



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Consultation on the introduction of catch recording for licensed fishing boats under 10 metres in length

February 2019



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Consultation summary

Subject	Consultation on the impacts of the introduction of catch recording for all English and Welsh licensed fishing boats under 10 metres in length.
Purpose	<p>England and Wales fisheries administrations are proposing the introduction of new catch recording requirements for all licensed fishing boats under 10 metres in length.</p> <p>This consultation seeks to identify any potential business impacts and implementation challenges arising from the introduction of this requirement. Responses will help to inform the way that these changes are introduced.</p>
Geographical scope	The change will apply to all English and Welsh licensed fishing boats under 10 metres in length. Scottish licensed vessels already have a fishing vessel licence condition that mandates recording for the under 10 metre fleet. Northern Ireland will be seeking consultation responses at a later date.
Audience	This consultation will be of particular interest to owners and operators of licensed fishing boats under 10 metres in length operating in UK waters. However, it is open to anyone who may wish to contribute their views on the changes. This consultation is the principal way by which we will gather views on the proposal.
Duration	<p>This consultation will run for a period of six weeks.</p> <p>Start date: Tuesday 19 February 2019</p> <p>End date: Tuesday 2 April 2019</p>
How to respond	<p>You can respond to the consultation by email to: catchrecording@marinemanagement.org.uk</p> <p>Or by post to: Marine Management Organisation Lancaster House Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7YH</p> <p>However you choose to reply, please ensure your response reaches us by 17:00 on Tuesday 2 April 2019.</p>
Enquiries	If you have any enquiries, or wish to receive hard copies of the consultation documents, please contact us by using the details shown above.

<p>After the consultation</p>	<p>We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at GOV.UK</p> <p>This summary will include a list of the names of organisations that responded. It will not list personal names, addresses or other contact details (for either organisational or individual responses).</p> <p>We will retain a copy of responses so that the public can see them; copies will be made available on request. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.</p>
<p>Confidentiality and data protection</p>	<p>Information provided in response to this consultation document, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes; these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).</p> <p>If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that under the FOIA there is a statutory code of practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals with obligations of confidence.</p> <p>In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided in your response as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation but cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.</p>
<p>Compliance with the Code of Practice on Consultation</p>	<p>This consultation is issued in line with the principles of consultation issued by the Cabinet Office. These can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance</p> <p>If you have any comments or complaints about this consultation, please address them to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Catch Recording Consultation Co-ordinator Marine Management Organisation Lancaster House, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 7YH</p> <p>Or email: catchrecording@marinemanagement.org.uk</p>

Introduction

This public consultation is seeking views on the business impacts arising from the proposal to introduce mandatory catch recording for the under 10 metre commercial sea fishing fleet in England and Wales.

The proposal is that catch recording requirements will be introduced via a fishing vessel licence condition. The anticipated benefits of introducing catch recording for under 10 metre vessels include improved data gathering and a greater understanding of the activities of under 10 metre fishing vessels. Better records will also allow the origins of fish to be traced, which should lead to improved sales and marketing opportunities for the industry.

United Kingdom fisheries administrations (UKFAs) policy makers, industry and consumers all have a shared goal in ensuring that our fisheries are managed in a sustainable way. Existing methods of capturing data on the activities of the under 10 metre fishing fleet restrict the ability of UKFAs to make informed, real-time decisions on fisheries management in that sector of the UK fishing fleet.

This consultation sets out the changes that are being proposed with the aim of introducing catch recording in the under 10 metre fleet. It provides an opportunity to help to shape how this policy might be implemented. The consultation will be of particular interest to owners and operators of UK fishing boats under 10 metres in length. The responses will help to inform policy makers' decisions in respect of the proposal and will help determine the most appropriate means of introducing the change, if it is to be introduced.

Scotland has its own arrangements in place for recording catches; under 10 metre fishing vessels licenced in Scotland are not, therefore, covered by this consultation. Northern Ireland will be seeking consultation responses at a later date.

What is catch recording and what are we proposing to do?

Catch recording proposals require the owners and operators of commercial fishing vessels to provide information on the fish retained on board and landed on each fishing trip. The data will be used to help the fishing industry ensure sustainability for the future.

In England and Wales it is a legal requirement for commercial sea fishing vessels over 10 metres in length to provide catch information¹. The majority of vessels under 10 metres in length are not currently required to submit catch records. These vessels make up the majority of the fishing industry in terms of numbers. There are approximately 3,000 under 10 metre vessels in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man (82% of the entire UK fleet). In 2017 these vessels landed at least 30,497 tonnes of fish valued at £67m. It is vital that policy makers, regulators, and the industry have access to up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information on catches taken by this fleet, especially for those species which have quotas or catch limits established.

Defra and Welsh Government are proposing an approach that would see the owners and operators of under 10 metre vessels, who catch and land **species subject to quotas, catch limits or effort restrictions**, recording their catch via a mobile device (a smart phone or tablet) prior to the fish leaving the vessel.

Those who catch only **non-quota species** would have 24 hours to record their catch via either a mobile device, personal computer or laptop.

For **all catches** (quota and non-quota) a declaration will need to be submitted within 48 hours of fish leaving the vessel, via either a mobile device, personal computer or laptop, providing accurate weights of all species landed.

The costs to individuals associated with this new licence requirement will range according to individual circumstances. Relatively low additional cost will be incurred by individuals who already have means to send through the information digitally (i.e. already own a suitable mobile device, personal computer or laptop).

Higher costs will be incurred in cases where individuals do not currently have the means to send information digitally. Actual costs in these circumstances would be determined by the type of phone, tablet, laptop, PC and data package selected to transmit the information.

Why do we need to record the catch of the under 10 metre fleet?

UKFAs recognise that a greater understanding of the activities of the under 10 metre fleet is necessary to improve fisheries management decision making across the industry.

¹ Article 14 of Council Regulation (EC) 1224/2009

Improved data gathering and sharing will help to ensure sustainable fisheries for the future. Information collected under an enhanced system will also help to verify the traceability of fish caught and ensure that fish has been caught in compliance with regulations; these are vital requirements for the sale, export and marketing of UK fish at home and abroad.

Defra has also consulted on proposals to introduce Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems (I-VMS) for vessels under 12 metres in length. This will provide more information about where fishing is taking place. Welsh Government is currently consulting on the introduction of vessel monitoring for under 12 metre vessels. The two initiatives combined, I-VMS and catch recording, will provide a more complete picture of current fishing activity. This will help to inform future policy and ensure sustainable fishing for future generations.

What are the benefits of introducing catch recording requirements for the under 10 metre fleet?

The objective of extending catch recording requirements to all under 10 metre vessels is to gain a better understanding of fishing activity in that sector of the UK fleet and to help ensure sustainable fisheries for this and future generations. The data will improve understanding of inshore fishing activity, and help to inform future policy and fisheries management.

Catch recording will also provide benefits to industry, as follows:

- By helping to maximise fishing opportunities, such as zoned management within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), creating a more responsive management system. This means greater access may be allowed to certain types of fishing in areas where it was previously prohibited as information on catches in those areas becomes clearer;
- Providing consumers with comprehensive and accurate information of catch locations, which can improve consumer confidence when purchasing locally sourced fisheries products;
- Assisting with the recovery of and swifter payment of insurance claims in case of loss of gear at sea;
- Demonstrating to the public and the wider food chain associated industry that the fishing industry is taking positive and tangible steps to fish more sustainably, allowing catches to be marketed more positively;

- Enabling the data captured to be used by fishermen to make better and more well informed business decisions and develop their business plans;
- Allowing fishermen to demonstrate, more easily, that they have a track record in catching a certain species of fish;
- Helping fishermen to keep accurate records of their catches to ensure that they can fish to the catch limits set by UKFAs, adjust fishing patterns to accommodate uptake and reduce regulatory interventions;
- Providing fishermen with data, which can be used to engage in consultations on other uses of the UK marine area, such as offshore windfarms, MPAs and marine infrastructure developments.

Who would be affected by the changes?

The proposal to introduce mandatory catch recording via a fishing vessel licence condition will apply to the owners or operators of fishing boats under 10 metres in length, registered in England and Wales. It will also apply to fishing boats registered in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man when they are operating in English or Welsh waters. This proposal will not, at present, apply to EU or third country vessels operating in English or Welsh waters.

How and when are we proposing to make these changes?

The proposal is that a licence condition will be introduced to make it compulsory for all under 10 metre fishing vessels registered in England and Wales to record their catch.

Rather than mandate the use of a traditional paper fishing logbook and landing declaration to record catches, simple, digital solutions, are being developed, which will minimise the impact on fishermen and vessel owners.

These solutions are in the process of being tested by members of the UK fishing fleet who have volunteered to help ensure that users' needs are captured and the solution meets the requirements of the industry. Once a solution has been developed that meets the needs of industry, a roll-out programme is planned, which will provide education and support to fishers to ensure that everyone is able to use the system.

Fishing administrations in England and Wales are planning to introduce the recording of catches for under 10 metre vessels from summer 2019. Information and updates will be issued to industry with progress on development and feedback from the consultation.

What we will do with the consultation responses and by when

The consultation closes on Tuesday 2 April 2019. We will publish a summary of the responses on GOV.UK within six weeks of this date.

Consultee information (optional)

1. What is your name?
2. What is your email address?
3. What category best describes your interest in this consultation?
4. If you are a vessel owner or operator, where is your vessel licensed?
5. Would you like your response to be confidential?

Consultation questions

1. It is proposed that vessels catching and retaining species **subject to quotas** will record their catch (via a specially developed app) before the fish have been removed from the vessel. Those that catch and retain only **non-quota species** will have 24 hours, from landing, to record their catch via the mobile app or online. **For all catches a declaration will need to be submitted** within 48 hours (using a mobile device, personal computer or laptop) providing accurate weights of all species landed. **What are your views on the proposed approach and policy?**
2. What challenges will you face as a consequence of this new requirement?
3. Are there any further comments you would like to make on the impact of the proposal?

If you have any comments or complaints about this consultation, please address them to:

Catch Recording Consultation
Marine Management Organisation
Lancaster House, NE4 7YH

Or email: catchrecording@marinemanagement.org.uk