

Guidance for the administration of the English share of scientific quota

1 Background

- 1.1 An additional 2% quota allowance, known within the UK as 'scientific quota', may be applied for by those wishing to undertake research projects where it may be necessary to take catches of species subject to quota restrictions.
- 1.2 Article 33 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009¹, as assimilated into UK law, states:
 - *Catches taken in the framework of scientific research which are marketed and sold, including, where appropriate, those below the applicable minimum conservation reference size, shall be counted against the quota applicable to the United Kingdom insofar as they exceed 2% of the quotas concerned.*
- 1.3 The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) manages the English share of the scientific quota applicable to the UK, which is apportioned across the UK Fisheries Administrations (UKFAs) in proportion to their share of the overall quota for each stock. This guidance deals with the distribution and administration of that share, in order to provide transparency to potential applicants.

2 Applying for scientific quota

- 2.1 Applications to access the English share of scientific quota may be made as part of a request for a dispensation from fisheries regulations. Scientific quota may be awarded with or without a dispensation, depending on the activity. Applicants that do not require a dispensation may still be asked to complete the dispensation form for administrative and evidence-gathering purposes.
- 2.2 When completing a [dispensation request form](#), please ensure all sections relating to scientific quota are completed, and submit it to the MMO: dispensationrequests@marinemanagement.org.uk.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2009/1224/article/33

- 2.3 MMO will endeavour to respond to all requests for scientific quota within a standard timeframe of 10 working days from the receipt of the required information. Should a dispensation be required alongside scientific quota, this will be subject to the standard timeframes set out at www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-scientific-research-dispensation
- 2.4 Applications will be considered by the MMO according to the principles set out below. Applicants should set out how their planned activity aligns with these principles.
- a) The 2% of additional catches referenced under paragraph 1.1 are considered a ceiling rather than a target, meaning quota should only be applied for that are required to cover the catches made in undertaking the scientific research.
 - b) As Article 33 of Regulation 1224/2009 allows for fishing activity to take place that exceeds the UK total allowable catch, requests for scientific quota must be fully justified. Catches made against this quota must be directly beneficial to the stated aims of a defined project, and the award of quota must be proportionate to the volume of samples required to complete the project. Scientific quota will not be awarded solely as an incentive or compensation for taking part in project activity.
 - c) Any request for a volume of scientific quota deemed to be in excess of an amount proportionate to the purposes of the research taking place will be declined. Your application should set out the specific uses of the landings made against scientific quota in order to demonstrate this proportionality to the purposes of the research. Any request for an award of scientific quota for a species other than the species required for the purposes of the research will be declined.
 - d) There must be sufficient scientific quota remaining for the stocks requested. Any request for an amount of scientific quota that exceeds the amount remaining will be declined. If a request exceeds the English share, but not the total remaining, then MMO will work with the other UKFAs to establish whether the project could be supported by the award of additional scientific quota from those UKFAs. Any award from another UKFA is subject to the approvals process for scientific quota within that UKFA.
 - e) Requests will ordinarily be considered on a 'first-come-first-served' basis, except where the request is for a significant (>50%) portion of the English scientific quota. Where the request for scientific quota exceeds 50% of the available English scientific quota, priority will be given to projects that are considered to best align with the achievement of Fisheries Objectives as set out in the Fisheries Act 2020².

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/22/contents/enacted

3 Reporting scientific quota uptake

- 3.1 Operators in receipt of an award of scientific quota must report their uptake of that quota to enable UKFAs to mitigate the risks of overfishing.
- 3.2 English vessels that have been awarded scientific quota will be issued with an instruction pack setting out how best to report uptake, depending on the circumstances of the vessel and the type of trip being undertaken.
- 3.3 Once the proposed survey activity has taken place, and there are no plans for further activity in that year, applicants should report back to MMO in order to return any unused scientific quota so that it may be redistributed in year.
- 3.4 Failure to meet the reporting requirements set out in sections 3.1–3.3 may result in the withdrawal of any scientific quota currently awarded and may affect eligibility for future awards.