



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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Dear Colleague,

Today, in a major step forward in our preparations to leave the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), we are introducing the Fisheries Bill to the House of Commons.

Whatever one's views about the EU, most will agree that the CFP damaged the UK's fishing industry, and our precious fishing stocks. The Bill sets us on the path to righting that wrong for future generations by building a sustainable fishing industry, with healthy seas and a fair deal for UK fishermen.

This vision received strong support in our consultation on our White Paper, Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations, the response to which is also published today.

The Bill proposes powers to allow the UK to determine which vessels may fish in our waters and to set fishing opportunities (quotas and days at sea/effort) for UK fishing boats.

Negotiations on our exit from the EU are ongoing, but we have been clear that market access for fisheries products is separate to the question of fishing opportunities and access to waters. The Bill will give us the powers to implement the result of those negotiations.

The Bill confirms this government's strong commitment to sustainable fishing and to the marine environment. It would require the UK government and the Devolved Administrations to set out in a joint statement how they will work together to achieve the Bill's sustainability objectives. It also extends powers to protect the marine environment.

The management of fisheries is devolved and will remain so. Leaving the EU will mean that that the Devolved Administrations will see a significant increase in their decision-making powers in fisheries. The new legislation also proposes ways in which the UK government and the Devolved Administrations will work together to adopt common approaches to fisheries management in certain areas - including preserving UK vessels' right to fish across the four zones of UK waters and creating a consistent approach to managing any access for foreign vessels provided for in international agreements.

The CFP, which is made of around 100 EU regulations, will be retained in UK law under the EU (Withdrawal) Act to provide immediate stability for the fishing industry. Learning the lessons from the cumbersome CFP, we now propose powers to allow government to amend the highly technical legislation to respond to scientific advice and innovation quickly. On top of this, the Bill creates new schemes to help the English fishing fleet seize the opportunities of Brexit. These include extending grant making powers, establishing a

new scheme to help the fishing industry comply with the landing obligation (also known as the discard ban) and creating powers to tender additional English quota.

It is crucial that we press ahead to prepare for our future outside the EU and make the most of the opportunities it brings. The Fisheries Bill delivers this, and I hope I can count on your support during its passage through Parliament.

The Bill can be found at www.parliament.uk/ and hardcopies will be available in the Vote Office.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'G'.

Michael Gove