



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra's policy framework for Fisheries Management Plans

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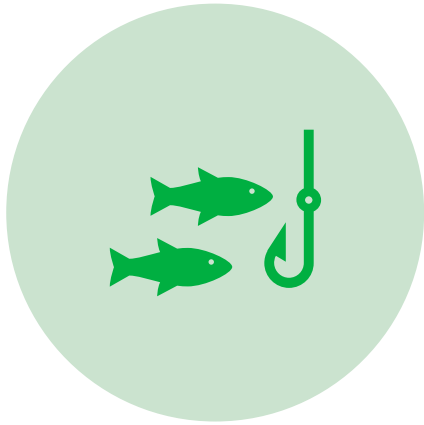


Environment
Agency



Forestry Commission





Defra's view of
Fisheries Management
Plans (FMPs)?



How and when will
Defra develop FMPs?



How will FMPs help
deliver Defra's shellfish
policy?

Sustainable fisheries

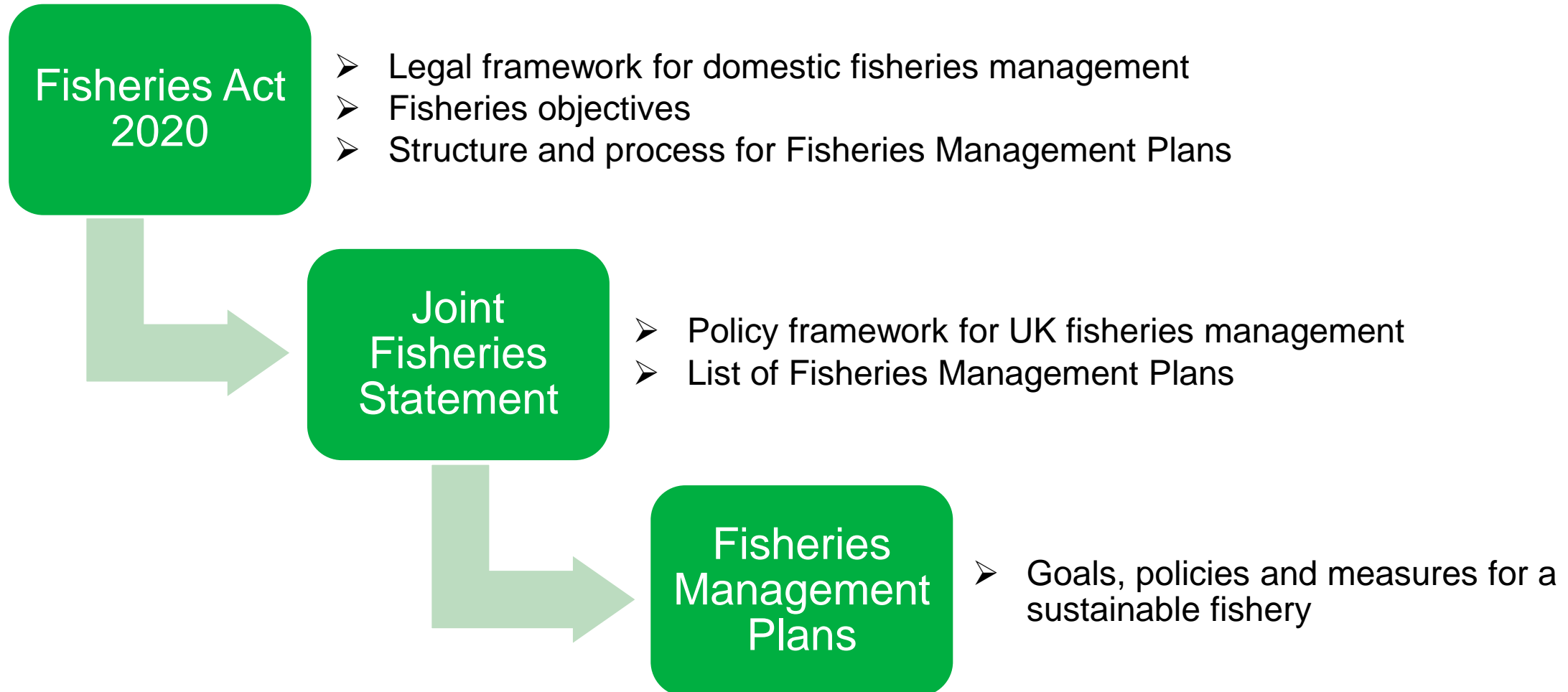
In the final debate on the Fisheries Act in the House of Lords*, Defra's minister Lord Gardiner noted:

“our ongoing commitment to ensure that today's fishers' grandchildren enjoy the benefits of a healthy and productive marine environment, with sustainable fish stocks that support a thriving fishing industry and vibrant coastal communities”

*See Hansard Volume 807: debated on Thursday 12 November 2020



Legal & policy framework for FMPs



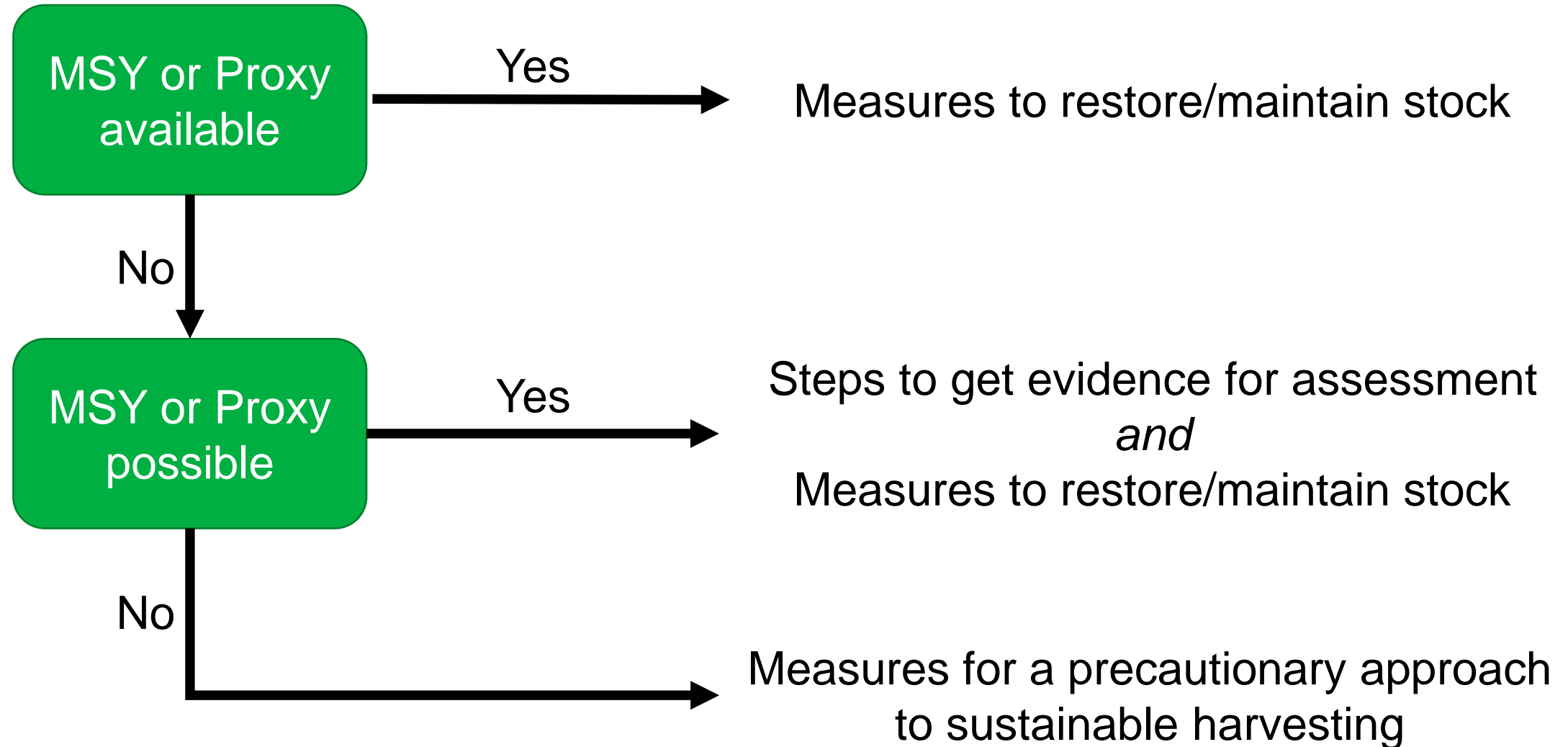
What is a Fisheries Management Plan?

Defra's FMPs will be evidence-based action plans, developed with fishermen and stakeholders, that deliver sustainable fisheries for current and future generations



When developing FMPs, Defra will bring together all groups with an interest in a fishery to build a shared understanding of the issues and actions needed to drive a thriving industry, prosperous local communities and a healthy marine environment

How FMPs will guide sustainable harvesting





How and when will Defra develop FMPs?

FMP Programme Outcomes

- ❖ FMPs manage fishing activity so that stocks are restored to/maintained at sustainable levels, support economic prosperity of fleets and coastal communities, and enhance our implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.
- ❖ FMPs build stakeholder's capacity and capability to actively participate in the management of their fisheries to support their social and economic well-being
- ❖ FMPs contribute to the UK's vision for 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'

Summary of proposed FMPs

There are 43 proposed FMPs listed in the Joint Fisheries Statement

Defra will lead the preparation and publishing of:

- ❖ 10 FMPs for English waters only
- ❖ 4 joint plans with Welsh Government for English and Welsh waters
- ❖ 1 joint plan with Scottish government for English and Scottish waters

Defra will contribute to the preparation and publishing of:

- ❖ 21 joint FMPs with all 4 UK administrations, coordinated by Scottish Government
- ❖ 1 joint plan coordinated by Scottish Government for the North Sea
- ❖ 2 joint FMPs coordinated by Northern Ireland with the Welsh Government for the Irish Sea.

The additional plans will be:

- ❖ 3 FMPs are being developed by Welsh Government for Welsh Waters only.
- ❖ 1 FMP for Northern Irish inshore waters only.

Full list of plans for UK is shown on:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-fisheries-statement-jfs/list-of-fisheries-management-plans



Planned FMPs co-ordinated by Defra for English waters

2023	2024	2025
King Scallop*	Queen scallops	Celtic Seas demersal*
Crabs and Lobster	Cockles	Celtic Seas pelagic*
Whelk	North Sea & Channel sprat#	Black Sea Bream
Bass*	Skates & rays	Wrasses complex
Channel demersal non-quota	Southern North Sea demersal non-quota	
Southern North Sea flatfish		

* Joint with Welsh Government; # Joint with Scottish Government

FMP Programme 2023 and beyond

- ❖ Defra will consult on 6 frontrunner FMPs in spring/summer to publish by end of 2023
- ❖ Continue collaborating with stakeholders to improve our FMPs
- ❖ Implement evidence and management actions emerging from the frontrunner FMPs
- ❖ FMP evaluation project will generate learning and provide an independent objective assessment of programme delivery
- ❖ Defra commissioning delivery partners for next 'tranche' of FMPs to be published in 2024
- ❖ Defra will continue working with the Devolved Administrations on joint FMPs for UK waters
- ❖ Monitor FMPs to test their effectiveness and review/revise accordingly
- ❖ Publish the first review of progress in Joint Fisheries Statement report in 2025

www.gov.uk/government/publications/fisheries-management-plans/fisheries-management-plans



How will FMPs help deliver Defra's
shellfish policy?

Frontrunner FMP Projects

FMP Title	Stock(s) covered	Delivery Partner
Crabs & Lobster FMP	Crab and Lobster	Seafish working with the Crab Management Group
Whelk FMP	Whelk	Seafish working with the Whelk Management Group
Scallop FMP*	King scallop	Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG) with support from Seafish
Bass FMP*	Bass	Defra NQS Team working with Policy Lab who specialise in co-design and stakeholder engagement.
Channel Non-Quota Demersal FMP	Red gurnards, tub gurnards, cuttlefish, squid, octopus, John Dory, surmullet, lesser spotted dogfish, grey gurnards, Lemon sole, brill, smoothhound, bib and turbot.	Marine Management Organisation
Southern North Sea & Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP	Plaice, Sole, Turbot, Brill, Lemon sole, Sole, Dab, Flounder, Halibut	Defra EU Fisheries Policy and Negotiations Team

* Plans being developed jointly with Welsh Government

Introduction to shellfish policy

- ❖ **There are around 200 non-quota species found in the UK** consisting of both shellfish and finfish species. Crabs and scallops are some of our most valuable fisheries. Most Non Quota Species (NQS) are data poor, compared to quota species, and vulnerable to unsustainable levels of fishing activity
- ❖ **Overall objectives** – Stocks are fished sustainably and management is improved underpinned by robust scientific data and evidence.
- ❖ **Within Defra Marine and Fisheries we have a team of 4 devoted exclusively to delivering NQS shellfish policy** - working closely with fisheries management bodies, environmental and scientific organisations.
- ❖ Our team has expanded in **recognition of the need to have dedicated resource** to look after NQS that have historically not been given the level of attention received by quota species.
- ❖ **Management groups** of industry, government and regulatory organisations together with other interested parties have been set up to help fill this resource gap and now find themselves uniquely placed to deliver FMPs.

Why? Economic and social value

- ❖ The UK shellfish sector is of economic significance, producing £244 million in 2020, and is particularly important to our inshore fleet.
- ❖ Economic AND social value because shellfish are important not just for their currency value but for the jobs, communities and local businesses that rely on the sector.
- ❖ Part of the work to develop FMPs has been considering the social value and importance of a thriving local fishing industry – this is harder to quantify but is of no lesser importance.
- ❖ Employment in shellfish sector - in 2021 ~2500 FTE for Pots & traps & Scallop Dredge sectors
- ❖ Quick look at pre-pandemic figures –
In 2019 **£366.5m** of the total value of landings into the UK by UK vessels (**£762.3m**) was shellfish (Nephrops: **£112.1**; Crabs and Lobsters: **£71.0m and £46.3m** respectively; Scallops **£61.4m**).
- ❖ Historically, shellfish make up around 30% of UK total seafood exports (2017 – 2019)

Why? Protect vulnerable stocks

- ❖ Compared to quota stocks NQS are relatively data poor.
- ❖ We do have reasonable stock assessment for scallops and crab and lobster, however not for whelk which is the most data poor of the 4 stocks covered by these FMPs.
- ❖ Central to government policy for fisheries management is the need to improve the scientific data and evidence for these species.
- ❖ As policy makers we have a bit of a chicken and egg situation – it's difficult to put management measures in place without data, but it is also difficult to acquire some data without the management interventions in place.
- ❖ Enter the precautionary approach – set out in the Fisheries Act is the mechanism to allow interventions to protect the stock ahead of the detailed data.



FMPs contribute to the UK's vision for 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'

- ❖ Protection of the stocks for the future is not the only government policy that will be reflected in the FMPs.
- ❖ As we are developing FMPs we have commissioned extensive conservation advice from the JNCC and NE for all front runners.
- ❖ This advice includes extensive analysis of fishing impacts on the other species and includes recommendations for government to consider as part of the development of the Plans.
- ❖ Objectives within the plan also include consideration of climate change and reducing carbon impacts.
- ❖ For the first time all these issues will be set out in one place allowing for a complete overview of the challenges and possibilities for the next few years.

Cuttlefish



Current management overview

- ❖ The level of management applied to NQS fisheries in England is variable and complex, largely due to the diverse nature and location of NQS fisheries and the need for increased scientific data to monitor and manage these fisheries effectively.
- ❖ For example -
 - Overview of scallop management
 - Overview of crab and lobster management
 - Overview of whelk management
- ❖ Our FMPs will incorporate these overviews

Current approaches to delivering shellfish policy

- ❖ Previous slides provides a picture of the diverse and varied nature of management across NQ shellfish species. Not necessarily wrong as the species themselves are diverse in nature.
- ❖ This does mean we have a multi-layered complex regime of management and enforcement from voluntary measures, local pilot schemes through to licence conditions, byelaws and primary national legislation.
- ❖ The framework within which we work as government and regulators has led us to deliver our policies for a sustainable fishing industry by fixing and making improvements historically in a bit of piecemeal way.
- ❖ This approach is not always completely successful - we have in the past ended up with unintended consequences by introducing a measure to improve a situation in one area, only to cause an issue in another...

So what will FMPs do differently?

- ❖ Delivery partner approach
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Long-term goals
- ❖ Planning across the sector as whole
- ❖ Bringing together all the knowledge, evidence, current management approaches for the first time
- ❖ Identify data and evidence gaps and set out how these gaps can be filled
- ❖ Inclusion of conservation impacts and recommendations
- ❖ The precautionary approach

Conclusion

- ❖ In summary – as a government policy objective; shellfish are important, economically, socially and environmentally

...and...

- ❖ We have a duty to protect the species by looking after the eco-system it relies on and through careful management based as far as possible on robust evidence.

Thank you

www.gov.uk/government/publications/fisheries-management-plans

www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-fisheries-statement-jfs/list-of-fisheries-management-plans

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