent years. The reasons for this are not clear, but could include a shift in distribution due to changes in environmental and prey conditions and/or increasing stock size associated with the stock's recovery. The UK has funded the Thunnus UK project, as part of the ICCAT Grand Bluefin Tuna Year Programme(GBYP) research activities, to provide a baseline understanding of the ecology of Atlantic Bluefin tuna (Thunnus thynnus) in waters of the British Isles. This work is on-going.

The IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) revised their Eastern Atlantic Bluefin tuna entry from "endangered" to "near threatened" in 2015. This reflects the improving state of the stock but underlines the continued need for a cautious approach to its management.

In 2017, ICCAT received advice from its scientific committee (the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics, SCRS) that the stock was increasing and unlikely to be subject to overfishing. However, these assessments and stock projections are acknowledged by SCRS to include a degree of uncertainty relating to a number of biological and ecological aspects of Bluefin tuna life history and the models used. Further information is available in this report.

EU legislation continues to apply for 2020; the UK does not have quota for eastern Bluefin tuna and no commercial UK vessels are authorised to land catches of this stock. Any Bluefin tuna caught by any UK vessel must be returned to the sea, alive and unharmed to the greatest extent possible.

Recreational sea anglers are not permitted to target Bluefin tuna and must release any unintended catches immediately and unharmed.

Bluefin tuna caught as bycatch which are dead must be reported to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) by contacting the local MMO office, landed whole and unprocessed. Bluefin tuna landed as a result of this requirement

must not be sold or given away unless it is for scientific research following approval from the MMO.

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RAF completes COVID support task at Kinloss

3 RAF Puma helicopters deployed to Kinloss Barracks to support the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) in the coronavirus fight are heading back to their Oxfordshire base today, nearly 3 months after being stood up in support COVID activity in Scotland.

The aircraft and crews from RAF Benson had responded to an urgent request in March from SAS to provide it with an interim ability to move infectious patients by air especially vital to remote highland and island communities during the coronavirus crisis.

RAF Puma just taking flight. MOD Crown Copyright 2020.

The support of the RAF has given the SAS the time to build its own infectious patient air-lift capacity, removing the need for ongoing support from their military colleagues.

MOD Crown Copyright 2020.

The Ministry of Defence can swiftly re-deploy the aircraft in support of the Scottish authorities should future circumstances require them.

While in Scotland, the RAF aircrews have taken advantage of the Scottish mountains and wilderness areas to train for their future operational deployment to Afghanistan.

Copyright RAF Benson.

Maj Gen David Eastman MBE, Commander Standing Joint Command (UK) said:

> The deployment of the RAF Puma Task Force shows how quickly we have been able to respond to requests for support from our colleagues in the emergency services across the United Kingdom throughout the

> battle against the coronavirus.
>
> Our crews have been on 24-hour call and successfully evacuated patients from some of the most remote areas of Scotland. I am extremely proud of the work the Task Force has done and we stand ready to support the Scottish people and Ambulance Service should they need us again.

Pauline Howie, Chief Executive of the Scottish Ambulance Service, said:

> We really appreciate the rapid support from the Ministry of Defence and Royal Air Force during the coronavirus crisis. We trained regularly together to establish the best ways of moving adult-sized incubators, called epishuttles, by air.
>
> During this time the Kinloss Pumas transported one critically ill patient from Arran to the mainland, while other fixed wing RAF transport aircraft have also move seriously ill patients from Orkney and Shetland to Aberdeen.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney said:

> The Scottish Government is very grateful for the presence of the RAF Puma crews who have been able to assist in a number of operations to move patients in need of urgent medical care. I would like to extend the warmest of thanks to those involved with this deployment and I wish them well for the challenges that lie ahead.

On 18 March 2020, the Defence Secretary announced that 20,000 military personnel were on standby across the UK to support the Civilian Authorities tackle COVID-19. Today there are around 4,000 troops supporting the civil authorities across the UK on 60 separate formal Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) requests.

15-year vision set to revolutionise construction

A digital revolution in the construction industry could dramatically increase productivity and save billions of pounds, while radically reducing disruption to the public and slashing the number of fatal building site accidents.

That was the rallying call to the sector today from Highways England as it

spearheaded the launch of a 15-year plan to accelerate the use of technology in infrastructure.

Connected and autonomous plant (CAP) is already being used to transform activities across the UK construction sector, including for example the use of robotic trucks on Britain's biggest road project, the recently opened A14 improvement.

Now the Government company, with partners TRL and the Infrastructure Industry Innovation Partnership (i3P), has set out a roadmap – a vision where the use of CAP techniques will become standard industry practice by 2035. It has been estimated productivity improvements achieved via CAP could exceed £400billion by 2040.

Highways England Chief Executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

> Connected and autonomous plant will make work safer and quicker. The Roadmap lays out the benefits and addresses the barriers to making this a reality. We are confident the Roadmap will help our supply chain to rapidly make this the norm on our worksites.

The CAP Roadmap was developed through collaboration with more than 100 industry stakeholders.

It predicts that adoption of this technology across the construction sector could:

- reduce fatalities in the construction sector by 37%
- improve productivity by up to £400Bn by 2040
- see annual savings of £53bn across new construction work
- assist with 47% of construction activities currently performed
- see road construction deliver benefits of >£3bn between now and 2035

Mark Thurston, CEO of HS2 said:

> This work charts an extremely exciting and potentially game changing route as to how we operate our sites as we build Britain. My challenge to our industry is to take the steps we can take today to improve our future, moving forwards together to make our people more efficient, and safer than ever.

The Roadmap sets out nine workstreams focussing on key areas.

Alex Wright, Chief Technologist for TRL explained:

> The CAP roadmap has been developed collaboratively with more than 75 organisations. Through a wide variety of questionnaires and workshops, we identified the actions required to overcome the various technical, business and legislative challenges to

delivering the vision.

Overall, the Roadmap brings together nine pathways which have been identified to deliver success by 2035. This includes elements from legislation, regulation and policy as well as factors facilitating finance and investment and an understanding of the skills gaps.

Highways England is already trialling CAP plant in key areas. Automated dump trucks were trialled on the recently-opened A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement in the East of England.

The trucks were programmed remotely to follow a pre-determined route and have the capability to detect and avoid obstacles and other vehicles, along the routes as they drive.

They provide the potential for round-the-clock working, helping to reduce the length of time roadworks are on the ground. And by being automated they reduce the risk of road workers being involved in incidents on site, allowing jobs to be moved to other skilled areas.

On the A14 and on motorways, a robot is saving drivers from hundreds of hours of disruption. It uses precise positioning technology to mark out where white lines need to be painted on new or resurfaced roads and puts roadworkers at less risk of an accident.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.