



An end to discards?

Within our Fish for Life approach, Findus Group has long held the view that discarding (disposing of fish at sea) is both a senseless waste of resources and a barrier to long term sustainability in fisheries.

However we also recognise that this issue is a major challenge in the EU. To bring an end to discards will require a complex combination of regulatory reform, technical conservation measures and changed market conditions. Nevertheless, we do not believe it is possible to implement truly effective management regimes unless all fish caught are landed and properly recorded – and this cannot be achieved whilst discarding continues.

Recognising the importance of this issue, our business has taken an active approach in lobbying for industry improvement. We are already engaged with scientists, fishery managers and fishermen in joint initiatives to better understand and reduce discarding. We are a contributor to the Seafish Discards Action Group and have also funded research into improved technical conservation measures in the Scottish Nephrops fishery, in a partnership with Glasgow University.

Whilst the European fishing industry continues to work hard to reduce discards, it is important to recognise that much of the fish eaten in the UK is sourced from outside the EU – often from fisheries where discards are already illegal.

It is clear therefore that there are already models for better practice. We look forward to a time when fishermen and legislators in Europe will be able to jointly achieve a more selective fishing industry which is able to remain viable, profitable and sustainable whilst still landing the whole catch.

