Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Fisheries: Managing our quota in 2023 and beyond

Summary of responses and government response

April 2023

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications

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Introduction

As set out in the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), we have moved away from relative stability towards a fairer share of fishing opportunities for our fishing industry across the British Islands. This sharing arrangement means the UK has received an uplift of quota. We have defined this uplift as additional quota (AQ), and we refer to existing quota (EQ) to mean the equivalent quota the UK held prior to leaving the EU.

In our 2018 White Paper, Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations, we stated that we would allocate AQ on a different basis to that used for EQ.

Following the 2020 consultations 'Fisheries: Apportioning additional quota between the UK administrations' and 'Fisheries: Quota allocation and management in 2021 and beyond: England and the Crown Dependencies', we set out how AQ would be apportioned in 2021 and 2022. We also committed to carrying out a further review on how we would apportion AQ in the future.

Between June and September 2022, we ran the consultation 'Fisheries: Managing our quota in 2023 and beyond' as part of that further review, to find out stakeholder views on how we should apportion and allocate quota going forwards. This document is the government response to that consultation.

Background

From 27 June to 19 September 2022, Defra ran the consultation ‘Fisheries: Managing our quota in 2023 and beyond’ using our online consultation tool Citizen Space.

We proactively engaged with stakeholders across the UK, including representatives from Crown Dependencies.

Many of these conversations were arranged using virtual meetings, but we were also able to visit locations around the UK to meet in person with industry and other stakeholder groups. We held conversations with representative bodies such as the National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations, the UK Association of Fish Producer Organisations, the Scottish Association of Fish Producer Organisations and the Northern Ireland Fishermen’s Federation as well as with regional fisheries groups and several environmental NGOs.

While the analysis presented in this document is based on the formal responses to the consultation, we have also considered the views expressed in these other discussions.

This document is in three parts.

Part 1 presents stakeholder views on how we should apportion additional quota between UK administrations and views on UK-wide quota issues. It includes responses to how we should manage inward transfers from international negotiations, unallocated stocks and some areas for potential future review.

Part 2 presents stakeholder views on how we should allocate quota in England and the Crown Dependencies. It includes responses to questions around distribution methods and reserve quota.

Part 3 of this document is the government response the consultation exercise, outlining how we intend to manage quota in 2023 and beyond.

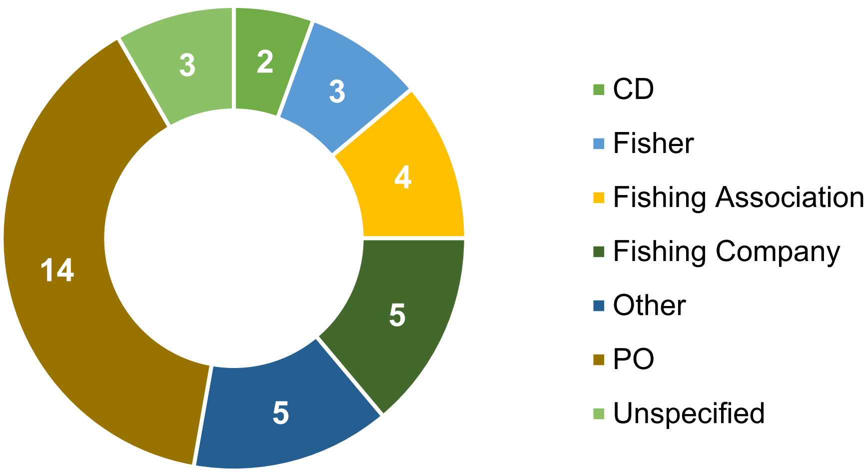
Overview of Responses

A total of 36 responses were received to the consultation. 27 responses were received via Citizen Space and nine via email.

Responses were received from a range of individuals and organisations. These have been grouped into 7 broad categories:

i. Fishing company
ii. Fisher
iii. Fishing association/representative body
iv. Producer Organisation (PO)
v. Crown Dependency (CD)
vi. Other
vii. Unspecified

Figure 1: consultation respondents by group



A list of respondents has been set out in Annex 1. Some respondents stated that they wished for the responses to remain confidential – their views have still been reflected in this summary, but their names have not been included in the list. Refer to Annex 2 for a breakdown of respondents for each question.

1. UK Quota Functions

Q1. Which option do you prefer for the new apportionment method and how long should this be in place?

Background

In 2021 and 2022, Defra apportioned additional quota between the UK administrations using a hybrid of track record (historic uptake) and zonal attachment. We chose this method to ensure that no administration was worse off than before leaving the EU and to ensure that quota was shared fairly and that all parts of the UK benefited.

We consulted on three main options for apportionment in 2023 and beyond:

i. Track Record (historic uptake) – taking into account previous landings by vessels registered in each administration.
ii. Zonal Attachment – taking into account the geographic location of stocks.
iii. Hybrid – a mixture of track record and zonal attachment.

In the 2018 White Paper we committed to move away from fixed quota allocation (FQA) units for the apportionment of AQ. This is, in part, to give opportunity to those who may not have had it in the past. In previous consultations, FQA units were favoured by some respondents, predominantly existing FQA holders. As we are not actively considering FQAs for AQ, this was not listed as a separate option within this consultation.

Analysis

35 out of 36 respondents provided an answer this question, with 30 stating a preferred apportionment method.

Nine respondents were in favour of a hybrid approach using track record and zonal attachment. Of those, 6 favoured maintaining the current ratio (90% track record to 10% zonal attachment). Many in favour of continuing the current hybrid model and ratio argued that, as the current apportionment method, it would provide continuity and stability to the fishing industry. Three respondents preferred an increase in the zonal attachment ratio, one suggesting it can enable a ‘proactive response’ to stock movement, and a further respondent suggesting it could address regional imbalances. The third suggested increasing zonal attachment to move away from ‘business-as-usual’, rewarding the least damaging sectors and benefiting local communities. Between these three respondents there was no agreement on a specific zonal attachment level. One respondent suggested an alternative hybrid method without any track record, using half of the AQ to incentivise low impact fishing practises.

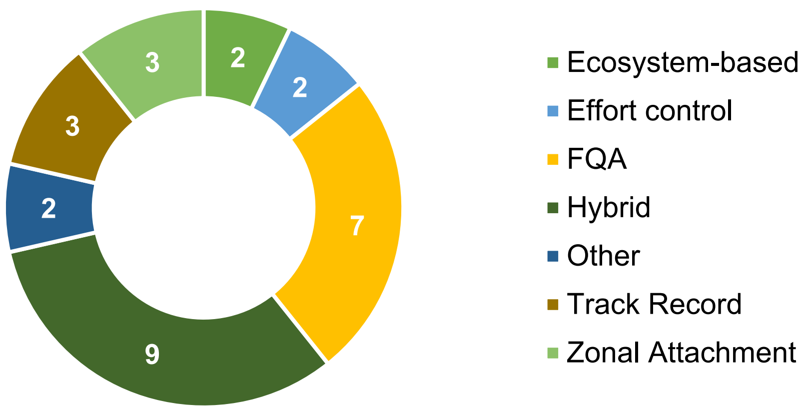
Respondents from the Scottish fishing industry were largely in favour of continuing with the current hybrid approach, whilst responses from England, Northern Ireland and Wales were mixed.

One respondent noted the current track record to zonal attachment ratio did not give their group sufficient access to fish in their waters, and while they suggested increasing zonal attachment in future, they also proposed exceptions to resolve specific issues identified.

Although apportioning AQ via FQA units was not one of the options provided, 7 respondents noted a preference for apportioning AQ using FQA units. Some of these respondents remarked on the simplicity and certainty of FQAs.

In their responses to this question and question 2, 7 separate respondents noted their concern for using track record for several reasons including that using track record benefits those with FQA holdings most, can lead to a concentration of quota ownership, and creates barriers for new entrants.

Figure 2: apportionment method



14 respondents also specified how long any apportionment method should be in place. 12 stated that any method should be in place until the end of the TCA agreement in 2026. The most common reason cited was to provide stability for the fishing industry over the next 3 years.

Figure 3: preferred hybrid weighting

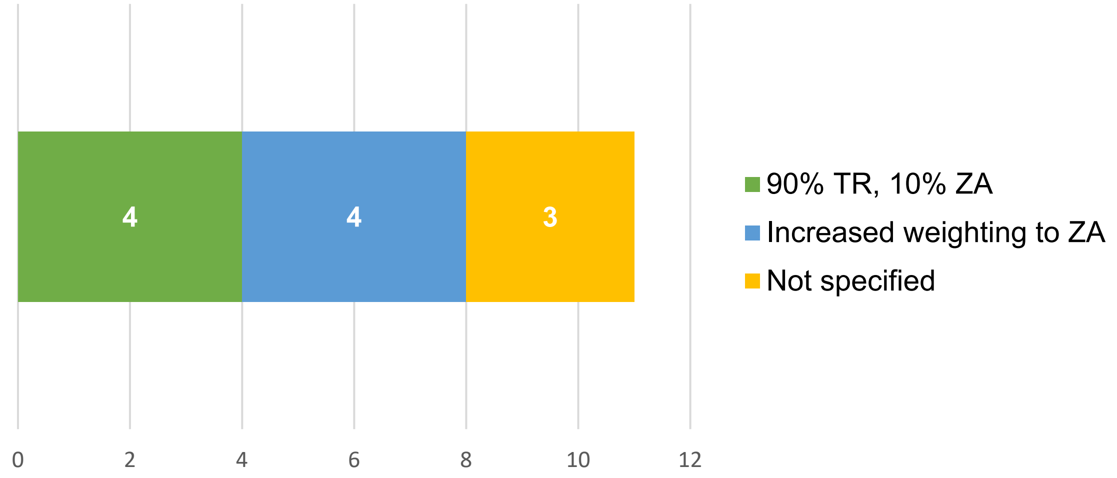
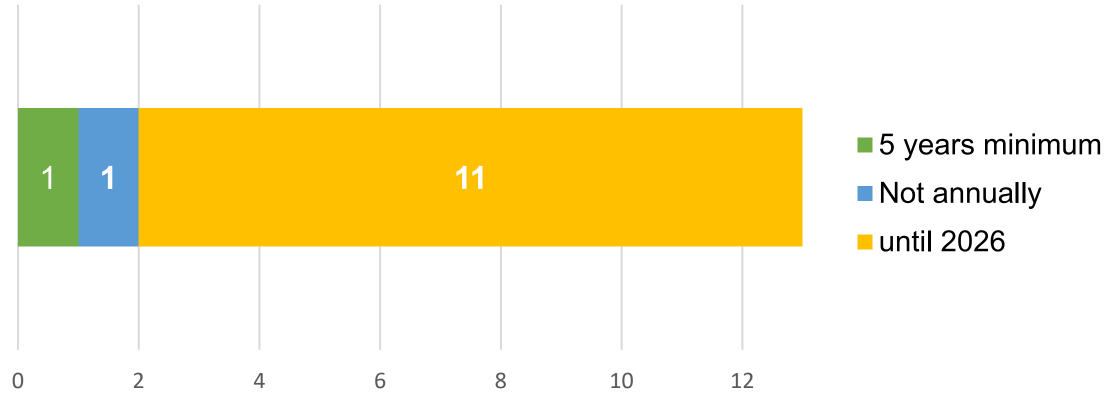


Figure 4: period of apportionment method



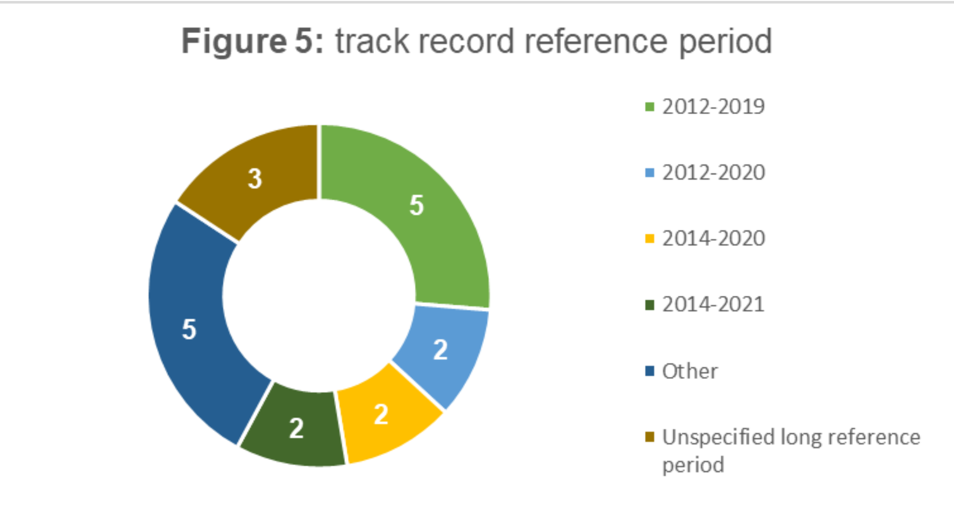
Q2. If we used track record again, what reference period should we use?

Background

In 2021 and 2022, additional quota was apportioned using the reference period 2012 to 2019. A long reference period was used because we considered it would even out any anomalies in the data. No alternative periods were listed, but we did publish track record data from 2012 to 2020 inclusive in an annex to the consultation and respondents were free to detail their preferred reference period.

Analysis

28 of 36 respondents provided an answer to this question, with 19 specifying a preferred track record reference period[1].



9 respondents stated a preference that included updating the reference period to include 2020 and/or 2021 (see footnote 5 for further responses). Furthermore, a majority preferred maintaining a long reference period that would account for anomalies for example, COVID-19. However, the current 2012 to 2019 reference period was the most popular individual choice (5 respondents). Four respondents also suggested a rolling reference period.

[1] Other includes the following responses: 1 longer than current reference period, but not including 2020; 1 2017-2021; 1 2016-2020; 1 most recent 5-year reference period; 1 2013-2019

Q3. What additional exceptions, if any, should we consider and why?

Background

In 2021 and 2022, we recognised exceptions were necessary where a broad hybrid approach did not address all issues raised during the previous quota consultation. One particular issue was around quotas available to the inshore fleet in Wales and their management of choke and bycatch issues. We made some exceptions to ensure they received additional quota in some stocks, especially where it appeared other parts of the UK did not have an immediate need for this quota. In this consultation, respondents were invited to consider whether additional exceptions for specific parts of the UK fleet should also be considered. Bycatch was offered as a reason for an exception to be granted, but respondents were free to provide additional possibilities.

Analysis

23 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to this question, with 13 listing a specific additional exception.

The Isle of Man, Northern Ireland and Wales were listed as areas where an additional exception should be considered.

Reasons for exceptions included provision for bycatch, supporting new vessels and providing opportunity to the under-10m fleet. These were largely related to addressing concerns around perceived unfair distribution of quota, improving access to those parts of industry that may need more time to adjust to new fishing opportunities, and providing sufficient quota for bycatch.

Two respondents stated that any additional exceptions should be conditional on actual uptake rather than theoretical uptake. In addition, one respondent noted the need for groups benefiting from exceptions to be required to catch the additional quota apportioned, or for the quota to be redistributed at an appropriate time to enable utilisation by others.

Q4/5. Which option do you prefer for managing these inward transfers of hake and anglerfish from Norway? Why do you prefer this option?

Background

The UK received an inward transfer of hake and anglerfish quota from annual fisheries negotiations with Norway in 2022. The UK previously fished these stocks in Norwegian waters, and for 2022 we continued to use their historic stock codes (OTH/04-N. And ANF/04-N.) following our longstanding commitment to allocate our existing quota in the normal way. However, engagement with industry suggested there were different views on how these should be treated. Four options were listed as potential ways of managing the stocks in the future:

1. Continuing to use OTH/04-N. and ANF/04-N. stock codes to reflect our previous fishing activity in Norwegian waters.
2. Rename the OTH/04-N. and ANF/04-N. stock codes and related FQA units to better describe the quotas now being transferred in.
3. Use North Sea hake and anglerfish stock codes (HKE/2AC4-C and ANF/2AC4-C) to reflect the wider area in which they can now be fished.
4. Create a new method for the sharing of incoming stocks between UK administrations.

If respondents chose option 4, they were asked to share their ideas.

Analysis

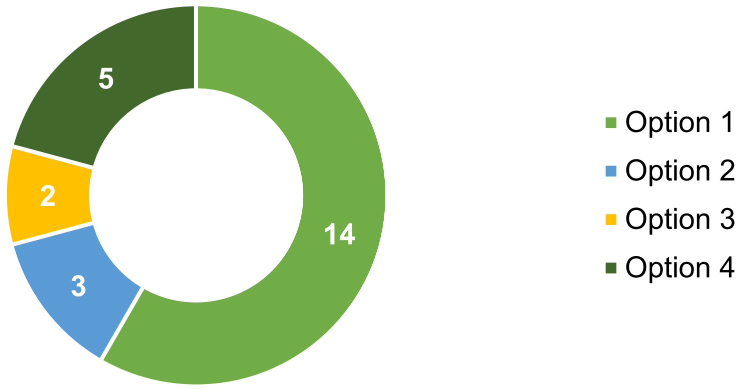
24 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to Question 4. 23 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to Question 5.

A majority, 14 respondents, favoured option 1 – continuing to use the current stock codes, OTH/04-N. and ANF/04-N. This was because any change to the current methodology was likely to ultimately penalise those with a track record in the existing stocks.

Most respondents who preferred options 2, 3 or 4 stated ‘simplification’ as their reason, namely aligning quota management areas with stock assessment areas. Two respondents discussed how the current method perpetuated unfair quota distribution in favour of larger industry players.

75% of Scottish respondents favoured option 1, with two preferring option 3. The remaining respondents from England, Northern Ireland and Wales were mixed, but with a majority (8 out of 13) preferring option 1.

Figure 6: inward transfer options



Q6. Do you have any initial views on how we manage unallocated stocks and ideas for improvement?

Background

For various reasons, some stocks remain unallocated at the UK level. Examples of these include West of Scotland Cod (COD/5BE6A) and Northern Albacore (ALB/AN05N). The approach for managing unallocated stocks has not been reviewed in several years, and this question invited consultees to provide feedback in two areas:

1. Feedback on how unallocated stocks are currently managed.
2. Any ideas for improving unallocated stock management.

Respondents were free to list their own ideas for improvement and ideas were suggested, for example increased transparency.

Analysis

35 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to this question.

Overall, a species-by-species approach seems to be preferred, and one respondent suggested improving consistency in approach between allocated/unallocated stocks. West of Scotland Cod, Bluefin Tuna and Albacore Tuna were the most frequently cited stocks

8 respondents supported apportioning West of Scotland Cod using FQA units, and a further 2 suggested FQA units are explored for West of Scotland Cod once further scientific information is understood. Scottish respondents largely favoured this approach, with some referencing the historical apportionment of West of Scotland Cod by FQA units. Respondents in England, Northern Ireland and Wales provided mixed responses, and while most POs favoured allocating West of Scotland Cod using FQAs, a further 5 responses placed an emphasis on apportioning based on sustainability.

3 respondents explicitly stated a preference for leaving stocks unallocated. One suggested this would enable stock levels to reach maximum sustainable yield biomass (BMSY) more quickly, and another respondent suggested that allocating bycatch stocks, including WoS Cod would be poor management of an overfished stock. A further respondent expressed their preference for leaving these stocks unallocated, raising a concern that allocating would only benefit 'the money guys' and suggesting the quota should remain in a 'government pot'. An additional respondent suggested sharing stocks equally with non-quota holders.

Improving transparency in management was frequently cited. Consistency in approach was also suggested as an improvement by one respondent, as some stocks for which FAs have under 50t quota will be allocated, while other stocks with under 50t quota remain unallocated.

A small number of respondents suggested that certain stocks, in particular Bluefin Tuna, would be better managed within the recreational sector.

Q7/8. What do you think about how we have managed our Bluefin Tuna quota to date? What other options should we consider for future years?

Background

One of the unallocated stocks that we currently manage as a special case is Bluefin Tuna (BFT/AE45WM).

In line with our commitment to taking a cautious and measured approach to managing Bluefin Tuna, our plans to date have focused on improving our understanding of the stock's presence in our waters. We have used our quota to account for any mortality arising as a result of a scientific catch and release tagging programme (CHART) and as a result of limited bycatch in commercial fisheries.

Analysis

23 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to Question 7.

The majority (17) of respondents expressed support for Defra's management approaches taken to date with focuses on: sustainability, cautious management, and developing understanding of the stock. For this question, 14 either supported the continuation or expansion of recreational/catch-and-release fisheries or supported exploring the potential for targeted commercial fisheries in 2023 or in the future.

28 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to Question 8.

15 respondents either supported the continuation or expansion of recreational/catch-and-release fisheries or supported exploring the potential for targeted commercial fisheries in 2023 or in the future. A further 4 suggested Defra consider options for Bluefin Tuna and keep management under review as the situation changes.

Other respondents expressed views about greater involvement of commercial fishers in data collection or catch-and-release fisheries; equal access to Bluefin Tuna quota; opportunities for new entrants into the fishing industry; and fishing opportunities for inshore fishers.

Q9. Do you have any initial views on the three areas for potential future review?

Background

We identified 3 areas of quota policy which could be subject to review in the near future. These were: banked quota, underpinning, and anomalous stocks.

Numerous industry groups have in the past raised concerns regarding the rules around the distribution of banked quota. We have previously engaged with industry on this and are open to the idea of further review in this area. Including a question on this was intended to help gauge wider opinion on the need for reform in this area.

The underpinning mechanism, which is used to guarantee set levels of quota to the non-sector pools, has been in place without change for a long period of time. With changes to the fleet and the movements in geographical location of stocks over time, it is important to review the mechanism in order to ensure that continues to meet its intended purpose. In this consultation we wanted to explore industry views of the current underpinning mechanism and explore initial views on the need for reform.

Over a period of years, different apportionment and allocation methods have been used for certain anomalous stocks. It is important that we continue to review how we apportion and allocate these stocks in order to ensure they remain appropriate. The aim from this consultation was to better understand the views of stakeholders on how we should manage these stocks moving forwards.

Analysis

32 out of 36 respondents responded to this question.

<u>Banked Quota</u>

Of the 23 respondents who provided a view on banked quota, 21 indicated support for a review of the banking mechanism. Seven explicitly said they would prefer a return to the 1:1 method, and 2 of the 7 stated the current index approach favours larger POs. One respondent suggested keeping an index-based approach but improving it to reward those with sustainable fishing practises and 3 further respondents suggested the overall concept of banking should be reviewed if it enables fishing above maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Of the 23 respondents with views on banking, 2 stated they were content with the present banking arrangements.

Underpinning

18 respondents shared views on the underpinning mechanism. Of these, 16 responded in support of a review of the mechanism, some outlining the reference period should be explored and updated, and others suggesting the stocks and timings of quota redistribution should be considered. Two respondents suggested the current management should remain.

Anomalous Stocks

15 respondents expressed views on anomalous stocks. These views varied, in part given the range of stocks involved.

Of the 11 respondents who specifically outlined views on skates and rays (areas VI, VII and VIId), 2 favoured changing the current allocation method and instead allocating quota to the licences that formed the basis of the 2006-2008 track record period. They maintain this would improve efficiency in allocation, increase transparency and reduce bureaucracy. One suggested the apportionment method for Skates and Rays should be reviewed. Five explicitly stated they would not like the skates and rays methodology to be changed, some stating that it would be too complex to do so, and others noting the current method provides stability. Three respondents requested consultation on any changes to skates and rays quota management.

Of the 6 respondents who expressed views on Area 7 Cod, there was no dominant view within consultees. For example, one suggested creating FQA units from the proxy units to make the system more transparent for both Area 7 Cod and Haddock. One respondent requested additional access to Cod VIId and skates & rays for under 10 metre pool (u10m). Another suggested distributing cod quota using sustainability criteria, while a further respondent was more concerned about the overfishing of Area 7 Cod rather than its allocation. More generally, one respondent suggested, along with Skates and Rays, that apportionment of all other anomalous stocks should be reviewed to ensure consistency and transparency with that of 'FQA based allocations' and 3 further respondents outlined they would like to see a review or further consultation on anomalous stocks.

2. Quota in England and the Crown Dependencies

Part 2 of the consultation focused on the allocation and management of quota in England and the Crown Dependencies.

Q10. Which distribution option do you prefer?

Background

In 2021 and 2022, we distributed additional quota in England by determining which stocks were important to each of the three fleet segments – the sector, the under 10 metre non-sector pool, and the over 10 metre non-sector pool – as well as their capacity to catch them. AQ was then distributed to the sector's share via FQA unit holdings.

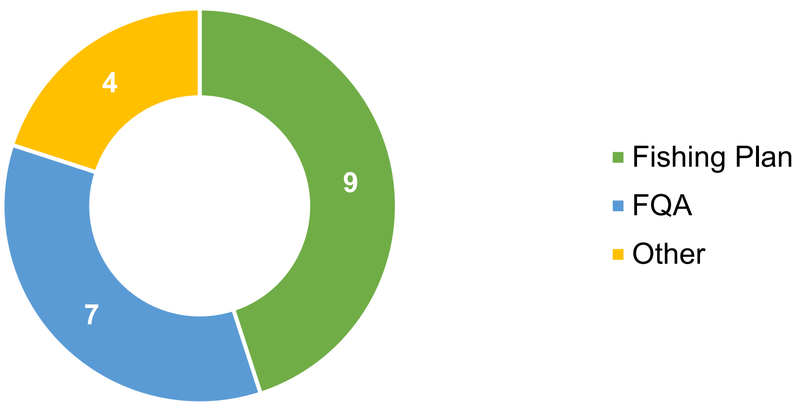
This question only referred to how additional quota was then distributed to the sector. Options for consultees to consider included:

i. Track Record (historic uptake) – taking into account previous landings by vessels registered in each PO.
ii. Fishing Plans – inviting POs to tender for additional quota by submitting a fishing plan, which could be assessed and scored against certain criteria.
iii. Auctions – inviting POs to bid for quota in an auction.
iv. FQA units.

Analysis

27 out of 36 respondents responded to this question, with 20 stating a preferred distribution option.

Figure 7: preferred distribution option



Nine respondents were supportive of fishing plans as a method for allocation, citing that these could drive improvements, good environmental practises, and sustainability benefits.

One respondent suggested fishing plans could be time consuming for POs and government and were concerned about the allocation delays this could cause. Fishing plans were largely supported by independent fishers and NGOs, but some POs also showed support for this method.

No respondents stated they would prefer auctions as a quota allocation mechanism and most respondents raised concerns about distributing quota using auctions. These included concerns around fishing opportunities only going to the highest bidders, the lack of certainty for fishing businesses, the selling of a public resource, and concerns around how government will verify environmental claims of any companies involved in bids. One respondent suggested funds generated should be used for fisheries science and management, but not used as a replacement for government funding. Seven respondents preferred FQA units to remain as the distribution method – these were all responses from POs. Some respondents noted their concern for distribution of AQ by FQA units, suggesting this method would not incentivise improvements in fishing practises and would ignore the needs of those who currently have limited access to FQA units.

Other responses included preferences for zonal attachment (2 respondents), citing levelling up and community benefits, and track record (mostly as a second preference should FQAs not be an option for AQ) as this could provide stability and support existing investment by fishing businesses.

Q11. Do you have any initial views on how we could use our reserve quota and how we can best ensure relevant catches are recorded and accounted for?

Background

Since 2016, reserve quota has been available for stocks in England that are subject to the landing obligation. The aim is to ensure previously discarded fish are landed and counted. We are considering how best we can use reserve quota for 2023 and beyond.

In 2021, some of this quota was allocated to the non-sector pools with the remainder allocated to the sector via FQA units. Further information about how this works can be found in the English Quota Management Rules.

We have been clear that the allocation of this quota is kept under review, and we are considering how best we can use this in 2023 and beyond. In this consultation we outlined possible options and asked respondents for their initial views on how we can best use reserve quota to ensure relevant catches are recorded and accounted for.

We suggested reserve quota could either be allocated to industry to support enhanced monitoring or withheld. If reserve quota was allocated to industry, this could be to support vessels involved in fully documented fisheries (FDF) trials or allocated to POs that committed to enhanced monitoring. Withholding the quota could be used to account for estimated discard rates in different fisheries or it could be used to support a discard prevention charging scheme.

Analysis

26 out of 36 respondents provided an answer to this question.

Responses were varied. Some respondents suggested that reserve quota should not be allocated, largely for environmental reasons. Others suggested reserve quota could be allocated to those who fulfil certain criteria related to environmental impact, compliance, or enhanced monitoring. Some responses, mostly from POs, favoured reserve quota being allocated via FQA units.

3. Government Response

Apportionment of Additional Quota

As with previous consultations, there were a range of responses and no overall consensus.

Having considered all the responses and different options carefully Defra will continue with the general policy of apportioning additional quota using a hybrid approach until 2026. This will be based on a 90:10 ratio between track record and zonal attachment. This provides a balance between historic catch levels and the geographic distribution of stocks. This balance ensures additional quota goes to those parts of the British Islands which have demonstrated the ability to catch it but also provides some opportunities to those who have not previously had the opportunity to fish the stocks in their own waters.

There were also differing views on the track record reference period to use. Having considered the different views, Defra will retain the 2012-2019 reference period. Overall, changes to the reference period would have only minor differences to the outcome for most stocks. However, a longer reference period better manages anomalies between different years. It would not be right to include 2021 in the reference period as the data from that year would include AQ.

A clear majority of respondents wanted this method to remain in place until 2026. Defra considers that this would provide stability for industry and intends to keep this method in place until the end of the TCA period in 2026.

There should be no expectation that this method would continue beyond 2026. That will be the subject of future consultation.

Summary: Defra will continue to use the 2012 to 2019 reference period and 90:10 ratio split and will maintain this until the end of the TCA period in 2026.

Exceptions

While the general apportionment policy will not change, there is a case to introduce some additional exceptions.

Previously exceptions were made for the benefit of Wales. This was to help develop fisheries in Wales and to manage chokes and bycatch. These exceptions will be retained and kept under review, in consultation with Welsh Government. The expectation is that these exceptions will be retained until 2026 when the general apportionment policy is next reviewed. However, if uptake is found to be consistently low then it may indicate that the fisheries are not developing and/or that these exceptions are not needed to manage chokes and bycatch. In that situation, it may be that the quotas could be better utilised by another part of the British Islands.

Defra also intends to make some additional limited exceptions for the benefit of Isle of Man and Northern Ireland.

Defra will make an exception in 2023 to allow Isle of Man fishers to catch some of the herring stock in Manx waters. In practice, Isle of Man receives their quota from the English share of the apportionment so this will take the form of an exception made for England but with the quota then being allocated to the Isle of Man.

This will be reviewed, in consultation with Isle of Man Government, towards the end of 2023. The expectation is that this exception will be retained until 2026 and that nephrops quota would also be made available for an Isle of Man creel fishery from 2024. However, the Fisheries Management Agreement between Isle of Man Government and the other UK administrations is due to end in November 2023 following the Isle of Man decision to withdraw and so these exceptions are subject to adequate governance arrangements being put in place for 2024 and beyond.

Any exception for the benefit of Isle of Man could disproportionately affect Northern Ireland fishers due to their track record fishing in Manx waters. Defra will make further exceptions, in consultation with the Northern Ireland Executive, to ensure that Northern Ireland fishers are not disproportionally affected. The expectation is that these would also be in place until 2026.

As with the exceptions made for the benefit of Wales, if uptake against these additional exceptions for Isle of Man or Northern Ireland is found to be consistently low then it may indicate that the quotas could be better utilised by another part of the British Islands. This will be kept under review.

These exceptions will be phased in between 2023 and 2026.

Summary: Defra will continue to make exceptions for Wales and will now also make limited exceptions for the benefit of Northern Ireland and Isle of Man.

Inward transfers

In 2022, the UK secured inward transfers in a number of stocks as part of annual negotiations with Norway and Faroes.

In consultation, we asked how we should apportion inward transfers of hake and anglerfish from Norway in future years. While there were some differing views, the responses provided a clear majority in favour of continuing the approach taken in 2022. As such, Defra will continue to apportion any future inward transfers in these stocks via the OTH/04-N. and ANF/04-N. stock codes.

This approach will provide stability and aligns with how we have managed other inward transfers and with UK practice in previous years.

Summary: Defra will continue to use the current stock codes for inward transfers of hake and anglerfish from Norway.

Unallocated Stocks

There were a range of opinions outlined on how unallocated stocks should be managed in the future. Given the differences in the stocks that are currently unallocated, it is likely that there will not be a one size fits all solution and different approaches would be required. However, transparency in approach has been mentioned in a number of responses and will be a key element of any future review. Defra will consider the responses to this issue further and engage again before changing the management of unallocated stocks in future years.

One unallocated stock that was highlighted by various respondents was WoS Cod. For 2023, this stock will remain unallocated.

Summary: Defra will review unallocated stocks on a stock-by-stock basis and engage with industry before making changes.

Bluefin Tuna

The UK has taken a cautious approach in management of Bluefin Tuna and has sought to understand more about the stock and its distribution in UK waters through the CHART programme. Respondents were generally supportive of the approach to date and expressed desires to develop recreational and commercial fisheries in future.

Having considered the responses to this consultation, the UK has submitted its annual fishing plan for Bluefin Tuna to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Subject to ICCAT approval, the UK's initial quota of 63t will be used to develop our fishing activities in 2023, in particular: continuing to permit some limited opportunities for sale of bycatch; exploring options to trial a small-scale commercial fishery using highly selective gears; and building on the successes from the last two years of the Scientific Catch, Release and Tagging programme (CHART). We will provide a further update on plans for Bluefin Tuna quota in 2023.

Summary: Defra are cautiously exploring options for the future which could include commercial fishing; recreational fishing; and scientific tagging programmes. Bycatch provision will continue for 2023.

Other areas for potential review

There was generally broad support from respondents for reviewing the management of banked quota, underpinning and the anomalous stocks. Defra will engage further with industry and other stakeholders in due course about more specific proposals.

Summary: Defra will review the management of banked quota, underpinning and anomalous quota stocks. Any proposed reform to the management of these three areas will be subject to future engagement with industry.

Allocation of English additional quota

In 2023, Defra will continue to use FQA units to share the additional quota allocated to the sector between producer organisations. However, this remains a temporary arrangement. The use of FQA units here does not create any long-term association between additional quota and these units.

Fishing plans proved to be the most popular option for respondents. Defra will explore this option as an alternative to FQA units and engage further with industry and other stakeholders in due course.

Summary: in 2023 Defra will continue to use FQA units to allocate share the additional quota allocated to the sector between producer organisations in England. Defra will explore fishing plans as an alternative method.

Reserve quota:

Defra will review the management of reserve quota, taking into account the views expressed in this consultation, in developing reforms to how we manage discards. Any proposed reforms to the management of reserve quota will be subject to further engagement with industry.

Summary: Reserve quota will be reviewed alongside reforms to how we manage discards.

Annex 1 – List of organisations who responded to the consultation

These are presented in alphabetical order. Note that some respondents who wanted to remain anonymous do not appear on this list, however their views have still informed the analysis of this consultation and are incorporated in the figures presented throughout.

- Aberdeen Fish Producers Organisation
- Andrew Marr International Ltd
- Blue Marine Foundation
- Cornish Fish Producers Organisation
- ClientEarth
- Cornwall Council
- Eastern England Fish Producers Organisation
- Isle of Man Government - Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
- Lunar Fish Producers Organisation
- Manx Fish Producers Organisation
- North Atlantic Fish Producers Organisation
- Natural England
- North East of Scotland Fishermen's Organisation
- New Under Ten Fishermen's Association Limited [NUTFA]
- National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations
- North Atlantic Holdings
- Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation
- Orkney Producers Organisation
- Scottish Fishermen's Organisation
- Shetland Fish Producers Organisation
- Shields Creels
- South West Handline Fishermen's Association
- The UK Bluefin Tuna Association Ltd.
- UK Association of Fish Producer Organisations
- University of Southampton
- Wales and West Coast Fish Producers Organisation
- West of Scotland Fish Producers Organisation
- Western Fish Producers Organisation

Annex 2 – Breakdown of responses per question

Question 1: Which option do you prefer for the new apportionment method and how long should this be in place?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
5	3	3	14	2	5	3

Question 2: If we used track record again, what reference period should we use?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
5	3	1	13	2	3	1

Question 3: What additional exceptions, if any, should we consider and why?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
4	3	0	8	2	4	2

Q4. Which option do you prefer for managing these inward transfers of hake and anglerfish from Norway?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
4	2	2	13	0	0	1

Question 5: Why do you prefer this option?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
4	2	2	12	0	0	1

Question 6: Do you have any initial views on how we manage unallocated stocks and any ideas for improvement?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
5	3	3	14	2	5	3

Question 7: What do you think about how we have managed our bluefin tuna quota to date?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
2	2	4	10	0	3	2

Question 8: What other options should we consider for future years?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
4	2	4	11	1	3	3

Question 9: Do you have any initial views on the three areas for potential future review?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
5	1	3	14	2	5	2

Question 10: Which distribution option do you prefer?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
4	2	3	9	2	5	2

Question 11: Do you have any initial views on how we could use our reserve quota and how we can best ensure relevant catches are recorded and accounted for?

Fishing Company	Fisher	Fishing Association/Body	Producer Organisation	CD	Other	Unspecified
5	1	2	8	2	5	3