

# ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE TO DECOMMISSIONING - FISHING



Elspeth Macdonald  
Scottish Fishermen's Federation

## Scottish Fishermen's Federation – formed in 1973

- Promoting and protecting the collective interests of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation constituent Associations.
- Supporting production of healthy and sustainable wild-caught seafood, ensuring a sustainable future for the industry and our marine environment.
- Advancing the reputation of fishing by championing responsible practice in meeting a growing demand for healthy, climate-smart food.
- Improving fishing safety through supporting and promoting professional standards of training and compliance with safety standards.
- Showing fishing as a positive career choice – one with a viable and positive future.

# SFF's Constituent Associations



# All shapes and sizes....



< 10 METRES



80+ METRES

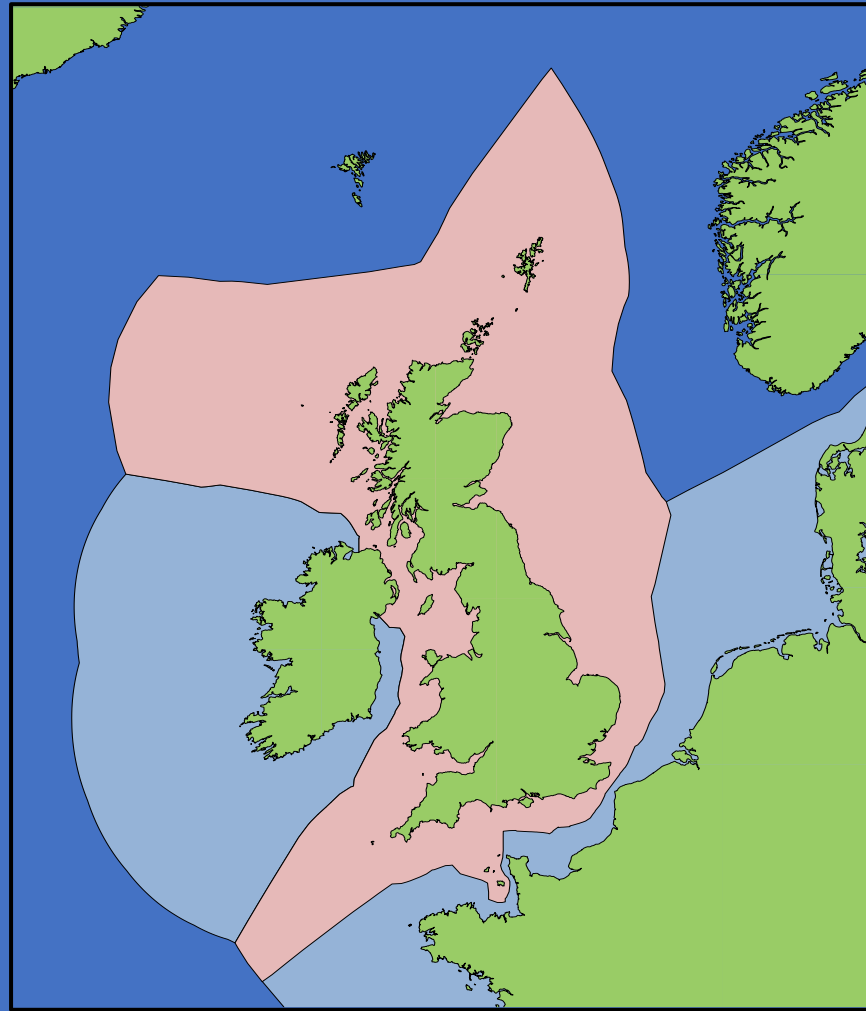
# Fishing's perspectives on decommissioning:

- Promises made to fishing 'back in the day'
- Safety – first and foremost
- Spatial Squeeze
- Structures
- Science and surveys

# Safety: we've come a long way, but hazards remain



# UK's EEZ – the envy of many fishing nations



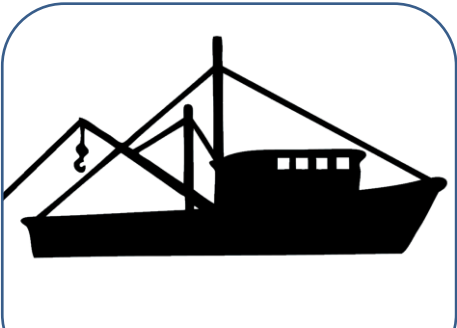
## But we're not the only fish in the sea.....

- Oil and gas – exploration, production, decommissioning
- Marine renewables
- Subsea cables
- Conservation sites – marine protected areas, priority marine features
- Aquaculture – fish, shellfish, seaweed
- Marine tourism and recreation
- Other maritime traffic
- Dredging and mineral extraction

**What might this look like in future?**



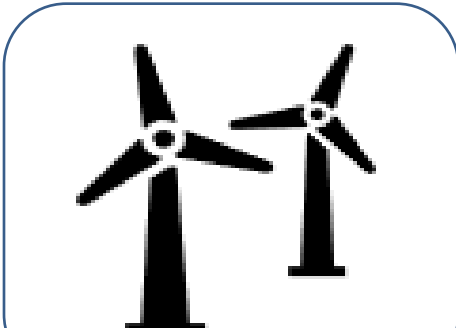
# Sectors



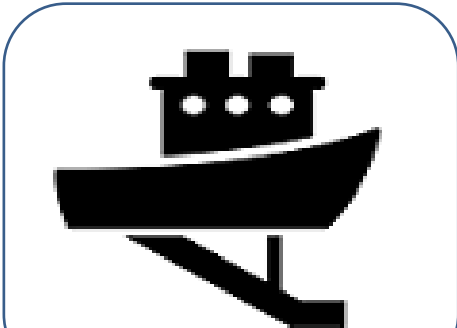
Fisheries  
management  
restrictions



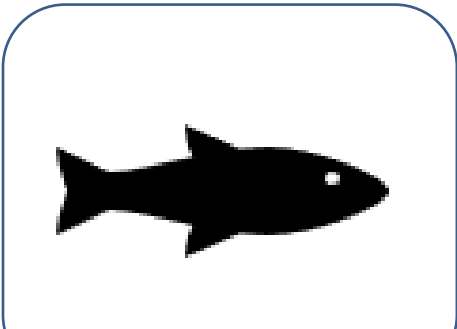
Nature conservation



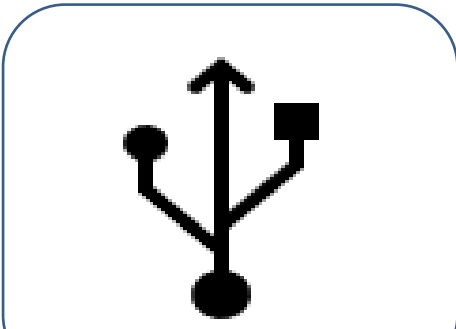
Offshore renewable  
energy  
(wind, wave, tidal)



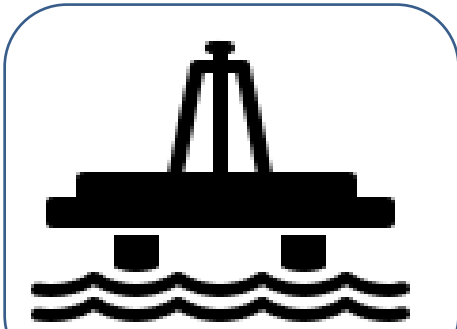
Aggregate extraction



Aquaculture

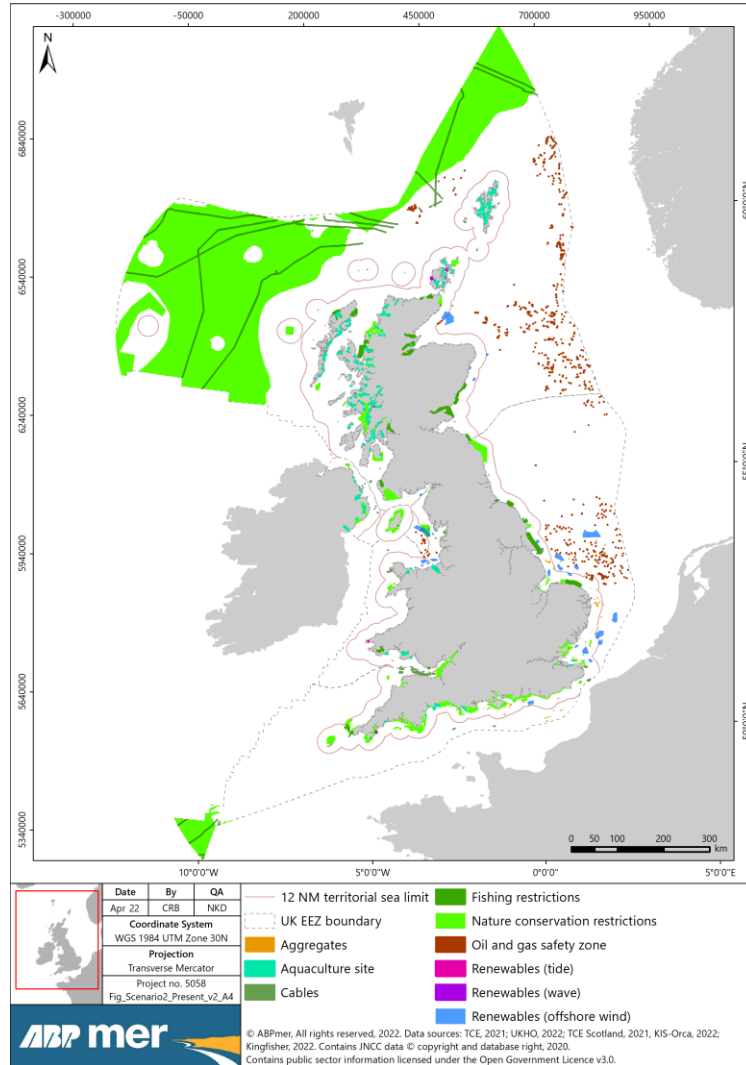


Cables



Oil and Gas

# Present Scenario



- Nature conservation restrictions in inshore waters increasing
- Roll-out of offshore wind farms
- Oil and Gas well established
- Many aquaculture sites, seaweed aquaculture beginning
- Aggregate dredging in English and Welsh waters
- Tide and wave energy still small-scale

**Area restricted**

**Percentage of EEZ**

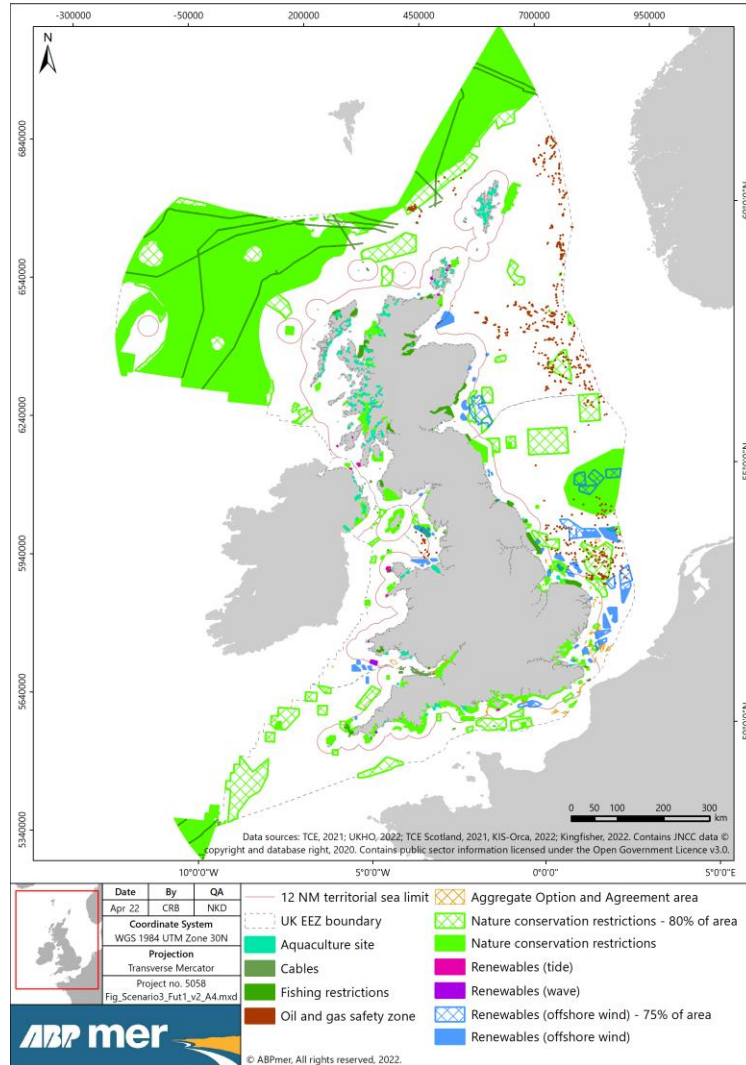
**169,994 km<sup>2</sup> (UK)**

**23.13 % (UK)**

**157,526 km<sup>2</sup> (Sco)**

**34.03% (Sco)**

# Future 1 Scenario (2030)



- Increasing offshore wind farms (42GW)
- Restrictions in MPAs increasing in offshore sites
- HPMAs not mapped but will increase areas restricted
- Oil and Gas maintains present footprint
- Aquaculture expanding, especially seaweed

**Area restricted**

**Percentage of EEZ**

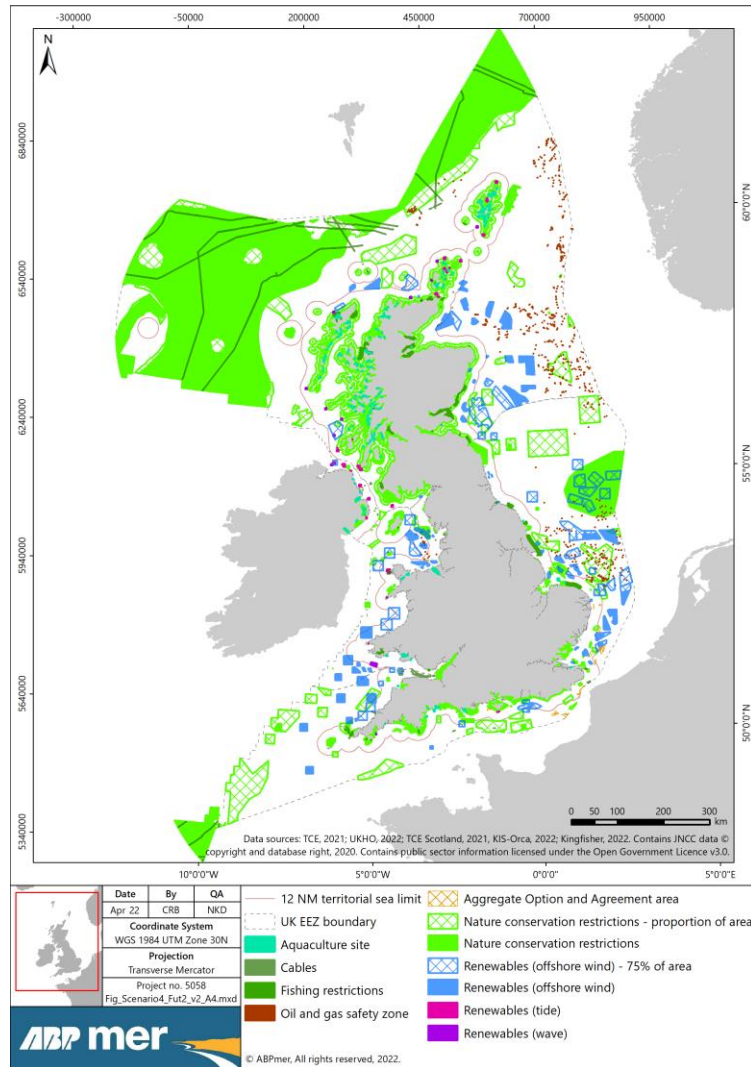
**266,457 km<sup>2</sup> (UK)**

**36.26 % (UK)**

**210,488 km<sup>2</sup> (Sco)**

**45.47% (Sco)**

# Future 2 Scenario (2050)



- Offshore wind reaches 115 GW – spatial footprint ten times present
- Wave and tidal energy increasing
- Oil and Gas some decommissioning
- Aquaculture continues expansion, seaweed has largest footprint

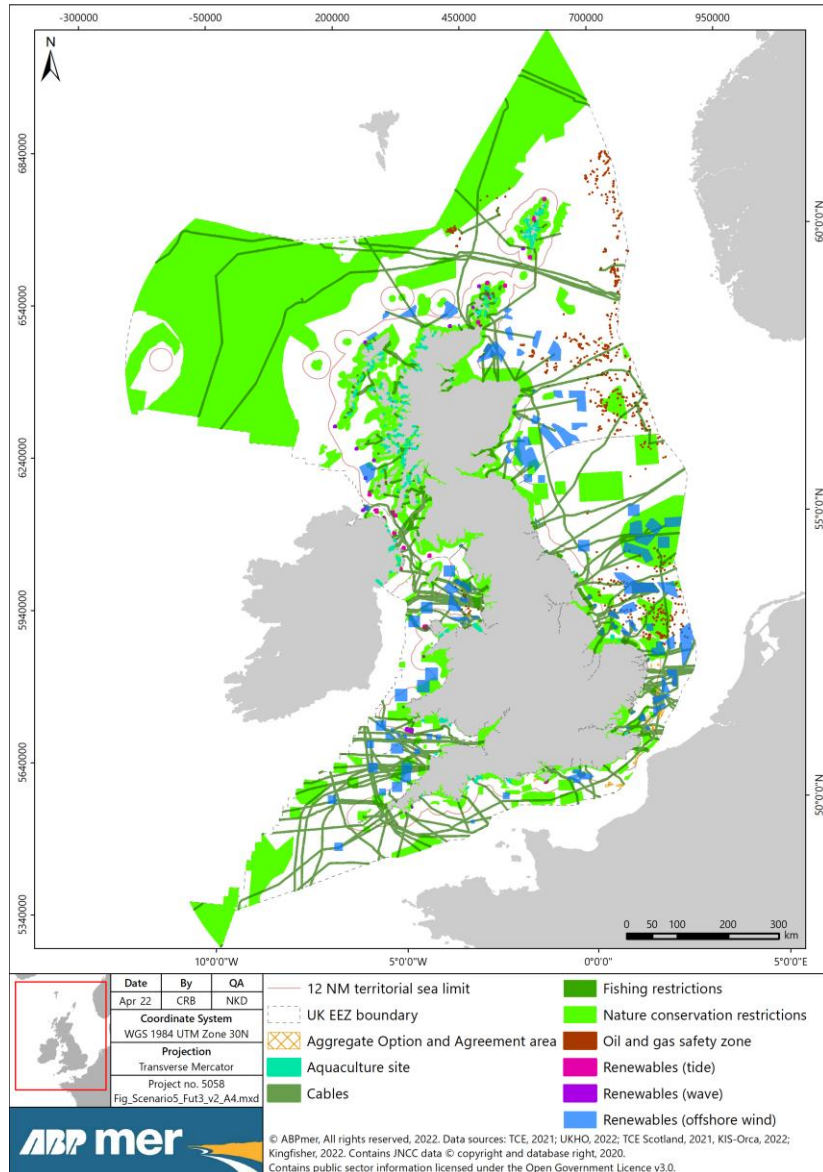
**Area restricted**

**Percentage of EEZ**

**276,713 km<sup>2</sup> (UK)**  
**212,548 km<sup>2</sup> (Sco)**

**37.66 % (UK)**  
**45.92 % (Sco)**

# Future 3 Scenario (2050)



- Spatial restrictions are intense
- Map similar to Future 2, but fishing excluded from offshore wind arrays, full extent of MPAs and 0.25 NM either side of cables
- Offshore wind farms occupy 31,500km<sup>2</sup>
- HPMAs not mapped but further increase restrictions

**Area restricted**

**Percentage of EEZ**

**356,834 km<sup>2</sup> (UK)**

**48.56 % (UK)**

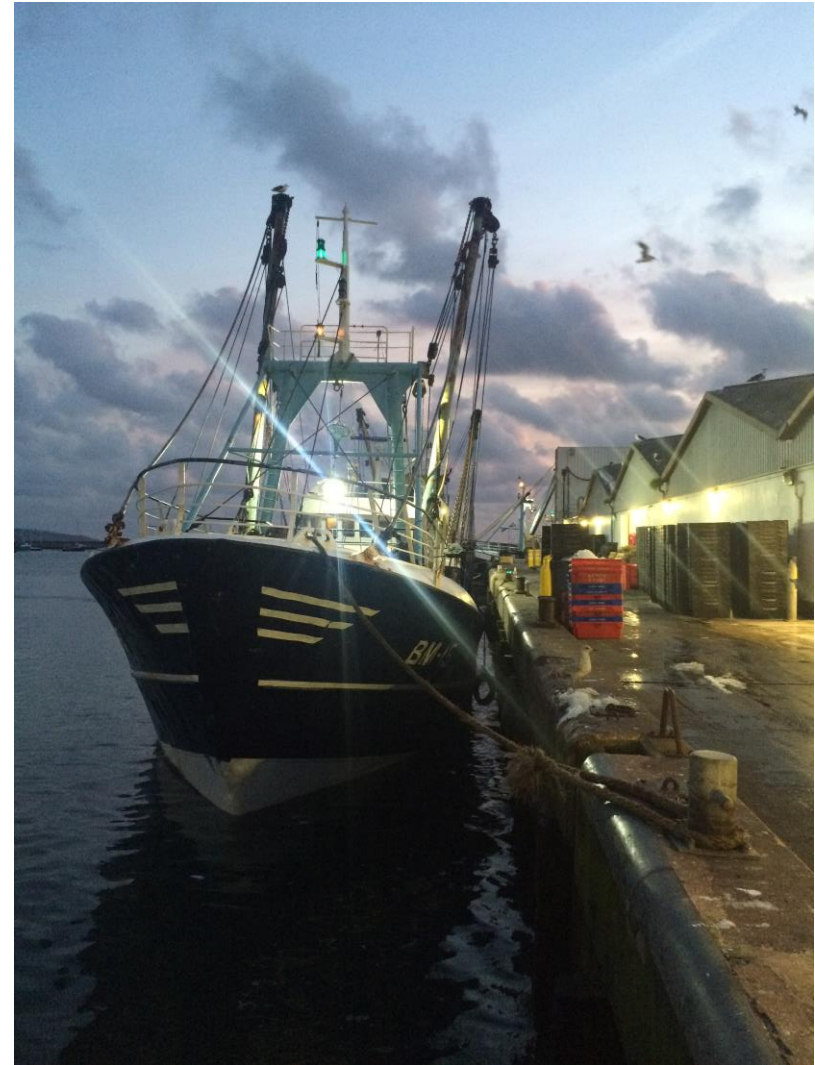
**260,341 km<sup>2</sup> (Sco)**

**56.246 % (Sco)**

# Report Conclusions

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- Demand for marine space will increase significantly over the next 10-30 years – up to 49% of the EEZ
- Nature conservation and offshore wind have the greatest future spatial footprints
- Displacement under future scenarios could be significant
- Local and regional impacts can be particularly severe on some fleet segments
- Importance of co-existence and co-location
- Potential impacts on other gears should also be considered



# Structures, Science, Surveys

- Wider context - likely to have many more structures - OFW
- Not inert – long term environmental impact isn't clear
- Might attract marine life – but not proven to generate additional biomass
- May divert fish from where we can safely catch them
- Potential impact on long term data sets



# OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS DECOMMISSIONING POLICY KEY PRINCIPLES

August 2018

The Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) Offshore Oil and Gas Decommissioning Policy explains that a return to clean seabed is the SFF's overarching principle in relation to oil and gas decommissioning in the United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS), taking into account current legislation, related guidelines and the UK Fisheries Offshore Oil and Gas Legacy Trust Fund Limited (FLTCT) Memorandum of Understanding.

The policy lists a number of central priorities. Our decommissioning preferences with regard to the various elements of oil and gas infrastructure (such as surface installations, subsea installations [e.g. manifolds and wellheads] and pipelines & flowlines [including trunk lines, pipeline bundles and umbilicals]) can be summarised as follows:



### Surface Installations: Total removal to shore

Failing that (and where a derogation against OSPAR Decision 98/3 has been granted); the preference is for seabed footings (minimum water clearance of 55 metres required above any partially removed installation which does not project above the surface of the sea) rather than for any part of the installation to be left visible above the water line.



### Subsea Installations: Total removal to shore

Failing that; trenching and burial.

### Pipelines & Flowlines:

(including trunk lines, pipeline bundles, and umbilicals)



### Total removal to shore

Failing that; trenching and burial with a proactive monitoring programme put in place. With regard to pipeline ends, preference is for burial along with an element of rock dump.

### Drill Cuttings

More research/clarification is required as to if, and when, it is deemed safe for fishermen to tow in the vicinity of drill cuttings. There should be compensation for loss of access to fishing grounds until technology allows for drill cuttings to be removed safely. We would require to know the size of the cuttings pile and representative evidence of its contents. What would be the consequence of interaction with fishing gear and the resultant catch?

### Verification Trawl Sweeps

SFF requires that a full trawl sweep survey campaign is undertaken upon completion of the OPRED approved decommissioning programme to provide assurance that it is safe for fishing to resume at said location.

### Rigs to Reef

SFF cannot support this scientifically unproven concept. Any possible benefits to fish stocks are viewed as minimal in relation to the sizes and geographical distribution of North Sea and West of Scotland fish stocks. It is also noted that infrastructure may first need to be brought to shore and cleaned (to be deemed to be free from contamination) in which case, a clean seabed is preferred.



### Fishing Awareness Sessions

As a matter of good practice, it is the SFF's view that, from the outset of any decommissioning programme the operator's project team should meet with the fishing industry to obtain an overview of the level and types of fishing activity that is likely to occur in the locality of the field being decommissioned.

### Technology Development

SFF will keep a watching brief on technology developments in relation to how this might affect future decommissioning programmes.

### Legacy and Liability

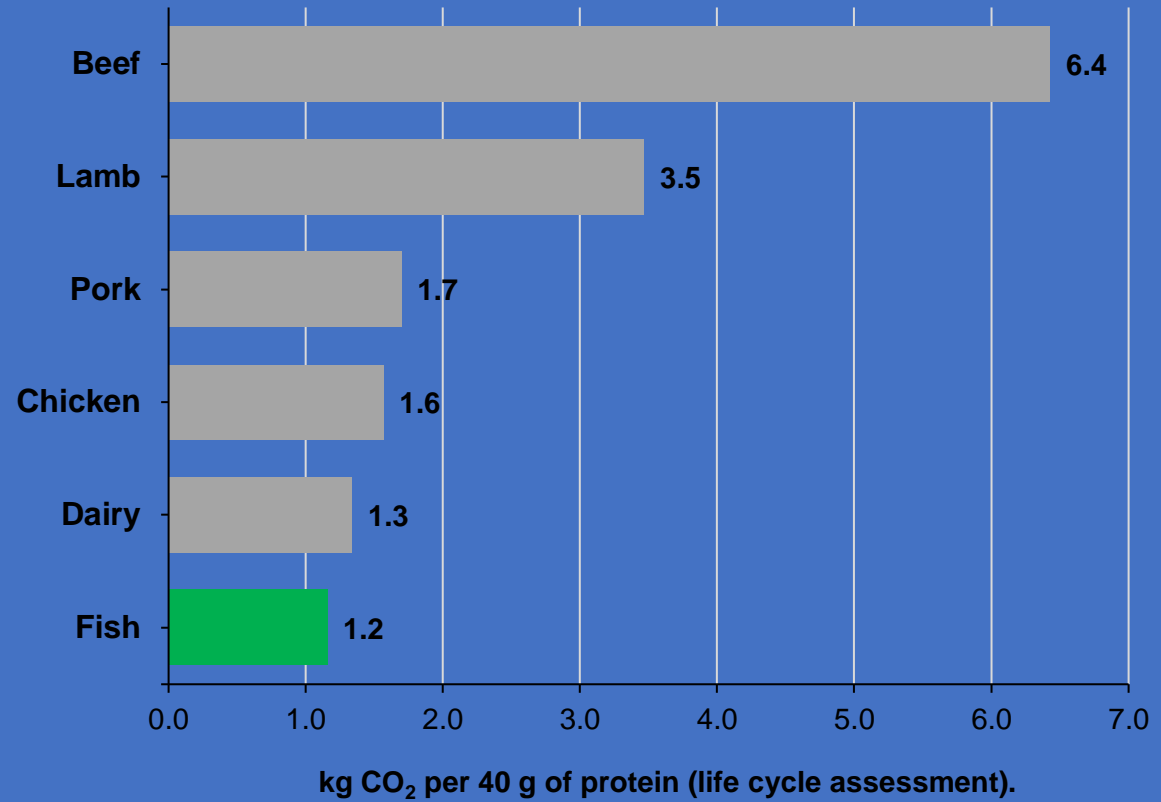
Our expectation is that the operator will provide a legacy and liability management plan for all issues (survey, sampling, monitoring and mitigation).

Download the full document at [www.sff.co.uk](http://www.sff.co.uk)  
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# Fishing – also part of reaching net zero



**Thank you for listening!**

