

# Our Sea, Our Future

How do we safeguard the future of our seas? If the seas are important to us, we need to make some complex choices.

## Do we remove old oil and gas rigs?

...or do we leave them and the sea life they have attracted? Like artificial reefs, they support eco-systems and provide networks of "islands" as colonisation routes for cold-water corals etc. that have been degraded by trawling. They also capture carbon and pollutants in the sediment beneath them.

## Do we support research and conservation?

If funding is needed for further research, where should it come from? Perhaps a levy on users of the seas could support future sustainability projects? Should the Government provide more initiatives like the Seafood Innovation Fund launched in July 2019? Or should funding focus on protecting habitats through an expanding MPA network and investment in "eco-tourism"?

## Do we strictly regulate users of the sea?

Rules backed by fines would make it economic sense to innovate and adapt. Leaving the EU will create a chance to review fishing TACs and quotas. The EU allocates quotas based on fish distribution data from the 1970s— before the recent changes due to global warming. Perhaps new rules could reflect current and predicted fish distributions?

## Do we stop eating fish?

25% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions are caused by food production—but seafood accounts for less than farmed animals so can be a better choice. However, not all fish are the same. Pelagic fish like herring need less fuel per kg of fish caught than other species.

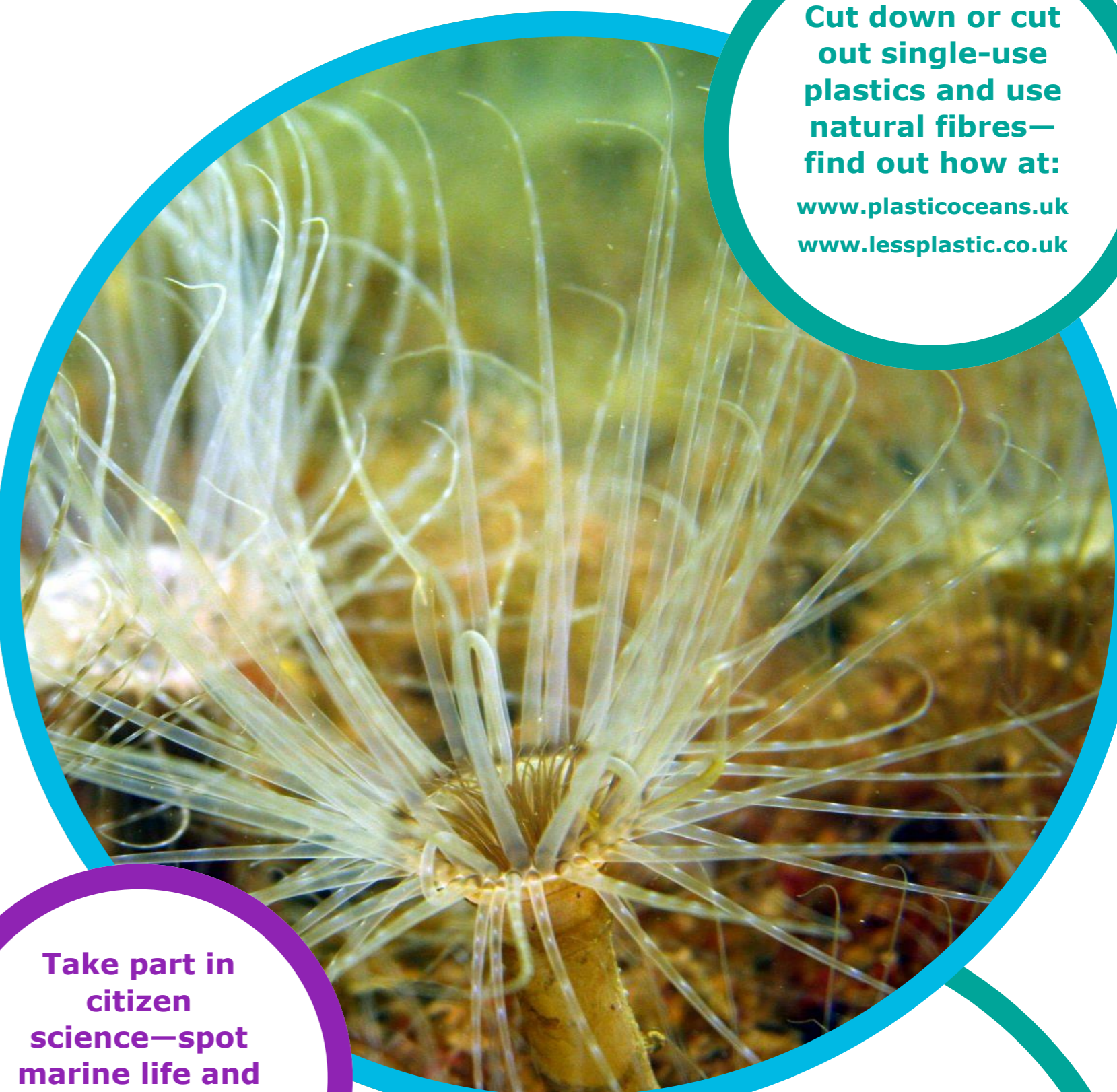
Should we be wary of exporting the problem? Fish is highly nutritious but if we avoid catching UK fish in favour of fully protecting our seas, will fisheries elsewhere be over-exploited instead?

Adapt your tastes—try new types of fish like squid. Find recipes at: [www.seafish.org](http://www.seafish.org)

Take to the sea! Reconnect and enjoy life on the water: [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com) [www.msck.org](http://www.msck.org)

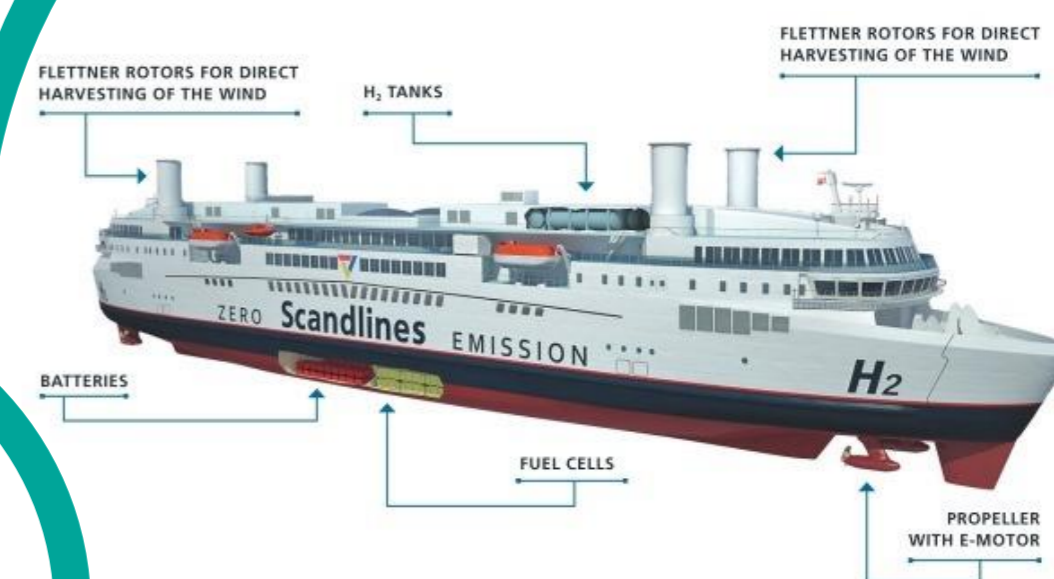


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Take part in citizen science—spot marine life and record your findings: [www.msck.org](http://www.msck.org)

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## Do we take action?

The seas are a complex, inter-connected environment. Likewise the pressures facing marine life over the next 50 years are complex and diverse. Only a cohesive approach can address these many pressing issues.

If we value the oceans, can we all play our part as individuals and by working together to discover, understand and protect our seas for today and for the future?

