

Boost for UK fishing industry with funding for new infrastructure projects

Funding to expand processing facilities for popular British fish like Scottish salmon, mackerel and herring are some of the projects which will modernise infrastructure across the UK seafood sector following a £20 million Government investment.

Part of the £100 million UK Seafood Fund, the announcement comes as a further £30 million is being made available today (25 November 2022) for infrastructure projects as the latest round of funding opens for bidding.

The UK Seafood Fund is a landmark government investment supporting the long-term future and sustainability of the UK fishing and seafood industry, with the infrastructure strand of the Fund helping to pay for upgrades to ports, processing and aquaculture facilities so they can meet future demand whilst also boosting jobs and economic growth.

The infrastructure scheme also supports businesses to become more environmentally sustainable, with successful bidders in Round 1 investing in greener technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to more reusable materials.

Successful bidders from the first round of infrastructure funding include:

- Denholm Seafoods who with almost £3 million funding will install new equipment to increase production of mackerel and herring landed at Peterhead.
- In the West Highlands, Mowi Scotland – an aquaculture processing facility for salmon – has been awarded £2 million funding to invest in new, modern equipment that will vastly speed up both the processing and despatch of their products.

Fisheries Minister Mark Spencer said:

Fishing communities are an important part of the UK's heritage and they make a valuable contribution to our economy so we are backing them with funds to boost growth and opportunities across the industry.

This funding will ensure seafood businesses throughout the supply

chain are well-equipped to keep pace with increasing demand at home and abroad, boosting production and sustainability and building a resilient sector for the future.

UK Government Minister for Scotland John Lamont said:

It's fantastic to see Scottish expertise securing a share of this multi-million pound UK Government funding. From substantially increasing the production of mackerel and herring in Peterhead, to speeding up the processing and sale of salmon from the West Highlands, the investment will boost innovation and sustainability.

Scotland's seafood, aquaculture and science sectors are world renowned. I look forward to continuing to work closely with them to ensure that this funding – and future allocations – helps deliver a sustainable and profitable future.

Allan Stephen, Director at Denholm Seafoods, said:

We are delighted with the support we have received from Defra, which from the outset has been highly productive. Securing the Defra grant will enable Denholm Seafoods to invest in our new freezing and production facilities which will maintain our high quality product.

Scott Nolan, Mowi Scotland Operations Director Processing & Sales (UK and Ireland), said:

The upgrade to our salmon processing plant in Fort William, Scotland, is vital to ensuring the UK remains competitive in a very global seafood market. The UK Seafood Fund Infrastructure Scheme comes at an important time, helping to safeguard and grow our domestic food supply as well as securing local jobs in rural communities.

The UK has a thriving seafood sector with exports of salmon – one of the UK's most important exports – worth around £600 million annually and other abundant fish stocks such as Cornish sardines in demand on the continent for their quality.

For the second round of the UK Seafood Fund infrastructure scheme, which is worth £30 million and opens today, businesses will have until March 2025 to deliver their transformational projects meaning a wider range of organisations will be able to apply.

Defra will also shortly announce successful applicants from the Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships (FISP) scheme, part of the UK Seafood Fund,

which funds data collection and research to support sustainable fisheries management. The final FISP round will launch in December 2022.

More information on the UK Seafood Fund can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafood-fund>

The list of successful Round 1 projects will be available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-seafood-fund-infrastructure-scheme-projects>

You can find more information on the FISP scheme here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-seafood-fund-fisheries-industry-science-partnerships-scheme>