

News story: Undulate Ray by-catch allowance in the English Channel

The by-catch allowance for Undulate Rays caught in ICES Areas VIIId (Eastern English Channel) and VIIe (Western English Channel) will be 70kg live weight, per vessel, per trip from 1 March 2019. This may be subject to change on a monthly basis with a closed period from May 2019 – August 2019.

The 2019 TAC and Quota Regulation has amalgamated the Area VIIId and Area VIIe by-catch allowance for Undulate Rays. In previous years the two areas had separate allowances but this year there is a combined allowance of 58 tonnes for both areas. Any restrictions applied to catches of this species must therefore be the same for both areas. The TAC and Quota Regulation stipulates that this species shall not be targeted and shall be landed whole or gutted. These conditions are the same as in previous years and are in line with the fact that this is a protected species, considered endangered world-wide.

In order to protect juveniles and spawning females the current restrictions on minimum and maximum size and the closed period remain in place:

- Minimum size of 78cm
- Maximum size of 97cm
- Cannot be landed during May, June, July and August

70kg per vessel per trip represents a decrease in the amount that can be landed in VIIe but this is necessary to ensure the UK stays within its 58 tonne limit for both areas. Uptake so far this year is 10 tonnes and is being monitored closely. Further changes to the by-catch allowance may be necessary later in the year.

Catches of Undulate Rays in Areas VIIId and VIIe will be recorded separately from the wider area VII stock, which means the 70kg is additional to and not included in any quota allocation for Skates and Rays in the wider Area VII.

Any question please contact Edward Baker: email

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Speech: Lord Ahmad addresses 40th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Mr President, (High Commissioner), Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is, as ever, an honour to address you today.

In an ideal world, we would not need this Council. In an ideal world, states would meet the human rights obligations they have to their people. States and non-state actors would not abuse the vulnerable, persecute certain communities, or silence those who speak out. In an ideal world, those who did such despicable things would face justice. Sadly, we do not yet live in an ideal world. That is why this Council is so important, and why the UK is and will continue to be one of its most steadfast supporters.

We support the Council's work because, in addition to the obvious moral argument for standing up for the oppressed, we also believe that States that respect human rights create the conditions for societies that are more secure, more prosperous and better equipped to meet the needs of their people.

Yet the challenges the Council faces are many and complex. If it is to rise to those challenges we must work together to strengthen it. Its success depends on all of us. We must ensure that the Council is not only more vocal and more ambitious, but also more proactive. We must not only tackle the most pressing human rights issues of today, but also work to prevent those of tomorrow.

My government is determined to do just that, and this year we are focusing particular attention on three human rights issues: freedom of the media, freedom of religion, and preventing sexual violence in conflict.

Mr President, media freedom plays an essential role in protecting all other human rights and freedoms. A free media helps people form their own opinions, and it holds governments and corporations to account. It is a vital foundation for any healthy democracy. That is why journalists should be free to do their jobs without fearing for their safety. Yet in many parts of the world, the statistics tell another story. Indeed, according to Reporters Without Borders, 2018 was the most dangerous year on record to be a journalist. 80 were murdered, 348 imprisoned and a further 60 taken hostage.

That is why, this year, the UK has launched a campaign to champion media freedom. We want the world to know that journalism is not a crime. On the contrary, media freedom is an essential element of the human right of freedom of expression.

Our campaign will advocate for the benefits of a free media; it will generate international support for the protection of journalists; and it will press for legislation to protect media freedom, not constrain it. The centrepiece of this campaign will be an ambitious international conference in London on 10 and 11 July. We will bring together journalists, civil society and governments from around the world to highlight the urgency of the issue, mobilise a global consensus and share best practice.

On behalf of our co-hosts, the Government of Canada, and ourselves, I would like to take this opportunity to invite all Foreign Ministers from this Council to attend. We look forward to working with you to champion this vital human right.

The UK's second major human rights focus this year is Freedom of Religion or Belief. We have long worked to defend and promote the rights of those of all faiths, and none, and we continue to do so. We are deeply concerned about the persecution of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang, the prosecutions of Baha'i in Yemen, and we echo the concerns expressed by the High Commissioner recently about the criminalisation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. We hope to see Iraq doing more to protect its minority communities and promote community cohesion.

We recognise that Christian communities worldwide have faced particularly aggressive persecution in recent years. That is why we have launched an independent review into this specific issue, to ensure that we are doing as much as we can to respond. Just last week during a visit to Pakistan I heard from Ahmadi Muslims, Hindus and Christians about the discrimination they face on a daily basis. While we remain concerned about restrictions on freedom of religion and belief in Pakistan, I was encouraged by the Government's plans.

Our third major human rights focus this year will be preventing sexual violence in conflict. This is an issue on which the UK has shown global leadership and in which we have seen significant progress, but there is still more to do. In November this year, five years on from our Global Summit in 2014, we will be hosting a major follow-up event to galvanise the international community into further action. I hope you will join us.

Mr President, in addition to these three key focus areas, the United Kingdom remains deeply concerned about the serious human rights situation in a number of countries.

In Syria, human rights are still being systematically violated on a daily basis. Thousands of peaceful activists are still in regime detention, exposed to appalling abuse torture, sexual violence and execution. And when I was in Iraq last year I heard first-hand from Syrian women that they had suffered harrowing sexual violence. This Council must do all it can to ensure that those responsible for these crimes are held accountable.

In Burma too, there must be genuine accountability for the crimes committed against the Rohingya and other ethnic groups by members of the Burmese military, crimes highlighted by the Fact Finding Mission.

It is to this Council's great credit that it recognised the gravity of the issue and established a mechanism to collect and preserve evidence for future prosecutions. I am proud of the role the UK played in securing that mandate. It is now essential that the mechanism gets the tools and access it needs to carry out its vital work and that the Burmese government cooperates with it fully.

In North Korea, despite some welcome signs on the political track, there has been no improvement in the human rights situation. North Korea is still top of both the Global Slavery Index and the Open Doors World Watch List of countries where Christians face the most severe persecution. People are not free to practice religion. Their freedom of expression is severely restricted and they cannot access the world's media. I once again call on the North

Korean authorities to work with the Council and other human rights actors to end widespread human rights violations.

In South Sudan, the human rights situation remains dire, and is exacerbated by persistent conflict and a worsening humanitarian situation. The UK welcomes the peace agreement, but we will continue to press, at the highest levels, for all parties to implement fully the commitments they have made to protect the rights and freedoms of the people of South Sudan.

Elsewhere, we remain concerned about instability and insecurity in Libya that is exacerbating the poor human rights situation. In Iran human rights defenders are still being harassed and arbitrarily detained, and detainees are denied the right to fair trials.

In Iraq, their next National Action Plan must properly address the impact of Daesh on women and children. And in Cameroon the cycle of violence in Anglophone regions must end.

Finally, to end on a more positive note, we welcome the decision of the Government of Sri Lanka to return more land to its people, and to establish an Office for Reparations and we encourage them to implement in full the commitments made to this Council to secure long-term reconciliation.

Mr President, to conclude: The UK remains committed to strengthening human rights, both at home and abroad. We remain committed to justice, accountability, and the rules based international system. And we remain committed to this Council. That is why we are seeking re-election next year, for the 2021-2023 term. And it is why we will continue to speak up for the oppressed and the persecuted.... to champion freedom of the media, freedom of religion or belief and an end to sexual violence....

And it is why we will continue to stand up for human rights, for freedom and for justice – for everyone, everywhere.

Thank you Mr President.

[News story: CIPFA to remain as Charities SORP secretariat](#)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, CIPFA, will continue to provide secretariat support for the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), working in partnership with the SORP-making body.

The organisation will also provide support for the drafting of the statement's future updates for at least another three years.

The Charities SORP is the set of rules which governs charity accounting for charitable companies and larger charities (charities with an income over £250,000).

Representatives from the three charity regulators in the UK make up the SORP-making body that develops this charity accounting framework.

CIPFA has been providing this service since 2014 with an initial three year contract extended for a further year whilst the contract was retendered.

Following an open tender process in 2018, the SORP-making body agreed to award the contract to CIPFA for an initial term of three years from December 2018 with an option to extend for up to two more years.

CIPFA were also awarded a related subcontract to provide a printing, publication, and distribution service for the SORP as part of an integrated service.

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator's (OSCR), Laura Anderson, on behalf of the joint-chairs of the SORP committee, said:

We are delighted to continue our partnership with CIPFA and very much look forward to the work we will carry out in developing the SORP to ensure it serves the charity sector well.

This is a very positive continuation of our work with CIPFA and something that we are all very excited about – we are looking forward to the challenges ahead.

Don Peebles, Head of Policy & Technical, CIPFA, said:

This renewed partnership provides an opportunity for CIPFA to use its expertise in providing advice and guidance on accounting best practice in the charity sector.

We look forward to continuing to support the development of the next version of the SORP, as well as other changes on the horizon for the newly extended SORP-making body.

For media enquiries contact the CIPFA press office on telephone number: 020 7543 5830 or email: Letreis.lawrence@cipfa.org.

Notes to editors

- The SORP-making body is comprised of representatives from Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. The Charities Regulator in the Republic of Ireland has an option to become part of the SORP-making body in the future.

- CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, is the professional body for people in public finance. CIPFA shows the way in public finance globally, standing up for sound public financial management and good governance around the world as the leading commentator on managing and accounting for public money.
- The Secretariat provides the technical drafting services to the SORP-making body, including handling consultations, servicing the advisory charities SORP-committee and developing consultation responses on behalf of the SORP-making body.
- The Charities SORP Committee is a sector-based expert committee that advises the joint SORP-making body in its development of the SORP. The Committee includes charity finance directors, charity auditors as well as members reflecting broader charity sector and academic interests.
- A governance review of the constitution and composition of the Charities SORP committee and the SORP making process was initiated in 2018.
- For more information about the SORP, the SORP-making body and advisory SORP Committee refer to the dedicated website www.charitySORP.org.
- The invitation to tender can be viewed in [full online](#). The tender process was opened on 11 July 2018 and CIPFA were informed of their success on 8 October 2018.

[News story: Charity Commission and partners launch fraud resilience survey](#)

Fraud is a growing problem for charities, costing hundreds of millions, potentially billions, of pounds each year. Roughly 70% of all fraud is now committed online, meaning a charity's valuable funds, operations, data and reputation can be at risk from a wide range of fraud and cyber-crime. It's never been more important to understand fraud risk and to boost your charity's cyber security.

Today, in partnership with the Fraud Advisory Panel, we have launched a survey, aimed at helping us get a better understanding both of charities' resilience to fraud and their levels of cyber security. We are emailing

15,000 charities directly, inviting them to complete a questionnaire.

If you are one of the charities contacted, please do try to complete the survey as honestly as possible. We estimate it should only take around 15 minutes to do. If you are not contacted by us, there's no need to take any action now.

All answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed or shared with persons or organisations outside of the Commission.

Alan Bryce, Head of Development and Operational Intelligence at the Charity Commission said:

This is a really important project that should significantly improve our understanding of what's happening across the charity sector and shape our regulatory engagement, helping to build a stronger counter-fraud culture for the future. I urge those charities contacted to get actively involved and complete the questionnaire – your answers really will make a difference.

The survey will run for four weeks, and the Commission intends to publish the findings of the research later this year.

[News story: Better, faster, more personalised asthma treatment](#)

Although 5.4 million people in the UK are affected by asthma, diagnosing the condition is difficult. Current testing often leads to misdiagnosis and diagnosing pre-school children is particularly challenging.

In a series of 3-year projects in Manchester, Edinburgh and Portsmouth, collaborations between academics and innovative businesses will lead to vastly improved treatment options.

Improving asthma services

With each project set to receive more than £200,000, it is expected that patients will see an improvement in services thanks to new diagnostic testing that better predicts response to treatment.

The projects will also provide doctors with improved decision support systems, reducing workload for GPs and leading to more personalised treatment.

The 3 collaborative projects are:

University of Manchester and Owlstone Medical

This partnership will develop new tests for diagnosis. It will look at the small airways in the lungs to assess treatment response. The aim is to reduce the number of people that are wrongly diagnosed and are taking unnecessary medication.

University of Edinburgh and Tactuum

This project will design a new clinical decision support system to help medical professionals diagnose asthma. Assessments of the patient will improve with the intention that it will lead to more personalised treatment plans.

Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth & Cambridge and Respiratory Innovations

In order to speed up the journey to diagnosis – and reduce costs in doing so – this project will test a new device that measures gases in exhaled breath to quickly diagnose asthma.

Partnership to improve health and wellbeing

The funding will tackle a serious health challenge and aims to improve the lives of the millions of people in the UK with asthma.

The partnership between [Asthma UK](#) – the leading UK asthma research charity – and Innovate UK will see academic researchers and innovative businesses partner together to meet the goals of the charity. It also supports the UK's economy and development in the medical field.

Dr Kath Mackay, Interim Director Ageing Society, Health & Nutrition at Innovate UK said:

Many of us either are or know asthma sufferers, so are only too aware of the pressing need for better diagnosis and improved, personalised treatments.

By choosing to work in partnership with leading charities such as Asthma UK, we can connect businesses to the resources that the charities may have. This can be access to patients, new ideas and the ability to generate real world evidence.

Dr Erika Kennington, Head of Research at Asthma UK, added:

Diagnosing asthma can be extremely difficult and this is mainly because there is a lack of definitive diagnostic tools.

We look forward to seeing the outcomes of these research projects and hope that improved and faster diagnosis could mean people with asthma can then get faster access to treatments and care.