

Environment Agency delivers major fisheries improvements funded by rod licence income

Today (12 January), the Environment Agency has published its [Annual Fisheries Report](#) revealing that over 1 million licence sales in 2020/21 funded improvements to the environment and fish habitats.

Over 1 million (1,090,068) fishing licences were sold to anglers between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, generating £24,583,342 in income which has been reinvested into incident response, enforcement action and habitat improvements to support fisheries.

This income was further boosted by government funding and partner contributions, allowing the EA to deliver a major investment of £33 million through the Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) to enhance the environment which fish stocks rely on to survive.

The report outlines how licence income supported fish restocking across the country which helps fish populations to recover following environmental incidents. Almost 500,000 coarse fish were stocked into rivers and still waters around the country, including over 130,000 barbel and almost 82,000 roach.

Licence sales also helped to fund 45 fish pass projects, opening up rivers to encourage the free movement of fish. Installing structures to bypass obstacles, such as weirs, allows fish to access new feeding areas and breeding ground to spawn successfully.

As inclusivity is a key pillar of the EA's National Angling Strategy, the additional income from increased licence sales has been used to benefit the growing angling community and make the sport accessible for all. This includes the construction of facilities for less able anglers such as accessible toilets, safer platforms for wheelchair users and improved access to fisheries sites.

The EA worked in collaboration with partners, such as the Angling Trust, the Angling Trades Association and the Canal and Rivers Trust, to encourage more people to give angling a go. The relaunch of the Take a Friend Fishing initiative (TAFF) encouraged over 3,000 licence holders to take a friend fishing. Licence income was also used to support the training of new coaches and facilitate 495 participation events which saw around 5,000 people try fishing for the first time

Kevin Austin, Deputy Director for Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said:

It's fantastic to see that over a million people went fishing last year and are recognising the benefits of this sport. The

Environment Agency uses licence income to maintain, improve and develop fisheries across the country.

Whether it's preventing illegal fishing and poaching, responding to incidents or safeguarding habitats – all licence income is invested directly back into our fisheries and angling services.

When you buy a licence you help us continue this vital work and create new opportunities for anglers.

During 2020/21, fisheries licence income funded:

- 119 fish stock surveys
- 17,106 fishing licence checks carried out by Environment Agency enforcement teams with the support of the Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS). 867 offence reports were issued, and 340 anglers were prosecuted for fishing without a licence
- EA response to 391 incidents involving dead or dying fish, including reports of pollution and fish disease
- Improvements to fish habitats on 575km of rivers in England
- Supply and stocking of almost 500,000 coarse fish including barbel, roach, bream, tench and grayling
- Initiatives to provide facilities to anglers, encourage more people into the sport and make fishing more accessible for all
- Work with over 1,200 project partners to improve fisheries and angling facilities
- The Angling Improvement Fund (AIF) managed by the Angling Trust to protect fisheries from predators, such as cormorants and otters
- Improvements to over 153 hectares of still water fisheries
- Monitoring, research, and development work to deliver sustainable fisheries management
- Vital work at the National fisheries laboratory at Bampton, to check the health of fish stocks and minimise the risk of spreading fish diseases

The EA has created a digital fishing licence, which allows anglers to purchase and display licences on their smartphones. This not only simplifies the process for anglers but has reduced spend on producing licences, allowing even more income to be spent on improving angling services.

You must purchase a fishing licence to fish in England and Wales. All income from fishing licence sales is reinvested to support the vital work of the Environment Agency to improve and develop fisheries across the country. Annual licences start from £30 and can be purchased online or by phone, more information can be found [here](#).

The RPA delivers strong performance across 2021

The Rural Payments Agency has paid out just under 101,300 eligible claims, totalling £1.8bn for farmers in the first month of the payment window which runs between December and June.

This total represents 98.3% of eligible claims to the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), 62.2% of claims to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CS) revenue and 64.6% of claims to the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ES) 2021.

In addition, across 2021, £66.75m was paid out in Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants which support the establishment and maintenance of woodland and hedges. Just under 5,700 CS Capital claims were paid out within an average of 30 working days.

Through [Countryside Stewardship](#), farmers can apply for funding to improve their local environment – from restoring wildlife habitats and creating woodlands to managing flood risk. Following close working with industry, changes have been made to the scheme this year to broaden out the options available and make it easier to apply.

Following these measures to simplify the scheme, the RPA received a 40% increase in applications for Countryside Stewardship, in comparison to 2020.

There are now over 40,000 farmers in England participating in either Countryside Stewardship or legacy Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) schemes. HLS is an Environmental Stewardship agreement for more complex types of management and agreements tailored to local circumstances.

RPA Chief Executive, Paul Caldwell, said:

We have continued to improve our service helping farmers deliver the best outcomes they can and we've worked hard to get payments made as quickly as possible – and will continue to do so.

I understand how important it is to help farmers through the transition period, to help them secure their future and our key focus is to help everyone make the most of the opportunities from the Agricultural Transition Plan. I am proud of what we have achieved in 2021 and we are focused on delivering more great results for our farmers in 2022.

Across 2021 the RPA continued to play a crucial role in developing and delivering the Government's objectives set out in the Agricultural Transition Plan. Building on the progress made in 2020, the Agency worked closely with Defra as the delivery body for the environmental land management schemes and saw the launch of the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) pilot with over

2,500 expressions of interest and over 900 applicants.

The RPA delivered a number of other schemes and support in 2021:

- The agency opened up the window for 2022 Countryside Stewardship Agreements to allow farmers to apply for funding to improve their local environment from restoring wildlife habitats and creating woodlands to managing flood risk. Working closely with farmers and land managers changes were made to the scheme this year to expand the options available and make it easier to apply.
- The Agency saw an improved interest for the new Capital Grants scheme for 2021 with over 3,000 applications received to improve Air Quality, Water Quality, Boundary Trees and Orchards or a mixture of these options.
- The Countryside Productivity Small Grants Scheme provided investment towards specific items of equipment which improve productivity and efficiency for farming and horticultural businesses released £16m payments on just over 2,800 eligible claims.
- In December the RPA launched the initial Farming Investment Fund, including the Farming Equipment and Technology Fund and the Water Management theme of the Farming Transformation Fund. Farmers will benefit from a £27 million pot to invest in productivity-boosting equipment.
- The RPA opened a sixth round of the popular Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund in December 2021. The £2.5 million fund encourages collaboration and knowledge-sharing amongst the farming community to protect and enhance their local environment, in line with their local Countryside Stewardship priorities.
- The Government announced a package of measures to support the pig industry, seeking to reduce the animal welfare implications of pigs backing up on farms. The RPA launched the Slaughter Incentive Payment Scheme (SIPS) aiming to increase the throughput of pigs by contributing towards the extra costs involved in operating additional slaughter shifts at abattoirs and a Private Storage Aid (PSA) scheme to contribute towards the costs of cold storage of the product.

The RPA attended shows and events across the country providing regular progress updates and heard first-hand about farmers experiences which has helped improve future services. The RPA also hosted several regional Roundtables with English Members of Parliament and their constituents as it continued to learn, engage and focus on delivering the schemes and supporting agricultural and rural communities to navigate the changes over the coming months.

Government launches new scheme for technologies producing hydrogen from biomass

- £5 million government funding to support the development of innovative new technologies that will generate hydrogen from biomass and waste
- paired with carbon capture and storage methods, these technologies have the potential to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere
- new technology will help generate green jobs and attract private investment, while also supporting the UK's net zero goals

The government has today (Wednesday 12 January) launched a new programme to help develop innovative technologies to produce hydrogen, a clean energy source, from sustainable biomass and waste.

Backed with £5 million in government funding, the new [Hydrogen BECCS Innovation Programme](#) will support the development of technologies to produce hydrogen generated via BECCS (bioenergy with carbon capture and storage). The BECCS process produces hydrogen from biomass and waste, with the ability to capture and store the carbon released during the process.

BECCS technology can uniquely offer the ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, as the CO₂ absorbed during the growth of the sustainable biomass and the organic content found in waste can then be permanently removed from the atmosphere using carbon capture technologies. Hydrogen BECCS technologies therefore have a key role to play on the UK's path to net zero emissions, providing hydrogen as a clean fuel for hard-to-decarbonise sectors such as transport and heavy industry, while also removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

Energy and Climate Change Minister Greg Hands said:

This innovative technology offers incredible potential for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, crucial to reaching our net zero goals. This government funding will help support the development of this new technology in the UK, boosting green jobs and investment while slashing carbon emissions.

From today, applicants from small businesses and large companies, to research institutions and universities, will be able to bid for a share of £5 million new government funding under Phase 1 of the Hydrogen BECCS Innovation Programme. Each project will be able to bid for up to £250,000 to help develop their project plans and demonstrate the feasibility of their proposed innovation. Phase 1 will then be followed by a second Phase, that will provide further funding to support the most promising Phase 1 projects to demonstrate their projects.

This new programme will support the government's [plan to develop a thriving low-carbon hydrogen sector](#) as part of the UK's green industrial revolution. As a clean fuel, emitting only water vapour when combusted, hydrogen has a critical role to play in our transition to net zero, with the potential to help reduce emissions from hard to decarbonise areas of the economy, such as transport and heavy industry.

Hydrogen BECCS technologies therefore present a key opportunity for the UK. This new programme will be crucial in supporting this new type of technology to be developed and scaled up for commercialisation here in the UK, helping the nation on the path to net zero while also providing new green jobs and encouraging private investment.

- The [Hydrogen BECCS Innovation Programme](#) is funded through the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's £1 billion [Net Zero Innovation Portfolio](#), which aims to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative clean energy technologies and processes through the 2020s and 2030s
- the programme seeks to support development of innovative hydrogen BECCS technology solutions across 3 categories:
 - feedstock pre-processing: the development of low cost, energy and material efficient technologies which will optimise biomass and waste feedstocks for use in advanced gasification technologies
 - gasification components: the development of advanced gasification technology components. Advanced gasification technologies are thermal conversion technologies which can be used to convert biomass or waste into aviation fuel, diesel, hydrogen, methane and other hydrocarbons
 - novel biohydrogen technologies: the development of new biohydrogen technologies which can be combined with carbon capture, for example dark fermentation, anaerobic digestion, waste water treatment
- the programme will be conducted in 2 phases, one building on the other, to support the development of core technologies essential for the generation of hydrogen from biomass and waste with the ability to capture carbon
- in Phase 1, successful applicants will receive funding to develop their hydrogen BECCS innovation, demonstrating its feasibility and preparing project plans for Phase 2. Under Phase 2, Phase 1 projects will be able to apply for further funding to support a physical demonstration of the hydrogen BECCS technology

[Civil news: exceptional case funding for families at inquests](#)



Exceptional case funding (ECF) for inquest cases no longer need to include means assessments of individuals after a rule change on 12 January 2022.

How will the new rules work?

The changes mean that:

- new and pending applications for ECF inquest funding no longer require means assessments
- no further contributions will be required for existing ECF inquest certificates
- legal help related to the ECF inquest application – and not already in place – will no longer require a means assessment

There is no change to means testing for standalone legal help. However, the legal help waiver provision also remains in place. This allows for advice and assistance in the early stages of the inquest process.

How do we submit applications?

A new submission form called CIV ECF2 (INQ) is now available on the ECF legal aid pages on GOV.UK.

The new form needs to be emailed to the ECF team using the mailbox below. You should note that it will no longer be possible for means-free submissions to go through the Client and Cost Management System. We will advise you further when this situation changes.

Will you continue to accept the current forms?

You should start using the new CIV ECF2 (INQ) immediately. It replaces CIVAPP1 and the current ECF1, combining all information in one form.

We will continue to accept an application using the 2 forms which are being replaced – both are required – for 2 months until 11 March 2022.

Further information

ECC@justice.gov.uk – mailbox for submissions

[Exceptional case funding form and guidance](#) – updated CIV ECF2 (INQ) is now available for you to download together with provider pack and guidance on inquests

[Civil legal aid: means testing](#) – for amended Lord Chancellor’s guidance on determining financial eligibility for certificated work and updated means assessment guidance

[Civil legal aid \(financial resources and payment for services\) \(amendment\) regulations 2021](#) – to view statutory instrument amending the regulations

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1. 12 January 2022

Updated on 12 January 2022 with information about the new ‘CIV ECF2 (INQ)’ exceptional case funding form and associated guidance

2. 15 December 2021

First published.

[SIA offers grants for good causes using cash confiscated from criminals](#)

Press release

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is calling on UK charities and community groups to register their interest for funds to support good causes.



Security Industry Authority

Organisations will be eligible to apply if they are a registered charity or not for profit organisation and are able to clearly demonstrate the positive impact of the grant to public protection. The grants will come from a special fund that uses ill-gotten cash confiscated from individuals convicted of criminal offences within the private security industry.

Organisations can register their interest by completing the [form available here](#). The SIA funds the grants from proceeds of crime confiscations orders following successful prosecutions.

Previous beneficiaries of the SIA grant for good causes include:

- The Prince's Trust Northern Ireland – Get into Security initiative
- EY Foundation's Secure Futures initiative
- The Worshipful Company of Security Professionals Charitable Trust COVID-19 crisis fund

Pete Easterbrook, the SIA's Head of Criminal Investigations, said:

We are delighted to highlight the SIA grant for good causes. We welcome applications from charities and other not-for-profit organisations where they can demonstrate a grant will have a positive impact on public protection or the wider security industry.

He added:

We believe that crime should not pay, so it's fitting that illegally-acquired money should be removed from criminals and used for the benefit of the security industry.

The window for expressions of interest is now open and will close on 21 January 2022.

You can find guidance about the SIA grant for good causes [here](#).

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the [Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). The SIA's main duties are the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

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