

# World news story: UK Environment Ministers visits Uganda ahead of CHOGM

UK Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey this week visited Uganda to discuss the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and see local work to reduce plastic use and fight the international illegal wildlife trade.

The Minister's visit on Thursday 5 and Friday 6 April comes a fortnight before the start of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) to be held in London on 19-20 April 2018.

During the Minister's visit to Uganda she met Dr Mary Kitutu, the Ugandan State Minister for the Environment. The Ministers discussed the upcoming CHOGM as an opportunity for countries to work together to tackle environmental issues such as marine plastics under the CHOGM ambition of 'Delivering a Sustainable Future'.

At the Uganda Breweries Limited brewery in Luzira, owned by Diageo a leading British beverage firm, the Minister saw the brewery's work to reduce their impact on the environment through reducing waste and improving recycling.

The Minister also met Ugandan Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Sam Kutesa and visited the Nile Basin Initiative secretariat in Entebbe.

The Minister spent time at Murchison Falls National Park to understand more about how the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) are working to protect Uganda's diverse wildlife and ecosystems. The Minister met UWA rangers who have benefited from anti-poacher training provided by the UK Military. The Minister visited the park in the same week that the UK Environment Secretary, Michael Gove, announced that the UK would introduce a ban on ivory sales. The Minister highlighted the UK's ambition to deliver a step change in the global fight against the illegal wildlife trade as a transnational crime and threat to endangered species. The UK will host an Illegal Wildlife Trade conference on the 10-11 October 2018.

UK Minister for the Environment, Thérèse Coffey said:

The total ban on ivory sales puts the UK at the forefront of global efforts to address the drastic decline in the elephant population, demonstrating our belief that the abhorrent ivory trade should become a thing of the past.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue and many others with the Ugandan Government and I hope through this continued dialogue we can further continue the successful partnership of our two countries.

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## Notice: Queen scallop seasonal closure

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has introduced a seasonal closure between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018 on fishing for queen scallops in the Irish Sea (ICES are VIIa) and waters West of Scotland (ICES area VIa) for conservation reasons. This closure will be enacted each year until further notice.

The action is designed to protect the stocks from fishing during the spawning period and was supported by respondents to a [UK wide consultation](#) held between 11 October 2016 and 2 January 2017 by Marine Scotland.

If you have any further queries please contact the MMO on 0300 123 1032.

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## Transparency data: Deployment of oyster trestles to the west of Whitstable Harbour

In late 2016 the MMO was contacted by members of the public reporting concerns relating to the deployment of oyster trestles to the west of Whitstable Harbour.

Whilst it was understood that the Whitstable Oyster Fishery Company (WOFC) have deployed Oyster trestles in this location since 2009 the concerns were that the footprint and number of trestles had increased, over a relatively short period of time, in an area also used by swimmers, sailors and navigators.

In February 2017, in response to questions from members of the public the MMO [agreed to work with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Trinity House](#) to assess how oyster racks in the area may affect local navigation and safety.

Following an initial investigation by the MMO into the concerns raised, in July 2017, [independent experts commissioned by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency produced a report](#) looking at navigational risks in relation to oyster farm activity in the Whitstable area.

The report concluded that the farm's operations are acceptable as a low risk to marine navigation. It also recommended mitigation to reduce the risk even further, although acknowledging that the farm's owners have already adopted this in some instances.

### [The MMO provided a further update on its investigation in February 2018](#)

clarifying that after careful consideration it had concluded there was insufficient evidence to prove a criminal offence in relation to its remit under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. This update went on to explain that the MMO considered the oyster farm's activities met the requirements of the exemption relating to shellfish propagation and cultivation under the Marine Licensing (Exempted Activities) Order 2011 as amended (Article 13).

In March 2018, the MMO received further contact from members of the public alleging the deployment of additional oyster trestles which they felt increased the risk to swimmers, sailors and navigators. Additional concerns also related to the propagation of non-native oysters.

The MMO can clarify that if the applicant seeks to expand the current site in future, it is likely that contact will need to be made with the MMO in order to ascertain whether a marine licence, or an additional exemption notification form, is required and the applicant has been advised accordingly. Any application for a marine licence would be consulted upon through the usual process and any notification in relation to an exemption will be placed on the public register.

The MMO is continuing to monitor the development and inspections are on-going.

### **Relevant marine licensing legislation**

The deposit of an object or substance from a vehicle, vessel, aircraft or marine structure and or the construction of works in the UK marine area is a licensable activity under part 4 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MACAA) although the Marine Licensing (exempted activities) Order 2011 (as amended) ("the amended order") provides a number of exemptions removing the requirement to obtain a marine licence for some low risk activities where certain conditions are met.

In particular exemption 13 of the amended order covers the deposit and removal of any shellfish, trestle, cage, pole, rope, marker or line in the course of propagation and cultivation of shellfish when certain conditions are met.

Further information relating to exemptions can be found on the [marine licence exempted activities page](#).

Applicants are required to satisfy themselves that their proposed activities meet the terms of any exemption they intend to reply on. In the event that it is subsequently determined that an activity undertaken was not consistent with the activity described or not in accordance with the conditions contained in the relevant exemption, then enforcement action may be taken.

### **Propagation of non-native shellfish**

The MMO understands that WOFC has obtained approval from [Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science \(Cefas\)](#) for the propagation of

non-native oysters. As the regulator responsible for propagation and cultivation of non-native species of shellfish, any queries and/or concerns about this specific matter should be directed to Cefas in the first instance.

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## **Notice: DY11 7RZ, Roxel (UK Rocket Motors) Limited: environmental permit issued**

The Environment Agency publish surrenders that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the partial surrender notice and decision document for:

- Operator name: Roxel (UK Rocket Motors) Limited
  - Installation name: Kidderminster Rockets
  - Permit number: EPR/BK2437IM/S003
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## **Notice: CB21 6GT, Heptares Therapeutics Limited environmental permit application advertisement**

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for Radioactive Substances Activity. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how to view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)