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Intelligence

Aquaculture research projects receive \$1.3 million to explore imaging technology and AI

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Aquaculture research projects aim to deliver 'positive environmental and fish health impacts'

The Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre (<https://www.sustainableaquaculture.com/>) (SAIC) in Scotland is providing a combined £1.1 million (U.S. \$1.3 million) in funding to support three aquaculture research projects that explore imaging technology and artificial intelligence (AI).

Two of the successful projects will cover technology-led environmental monitoring, including the use of AI, 3D-modeling and image-collecting remotely-operated vehicles (ROVs), while the third focuses on the role of cleaner fish as an effective, sustainable treatment for sea lice. Aside from receiving £350,000 (U.S. \$438,000) in funding from SAIC, the research projects also secured additional support from businesses operating in Scottish aquaculture.

"In recent years, technology adoption across the sector has increased rapidly, but there is still a huge opportunity to use more data-led, intelligent systems to inform better decision-making," said Heather Jones, CEO of SAIC. "Greater use of AI, imaging and ROVs for applications such as monitoring and mapping of the seabed could be transformative for reducing the sector's environmental impact and



Funded projects will cover technology-led environmental monitoring, including the use of AI; 3D-modeling and image-collecting remotely-operated vehicles (ROVs); and the role of cleaner fish as an effective, sustainable treatment for sea lice. Photo courtesy of the Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre.

supporting future regulation requirements.”

Headquartered at the University of Stirling, SAIC is one of seven innovation centres introduced by the Scottish Government to drive growth in areas of key economic and social importance. The latest funding awards build on SAIC’s work to date, covering more than 60 collaborative projects with a combined value of £52.7 million (U.S. \$66 million).

A blue banner for the Responsible Seafood Conference. On the left, there is a silhouette of the Seattle skyline, including the Space Needle. To the right of the skyline, the text reads "FAIRMONT OLYMPIC HOTEL" in a small font, "OCTOBER 3-6" in a larger font, and the "goal" logo in a very large, bold font. The "goal" logo features a stylized fish inside the letter 'o'. Below the logo, it says "SEATTLE • 2022". On the far right, the text reads "THE RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD CONFERENCE" and "CONNECT. COLLABORATE. COMMIT." in a smaller font.

(<https://www.globalseafood.org/goal/>).

A recent economic impact assessment produced by Frontline Consultants showed that projects funded by SAIC between its inception and February 2021 would collectively deliver an additional turnover of £50 million (U.S. \$60.6 million) per annum for the companies involved by 2026. Overall, for every £1 (U.S. \$1.25) of SAIC funding granted to research projects during this period, a further £4.67 (U.S. \$5.85) was leveraged from businesses in the aquaculture sector and other funding sources.

“Driving improved sustainability, fish health and wellbeing is another area crucial to the growth and development of aquaculture,” said Jones. “Through collaborative research in the sector’s core priority areas, we can unlock additional capacity for sustainable seafood production, with Scotland at the forefront of significant developments across the whole supply chain.”

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