



27 November 2020

Provisional Monthly UK Sea Fisheries Statistics - Reported Landings: September 2020

Key points

Like all parts of the UK and world economy, the coronavirus pandemic is having a large impact on the activity of the UK fishing fleet in 2020. From March, the coronavirus contributed to a reduction in the quantity and value of fish landed by the UK fleet. So far, the most severe impact (measured by value of fish landed) was in April.

From January to September 2020, the value of all fish landed by the UK fleet (into the UK and abroad) is £547 million, a 21 per cent reduction on the same period in 2019.

In response to the impact of coronavirus on the UK fleet, the MMO has introduced a new monthly publication to include more timely information on fishing activity. Additional breakdowns by vessel length are included in this release, to reflect the different impacts coronavirus is having across the fleet.

The new publications (March through October 2020) are available to download here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ad-hoc-statistical-releases-sea-fisheries-statistics>. Figures may differ between this national statistics release and the ad hoc stats release due to data lags. Further details on this is covered in the methodology tab.

When considering the period January to September 2020, other points to note are:

- Mackerel landings by the UK fleet are 54 per cent higher than the same period in 2019, 106 thousand tonnes compared to 69 thousand. The value of mackerel landings did not increase so steeply, up 37 per cent compared to 2019. This increase in quantity landed is due to the increased mackerel TAC in 2020.

View the accompanying tables here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/monthly-uk-sea-fisheries-statistics>.



Background

This is a National Statistics publication.

This notice provides an overview of the reported weight and value of landings by UK vessels into the UK and abroad, and by foreign vessels into the UK.

Data are collected under EU legislation which controls fishing activity by setting limits in two key areas:

- (i) Fish quotas - limits on the amount of fish that can be landed related to the species of fish and area of activity.
- (ii) Fishing effort – limits in terms of the effort that can be exerted, usually in terms of days at sea combined with a measure of the catching capacity such as engine power.

The underlying data used to produce this report are also used to provide the EU with monthly reports on uptake against our allocated annual limits. Analysis of quota uptake for other member states allows fisheries administrations to identify opportunities for international quota swaps. Data are also used to monitor uptake on a weekly basis for the fishing industry. Fish Producer Organisations are provided with a report on their landings for validation and they use the weekly statistics to arrange domestic quota swaps.

Data are used to provide analysis and evidence to researchers and the media and to respond to ad-hoc requests from fishers, other fishing organisations and the general public. They are also used to formulate and monitor fishing policy for fisheries administrations.

View the accompanying tables and datasets here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/monthly-sea-fisheries-statistics-september-2020>

Also available at the above address is an ODS file containing the data for 2015 to 2020. This includes variables covering month, species, port of landing, vessel length and nationality and the weight and value of the landed fish. Users can use the Excel filters to select, for example, landings into a specific port. Alternatively, users could produce tables (using, for example, the pivot table function).

We welcome any further comments or suggestions on this release. Also, please contact the MMO Statistics team if you have any questions, data requests or comments. Contact details are:

Statistician: Rebecca Cavanagh

Email: statistics@marinemanagement.org.uk

A methodology note on data collection, coverage, processing and revisions is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fishing-activity-and-landings-data-collection-and-processing>

Data coverage

Data relate to reported landings of commercial fishing by UK vessels and by foreign vessels landing into the UK. Data are only included once fully validated.

Data include figures for the Isle of Man fleet and landings by some of the larger Channel Islands' vessels. Relatively small amounts of landings by the remainder of the Channel Islands' fleet – accounting for less than one tenth of one per cent of all landings - are not included here, although they are included in the weekly statistics used for quota management.

Landings do not typically equal total catches as many species can be discarded. Discarding could occur in cases where fishers accidentally catch fish for which they did not have quota, catch damaged or less profitable fish, or catch undersized fish which they could not sell. The degree of discarding varies by stock and by the sector involved. The EU's new landing obligation, being phased in from 2015 onwards, is intended to end the discarding of marketable fish. As of 1 January 2015, the landing obligation has been in force for pelagic and industrial fishing. A number of demersal species have followed since 2016 and the remaining species covered by quota stocks are included from 2019.

Despite legal obligations for fish catches to be declared, a proportion of fishing activity remains unreported. A joint study in 2009 estimated that between 2000 and 2003, illegal fishing amounted to between 5 and 13 per cent of reported catches. It is thought that overall level of unreported landings has reduced in recent years following a requirement for buyers and sellers to be registered and the implementation of new EU regulations. But the extent of illegal and unreported fishing by UK vessels is still uncertain and will vary across species.

Discarded fish and illegal/unreported landings are excluded from the report. And so the figures presented should not be interpreted as total removals from the sea; **the figures are the reported landings.**

More details are in the [methodology note](#).

Although figures for the latest month are published almost two months in arrears, some data may still be excluded from the report giving rise to revisions in later months. This is dealt with in the next section.

Revisions Policy

Data are based on landings which have been fully validated. Data are based on the latest available figures from fisheries administrations' data systems and will be subject to three main sources of revision:

- (i) Receipt of additional data
- (ii) Revisions to data
- (iii) Correction of data processing errors

More details on revisions are included in the [methodology note](#). It includes new analyses of data revisions/lags for cumulative 'year-to-date' figures and for the 'current month' figures. 'Revisions triangles' are provided for different types of landing and show how landings for each month from January 2018 onwards have been revised over time. The changes are reflected in the revisions triangles.

Statistics on landings are presented in two main forms – either landings in the individual latest month the release relates to, where statistics are being published for the first time, or the cumulative period for the year so far, i.e. from January to the latest month, which will include any revisions to the data for each month. The impact of revisions to data for both the cumulative and individual monthly data series for 2016 have been analysed and the results are available within the [data revisions](#) section of the methodology note.

In summary, the results of the analysis indicate that the first time a cumulative 'year-to-date' figure is published, the tonnage recorded is typically around 1 per cent lower than the final figure.

For landings data for an individual month, the estimate of total landings by UK vessels into the UK - when published for the first time - is generally around 3 per cent lower than the final figure. So, for example, October 2019 landings by UK vessels into the UK may be around 3 per cent lower than the actual final figure for that month. This rises to around 6 per cent for UK vessels landing into the UK and abroad. The bulk of the lag in data for any individual month is incorporated within the first revision to the data for that month. So, when we update the October 2019 figures in the dataset next month, we expect the revised figure for UK vessels landing into the UK to be around 1 per cent lower than the final figure, rising to 3 per cent for all UK fleet landings. Figures for the current year will be more affected by lags in getting data finalised on our systems. Comparisons between earlier years should therefore be made with care.

These lags will vary between species groups and type of landing. For instance, UK vessels' landings abroad and foreign vessels' landings into the UK have larger revisions, especially for shellfish and demersal landings. Data entry for these trips can be more complicated and fully validating the data can sometimes take longer. Also, many shellfish species are not affected by quota and effort management and have a lower priority in terms of data entry. However, the tonnage involved in these demersal and shellfish trips is relatively small compared with overall landings.

The methodology note highlights the steps being taken by MMO to improve the reporting of electronic data. We are also considering the benefits and risks involved in using data that have not passed the full set of validation checks.

UK Sea Fisheries Statistics

We published our annual statistical report on 24 September 2020.

The publication is a summary of:

- The UK fishing fleet
- Its activity at sea
 - Landings – how much fish they catch and land
 - Effort – how long they spend at sea
- Trade

Most recent editions are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-sea-fisheries-annual-statistics>

and an archive of older versions is available at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140507202222/http://www.marinemangement.org.uk/fisheries/statistics/annual_archive.htm

Section 2 reports on landings statistics for the most recent five-year period. Landings are broken down into more detail including fishing gear used, sea area of capture, foreign country of landing and foreign vessel nationality. Links between tables in the monthly return and annual publication are shown below.

As with the monthly return, all tables included in the publication are published together with datasets for the landings raw data:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-sea-fisheries-annual-statistics>

A user consultation on the annual publication was carried out in May 2016 and an analysis of its findings is available with the 2016 annual report. A [user consultation](#) is also included.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics last underwent a full assessment ([Assessment Report 292 Statistics on Monthly UK Sea Fisheries Landings](#)) against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in 2014.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following key improvements:

1. Table 11 has been added to show a time series of landings since 2014.
2. Revisions over time are quantified.
3. An analysis of typical in-year revisions is provided.
4. Lags in data validation have been reduced as we no longer require a sales note to access a trip's details.
5. Datasets and monthly revisions analysis are now available in open data format. Unfortunately, Tables 1 to 11 cannot be produced in open data format as negligible values represented by '..' appear as a blank cell.

Explanatory Notes

1. Quantities in the tables and charts are shown in terms of the live weight of the fish landed. Landed weight is also provided in the on-line dataset.
2. The values shown are based on information from first-hand sales of fish to all outlets, i.e. for human consumption as well as other uses, such as fishmeal and animal feed.
3. Average prices are based on the live weight of the fish.
4. The calculation of average prices excludes landings with zero value to better reflect the price of the fish.
5. The category 'other demersal' includes fish roes and livers.
6. Landings into England in Table 7a exclude data for the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands.
7. The individual ports reported in this publication represent those ports which were identified as the top 20 UK ports in terms of quantity landed or the top 20 UK ports in terms of value of landings, in the annual publication - UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2017.
8. Details on data collection, coverage, processing and revisions can be found in the [methodology note](#).
9. The following symbols apply throughout:
 - means "nil"
 - .. means "negligible" (less than half the last digit shown)
 - n/a means "not applicable"

Useful websites

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Marine Management Organisation</i> | www.gov.uk/mmo |
| <i>Quota statistics</i> | www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/quota-use-statistics |
| <i>Effort statistics</i> | www.gov.uk/government/collections/effort-use- |
| Defra | www.defra.gov.uk |
| Marine Scotland | www.marine.gov.scot/ |
| DARDNI | www.dardni.gov.uk |
| Welsh Assembly Government | www.wales.gov.uk |
| National Statistics | www.statistics.gov.uk |
| Sea Fish Industry Authority | www.seafish.co.uk |
| European Commission - Fisheries | www.ec.europa.eu/fisheries |
| Eurostat | www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat |
| EU Fleet Register | www.ec.europa.eu/fisheries/fleet |
| FAO Fisheries Department | www.fao.org/fishery |
| ICES | www.ices.dk |
| HMRC Trade Statistics | www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs |