



March 2021

Common Language Group e-alert

(news alerts issued to CLG circulation list by email in March 2021)

<https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/seafood-issues-groups/the-common-language-group/>

Consultations

Marine Management Organisation launches consultation on four of England's Marine Protected Areas including banning bottom-trawling in protected zones. 1 February 2021. Consultation closes 28 March 2021.

Areas include: Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation; Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation; South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone; and the Canyons Marine Conservation Zone.

Northern Ireland consultation on fisheries management in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Closing date 31 March 2021.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA) consultation covers the development of fisheries management measures for MPAs and the establishment of scallop enhancement sites in the Northern Ireland inshore region.

Carbon emissions and marine litter

European Parliament urges EU to take drastic action to reduce marine litter. 25 March 2021.

MEPS call for boosting recycling in the fisheries sector and substantially cutting the use of plastics specifically increasing collection, recycling and upcycling in the fisheries and aquaculture sector; expanded polystyrene used in fishery products to be phased out; and an EU action plan needed to clean up polluted rivers and estuaries.

Environmental Justice Foundation and other eNGO open letter to world leaders: Put marine ecosystems at the heart of climate policy on blue carbon. March 2021.

The letter chooses to emphasise FAO 2020 finding that 90% of fisheries are fully or overexploited, but misses the fact that the same report says 78.7% of current marine fish landings come from biologically sustainable stocks'. There are also issues related to MPAs and the definition of high seas used.

Bottom trawling releases as much carbon as air travel, landmark study finds. 17 March 2021.

The study published in Nature Protecting the global ocean for biodiversity, food and climate – is the first study to show the climate impacts of trawling globally. It also provides a blueprint outlining which areas of the ocean should be protected to safeguard marine life, boost seafood production and reduce climate emissions.

New projects seek to boost Scottish seafood and reduce fleet's greenhouse emissions. 15 March 2021.

Fisheries Innovation Scotland (FIS) has announced two research projects to explore the digitalization of the Scottish fleet and to understand greenhouse gas emissions from fishing vessels.

Fisheries management

[Increased presence at sea deters illegal fishing.](#) 26 March 2021.

Vastly increased offshore patrols, aerial surveillance, and monitoring have ensured that illegal fishing has been kept at bay in England's seas since the U.K. became an independent coastal state on 1 January this year, according to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

[EU, Norway and the United Kingdom conclude key fisheries arrangements on North Sea.](#) 16 March 2021.

The UK has reached agreement with Norway and the European Union on catch limits in 2021 for six jointly-managed fish stocks in the North Sea. This marks the first time the UK has participated in such discussions as an independent coastal state.

[Defra publishes report on co-designing the principles for low impact fishing.](#) March 2021.

This [collaborative project](#) sought to co-design, with fisheries stakeholders, the principles and criteria that can be used to define low impact fishing.

[Fishing rules: Compulsory CCTV for certain vessels to counter infractions.](#) 11 March 2021.

The European Parliament has adopted its negotiating position on the new Fisheries Control system, which will reform the rules that have governed EU fishing activities since 2010. This stipulates: on-board cameras (CCTV) are to be compulsory for vessels that are likely to not comply; recreational fishermen who do not respect EU conservation measures or fisheries rules should be penalised; new measures to address loss of fishing gear; and fish should be traced throughout the whole food chain, including processed and imported products.

Traceability

[Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\) launches online public consultation: Advancing end-to-end Seafood Traceability.](#) 9 March 2021. Closing date is 12 April 2021.

The guidance document analyses and documents the interrelation of traceability along the value chain based on country-specific traceability mechanisms. It focuses on Key Data Elements (KDEs) and Critical Tracking Events (CTEs) as salient collection points of traceability systems.

[View the presentations from the WWF Bait to Plate webinar.](#) 24 March 2021.

In the news

[Seaspiracy documentary \(Netflix\).](#) Broadcast 24 March 2021.

The Netflix documentary questions the credibility of the sustainable seafood movement.

- [Seafish note](#)
- **In response: [Industry pans Seaspiracy as misleading](#)**
- [View 'The science of sustainable seafood, explained'](#)

[Guardian article puts seafood fraud back in spotlight.](#) 16 March 2021.

An analysis of 44 studies by The Guardian has found that 36% of seafood samples from restaurants, fishmongers, and supermarkets in more than 30 countries were mislabelled. Overall, the analysis found that restaurants appear to have the highest mislabelling rates.

Tuna sourcing

[International Seafood Sustainability Foundation's \(ISSF\) tuna stock status report shows increase in catch, little change in sustainability.](#) 30 March 2021.

The latest ISSF 'Status of Stocks' report shows 87.6% of the global commercial tuna catch continues to be sourced from stocks at "healthy" levels of abundance. In addition, 9.6% of the total tuna catch came from overfished stocks, and 2.8% came from stocks at an intermediate level of abundance.

This is the second update to this report since March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic started to impact the work of regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs).

[Global Tuna Alliance, others introduce 2025 Pledge towards Sustainable Tuna](#). 22 March 2021.

The Global Tuna Alliance, Friends of Ocean Action, and the World Economic Forum have introduced the 2025 Pledge towards Sustainable Tuna (25PST), a new global commitment supporting responsible global tuna fisheries management and harvesting, which replaces their Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration.

[Report finds gaps in measures targeting eradication of tuna IUU](#). 26 March 2021.

The global fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated tuna-fishing activities has been slowed by significant gaps in the implementation of proposed counter-measures by five tuna regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs), according to a new report by the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). The report found the implementation of key elements, such as the requirement for advance notice of port entry, denial of port entry or use, minimum inspections levels, and minimum standards for training of inspectors, has been inadequate.

Seafish

[Seafish review of the COVID-19 impact on the seafood industry October to December 2020](#) (March 2021)

This takes a high-level view of the entire seafood supply chain to explore the impact on: UK seafood markets; seafood business operations; and consumer behaviour. We have also published a more detailed report on Covid-19 impacts on the UK seafood processing sector based on results from the 2020 processing sector survey. You can find this report [here](#). Our next processing sector survey will run during April and May 2021 and collect further information on Covid-19 and Brexit impacts.

This is an amalgamation of the news alerts issued in March 2021.