

# **The Allocation of Scottish Additional Quota From 2024**

## **Island Communities Impact Assessment**

**June 2024**

## Island Communities Impact Assessment

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| Name Of Policy | <b>The Allocation Of Scottish Additional Quota From 2024</b> |
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### Step One – Develop A Clear Understanding Of Your Objectives

#### Objectives of the policy

The Scottish Government Marine Directorate has consulted on how Additional Quota (AQ) is to be allocated from 2024. AQ is the share of fish quota that has increased following the UK leaving the EU and becoming an independent coastal state. The Scottish share is managed by the Scottish Government Marine Directorate which allocates it to the Scottish fishing industry. The resultant methodology is to be in line with Statutory Obligations (in particular Section 25 of the Fisheries Act 2020) and relevant regulatory and Scottish Government objectives.

#### Impacts/ outcomes of the policy and how do these potentially differ across the islands

#### Summary of Outcome

Following consideration of responses to the consultation, objectives for the use of quota as set out in the [Fisheries Act 2020](#) and other relevant information, the Scottish Government will allocate Additional Quota in the following way:

- Through the Historic Track Record (HTR) of active fishing vessels, based on an annually updated reference period, beginning in 2025.
- Through special allocations to non-sector vessels with an immediate uplift in the quota retained for the following stocks: North Sea saithe, North East Atlantic mackerel, North Sea cod and West of Scotland cod.
- From 2025, West of Scotland cod will be allocated to sectoral vessels following an application process.
- Retaining the option to allocate quota on an equal basis between eligible vessels resulting from swaps of fishing quotas with other coastal states.

While not intending to introduce in the short term, the Scottish Government will additionally:

- Investigate the potential development of Community Quota Initiatives, with this allocation methodology potentially being adopted in future years.
- Explore whether non-compliance with fishing regulations could be used as a basis for withholding access to AQ as part of the body of work to review the penalties system.

These policies affect the allocation of AQ, which in the islands' case is principally landed at Shetland. Landings to the other island port districts (Orkney, Portree and Stornoway) and mainland port districts that contain islands (Mallaig, Oban and Campbeltown) are predominantly focused on nephrops and shellfish (though there

are some landings of demersal and pelagic fish) and there is no AQ for nephrops or shellfish species.

However, the Scottish Government has committed to explore the potential for AQ to be allocated to community groups (such as Island communities). This proposal was strongly supported by island stakeholders but will need to be developed, due to implementation constraints, and therefore are not explored in this Impact Assessment.

## Step Two – Gather Your Data And Identify Your Stakeholders

### Data available about the current situation in the islands

Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics are published annually by the Scottish Government and detail the species landed by port district. Fishing vessel registrations by administrative and home port are published by the UK government.

Table 1 shows the numbers of sector and non-sector vessels currently administered by designated island Marine Directorate fishery offices. The total number of vessels is **1944**, of which **673** are administered by island ports and **558** of these are non-sector vessels.

Table 1: Numbers of sector and non-sector vessels currently administered by designated island Marine Directorate fishery offices

| Island Port of Administration * | Non Sector | Sector | Total |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|
| Kirkwall (Orkney)               | 116        | 13     | 129   |
| Lerwick (Shetland)              | 198        | 45     | 243   |
| Stornoway                       | 166        | 44     | 210   |
| Portree                         | 78         | 13     | 91    |
| Total                           | 558        | 115    | 673   |

Source: Marine Directorate Sea Fisheries data.

Note: The island ports of administration were selected as Kirkwall, Lerwick, Portree and Stornoway although this does not necessarily mean that all administered vessels fish and land into these ports and it is acknowledged that there may be additional vessels administered by mainland district ports which would fish and land into island ports. For example Oban and Campbeltown districts also administer fishing vessels landing into island ports including Mull, Tiree, Coll, Islay and Colonsay. The converse is also true and some island administered vessels may fish and land on the mainland. In addition there are fishing vessels which operate nomadically and will on occasion land into island ports depending on where they are fishing at any given time.

In 2022, the total tonnage and value of all landings into key island districts are shown below:

- Shetland 54,775 tonnes with a value of £82,258,000
- Stornoway 2,923 tonnes with a value of £12,554,000
- Orkney 2,034 tonnes with a value of £7,659,000
- Portree 1167 tonnes with a value of £8,113,000

The tonnage and value of landings of shellfish, demersal and pelagic species into Orkney, Shetland and Stornoway districts are shown in Table 2 for 2022

Table 2: The tonnage and value of landings of shellfish, demersal and pelagic species into Orkney, Shetland Stornoway and Portree districts are shown in the table below for 2022.

| District  | Shellfish landings (tonnes) | Shellfish landing value (£1000s) | Demersal landings (tonnes) | Demersal landing value (£1000s) | Pelagic landings (tonnes) | Pelagic landing value (£1000s) |
|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Orkney    | 2001                        | 6511                             | 15                         | 1147                            | 18                        | 1                              |
| Shetland  | 2486                        | 5722                             | 17090                      | 39707                           | 35199                     | 36830                          |
| Stornoway | 2837                        | 11905                            | 85                         | 647                             | 1                         | 2                              |
| Portree   | 1154                        | 6884                             | 13                         | 1229                            | 0                         | 0                              |

Source: Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics 2022 supplementary table 32

With the exception of Shetland, most vessels operating from or landing catches to island ports are targeting shellfish species which either have no total allowable catch limit, or in the case of *Nephrops norvegicus* has a total allowable catch that is typically only occasionally fully utilised and for which there is no Additional Quota (except in ICES area VII where few island-based vessels operate).

4,117 fishers were working on Scottish vessels in 2022, representing 0.2% of the total Scottish labour force. Although employment in the fishing fleet is a small percentage of total employment in Scotland, employment in fishing accounts for a higher percentage of employment in island communities (Shetland: 5%, Orkney: 2%; Na h-Eileanan Siar: 2% and in Argyll and Bute 1%).

Table 3 shows the number of fishers employed on Scottish registered fishing vessels by designated island districts for 2022. The island districts account for approximately 30% of the total fishing workforce with Shetland accounting for over 14%.

Table 3: Number of Fishers employed on Scottish registered vessels by Island District 2022

| District  | Regularly Employed | Irregularly Employed | Total Employed | As % of total fishing workforce |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Orkney    | 155                | 83                   | 238            | 5.8%                            |
| Shetland  | 397                | 188                  | 585            | 14.2%                           |
| Stornoway | 214                | 87                   | 301            | 7.3%                            |
| Portree   | 89                 | 41                   | 130            | 3.2%                            |
| Total     | 855                | 399                  | 1254           | 30.5%                           |

Source: Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics 2022 supplementary table 45

Current employment rates are shown in Table 4 and show that in all cases the islands have overall better employment rates than Scotland as a whole.

Table 4: Current employment/unemployment rates per island

| District | Employment rate | Unemployment rate | Claimant count | Economic Inactivity |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Orkney   | 89.8%           | 1.9%              | 1.5%           | 10.2%               |
| Shetland | 89.1%           | 2%                | 1.5%           | 10.9%               |
| Highland | 76.7%           | 2.5%              | 2.2%           | 21.2%               |
| Scotland | 75.2%           | 3.4%              | 2.8%           | 22.1%               |

Source: Office for National Statistics Highland's employment, unemployment and economic inactivity - ONS

Average crew share earnings and number of vessels for selected fleet segments and districts is shown in Table 5. It can be seen in the case of the island districts that Shetland has virtually all the 10m & under line vessels although the average crew share is smallest and also all of the over 10m pelagic vessels where crew share is highest. In contrast Stornoway has higher numbers of 10m & under creel vessels. Shetland also has no over 10m nephrops trawlers whereas Stornoway district has the greatest number (17 vessels).

Table 5: Average crew share earnings and number of vessels for selected fleet segments and districts.

| Fleet Segment                | Average Crew Share | Orkney | Shetland | Stornoway | Portree | Scotland Total |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------|----------|-----------|---------|----------------|
| 10 metre & under creel       | £22,400            | 56     | 48       | 111       | 56      | 816            |
| 10 metre & under line        | £12,400            | 1      | 95       | 0         | 0       | 155            |
| Over 10 metre Nephrops trawl | £58,700            | 4      | 0        | 17        | 6       | 181            |
| Over 10m Demersal trawl      | £267,400           | 2      | 17       | 0         | 0       | 60             |
| Over 10m Demersal seine      | £306,400           | 0      | 5        | 0         | 0       | 13             |
| Over 10m Pelagic             | £1,903,575         | 0      | 8        | 0         | 0       | 21             |

Source: Data from 2022 Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics and 2021 Seafish Fleet Interrogation Tool. Pelagic figures are from 2019 estimates published by STECF.

Previous AQ allocations to sectoral groups containing vessels with island administrative ports are shown in Table 6. Shetland FPO has received 11.8% of the sectoral demersal AQ allocation and 27.6% of the pelagic AQ allocation for all 33 vessels which have island administrative ports. Individual recipients of fishing quotas, i.e. exclusive of vessels in the non-sector, can trade their allocations, which makes it harder to draw a direct line between distributed quota and benefit to any island.

Table 6: 2022 AQ allocations to sectoral groups containing vessels with island administrative ports. Values in parenthesis are values as a % of the total sectoral allocation.

| <b>Group</b>                      | <b>Number of vessels</b> | <b>Number of vessels with island administrative ports</b> | <b>Island Administrative Ports</b> | <b>Demersal Allocation (tonnes)</b> | <b>Pelagic Allocation (tonnes)</b> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Orkney FPO                        | 23                       | 14  | Kirkwall, Stornoway                | 213.2 (3.4%)                        | 2.1 (<1%)                          |
| Scottish Fishermen's Organisation | 132                      | 13  | Kirkwall, Stornoway                | 2990.3 (47.6%)                      | 12217.2 (33.2%)                    |
| Shetland FPO                      | 33                       | 33  | Lerwick                            | 740.5 (11.8%)                       | 10166.3 (27.6%)                    |
| Fife FPO                          | 18                       | 2   | Kirkwall                           | 26.4 (<1%)                          | 30.9 (<1%)                         |
| West of Scotland FPO              | 40                       | 14  | Portree, Stornoway                 | 17.1 (<1%)                          | 0 (0%)                             |
| Interfish                         | 2                        | 1   | Lerwick                            | 0.2 (<1%)                           | 3848.2 (10.5%)                     |
| Northern Irish FPO                | 12                       | 3   | Lerwick, Portree, Stornoway        | 119.2 (1.9%)                        | 0 (0%)                             |

Note: Vessels with administrative ports do not necessarily operate out of or land into these ports, and likewise vessels with mainland administrative ports may use island ports.

The allocation and uptake of Special Allocations to the non-sector in 2022 are shown in Table 7. North Sea Cod uptake was very high at 130% indicating that AQ was insufficient to meet demand. Both saithe and mackerel also had good uptake.

Table 7: Allocation and uptake of Special Allocations to the non-sector in 2022. NS = North Sea; WS = West of Scotland.

| <b>Stock</b>                 | <b>EQ Special Allocation (tonnes)</b> | <b>AQ Special Allocation (tonnes)</b> | <b>Landings (tonnes)</b> | <b>Uptake</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| NS cod                       | 67.7                                  | 52.3                                  | 155.4                    | 130%          |
| NS saithe                    | 11.2                                  | 48.8                                  | 39.6                     | 66%           |
| NS anglerfish                | 0.7                                   | 29.3                                  | 10.9                     | 36.3%         |
| NS lemon sole/witch          | 0.4                                   | 14.6                                  | 3.2                      | 21%           |
| NS skate/rays                | 1.6                                   | 8.4                                   | 6.3                      | 63%           |
| WS anglerfish                | 1.6                                   | 13.4                                  | 0                        | 0%            |
| WS skate/rays                | 5.3                                   | 19.7                                  | 0.2                      | 0.8%          |
| NS ling                      | 0.7                                   | 14.3                                  | 2.2                      | 15%           |
| North East Atlantic Mackerel | 1116                                  | 250                                   | 1366                     | 83%           |

The proposed increase in Special Allocations represents an additional opportunity to the non-sector with a value of approximately £570000, or 1.7% of the turnover of this fleet segment (Table 8).

Table 8: Estimated increase for 3 stocks identified for increased Special Allocations.

| <b>Stock</b>         | <b>Estimated Minimum Allocation (tonnes)</b> | <b>Estimated Uplift vs 2022 Allocation (tonnes)</b> | <b>Estimated Landed Value</b> | <b>Increase</b> |
|----------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| NS cod               | 200  | 80  | £747,684                      | £299,073        |
| NS saithe            | 80   | 20  | £117,056                      | £29,264         |
| NE Atlantic mackerel | 450  | 200   | £542,009                      | £240,893        |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>730</b>                                   | <b>300</b>  | <b>£1,406,749</b>             | <b>£569,230</b> |

Source: Values estimated from 2022 Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics.

Note: these are only estimates based on if the proposed system was used in 2022. Quota varies between years, as does realised landed value, so this will not be an accurate reflection of value in future years.

Sectoral vessels have the option of leasing quota to meet catching goals. Prices for leased quota vary between stock and species and are not typically published due to the associated commercial sensitivity. An overview of the typical prices from previous years is presented in Cross (2021)<sup>1</sup>.

### **Key Stakeholders**

Key stakeholders were identified as all Scottish commercial fishing vessels, UK Fish Producer Organisations, Scottish recognised Quota Management Groups and vessels without a sectoral affiliation, fishing associations (including island based fishing associations), environmental groups and regional inshore fisheries groups (RIFG).

## **Step Three - Consultation**

### **Previous engagements**

There has been previous engagement with: Fish Producers' Organisations and Quota Management Groups, Regional Inshore Fishery Groups, Island Fishermen's Associations, Scottish Creel Fishermen's Federation, eNGOs.

### **Additional Quota Consultation**

A consultation was hosted on the Scottish Government consultations website, informing stakeholders in advance. The consultation opened on 19 October 2023 and closed on 11 January 2024.

<sup>1</sup> [Challenging quota market efficiencies: A case-study of Scotland \(United Kingdom\) - ScienceDirect](#)

Stakeholders were asked to consider the potential impact of the options presented in the consultation, with reference to their answers contributing to our impact assessments.

To raise awareness of the content of the consultation a number of engagement sessions were held virtually between sectoral groups, fishing representative bodies, non-sector fishing interests and environmental NGOs. 91 responses were received including island-connected businesses, community groups and local authority groups.

## **Step Four - Assessment**

### **Assessment of unique impacts on island communities**

The issues arising from the AQ consultation responses and the proposed mechanisms for allocating AQ from 2024 with regard to island communities are assessed below.

#### **Allocating using Historic Track Record, with a periodically updated reference period**

The location of the fish stocks for which Scotland has AQ, and industry structure around the coast presents an intrinsic barrier to significant benefits being immediately felt across all islands from AQ. Non-sector vessels make up the vast majority of the Scottish fleet but allocating more quota to the non-sector will only work if boats have the capacity to catch the fish and utilisation increases. The exception is the case of Shetland which already benefits from AQ, both in terms of its sectoral fleet and inshore non-sector fleet.

A periodically updated HTR or “rolling” reference period recognises previous investments made by the current fleet and corresponds with proven vessel activity. It reduces costs to the active fleet by providing AQ and will help meet planned activity for these vessels.

This rolling reference period may also enable new entrants to slowly access this fishing opportunity through leasing of quota, as their uptake and access increases.

#### **Reserving some AQ to be used as Special Allocations to the non-sector group of vessels.**

Special allocations of AQ to the non-sector may provide additional social and economic benefits by enabling fishermen to diversify to target demersal and pelagic fish which may increase profitability and take advantage of seasonal availability of certain stocks in inshore waters. This would allow for a wider distribution of the AQ and increase the potential to build resilience into coastal communities thus securing jobs and retaining working age people in island communities.

The majority of 10 metre and under vessels utilise lines when targeting finfish stocks, particularly cod/saithe/mackerel, though there is a small number of vessels which operate trawls (in the period 2021-22, less than 10% of all landings of species, for which Additional Quota was awarded to the non-sector groups, were made by



vessels carrying bottom-impact, mobile gears). The use of lines is often associated with higher selectivity, reduced bycatch of fish species and a lower impact on the marine environment than other forms of fishing, though it may present a greater risk of entanglement of seabirds.

Many of these vessels primarily target non-quota shellfish species (such as crab and lobster) and allocating greater quantities of whitefish and mackerel species covered by quota will also allow for diversification and potentially also reduce fishing pressure from these non-quota species.

### **Applications to access West of Scotland Cod on environmental, social and economic criteria**

Following revised assessment by ICES resulting in the setting of a directed fishery TAC for West of Scotland Cod for the first time since 2012, approximately 200 tonnes will be available for allocation as AQ, with a landed value in the region of £750,000. From Table 5 the island community with the fleet composition that is best placed to take advantage of this allocation is Shetland, though there is non-sector interest in fishing whitefish in Na h-Eileanan Siar.

An outcome of the consultation is that from 2025 West of Scotland cod AQ is to be allocated to Scottish registered vessels (sectoral or non-sector) following an application process. In this process vessels will have to align with environmental, social and economic criteria. This allocation may afford new opportunities to island based fishing businesses if successful in making an application.

### **Retaining the option of allocating in-year quota transfers on an equal basis.**

This is expected to be used when negotiation leads to gains of quota. This will be cost-neutral and there should be no difference in outcome for sectoral vessels targeting mackerel whether they are based on the mainland or Shetland. There may be an impact in cases where allocations made on this basis lead to vessels receiving quota they do not intend to fish that could lead to downstream impacts in other island-connected fishing businesses. As an example, a pelagic vessel targeting mackerel that also receives an allocation of herring. This vessel may not pursue the allocation, leaving it unfished when other businesses may have been willing to target it, leading to economic gains from trading of quota instead of active fishing.

### **Discussion of specific Demographic, Economic, Social and Gaelic impacts**

**Demographic:** The average age of someone working in the fishing industry in the UK is 40. Relative to the rest of the UK, the Scottish fishing fleet has a younger demographic breakdown. AQ may contribute to increasing catch rates, landings and profitability which in turn would encourage additional workers into the fishing industry workforce at crew, processing and transport stages. AQ distributed to island-connected vessels and businesses may therefore secure and encourage employment opportunities on the islands. This may also incentivise the retention of working age people in the islands and is likely to be a benefit to many island communities. Shetland, due to the location of fish for which there is AQ, the concentration of relevant vessels and the processing and transport capacity, is likely

to benefit, and be able to realise that benefit to the greatest extent. Fishing needs fit and healthy working age people, a key demographic in decline in Shetland. AQ may contribute to factors drawing people below 45 to remain or move to Shetland to work.

**Economic:** Following from the demographic advantages above, the associated economic benefits from creating employment at sea and onshore employment generate additional value for the local economy.

The majority of mainly smaller 10m and under vessels will typically land locally to Scottish island ports and generate revenue for island ports, fish buyers, hauliers and transportation networks. This fleet segment is also engaged in direct sales on a local scale, for example to the hospitality sector.

AQ will provide additional fishing opportunities to the vessels which are allocated extra quota and therefore this will have a direct economic benefit to those recipients. Since AQ will be accessed by vessels that target finfish rather than shellfish, there is expected to be a benefit to islands economies, but this benefit will principally be realised in Shetland, given the fleet composition and level of allocation to the Shetland FPO.

Access to special allocations of AQ to non-sector vessels may allow for a diversification away from the traditional heavy reliance on shellfish including *Nephrops* in the islands and provide an opportunity to increase pelagic fishing in regions which may reduce food-miles and increase food security in rural communities. This may also have impact on the hospitality sector by providing an additional source of locally caught produce.

AQ transported from islands to the mainland would incur transportation costs and may impact market prices elsewhere, however, it may also be of economic benefit to island fishing communities and enable them to catch their own bait locally for use by vessels targeting shellfish thereby reducing the additional costs of sourcing bait from the mainland. In addition island based vessels typically land locally to Scottish island ports and therefore generate downstream revenue for fish buyers, hauliers and transportation networks connected to the islands and benefit the island economy.

**Social:** Both the previous demographic and economic factors will have consequences for social impacts and we anticipate that allocation of AQ as a whole will make a positive contribution to social factors, for example providing special allocations to the non-sector may lead to more fishing opportunities, strengthened earnings security and associated downstream benefits. Every job created directly involved in fishing supports between 2.5 and 5.6 jobs, sector dependent, in the value chain<sup>2</sup>.

**Gaelic:** There is unlikely to be an appreciable impact on the use of Gaelic as a consequence of the publication of the policy.

### **Potential barriers or wider impacts**

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<sup>2</sup> [The economic impacts of the UK sea fishing and fish processing sectors: An input-output analysis — Seafish](#)

The fish stocks for which Scotland has AQ are not uniformly distributed around the Scottish coast and consequently the concentration of vessels and shore-based infrastructure is focused in a few locations. This means that there is a barrier to realising the full benefit of AQ if a fishing vessel is based outside of these locations. For example, allocating more quota to the non-sector fleet on an island that primarily targets shellfish will only work if boats are modified to fish for it and utilisation increases. The exception, as noted above, is the case of Shetland where the non-sector inshore fleet already targets several AQ species.

Historic Track Record provides quota to people who can catch and process it already and there is a risk that it may not be fished if given to people without a track record. However, as set out in consultation responses, fishers without a track record (such as non-sector vessels) need confidence that they will have access to the fishing opportunity to invest in new equipment. Therefore, the move to a rolling reference period for HTR and the increase in Special Allocations reduces this barrier compared to the status quo.

Vessels could be adapted for alternative fishing methods such as traps, netting, jigging and lining provided sufficient monthly quotas are available, but this may require new infrastructure and markets to be developed. Long-term confidence in AQ availability was seen by many consultation respondents as being necessary.

### **Mitigations already in place for these impacts**

There are existing economic opportunities for fishing species outside of those covered by AQ. Excluding Shetland, island-connected vessels mainly target shellfish & mollusc species that either have no total allowable catch limit or in the case of *Nephrops*, a total allowable catch that is generally underutilised by the existing fleet (2013-22 average utilisation: 94%, excluding 2020).

Allocations of fish quota have been made available to non-sector vessels based on the west coast, including those on islands, to access additional demersal or pelagic opportunities. We will significantly increase the special allocation for the species with good utilisation to incentivise further uptake.

### **Is a full Island Communities Impact Assessment required?**

The evidence shows that the policy will likely have outcomes (such as levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation) for an island community which is significantly different from other island communities. The concentration of island-connected vessels, which can target and land demersal and pelagic species into well-serviced ports in Shetland means there are different circumstances in different islands with Shetland fishers better realising the benefit from AQ compared to fishers connected to other islands.

The effect of this policy may therefore amount to an advantage for one island community and a status quo or disadvantage for another island community. As determined in the assessment, the concentration of vessels and infrastructure in Shetland and Northeast mainland Scotland means these areas stand to receive similar benefits from the outcome, while Orkney, na h-Eileanan Siar and other islands are anticipated to be less able to benefit.

A full Island Communities Impact Assessment IS required

## **Step Five – Preparing Your ICIA**

### **Assessment of likely significantly different effects of the policy**

There is no evidence of significant disadvantages for island communities compared to mainland communities based on AQ distributed on HTR principles or special allocations for the non-sector. There is, however, an existing weighting towards Shetland in advantages gained from AQ that is not the same in Orkney or na h-Eileanan Siar (or other areas such as the Firth of Clyde) that reflects the makeup of the fleet and the species targeted, and the results of previous efforts to promote diversification in fishing.

Shetland fishers in sectoral groups will expect to benefit from AQ more than fishers connected to other islands. This is principally due to the varied geographic location of fish stocks and the industry structure since the majority of the AQ is made up of North Sea stocks and therefore will be a less viable option for most of the west coast fleet (particularly smaller vessels), where transit and logistics become limiting factors in accessing these stocks. It should also be noted, however, that this does not mean there is no desire to target demersal and pelagic fish on other islands even though previous efforts to incentivise diversification to take advantage of additional fishing opportunities in the west coast have not translated into significant uptake.

The Joint Fisheries Statement of the UK Fishing Authorities sets the over-arching direction of fisheries management that must be complied with. Historical Track Record provides quota to people who have a record of catching the species already and there is a risk that it may not be fished if given to people without a track record, however, if it is not allocated to people without track record then there is no incentive for diversification.

### **Alternative delivery mechanisms**

AQ allocated as a direct result of this consultation will be similar to the previous period 2021-2023, where, in the main, quota was allocated based on the Historic Track Record of vessels. However, some additional Special Allocations will be made to the non-sector and vessels will have to apply for West of Scotland cod Additional Quota.

A periodically updated HTR or “rolling” reference period will recognise previous investments made by the current fleet and corresponds with proven vessel activity. It will reduce costs to the active fleet by providing AQ and will help meet planned activity for these vessels and may also enable new entrants to slowly access this fishing opportunity as their uptake and access increases.

The proportion of quota allocated via the different mechanisms may vary from year-to-year. Some methodologies for the distribution of AQ arising from this consultation and subsequent work may not commence until after 2024. Gains from transfers of quota to the UK from other Coastal States which arise from negotiations may be allocated differently to the AQ gained because of the change in the UK share of quotas arising from the TCA. We anticipate that our approach to the allocation of any

AQ will change in future years, this is due to a number of factors such as the development and implementation of our Future Catching Policy. Related to the allocation of sea fish quotas is the operation of sectoral and non-sector groups in Scotland. The Scottish Government will be reviewing these groups as part of the Future Fisheries Management Strategy.

## **Step Six – Making Adjustments**

### **Possible alternative delivery mechanisms/mitigations for different island communities**

AQ could be given to specific communities for them to distribute and manage and Community Quota Schemes may provide a model that could be developed further around managing quota for island communities. There are, or have recently been, CQS initiatives in operation on Shetland, Orkney and na h-Eileanan Siar, though as stakeholders pointed out, these would favour receiving quota free from the Scottish Government as an alternative to accessing quota through dummy licenses. This would require further consultation and time and resources to set up any management group other than currently recognised (Producer Organisations, Scottish Quota Management Groups and the Scottish non-sector) and therefore would not offer any immediate solution for 2024, though views were sought on the concept in the Calls for Evidence section of the AQ consultation. As noted, we intend to explore this matter further.

Vessels could be adapted for alternative netting, jigging and lining methods provided sufficient monthly quotas are available, however for infrastructure and markets to be developed long term confidence in AQ availability would be required.

Any major changes on policies regarding specific AQ allocation mechanisms or mitigation would likely require further consultation.

### **Measuring outcomes**

The policy is currently being developed from the consultation responses and specific islands considerations will be assessed at all stages.

No additional data gathering is planned beyond existing routine statistical reporting, though this will be kept under review.

## **Step Seven – Publishing Your ICIA**

Does your ICIA need to be presented in Gaelic or any other language?

No

Where will you publish your ICIA and will relevant stakeholders be able to easily access it?

ICIA will be published online as part of the supporting documents accompanying the consultation outcome report.

Confirm appropriate level of sign off?  
Ministerial

ICIA completed by Malcolm Baptie  
Policy Manager, Marine Directorate  
05/04/2024

ICIA authorised by Malcolm Pentland  
Deputy Director, Marine Economy and Communities  
11/04/2024



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