



## UK Fisheries Bill Briefing

November 2018

Greener UK and Wales Environment Link have identified the following areas where the UK Fisheries Bill must be improved in order to enable the sustainable management of natural resources:

**1. A duty on all public authorities to deliver the fisheries objectives.**

Without this duty, targets are established but with no clear obligation for authorities to deliver them. There should also be the requirement for annual updates on progress against objectives.

**2. A commitment to ensure that fishing limits cannot be set above the scientifically recommended levels that would deliver the objective to restore fish stocks to a healthy biomass.**

There must be a target for fishing mortality to be set at sustainable levels (currently 2020, under the Common Fisheries Policy) and an immediate duty to deliver on restoring stocks to healthy biomass levels.

**3. A formal consultation procedure to scrutinise secondary legislation.**

Powers provided by the Bill to create secondary legislation could result in major changes to fisheries management measures and should therefore be subject to wider scrutiny, including by stakeholders.

**4. An approach which seeks to ensure shared stocks are managed sustainably.**

The Bill does not make any firm commitment on how shared stocks should be sustainably managed. This is extremely concerning as setting clear sustainability criteria in relation to negotiations with other countries would help avoid, for example, another 'mackerel wars' scenario.

**5. A clear objective in the Bill that fisheries management should be coherent within UK, devolved and international environmental legislation.**

Fisheries management does not take place in isolation and the impacts of fishing activity can have significant implications for the health of the wider marine environment.

**6. A mandate to allocate fishing opportunities on the basis of transparent and objective environmental and social criteria, to incentivise the most sustainable fishing practices.**

If the Bill does not require that fishing opportunities are allocated according to transparent and objective environmental and social criteria, then local, low-impact fishers will continue to miss out, to the detriment of coastal communities and the environment.

**7. A commitment to full documentation of catches.**

If we fail to achieve full documentation of UK fisheries we will not have a true picture of what is being removed from the seas and therefore will not have accurate scientific data to ensure effective management of the shared stocks in UK waters.

**8. A commitment to robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.**

There are no provisions in the Bill to deal with monitoring and enforcement, a fundamental part of effective fisheries management. Vessel monitoring should be applicable to all vessels regardless of size. In addition, remote electronic monitoring with CCTV should be required for all large vessels (over ten metres) and select smaller vessels to ensure accountability and improve enforcement.

**9. Access of foreign vessels to UK waters should be contingent on compliance with the same environmental standards applicable to UK boats.**

There is no provision in the Bill that foreign boats must comply with the same standards as UK boats, which is essential to ensure a level playing field and a high level of environmental protection.

**Wales Environment Link (WEL)** is a network of environmental, countryside and heritage Non-Governmental Organisations in Wales, most of whom have an all-Wales remit. WEL is a respected intermediary body connecting the government and the environmental NGO sector in Wales. Our vision is a healthy, sustainably managed environment and countryside with safeguarded heritage in which the people of Wales and future generations can prosper.

*This paper represents the consensus view of members of WEL's Marine Working Group. Members may also produce*



*information individually in order to raise more detailed issues that are important to their particular organisation.*

Baltic House, Mount Stuart Square Cardiff, CF10 5FH  
Tŷ Baltic, Sgwâr Mount Stuart, Caerdydd, CF10 5FH

Tel: 02920 497 509

[www.waleslink.org](http://www.waleslink.org)

Registered Charity Number / Rhif Elusen Gofrestredig: 1022675

Chair / Cadeirydd: Roger Thomas

Director / Cyfarwyddwraig: Susan Evans