

# UK Fisheries beyond Brexit



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# What's happened so far related to managing fisheries post Brexit?



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- January 2018 – **Defra published 25 year plan for the Environment**
  - May 2018 – **European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018** passed
  - July 2018 – Defra published white paper on '**Sustainable fisheries for future generations**'
  - October 2018 – **UK Fisheries Bill** introduced to Parliament
  - December 2018
    - **Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill**
    - **CFP Statutory instruments** making EU retained law functional
  - March & August 2019 – Scotland and Wales publish **public consultations** on future fisheries
  - October 8<sup>th</sup> 2019 – UK Fisheries Bill & Environment Bill **prorogued**
  - October 14<sup>th</sup>
    - **Queens speech** commits to bringing forward Fisheries Bill
    - **Environment Bill** reintroduced to Parliament
  - November 6<sup>th</sup> 2019 – **both Fisheries and Environment Bills fall as General Election announced**
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WWF chairs the Greener UK marine and fisheries work pillar with public affairs lead provided by MCS. Greener UK is a coalition of 14 major environmental organisations united in the belief that leaving the EU is a pivotal moment to restore and enhance the UK's environment. Greener UK is working in partnership with the New Economics Foundation, Oceana and EDF. Main documents published to date have also had the support of Environment LINKs UK and Sustain.

## GREENER UK



Working with



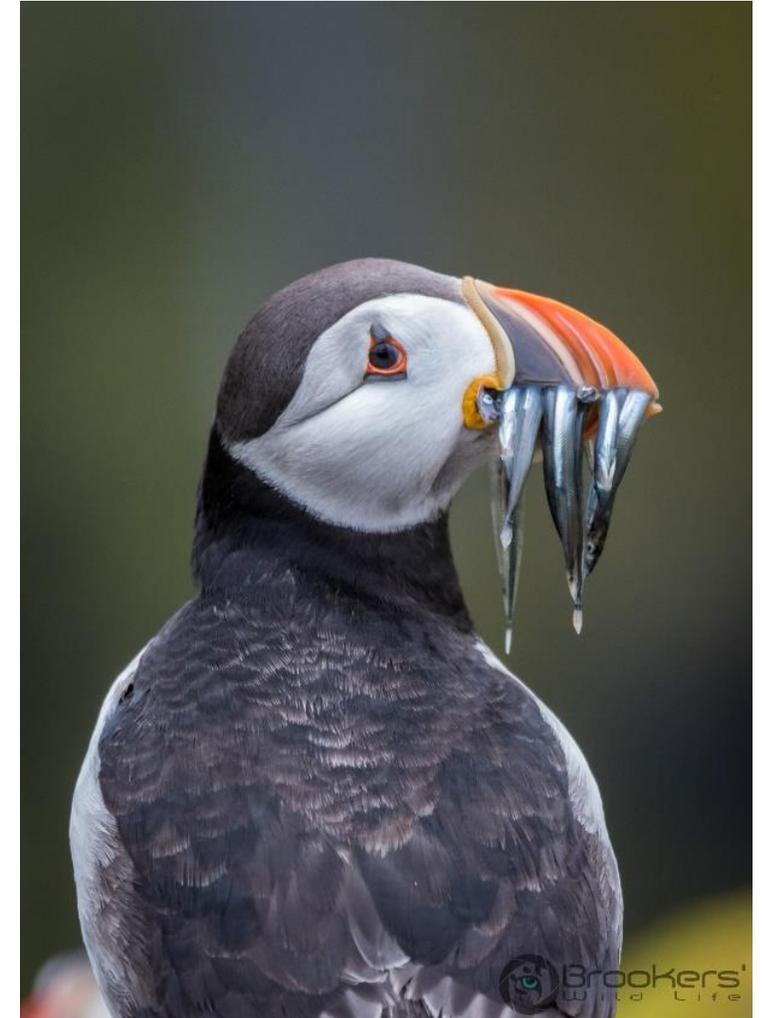
# How did the Fisheries Bill address eNGO key asks?

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**The ask: Commitment to manage fisheries sustainably as part of wider marine management**

**What Bill delivered: Sets out fisheries objectives (Article 1) but no binding duty on national authorities to deliver**



# How did the Fisheries Bill address eNGO key asks?



**The ask: Commitment to setting sustainable fishing levels**

**What Bill delivered: Repeals CFP commitment to set fishing mortality at sustainable levels by 2020 (CFP Article 2.2) Does not replace**



# How did the Fisheries Bill address eNGO key asks?

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**The ask: Commitment to using clear and transparent criteria to allocate fishing opportunities**

**What Bill delivered: Merely transcribes CFP language (Article 17) - not strong enough**



# How did the Fisheries Bill address eNGO key asks?



**The ask: Commitment to verifiable Fully Documented Fisheries with effective monitoring and control**



**What Bill delivered: No provisions in the Bill**



# What about watchdog(s) – who holds government to account?



**Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill (2018) - introduced the Office for Environmental Protection**

**Environment Bill – England only**



# Fisheries are a devolved management responsibility



# Scotland takes lions share of UK volume/value



Landings by Scottish vessels accounted for 57% of value and 64% of tonnage of all landings by UK vessels in 2017

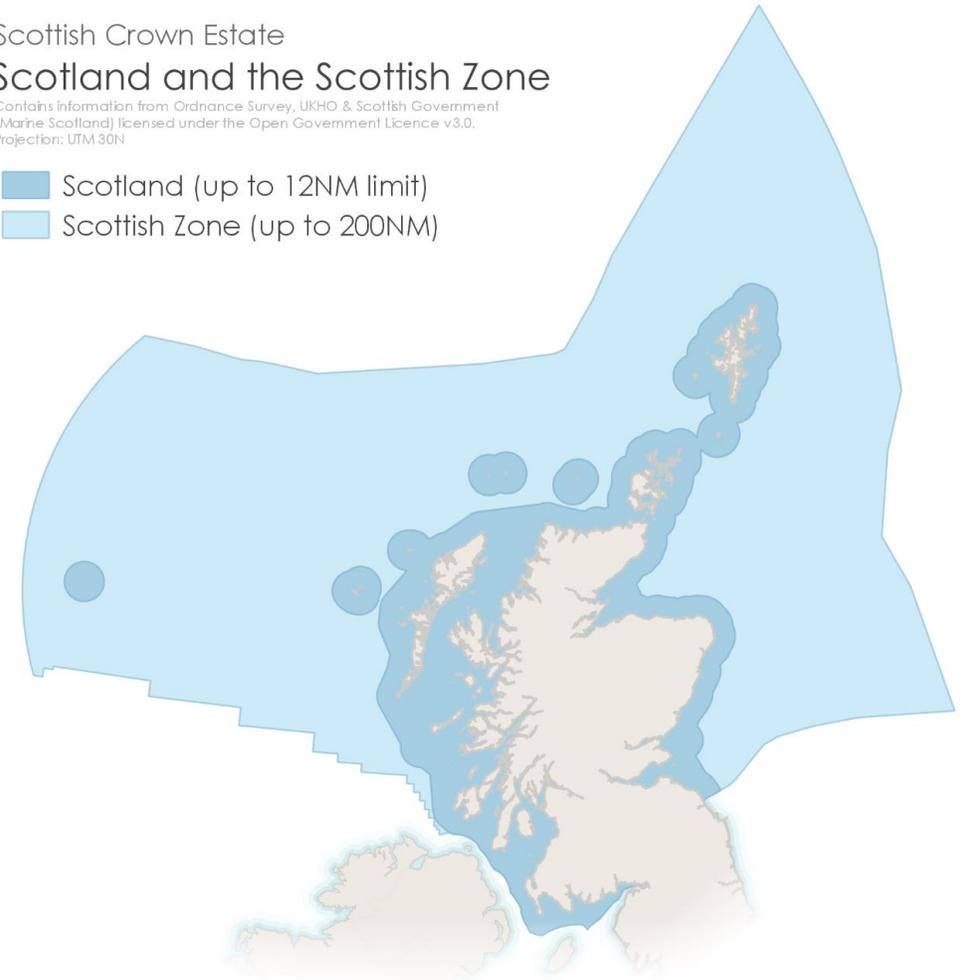
Scotland is responsible for controlling the activities of all fishing vessels operating within the Scottish zone - the North Sea and west of Scotland out to 200 nautical miles. It is also responsible for managing and controlling the activities of Scottish vessels wherever they may fish – including fishing effort and quota.

Marine Scotland also manages all inshore fisheries within the 12 nautical mile territorial water limit.

## Scottish Crown Estate Scotland and the Scottish Zone

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Projection: UTM 30N

- Scotland (up to 12NM limit)
- Scottish Zone (up to 200NM)



# Fisheries Bill and devolved management



Without a UK Fisheries Bill (FB) the Devolved Administrations (DAs) are in limbo regarding powers they will have post Brexit

- FB proposed ways for UK government and the DAs to adopt **common approaches** to fisheries management in certain areas and create a consistent approach to managing access of foreign vessels.
- The FB identified the creation of a **joint statement** for the four Fisheries Administrations to set out how they will work together to achieve the Bill's sustainability objectives
- Not clear if DAs would bring forward alternative FBs



# Sustainable management and effective implementation is important up and down the supply chain



## DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE UK SEAFOOD

For many years, the government, fishermen, processors and retailers have worked together to improve the sustainability of UK seafood. Exiting the EU potentially marks a step change for the UK seafood sector. As new regulations are developed, all concerned need to consider how to deliver sustainable fisheries management and high quality, sustainable UK seafood, now and for the years to come.

We (the undersigned) believe it is important that the government and industry continue to support the adoption of policies and actions that maximise the environmental and social benefits of fisheries and minimise the risks. It is clear that whatever legislation is adopted as the UK exits the EU it must deliver confidence that UK seafood remains legally and sustainably sourced, and fisheries must operate in accordance with the existing regulations until such time as it is replaced by new fisheries legislation. This includes the continued implementation of the landing obligation which requires fishing vessels to land all catches of specified fish so that they count against quota (where quotas apply) and to be fully documented.

With these obligations come clear opportunities, the most obvious of which is healthier fish stocks and a more resilient, profitable industry alongside greater food security. But if implemented poorly the result will be unaccounted for mortality, which undermines fishery science and could lead to overfishing. It could also constitute illegal activity which poses a significant reputational risk for the industry supply chain both at sea and on land.

The current outlook for assessed Northeast Atlantic stocks is positive with trends for mortality decreasing and for biomass increasing. We are proud of these achievements and need these positive trends to continue and not be undermined as a result of poor implementation. The UK seafood industry believes that:

1. Effective implementation of current legislation, and in time equivalent new UK and devolved law, is essential to ensure the continued biological and economic sustainability of European fisheries including those MSC certified fisheries
2. Fully documenting fisheries is an essential tool for successful fisheries management and the attainment of healthy fish stocks
3. Properly documenting and accounting for catches should not be sacrificed because there are implementation challenges in some fleet sectors

In order to address this we are willing to support initiatives that will be necessary to support this outcome. These include:

- Increased selectivity in fishing activities both in terms of fishing practice and gear development
- Comprehensive and cost-effective monitoring and enforcement of measures for example the use of remote electronic monitoring
- Innovation in access to quota
- Incentivising changes in fishing practices to address potential choke situations



This statement was convened by WWF as part of our programme to achieve sustainable fisheries in the UK.

# It's also vital for planetary health and climate resilience



- The ocean has absorbed 20-30% CO<sub>2</sub> and up to 93% heat (IPCC, Cheng et al., 2017) Without the ocean, world would be 36oC hotter than pre-industrial levels, not 1oC (Grantham Institute, 2015)
- Seagrass – absorbs carbon 35 times more effectively than rainforest – accounts for 10% of global ocean carbon burial despite covering only 0.2% area (Fourqurean et al, 2012)
- Fishing is the human activity that has the greatest impact on ocean health (IPBES report 2019)
- In the UK we are failing to meet 11 of the 15 indicators that we use to measure Good Environmental Status



# Ocean recovery – example solutions



Action to drive down emissions from marine based sources (industry transformation) and support for deeper societal change

100% sustainably managed and governed oceans, ending damaging activities and reducing wider pressures across marine area, including high seas

Properly protected, “climate-smart” MPA networks that remove key pressures and protect climate refugia and carbon sinks (“30x30”+)

Restoration of key ecosystems for their triple-win powers (people/food, climate, nature)

Breaking down the fisheries/wider ocean silos, restoring fish stocks and delivering "climate-smart" fisheries

Redirection of mainstream ocean finance and new self-sustaining funding models for conservation



# Legislatively where are we?



CFP has been transposed into UK law with SIs making it operable.

Fisheries Bill – was regressive and low on ambition and timescales. Unclear how it will return

Environment Bill proposed OEP & targets but marine jurisdiction ambiguous. England only. Unclear nature of return

The UK Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) & devolved Marine Acts Scotland (2010), Northern Ireland (2009)

Climate Acts



# Conclusions

The Fisheries Bill was regressive and without amendments it would fail to deliver sustainable fisheries.

Current nature and climate emergency demands greater ambition, greater urgency and greater integration of fisheries into wider marine management

Need to deliver recovery and sustainable management for the benefits of the marine environment, climate resilience and all those who depend on it

Thank you

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