

UK Government announces outcome of EU fishing licence applications

Almost 1,700 EU vessels licences have now been licensed to fish in UK waters. Of these, 117 licences have been issued for EU vessels to fish in the 6-12 nautical mile zone where supporting evidence of a track record was available.

There are thirty five smaller vessels which did not have supporting evidence where licences have not been issued but where the UK government remains open to further discussion and evidence. The UK is clear on methodology with decisions based on evidence available and in line with the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

The UK government will publish the list of EU under 12m in length vessels that will be licensed to fish in the UK 6-12 nautical mile zone on Wednesday 29 September.

A UK Government spokesperson said:

The government has this year issued a large number of licences to EU vessels seeking to fish in our exclusive economic zone (12-200 nautical mile zone) and our territorial sea (6-12 nautical mile zone). Our approach has been reasonable and fully in line with our commitments in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

As regards the 6-12nm zone, as set out in the TCA, EU vessels must provide evidence of a track record of fishing activity in those waters. We have been considering applications for vessels of under 12 m in length to fish in this zone and, on the basis of the evidence available, we are able to grant licences for 12 of the 47 applications made.

We continue to work with the Commission and the French authorities and will consider any further evidence provided to support the remaining licence applications.

Almost 1,700 vessels have already been granted licences to fish in the UK 12-200 nautical mile zone and a further 105 licences were issued for vessels to fish in the 6-12 nautical mile zone where evidence was available to support a track record over the five year reference period.

There were 47 smaller vessels, under 12 metres, where data was less available and where further supporting evidence was requested to support their application to fish in the 6-12 nautical mile zone. Having assessed all available evidence, we have now licensed a further 12 under 12m vessels to fish in the 6-12 nautical mile zone of our territorial sea. The approach we have taken is reasonable and fully in line with the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement brought in changes to fishing arrangements between the UK and the EU. The UK is required to grant access to vessels which fished in the relevant parts of the UK's 6-12 nautical mile zone in four out of five years between 2012 and 2016.

The UK requires reasonable evidence to assess applications against the requirements:

- Positional data showing fishing activity in our territorial waters.
- Data recording catches of any of the permitted species corresponding to the same date or time period as that positional data.

The UK has left the EU and as an independent coastal state is committed to sustainable fisheries management. Defra continues to work with counterparts in the Commission and with French authorities. We welcome any further evidence from the EU, using our published methodology, to assess other existing licensing applications from EU vessels.

Full licensing criteria will be published on the [UK Single Issuing Authority's website](#) on Wednesday (29th September 2021).