



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

Title: The Scallop Fishing (Wales) Order 2010

Date: 4 February 2010

By: Elin Jones, Minister for Rural Affairs

The purpose of this statement is to inform Members that I have made the Scallop Fishing (Wales) Order 2010. The Order is being brought in to enhance regulation of the scallop dredge industry with the aim of protecting scallop stocks and safeguarding important marine species and habitats whilst maintaining a viable and sustainable scallop industry for fishermen operating in Welsh waters.

This statement follows my announcements made on the 9th October and 12th November 2009 in which I explained the background to the increase in fishing effort in this fishery over the last few years and the actions taken by the Welsh Assembly Government to introduce new measures to regulate the fishery. Under the Scallop Fishing (Wales) Order 2005 the fishery was due to open on the 1st November 2009, however, I took the decision to extend the closed season until the 28th February 2010 whilst new regulatory measures were drawn up. The fishery is due to re-open on the 1st March 2010.

The new regulations include both spatial and technical restrictions which seek to reduce the level of scallop fishing effort in Welsh waters and will also prohibit scallop dredge fishing in several clearly defined areas around the Welsh coast which have been identified as important to vulnerable marine species and habitats. The spatial restrictions are based on advice received from the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) which will be made available on the Welsh Assembly Government website. The technical restrictions contained in the Order sets a maximum limit on the engine power of scallop dredging vessels which can access the fishery and also concerns the design

of scallop fishing gear which can be used and number of dredges which can be deployed by vessels. With the exception of part of Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC), for which arrangements are described below, all other SACs within Welsh waters will currently remain closed to scallop dredging.

Survey work undertaken recently in the Cardigan Bay area by Bangor University School of Ocean Sciences in addition to the advice received from CCW has informed my decision to allow scallop dredging in one part of the Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC). We will look to undertake similar assessment to that carried recently in one area in Cardigan Bay which could lead to re-evaluation of areas where dredging is currently prohibited.

A copy of The Scallop Fishing (Wales) Order 2010 is attached. An illustrative chart showing the spatial restrictions can be viewed on the Welsh Assembly Government fisheries webpage. Officials are continuing to work with the industry to develop future management measures for the fishery.