

# Engagement with small-scale egg and poultry producers on disease must be improved

New research has revealed a gap in knowledge about disease control practices in many of Scotland's small-scale poultry keepers and egg producers.

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## Press release: New proposed measures announced ahead of salmon consultation

The Environment Agency is proposing new measures to protect salmon stocks across England and in the Border Esk, which are currently among the lowest on record.

The 2015 national salmon stock assessment indicated that salmon stocks in many rivers across England had failed to meet their minimum safe levels. The 2016 assessment showed this trend continued and the new measures proposed are based on this assessment.

The proposals come after an initial EA consultation last year to understand how the better management of salmon fishing in England and the Border Esk can reduce the impact on salmon numbers. The responses to that consultation helped inform these proposals and build an understanding of the likely impacts for managing salmon fishing in the future.

The Environment Agency is now proposing the following measures to protect salmon stocks in England Fisheries and on the Border Esk:

1. Stop the taking of salmon from the majority of net fisheries by 2019. Other nations have closed their net fisheries; the evidence shows we should too.
2. For rivers with the lowest salmon stocks, a mandatory requirement to return all salmon caught. This reflects the need for both net and rod fishermen to help us protect Salmon stocks.
3. Voluntary catch and release targets for all other rivers.
4. Restriction on the number, size and type of hooks that can be used when

fishing.

Kevin Austin, Environment Agency's Deputy Director for Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment said:

We are not suggesting these proposals lightly and have consulted widely with those affected. However we need to take action now in order to give as many of the salmon that make it back to our rivers as possible a chance to spawn successfully.

The reasons for decline of salmon are complex and there is no single solution; reducing the catch of salmon can only partly contribute to the recovery of salmon stocks. We continue to work closely with water companies and other to improve water quality and low flows on salmon rivers. We are also investing and working in partnership to improve fish passage on schemes up and down the country.

It is only through continuing to take concerted action, and through the co-operation of others, that we will successfully protect this iconic species for future generations.

Reducing the taking of salmon by rods and nets is only one part of the Environment Agency's larger programme called the 'Salmon Five Point Approach'. The Salmon Five Point Approach has been jointly developed and committed to by a wide range of partners which include Government, Atlantic Salmon Trust, Angling Trust, River Trusts, Association of River Trusts and the Institute of Fisheries Management.

It sets out the actions to address the key pressures that affect the different life stages of salmon. The priorities are:

1. Improve marine survival
2. Further reduce exploitation by nets and rods
3. Remove barriers to migration and enhance habitat
4. Safeguard sufficient flows
5. Maximise spawning success by improving water quality

You can find out more about the [Salmon Five Point Approach](#).

We will formally advertise the proposed byelaws to protect Salmon will be published on GOV.UK in late February 2018, and all those wishing to may respond either online or via letter.

Notes to Editors:

1. The most vulnerable rivers will be the rivers classed as "At Risk" as predicted by 2021. These are: the Tees, Stour, Yealm, Plym, Ribble, Wyre, Lune Crake, Calder and Derwent
2. Voluntary catch and release levels at rivers classed "probably at Risk"

will be required to be greater than 90%

3. Voluntary catch and release levels should be encouraged on rivers classed as 'Probably not at Risk'
  4. Other countries that have closed salmon net fisheries include, Eire, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Faroese fisheries
  5. [2015 national salmon stock assessment](#)
  6. [2016 national salmon stock assessment](#)
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## [Lantra Learner of the Year Award](#)

Nine SRUC students and Modern Apprentices have been nominated for Lantra Scotland's 16th Learner of the Year Awards.

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## [Press release: Call for evidence to help improve air quality launched](#)

Householders and businesses are being asked for their views on proposals to cut harmful emissions caused by the burning of dirtier fuels.

A [call for evidence](#) on the use of house coal, smokeless coal, manufactured solid fuels and wet wood used for heating homes has today been launched to help the government reduce harmful emissions of soot and smoke, as action continues to improve air quality.

The government is considering a range of options to tackle these emissions, these include:

- Encouraging consumers to switch from house coal by only allowing the sale of low sulphur smokeless alternatives
- switching from wet wood to dry wood
- the introduction of sulphur limits for all smokeless solid fuels
- and new powers for local authorities to take action for persistent smoke offences where local amenity is harmed
- The government is not considering banning domestic burning, and is not seeking to prevent the use or installation of wood-burning stoves

The call for evidence will inform our understanding of what impact these measures could have if introduced.

While we are keen to encourage consumers to switch to cleaner wood burning, which will directly benefit them in their homes and improve the local environment, the government is not considering banning domestic burning. Many households have installed wood-burning stoves, and we are not seeking to prevent their use or installation.

While air quality in the UK has improved significantly in recent decades, with reductions in emissions of all of the key pollutants, domestic burning of house coal (the typical black fuel), smokeless solid fuels (smokeless coal, for example, or manufactured solid fuels which are made from coal and other ingredients) and wood are the single largest contributors of harmful particulate matter (PM) emissions, accounting for around 40% of total UK PM2.5 emissions in 2015. In fact, a wood burning stove can emit more PM than a diesel HGV or passenger car.

The tiny particles in smoke can enter the bloodstream and have been found in internal organs risking long term health issues as well as having more immediate impacts in some people such as breathing problems or asthma attacks.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

We all have a role to play in improving the air we breathe. Many of us enjoy a cosy fire in our homes, but burning dirtier fuel has a real impact on the quality of air for our family and friends around us.

We must be mindful that pollution is about more than just transport. Poor air quality affects public health, the economy, and the environment, which is why we are determined to do more. However, if we make the switch to burning cleaner domestic fuel, we can continue to enjoy burning wood and smokeless coal in stoves and fires in our homes.

Many consumers are unaware of the impact on their health or the environment from burning solid fuels, or indeed which are the cleanest fuels to buy. That is why the government is already working with industry to raise consumer awareness of the benefits of cleaner fuels, such as 'Ready to Burn' wood, where a logo clearly identifies wood that is certified as clean and ready to burn.

Consumers can already take action by buying the most efficient stove, using high quality fuel and regularly servicing their appliance.

Last year the government confirmed it would end the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars by 2040 as part of a £3.5 billion plan to tackle nitrogen dioxide emissions. The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations produced by Defra and the Department for Transport, outlined how councils with the worst levels of air pollution at busy road junctions and hotspots must take robust action.

The call for evidence will feed into the government's Clean Air Strategy, which will be published for consultation in 2018. This will further address wider sources of air pollution.