

**SEAFOOD FROM  
SCOTLAND**

**Sustainable  
Scottish  
Seafood**





# SUSTAINABLE SCOTTISH SEAFOOD

In Scotland's clean waters you will find some of the world's finest seafood. It provides a valuable, high-quality resource that has been harvested by Scottish fishermen for generations.

Our fishermen consider themselves to be custodians of the sea. They are passionate about sustaining the rich marine environment from which they make their living. Scottish fishermen have been very active in gaining independent authentication of the environmental and sustainable credentials available to the industry. They have been quick to engage in internationally recognised programmes to add value and recognition to their seafood offering.

This commitment to sustainability practices has served to enhance Scotland's reputation as a leader in responsible fishing methods committed to supplying sustainable products. Working closely with Government, scientists and environmental NGOs, our industry has taken a proactive approach to sustainability from engaging in pioneering fishing and sustainable certification programmes, to becoming one of the acknowledged leaders in European sustainable fisheries management.



**98%** of Scotland's coastal water has a **high quality status**



Within the UK, **77%** of all landings are from MSC certified fisheries, equating to over **540,000 tonnes** of sustainably sourced fish and seafood <sup>1</sup>

In 2018...



...there were **2,089** active Scottish registered **FISHING VESSELS**

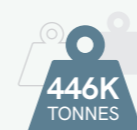


**4,860** FISHermen

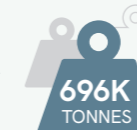


**2,178** FARMERS IN AQUACULTURE

...THE SCOTTISH FLEET LANDED



**446K TONNES** 8% of the EU total



**696K TONNES** across the UK

...a consumer insight study<sup>2</sup> by Globescan found...



...**83%** of UK seafood consumers agree that we need to protect seafood supplies for future generations.



**603** aquaculture sites

**+£700m**

was spent (wholesale value) on MSC labelled product in the supply chain, a **30% increase on last year.**



...**81%** of UK seafood consumers agree that in order to save the ocean, we have to consume seafood only from sustainable sources.



Recognising the need to act, a growing community of restaurants, hotels, retailers, traders, brands, universities and caterers are making demonstrable commitments to improving the sustainability of seafood supply chains.

<sup>1</sup> MSC data against FAO, accurate as of 3rd October 2018

<sup>2</sup> In 2018, the MSC partnered with GlobeScan to conduct a global research study into consumer perceptions on seafood, sustainability and the MSC's role in the industry. 1,315 UK consumers (1,020 UK seafood consumers) took part in the UK.



# DIFFERENT ACCREDITATIONS

## Environmental and Sustainable Certifications

Scottish fishermen have committed themselves to lead in industry environmental and sustainable standards by gaining accreditations and going above and beyond the minimum requirement.

This has helped to enhance Scotland’s reputation as a leader in responsible fishing methods and demonstrates a commitment to supplying sustainable products.

All Scottish fisheries are controlled, regulated and managed in order to deliver a sustainable and traceable supply of seafood from net to plate.

Recently, many species found in the North East Atlantic have shown a significant increase in abundance. For example, the European hake and North Sea plaice stocks are both at historic highs. Another example is that aggregate whitefish spawning stock biomass has increased dramatically over the last two decades and is now also at a record high. Over the same period, the average level of fishing mortality of whitefish stocks has fallen to record low levels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The NAFC Marine Centre have collated and summarised published data by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) to provide an overview of the 2020 trends in Scottish Fish Stocks and their levels of exploitation.



### Marine Stewardship Council

The Marine Stewardship Council is an international non-profit organisation. It recognises and rewards efforts to protect oceans and safeguards seafood supplies for the future.



### Friend of the Sea

Friend of the Sea has become the leading certification standard for products and services which respect and protect the marine environment.



### RSPCA Assured

RSPCA Assured is RSPCA’s ethical food label dedicated to farm animal welfare. The RSPCA Assured label on eggs, fish, meat and milk confirm farms, and every stage of the animals’ lives, have been assessed to RSPCA animal welfare standards.



### Label Rouge

Granted by the French Ministry of Agriculture, Label Rouge is a prestigious quality mark given to foods of superior quality, particularly with regard to taste. In 1992, Scottish salmon was the first fish and first non-French product to be awarded the Label Rouge quality mark.



### The Soil Association - Organic Standard

The Soil Association, its standards and activities, and the practice of organic farmers are all based on a set of internationally recognised principles. Soil Association Certification Limited is the UK’s largest and oldest organic certification body.



### The Organic Food Federation

The Organic Food Federation is at the forefront of promoting organic methods, maintaining high standards and best practice within the sector.



### Protected Geographical Indications

The Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) identify an agricultural product, raw or processed, for which quality, reputation or other characteristics are linked to its geographical origin.



## MEASURES TAKEN BY SCOTLAND

### Scottish Focused Conservation Measures

**The Conservation Credits Scheme:** This pioneering approach was developed by the Scottish Government and industry. In return for participating in additional conservation measures during their fishing activity, vessels are allowed additional days at sea over and above their basic entitlement. Elements of this scheme are now used throughout Europe.

The additional conservation measures include avoiding areas where high concentrations of cod occur, using larger mesh sizes to allow juvenile fish to escape, and using specially designed gear that reduces the capture of cod, whilst still fishing effectively for other species.

**Area Closures:** The use of area closures has also contributed to reductions in fishing mortality for cod and other demersal species. Several types of fishing closures are operated by Marine Scotland and observed by Scottish industry.

**Species Specific Measures:** Numerous regulations, particularly for shellfish, have been implemented to provide further conservation measures that enhance the sustainability of these fisheries.

These include a ban on landing egg-bearing female and newly moulted (soft) brown crabs, restrictions on landing crab claws, and local v-notching of egg-bearing female lobsters. Fishermen catching these are required to return them to the sea to help maintain healthy reproductive stocks. Specific limitations on mobile scallop gear exist in inshore waters, limiting the size and capacity of fishing pressures on inshore scallop grounds.





# MODERN MANAGEMENT & REGULATION

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is Europe's regulatory regime governing fisheries in EU waters.

It controls how much fish each Member State is allowed to catch and the conditions under which it must be caught.

This includes the type of net used, how long a vessel can fish for, and the size of fish that can be landed.

Marine Scotland, within the Scottish Government, is responsible for the management of the Scottish fishing industry and for ensuring that the fleet adheres to CFP rules and regulations.

All Scottish fishing vessels are licensed based on their size, where they fish and what they catch. This helps maintain the size and catching capabilities of the fleet.



**6. Local & Regional Conservation:** To maintain the environment, local conservation measures limit or prevent types of fishing activity. Scotland has a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) which conserve and protect species, habitats and marine features of the seas.

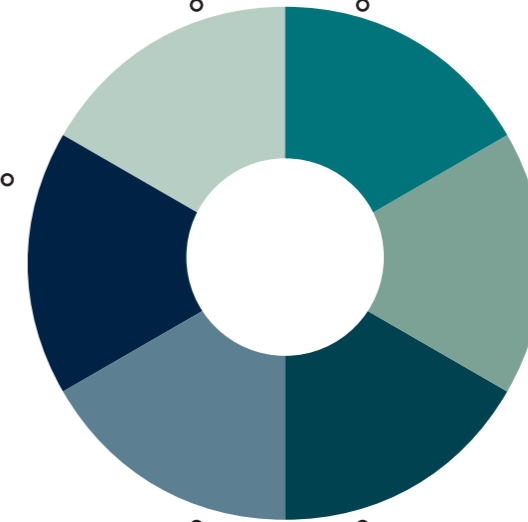
**1. Licensing:** All Scottish fishing vessels are licensed based on their size, where they fish, and what they catch. This helps maintain the size and catching capacity of the fleet.

**2. Catch Limits:** Nearly all Scottish catches are limited by a Total Allowable Catch (TAC or Quota). Based on scientific advice, TACs are apportioned by the EU and neighbouring states and decided annually by the European Council.

**5. Gear Restrictions:** Many regulatory measures restrict the type, design, construction or amount of fishing gear that Scottish fishermen can use. This helps to control fishing pressure and assists in targeting species more selectively.

**4. Minimum Landing Sizes:** Almost all Scottish commercial stocks have minimum sizes for landing and selling.

**3. Effort Limitation or 'Days at Sea':** An additional way to control fishing pressure is to set the amount of time vessels are allowed to spend at sea. This is managed by Marine Scotland.





# INDEPENDENT SCHEMES IN SCOTLAND

## Fishing for Litter

Launched in Scotland in 2005, Fishing for Litter encourages vessels to safely land any litter they 'fish'. So far, more than 1,400 tonnes of marine litter from Scotland's seas has been disposed of safely in the 19 participating ports.

The scheme provides an environmental response to the issue of marine litter in the seas, with more than 230 boats participating in the Scottish scheme.

## The Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme

This independently-audited UK-wide certification scheme recognises best practice operation by vessels and crew.

The scheme was originally piloted with Scottish boats, and there is now wide participation across all sectors, with approximately 90 vessels registered in the scheme in Scotland.

## Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group

Established in 2006, the SPSG represents all sectors of Scotland's pelagic industry, including catching, processing and marketing.

SPSG was established to oversee the certification of its main fisheries to the Marine Stewardship Council eco-label standard and is currently driving forward a number of other sustainability initiatives. SPSG is also involved in a range of scientific initiatives to enhance our understanding of pelagic stocks and to ensure informed decisions are made with regard to their management.

The over-riding aim of SPSG is to ensure that the Scottish pelagic industry is truly sustainable.





## VERIFICATION & COMPLIANCE

**Scottish seafood is fully accountable and traceable. All vessels greater than 12 metres now operate with compulsory vessel monitoring systems and electronic logbooks.**

Vessels record what, where and when catches were made, and this data links onwards to where and when it was landed and sold, and who purchased the catch. The information supports management of a sustainable system and provides traceability from point of capture into the supply chain.

Further verification and control of fishing activity is undertaken by Marine Scotland, using surveillance programmes from land, sea and air.





**Worldwide, buyers and consumers are increasingly seeking assurances that seafood conforms to higher standards of quality, safety, traceability and sustainability. Scotland's strength in regulations, voluntary schemes and accreditations guarantee a high standard achieved right across the industry that you can be proud of choosing.**

Consumers' increasing awareness of sustainability and seafood quality pushes our industry to continually strive to improve. Scottish seafood remains at the forefront of this push as both advocates and practitioners of sustainable practices, not only through accreditation but in the overall mindset of our fisheries and individuals within the industry.

Seafood from Scotland is working with all our member organisations to ensure Scottish seafood and its sustainability remains the best in the world.







### HADDOCK

Scotland's favourite whitefish, caught in the North Sea and off the west coast of Scotland.

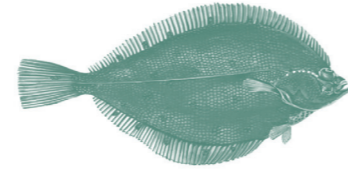
A sweet flavoured fish with medium to large flakes, versatile for many cooking methods. Whole haddock are available up to 3.5kg, but most commonly as 2 whole side fillets up to 400g.



### HAKE

An excellent fish, very popular in Europe, fished in the North Sea and west of Scotland. Hake has a soft flesh which firms up when cooked.

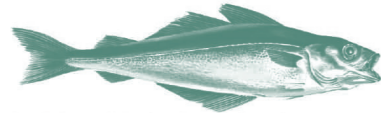
Ranging from 1kg to 5kg, hake has a long, round slender body great for cutting into steaks or loins.



### PLAICE

A versatile meaty flatfish with a sweet, mild flavour, this species is fished from the North Sea.

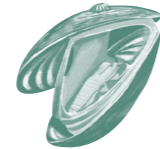
Ranging from 230g to 2kg and most commonly available between 500g to 750g, these whole fish are easy to identify by their distinctive orange spots. Best cooked whole for a great flavour.



### SAITHE (COLEY)

A good alternative to cod and haddock. It is a fine flavoured species abundant in all waters around Scotland.

Similar to cod, the species ranges from 500g to 6kg as whole fish.



### MUSSEL

Rope grown on the west coast of Scotland and around the Scottish Isles, mussels are a highly sustainable species and are quick and easy to cook.

Scottish mussels have a meaty flesh and medium sweet seafood flavour.





## HERRING

High in Omega 3, this sustainable oil-rich fish is great grilled or baked whole, and of course when smoked makes fantastic Scottish kippers.

A smooth, slender body, with silvery skin with hints of green and blue, they range in size from 100g to 450g.



## BROWN CRAB

Traditionally fished by pot and creel, particularly around the west coast and the Scottish Isles.

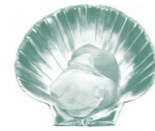
Brown crab can be bought live, cooked, dressed or as ready-made products such as crab cakes or terrines. The rich white meat found in the claws is very sweet and the brown meat is particularly rich in Omega 3 and other beneficial vitamins and minerals. Male crabs range from 1kg to 2kg with an estimated yield of 35%.



## WHITING

A smaller fish from the cod family with a silver-grey body and round belly, this species is often sold around 2kg.

Similar to many of the whitefish species, it takes very little cooking. Mainly caught in the northern North Sea.



## SCALLOP

Caught around Scotland's coast, using mobile gear or by hand diving. Scallop meat has a sweet delicate flavour and needs minimal cooking.

Scottish King scallops have approximately 15cm wide shells, with 18-35 pieces of meat per kg (out of shell). Queen scallops have approximately 7cm wide shells and 40 to 120 pieces of meat per kg.



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