

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1547
Ein cyf/Our ref HIDCC/02039/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

petitions@senedd.wales

18 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 31 October regarding further questions relating to a petition which seeks to promote a ban on bottom towed fishing gear.

I have seen the Sir David Attenborough documentary, Ocean, and understand people's concern about this issue. As I set out in my response of 27 August, I'm pleased to be able to say that the position in Wales is very different from that seen in the documentary.

In answer to your additional questions, the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for king scallops in English and Welsh waters was subject to public consultation and published in December 2023. The summary of responses and government response can be found here: [Summary of responses and government response - GOV.UK](#). The FMP contains a range of policy commitments, including a review of fishing regulations.

The resulting consultation on *scallop fishing management measures in Wales*, launched on the 24 October 2025, concerns a range of proposed changes to scallop fishing management following policies in the FMP. The petitioner may be interested in responding to the consultation: [Scallop fishing management measures in Wales \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#) which closes on 15 January 2026.

Wales already has a well-managed inshore king scallop fishery with substantial areas closed to protect sensitive habitats. The proposals in the consultation, developed with the help of the Wales King Scallop Advisory Group, aim to strengthen the current controls and extend them to the whole of the Welsh zone, i.e. the full Welsh maritime jurisdiction. At the same time, the proposals seek to enable adaptive management of the fishery such that measures could be varied in response to evidence about the stock, the fishery or the environment. We are committed to ensuring our fisheries are as sustainable as possible, and so there are also proposals which would help us trial, and where practicable implement, lower-impact fishing methods such as hand diving.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The scope of the consultation includes all targeted king scallop fishing but does not relate to the types of bottom towed gears used in other fisheries, such as demersal trawls which target fish that live near the seafloor.

In line with the Joint Fisheries Statement 2022, the Welsh Government is jointly developing demersal FMPs with the UK and Devolved Governments which may consider other types of bottom towed gears. Development of the Irish Sea Demersal FMP is being led by Northern Ireland and the Celtic Sea and Western Channel Demersal FMP is led by the UK Government. These FMPs will be consulted on prior to publication which is scheduled for 2026.

Once again, thank you for writing to me on this important matter. I hope you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Irranca-Davies', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

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