

Name: Battricks Seafood

Details:

I am making a response on behalf of Battricks Seafoods from the viewpoint of a live shellfish export merchant.

As a local purchaser of live shellfish I can confirm that catches and landings have dropped significantly over the past few years, which on its own poses a direct threat to our business. If a local shellfish merchant like us were to stop our exporting, it is likely to have a huge detrimental effect on the large number of smaller local commercial boats that cannot undertake direct landings to France. One way to address this decline in catches is to reduce the access of French fishing boats to Jersey's waters. Whilst I appreciate there are limitations and barriers as to how to go about achieving this due to the conditions attached to the post Brexit trade deal, nevertheless this same deal (and the scrapping of the Bay of Granville Treaty) also provides a clear and strong opportunity for the us to better control the fishing activity of commercial stocks in our waters. Assuming Jersey has the desire and resources to achieve this, the competent authority (Marine Resources Department) should look at whether current fishing activity for the key stocks (which can be impacted by local management measures) are being exploited at a sustainable level and if not, then fishing activity needs to be reduced. The best way of achieving this is to limit the fishing capacity of boats operating in the fishery and more specifically, the engine size of these boats. This approach would effectively support Jersey's commercial fishing fleet given our boats tend to be smaller and less powerful than the French ones fishing within our waters. So long as any such development was underpinned by a scientific based approach then Jersey would be able to defend its position and actions. A move in this direction would also support other initiatives to protect our marine resources such as the one being undertaken by Blue Marine Foundation (<https://www.blumarinefoundation.com/projects/jersey/>)

Additional comments:

Live shellfish merchants also now face new issues and challenges related to the post Brexit trade deal which French fishermen (and merchants) will not have to contend with which means an uneven playing field has developed in terms of us competitively supplying into the EU market. These include:

- Extra administration costs involved in processing the new export documentation.
- Reduced freight sailings to France. It is vital we have at least 2 freight sailings a week to St Malo, which is currently the only port we can export shellfish to. If this route is not adequately serviced, then it will further undermine the future of Merchants (which, in turn, will adversely impact upon the large number of local fishermen operating smaller fishing boats). This issue may require the States of Jersey to be more proactive and supportive in finding an appropriate solution to this matter.

Finally, Battricks are interested to commit to work collaboratively and transparently with local fisherman to develop new products for both the local and export markets. We are prepared to make investments towards this goal however, it would require a radical change of approach and a shift in the immediate expectations in order have any chance of meaningful long-term success.

Peter Tarrant
Managing Director

Reply required: No