



Fisheries Act 2020

2020 CHAPTER 22

Fisheries objectives, fisheries statements and fisheries management plans

1 Fisheries objectives

- (1) The fisheries objectives are—
 - (a) the sustainability objective,
 - (b) the precautionary objective,
 - (c) the ecosystem objective,
 - (d) the scientific evidence objective,
 - (e) the bycatch objective,
 - (f) the equal access objective,
 - (g) the national benefit objective, and
 - (h) the climate change objective.
- (2) The “sustainability objective” is that—
 - (a) fish and aquaculture activities are—
 - (i) environmentally sustainable in the long term, and
 - (ii) managed so as to achieve economic, social and employment benefits and contribute to the availability of food supplies, and
 - (b) the fishing capacity of fleets is such that fleets are economically viable but do not overexploit marine stocks.
- (3) The “precautionary objective” is that—
 - (a) the precautionary approach to fisheries management is applied, and
 - (b) exploitation of marine stocks restores and maintains populations of harvested species above biomass levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield.
- (4) The “ecosystem objective” is that—
 - (a) fish and aquaculture activities are managed using an ecosystem-based approach so as to ensure that their negative impacts on marine ecosystems are minimised and, where possible, reversed, and

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (b) incidental catches of sensitive species are minimised and, where possible, eliminated.
- (5) The “scientific evidence objective” is that—
- (a) scientific data relevant to the management of fish and aquaculture activities is collected,
 - (b) where appropriate, the fisheries policy authorities work together on the collection of, and share, such scientific data, and
 - (c) the management of fish and aquaculture activities is based on the best available scientific advice.
- (6) The “bycatch objective” is that—
- (a) the catching of fish that are below minimum conservation reference size, and other bycatch, is avoided or reduced,
 - (b) catches are recorded and accounted for, and
 - (c) bycatch that is fish is landed, but only where this is appropriate and (in particular) does not create an incentive to catch fish that are below minimum conservation reference size.
- (7) The “equal access objective” is that the access of UK fishing boats to any area within British fishery limits is not affected by—
- (a) the location of the fishing boat’s home port, or
 - (b) any other connection of the fishing boat, or any of its owners, to any place in the United Kingdom.
- (8) The “national benefit objective” is that fishing activities of UK fishing boats bring social or economic benefits to the United Kingdom or any part of the United Kingdom.
- (9) The “climate change objective” is that—
- (a) the adverse effect of fish and aquaculture activities on climate change is minimised, and
 - (b) fish and aquaculture activities adapt to climate change.
- (10) In this section—
- “ecosystem-based approach” means an approach which—
 - (a) ensures that the collective pressure of human activities is kept within levels compatible with the achievement of good environmental status (within the meaning of the Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 ([S.I. 2010/1627](#))), and
 - (b) does not compromise the capacity of marine ecosystems to respond to human-induced changes;
 - “precautionary approach to fisheries management” means an approach in which the absence of sufficient scientific information is not used to justify postponing or failing to take management measures to conserve target species, associated or dependent species, non-target species or their environment.