



Marine  
Management  
Organisation

# Getting ready for 1 January 2021

Support for commercial  
fishers, merchants and  
exporters

Updated 17/11/20



...ambitious for our seas and coasts

From 1 January 2021, the UK will have sole responsibility for the future of our seas and fishing industry and we need to be ready for change as an independent coastal state. This guide is to help find your way through the steps you must take if you want to ensure your business continues to prosper.

For most commercial fishers there will be little immediate change, while fish and seafood exporters will need to comply with the EU's Illegal, Unreported or Unregulated (IUU) fishing regulations and supply additional documents in order to continue to trade with customers in the EU.

You can learn more about getting ready and sign up to get the latest updates on fisheries at <https://www.gov.uk/transition>.

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## Commercial fishing in UK, EU or other waters

For all commercial fishing, whether in the UK's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) or elsewhere, you need to be registered and you need a licence to fish.

All English vessels currently registered with the MMO and already holding a commercial fishing licence will automatically receive a new licence from the new [Single Issuing Authority](#) for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in time for 1 January 2021. This will incorporate any new terms and conditions to ensure UK fishers have the correct licences to fish legally in Norwegian, Faroese and EU seas.

- Ensure the MMO has your email address: contact [info@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:info@marinemanagement.org.uk) with details of your vessel.
- Register your vessel with the UK Ship Register (RSS) via the [Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#).
- Apply for an IMO number (if your vessel is over 12 metres long) - download the [IMO registration form](#).
- [Apply for a licence](#) (for advice on how to transfer a licence [click here](#).)

## Recording your catch and sales

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

Importantly, the data on 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.

- 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; electronic logbooks within 24 hrs
- Vessels over 12m – submit electronic logbooks 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.

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 MMO and 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.

It is your future - and 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. For more information [click here](#).

## Landing your catch in the UK

Any UK-registered, licensed vessel can land catch in any port in the UK. Fishing is well regulated in the UK to protect sustainable fish stocks and prevent Illegal, Unreported or Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The MMO's [Compliance and Enforcement Strategy](#) sets out the rules for fishing in English waters.

## Selling catch by auction in the UK

Anyone selling fish at auction must be registered as a [buyer or seller of first-sale fish](#).

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 for smaller businesses (with a turnover of less than £200k) that are allowed to use paper sales notes, 48 hours by post. 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 elogbook and landing declaration to enable catch certificates to be issued for export.

## Landing your catch in the EU

From 1 January 2021 UK registered vessels will be able to 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.

Local Authority approved freezer, reefer or factory vessels that land frozen or processed fish directly into the EU will also 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).

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

See the [MMO's handy checklist](#) for landing fish and fishery products in the EU from 1 January 2021.

## Food Labelling

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

## Exporting your catch or fishery products to the EU

The updated [GB-EU Border Operating Model](#) provides details of the specific requirements for exporting fish and shellfish on [page 167](#).

- Exporters will be invited to sign in and try the service from mid-November – December.
- See our handy [process map for export](#)
- Get ready to complete [catch certificates](#) needed for all consignments
- 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](#)
- Register for the [Trade Control and Export System \(TRACES\)](#) and part complete a Common Health Entry Document.
- 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

## 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 stored, 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

Until negotiations with the EU conclude, there will be some areas without complete certainty, but full guidance will be provided by the end of the [transition period](#).

## Fishing Quotas

Discussions on quotas will be held as usual and announced in December 2020. Visit [the website](#) for more information.

## Funding and grants available

A new maritime and fisheries fund for the UK will be launched later this year.

## Managing customs and VAT declarations

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

## Control and enforcement

All existing regulations for fishing in UK waters remain in place. If an agreement on access is made, the MMO will continue to monitor for Illegal, Unreported or Unrecorded (IUU) fishing to assure the sustainability of our seas and fishing industry.

UK fishers will need to comply with the [EU's IUU Regulations](#) to fish in EU waters. 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.

## 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

- Fish Export Service – Helpline for registrations from 19 Oct - 16 Nov: 03300 416579
- Fisheries in England – MMO Email: [info@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:info@marinemanagement.org.uk)  
Phone: 0300 123 1032
- Fisheries in Scotland – Email: [marinescotland@gov.scot](mailto:marinescotland@gov.scot)  
Phone: 0300 244 4000
- Fisheries in Wales – Email: [milfordhavenfisheriesoffice@gov.wales](mailto:milfordhavenfisheriesoffice@gov.wales) Phone: 03000 253500
- Fisheries in Northern Ireland - Email: [marine.inforequests@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:marine.inforequests@daera-ni.gov.uk)  
Phone: 028 9056 9262
  
- APHA – Email: [fish.exports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:fish.exports@apha.gov.uk)
- HMRC Customs and International Trade Helpline: 0300 300 3700
  
- **MMO local offices: for local contacts visit <https://www.gov.uk/contact-local-marine-management-organisation>**