

Let's Talk About HVO

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil: A sustainable fuel for your boat's diesel engine

If you care about the environment, you will be considering how to minimise your carbon footprint when out on the water.

HVO
For leisure
Boaters

Like most inland boaters, your current boat is probably powered by a diesel engine, and you may not be ready to transition to electric drive.

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Fortunately, there is a way to dramatically reduce the CO₂ emissions of your current diesel engine.

In line with our commitment to the [sustainability](#) of boating, the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is working with the Royal Yachting Association (RYA), British Marine (BM) and the Cruising Association (CA) to raise awareness about the environmental and safety benefits of switching recreational vessels from fossil diesel to a **cleaner, greener, sustainable fuel known as HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil)**.

How can inland boaters make the switch?

HVO can be used immediately in your boat's current engine to significantly reduce carbon emissions.

Renewable HVO fuel is:



Historic nb Spey using HVO

- Tried and tested in a range of modern and traditional canal boat engines
- Approved by the leading marine diesel engine manufacturers
- More resistant to 'diesel bug' than mineral diesel and especially 'FAME' biodiesel
- Safe to use as a drop-in replacement for mineral diesel, at any concentration, with no engine modifications required

So, what's the problem?

There are two key barriers to the widespread adoption of HVO (for both propulsion and domestic use) in the leisure boating sector: **Limited Availability and Inconsistent Price**.

Despite a Government managed subsidy ('RTFC's') the price of HVO is very volatile and usually significantly more expensive than mineral diesel. As a result, boaters are reluctant to buy it and suppliers are reluctant to stock it.

The IWA, the RYA, BM and the CA have formed a HVO Joint Working Group to change government policy and increase the adoption of HVO in existing diesel engines across the whole UK recreational boating sector.

TAKE ACTION: Support Our Campaign

The Inland Waterways Association now invites all boaters to help promote HVO.

We need your support as a boater to help increase demand, expand supply and stabilise the price of HVO to encourage the adoption of the biofuel in the leisure boating community. Please:

- ✓ Use HVO whenever you can get it.
- ✓ Inform your fuel supplier (marina, boatyard, hire base) that you would buy HVO if they stocked it.
- ✓ Lobby or write to your MP asking them to pressurise the Government to support our campaign to adopt policies that will make HVO available and affordable to leisure boaters.

THE TECHNICAL BITS: What is HVO?

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil is a new generation renewable fuel produced from bio feedstocks, often waste oils, and stabilised using hydrogen. Certified by the UK Government as sustainable, it is widely reported to reduce carbon emissions by up to 90%. HVO does not suffer from the drawbacks of first-generation biodiesel (known as FAME), such as diesel bug, and is stable for long periods of time.

HVO is:



- Clear, colourless and odourless
- Cleaner than mineral diesel, with lower particle emissions
- More biodegradable than mineral diesel
- Suitable for use in any concentration with mineral diesel, from 1% to 100%
- Suitable for supply and distribution using the existing marine infrastructure

UNITED FOR GREENER BOATING: About the Joint Working Group

The mission of the HVO Joint Working Group is to persuade government to adopt policies that will make HVO affordable and available to leisure boaters. We are also raising awareness among boaters about the environmental, safety and compatibility aspects of the biofuel with the view that an increase in demand will stimulate the supply network in the leisure boating sector.

Backed up by practical evidence and international research, plus [tests](#) and surveys of the use of engines carried out by the Group, we conclude that sustainable HVO is a simple, cheap and immediate pathway to greener boating. We believe it can enable more UK owners of existing inland and seagoing recreational boats to contribute towards Net Zero while novel propulsion technologies are developed for new boats.

THE CHALLENGE: Improving the availability and price of HVO

The price of HVO is very variable and, at times, unattractive to some leisure boaters, partly due to the cost of production and the nature of the markets for feedstock and finished product and despite a Government managed subsidy (RTFC's). This means that distributors and retailers have been reluctant to market it to the boating community in the UK and boaters are hesitant to buy it.



Our surveys suggest that many boaters would be prepared to pay a small premium to reduce their environmental footprint, but there is still work to do to lower and stabilise the price of HVO in our sector.

For inland boaters, our Group is working with suppliers to help explain to boaters about the benefits of adopting HVO in place of mineral diesel. HVO is becoming available for inland waterways vessels in the UK, through the IWA's list of current UK [stockists](#) and other suppliers.

See our webpages: [IWA Sustainable Boating](#)

Join us to help ensure all recreational boating in the UK is more sustainable.