

# A Future for Decapod Crustaceans

Welfare, Protection  
& Sustainability

2025–2028





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# Foreword from CEO, Dr. Ben Sturgeon

**A**s CEO of Crustacean Compassion, I am proud to lead an organisation dedicated to improving the welfare of decapod crustaceans, such as crabs, lobsters, and prawns. Since our founding in 2016, our mission has been to advocate for these often-overlooked animals, ensuring they are recognised for their sentience and treated with the compassion they deserve.

We have achieved significant milestones, including the inclusion of crustaceans in the UK's Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022, progress within the seafood industry, and the growth of a passionate community of supporters. But our work is far from over. Now, we need to turn this into real, enforceable protections that will improve the lives of millions of animals. That's where our new strategy comes in.

For 2025–2028, we are launching an ambitious new strategy that expands our focus to include the protection of crustaceans in the wild. While we continue advocating for higher welfare standards in human care, we will also tackle the harmful impacts of destructive fishing, habitat degradation, and climate change that threaten decapod crustacean populations in their natural environments.

We aim to secure better protection for crustaceans both in human care and the wild, working with coastal communities to implement sustainable, high-welfare fishing practices. We will also push for humane capture methods, reduce harm caused by unsustainable practices, and advocate for the preservation of critical habitats. As part of this, we are integrating decapod crustacean welfare into a sustainable blue economy, balancing ethical treatment with economic sustainability, and encouraging alternatives to destructive fishing methods like bottom trawling.

Guided by our core values of being decapod-focused, pragmatic, evidence-based, strategic, and courageous, we are committed to challenging entrenched practices and driving systemic change. In the coming years, we will continue working tirelessly to ensure that decapod crustaceans are no longer overlooked, but rather, treated with the respect, kindness, and dignity they deserve.

Looking ahead, we will roll out this strategy through two consecutive two-year campaign plans. The first phase (2025–2026) will focus on establishing foundational policy and industry changes, while



the second phase (2027-2028) will build on this momentum to expand our impact. This next chapter in our strategy represents a bold step toward ensuring crustaceans are protected both in human care (in various settings) and in their natural habitats. Together, we can create a world where decapods are truly valued, safeguarded, and able to thrive in both environments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sturgeon'.

## SECTION I

# Introduction

**C**rustacean Compassion is an award-winning animal welfare organisation dedicated to ensuring the humane treatment of decapod crustaceans like crabs, lobsters and prawns.

While we are a small team, we are driven by a powerful mission to improve the lives of millions of these often-overlooked animals. Our work spans policy advocacy, industry collaboration, and public education to ensure that crustaceans are recognised for their sentience and treated with the compassion they deserve.

## OUR APPROACH

Our work is grounded in scientific research and driven by the belief that all sentient animals deserve humane treatment, based on their species' specific needs. We are not anti-consumption but rather focus on advocating for better practices within the food industry and other sectors where crustaceans are used, such as in experimentation, companionship, and leisure activities.



We are focused on achieving systemic change through **three key pillars:**



### ADVOCACY:

Engaging with policymakers to strengthen and enforce animal welfare laws protecting decapod crustaceans.



### ENGAGEMENT:

Encouraging businesses and the seafood industry to adopt higher welfare standards for crustacean products and phase out inhumane practices.



### EDUCATION:

Raising awareness and building support for the humane treatment of crustaceans and the science of their sentience.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is simple yet powerful: a world where decapod crustaceans are valued as sentient beings with legal protection and humane treatment.

## OUR MISSION

Crustacean Compassion's mission is to promote and lead the ethical and humane treatment of decapod crustaceans through advocacy, education, and engagement to build a world where people treat them and their environment with compassion, kindness, and respect.



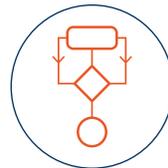
## OUR VALUES



**WE ARE:**

### CRUSTACEAN-FOCUSED

Understanding and advocating for crustaceans' needs is at the heart of our work.



### PRAGMATIC

We work with those who can help achieve the greatest benefit for crustacean welfare, even if we must challenge them when necessary.



### EVIDENCE-BASED

Our decisions are grounded in scientific research, reasoned assumptions, and ethical rationale.



### STRATEGIC

We work efficiently to achieve demonstrable results while respecting the urgency of our cause.



### COURAGEOUS

We stand firm in our values, seek a wide audience, and are unafraid to challenge the status quo.

# Our three pillars of work



We are dedicated to securing legal protections for decapod crustaceans. We work to include these animals in relevant animal welfare legislation, such as the UK Animal Welfare Acts and the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. Our efforts also focus on ensuring that existing laws, like those governing animal transport and slaughter, are properly enforced.

Through meetings with policymakers and collaboration with other animal protection groups, we aim to ensure decapods receive the legal protections they deserve.



We work closely with the seafood industry to promote better welfare practices for decapod crustaceans. Our initiatives include creating the UK's first welfare benchmark, The Snapshot, which helps seafood producers, processors, and retailers assess and improve their treatment of decapods. Additionally, through the **Crustacean Industry Welfare Hub**, we provide companies with resources and guidance to improve welfare standards throughout the supply chain.

By fostering collaboration, we help businesses realise the benefits of ethical treatment for both crustaceans and consumers.



We strive to raise public awareness about the pain and suffering experienced by decapod crustaceans, advocating for a shift in how these animals are treated. Through public campaigns, petitions, and social media initiatives, we encourage the public to take action in support of improved welfare. Additionally, our website features a new Children's Corner with fun activities and educational resources to teach young people about crustaceans and their habitats.

By sharing knowledge, we aim to foster compassion and a deeper understanding of these often-overlooked animals.

## Our journey so far

Crustacean Compassion was founded in 2016 by a group of volunteers shocked by the treatment of crabs and lobsters in London's shops. Driven by the desire to create lasting change, we campaigned for the legal recognition of crustaceans as sentient beings, culminating in their inclusion in the UK's Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022.

Since then, we have grown into a fully funded not-for-profit organisation with dedicated staff, committed volunteers, and a Board of Trustees, becoming a leader in advocating for crustacean welfare both in the UK and internationally. Today, we are proud to lead the charge in changing attitudes towards these fascinating, fragile and vital animals.

We also believe crustaceans deserve protection not just in captivity, but in the wild. Despite their vital role in marine ecosystems, they continue to suffer from harmful fishing practices, habitat destruction, and climate change. We advocate for a future where they are safeguarded through science-based policies, sustainable practices, and public awareness.



# Our impact

Through tireless advocacy, public campaigns, and collaborations with experts, we've achieved major milestones, including:



The **historic** legal recognition of decapods as sentient beings in the UK's Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022.



A growing community of over **10,000** supporters and **10,000** followers across social media.



Over **82,000** actions taken by our supporters to improve crustacean welfare.



The creation of the **first** industry hub – a website specifically to empower professionals in the seafood industry, science and academia to discover and implement better welfare practices.



The introduction of The Snapshot, the **first ever** benchmark report on decapod welfare in the seafood sector, now with three annual reports published to date, and showing significant progress in improved policy and practice across major UK seafood businesses.



Commitment from **8** major UK supermarkets to ban live sales of crustaceans in their stores.



We convened policymakers, scientists, and officials at **key events**, including a Roundtable with UK parliamentary Committees, to advance decapod welfare. We also co-hosted a workshop with the London School of Economics, which prompted a government review into how crustaceans are used in scientific research.



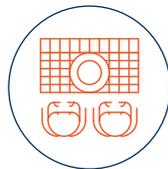
## SECTION 2

# Our new 2025–2028 strategy: Expanding to protect decapod crustaceans in the wild

**A**t Crustacean Compassion, we are driven by a singular mission: to improve the welfare of decapod crustaceans through advocacy, engagement, and education. Our vision is of a world where crustaceans are treated as sentient beings, deserving of legal protection and humane treatment - both in human care and their natural habitats.

## STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

In our 2025–2028 strategy, we are expanding our efforts to protect crustaceans in the wild. This means safeguarding their welfare from the impact of human activities. Our focus will be on two primary outcomes:



### OUTCOME 1

Improved welfare for wild-caught and farmed decapod crustaceans used for various human purposes.



### OUTCOME 2

Stronger protection for wild decapod crustaceans affected by human activities in their natural habitats.

We will continue to operate through our three core pillars to drive meaningful change both in human care and the wild.

# Strategic objectives (2028)

Our strategic objectives outline the tangible goals we aim to achieve by 2028 to drive these outcomes forward:

## OBJECTIVE 1:

Ban harmful practices in the keeping and breeding of wild crustaceans in the UK.

## OBJECTIVE 2:

Implement stricter regulations for handling, transport, and slaughter.

## OBJECTIVE 3:

Ensure enforcement of UK laws to protect threatened wild crustaceans.

## OBJECTIVE 4:

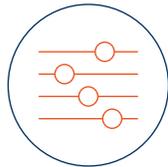
Promote sustainable and ethical markets within the decapod crustacean fishing industry.

## THE 5 R'S FRAMEWORK:

Our work is guided by the 5 R's framework, which shapes our efforts in creating real-world change:



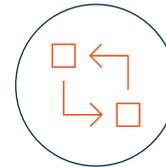
**Reduce** harm by improving industry practices.



**Refine** welfare standards for decapod crustaceans.



**Reject** cruel and destructive practices.



**Replace** them with ethical alternatives.

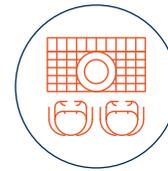


**Reach** legal recognition and protection for decapod crustaceans.





## Strategic outcome I: Protecting crustaceans in human care



Improved welfare for wild-caught and farmed decapod crustaceans used for various human purposes.

Decapod crustaceans endure immense suffering in the commercial food industry and scientific research. They are often confined in cramped, stressful conditions, roughly handled, and subjected to cruel slaughter methods like being boiled alive or torn apart, all while conscious. Despite overwhelming evidence of their ability to feel pain, they are excluded from the UK's Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASP), leaving their welfare unprotected. Their suffering is compounded by the lack of regulation in their transport and killing, with practices like live sales, live posting, and live boiling adding to the cruelty they face. These outdated and cruel practices cause unnecessary harm throughout their lives, from capture to slaughter.

Crustacean Compassion is dedicated to advocating for stronger legal protections, ethical standards, and improved welfare practices for crustaceans in the food industry, scientific research, even in the pet trade and recreational activities, or any other circumstance where they are under human care.

## Strategic outcome 2: Protecting crustaceans in the wild



Stronger protection for wild decapod crustaceans affected by human activities in their natural habitats.

Decapod crustaceans face significant threats in the wild, primarily from habitat loss due to coastal development, pollution, and overfishing. Destruction of critical ecosystems reduces shelter and breeding grounds, making crustaceans more vulnerable to predators and environmental stress. Climate change further disrupts their habitats, with rising temperatures and ocean acidification affecting breeding and food availability. Pollution, including plastic waste and discarded fishing gear, also poses a serious threat, entangling or poisoning crustaceans and further harming their populations.

Crustacean Compassion is committed to protecting decapod welfare on both an individual and population level. Overfishing and harmful practices like bottom trawling damage ocean floors, increases bycatch of juveniles, berried hens and other marine animals, and deplete populations. We will work to ensure better protection for both their well-being and the survival of their populations, advocating for stronger regulations and conservation efforts.





## Why it works

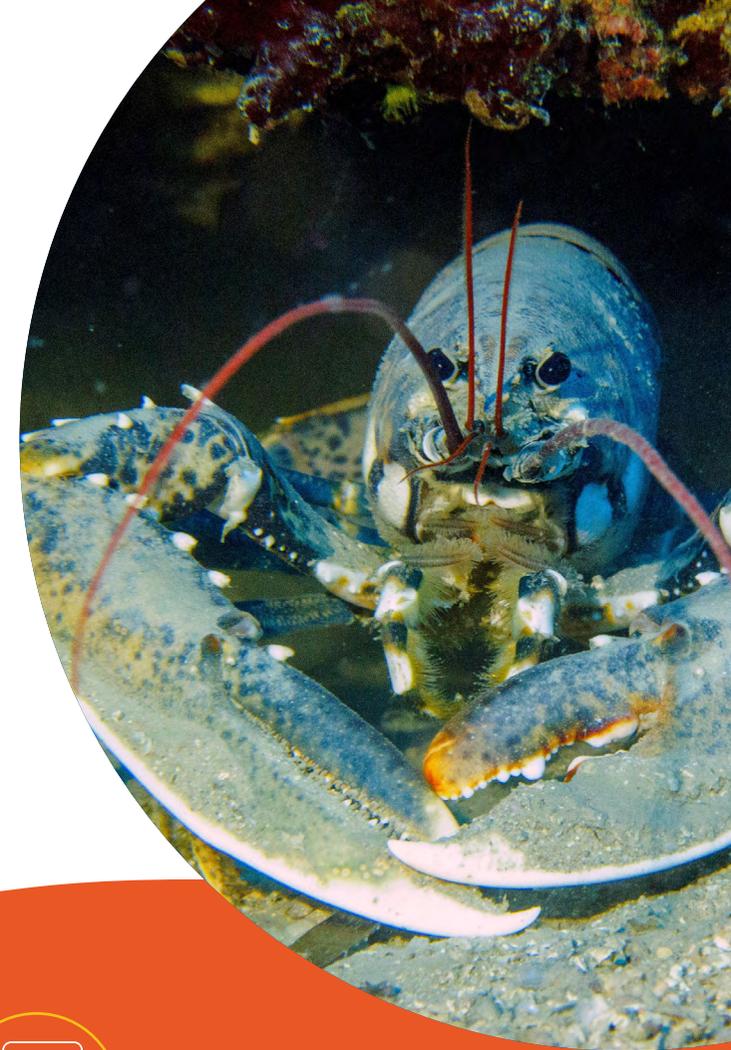
This strategy is grounded in evidence and aligned with our values: crustacean-centred, pragmatic, and courageously challenging the status quo when necessary. With the strategic outcomes and objectives clearly defined, we are committed to tangible change, moving from policy shifts to industry practices, and ultimately creating a more compassionate world for decapod crustaceans. By focusing on these outcomes and objectives, we can track progress, ensure accountability, and maximise impact, while staying true to our mission of fostering a world where all crustaceans are treated with the respect they deserve.

## SECTION 3:

# 2025–2026: Our phased approach: a foundation for lasting change

**O**ur 2025–2028 Strategy is designed to make a significant impact on crustacean welfare over the next several years. To ensure our efforts are as effective and responsive as possible, we've started with an initial two-year campaign plan for 2025–2026. This early phase focuses on building momentum, establishing key partnerships, and achieving tangible results that will lay the groundwork for our longer-term goals.

While the 2025–2028 strategy is already outlined in broad terms, we are choosing to refine it further based on the lessons and successes of our first two years. By focusing on immediate priorities in the early stages, we can assess progress, adapt to new opportunities, and ensure that our future campaigns are informed by real-world insights.



## WHY THIS PHASED APPROACH?



### ADAPTABILITY:

The landscape of crustacean welfare is constantly evolving, and this approach allows us to remain agile, responding to new research, policy shifts, and public sentiment as they arise.



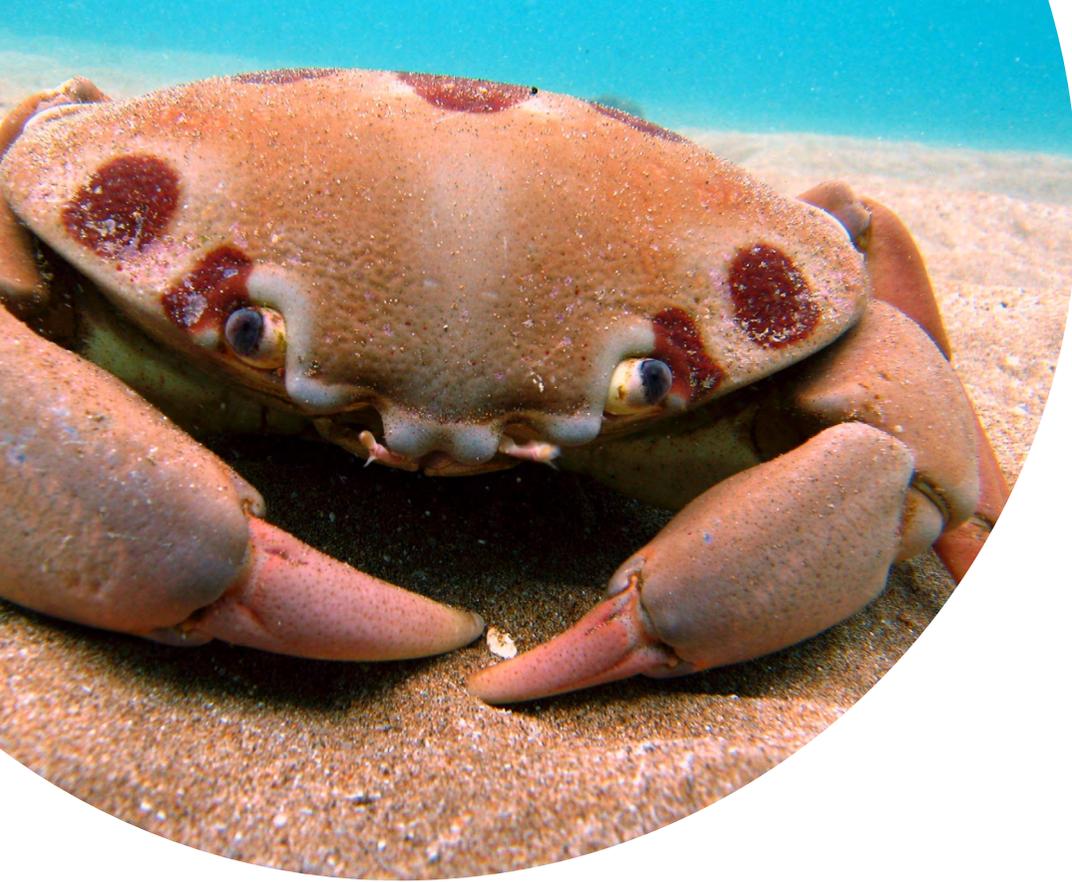
### BUILDING ON SUCCESS:

The initial two-year plan provides the opportunity to test and refine our strategies, setting a solid foundation for the next phase. By evaluating our progress, we can ensure the next plan reflects the latest developments and maximises impact.



### MAXIMISING IMPACT:

This phased approach ensures we prioritise early wins and measurable actions that set the stage for the future. Each step we take now helps pave the way for a more effective and ambitious approach as we move toward 2026 and beyond.



## Summary of our 2025–2026 campaign plan

This two-year campaign plan is a key component of our broader four-year strategy (2025–2028), focused on enhancing protections for decapod crustaceans in both human-use environments (such as food, research, and leisure) and their wild habitats.

The plan is ambitious, with major milestones aimed at addressing some of the most pressing welfare concerns, including bans on mutilations, live boiling, live posting, and live public sales. It also aims to secure crustaceans' inclusion in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and to secure a commitment for inclusion in ASPA. In addition, we will begin initiatives in wild welfare and coastal communities, explore collaboration with certification schemes and investors, and continue our international advocacy efforts.

### CAMPAIGN GOALS (2025–2026)



End cruel practices such as mutilations, conscious boiling, live posting, and live public sales.



Secure the inclusion of crustaceans in UK animal welfare laws (AWA and ASPA).



Continue to drive industry-wide progress through policy engagement and collaborative projects



Initiate work on wild welfare and coastal community engagement.



Collaborate with certification schemes and investors to promote crustacean welfare.



Continue **international advocacy efforts.**



## Conclusion

As we expand our work, we remain committed to our mission and our values. With bold new initiatives, strategic advocacy, and continued public education, Crustacean Compassion is poised to make a lasting impact on the lives of decapod crustaceans worldwide.

**Join us as we work to create a future where all sentient beings, regardless of size or species, are treated with the compassion they deserve.**



## WHO WE ARE

### OUR VISION

a world where decapod crustaceans, such as lobsters and crabs, are valued as sentient animals with legal protection and humane treatment.

### OUR MISSION

Crustacean Compassion's mission is to promote and lead the ethical and humane treatment of decapod crustaceans through advocacy, education, and engagement to build a world where people treat them and their environment with compassion, kindness, and respect.

### OUR VALUES

- **We are crustacean-focused:** Advocating for crustaceans is central to our mission.
- **We are pragmatic:** We collaborate for impact but challenge when needed.
- **We are evidence-based:** Our work is rooted in science, logic, and ethics.
- **We are strategic:** We act efficiently for measurable change.
- **We are courageous:** We uphold our values and challenge the status quo.

# Summary



## HOW WE WORK

### OUR APPROACH

- **Advocacy:** Strengthening and enforcing animal welfare laws for decapod crustaceans.
- **Engagement:** Urging businesses to adopt humane welfare standards for crustaceans.
- **Education:** Promoting awareness of crustacean sentience and humane treatment.

### THE 5 R'S FRAMEWORK

- **Reduce** harm by improving industry practices.
- **Refine** welfare standards for decapod crustaceans.
- **Reject** cruel and destructive practices.
- **Replace** them with ethical alternatives.
- **Reach** legal recognition and protection for decapod crustaceans.



## WHAT WE DO

### STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

1. **Improved welfare for wild-caught and farmed decapod crustaceans** used by humans.
2. **Stronger protection for wild decapod crustaceans** in their natural habitats.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Ban harmful practices** in the keeping and breeding of wild crustaceans in the UK.
2. **Implement stricter regulations** for handling, transport, and slaughter.
3. **Ensure enforcement of UK laws** to protect threatened wild crustaceans.
4. **Promote sustainable and ethical markets** within the decapod crustacean fishing industry.

### CAMPAIGN GOALS (2025–2026)

1. **End cruel practices** such as mutilations, conscious boiling, live posting, and live public sales.
2. Secure the **inclusion of crustaceans in UK animal welfare laws**.
3. Continue to drive industry-wide progress through **policy engagement and collaborative projects**.
4. Initiate work on **wild welfare and coastal community engagement**.
5. Collaborate with **certification schemes and investors** to promote crustacean welfare.
6. Continue **international advocacy efforts**.





Email: [info@crustaceancompassion.org](mailto:info@crustaceancompassion.org)

Website: [www.crustaceancompassion.org](http://www.crustaceancompassion.org)

X: [@crab\\_welfare](https://twitter.com/crab_welfare)

Instagram: [@crustacean\\_compassion](https://www.instagram.com/crustacean_compassion)

Facebook: [CrustaceanCompassion](https://www.facebook.com/CrustaceanCompassion)

LinkedIn: [crustacean-compassion](https://www.linkedin.com/company/crustacean-compassion)