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# New UK aquaculture hub aims to drive industry innovation and sustainability

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

## National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub to boost sustainable practices, create jobs and position UK as innovation leader

The University of Stirling is launching a new aquaculture research facility to boost productivity, improve sustainability and create jobs.

The National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH) celebrated a milestone with a ceremonial steel signing, marking the final phase of construction for the state-of-the-art center.

Supported by a £17 million (U.S. \$22 million) investment from the UK Government through the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal, along with a £1 million (U.S. \$1.3 million) grant from the Wolfson Foundation, the NATIH is set to position the UK as a global leader in sustainable aquaculture innovation. Fully integrated with the University's Institute of Aquaculture, the facility will join an extensive network of research hubs, including marine and freshwater centres in Kintyre and Buckieburn, when it opens next year.

“The new NATIH will create the UK’s leading innovation community for sustainable aquatic food



An artist's impression of the National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub, which will open next year. Photo credit: University of Stirling

production, and position UK innovation and productivity at the forefront of one of the world's fastest-growing sectors," said Professor Sir Gerry McCormac, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stirling. "The facility is also the catalyst for the creation of a range of high value, skilled jobs and training opportunities in the blue economy space."

A banner for Best Seafood Practices certification. On the left, there are two small images: a fisherman in a yellow protective suit and a fishing boat on the sea. The main text reads "A comprehensive solution for the wild seafood supply chain." To the right, there are three checkmarks with the following text: "Crew rights", "Food safety", and "Environmental responsibility". On the far right, there is the Best Seafood Practices logo, which consists of a stylized eye shape, and a "LEARN MORE" button with a right-pointing arrow.

(<https://bspcertification.org/>).

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal represents a transformative £90.2 million (U.S. \$117 million) investment by the UK and Scottish governments to fuel inclusive economic growth through advancements in innovation and infrastructure across the region. With additional contributions from regional partners – including Clackmannanshire Council, Stirling Council and the University of

Stirling – the total investment will reach over £214 million (U.S. \$278 million), to be rolled out over the next 10 to 15 years. This strategic partnership is expected to drive long-term prosperity and establish the region as a hub for cutting-edge research and sustainable development.

“Our vision is to tackle global problems of food security, hunger and sustainability through aquaculture,” said Professor Simon MacKenzie, Head of the Institute of Aquaculture. “The new NATIH will help us build on our international reputation for world-class research, teaching, technological innovation and consultancy in aquaculture, supporting growth in the production of aquatic food for human consumption, contributing to global food security while reducing the impact on natural resources.”

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## Author

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**RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE**

[editor@globalseafood.org](mailto:editor@globalseafood.org) (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>)

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