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Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Call for evidence: Dogger Bank king scallop stock closure in ICES rectangles 39F1, 39F2, 39F3, 38F1, 38F2, 38F3, 37F1 and 37F2

July 2020



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Bronze



## Summary

The four UK Fisheries Administrations (FAs) are seeking views and evidence on the impact of the potential implementation of a temporary closure of the king scallop (*Pectens maximus*) fishery in the Dogger Bank area including in the Special Area of Conservation<sup>1</sup> (SAC).

Industry members have implemented voluntary measures within the area to help ensure the sustainability of the stock and have asked UK FAs to implement management measures as soon as possible.

The aim of the closure is to enable the FAs to make an informed review of the current king scallop fishery. Without more detailed analysis of the stock, we do not know if scallops in the area are locally recruiting individuals, whether there is significant larval import/export from the area or what sustainable fishing levels in the fishery are.

This call for evidence will run from 1 July 2020 to 8 July 2020 and is on behalf of the four UK FAs.

## Background

An industry group has approached the UK FAs to highlight a substantial increase in scallop dredge activity within the Dogger Bank SAC. The same industry group are taking forwards voluntary measures to restrict scallop dredge activity in the area as of midnight on the 30 June 2020.

The FAs data has confirmed the increase in scallop dredge activity in the Dogger Bank SAC.

As of 29 June 2020, 948t of king scallops have been landed from four ICES rectangles inside the Dogger Bank SAC (39F1, 38F1, 37F1 and 37F2) this year, see table 1, compared to an average of 1t per year for the years 2015-2019, see table 2.

In June 2020, Dogger Bank king scallops accounted for 59% of all scallops landed by UK vessels.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0030352>

**Table 1: UK vessel landings of king scallops using dredges from Dogger Bank: 2020**

Month	Tonnes				
	England		Scotland		Total
	u15 m	o15 m	u15 m	o15 m	
January	10	0	0	0	10
February	6	0	0	0	6
March	33	0	0	0	33
April	55	0	0	0	55
May	29	0	0	23	52
June	7	74	0	711	792
<b>Total to date</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>948</b>

Source: UK Fisheries Administrations (logbooks and landing declarations)

**Table 2: UK vessel landings of king scallops with all gears from Dogger Bank: 2015-2019**

Year	Tonnes
2015	0.34
2016	0.16
2017	1.25
2018	0.75
2019	2.43

Source: UK Fisheries Administrations (logbooks and landing declarations)

This dramatic increase in activity will have an impact on the king scallop stock, with CEFAS noting an apparent recent decrease in landings per unit effort in one of the ICES rectangles being fished. The voluntary industry closure is being implemented for only two ICES rectangles. As noted above, there has been scallop dredging in four ICES rectangles in the Dogger Bank area, moreover, data from a logbook by-catch analysis by CEFAS suggested that there is potential that the stock extends further eastwards into the Dogger Bank SAC from the rectangles currently being exploited. As we do not yet know the full spatial extent of the scallop stock, and in order to prevent relocation of effort into other areas of the same stock we propose to close all ICES rectangles included in the Dogger Bank SAC (39F1, 39F2, 39F3, 38F1, 38F2, 38F3, 37F1 and 37F2), see annex 1). As there has been no dredging in the more easterly ICES rectangles the impact of their inclusion in the closure on current fleet activity would be low while at the same time reducing the risk of further disturbance to other parts of this poorly understood stock.

At this stage the four UK FAs are considering what action to take to allow a scientific review of the king scallop stock within Dogger Bank. This temporary closure will be for at least three weeks to permit basic questions about the nature of the stock to be answered (e.g. is the stock spawning, what is its age structure). The closure will be reviewed after three weeks based on the scientific evidence obtained up to that point. Further work will be required beyond the three week closure to understand more complex aspects of the stock (e.g. is the stock self-sustaining, how is this stock connected with other UK scallop stocks, what is a sustainable amount of fishing pressure for this stock).

## Evidence requested

Given the evidence above, the FAs seek views on a minimum three-week closure via a licence condition to allow time for data to be collected and a summary of findings to be prepared by CEFAS for analysis. After the initial closure period the FAs intend to review the position and take necessary steps for the protection of the scallop stock based on the evidence available.

The FAs are interested in receiving evidence about the following:

- 1) Your views on closing the suggested ICES rectangles identified above.
- 2) Your views on alternatives to a temporary closure to allow data collection.
- 3) Your experience or evidence of fishing for king scallops in the Dogger Bank SAC and the adjoining Southern North Sea SAC.
- 4) Your experience or evidence of any problems encountered of fishing in the Dogger Bank SAC and the adjoining Southern North Sea SAC.
- 5) Your evidence of the problems that the proposed closure would cause you or your business.
- 6) Your views on the suggested minimum 3 week period of closure from 12 July 2020.

Please email your responses to [effort@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:effort@marinemanagement.org.uk) by 5pm 8 July 2020.

In your response please state whether you are replying on behalf of an organisation or as a member of the public.

If you are replying on behalf of an organisation or organisations:

- Which organisation(s)?
- What is your name and position?
- What is your email address?

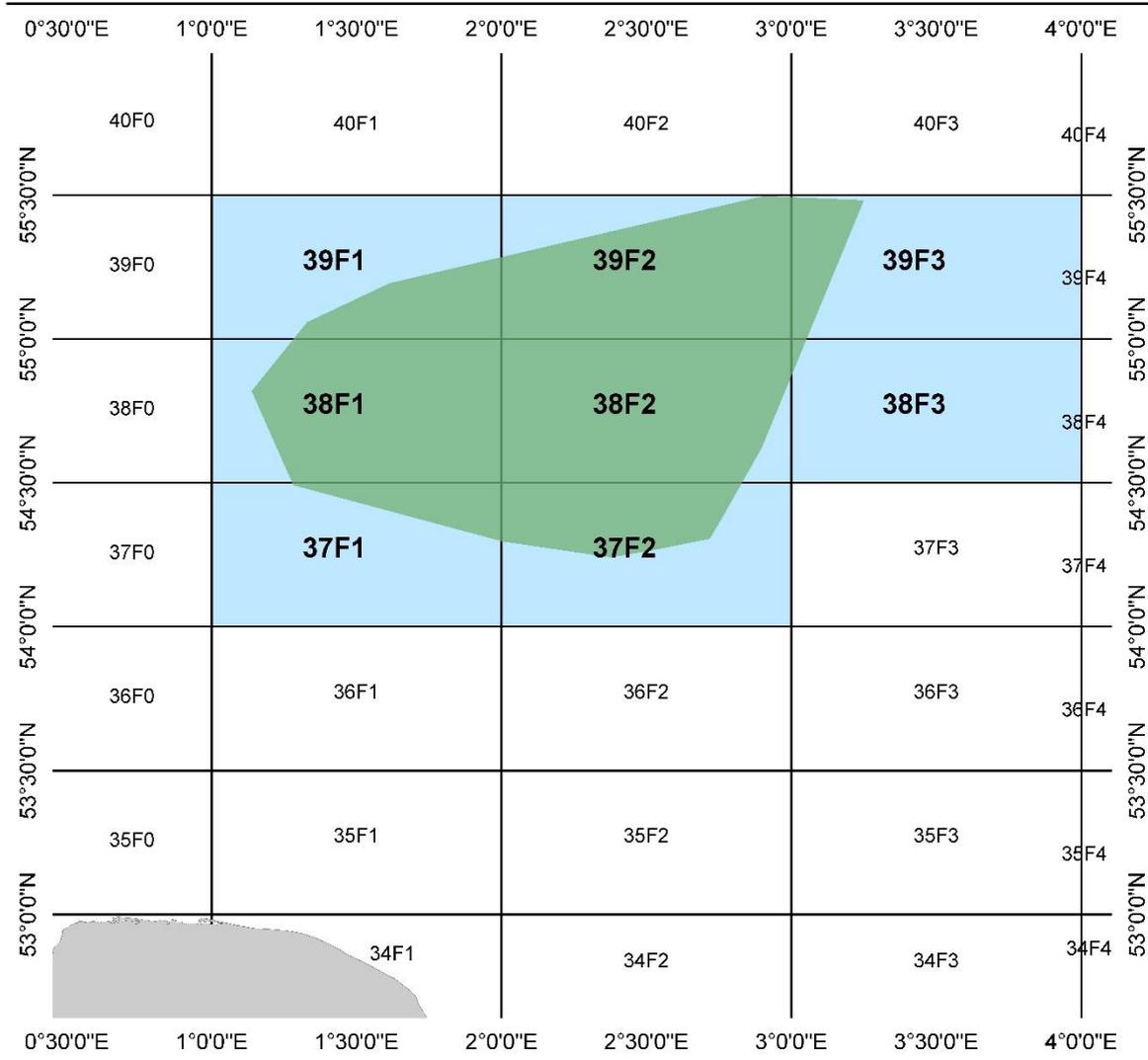
We may wish to contact you about your submission for further details, if you are happy for us to do this please let us know in your submission, setting out what the best method (e.g. email, telephone, post) and time to do this would be. We will not contact you to follow up on this call for evidence unless you provide permission.

# Annex 1



Marine Management Organisation

## Dogger Bank SAC



- Dogger Bank SAC
- ICES Rectangles: 39F1, 39F2, 39F3, 38F1, 38F2, 38F3, 37F1 and 37F2
- ICES Rectangles



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