



Addressing discards – new developments in 2014

Developments (year by year) from 2008 to 2013 can be found at:

<http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/conserving-fish-stocks/discards/discard-guides-and-information>

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In addition please look at the Seafish summary of key players and stakeholder activities to create a pathway to the landings obligation. This covers the devolved administrations, the Regional Advisory Councils, Producer Organisations, Fishermen's Organisations, Scientific bodies, selectivity and data collection trials, regional projects, EU Commission and Seafish. <http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/conserving-fish-stocks/discards/discards-under-cfp-reform>

For further information:

Seafish

<http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/conserving-fish-stocks/discards>

New Seafish Guide to Discards – September 2013.

http://www.seafish.org/media/publications/SeafishGuidetoDiscards_201309.pdf

CEFAS

<http://www.cefas.defra.gov.uk/our-science/fisheries-information/discards-and-fishing-gear-technology.aspx>

CFP reform

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform/index_en.htm

FULLY DOCUMENTED FISHERIES

Final Report: The English Discard Ban Trial. October 2014.

Ten recommendations are made, which are considered would assist in the implementation of the landing obligation. These include, providing advice to ensure that the safety of fishers is not compromised by the landing obligation; working with Producers Organisations and national fisheries managers to ensure the highest levels of flexibility in quota usage both internationally and domestically; analysing in real-time the catch data from vessel operators, registered buyers and sellers and independent scientific observations during the implementation phase of the landing obligation; preparing to deal with discrepancies between real-time data and forecast catch rates; having a designated role to ensure that any material destined for non-human consumption can be handled at ports and transported; prepare for the likelihood of more small, but legally sized fish on the human consumption market; testing of the e-log system in recording all components of the catch; assessing how data sources can be integrated to deliver full documentation of catches in the non-sector under-ten metre fleet; and evaluate the extent to which the current observer programme can serve to provide a reference fleet to validate self-reported catch data.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361564/Discard_Ban_Trial_Report_v11.pdf

Self-sampling in the inshore sector (SESAMI). Final Report. October 2014.

Results indicate that there were no significant differences in the amount caught, proportion retained and discarded over time for vessels that fish in the south east and those that fish in the south west. However, there were significant differences between gear types on the measures of daily catch, proportion retained and discarded, and the number of species caught with daily catches for gill and tangle net significantly higher than those of drift net, hand line (board), ring net and rod and line. Catches from otter trawls showed a significantly greater number of species caught per trip than all other gear types.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361558/SESAMI_final_report_Final.pdf

Final report from the 2013 trial showing that discards are under the UK average for Western haddock. 22 September 2014.

A trial has been carried out on a trawler fishing under a discard ban for Area VIIb-k haddock, which is caught amongst a diverse range of over 20 species in the south west mixed fishery. On-shore observers estimated that less than 0.01% incidental discards and less than 1% of the haddock catch was below the minimum landing size or damaged. The fishery in the area is fished by over 130 UK vessels, which discard about 62% of haddock because of quota restrictions. The results of the trial show the potential effect of a haddock as a choke species – a low quota species that, when the quota is gone, would lead vessels to stop fishing even if they still had quota for other species. The data suggests that the south west trawl fleet faces challenges in avoiding haddock catches, which could result in an early closure to this fishery when the quota is exhausted. This report follows an [interim document](#) published in June 2014 which stated haddock catches would continue to be documented until the end of the scheme. The final report includes this data. It is also connected to a [report about trials](#) carried out by fishermen of different trawl designs which have dramatically reduced overall haddock catches across all size ranges. These trials were carried out following participation in the catch quota trial scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/catch-quota-trial-final-report-2013-western-haddock>

North Sea trials show less than 1 percent of cod discarded. 11 August 2014.

The MMO has published the results of catch quota trials which took place in the North Sea during 2013. 12 vessels took part in the scheme in the North Sea in 2013. The [report](#) details how the practice is proving a successful, alternative method of managing fisheries. Results for the 2013 trials

show an overall estimated discard rate of North Sea cod of 0.03% (496kg) from a total sampled catch of 1,452 tonnes.

Final report:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342449/North_Sea_Cod_Catch_Quota_Trials_Final_Report_2013.pdf

Catch Quota Trials: MMO North Sea cod 2013 interim report. Published 11 June 2014.

There are 11 trawlers and 1 gill netter taking part in the trial. Interim results show:

- an overall estimated discard rate of North Sea cod of 0.03% (225kg) from a total sampled catch of 638 tonnes
- self-reported landings of unmarketable North Sea cod (both damaged and undersized) of 0.5%
- consistent compliance with the obligation to land all catches of cod and low levels of unmarketable cod catch

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/catch-quota-trials-north-sea-cod-2013-interim-report>

Catch Quota Trials: MMO Western haddock 2013 interim report. Published 11 June 2014.

A trial has been carried out on a trawler fishing under a discard ban for Area VIIb-k haddock. On-shore observers estimated that less than 0.01% incidental discards and less than 1% of the haddock catch was below the minimum landing size or damaged. The fishery in the area is fished by over 130 UK vessels, which discards about 62% of haddock because of quota restrictions. The results of the trial show the potential effect of a haddock as a choke species – a low quota species that, when the quota is gone, would lead vessels to stop fishing even if they still had quota for other species. The data suggests that the south west trawl fleet faces challenges in avoiding haddock catches, which could result in an early closure to this fishery when the quota is exhausted.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/catch-quota-trials-western-haddock-2013-interim-report>

Apply to partake in 2014 Irish Sea Fishery Board (BIM's) discard trials. 28 February 2014.

- Seltra sorting box in the Nephrops fishery in the Smalls. Trial in March. Closing date for applications. 12 March 2014.
- Quad-rig vs Twin-rig trawl in the Nephrops fishery at the Smalls fishing grounds. Trial in April. Closing date for applications. 12 March 2014.
- Cod-end selectivity for Nephrops in the Irish Sea and the Smalls. Trial in June and July. Closing date for applications. Later in 2014.
- Cod-end selectivity for mixed whitefish in the Celtic Sea. Trial in August/September. Closing date for applications. Later in 2014

<http://www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/22601/apply-to-partake-in-2014-discard-trials#sthash.R5Qx0fPj.dpuf>

SCOTLAND

Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS). Workshop to address the issues surrounding a discarding ban in the Scottish Nephrops fisheries 12:30 on 12 to 17:00 on 13 May, 2014. Radisson Hotel, Glasgow 301 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8DL.

MASTS is sponsoring a short workshop to consider how the incoming discards ban will affect Scottish *Nephrops* fisheries. The workshop will include sessions with leading experts from policy, industry, gear technology, economics and ecosystem science sectors. The output from the workshop will be a MASTS position paper which will inform the direction for research which needs to be undertaken now, ahead of the discards ban being introduced in the *Nephrops* sector. This will cover: EU and Scottish government policy direction and likely operation of the discarding ban; industry position; current by-catch and discard patterns; progress with more selective gear; post-discard survival studies; ecosystem effects; and economic impacts. Contact: Clive.Fox@sams.ac.uk

ENGLAND/WALES/NORTHERN IRELAND/SOUTHERN IRELAND

GENERAL POLICY

Common Fisheries Policy: Consultation on the implementation of the pelagic landing obligation (discard ban) in England. Closing date 12 May 2014.

Defra is seeking views on the proposed method to implement the pelagic landing obligation, also known as a discard ban, in England. All fish caught in pelagic fisheries must not be returned to the sea, except when subject to specific exemptions. The ban will come into force on 1 January 2015. In particular Defra is seeking views on proposed changes to: quota management; access to exemptions; monitoring and enforcement; and catch management.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/fisheries/pelagic-landing-obligation-in-england>

Commentary

- **Seafish welcomes new Defra consultation on the implementation of a pelagic landing obligation.** Seafish said it has worked closely with industry in the run up to this consultation, through a range of projects and initiatives, as well as the Seafish Discard Action Group (DAG). Seafish encourages the industry members to respond to the consultation. “Positive steps have already been taken by DAG and Seafish in looking at new gear technologies and developments to assist industry through the implementation of a discards ban and this work is ongoing. As part of this work, the Seafish Economics team has recently produced a comprehensive study on the potential economic impacts of the landings obligation.”
<http://www.seafish.org/about-seafish/news-and-events/news/seafish-welcomes-new-defra-consultation-on-the-implementation-of-a-pelagic-landing-obligation>
- **UK fishermen have ‘lot to lose’ from discard ban.** Barrie Deas, NFFO, speaking at Bord Iascaigh Mhara (the Irish Sea Fisheries Board, BIM)’s conference in Dublin, said fishermen have a lot to lose if the ‘big bang’ approach to banning all discards throws up some difficulties. By this he meant the mass introduction of the bans across whole species at a time, rather than incremental introductions the like of which saw success for Norway. His concern was that should the discard ban interrupt fishing in some way, it could cost the industry heavily. There have been a number of people, and initiatives, backing the idea that for the discards ban to work fishermen must be given the flexibility to implement it in ways which make the most sense for them.
http://www.undercurrentnews.com/2014/04/04/uk-fishermen-have-lot-to-lose-from-discard-ban/?utm_source=Undercurrent+News+Alerts&utm_campaign=de019f21fa-From+Email+Europe+briefing+4+4+2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_feb55e2e23-de019f21fa-91339593

There have been a number of articles (for copies E: k_green@seafish.co.uk):

- **Fishing News.** 2 May 2014. Landing obligations threaten Scottish tradition. Although the Scottish fleet has been downsized by over 60% in little more than a decade, skipper/owners and related family shareholders continues to form the backbone of vessel ownership
- **Fishing News.** 9 May 2014. Defra spells out plans for pelagic discarding.
- **Intrafish.** UK fisheries minister: 'No fish will be dumped on land' - George Eustice denies allegations the EU Commission's discard ban is only moving the problem from sea to land. During a Q&A session at the annual general meeting of the National Federation of Fishing Organizations (NFFO) held in London this week Fisheries Minister George Eustice said the introduction of the discard ban and landing obligations would not result in a problem of where to dispose of previously discarded over-quota fish. “If the current TACs and quotas take into account the ‘X’ amount that are being discarded today and, once the discard ban is introduced, the TACs [total allowable catches] are increased to allow for this, then fishermen will find if they manage their fisheries better and target different species at different times in different areas, that almost all of what is caught will actually be within the allowable quota,” he said.

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in the UK 2014 to 2020. Consultation. Closing date 12 May 2014.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/fisheries/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund-in-the-uk>

Defra is seeking views on the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in the UK. The EMFF is an EU fund which will be used to support Common Fisheries Policy reform. **There are specific comments/proposals under EMFF which relate to discards:**

The aim is to help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing and to adjust to the requirements of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is one of the EMFF priority areas. There is an assumption that the UK will receive €138m for the 'core' budget (the same as it received under the EFF), €24m for the enforcement budget and €30m for the data collection budget. In relation to the reformed CFP it includes:

- Transition of the fleet to sustainably managed discard-free fisheries. For example, the fund will be used to support the purchase of new gear for boats to help the fleet adapt to the requirements of the new CFP.
- Onshore support for this transition. This will include funding for adaptations to ports so they are better equipped for the requirements of the new CFP, as well as funding for the marketing and processing sectors to encourage greater sale and consumption of under-exploited species.
- Assistance with the technical aspects of CFP reform. This might take the form of upgrades to IT systems to allow public bodies to fulfil their obligations under the new CFP.
- Innovation in key areas of CFP reform. For example, funding will be made available for research projects that will assist the industry in its transition to the reformed CFP. Funding will also be available for projects that disseminate the benefits of these projects among the fisheries sector.

More specifically:

Article 34: Support to systems of transferable fishing concession of the CFP or new systems adapting fishing activities to fishing opportunities.

While UK fisheries administrations have no plans to move to transferable fishing concession systems, all administrations will need to upgrade ageing quota management systems to cope with CFP reform and other changes. This will be an ongoing process over the life of the programme, so we have predicted one project per administration per year. Output expected: Pilots or trials of new quota management systems. Outcome expected: More efficient utilisation of the quota system leading to better economic outcomes.

Article 37: Limiting impact of fishing on the marine environment and adapting fishing to the protection of species by investments.

'Incentives to adopt new gear', and 'transition to sustainable fisheries and the delivery of CFP targets on MSY and the discarding of fish' as opportunities. Statement of needs lists "innovating and incentivising in key areas of CFP reform, including MSY issues relating to mixed fisheries and technical and practical approaches to the reduction of discards", "assistance in transition to discard free sustainable fisheries." This measure will enable fishermen to adopt the new gears developed from article 35 and 36 projects/trials. It will also facilitate purchase of inshore facilities that can deal with any unwanted catches that must now be landed. Expected output: Adoption of new gears. Expected outcome: Purchase of onshore facilities that can deal with any unwanted catches that must now be landed. Economic benefits to the industry increasing their resilience and environmental benefits from more selective gear.

Article 79: Data Collection. Availability of public funds to enable data collection is listed as threat.

Funding will be used so that the UK can fulfil its obligations under the Data Collection Framework and Data Collection Multi Annual Plan. These are EU legal requirements, and this work was previously funded under EU aid. The UK will be allocated a ring-fenced pot of money, all of which will go into funding this activity. Output expected: Data to support the implementation of the CFP including the utilisation of flexibilities. Outcomes expected: Increased flexibilities for use within the

CFP reducing the impact on the industry. Data leading to the efficient implementation and management of the CFP leading to environmental benefits.

Discards Ban Road Shows coming to Wales. 11 March 2014.

Following last autumn's series of meetings around English fishing ports and harbours to discuss the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Cefas has been contracted to carry out a similar exercise with the Welsh industry. Meetings with Welsh fishermen will take place during the period 18-20 March, at venues in Bangor, Aberystwyth and Carmarthen. To kick off the ASSIST project there, Cefas fisheries scientists Robert Forster and Tom Catchpole will visit Welsh ports to meet fishermen and help identify the potential impacts and opportunities that the landing obligations will raise.

<http://cefas.defra.gov.uk/news/web-stories/discards-ban-road-shows-coming-to-wales.aspx>

Discard related science meeting. 21 January 2014.

Defra facilitated a meeting this week which brought together officials from the key UK administrations and supporting organisations who have a shared interest, and crucially a shared intention to make further investments in discard related science (including but not limited to gear selectivity, catch handling, markets and survivability) in the near future. This meeting covered current and future discard related projects to help develop a singular picture to aid decision making.

ENGLAND/WALES/NORTHERN IRELAND/SOUTHERN IRELAND
GEAR TECHNOLOGY TRIALS

Fishermen are invited to propose Fisheries Science Partnership project ideas for 2015/16. 28 November 2014. Closing date 23 January 2015.

Cefas and the FSP panel are keen to see proposals to help the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy reform especially innovative approaches to the forthcoming demersal landing obligation or discard ban. Project examples include, but are not restricted to: Mixed-fishery and regional approaches; Selectivity improvements (including new gear); Discard-survivability studies; Spatial adaptations; Emerging issues in support of the Advisory Councils (ACs).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fisheries-science-partnership-fsp-seeking-project-ideas>

Catch comparison of Quad and Twin-rig trawls in the Celtic Sea Nephrops fishery. 29 August 2014.

Key Findings

Significant reductions of cod by 61%, haddock by 38% and an increase in Nephrops by 54% in the Quad-rig. Increased proportions of juvenile fish and Nephrops in the Quad-rig require further investigation. The trial was carried out onboard the MFV Celtic Chieftain, a 22m trawler from Clogherhead, County Louth.

<http://www.bim.ie/media/bim/content/publications/Catch%20comparison%20of%20Quad%20and%20Twin-rig%20trawls%20in%20the%20Celtic%20Sea%20Nephrops%20fishery%20Trial%20Report%202014.pdf>

Fisheries Science Partnership discards related project ideas. Reminder - closing date 16 May 2014.

- FSP41 Area VII Haddock Discard Elimination Using Technical Measures
 - FSP42 Aligning Spurdog Management with the Landing Obligation under the Reformed Common Fisheries Policy
 - FSP43 North East Coast Study On The Survival Of Discards
- Invitation to Tender documents can be obtained from the [tender invitations](#) page, along with copies of the draft contract terms and conditions.

<http://www.cefasc.defra.gov.uk/industry-information/fisheries-science-partnership.aspx>

SW Haddock Otter Trawl ASSIST Project. Closing date 16 May 2014.

Following industry meetings in Newlyn in February 2014 Cefas is calling for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from skippers/owner of otter trawlers in the Mevagissey and Looe areas to participate in gear trials to reduce haddock discards and smaller grades. Skippers will need to demonstrate credible ideas to reduce haddock catches on suitable vessels, which can be used to help prepare for the landings obligation commencing 2016 for demersal fisheries. To register your interest E:

simon.armstrong@cefasc.co.uk M: 07979 575776

Fisheries Science Partnership - Single Year Project Tenders for 2014/15 – discard related. Closing date 16 May 2014.

Cefas, on behalf of Defra, invites skippers and owners of commercial fishing vessels to take part in a programme of fisheries research and thus invite submission of tenders for the Financial Year 2014/15 programme.

- FSP41 Area VII Haddock Discard Elimination Using Technical Measures
- FSP42 Aligning Spurdog Management with the Landing Obligation under the Reformed Common Fisheries Policy
- FSP43 North East Coast Study On The Survival Of Discards

<http://www.cefasc.defra.gov.uk/industry-information/fisheries-science-partnership.aspx>

ONSHORE IMPLICATIONS

The use of discards in bait. Published November 2014.

This study explores the potential for species and quantities of fish predicted to be landed under the future landings obligation by the English fleet and not sold for human consumption, to be used as bait in pot fisheries.

http://www.seafish.org/media/Publications/SR668_use_of_discards_in_bait.pdf

PATHWAY TO A LANDINGS OBLIGATION – Reports and meetings

See Seafish summary of key players and stakeholder activities to create a pathway to the landings obligation. <http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/conserving-fish-stocks/discards/discards-under-cfp-reform>

Other reports

European Parliament Register: Implementation of the common fisheries policy's 'land-all' policy. 14 May 2014.

Question. Can the Commission detail what progress has been made in implementing the common fisheries policy's 'land-all' policy?

Answer by Commissioner Damanaki on behalf of the Commission

The landing obligation introduced under Article 15 of the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) will enter into force in a gradual way beginning 1 January 2015. Pelagic fisheries, industrial fisheries and fisheries for salmon and cod in the Baltic will be the first to be covered.

As foreseen under Article 17 of the CFP, at a regional level groups of Member States in consultation with the relevant Advisory Councils (ACs) are developing temporary discard plans for the first stage of the entry into force of the landing obligation. These discard plans are the means to introduce specific provisions regarding the fisheries covered by the landing obligation. The Commission is facilitating these groups and the ACs when requested and has held a number of meetings with them to discuss progress.

The Commission has convened three expert meetings of STECF to consider specific implementation elements and to help regional groups in developing discard plans. ICES has also been asked to look specifically at the inclusion of discards data into the advice for setting fishing opportunities, on the basis of scientifically validated data. The Commission has also tabled a proposal to facilitate introduction of the landing obligation, by removing all legal inconsistencies and contradictions in the legal framework for technical and control measures. This proposal is currently under negotiation between the co-legislators and needs to be adopted before 1 January 2015 to avoid legal uncertainty.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) opinion on the landings obligation. 29/30 April 2014.

On 13 January 2014 and 17 December 2013 respectively, the European Parliament and the Council decided to consult the European Economic and Social Committee on the landings obligation. This was adopted at the end of April 2014.

Key conclusions:

- The EESC believes that it is crucial to adapt this landing obligation to the legislation in force, which requires fishing operators to discard in certain circumstances.
- It believes that the Commission's proposal is unnecessarily complicated and will generate an undue and disproportionate amount of additional work for fishing operators when it comes to applying the landing obligation. As a result, it advocates opting for more pragmatic, clear, straightforward and flexible rules that genuinely give fishing operators time to adapt during a transitional period, without facing heavy penalties.
- The EESC regrets that a prior impact assessment was not carried out in order to study the repercussions of the landing obligation for each fleet.
- The EESC believes that technical measures are fundamental to fishing activities and that, for this reason, any related decisions should be taken following direct contact with ports; they should be specific to concrete cases, timely and based on fast-track and efficient decision making processes that can be adapted to changing circumstances and developments concerning the relevant species.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209495%202014%20INIT>

Study: The Obligation to Land All Catches - Consequences for the Mediterranean. 3 April 2014.

The European Parliament Committee on Fisheries has published a note on The Obligation to Land All Catches - Consequences for the Mediterranean. The Landing obligation of regulated species in the EU Mediterranean is raising some concerns about its effective implementation. This report provides a state-of-the-art of fishery discards in the Mediterranean, discussing consequences of the discards ban and finally providing some recommendations on how to tackle the problem of juvenile catches.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2014/529055/IPOL-PECH_NT\(2014\)529055_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2014/529055/IPOL-PECH_NT(2014)529055_EN.pdf)

EU DG for Internal Policies. Indepth analysis: Best Practice in the Use of Right-based Management to Reduce Discards in Mixed Fisheries. March 2014.

Five countries employing IQ/ITQ-based management systems were studied; Iceland, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway and the USA. All five countries have imposed discarding restrictions. Iceland and Norway have a virtually complete discarding ban. Namibia and New-Zealand ban the discarding of quota-managed species. The USA only bans discarding of some species. In none of the countries is discarding now seen to be a major or even a significant problem although it was perceived so in the past.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2014/529054/IPOL-PECH_NT\(2014\)529054_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2014/529054/IPOL-PECH_NT(2014)529054_EN.pdf)

EU DG for Internal Policies. Indepth analysis: Characteristics of Multi specific fisheries in the European Union. March 2014.

Includes a roadmap (Annex III) for a feasible landing obligation and MSY approach in EU mixed fisheries. Qualitative assessments are presented for four selected case studies including cod mixed fisheries in the North Sea and mixed demersal fisheries in the Celtic Sea.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/529053/IPOL-PECH_ET\(2014\)529053_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/529053/IPOL-PECH_ET(2014)529053_EN.pdf)

Broad consensus in Gap 2 meeting on the necessity of creating a more including and transparent regional management of EU fish stocks. 7 March 2014.

According to the EU Common Fishery Policy the development of discard ban and multiannual plans are examples of fishery management elements that need regional attention..... Among the regional bodies, most discussions were around the Scheveningen Group. They also presented their MoU and their work with the compilation of a fish atlas on discard by the North Sea fisheries (this atlas cannot currently be found on any official website but only at the websites of the Pelagic and North Sea Advisory Councils, which is one example of lack of transparency within the regional work). There was also some focus on the North Western Waters Group and their mutual effort together with the Scheveningen Group on creating a discard ban plan for the pelagic fisheries. BALTIFISH however, was not included in the agenda at all and only briefly mentioned as a good model for the other regional bodies, primarily as an example linking science and management within the Baltic Sea region.

<http://www.fishsec.org/2014/03/07/broad-consensus-in-gap-2-meeting-on-the-necessity-of-creating-a-more-including-and-transparent-regional-management-of-eu-fish-stocks/>

Fishermen, scientists and policy makers join forces to make reformed CFP a reality. Meeting was due to take place 26 February.

A unique meeting was due to will be held in Brussels bringing together Europe's fishermen and their representatives with policy makers and scientists. The meeting's purpose will be for attendees to address how they, collectively, can collate the information necessary to make the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) work in practice - despite historical tensions between their sectors. The result of the day will be a set of points of consensus about the next steps that need to be taken. These will

be shared with all relevant parties. <http://gap2.eu/gap2general/policy-briefing-1-participatory-research-as-a-foundation-for-the-regionalization-of-cfp-in-europe/>

- The GAP2 first Policy Briefing looks at how participatory research could underpin the successful implementation of reformed and increasingly regionalized Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Putting the science in regionalization: Participatory approaches in the new regionalized CFP <http://gap2.eu/gap2wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Gap2-policy-brief1-KB-edit.pdf>

NFFO Analysis of potential chokes issues. 21 February 2014.

If choke species take the effect highlighted in these reports. In some cases, substantial changes in practice will be required in order for businesses to remain profitable while observing the landings obligations. All methods used in the analyses considered relied on very important assumptions which may not represent the reality, and, depending on the assumptions used, may lead to very different conclusions. However, without a large margin of flexibility there could possibly be a substantial and unsustainable loss in profitability for vessel businesses. The interpretation of the regulation, particularly the application of de minimis allocations, may have substantial effects on businesses as a consequence, the prospect of going out of business would clearly generate a substantial incentive for individual business operators not to comply with the landings obligation and compliance issues should be considered in light of identified expected choke species.

http://www.nffo.org.uk/news/choke_issues.html

New report shows what the landings obligation could look like for selected UK fleets. Published 24 January 2014.

Seafish has published a report which looks at the potential economic implications of the introduction of the landings obligation on selected UK fishing fleets. It highlights some of the key issues and challenges surrounding the landings obligation and aims to help the fleets identify the priorities which need to be addressed. The report is the result of a study commissioned by the Seafish, on behalf of the [Discard Action Group](#) (DAG), and conducted by Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Limited. Focused on the Irish Sea *Nephrops*, North Sea mixed whitefish and North Sea *Nephrops* fleets, it highlights two key aspects of the landings obligation: the restricting effect of so-called "choke" species, and a lack of clarity surrounding the permitted flexibilities contained within the legislation.

The Seafish [press release](#): **New report shows what the landings obligation could look like for selected UK fleets. 24 January 2014.**

The Seafish [report](#): **A case study review of the potential economic implications of the proposed CFP landings obligation**

Seafish [blog](#): **Addressing the issue of 'choke' species in a mixed fishery**

Seafish [web page](#): **Discards under CFP reform**

Seafish [industry briefing](#): **The Landings Obligation**

TECHNICAL MEASURES

Study in support of the development of a new technical conservation measures framework within a reformed CFP. 18 July 2014.

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/technical-conservation-measures/index_en.htm

MSC review of best practice mitigation measures to address the problem of bycatch in commercial fisheries. June 2014.

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Principles and Criteria 1 state that fisheries should make use of fishing gear and practices designed to avoid the capture of non-target species (and non-target size, age, and/or sex of the target species); minimise mortality of this catch where it cannot be avoided, and reduce discards of what cannot be released alive. However, the current assessment criteria provide little additional incentive for fisheries to minimise bycatch, potentially allowing fisheries to be certified with high levels of bycatch and without best practice mitigation measures included. As part of a suite of possible changes the MSC are considering options for changes to the requirements associated with unwanted catches (including bycatch and discards), consistent with international best practice management, including effective data collection and monitoring programmes; and consistent with the original intent of the MSC's Principles and Criteria. In order to consider amendments to the 2012 assessment criteria, it was important to review the issue and establish a benchmark of what is global best practice for mitigating bycatch in a number of different contexts

www.msc.org/business-support/science-series/volume-02/mitigation-measures-on-bycatch/at_download/file

Consultation on a new framework for technical measures in the reformed Common Fisheries Policy. 24 January 2014. Deadline for submissions 25 April 2014.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) includes as a management instrument the so-called technical measures regulations. These define where, when and how a fishing enterprise can exploit and interact with marine resources and the marine ecosystem. Technical measures can be grouped into:

- measures that regulate the design characteristics of gears, such as the regulation of mesh size;
- measures that regulate the operation of the gear, such as maximum limits on how long or what type of gear can be deployed, and what net can be used;
- minimum landing sizes; and
- spatial and temporal controls such as closed/limited entry areas and seasonal closures.

Through this document the Commission seeks the views of stakeholders and the public in general on the best way forward to modernise and rationalise technical measures in the context of the new CFP. The results of this consultation will serve as input for the development of legislative proposals for a new framework for technical measures.

SURVIVABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Workshop on Methods for Estimating Discard Survival is now available at WKMEDS 2014.

The final report (Edition 1) has been published. This group is working by correspondence and a series of workshops to be held in 2014–2016. The first meeting was held on 17–21 February, 2014, at the ICES HQ in Copenhagen.

This report:

- Describes the concepts behind assessing discard survival (Sections 2 and 3);
- Describes three different approaches for estimating survival (vitality assessment, captive observation and tagging) (Sections 4, 5 and 6); and
- Provides guidance on the selection of the most appropriate approaches and experimental designs, as well as how to integrate and utilize information from them, with respect to specific discard survival objectives (Sections 3, 7, 8 and 9).

Later versions of this report will cover in more detail:

- Techniques for assessing survival using tagging and biotelemetry; and
- The most appropriate methods for analysing and reporting survival data.
- Note on high survival - it is advised that assessing proposed exemptions on the basis of "high survival" need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account the specificities of the species and fisheries under consideration.

<http://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Expert%20Group%20Report/acom/2014/WKMEDS/WKMEDS%20Report%202014.pdf>

New rules banning fishermen from throwing away unwanted fish they have caught could harm wildlife – and fail to improve fish stocks, a University of Strathclyde report has found. 13 May 2014.

The study, published in the journal Nature Communications, suggests new reforms to the CFP may have unintended consequences. Professor Mike Heath said: "Wildlife everywhere capitalises on waste from human activity, and discarded fish are food for a wide range of seabirds, marine mammals, seabed animals and other fish. Therefore, banning discards of fish could have unintended effects on the ecosystem." The team developed a computer simulation model of the North Sea marine ecosystem and used it to investigate the effects of changes in the fishing pressure and the proportion of fishery catch which is discarded at sea. Forcing vessels to land fish which are currently discarded leads to adverse effects on seabirds and marine mammals – and on seabed animals – but without any improvements in fish stocks, the study found. In contrast, changing fishing practices – so that unwanted fish are no longer captured – had dramatic effects in the model which affected the entire food web, with major benefits for birds, mammals, and fish stocks. This could be achieved by "improved selectivity", through the use of fishing gear designed to avoid unwanted catches and judicious timing and location of fishing.

http://www.strath.ac.uk/press/newsreleases/headline_822143_en.html

ICES Workshop on Methods for Estimating Discard Survival (WKMEDS). 17-21 February 2014.

This workshop will be chaired by Mike Breen (Norway) and Thomas Catchpole (UK), and will work by correspondence as well as a series of meetings during 2014-16. The first meeting will be held on 17-21 February, 2014, at the ICES HQ in Copenhagen to:

- a) Develop guidelines and where possible identify best practice for undertaking discard survival studies (using the framework detailed in the report of STECF Expert Working Group EWG 13-16) (2014 Workshop);
- b) Identify approaches for measuring and reducing, or accounting for, the uncertainty associated with mortality estimates;
- c) Critically review current estimates of discard mortality, with reference to the guidelines detailed in 1, and collate existing validated mortality estimates;

d) Conduct a meta-analysis, using the data detailed in 3, to improve the understanding of the explanatory variables associated with discard mortality and identifying potential mitigation measures; and

e) Based on ToR a) to d) a CRR should be developed for SCICOM consideration.

WKMEDS will initially focus on developing guidelines, and identifying best practice, for undertaking experiments to investigate the survival of organisms discarded from the catches of commercial fisheries. These guidelines will include:

1. the selection and measurement of the likely explanatory variables influencing discard survival;
2. methods for observing the survival of test subjects in captivity in the laboratory and in the field;
3. methods for estimating mortality indirectly from assessments of vitality (e.g. RAMP);
4. methods for estimating survival using tagging and biotelemetry; and
5. statistical techniques for analysing binomial data, including consideration of experimental design (e.g. defining necessary sample size and replication).

For further information E: wgftfb@googlegroups.com

By-catch symposium

There is a bycatch symposium in Anchorage in May 2014 that has a session on the economic and social issues of bycatch as well as lots of good sessions that focus on different bycatch reduction policies and strategies. <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/2014/wakefield-bycatch/info.php>

OTHER COUNTRIES

EU tells industry to 'give discard ban a chance to work'. But many fishermen believe discard plans will decimate the fleets. 14 April 2014.

Helene Banner, EU spokeswoman for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG Mare), told IntraFish the decision-makers wanted to bring in a discard ban which could still be realistically flexible enough for the industry to be able to cope with it. E: k_green@seafish.co.uk for a copy of the article.

New Oceana report: Wasted Catch: Unsolved Bycatch Problems in U.S. 20 March 2014.

These nine fisheries combined throw away almost half of what they catch and are responsible for more than 50% of all reported bycatch in the U.S., injuring and killing thousands of protected and endangered species every year. Oceana explains that despite significant progress in the last decade, the catch of non-target fish and ocean wildlife, or “bycatch”, remains a significant problem in domestic fisheries. In fact, researchers have estimated that approximately 20% of the total U.S. catch is thrown away each year. <http://oceana.org/en/news-media/publications/reports/wasted-catch-unsolved-problems-in-us-fisheries>

Latest Smart Gear competition. March 2014.

WWF, in partnership with industry leaders, scientists and fishers, launched the International Smart Gear Competition in 2004. Designed to inspire creative thinkers, Smart Gear is a call for innovative ideas that have practical applications for fishing “smarter”—for increasing selectivity for target fish species and reducing by-catch. The competition invites submissions of practical, cost-effective solutions to reduce fisheries by-catch, and offers cash prizes totalling \$65,000. Closing date to enter is 31 August 2014. <https://worldwildlife.org/initiatives/international-smart-gear-competition>

Full Study Report: Collaboration between the scientific community and the fishing sector to minimize discards in the Baltic cod fisheries. 24 March 2014.

The main aim of this study was to identify technical solutions, both economically and biologically sustainable, to mitigate the discards of cod in the Baltic Sea cod fishery. The aim of the project was divided into three main tasks:

- Assessing the recent knowledge on discards and causes of discards in the Baltic cod fishery, and exploring the temporal and spatial distribution patterns of discard sensitive size classes of cod and of the fishery effort.
- Identifying technical solutions and suggesting final technical measures to further mitigate discards in the trawl fishery for Baltic Sea cod.
- Evaluating the possible impacts of the proposed technical solutions and technical measures on the stock and on the economy of the fisheries concerned. These tasks were undertaken through a desktop study, a technical study and an impact study.

http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/minimize-discards-baltic-cod-fisheries_en.pdf

No Discarding to Create Higher Costs for Dutch Fishing Industry. 30 December 2013.

The introduction of a landing obligation will cost the Dutch fishing industry between €6 million and €28 million if catches and fishing activities are unchanged, depending on the way in which the quotas are modified and the prices of the by-catches to be landed. This was the conclusion of a study by LEI Wageningen UR commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs. The landing obligation for by-catches of species with quotas will require fishermen to bring in undersized and non-marketable fish. The yields from by-catches to be landed will not balance out the costs of landing them. Because the by-catches may not be used for human consumption, the price which they can command will be relatively low. The market survey demonstrates that a selling price of between €0.15 and €0.30 per kg can be expected for by-catches. The scenario study assumes that the catch composition and all fishing activities will be the same as in the baseline year (2011). In the first scenario, in which the catch quota is equal to the current quota plus by-catches, the extra costs

for the Dutch offshore fishing fleet would amount to between €6 million and €14 million. In the second scenario, in which the catch quota to be implemented is equal to the current quota, the net costs will be between €23 million and €28 million. These figures do not include additional costs for full monitoring of the catch through the use of cameras (€6 million) or by the presence of observers on all trips (approximately €18 million).

<http://www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/22109/no-discarding-to-create-higher-costs-for-dutch-fishing-industry#sthash.sIW68Pau.dpuf>

Baltic Member States prepare themselves for the new CFP and strengthen their cooperation. 17 December 2013.

The Member States around the Baltic Sea basin have today signed a Memorandum of Understanding underlining their joint commitment to making the best use of the possibilities presented by the new CFP's promotion of regionalisation. The landing obligation is a key new milestone under the reformed CFP. Here too the BALTFISH countries are working hard. Discussions are well underway on a discards plan for Baltic stocks, and the priority now is to complete the task with a final decision needed early next year in order to meet the 1 January 2015 deadline for the entry into force of the landing obligation.

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/mare/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=13551

BalticSea2020 response re a discard plan for the Baltic Sea. January 2014,

There is concern within BalticSea2020 about developments under the revised CFP, such as more prescriptive regulation, and they have written to the ministerial coordinator of the Baltfish forum. In short they suggest that the revision of the Baltic regulation allow for a choice where fishermen with CCTV enjoy far reaching exemptions: No days at sea, no technical regulation and increased quotas. Baltic Member States are to put together the proposal by March.

If you would like to see a copy of the Proposal from BalticSea2020 to revise Council regulations No 2187/2005, No 1098/2007 and the yearly TAC/quota regulation or their outline for a discard plan for the Baltic Sea E k_green@seafish.co.uk

GUIDES AND MEDIA

Scottish fishermen ‘face bankruptcy’ unless EC rethinks discard ban. 24 November 2014.

Member State governments need to wake up and assert their authority over the European Commission (EC) to prevent the ban on fishermen discarding catches at sea bankrupting large swathes of the industry, according to a joint statement from two industry bodies. That is the message ahead of the December Fisheries Council from two of Scotland’s biggest fishing bodies, the Scottish White Fish Producers’ Association (SWFPA) and Shetland Fishermen’s Association (SFA). With only a marginal quota increase for haddock and potential reductions for species such as cod and whiting in prospect at the ongoing EU/Norway discussions leading up to the annual EU summit on Dec. 15, EC officials are apparently dismissive of serious impediments to the introduction of the discard ban for the main white fish stocks in January 2016.

<http://www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/24623/scottish-fishing-industry-in-peril-if-no-governments-action-say-associations>

Environmentalists’ portrayal of the industry as a group of greedy businessmen is a grotesque caricature, says Mike Park. 23 September 2014.

While radical change was long overdue, and the fishing industry particularly welcomed a shift towards regional management, the headline-grabbing element of the new CFP – the landings obligation, or discard ban as it is popularly known – is proving a disaster. A perfectly laudable aim (no fisherman that I know gladly throws healthy fish back into the sea), it is practically impossible to achieve under the existing quota system without bankrupting large parts of fleets from Peterhead to the Port of Vigo in Spain. <http://www.scotsman.com/news/fishing-for-more-benign-eurocrats-1-3549452>

Let's take control of our future: David Stevens. 15 September 2014.

Newlyn skipper of the Crystal Sea (SH118), David Stevens, explains why the industry must take centre-stage in implementing the discard ban and what this means for fisheries management.

<http://nffo.org.uk/blog>

<http://www.crystalseafishing.co.uk/captains-blog/lets-take-control-of-our-future.html>

NFFO discard reduction web page

<http://nffo.org.uk/responsible-fishing/discard-reduction/>

Marine Scotland. The Landing Obligation – What it means. 20 May 2014.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00450934.pdf>

Newsnight. Wed 14 May 2014.

Barrie Deas (BD) and Hugh Fearnley- Whittingstall (HFW) were interviewed by Jeremy Paxman (JP) last night on the discards ban. The slot is 35 minutes in. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b043wg9w>

JP talks of the CFP and the absurd new regulations obliging fishermen to throw fish back into the sea – crusade claims as much as 50%. A very successful campaign by HFW has changed EU law but could the new rules themselves be ‘environmentally vandalistic’ as claimed by the fishing industry.

BD. At EU level fears of a blanket ban on quota species, but we do not have the detailed rules yet. A lot hinges on this. Pragmatic, sensible way could work with. Fear applied in blanket way and having to land fish which would otherwise survive ie plaice (60%) which could survive. The industry has gone well over the last few years (sustainable footing) and there are now fears that a blanket ban could de-stabilise the industry.

JP. The claim is that you are more worried about a few dead fish rather than the livelihood of the fishing industry?

HFW. This is timely pressure politics. There is no blanket ban proposed – there are allowances for exemptions and flexibility.

JP. Is it true the campaign was based on lies and distortion?

BD. Yes it was. The premise of Fish Fight was there was a massive problem that nobody was doing anything about.

There was some debate about the figures that were being quoted on each side about the size of the problem.

HFW. We have seen a massive reduction in fishing effort (quota slashed, fleet reduced) over the last few years from 60,000 fishing days (2002) down to 20,000 fishing days (2012) in the North Sea (much smaller catches) so this accounts for the reduction in discards.

BD. And selectivity and decommissioning schemes – it is whole range of things.

HFW. The last programme highlighted the catch quota trials in Scotland as a success. Blaze a trail.

BD. Discards are a problem but it was a problem that was on the way to being solved, now there is real concern about choke species. (Explains choke species).

HFW. The EU does need to address this and flexibility is needed. Ban is a very negative word It is important to emphasise this is an obligation to land fish – not a discard ban which is negative.

BD. This could be positive if we get it right. All hinges on the detail.

JP to HFW. What are you?

HFW. A journalist and a campaigner. This was a simple revelation – 0.5 million tonnes of perfectly good fish was being thrown overboard dead.

BD. Celebrity chefs do have a role to play to encourage diversification and find markets for that component of the catch that could be eaten.

HFW. Without the Fish Fight campaign there would not be this focus.

BD. We were making progress. Sustainability is the key. We are going in right direction, certainly in the North East Atlantic.

HFW. It would be great to see cod stocks return to sustainable levels.

Hugh responds to claims he has misled the public on discards. 14 May 2014.

<http://www.rivercottage.net/blogs/hugh-on-newsnight-tonight/>

Fish fight chef ‘misleading’ public over discards. 14 May 2014.

A celebrity chef has been accused of threatening fishermen’s livelihoods by misleading the public over a ban on throwing back edible fish.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/environment/article4088866.ece> (Subscription only)