



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Fishing and exporting seafood products from 1 January 2021

Information for commercial fishers, merchants and exporters

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The UK has reached an agreement with the EU on its future relationship.

This quick guide signposts to the guidance and help available for all aspects of commercial fishing, exporting / importing seafood or directly landing catch, and to the rules that apply from 11pm on 31 December 2020 for fishing or seafood exporting businesses based in Wales.

You can learn more about the new processes and sign up to get the latest updates on fisheries at <https://www.gov.uk/transition> and www.gov.wales/preparing-wales.

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Commercial fishing in UK, EU or other waters

There is no change to the rights and responsibilities of UK-registered vessels fishing in UK waters. All vessel owners must continue to comply with the law and the conditions of their licence, including existing reporting requirements (such as logbooks), the economic link criteria and [discard policy](#). The Welsh Government sent an amended licence to fish in UK waters to vessel licence holders in Wales on 31 December 2020. More information is available on catch limits for the [under 10m pool](#). For information on other catch limits please refer to your licence.

From 1 January, UK and EU vessels must not fish in each other's waters without a licence.

The new [Single Issuing Authority](#) (SIA) for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will initially issue licences to eligible UK vessels to fish in EU waters and eligible non-UK eligible vessels to fish in UK waters in the respective 12 - 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zones of either party.

Licensing of UK vessels and non-UK vessels to fish in each other's 6 – 12 nautical mile zones were issued on 29th January 2021, following the eligibility criteria being confirmed and assured.

The SIA will also issue licences for fishing in Norwegian and Faroes waters, as and when negotiations are complete, as happens every year.

UK licence holders have been emailed directly by the UK SIA with their external waters licence and a list of licensed UK vessels is now available on the UK SIA website.

To make sure you have the appropriate licence, you should:

- Ensure your vessel is registered with the [UK Ship Register](#)
- Apply for an IMO number (if your vessel is over 12 metres overall length) - download the [IMO registration form](#)
- Ensure the Single Issuing Authority has your email address: contact uksia@marinemanagement.org.uk with details of your vessel
- Apply for a licence [if you don't already have one](#). (For advice on how to transfer a licence click [here](#))

Recording your catch and sales

- Vessels under 10m – [record on the catch app](#) in accordance with your licence condition
- Vessels 10-12m – [submit paper logbooks](#) and landing declarations within 48 hours; if completing an electronic logbook, submission must be in line with the requirements for vessels over 12m
- Vessels over 12m – [submit electronic logbooks](#) prior to landing, and landing declarations within 24 hours of landing
- [Sales notes](#) must arrive within 24 hours of first sale via the Electronic Reporting System or within 48 hours if submitting by post

For more information click [here](#). Logbooks, landing declarations and sales notes are vital to the future of our fish and seafood industry. The data they provide about what fish is being taken out of the sea, where and when, is the evidence the Welsh Government uses to make its decisions and fight the industry's cause – on quotas, negotiations, closures, environmental legislation, funding and grants, port developments, export approval and more.

Fishers will need to submit all logbooks, landing declarations and catch records accurately by the legal deadline to be compliant.

Importantly, the data on logbooks, catch records, landing declarations and sales notes must match to enable [UK catch certificates](#) to be generated for catch to be exported to the EU, so it is important that fishers ensure merchants have the correct landing date for each consignment.

It is your responsibility to make sure your data is correct and in on time. As well as being a legal requirement to meet the deadlines, from 1 January 2021, if your documents are not in on time you could jeopardise your buyer's ability to sell and export your catch..

Landing your catch in the UK

Any GB-registered, licensed vessel can land catch in any port in the GB. Fishing is well regulated in Wales and in the UK to protect sustainable fish stocks and prevent Illegal, Unreported or Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Selling your catch

When selling your catch, you should ensure that it is sold to a registered buyer, under the [Registration of Buyers and Sellers Scheme](#). Anyone buying first sale fish for commercial purposes must also register under this scheme.

Sales notes must be [submitted](#) by the legal deadline. They must arrive within 24 hours of sale for larger businesses and others using the Electronic Reporting System (ERS), or within 48 hours by post for smaller businesses (with a turnover of less than £200k) that are allowed to use paper sales notes. Late submission is not only illegal, it could impact the ability of your merchant to sell on your catch. It is very important

that the sales note has the same landing date as the electronic logbook / paper logbook / catch record and landing declaration to enable catch certificates to be issued for export.

Landing your catch in the EU

From 1 January 2021 GB registered vessels can land fish into EU ports that are designated under the [North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission \(NEAFC\)](#) regulations. You will need to register your vessel with [NEAFC's Port State Control System](#). Fresh fish can be landed into any [NEAFC designated port](#). If you are the Captain or Skipper of a factory or freezer vessel that is an approved food establishment, you will need to land into a [Border Control Post \(BCP\)](#) that can handle your type of product - check your trade route in advance and find out who the [relevant EU 'competent authority' is](#).

Before landing, you must submit [a prior notification](#) to the EU Competent Authority up to 4 hours ahead for fresh fish and up to 72 hours ahead for frozen fish. And you need to submit a [pre-landing declaration](#) at least 4 hours ahead.

You need to complete a [UK catch certificate](#) for the catch you intend to land.

Local Authority approved freezer, reefer or factory vessels that land frozen or processed fish directly into the EU will require a [Captain's Certificate](#) signed by the Captain who is authorised by APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) or DAERA (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs). This does not apply to fresh fish.

You need to register to make [your HMRC customs](#), export declarations and VAT declarations. Check the link and see the section on customs below for more

information on procedures required. See [the Marine Management Organisation's handy checklist](#) for landing fish and fishery products in the EU from 1 January 2021.

Landing your Catch in Northern Ireland

New rules apply to GB vessels landing catch in Northern Ireland and catch certificates and other documentation will be required. [Please see this link for further guidance.](#)

Food Labelling

There are changes required for food labelling. [Further guidance is available.](#)

Exporting your catch or fishery products to the EU

Specialist advisors are on hand 24/7 to assist with the Fish Export Service – call 0330 159 1989

- The updated [GB-EU Border Operating Model](#) provides details of the specific requirements for exporting fish and shellfish on page 204.
- The Marine Management Organisation has produced a [process map for export](#)
- You risk your fish being delayed or rejected when they reach the EU if you do not have the right documents or go through the wrong [Border Control Post \(BCP\)](#).

Steps you must take to export fish and seafood products:

- Register for [Export Health Certificates \(EHCs\)](#).

- [Get your EHCs on-line.](#) Factory / freezer trawlers need to apply for EHCs (but they are not needed for fresh fish landings – these require a Captain’s Certificate)
- Retain a ‘certifying officer’ to help you certify your [Export Health Certificates](#) (EHC)
- Apply for a [UK EORI number](#)
- Apply for an IMO number (if your vessel is over 12 metres long) - [download the IMO registration form](#)
- Comply with [food hygiene requirements](#)
- Export via [EU approved premises](#)
- Comply with [EU food labelling requirements](#)
- For endangered species you need a [CITES export permit](#)

Transporting fish or fish products

- Guidance on how to [transport fish and fish products](#).
- [Haulier driving requirements](#) for driving in the EU
- HGVs carrying exclusively fresh and live seafood will be prioritised in the case of severe disruption at the port of Dover or Eurotunnel. Here’s the [GOV.UK guidance](#).

Storage and Processing

You will need [UK storage documents](#) and [UK processing](#) documents for fish and shellfish that have been imported or landed directly into the UK for processing, or storage, ready for export.

You’ll need separate documents for each export and for each processing plant.

Importing from the EU into the UK

Importers have been given extra time to make the [necessary arrangements](#). From 1 January, most imports of marine caught fish and some shellfish will need to be accompanied by a catch certificate from the originating country along with other relevant documents.

From April 2021, [Export Health Certificates \(EHCs\)](#) will be needed along with new pre-notification requirements and from July; commodities subject to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) controls must arrive at an [established Border Control Post](#) (BCP). Further details of the import requirements for seafood are on pages 61, 94 and 123 of the [Border Operating Model](#).

Moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland

More information on processes required to move fish or seafood products into, through or out of Northern Ireland is [available at this link](#).

You can get advice from the new [Movement Assistance Scheme \(MAS\)](#) helpline on moving agri- food goods from Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) to Northern Ireland and can claim money back if you provide an inspection and certification service.

Telephone: 0330 0416 580 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm on weekdays (excluding bank holidays).

Fishing Quotas

The UK Government has announced that provisional catch limits for fishermen in the UK will be set to ensure fishing continues uninterrupted until annual fisheries

negotiations with the EU, Norway and Faroe Islands conclude. You can read the [press notice](#) and visit the [website](#) for more information.

Funding and grants

In Wales there will be a two phased approach to future funding for the marine and fisheries sector which replaces the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the first phase will be launched early in 2021.

Managing customs and VAT declarations

You can register now and get help to make your [HMRC customs export declarations](#) and VAT declarations. Check this website for details of processes required.

The customs export rules apply to:

- Exports to the EU of fish caught by GB-flagged fishing vessels in UK waters
- Exports to the EU of fish imported from another country that have been stored or processed in the UK
- Direct landings in [EU ports](#) by a GB-flagged fishing vessels
- Direct landings by EU registered vessels fishing in UK waters if they wish to land in an EU port
- You do not require a GB export declaration for fish caught by GB vessels in international waters landed directly in EU waters

For further guidance on this issue, please see the HMRC newsletter [here](#). There is also the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) [webpage](#) and a help line available at 0300 322 7095 Mon-Fri 8am-5pm.

If you continue to experience issues with customs transit, email Defra on

FishTrade@defra.gov.uk

You can register now and get help in how to make your [HMRC customs export declarations and VAT declarations](#).

Control and enforcement

Most existing rules have been retained in new UK law and remain in place from 1 January 2021.

Fishing vessels are required to fish in accordance with the conditions of their licences from 11pm on 31 December 2020. Fishing without a licence is illegal.

All vessels are entitled to 'innocent passage' through other territorial waters under UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea).

The Welsh Government will continue to monitor Wales's seas for Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing to assure the sustainability of our seas and support our fishing industry.

UK fishers will need to continue to comply with their licence conditions and ensure that records such as landing declarations, logbooks and catch recording for under 10m, all of which are legal requirements, are submitted correctly and on time.

To continue to export fish and fishery products to customers in the EU, exporters will be required to supply catch certificates which are enabled by data such as landing declarations, logbooks and sales notes.

Knowing the limits

In compliance with the UK's obligations under UNCLOS and SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea), the UK's territorial sea limit, Exclusive Economic Zone, international maritime boundaries and 6 and 12 nautical mile fish limits can be found on the UK Hydrographic Office's ADMIRALTY Standard Nautical Charts and Electronic Navigational Charts. These can be obtained from an international network of ADMIRALTY Chart Agents. You can find a list of these agents and their locations [here](#).

For illustrative purposes, diagrams and shape files (digital data files) are available on [the UKHO's ADMIRALTY Marine Data Portal](#).

Welfare and wellbeing organisations providing support

- [Fishermen's Mission](#) - Offering emergency financial support for the maintenance of the basics of life, and providing pastoral care.
- [Seafarers' Advice and Information Line \(SAIL\)](#) - Part of Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) offering specialised advice for fishers, including independent, financial advice on benefit entitlement, HMRC issues, debt, charity grants and housing.
- [Seafarers' Hospital Society](#) - Offering health, welfare and advice to merchant seafarers and fishers' families
- [Seafarer Support](#) - Guides serving and former UK seafarers and their families towards relevant help in times of need.

Further information and help

Welsh Government Marine and Fisheries

Email: milfordhavenfisheriesoffice@gov.wales

Tel: 03000 253500

- **Fish Export Service** – Helpline 0330 159 1989
- **APHA** – Email: fish.exports@apha.gov.uk
- **HMRC Customs and International Trade Helpline:** 0300 300 3700