

Press release: December deal delivers for UK fleet and fish stocks

UK Government strikes agreement that supports nation's fishing industry and the long-term health of fish stocks at this year's annual EU quota negotiations

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The UK Government has secured a deal that supports the whole of the UK's fishing industry and the long-term health of fish stocks at this year's [annual EU quota negotiations](#).

During two days of intensive talks in Brussels, which concluded in the early hours of this morning, the UK negotiating team worked to deliver increased quota in certain high-value stocks for our fishermen while ensuring stocks continue to be fished at sustainable levels to ensure the future prosperity of our industry.

This year's December Council discussions were challenging for all Member States given scientific advice on quota, which included a recommendation of zero total allowable catch (TAC) for five key species for UK fishermen. A particular challenge was the introduction of [the Landing Obligation](#) from 1 January 2019 – a requirement to cut the discarding of fish.

The agreed deal ensures there are now workable solutions to alleviate the pressure for fishermen while preventing fish from being wastefully discarded unnecessarily. The agreement also includes a commitment to review scientific data as the new regulation comes into effect.

Speaking as the Council drew to a close, Fisheries Minister George Eustice said:

These negotiations were the culmination of months of government-led work with the Devolved Administrations, industry and environmental NGOs, to secure the best possible deal for the whole of the UK fishing industry.

We entered into discussions knowing that a good deal needed to carefully balance progress towards sustainability targets, while ensuring that we listen to the scientific evidence on the health of

fish stocks and safeguard a profitable future for our hard-working fleet.

We welcome quota increases for important species like megrim and hake, and progress towards achieving sustainable fisheries – in what was a particularly challenging year of negotiations for all Member States.

Total fishing opportunities agreed for 2019 include increased quotas for:

- West of Scotland monkfish (+25%)
- Western hake (+28%)
- Skates and rays in the English Channel (+10%)

Limits remained the same for Celtic Sea sole and pollack – and where the science showed it was necessary, quotas were reduced for certain stocks, including herring in the Celtic Sea.

The UK delegation included representatives from all four corners of the UK, including Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy Fergus Ewing.

Benefits will be felt around the country with increases in quota for hake, haddock and megrim. Increased quota for monkfish will provide a boost for the Scottish fleet, while Northern Ireland have benefited from an increased share in Irish Sea cod. Agreements on sea bass will offer welcome support to the inshore fleet in Wales.

[News story: Marvel legends assemble to inspire next generation of engineering super heroes!](#)

The government's Year of Engineering is assembling Marvel super heroes, including Iron Man and The Hulk, to launch an exciting new partnership with the iconic comic brand. Marvel is the latest big name to join the campaign, which aims to transform perceptions of engineering among children age 7 to 16 and encourage more young people from different backgrounds to consider careers in the profession.

Young people are being encouraged to take the [More Heroes Needed aptitude test](#) to help them find out which super hero qualities they share with these legendary characters. They can then discover how those strengths could help them thrive in the world of engineering.

Launching the partnership, Year of Engineering Minister Nusrat Ghani joined children from the Berger Primary School in Hackney and a team of real-life super heroes – including a female army engineer turned weight-lifter, and an expert in comic book science – at an immersive new Marvel exhibition in east London.

The test aims to demonstrate to children that they have an abundance of talents that would suit a career in engineering, ones that perhaps they hadn't previously appreciated. It demonstrates that engineering isn't solely about academic aptitude but that curiosity, creativity and being honourable and collaborative are all important qualities of a successful engineer. The Year of Engineering is encouraging parents to take the test with their kids over the Christmas holidays, and curriculum-linked resources are available to help teachers bring super hero engineering to life in the classroom in the New Year.

Since the start of 2018, government has worked with more than 1,400 partners to deliver more than a million inspiring experiences of engineering, and research carried out in the first 6 months of the campaign shows that the percentage of 7 to 11 year olds who would consider engineering careers has shot up by 36%.

The new aptitude test is part of a wide range of resources for parents and teachers on the Year of Engineering website, which also features inspiring ideas to help keep kids busy and entertained over the Christmas holidays.

Nusrat Ghani, Minister for the Year of Engineering said:

The characters who inhabit the Marvel universe are famed for achieving amazing things against all odds; something engineers do on a daily basis.

Whether it's tackling the problems of climate change, helping to provide clean water and energy in developing nations or using technology to help us live healthier more independent lives, the engineering profession is full of its very own super heroes.

I'm certain that this partnership will encourage many young people to look again at their own amazing abilities and realise that while they may never possess the strength of the Hulk they could one day move mountains as an engineer.

To take the test with your kids, head to moreheroesneeded.com.

For festive activities to get children making and inventing, visit yearofengineering.gov.uk/theholidaymakers.

Press release: PM urges devolved leaders to 'listen to businesses' and back the Brexit deal

The Prime Minister will tomorrow (Wednesday 19th December) urge leaders from the devolved administrations to listen to businesses all across the UK who have supported the Brexit deal negotiated with the EU.

At the Downing Street meeting, the Prime Minister will update First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford and representatives of the Northern Ireland Civil Service on the next steps for the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

She will reiterate how the deal agreed with the EU works for all parts of the UK and will call on leaders to work together and support the Brexit deal to protect the interests of all four nations of the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister will also update leaders on the preparations being made for every eventuality including a 'no deal' scenario, and the extensive steps undertaken already to support businesses and citizens.

Ahead of the Joint Ministerial Committee (Plenary) (JMC(P)), the Prime Minister said:

I am confident that what we have agreed delivers for the whole of the UK.

This deal honours the result of the referendum – taking back control of our money, laws and borders, protecting jobs and livelihoods, and freeing the UK to strike new trade deals with countries around the world.

That's why it is more important than ever that the devolved administrations get behind this deal and listen to businesses and industry bodies across all four nations who have been clear that it provides the certainty they need.

From the Scottish Fishermen's Federation and Diageo, to Airbus and Manufacturing NI, business and industry right across the UK want to us to deliver this deal as it gives them the clarity and stability they need to protect jobs and living standards.

So my message is clear: now is the time for us to pull together and harness our efforts behind this deal and build a bright future for people all across the United Kingdom.

Press release: PM urges devolved leaders to 'listen to businesses' and back the Brexit deal

Prime Minister Theresa May sets out how the deal negotiated with the EU is best for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.