

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cùisean Dùthchail agus na h-Àrainneachd
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment

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Rob Gibson MSP

Convenor

Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP



21st February 2014

Dear Rob,

SCOTTISH CREEL SUPPORT FUND

I wanted to write to you to let you and members of the Committee know that Marine Scotland will be offering support to our creel sector following an extremely challenging year.

As you may be aware many creel fishermen have experienced hard financial times recently due to a combination of the extreme weather conditions which can lead to a loss of fishing gear and a reduction in catch. Marine Scotland is going to make up to £400,000 available which will contribute towards easing financial pressures faced by many in the industry.

After listening to representatives of the creel sector, the Scottish Government have acted swiftly to assist the sector in two ways:

- setting up a Scottish Creel Support Fund which will allow those fishermen who suffered in 2013 to apply for direct funding
- working to develop new and existing markets for creel caught produce

Marine Scotland are in the process of writing to all creel fishermen to alert them to this new fund.

I attach a copy of the letter being sent to licence holders of creel vessels

*Just write
Neil*

RICHARD LOCHHEAD

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Licencees of Scottish Creel Fishing Vessels

SCOTTISH CREEL SUPPORT FUND: INVITATION TO APPLY

Purpose

1. This letter invites eligible licencees to make an application to the Scottish Creel Support Fund, as announced by Marine Scotland on 21 February 2014.
2. Applications will be accepted up to 17:00 on 26 March 2014. Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted.

Objectives of creel support fund

3. The purpose of the fund is to offer financial assistance to fishing vessels facing exceptional stresses on their viability as a result of the reduction in catches and loss of gear experienced during 2013.

Amount of money available to successful applicants

4. In line with EU rules on permitted State Aid assistance, no individual enterprise will be permitted to receive payments in excess of the sterling equivalent of 30,000 Euros. In addition, the total amount made in payments under this fund will not exceed £400,000. Accordingly, in the event of over-subscription, individual payments will be adjusted to keep total expenditure within this limit. In addition, payments will not be made to enterprises which it is considered are not likely to be viable in the longer term.

Legal basis of payments

5. Payments will be made as grants under section 37 of the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007.

Eligible licensees

6. Scottish (i.e. with a Scottish PLN) fishing vessels, including vessels of 10 metres and under, which have, in calendar year 2013, conducted fishing operations with static fishing gear (pots and creels) and earned a gross income of £20,000 or greater, will be eligible to apply under the Scottish Creel Support Fund. Vessels will be permitted to make one application. Applications will only be accepted from licensees of presently active fishing vessels, or their nominees.

Content of applications

7. Applications will be made in terms of the application form. Incomplete applications will not be accepted and will be returned without being considered.

Determination of applications

8. Marine Scotland will determine applications according to published criteria. Payments arising from successful applications will be made in one instalment to a bank account nominated by the applicant.

Submission of applications

9. The application form can be downloaded from www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Sea-Fisheries/InshoreFisheries/CreelSupport and should be submitted to:

Scottish Creel Support Fund
Fisheries Division
Marine Scotland
Area 1B South
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

The application form is also available on request from local Fishery Offices, or by contacting Ross Cumming on 0131 244 6214 / creelsupport@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

Marine Scotland

21 February 2014