

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY M.B. ANDREWS OF ST. HELIER NORTH
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2026**

Question

“Will the Minister advise whether, in her assessment, the current level of regulation is detrimental to Jersey’s commercial fishing industry; and will she detail what fishing legislation, if any, she intends to introduce during her term of office and whether any consideration will be given to reducing the administrative requirements affecting commercial fishers?”

Answer

The question is something of short-term and long-term views. To use an example:

Do Jersey's Marine Protected Areas limit scallop dredging access? Yes, and in the short term that is detrimental to those boats.

However, in the medium and long term the areas now closed to dredging will generate more value to commercial fisheries through their role as nurse areas and spillover zones for commercial fish and shellfish species. It is also now available as a ground for fishing with pots, nets and by rod and line without risk of interaction with dredges and trawls.

Fishing is a complicated business from start to finish, be it buying a boat and a license and meeting the safety requirements of the Ports of Jersey registry to the challenge of finding, catching and selling fish and the reporting that follows. It's also a politically complex area where we have to manage in balance with the UK and EU as a result of the post Brexit Trade and Cooperation Agreement and through our Jersey-UK Fisheries Management Agreement.

Last month I asked my Marine Resources team to review and update the 1994 Sea Fisheries (Jersey) Law. They are tasked to look to simplify the law as best they can for fishers by reviewing and realigning the regulations that apply to them. This combined with the advisory booklets they produce and the brilliant Catch-Jersey logbook app they have developed will go a long way to simplifying the requirements put on our fishers.

Finally, I would highlight to the Deputy that I am lucky to have as a sounding board the Marine Resources Panel, made up of diverse islanders from the fishing industry, as well as fish merchants, recreational fishers, and scientists. This group has been instrumental in the formation of the island's modern fisheries management including the Ecrehou No Parlour Pot Zone currently lodged for debate and the measures relating to V notching lobsters and recreational pot limits that are being submitted for drafting.

Fishing is not farming. It is our last form of hunting and gathering, albeit with modern tools, when common goods are harvested in this way for private gain it must be done in the common interest. Unregulated fisheries in free markets have repeatedly resulted in stock collapse so while we will work to make things simpler it is in the island's interest to have a well-regulated, well managed fishery.

My department must try to ensure the long term sustainability of fish stocks in our waters which, in turn, supports the long term economic sustainability of the fishing industry. Short term regulatory practices will ultimately benefit the island into the future.

