

Strategy for Seafood: Island Communities Impact Assessment

October 2022

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1. Step One – develop a clear understanding of your objectives:

1.1 What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?

The [Blue Economy Vision](#), which we published on 31 March 2022, recognises that Scotland's seas and waters have an integral role to play in contributing to the nation's future prosperity, especially in remote coastal, rural and island communities, and that a healthy marine environment is critical to supporting this ambition.

The seafood industry is a central element of this vision, which sets an ambition for Scotland to be a global leader in providing healthy, high-quality and sustainably produced and harvested seafood for consumption at home and abroad.

Our [Strategy for Seafood](#) affirms the importance of the seafood sector and sets out how we are supporting industry to contribute to achieving our Blue Economy aspirations.

The Blue Economy Vision identified six outcomes across social, environmental and economic dimensions to deliver our aspirations for the sustainable management and shared stewardship of Scotland's seas and coasts to 2045. The seafood sector makes an important contribution right across these outcomes – environmental, social and economic – and one specifically relates to the sustainable production of seafood.

We therefore adapted the Strategy for Seafood (the Strategy) vision and outcomes from those in the Blue Economy Vision to highlight and further define this contribution. This also demonstrates how the sector can contribute to the National Outcomes set out in in our [National Performance Framework](#), and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Strategy for Seafood Vision

Scottish seafood is renowned both at home and internationally for its quality and sustainability and is enabled by an innovative and productive sector

Strategy for Seafood Strategic Outcomes

Scotland is recognised for a seafood sector that is:

1. entrepreneurial, domestically and internationally competitive, with a secure supply chain.
2. providing healthy, quality, sustainably harvested and farmed seafood and ensuring a balanced natural capital asset approach.
3. adapting to, and mitigating the impacts of, climate change, lowering greenhouse gas emissions in seafood production and supporting our Net Zero commitments.
4. contributing to thriving, resilient and healthy coastal and island communities.

The Strategy for Seafood fulfils our [2021 Programme for Government \(PfG\)](#) commitment to "...publish a strategy for seafood in 2022 with actions to revitalise the sector consistent with a sustainable and natural capital approach, to ensure remote and rural communities benefit from activity to support growth."

1.2 Do you need to consult?

In the preparation of the Strategy, we engaged with a number of key stakeholders including Salmon Scotland, Scottish Seafood Association, Scottish Fisherman's Federation, Seafood Scotland and others across the sector to validate the issues we had identified. We then sense-checked with colleagues across Scottish Government to identify issues within the seafood supply chain, ongoing work to address these and links to wider policy agendas.

The strategy sets out how we are supporting industry to contribute to achieving our Blue Economy aspirations by drawing together and bringing cohesion to the wide range of ongoing and planned Scottish Government activities intended to provide support in this area, and for which the relevant impact assessments have been completed as required. The Strategy also makes some high level recommendations that are intended as prompts for future exploration.

It is our intention that these recommendations would be reviewed with the sector in advance of any potential implementation. Consideration would be given to the most appropriate form of consultation required at that stage.

1.3 How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?

The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 defines an island community as a community which consists of two or more individuals, all of whom permanently inhabit an island (whether or not the same island), and is based on common interest, identity or geography (including in relation to any uninhabited islands whose natural

environment and terrestrial, marine and associated ecosystems contribute to the natural or cultural heritage or economy of an inhabited island).

1.4 What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?

The Strategic Outcomes for the Strategy are set out under paragraph 1.1.

Although the Strategy lays out recommendations for further exploration, these are at a very high level. While we would expect all of these to have a positive impact on island communities – Outcome 4 makes reference to “thriving, resilient and healthy coastal and island communities” – it is not possible to identify specific impacts at this stage, far less any differential impact for island communities.

1.5 Is the policy, strategy or service new?

The Strategy’s vision and outcomes are based on those for the Blue Economy Vision, setting out the contribution of the seafood sector. The strategy sets out how we are supporting industry to contribute to achieving our Blue Economy aspirations by drawing together the wide range of ongoing and planned Scottish Government activities intended to provide support in this area. While the strategy does contain some high level recommendations, these are intended as prompts for future exploration.

2. Step Two – gather your data and identify your stakeholders:

2.1 What data is available about the current situation in the islands?

Islands are key locations for seafood production

The commercial fishing sector landed £596 million worth of product in Scotland and elsewhere in 2019, a quarter of which was landed by vessels registered in the Shetland Islands, Orkneys Islands, or Na h-Eileanan Siar. Vessels registered in other rural local authorities like Aberdeenshire, Highland, Argyll and Bute, Moray, and Dumfries and Galloway accounted for nearly two-thirds of total landings. Similarly, 46% of all farmed Atlantic salmon (the UK’s largest food export in 2021 according to [HMRC’s trade statistics](#)) was produced in Na h-Eileanan Siar, Shetland, and Orkney (by value), with the remaining production in the North West and South West of Scotland. ([Scotland Marine Economic Statistics 2019](#))

Businesses on islands and in rural industry sectors, including fishing, are less commonly classed as ‘high growth’ businesses

In 2021, 1.1% of all registered businesses in Scotland were classed as ‘high growth’. This proportion was lowest in Na h-Eileanan Siar (0.8%), followed closely by the Shetland Islands (0.9%) and Orkney Islands (1.0%). Additionally, the combined ‘agriculture, forestry, and fishing’ sector – a key source of employment in rural communities, including islands – had the lowest proportion of high-growth businesses (0.3%) of any sector (note that many smaller enterprises won’t be represented since they don’t have to register for VAT and there may be a lag in VAT

returns). ([National Performance Framework's High Growth indicator](#), Scottish Government).

2.2 Do you need to consult?

We engaged with sector stakeholders in the preparation of the strategy (see paragraph 1.2). The strategy recommendations would need to be reviewed and refined before it would be possible to determine their specific impacts – this would therefore be the appropriate stage to carry out further engagement on how to ensure the strategy could best meet the needs of different island communities and further Island Communities Impact Assessments (ICIAs) would be considered at that point.

2.3 How does any existing data differ between islands?

See paragraph 2.1.

2.4 Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?

The strategy recommendations would need to be reviewed and refined before it would be possible to determine their specific impacts, and the features or mitigations required to best meet the needs of island communities.

3. Step Three - consultation:

The engagement we carried out is set out at 1.2. We have also drawn from a range of evidence to inform our understanding of the importance of the seafood sector to islands communities and how this varies – see paragraph 2.1.

It is our intention that the recommendations would be reviewed with the sector in advance of any potential implementation. Consideration would be given to the most appropriate form of engagement required at that stage.

4. Step Four – assessment:

4.1 Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?

See paragraph 1.4. It is not possible to identify specific impacts at this stage, far less any differential impact for island communities.

4.2 Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?

N/A – see 4.1

4.3 How will you address these?

N/A – see 4.1

You must now determine whether in your opinion your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).

It is not possible to make a full assessment for the reasons provided at 4.1. It is our intention that the strategy recommendations would be reviewed with the sector in advance of any potential implementation. We would ensure that island communities are considered in this and further Island Communities Impact Assessments carried out as required and based on feedback from stakeholders.

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Date completed: 22/9/22

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Date approved: 5/10/22



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This publication is available at www.gov.scot

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80525-039-5 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1162862 (10/22)

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