

Good Food Nation - Programme of Measures: 2022 Interim Update

March 2022



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Good Food Nation - Programme of Measures: 2022 Interim Update

Introduction – 2022 Interim Update

The [first Good Food Nation Programme of Measures](#), published in September 2018, set out the range of measures being carried out across the Scottish Government to deliver our Good Food Nation ambition in Scotland. The Programme of Measures identified over 100 separate pieces of work which were already being done, or were planned, across Scotland. An update on these measures [was published in November 2019](#).

This document is not a full update of these earlier publications, but it provides an update on work towards many of the measures contributing to the achievement of our Good Food Nation ambition. A full review of progress will be published in due course.

As with the previous updates, the measures are organised into five key areas:

1. Health
2. Social Justice
3. Knowledge
4. Environmental Sustainability
5. Prosperity

Health

Allotments and Community Growing

2021 update:

Scottish Government funding supports a number of community growing organisations, in line with our two overarching policy objectives to increase the amount of land available for community food growing, allotments and orchards; and to improve food growing skills and knowledge to empower communities and individuals to grow their own food.

In 2021/22 we have provided:

- £30,000 to Trellis, a national organisation for therapeutic gardening: it provides support for over 480 projects which in turn help over 12,000 people to improve

their wellbeing through growing produce. Trellis work with disadvantaged demographics and in 2021/22 they will particularly focus their efforts on projects with the care sector;

- £37,000 of funding to Social Farms & Gardens, and organisation which supports, represents and promotes community-managed farms, gardens, allotments and other green spaces. The organisation has a membership of over 300 community growing organisations who help to improve the lives of thousands of people across the country. Around 50% of the members are located in areas classified as Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 and 2;
- £20,000 to GreenGrow Scotland, a new charitable organisation which aims to promote the health, wellbeing, social connections, climate and nature action and economic opportunities associated with growing food, and a local food system by supporting grassroots community growing projects;
- £100,000 to the Green Action Trust to promote the growth and delivery of community growing spaces across Scotland by offering funding for up to fifteen community growing projects through the Growing Food Together Fund.

This funding supports projects that contribute towards achieving a variety of Scottish Government National Outcomes in a range of cross-cutting areas, including environment, education, culture and health.

Dietary Guidance

2021 update:

Food Standards Scotland have published an online dietary guidance resource, [EatWellYourWay.scot](https://eatwellyourway.scot), which delivers evidence-based dietary advice, to help people in Scotland make healthier food and drink choices, one step at a time.

The advice in Eat Well, Your Way is based on the Eatwell Guide. Research from The Carbon Trust has shown that if people consumed a diet more similar to the Eatwell Guide this would be a healthier and more sustainable way of eating. These effects come from a reduction in dairy, meat and discretionary foods, plus an increase in some starchy foods, fish and fruit & vegetables. Eat Well, Your Way currently includes some messaging targeted at making healthier, sustainable choices and the resource will continue to be developed in this way.

NB FSS will run a nationwide, multimedia promotional campaign for Eat Well, Your Way from 21 Feb to 31 Mar 2022.

The Healthcare Retail Standard

The Healthcare Retail Standard sets criteria where 50% of food and 70% of drink sold in all NHS Scotland shops is 'healthy' and only certain items can be promoted.

2019 position:

Following introduction of the Healthcare Retail Standard, it was found that customers were buying more products which met the Healthcare Retail Standard 'healthy' criteria.

The evaluation and first year of the HRS have informed a change in criteria, including:

- A ban on energy drink sales to under 16s;
- Healthy criteria for baby food;
- Relaxation on promotions for sugar-free chewing gum.

2021 update:

These new criteria have now been incorporated into the HealthCare Retail Standard.

Healthy Living Programme

The Healthy Living Programme is a voluntary scheme run in over 2,200 convenience stores through the Scottish Grocers Federation since 2006. The scheme helps to promote healthier produce in the stores.

2019 position:

The Healthy Living Programme now has over 2,300 members which constitutes around 40% of the convenience trade in Scotland. Two-thirds of the stores are situated in the most deprived areas of Scotland. The stores participating in the Healthy Living Programme continue to use Eat Better Feel Better^[2] materials and have fruit available for sale at checkouts.

2021 update:

The Healthy Living Programme's Big Breakfast and Healthy Living Day events address the link between the local convenience shop and the wider community and how we can help children and adults to buy healthier products. An increase in cooking from home during the pandemic has been supported by the programme through its 'Cooking with Wellby' campaign.

Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Reformulation

In partnership with the Food and Drink Federation Scotland, we planned in autumn 2018 to introduce practical support to help businesses to get expert advice on reformulating food and drink to lower the calorie content.

2019 position:

We have invested £200,000 over a three-year period from 2018/19 to support Scottish small and medium enterprises to reformulate commonly consumed products to lower the calorie content.

2021 update:

In 2021/22 we are investing an additional £105,000 to continue the reformulation project.

Food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt

2019 position:

A consultation on proposals for restrictions on the promotion and marketing of food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt where they are sold to the public closed in January 2019. The [consultation analysis report](#)^[6] was published on 13 September 2019.

In the 2019/20 Programme for Government, we committed to introducing a Restricting Foods Promotions Bill in the 2020/21 legislative programme.

2021 update:

The Bill was paused to take account of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses and consumers. In the 2021/22 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government set out that we will introduce a Public Health Bill that includes restrictions on unhealthier food and drink promotions in this Parliament. We intend to consult again in the spring to help us consider the impacts of EU exit and the COVID-19 pandemic on our proposals, as well as explore potential opportunities for alignment across the UK.

Out of home food strategy

2021 update:

The Scottish Government's [Out of Home Action Plan](#) was published in September 2021. Actions set out there include:

- A consultation on mandatory calorie labelling at the point of choice;
- A code of practice for children's menus;
- A new Eating Out, Eating Well Framework;

- A standardised format for voluntary provision of full nutrition information online and/or on printed material; and
- Coherence on wider food policy through the Ministerial Group on Food.

Our consultation on introducing mandatory calorie labelling is due for publication in Spring 2022.

School Food and Drink Regulations

2021 update:

The new Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 were commenced in April 2021, replacing the previous 2008 Regulations. Changes include:

- increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables offered to children and young people as part of the school day;
- bringing red and red processed meat provision in line with the recommendations set out in the Scottish Dietary Goals;
- significantly reducing the amount of sugar children and young people can access through the school day.

The updated Healthy Eating in Schools guidance, which supports implementation of the Regulations, was published in February 2021.

Food For Life

2021 update:

The Food For Life Scotland programme aims to increase the amount of healthy, locally sourced food served by local authorities in early years settings, schools and care homes and currently operates in 18 Scottish local authorities, with Moray being the latest to achieve accreditation in January 2022. Our funding supports a small team within the Soil Association to deliver the programme on our behalf, with a clear aim of stimulating more local sourcing through the accreditation process; the overarching objectives are:

- Work with local authorities to retain their current Food for Life Served Here (FFLSH) award; and trying to shift those accredited to Bronze up to Silver or Gold;
- Work with those local authorities not yet participating to introduce the Food for Life programme within their area.

As well as aiming to put more Scottish food on the table, the wider benefits include: educating young people about food and culture, reassuring parents and pupils that their school meals are responsibly sourced, and freshly prepared with trained cooks,

promoting fresh, local and seasonal food, ensuring that at least 75% is fresh and unprocessed and improving pupils' health by putting more fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, and wholegrains on the menu and generally ensuring that menus meet or exceed the Scotland's statutory food and nutrition standards.

Social Justice

Tackling food insecurity

2019 position:

Our Fair Food Fund has been progressively increased and is now £3.5 million. This fund supports dignified responses to food insecurity which help to tackle the causes of poverty. It is evolving the response away from charitable and towards human rights approaches.

2022 update:

In 2020-21, the Scottish Government invested around £2.5 billion to support low income households, including nearly £1 billion to directly support children. This considerable investment included £56 million to provide free school meal alternatives during school holidays and periods of remote learning, £70 million in flexible local responses to food and financial insecurity, and over £100 million for the third sector.

As committed to in our Programme for Government, we have now consulted on a draft ending the need for food banks plan. The draft plan sets out our human rights approach to the issue of food insecurity and outlines what more we will do using the powers we have to strengthen cash-first responses to hardship. Actions include investing in local cash-first partnership working that improves pathways between sectors and services and makes food banks the last port of call, and piloting the use of shopping cards as an alternative to food bank referrals alongside money advice to help prevent future need.

We are continuing to prioritise action that prevents hardship, including:

- Delivering our Scottish Child Payment worth £40 every 4 weeks for eligible children aged under 6. This is one of five family benefits and unique in the UK, that we will double in value in April 2022, reaching 110,000 children;
- Increasing the value of Best Start Foods and expanding eligibility later this term. The combination of Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods will provide a financial support package worth £8,4000 by the time an eligible family's first child turns 6;
- Providing Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments worth £520 to low income households, reaching reaching more than 144,000 school age children;
- Providing Pandemic Support Payments of £130 to over 530,000 households;

- Continued investment in our Scottish Welfare Fund, with over £38 million already paid out to support people from April to November 2021;
- Investing £12 million to support debt and welfare advice services;
- Providing £25 million flexible funding to local authorities to tackle financial insecurity with a strong emphasis on cash-first approaches, as part of our £41 million Winter Support Fund;
- Providing £150 to all households receiving council tax reduction and all households in bands A-D as part of our £290 million cost of living package;
- Expanding free school meal support to all primary pupils and providing targeted support during the holidays, starting with an additional £49.75 million in 2021-22. Universal provision of free school meals was expanded to include all children in primary 4 in August 2021, with further expansion to include all children in primary 5 from January 2022;
- Renewing our commitment to the Get in to Summer programme, which provides opportunities for children and young people to have fun and reconnect with peers, with food, childcare and wider family support available where needed as recommended by the Poverty and Inequality Commission.

Case Study – Utilising flexible funding, Argyll and Bute Council is in established new Flexible Food Fund in partnership with Bute Advice Centre, Allenergy and the Community Food Forum to tackle financial insecurity. This provides direct financial assistance alongside money advice and access to wider wellbeing supports. There are early indications that this has helped to reduce the need for food banks and has strengthened household financial resilience.

Measuring food insecurity

2022 update:

We are continuing to measure food insecurity through the Scottish Health Survey, as recommended by the Independent Working Group on Food Poverty.

The fourth Scottish data set was published in January 2021 showing that a reported 8% of adults in Scotland experienced food insecurity between August 2019 and September 2020, defined as being worried they would run out of food due to lack of money or other resources. Due to COVID-19, data collection for the 2019-2020 survey was restricted, with a smaller sample size and conducted over telephone, rather than face to face. This may result in an underestimation of food insecurity for this period.

Aggregate data from 2017-2019 (inclusive) show that food insecurity levels in Scotland were around 9%. Data from these years has also been published at local authority and health board level; the first time that local area data on food security in Scotland has been made available. This data suggests a relatively high degree of

regional variation, with rates of food insecurity as high as 14% in some areas, and as low as 4% in others. Though note, these figures are subject to a margin of error (95% confidence interval) which may be more pronounced for areas with a smaller sample size. This locally disaggregated data on food insecurity is broadly consistent with existing evidence on deprivation.

The data has been integrated in to our National Performance Framework outcomes on poverty and human rights. This is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals – including Goal 2: End hunger.

We are also measuring food insecurity through the Family Resources Survey, which suggests that 8% experienced low or very low food security, and a further 7% experienced marginal food security in Scotland, 2019-2020.

Human rights and rights of the child

We have a Programme for Government commitment to Incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law and the work of the First Minister's Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership.

2019 position:

In 2016, we accepted the recommendation of an Independent Working Group on Food Poverty to consider enshrining the right to food. A new National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership will be co-chaired by Professor Alan Miller and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People. The new taskforce met for the first time on 2nd October 2019. The taskforce was asked to consider all internationally-recognised human rights, which includes the right to food.

We are committed to incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots Law. We will deliver the legislation needed to do this by the end of March 2020. Our consultation on how a new Act could incorporate the UNCRC closed on 28 August and we will respond to this in the coming months.

2021 update:

In March 2021, the National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership published its recommendations for a new human rights framework for Scotland that brings internationally recognised human rights into domestic law. As part of taking forward the 30 the progressive, bold and ambitious recommendations from the Taskforce for a new human rights framework for Scotland, a new Human Rights Bill will be introduced to Parliament during this parliamentary session. Scotland's new Human Rights Bill will incorporate the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, includes a right to adequate food as an essential part of the overall right to an adequate standard of living, into Scots Law, as far as possible within devolved competence. The aim is that the right to food will be justiciable in the Scottish courts.

To further strengthen human rights protections in Scotland, the Bill will give effect to three other international Conventions for the empowerment of women, disabled people and minority ethnic people. The Bill will also include a right to a healthy environment and provision to ensure equal access to everyone, including older people and LGBTI people, to the rights contained in the Bill.

On 16 March 2021, the Scottish Parliament unanimously passed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill ('the Bill'). The Bill is a landmark piece of legislation that aims to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law to the maximum extent of the Scottish Parliament's powers – signalling a revolution in children's rights in Scotland. The Bill seeks to empower our children and young people to claim their rights and help to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

On 12 April 2021, a reference of certain provisions of the Bill was made by UK Law Officers to the UK Supreme Court. The provisions referred to the Supreme Court were: section 6 (duty on public authorities); and sections 19 to 21 (the interpretation duty and judicial powers of 'strike down' and 'incompatibility declarator'). A hearing before the UK Supreme Court took place on 28 and 29 June 2021.

On 6 October 2021, the UK Supreme Court judgment on UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill found each of the provisions referred by the UK Law Officers to be outwith the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament. While the Supreme Court judgment means that the Bill cannot receive Royal Assent in its current form, we are urgently and carefully considering the most effective way forward for this important legislation.

It is vital that we work through the complex issues raised by the Supreme Court judgment to ensure that incorporation can happen as quickly as possible with confidence that any amendments to the Bill do not attract further challenge. The majority of work in relation to implementation of the UNCRC is continuing.

Knowledge

Food Education Programme

2019 position:

We launched the Good Food Futures programme in June 2019 which aims to provide an overarching coordinated and end-to-end approach to the delivery of food education to young people and encourage careers in the food industry.

The Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) were awarded funding to increase the number of farm visits and events for school children, with the aim of benefiting around 14,000 children.

2021 update:

RHET have been awarded funding to deliver a programme of 80 digital farm experiences, which they estimate will reach around 2800 pupils directly, with additional numbers able to benefit from the use of pre-recorded material.

Food for Thought Fund

2019 position:

The Food for Thought Fund is a competitive fund that supports food education related projects in schools to help pupils learn about food. Support for our Food For Thought Programme continued in 2019 with 174 schools benefiting from the fund.

2021 update:

Education Scotland have been awarded funding to deliver a programme awarding grants of up to £3000 to 62 schools for the purpose of providing food education.

Scotland's National Chef

The National Chef will increase awareness of the objectives of the Good Food Nation Policy – healthy, environmentally sustainable and affordable food for all, with positive messages about the importance of cooking using locally sourced, Scottish products.

2019 position:

Scotland's National Chef carried out a number of engagements in 2019 in a range of settings including the Royal Highland Show, primary schools and a community garden, giving inspirational talks and *cookery* demonstrations.

We continue to identify opportunities for the National Chef to contribute strategically to the work of the Scottish Government and enhance our policy thinking.

2021 update:

Gary Maclean has been reappointed to a second term as National Chef. In this second term, he will seek to achieve a number of objectives, including supporting the recovery of the hospitality industry following the pandemic; promoting food education; promoting the benefits of Scottish produce; and tackling food insecurity.

Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007

2019 position:

To improve food provision and food education, and ensure schools are promoting health, Education Scotland will, by the end of 2020, publish a self-evaluation framework to support the implementation of the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. Education Scotland's Health and Nutrition Inspectors are working in collaboration with local authority school catering and education colleagues from across Scotland to develop the self-evaluation framework. Trialling of the framework will begin by the end of 2019.

2021 update:

The digital framework, [Food in schools across Scotland: A self-evaluation resource](#) was introduced in December 2020. The continuing impact of COVID during 2021 has impacted on the extent to which its use is embedding in practice. Awareness of the framework across local authority school catering services is high. Engaging with education colleagues remains a focus. Education Scotland paused school inspections from March 2020.

Environmental Sustainability

Scotland's Food Waste Reduction Target

2019 position:

The Food Waste Reduction Action Plan (FWRAP), published in April 2019, sets out the Scottish Government's proposals to meet the target of reducing all food waste in Scotland by 33% by 2025, against a 2013 baseline. The Plan also outlined plans to consult on seeking legal powers for a mandatory Food Waste Reduction Target by the end of 2019.

The FWRAP makes connections to EU, UK and Scottish activities in place which tackle food waste. It also connects with other Scottish Government policies and commitments in respect of food and waste generation, including the Climate Change Plan, Circular Economy Strategy and Good Food Nation.

2021 update:

We will continue to embed circular economy principles into the wider green recovery and take steps to reduce food waste through the FWRAP, delivering against our ambitious target to reduce food waste by 33% by 2025. The planned consultation on the range of commitments identified in the Food Waste Reduction Action Plan has been delayed by a number of factors, including the recent Covid-19 crisis.

We will publish a review of the FWRAP in 2022 to assess the progress towards the 33% reduction target and to identify any additional measures which may be needed to achieve it. The review will connect with other Scottish Government commitments in respect of food waste and generation, including the upcoming Good Food Nation Bill.

In addition, we are developing a Routemap to deliver our wider 2025 waste and recycling targets which will inform the development of the new Circular Economy Bill and there will also be further engagement and consultation to shape the Bill's contents. Considering the status of our existing food waste target is part of this Routemap work.

Food waste data

2019 position:

Targeted work is ongoing to gauge levels of food waste and surplus across Scotland, the UK and Europe. The Food Waste Reduction Action Plan and the Programme for Government commit the Scottish Government to explore opportunities to place requirements on businesses to publicly report on their waste and surplus, specifically in regard to food and textiles. This would ensure more data on food waste and surplus is available.

2021 position:

When we consulted on legislative proposals in 2019, the majority of respondents were in favour of the proposal regarding mandatory reporting of waste and surplus and, on that basis, are continuing to explore.

The Programme for Government outlines our commitment to introducing a Circular Economy Bill this Parliamentary session. A decision on the timing of a Bill will be taken by Cabinet in the context of setting the content of future legislative programmes.

Scottish Rural Development Programme

2021 Update:

The Scottish Rural Development Programme aims to help achieve sustainable economic growth through: enhancing the rural economy, supporting agricultural and forestry businesses, protecting and improving the natural environment, addressing the impact of climate change and supporting rural communities.

The powers of the Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Act 2020 have been used to enable the continued operation of current CAP schemes and

policies from 1 January 2021 and delivers on our commitment to Stability and Simplicity.

A total of £243 million has been committed through the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme since 2015 to maintain and enhance our rich and varied natural environment. 506 AECS Organics contracts have been approved, with £29.1 million committed to support organic farming. In addition, support is provided through the Farm Advisory Service and the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund to enable farmers and land managers to protect and enhance our environment.

Rural Funding Transition Period

2021 Update:

The Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Act 2020 (“the 2020 Act”) was unanimously passed by the last Scottish Parliament to “enable the continued operation of current CAP schemes and policies” from 2021. This delivers on our commitment to support the rural economy with Stability and Simplicity until 2025. The limited powers of the 2020 Act precludes substantive change until a new Scottish Agriculture Bill is introduced.

The work of the Farming and Food Production Future Policy Group concluded. Five sector-specific Farmer-led Groups were established to provide advice and proposals on action key agricultural sectors should take to cut emissions and tackle climate change – and how government might support them to do that. The groups published reports in March 2021.

The Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board was established as a 100 day commitment to drive forward the work of the farmer-led groups and our commitment to work with the sector to achieve our world-leading emissions targets, support biodiversity, ensure a just transition and make early progress in delivering emissions reductions. The Board will be asked to contribute to our work to implement policy reform, incorporating the relevant recommendations of the farmer-led groups, to cut emissions across agriculture, support the production of sustainable, high quality food, and design a new support system and approach.

In order to ensure everyone had the opportunity to play their part in shaping the future of farming, food production and land use in Scotland, we published a consultation that built upon the recommendations from the farmer-led groups. The consultation, “[Agricultural Transition in Scotland: first steps towards our national policy](#)”, closed on the 17 November 2021 and set out a number of key questions on the recommendations which will inform wider work on the development of agricultural policy and the replacement to CAP.

A new Scottish Agriculture Bill will be brought forward in 2023 to provide a replacement for the CAP. We remain committed to supporting active farming and food production with direct payments, however by 2025 we will shift half of all funding for farming and crofting from unconditional to conditional support.

Prosperity

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund

2019 position:

Provision of support to a range of collaborative projects under the SRDP's Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund delivered knowledge transfer and innovative projects that aimed to improve efficiency, enhance profitability, improve biodiversity and mitigate against climate change.

2021 update:

39 projects have been funded to date with £5.8 million of grant funding spent and were completed March 2021.

2022 update:

5 projects were awarded just over £170,000 of funding through KTIF. The chosen project have a specific focus on resource efficiency, cutting emissions, environmental performance and sustainability of agricultural holdings.

Sustainable growth and environmental impacts for the aquaculture industry

The need to strike an appropriate balance between the sustainable growth of the aquaculture industry and the associated environmental impacts is recognised.

2019 position:

The Scottish Government's response to the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee report on Salmon Farming in Scotland (29 January 2019) included, as part of any future request for planning advice, that Marine Scotland will expect a condition requiring an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to be delivered for any consents for marine aquaculture planning applications (when there is, or there is potential for, wild/farmed salmon interaction).

We updated local authorities and industry that Marine Scotland's screening and scoping responses will advise what we would expect EMPs to include (as a minimum), should the applicant submit a planning application. Consultation responses will also confirm whether these areas have been included in an EMP.

2021 position:

The Scottish Government is committed to moving beyond the status quo and the independent review of Scotland's regulatory framework for aquaculture being led by Professor Russel Griggs will help to inform what more can be done within the current regime to improve transparency and efficiency. We will consider the recommendations made by Professor Russel Griggs at the end of 2021 and work to deliver a Scottish Government led vision for sustainable aquaculture in 2022.

2022 position:

The Scottish Government is committed through the Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party Shared Policy Programme to a step change in how we manage the marine environment.

In October 2021 the Scottish Government published its response to the Salmon Interactions Working Group Report which contains 40 recommendations on measures to address the interactions between wild and farmed salmon in Scotland. A copy of the response can be found on the Scottish Government website. In our response we announced a range of measures, including strengthened controls on fish escapes and the introduction of penalties for fish farm escapes with the ultimate aim of ring-fencing or redistributing this money to support wild salmonid conservation and research.

Our response identified the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) as the lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild fish from sea lice from fish farms. SEPA is currently consulting on a new spatially-based risk assessment framework for sea lice and the protection of wild salmon, closing in March 2022.

A number of other changes to regulation and wider initiatives have also been undertaken which have progressed a number of Rural Economy and Connectivity and Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee recommendations. Progress has been and continues to be made in these areas.

The seaweed sector underpins sustainable economic growth that supports the production of high-nutrition food source with a host of health benefits, and can contribute to net zero goals. The Scottish Government is supportive of a seaweed industry, and introduced a Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement to help facilitate sector growth by setting out policies on seaweed cultivation, to support potential cultivators and investors in the sector.

The Scottish Government and Crown Estate Scotland, have provided funding to the Scottish Seaweed Industry Association to appoint a Development Director, who will work to establish a coherent and strategic direction for the commercial development of the Scottish seaweed industry.

Regulatory framework for aquaculture sustainable growth

The Scottish Government and its agencies are working with the sector, and with others, to develop a policy and regulatory framework that enables sustainable growth while maintaining the right balance across our economic, environmental and social responsibilities.

2019 position:

Our Technical Working Group has been tasked with developing a practical framework for assessing the sea lice loading and management requirements, taking account of the best available scientific understanding and the precautionary principle. The group comprises experts from the regulators - Marine Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage and representatives of local authorities.

It is intended that this framework will underpin future planning advice. Through the framework, adaptive management based on enhanced monitoring will create an enabling environment for encouraging further aquaculture development where impacts can be mitigated.

2021 update:

The Scottish Government asked the Salmon Interactions Working Group (SIWG) to consider the conclusions of the 2018 report by the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee, *Salmon Farming in Scotland*, and to provide recommendations on the interactions between wild and farmed salmon in Scotland. The SIWG Report, published in May 2020, contains over 40 recommendations on a future approach for managing interactions. We will shortly respond to the SIWG Report and take forward a programme of work to strengthen controls on sea lice and fish escapes. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency will consult on a new adaptive spatially-based risk assessment framework for sea lice emissions by the end of 2021.

2022 update:

An external review of the current regulatory framework for aquaculture will help inform what more can be done within the current regime to improve efficiency and effectiveness of regulation and consider options for delivery of reform in the longer term. The scope of the review is outlined in the Terms of Reference, which has been published on the [Scottish Government website](#). Professor Griggs' report was [published](#) on 10 February 2022 and the Scottish Government will provide a written response in early spring.

We are also developing a Scottish Government-led Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture that will place an enhanced emphasis on environmental protection and community benefit. Encouraging increasingly sustainable production of farmed seafood will be a core outcome of the Vision. The Vision will be developed with the input of a wide range of relevant stakeholders and building on the best available evidence. The Vision will be published in 2022.

Sea lice reporting

Industry began publishing site level sea lice data and fulfilled a commitment made under the framework to move to proactive and open reporting of mortality information in 2018 – a pioneering approach in the farming sector.

2019 position:

A review of Scotland's farmed fish sea lice policy was a priority action for Scottish Government which was included in Scotland's 10 Year Farmed Fish Health Framework (published in 2018).

Outcomes of the review included:

- The introduction of legislation in 2020 that will require all marine farms to report a weekly sea lice number to Scottish Government;
- Reduction of the reporting and intervention thresholds in lice on adult female fish from June 2019;
- A commitment, unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary, to a further reduction of intervention thresholds in lice on adult female fish in 2021;
- That we will explore the establishment of independent sea lice count checks.

2021 update:

The Farmed Fish Health Framework was refreshed in October 2020 with a new governance structure and a refreshed approach. •The new steering group is focussing on three priority workstreams: analysis of the cause of fish mortality, impact of and adaptation to climate change and improving accessibility of treatments (including medicines). Mandatory sea lice reporting legislation was introduced in December 2020 and came in to force on 29 March 2021. Since then, all marine farms have been reporting an average weekly sea lice number, per fish farm site to Scottish Government. The reported data is published on Scotland's Aquaculture Website. Work is ongoing to consider a further reduction of sea lice intervention levels and due to report before the end of 2021.

2022 position:

The commitment to a reduction in the reporting and enforcement levels for sea lice made in 2019 (from 4 and 6 adult female sea lice per fish, to 2 and 4 respectively) unless there is evidence to the contrary, will be progressed in line with further commitment made in the Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party Shared Policy Programme and within the context of wider work streams such as independent Regulatory Review of Aquaculture. More information on sea lice management can be found on the Marine Scotland topic sheet on sea lice management.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2022

OGL

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.scot

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80435-174-1 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, March 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1040990 (03/22)

W W W . g o v . s c o t