Brexit & Fisheries
- An environmental perspective

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Delivering UK shared vision for marine environment

‘clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas’

Agreed UK High Level Objectives:

Achieving a sustainable marine economy
Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
Living within environmental limits
Promoting good governance
Using sound science responsibly
Positive signals from Secretary of State

“...opportunity to escape the CFP and replace with approach to managing our marine environment which puts conservation and sustainability at the heart of our approach towards our own territorial waters”

In order to leave the environment in a better state than we found it we also need to leave the legislature in a better state.”

Micheal Gove 15th March 2018
Prosperity UK conference
Key elements of sustainable fisheries management

- Effective legislation and fisheries agreements
- Effective monitoring and enforcement
- Setting sustainable catch levels
- Sufficient resourcing
- Fully Documented Fisheries - account for removals & end the wasteful practice of discarding and bycatch
- Addressing impacts of fishing on wider marine environment – integrate within broader marine management
- Good Governance
- Sufficient resourcing
- Specific protections – supporting effective MPA management
- Shared management nationally and internationally
- Stakeholder engagement
Delivering the vision – the role of the Fisheries Bill

Need to establish overarching objectives and principles that guide the implementation of fisheries legislation and decision making now and in the future.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

Our short animation explains the positive impact the Well-being of Future Generations Act will have throughout Megan’s life and tells you more about what we are doing and why.

The Act will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

This new law will mean that, for the first time, public bodies listed in the Act must do what they do in a sustainable way.

Public bodies need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

It will expect them to:
Greener UK key asks for a Fisheries Bill

- **Commitment to manage fisheries sustainably as part of wider marine management**
  Fish are a public resource and must be managed for long term sustainability using precautionary and ecosystem based approaches to minimise and where possible eliminate the negative impacts of fishing on the marine environment in a way that is consistent with national and international legislation.

- **Commitment to setting sustainable fishing levels.**
  Sustainable Commitment to set fishing limits in line with best available scientific advice to ensure stocks are restored and maintained at levels above Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) and to ensure that fishing mortality is below levels that will deliver MSY.

- **Commitment to using clear criteria**
  Fishing opportunities should be allocated on the basis of transparent and objective environmental, social and economic criteria in a way that incentivises the most sustainable fishing practices.
Key asks continued.....

- **Strong governance and Fully Documented Fisheries**
  An inclusive, transparent and robust governance framework is required to deliver fully documented and accountable fisheries
Benefits of Remote Electronic Monitoring

New Zealand government identified:

- Improvement of the **information base** to support fisheries management: improving data for setting sustainable catch limits.
- Significant opportunity **to improve the value realised** from commercial fisheries, particularly for those stocks for which there is currently limited information.
- More **responsive decision-making**: The availability of more comprehensive, timely and fine-scale information on fishery interactions with fish stocks and the environment will enable a risk based decision-making framework to deliver New Zealand’s environmental goals
- **Reduction of waste** in commercial fisheries as cameras will encourage full catch reporting and eliminate discarding of unreported catch
- **Improved consumer confidence**
17 companies call for sustainable management and effective implementation

DELCIVERING 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 quotas (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 quotas
- Incentivising changes in fishing practices to address potential choke situations
Key asks continued.....

- **Application to all vessels**
  High environmental standards should apply to foreign vessels fishing in UK waters and to UK vessels fishing anywhere

- **Co-development and co-ownership of legislation**
  UK and devolved governments must reach agreement on how to maintain and improve on the existing common legislative and policy framework for fisheries management and marine conservation across the UK so as to ensure effective management of this public resource, contributing to the wider requirement to achieve and maintain good environmental status of UK seas
Conclusions

Withdrawal Bill – brings across CFP (via statutory instruments with amendments to fix deficiencies)

Current international commitments stand (UNCLOS Aichi biodiversity targets, SDG 14, UNGA resolutions etc)

White Paper sets out vision for future management of fisheries and wider marine environment.

Fisheries Bill facilitates day one operability and should include clear objectives and principles to guide decision making and future legislation

UK and devolved governments need to work to address the governance gap

Together with a well funded marine research programme and effective monitoring and control regime this should add up to the UK earning the reputation of world leaders in sustainable fisheries and marine management and with it positive branding for UK seafood on the global market
Thank you

WWF is working with a coalition of NGOs under the marine and fisheries pillar of Greener UK. These include Greener UK members Clientearth, Greenpeace, RSPB, The Wildlife Trusts and non Greener UK members the Marine Conservation Society, New Economics Foundation, the Pew Trusts and the Environmental Defence Fund. Documents published to date have also had the support of Environment LINK UK and Sustain.

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