Aquaculture in the UK

Aquaculture in the UK is a diverse industry, and many official and independent bodies across the UK's four Devolved Authorities are active within it. The “Seafish Guide to Who’s Who in UK Aquaculture” collates and provides links to Government bodies and policies, important regulators, independent advisors, trade bodies, information providers, funders and educators pertinent to UK aquaculture.

Atlantic salmon production in Scotland dominates UK aquaculture harvest tonnage and value. Scotland also produces significant amounts of farmed shellfish, particularly from Shetland. Scottish aquaculture has been estimated to contribute as much as £1.8 billion turnover and 8,800 jobs\(^1\) to the whole UK.

Aquaculture elsewhere in the UK differs significantly from Scotland both in terms of scale and species cultivated. Collectively the industries in England, Wales and Northern Ireland place emphasis on shellfish (particularly mussels and oysters) and trout production for the table and restocking. England also supplies salmon smolts to the Scottish industry and boasts a significant coarse fish and ornamental sector. Many of these aquaculture businesses are small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Aquaculture in England, Wales and Northern Ireland supports over 220 businesses and creates over 1,400 full time jobs\(^2\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Finfish Production (tonnes)</th>
<th>Shellfish Production (tonnes)</th>
<th>Finfish Value (£ million)</th>
<th>Shellfish Value (£ million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>6,456</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>7,945</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>~750</td>
<td>3,238</td>
<td>~3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>185,023</td>
<td>7,980</td>
<td>733.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>192,726</td>
<td>21,619</td>
<td>762.2</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seafish

Seafish is a UK wide, pan-industry body offering services to the whole seafood industry, from catching and aquaculture to restaurants and retailers, including importers, exporters and distributors. It is funded by a levy on the first sale of seafood landed in Britain, including imported seafood.

- Home page: [http://www.seafish.org](http://www.seafish.org)

The Seafish Domestic Aquaculture Strategy Programme is promoting and representing UK aquaculture interests to all key stakeholders, both in Government and industry. The Programme is striving to identify viable, sustainable and effective opportunities to address key issues and constraints and in doing so support the UK industry; enabling informed decisions and a collaborative approach to the delivery of local and national strategies.


---


Government/Devolved Authorities

Aquaculture is a devolved responsibility in each Devolved Authority (DA) across the UK. As such aquaculture management instruments, support mechanisms, etc., are often very different between each.

- **England**
  Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
  DEFRA is the UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on the environment, food and rural affairs
  - Farm Authorisation: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fish-shellfish-or-crustacean-farm-authorisation
  - Several and Regulating Orders: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/shellfisheries-several-orders-and-regulating-orders
  - Fish Health Inspectorate: https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/fish-health-inspectorate

- **Wales**
  The Welsh Assembly Government supports the continued sustainable growth of aquaculture and is responsible for the licensing of fish farms in Wales

- **Northern Ireland**
  Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)
  DAERA has responsibility for food, farming, environmental, fisheries, forestry and sustainability policy and the development of the rural sector in Northern Ireland
  - Home Page: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/
  - Introduction to Aquaculture: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/introduction-aquaculture
  - Authorisation of Aquaculture Production Businesses: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/authorisation-aquaculture-production-business

- **Scotland**
  Marine Scotland
  Marine Scotland is the directorate of Scottish Government responsible for marine and fisheries issues in Scotland; its purpose is to manage Scotland’s seas for prosperity and environmental sustainability, working with partners Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)
  - Home Page: http://www.gov.scot/About/People/Directorates/marinescotland
  - Introduction to Aquaculture: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish
  - Running a Fish farm: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/18716

Government Policy

- **England**
  DEFRA are supportive of industry lead sustainable growth of the aquaculture sector. There are no specific growth targets for England but there are government mechanisms (e.g. EMFF funding), regulations (Shellfish Act 1967) and initiatives (e.g. Marine Planning) which are aimed at providing the support to the industry. In addition, there is a UK-wide aquaculture development plan running to 2020 in the form of the Multi Annual National Plan (MANP). The plan sets out how the UK will tackle 4 key aquaculture growth challenges using support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
(Note: A list of Regulators/Authorities pertinent to aquaculture development in England is available through CEFAS guidance collated in to the “Aquaculture Regulatory Toolbox for England” and hosted on the Seafish website: http://www.seafish.org/industry-support/aquaculture/aquaculture-regulatory-toolbox-for-england)

➢ Wales

Welsh Government supports the continued sustainable growth of aquaculture, seeing it as one of the key food production sectors in Wales, and helping to underpin sustainable economic growth in rural and coastal communities. Welsh Government are developing Welsh National Marine Plan


➢ Northern Ireland

Aquaculture policy is enabled by local legislation namely the Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1966 which allows the DAERA to grant Fish Culture Licences authorising aquaculture activities. The key policy drivers are ‘Going for Growth’, the reformed CFP, and ‘The Rising Tide Report’ which reviews the Bottom Grown Mussel sector on the Island of Ireland. The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland is under development


➢ Scotland

The Scottish Ministerial Group for Sustainable Aquaculture (MGSA) was established in 2013, working alongside the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 to secure the sustainability of aquaculture growth and its interactions, supporting Scotland’s industry to achieve its targets set out in Scotland’s National Marine Plan (NMP)

- MGSA: http://www.gov.scot/Topicsmarine/Fish-Shellfish/MGSA

Advising Government/Regulating/Research/Leasing

➢ Europe

European Commission

EC Aquaculture

Strategic Guidelines for the Sustainable Development of EU Aquaculture, 2013

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
The EMFF scheme is funding from Europe for sustainable development and support growth and jobs in EU coastal communities, for includes for aquaculture. Various organisations run EMFF across UK:


➢ UK Wide

Animal and Plant Health Authority (APHA)
The APHA work to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) - Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
The UK Aquaculture Initiative is a joint BBSRC and NERC initiative to support high-quality, innovative research and research translation within a growing community of people working together towards a mutual goal of developing a healthy, safe and sustainable UK aquaculture system

Crown Estate (CE)
The CEs coastal portfolio comprises foreshore and seabed throughout the UK and it has interests in ports, harbours, leisure boating and aquaculture facilities - issuing licences or leases for aquaculture sites. All aquaculture developments on the territorial seabed or Crown foreshore will require a Crown Estate lease to exercise the planning permission/licence granted for the activity

Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI)
The FHI inspect fish and shellfish farms and investigate serious outbreaks of disease in both farms and the wild - helping to maintain the health of the UK’s fish and shellfish, improve businesses’ ability to trade openly outside the UK, reduce their losses from disease and help protect a valuable natural resource. The FHI reports to DEFRA
- Fish health inspections Northern Ireland: [https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/fish-health-inspections](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/fish-health-inspections)

Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)
The VDM an executive agency DEFRA) aims to promote animal health and welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines. Their work also helps the FSA to protect and improve the safety of food people eat

**England**

Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)
‘The Association’ aims to assist and promote the regional IFCAs to ensure that the authorities develop a leading and effective national role in fisheries and conservation management in line with the IFCA vision

Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)
CEFAS is a leader in marine science and technology, providing innovative solutions for the aquatic environment, biodiversity and food security. It is one of the UK’s most diverse centres for applied marine and freshwater science and research
- Home Page: [https://www.cefas.co.uk/about-us/](https://www.cefas.co.uk/about-us/)
- Aquaculture: [https://www.cefas.co.uk/sectors/aquaculture-and-food-security/](https://www.cefas.co.uk/sectors/aquaculture-and-food-security/)

Environment Agency (EA)
The EA work to create better places for people and wildlife, and support sustainable development

Food Standards Agency (FSA)
The FSA is a non-ministerial government department responsible for protecting public health in relation to food in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Guidance and information for the hygienic production of fish and shellfish: [http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/fish-shellfish](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/fish-shellfish)
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
The MMO licence, regulate and plan marine activities in the seas around England and Wales so that they're carried out in a sustainable way. MMO is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the DEFRA.

Natural England (NE)
NE is a government adviser regarding the natural environment in England, helping to protect England’s nature and landscapes for people and for the services they provide

Wales
Centre for Applied Marine Sciences (CAMS)
CAMS, based at Bangor University, cooperates on a range of grant- and industry-funded projects with partners in the aquaculture industry
- Home Page: http://www.cams.bangor.ac.uk/

Centre for Sustainable Aquaculture Research (CSAR)
CSAR operates from Swansea University's College of Science. It conducts research and technological development, training and advice on behalf of commercial farmers/aquaculture service providers, funding agencies and governmental institutions, in the UK and internationally
- Home Page: http://www-wed.swansea.ac.uk/csar/

Food Standards Agency (FSA) Wales
The FSA is a non-ministerial government department responsible for protecting public health in relation to food in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Home Page: http://www.food.gov.uk/wales

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
The NRW make sure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future

Northern Ireland
Agri-Food in Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
AFBI carries out high technology research and development, statutory, analytical, and diagnostic testing functions for DAERA and other Government departments, public bodies and commercial companies
- Home Page: https://www.afbini.gov.uk/

Food Standards Agency (FSA) in Northern Ireland
The FSA is a non-ministerial government department responsible for protecting public health in relation to food in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Home Page: http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland

Scotland
Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
FSS is the public sector food body for Scotland. FSS was established by the Food (Scotland) Act 2015 as a non-ministerial office, part of the Scottish Administration, alongside, but separate from, the Scottish Government

Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre (SAIC)
Innovation Centres are collaborations between universities, businesses and others to enhance innovation in and across Scotland’s key economic sectors; established by the Scottish Government, in partnership with the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The SAIC supports the growth, sustainability and profitability of the Scottish aquaculture industry.
- Home Page: http://scottishaquaculture.com/
Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum (SARF)
SARF is a registered charity and an independent company whose main aim is to support research into aquaculture and related areas. It has 13 members.
- Home Page: http://www.sarf.org.uk/

Scottish Environment Agency (SEPA)
SEPA is Scotland’s principal environmental regulator, protecting and improving Scotland’s environment.
- Home Page: http://www.sepa.org.uk/
- Aquaculture information: http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/aquaculture/

Scottish Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFGs)
IFGs are non-statutory bodies that aim to improve the management of Scotland’s inshore fisheries out to six nautical miles, and to give commercial inshore fishermen a strong voice in wider marine management developments
- Home Page: http://ifgs.org.uk/

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
SNH’s work is to care for natural heritage, enabling people to enjoy it, helping people to understand and appreciate it, and supporting those who manage it.
- Home Page: http://www.snh.gov.uk/

Trade Bodies/Organisations Representing Members

- **UK Wide**

  Aquaponics Association (BAQUA)
  BAQUA is a UK based network focused on advancing the UK aquaponics sector
  - Home Page: http://www.baqua.org.uk/

  British Trout Association (BTA)
  The BTA represents the UK trout farming industry and aims to provide a legislative framework for the industry, to support research and development and to promote marketing activities within the industry
  - Home page: http://britishtrout.co.uk/

Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association (OATA)
The OATA is the voice of the ornamental aquatic industry in the UK with the purpose to protect and promote the trade
- Home page: http://www.ornamentalfish.org/

Shellfish Association of Great Britain (SAGB)
SAGBs aim is to assist and promote the sustainable development of the Shellfish industry in the UK. Membership is composed of shellfish farmers, fishermen, fishermen's Associations, processors, commercial traders and retail companies/restaurants, many of the IFCAs, Seafish, academics, scientists, and consultants

- **Scotland**

  Association of Scottish Shellfish Growers (ASSG)
  The ASSG represents the Scottish shellfish farming industry and aims to provide a legislative framework for the industry, to support research and development and to promote marketing activities within the industry. ‘The Grower’ is the newsletter of the ASSG
  - Home page: http://assg.org.uk/#
Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation (SSPO)
The SSPO is a trade organisation which provides a voice and specialist expertise for the industry on technical issues, political representation and communications. It champions the importance of the industry to the rural and national economy, local communities and Scotland’s food sector
- Home page: http://scottishsalmon.co.uk/

Scottish Shellfish Marketing Group (SSMG)
Scottish Shellfish Marketing Group is an industry lead co-operative marketing organization. It is the UK’s leading supplier of rope-grown mussels and cultivated Pacific oysters
- Home page: http://www.scottishshellfish.co.uk/

Shetland Aquaculture
Members include fish farmers, shellfish farmers, feed companies, hatcheries and sales companies operating in Shetland
- Home Page: http://www.shetlandaquaculture.com/

➢ Wales

Welsh Aquaculture Advisory Group
WAAG has been set up by the Welsh Government to inform policy development through collaboration with Welsh industry

Cross Country/Region Interest Groups

Aquaculture Advisory Council (ACC)
The AAC is a stakeholder-led organisation has as main objective to provide the European institutions and the Member States with recommendations and advice on issues related to the sustainable development of this sector. The AAC will be composed of representatives from the industry and other stakeholders, with a 60% - 40% allocation of the seats in the general assembly and the executive committee.

Aquaculture Initiative (AIT) EEIG (European Economic Interest Grouping)
AIT EEIG is a cross-border body which operates in the six counties of NI is committed to the development of a sustainable aquaculture industry. AIT facilitates the Aquaculture Representative Group (ARG) and the All-Island Bottom Grown Mussel Consultative Forum
- Home Page: http://www.aquacultureinitiative.eu/

European Mollusc Producers Association (AEPM/EMPA)
The EMPA brings together professional producer organisations representing 8 European countries

Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)
FEAP is the united voice of the European aquaculture production industry, being the Federation of National aquaculture associations in Europe that represent professional fish farming. It has 26 members drawn from 22 States across Europe
- Home Page: http://www.feap.info/

Loughs Agency
The Loughs Agency is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) established as one of the cross-border bodies under the Good Friday Agreement. The Agency’s functions include the promotion of development of Foyle and Carlingford Loughs for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters
- Home Page: http://www.loughs-agency.org/

Seafish Aquaculture Common Issues Group (ACIG)
The ACIG is an amalgam of interested parties drawn together to develop consensus positions on a range of important issues affecting the finfish and shellfish aquaculture industry. It provides a biannual forum
facilitated by Seafish to address ethical, environmental and sustainability challenges to aquaculture

- Seafish ACIG Page: http://www.seafish.org/industry-support/aquaculture/aquaculture-groups/aquaculture-common-issues-group

Seafish Domestic Aquaculture Advisory Committee (SDAAC)
The SDAAC is a new Seafish initiative draws together a wider membership of UK aquaculture stakeholders. The SDAAC is formed from volunteers eager to see more coordinated and strategic development of UK aquaculture - from producers to Governmental bodies; NGOs to trade associations. The SDAAC will provide stakeholder with a mechanism for directing the work areas and resource allocation of Seafish' Domestic Aquaculture Strategy Programme

- Seafish SDAAC Page: http://www.seafish.org/industry-support/aquaculture/aquaculture-groups/seafish-domestic-aquaculture-advisory-committee

UK Aquaculture Forum
The Forum is represented by industry and government officials from the four devolved administrations of the UK, focusing on EU issues, and was formed in February 2010.

- Information Page: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Fish-Shellfish/international/ukaf

Charities/Campaigners/News Providers

- Across the UK and wider

Aquafeed International
Internet information portal for the global aquafeed industry

- Home Page: http://www.aquafeed.co.uk/index.php

Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) (wild salmon only)
The ASFB is the representative body for Scotland’s 41 District Salmon Fishery Boards (DSFBs) including the River Tweed Commission (RTC), who have a statutory responsibility to protect and improve salmon and sea trout fisheries


Atlantic Salmon Trust (AST) (wild salmon only)
A UK based charity Funding research and practical measures to ensure the future of salmon and sea trout at sea and in fresh water. AST are an advocate for salmon conservation within the United Kingdom, working to see naturally-generated stocks of wild salmon and sea trout reach sustainable levels of abundance.

- Home Page: http://www.atlanticsalmontrust.org/

Callander McDowell
Strategic planning and marketing for the aquaculture industry. Regular updates, comments and views on fish and seafood news are provided through the reLAKSation newsletter

- Home Page: http://www.callandermcdowell.co.uk/
- reLAKSation: http://www.callandermcdowell.co.uk/relaksation/

Fishupdate
Internet information portal for the global seafood industry and includes aquaculture news. Also produces ‘Fish Farming International’ magazine


Hatchery International
Internet information portal for the global fish hatchery industry

- Home Page: http://hatcheryinternational.com/

International Fishmeal and Fish Oil Organisation (IFFO)
The Marine Ingredients Organisation IFFO is the international ‘not for profit’ organisation that represents and promotes the fishmeal, fish oil and wider marine ingredients industry worldwide

- Home Page: http://www.iffo.net/
**Intrafish**
Internet information portal for the global seafood industry and includes aquaculture news. Also produces ‘Fish Farmer’ magazine (a monthly magazine since 1977)
- Fish Farmer subscription: [https://wyvex.escosubs.co.uk/store/products,fish-farmer-magazine_4.htm/](https://wyvex.escosubs.co.uk/store/products,fish-farmer-magazine_4.htm/)

**Marine Conservation Society (MCS)**
The MCS is a UK charity for the protection of our seas, shores and wildlife. It champions a vision of sustainable fisheries, abundant marine life and clean seas and beaches for the enjoyment of all. It also has a strong aquaculture focus
- Information on farmed fish: [http://www.goodfishguide.org/information/Farmed+fish](http://www.goodfishguide.org/information/Farmed+fish)

**New Economics Foundation (NEF)**
NEF is a UK think tank promoting social, economic and environmental justice. Their Blue New Deal Initiative is working towards a vision for coastal communities, including aquaculture

**Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) (wild salmon only)**
RAFTS is a leading independent freshwater conservation charity representing Scotland's national network of rivers and fisheries Trusts and Foundations. RAFTS is a Scottish Charity.

**Seafish Aquaculture News Alert**
At the start of each month the Seafish Aquaculture Industry News e-Alert covers aquaculture news items, legislation and reports

**Seafood Roundup**
Seafood Roundup is a weekly news summary with aquaculture content for the seafood industry professionals worldwide

**Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC)**
The SSC is a group of UK businesses using market influence to tackle seafood sustainability. ClientEarth founded the Sustainable Seafood Coalition in order to pursue a vision of all seafood and fish sold in the UK is from sustainable sources

**The Fish Site**
Internet information portal, with latest news on seafood including aquaculture

**World Wildlife Fund (WWF)**
WWF is a global environmental NGO with a strong interest in the development of sustainable aquaculture. WWF facilitated the Aquaculture Dialogues to develop standards to reduce or eliminate the main environmental and social impact of aquaculture and help set up the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) to manage the standards
- WWF and Aquaculture: [http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/our_global_goals/markets/mti_solutions/certification/seafood/aquaculture/](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/our_global_goals/markets/mti_solutions/certification/seafood/aquaculture/)
- WWF UK Aquaculture Page: [http://www.wwf.org.uk/what_we_do/oceans_and_coasts/oceans_europe/aquaculture.cfm](http://www.wwf.org.uk/what_we_do/oceans_and_coasts/oceans_europe/aquaculture.cfm)
Aquaculture Insurance Providers

- **UK Wide**
  - Sunderland Marine, Newcastle upon Tyne [http://www.sunderlandmarine.com/contact-us/](http://www.sunderlandmarine.com/contact-us/)

Aquaculture Consultancies, Specialist Equipment Providers, Veterinary Services, etc.

There numerous independent and/or private businesses servicing the UK aquaculture industry – from veterinary services to offshore equipment, research consultancies through to specialist hauliers.

Many of the trade websites and publications list aquaculture service providers, but a simple web search will lead those seeking assistance to a number of relevant sources.

**Prepared by:**
Lee Cocker, Aquaculture Manager, Seafish
e: lee.cocker@seafish.co.uk
August 2016