

CRUSTACEAN WELFARE POLICY



In April 2022, the UK Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act was passed, which legally recognised decapod crustaceans (crab, lobster, langoustine etc.) as sentient animals capable of feeling pain, distress and discomfort.

Being a significant purchaser of langoustine (*Nephrops norvegicus*) in the UK, we understand the importance of humanely treating live decapods, and we welcome that these animals have been identified as part of this legislation. We have long recognised the importance of humane handling practices for ethical reasons, and we are working with our supply chain partners to improve the welfare of langoustines.

Whitby Seafoods source wild caught langoustine which is typically sold as breaded Scampi to the UK Retail and Foodservice markets. Our langoustine are wild caught by either otter trawl or creel caught. Whitby Seafoods do not purchase, market or sell any live crustaceans to either consumers or other businesses.

STUNNING AND REDUCING BYCATCH

Whitby Seafoods are collaborating with our retail customers, other industry bodies and equipment manufacturers to research and develop technology to improve catching and processing methods. We are participating in an industry project to achieve the humane removal of langoustine tails on board fishing vessels. This would involve electrical stunning prior to processing.

Since 2017, Whitby Seafoods have been involved in the Northern Ireland Gear Trials Project, which is aimed at reducing unwanted fish bycatch in *Nephrops* trawls. This project is testing the effectiveness of selectivity devices in allowing unwanted bycatch species to escape. Lights and underwater cameras fitted to fishing nets are used to observe the behaviour of Langoustine in the trawl.





APPLYING BEST PRACTICE IN OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

We are committed to improving the handling of decapods across the seafood industry and implementing best practices in our supply chains.

Our Marine Sustainability Manager chairs the Shellfish Association of Great Britain (SAGB) Nephrops Processor Group that, together with Seafish and the SAGB, is developing industry Codes of Practice for the handling and despatching langoustine. The Codes of Practice will operate across the critical supply chain stages: catching, processing, wholesale and live imports and exports.

Developing and adopting these Codes of Practice will ensure that best practices in welfare standards operate across the entire shellfish sector. This page will be updated as this work progresses. More information can be found on the Seafish website here – Animal sentience and welfare (seafish.org).

This policy is reviewed annually.

