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Jersey | JE2 4WE

Constable Jackson
Chair, EHI Scrutiny Panel

BY EMAIL

10 January 2022

Dear Mike

Re: Fishing Vessel Licensing – Questions

Please see below responses to your questions received on 23 December 2021.

- 1. Local fishermen have quoted exorbitant fees of £70k+ to fish in Jersey's waters and a lack of parity for French/EU fishing vessels in having to bear the same costs. Please could you clarify what these fees relate to and whether they apply to French/EU vessels? Are these licence fees tradeable?**

Jersey fishers do not pay the Government of Jersey for a fishing licence; however, they do pay an administration fee of £112.00 to process a licence transfer and for the issuing of a Jersey fishing licence.

Jersey's fishing licence system forms part of the overall British fishing licence system which is a distinct pool of licences for British vessels created in the 1990's. Initially, licences were issued to British registered (including Jersey) Fishing Vessels for free if they could demonstrate a track record of fishing commercially. This set the overall size of the British fishing fleet under the Common Fisheries Policy, and no new licenses could be created. Nevertheless, licence entitlements can transfer from different devolved UK Fisheries Administrations and Crown Dependencies and, subsequently, a trade in licence entitlements developed across the UK and Crown Dependencies as fishers bought and sold licences between each other and licence dealers.

Typically, when a fisher retires, they sell their licence entitlement either with the vessel or separately. Over the years the price of licence entitlement changing hands has increased which means that many fishers who received the original licence for free have profited significantly by selling on their licences to incoming fishers. Anecdotally, many fishers have found that their licence has been a sound investment due to the increase in value that could be realised on sale.

It should be noted that governments are not involved in these financial transactions and that the Government of Jersey specifically does not condone, nor does it profit from, the above practices.

French fishers that qualify for a licence do so on the basis of demonstrating commercial fishing in the track record period defined in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. These are new licences that form their own pool of licences. French fishers qualifying for one of these initial licences do not pay for them just as British fishers did not pay for licences when first issued based on their track record of commercial fishing. It is envisaged that

French fishers will have to pay the same fee as Jersey fishers when they wish to transfer a fishing licence.

2. Please could you advise on the current status of the reclassification of Jersey's waters?

The work currently being undertaken is not reclassifying 'Jersey's waters' as such. Jersey's non-aquaculture waters are technically unclassified and any classification that takes place is species specific.

This project involves the sampling of wild caught Scallops (Pectinidae), as the main species exported to the EU and one of the species affected by the restrictions in place on Third Country direct landings. These restrictions are not new, they have existed for quite some time (approximately 2008) and apply to all Third Country imports of non-fishery products as listed in Annex I of COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1005/2008.

As the UK and her crown dependencies are now Third Countries, these long-standing rules now apply to us.

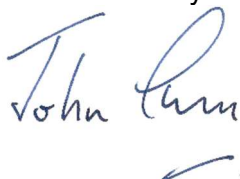
Following the completion of our Scallop sampling, which is still ongoing over a continuous period of time, it is envisaged that positive results will:

- facilitate the export (not direct landing) of Jersey Scallops having the data which proves they are safe for human consumption,
- potentially prevents the EU (or France) from reclassifying our Scallops harvesting areas in the future without a significant amount of data that contradicts ours, and
- giving EU (or France) access to our data, may allow us to negotiate future relaxations of the rules for Third Countries.

It is possible that the Scallop harvesting areas will be classified as 'A' although this is subject to CEFAS's final report (expected by end Q1). However, this will not allow for the reintroduction of direct landings of Scallops simply because they are not classified as Fishery Products (as per (EC) No 1005/2008). The EU is not obliged to allow direct landings.

I hope this letter is of assistance to the Panel and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely



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