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UK government embraces high-tech solution to safeguard fish stocks in English waters

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Once operational, UK government plans to make Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) technology mandatory for all vessels in five priority fisheries

To fortify the sustainability of fish stocks in English waters, the UK government **plans to use cutting-edge Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) technology** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-fishing-industry-to-benefit-from-cutting-edge-technology-to-help-manage-fish-stocks>) in English waters. The initiative integrates cameras, gear sensors and GPS units to ensure that catches are accurately recorded and fish are not unlawfully thrown back into the sea.

Volunteers within five priority fisheries will begin to use REM systems this summer, with their work helping to refine the UK's monitoring objectives and ensure the technology works for fishers. Once monitoring objectives have been finalized and the REM systems are demonstrated to be working well, REM systems will become mandatory for all vessels in those fisheries – including non-UK vessels.

“Leaving the EU has given us the opportunity to take a new approach to fisheries management that is in



Once operational, the UK plans to make Remote Electronic Monitoring technology mandatory for all vessels in five priority fisheries. Photo courtesy of DEFRA.

the best interests of the UK fishing industry,” said Fisheries Minister Mark Spencer. “By harnessing this technology, we can sustainably manage our fish stocks, to benefit the industry, future generations and our marine environment.”

A different approach to managing discards will also be adopted in England, with changes to be made to better account for catches. From 2025, landings and discards will both be counted against quota allocations, and the amount of quota used to cover discards will vary and will depend on the type of vessel and gear types used.



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In addition, discard reduction schemes will be established to identify ways to reduce unwanted catch in the first instance. Working collaboratively with regulators and the industry, the schemes will identify and resolve barriers to improved gears being used. Fishers will see both approaches implemented at the

start of next year.

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