

Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Quarterly Report for the Period Ending February 2017

General Situation

Chief Officer T Robbins

Officers continue to work hard on delivery of a multitude of demands at this time. The enforcement team have 13 current cases which have case files to be produced and sent to the solicitors, there are two cases going to the Crown Court which require far more detailed case file delivery for the barrister to prosecute. The environment officers are finishing off assessments for the remaining European Marine Sites and working on the tranche 2 Marine Conservation Site assessments and possible management measures. The consultation on eleven new tranche three sites will be starting shortly.

The new bass measures introduced at the end of January continue to cause concern for many commercial fishermen with regard to the new allowances and restrictions on vessels entitled to fish with either nets or rod & line. The full list of vessels with the new allowances has still yet to be published. The restrictions for recreational anglers remain the same as last year.

The emerging fishery for live wrasse within the SW has been an emerging issue for all the IFCAs. The wrasse are fished using pots, stored in holding tanks and then transported to Scotland where they are used by the salmon farming industry to help control sealice on the salmon. It has been estimated that 1,000,000 wrasse have been used in the salmon farms in the past twelve months. The fishery is very lucrative for those involved with certain species of wrasse demanding high prices. The effect on the wrasse population of a large scale fishery is at present unclear and the D&SIFCA working with Southern and Cornwall IFCAs are looking at introducing precautionary management to protect the wrasse population. A consultation has already started within the D&SIFCA district with those involved in the fishery to determine the levels of fishing effort and the numbers of wrasse being caught. It is hoped to use the Potting Permit Byelaw to introduce management measures through additional permit conditions.

Officers have been working with the Byelaw and Permitting Sub Committee to produce additional information and a report to the main Authority following on from the November meeting with regard to the Netting Permit Byelaw. Officers have supported the group to produce the fiftieth report so far produced for this byelaw.

Nationally the IFCA Chief Officers have met to discuss the issues around the UK exit from the EU due to be triggered in the next few months. Following a debate in the House of Lords on the future for fisheries post the exit there is expected to be a review carried out by Defra on the future of fisheries and fisheries management within the UK Economic Zone and the 0-12 mile fisheries limits. The Chief Officers are preparing a paper to go to the Association of IFCAs for discussion over the possible future model for fisheries management. Once the paper has been circulated to the AIFCA it will then be discussed by individual IFCAs.

There has been a meeting of the Chairs and Chiefs of the SW IFCAs hosted at the Brixham offices where the three IFCAs discussed closer working, emerging fisheries, the AIFCA and the possible changes to fisheries management as a result of the UK exit from the EU.

Interviews took place at the end of February for the new Enforcement Officer. Four strong candidates were interviewed and in the end the post was offered to Miss Kelly Hobson.

Kelly will start with the D&SIFCA on 3rd April 2107.

On the water and along the coast it has been a relatively quiet period for the enforcement team. Poor weather and reduced fishing activity over the festive period allowed the enforcement team to continue to process a significant number of the case files that had been generated throughout the rest of the year.

The enforcement team did identify further suspected, illegal activity and a further four case files were started. The focus of the enforcement during the quarter switched to illegal netting activity. Enforcement of netting controls is the most challenging work that the officers undertake but the team has had notable successes – more details below.

The submitting of a formal application to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund to support the Authority's purchase of a new patrol vessel has been delayed. There is a limited amount of funding available to all the IFCA's and it is likely that the proportion of those funds available to the Authority would now represent a much lower percentage of the overall cost of a new enclosed wheelhouse RIB than first envisaged. This has allowed the officers to consider further options that have presented themselves recently. Officers are looking at the feasibility of sharing the use of SIFCA's 7.8 metre RIB, currently based in West Bay. There is also the potential to work closer with the Border Force and have officers on board the new coastal class, enclosed RIBs that will be stationed at various ports along the south coast of England including possibly, Plymouth. In addition, continuing the Authority's innovative approach to its work, officers are also looking at the potential that drones may have for future enforcement work.

The number of new cases under investigation during the reporting period was 15. Since December 2015 the total number of investigations now stands at 59. It is important to note that not all of these have been taken forward from the initial evidence gathering stage for example, unmarked and seized pots and nets or reported pot losses resulting from illegal towed gear activity. However the number of investigations represents a significant workload for the officers to undertake in addition to their other work streams. The complexity of some cases and the required evidence gathering also adds to the work required to complete some of the case files.

Byelaw Review

The DCO and the SEO Neil Townsend have continued to work with Members of the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee to work on the draft Netting Permit Byelaw and to start to consider the ten possible permit changes to the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw contained in the report – The three year review of the permit conditions for the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw. Two Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee meetings were held during the reporting period.

The first meeting was used to consider the outcome of the previous Quarterly meeting held in December 2016 when members were only able to consider and agree the first four recommendations relating to the proposed Netting Permit Byelaw. In addition, members considered a proposal to allow the small scale, dredge scallop fishery access to the area known as 'the Bag' in Salcombe Harbour.

The second meeting was used to consider possible management measures that could apply to the emerging pot fishery for live wrasse and four further permit condition changes resulting from the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw review. It was agreed to consult with permit holders on all five proposals as part of the review process set out in the respective Byelaws.

IVMS

A formal application to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund has been submitted through the MMO. If the application is successful it would allow the Authority to facilitate the purchase and installation of IVMS units on board all the under 12 metre vessels engaged in towed gear operations. The over 12 metre vessels are required under existing legislation to have on board an operational and fully functioning VMS unit. The proposed timetable would see all the units fitted and operational by July 2017 but this is becoming increasingly tight to meet.

Training

All of the enforcement officers attended a two day course introducing a new system to collate, disseminate and analyse information relating to suspected illegal activity. The new system will allow the IFCA's to be part of a national intelligence sharing programme. The Authority's appointed Intelligence Officer summarised the training at the most recent staff meeting as it was recognised that all members of staff will receive information that may become important pieces of intelligence. This project has been welcomed as the Authority already approach its enforcement through intelligence led operations and this national approach will strengthen existing data sharing among enforcement partners in the South West.

Selected officers also attended Data Protection Act training and Freedom of Information Act training.

Working together

The cross warranting issues are still to be resolved so the Authority's enforcement officers have continued to work alongside Marine Enforcement Officers from the Marine Management Organisation during the quarter. It was hoped that an Order made under the European Communities Act 1972 would have reinstated the officers' powers to investigate European legislation by the end of January 2017. The timeline for the new order has slipped to June 2017. Officers have conducted joint patrols with MMO officers tasked primarily with enforcing bass regulations but also taking the opportunity to board scallop vessels.

Officers have worked alongside MMO officers on a number of occasions during the period that focussed on illegal netting activity. On one such joint patrol, a 180m net was seized from the Wembury Bay area as it was suspected that the net had been placed in breach of the surface fixed net provisions in Byelaw 17.

Enforcement

By the end of 2016, the enforcement team had initiated a total of 63 investigations. This represented an unprecedented number of cases for the Authority. 41 cases were completed, eight casefiles were forwarded to the MMO for consideration and a further case forwarded to the MCA, leaving 13 cases to be completed.

The 41 cases that were completed resulted in the following actions

3 Prosecutions

5 Financial Administrative Penalties

2 Simple Cautions

19 Written Warnings

12 No further Action

The range of illegal activity was wide including recreational fishers that had breached Bass Nursery Area legislation, and potting permit conditions, commercial fishers that had illegal netting in estuaries and along the coast, and had used towed gear in Marine Protected Areas or breached the scallop regulations. The full range of formal action was used to dispose of the cases.

The most notable outcomes of the investigations happened during the last quarter. The master and owner of the fishing vessel J SEA E333, Mr Dominic WELSH pleaded guilty to a further charge of scallop dredging in the Lyme Bay to Torbay SCI prior to trial at Plymouth Magistrates' Court on 9th December 2016. Having already pleaded guilty to using too many scallop dredges in the Authority's district at an earlier hearing the Magistrates fined the master and owner a total of £37,770 including all of the Authority's prosecution costs of £7,600.

On 17th February Shane BARTON, master and owner of the fishing vessel NICKY NOO PH993 was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment after pleading guilty to three charges of operating an unsafe vessel and on charge of breaching a prohibition notice. A separate 3 month suspended sentence was also activated leading to a total sentence of 15 months. The evidence gained from the investigation that D&SIFCA officers led in the early hours on 14th February 2016 that resulted in a net being seized in the Kingsbridge area was used to convict BARTON.

Investigations (selected)

Offence Date	Investigation complete	Prosecuting Authority	Offence	Location	Outcome/ Current Status
03-13/12/15	Yes	D&SIFCA	Scallop dredging within the Lyme Bay to Torbay SAC and contrary to the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw	Lyme Bay	Pleaded guilty to two charges relating to scallop dredging at Plymouth Magistrates Court 9/12/16 Fined 37,700
16-23/12/15	Yes	D&SIFCA	Scallop dredging contrary to the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw	South of Salcombe	Listed for trial at Plymouth Crown Court on 02/10/17
01 -19/02/16	Yes	D&SIFCA	Scallop dredging contrary to the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw	South of Salcombe	Listed for trial at Plymouth Crown Court on 02/10/17
14/02/16	Yes	D&SIFCA	Fishing with a fixed net contrary to Fixed Engine Byelaw	Salcombe	Case dealt with by MCA prosecution at Plymouth Crown Court on 17/02/17 15 month imprisonment

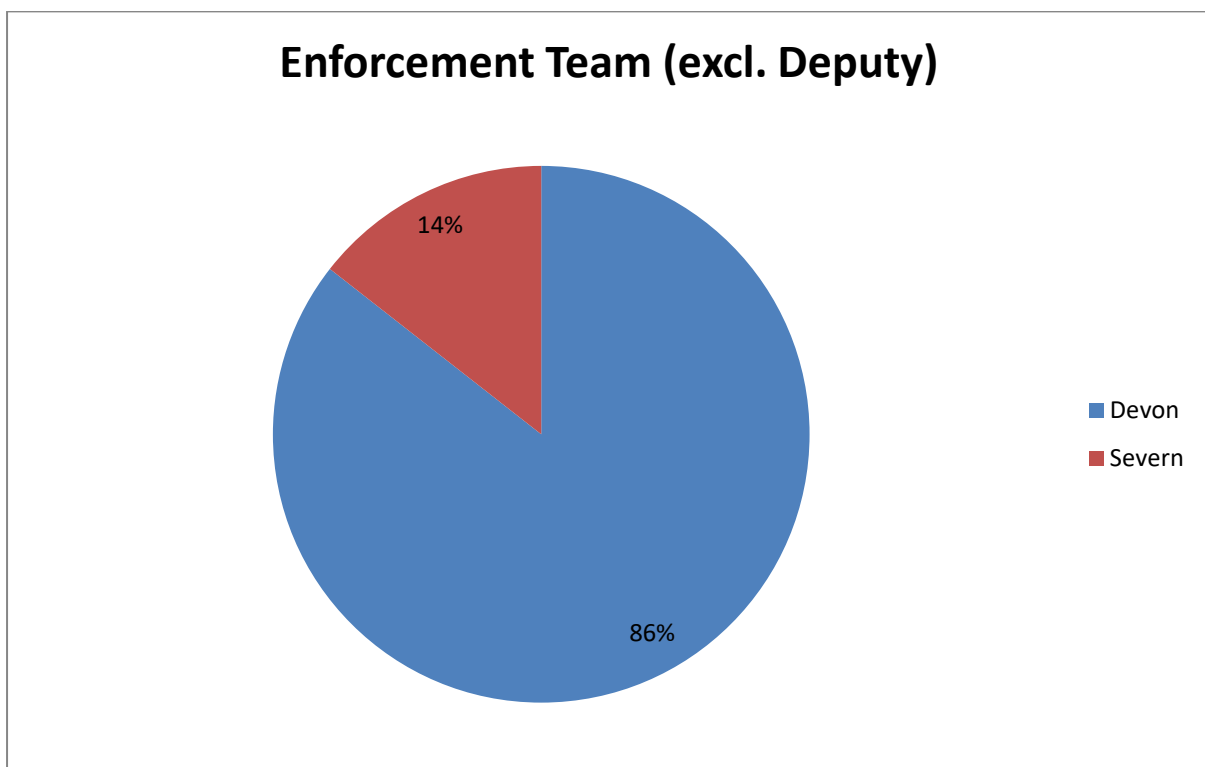
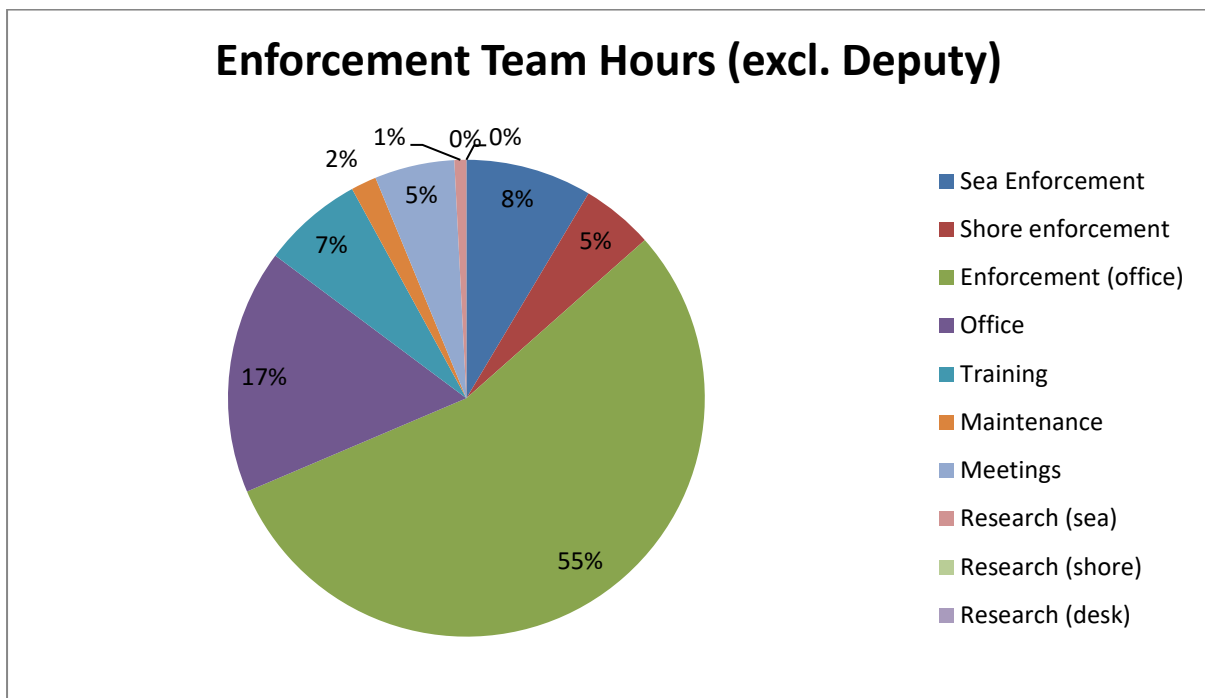
14/06/16	Yes	D&SIFCA	Retaining undersize female edible crab	Dartmouth	£500 FAP refused, pleaded guilty to charge at Torquay Magistrates' Court 30/01/17 fined £3924.84
05/07/16	No	D&SIFCA	Scalloping in closed season contrary to Mobile fishing permit Byelaw	East of Lundy	List for first hearing Torquay Magistrates' court 13/03/17
14/08/16	No	D&SIFCA	Scalloping in closed season contrary to Mobile fishing permit Byelaw	Lyme Bay	List for first hearing Torquay Magistrates' court 13/03/17
06/09/16	No	D&SIFCA	Towing in Start Point to Plymouth Sound SCI	Bigbury Bay	List for first hearing Torquay Magistrates' court 24/04/17
29/09/16	Yes	D&SIFCA	Fishing for bass (recreational anglers) in BNA	Teign	Simple cautions accepted
20/10/16	No	D&SIFCA	Scallop dredging between 1900hrs and 0700hrs	Start Bay	On going
25/10/16	No	D&SIFCA	Retaining undersize edible crab	Beer	On going
08 & 15/11/16	No	D&SIFCA	Use of fixed net	Bigbury Bay	Ongoing
12/11/16	No	D&SIFCA	Towing in Start Point to Plymouth Sound SCI	SW of Bolt Tail	On going
15/11/16	No	D&SIFCA	Towing in IPA and no trawling area	Start Bay	On going
16/11/16	No	D&SIFCA	Use of excessive dredges/dredging between 1900hrs and 0700hrs	Lyme Bay	On going
30/11/16	Yes	D&SIFCA	Use of fixed nets	Wembury Bay	FAP £1000 offered

Summary Table: Enforcement Officers' activities undertaken this quarter that fulfill Devon and Severn IFCA Success Criteria.

Success Criterion (SC)	Activities undertaken
<p>SC1: IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D&SIFCA is building on its own database through the introduction of permit byelaws. • Public consultation on Netting Permit Byelaw including roadshow events at 10 sites in the district • On line purchase of permits launched • Detailed minutes of the Byelaw and Sub-committee meetings made publicly available.
<p>SC2 IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All investigations follow the Enforcement procedures for infringements of fisheries legislation adopted by CIFCA and D&SIFCA • Case file review undertaken.
<p>SC3 IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environment protection within their districts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information from the pre-consultation, and public consultation used in Netting Permit Byelaw development • Three year review of Mobile Fishing Permit conditions undertaken • Consultation on proposed permit condition changes to introduce management of live wrasse fishery launched
<p>SC4 IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPA & FOIA training • Intelligence reporting training • Quarterly reports produced • Performance Assessment and Personal Training meeting conducted
<p>SC5 IFCAs make best use of evidence to deliver their objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers' enforcement activities are guided by the targeted enforcement plan referring to received information (IRs) • Patrol vessels task and review logs maintained.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers use information on illegal activity to inform and develop enforcement plans• EA emergency hotline operatives and Police aware of D&SIFCA• D&SIFCA introduced out of hours contact number 07740 175479 to report suspicious activity.
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Summary of Enforcement Officers' duties carried out during the quarter.



There has been a huge amount of work undertaken and achieved by the Environment Team this quarter, especially with data entry, analysis and report writing. Whilst it felt like the team might breathe a sigh of relief after all the HRAs have been completed, the reality is that there is additional work that is needed to be done. Much of this is in the form of developing monitoring of fishing activities. In some cases voluntary reporting, such as the Shad awareness and Bycatch Reporting Scheme, will be set up, in other cases formal monitoring plan will be developed to provide information on the current uncertainties in fishing activity and impacts.

The Team have worked together to gather as much information as possible on all aspects of the emerging wrasse fishery and the potential impacts of this fishery on the reef and seagrass habitats and on the fish stock itself.

Personal Development Plans and Performance Review interviews were undertaken this quarter between all members of the environment team and the Deputy Chief Officer. A new system has been developed to determine performance measures and these interviews have provided the opportunity to detail each team member's work streams and the objectives that need to be achieved and be measured against. Training and development needs were also discussed with each officer.

Marine Protected Areas

By the end of 2016, all HRAs for amber gear / feature interaction in EMS in the district (apart from bait collection) were completed. Since 2012, 2329 gear/ feature interactions have been assessed whether through a test of likely significant effect or a full HRA. This has been a significant amount of work for the Environment team, which has included detailed literature review, habitat mapping and groundtruthing, interaction studies, fishing activity surveys, GIS mapping, monitoring and evidence gathering. The majority of HRAs have received formal advice from Natural England with agreement with the conclusions of the assessments. However there are still a few that need further consideration and meetings between NE and the IFCA officers have been taking place to move these forward.

Revised HRAs for the Severn Estuary SAC shad and lamprey vs. static nets and Severn Estuary SAC fish assemblage vs. static nets HRAs were sent to NE for formal advice in November. The formal advice has been received and Natural England agrees that these activities are not likely to have a significant effect in view of the conservation objectives of the Severn EMS. A shad awareness and bycatch reporting scheme will be set up in the Severn EMS to satisfy the outcomes of the netting HRAs in relation to Thwaite shad bycatch.

Formal advice has been received from Natural England relating the HRAs undertaken on demersal trawling and scallop dredging that could potentially occur within Lundy SAC. NE has some concerns about the conclusions of the HRAs and officers have participated in discussion with Natural England on these matters. The conclusion from these discussions is that there will need to be some changes in the management of these gear types on the subtidal sand feature of the Lundy SAC that is currently open to access under the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw. A monitoring and control plan will be developed on the trawling that takes place in the Lundy SAC. The Permit conditions for this byelaw are currently being reviewed and this

provided an opportunity to discuss management changes to the access of demersal gear in Lundy SAC at the Byelaw and Permitting Sub Committee meeting in February. The Sub-Committee agreed the recommendation that the IFCA goes out to consultation on the proposed changes to management of these activities following the HRA and formal advice from NE. For the Exe SPA and Plymouth Sound EMS all handgathering HRAs have received formal advice from Natural England.

For the Tranche 1 MCZ in the district assessments have been undertaken and a majority of those have received formal advice from NE. For Lundy MCZ and Tamar Estuary MCZ all those assessments completed have received formal advice from Natural England supporting the conclusions of the assessments. For all Torbay MCZ activities apart from bait collection assessment have been completed and the IFCA is awaiting advice from NE on a small number. A recent telecom took place to discuss the assessment of cuttlepots on the seagrass and discussions are on going. The assessment for scallop dredging and otter trawling on the mud feature of the Torbay MCZ has been completed and formal advice has been received from NE agreeing with the conclusions of this assessment. The conclusions suggest that, changes in management of the towed gear and scallop dredging in the MCZ be introduced to ensure that the conservation objectives of the site are furthered, and both these activities should be prohibited from taking place within the MCZ boundary. Through the review of the Mobile Fishing Permit conditions, the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee heard the rationale behind this decision and made a recommendation for the IFCA to go out to consultation on the impact of these changes in management.

For the Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ a majority of the assessments undertaken have received formal advice from NE and a few are still in discussion with the MMO, NE and Defra. Progress was made with Tranche 2 MCZ fishing activities reports. Draft assessments for Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ have been produced for all activities except towed gear. A spreadsheet recording HRA and MCZ document counts was produced to act as an audit trail for all the assessments that have been made or are in the process of being produced. Extra HRAs have also been carried out to assess numerous derogation requests the IFCA has received for undertaking survey work within European Marine Sites.

Hand gathering / Bait Collection

Only bait digging and crab tiling HRAs remain to be completed. These are progressing and will meet the 2018 deadline set nationally for these activities. With the completion of HRAs for commercial activity in the Severn Estuary EMS, the next step is to undertake HRAs for bait digging activities. Bait digging data was collected for the Severn between 2012 and 2015 and on the Devon coast in 2014-2015. This data is being analysed in 'R' a code-based statistics package for ecologists and in GIS.

Work has started on the HRAs for bait digging and crab tiling activity in the Exe Estuary SPA. These assessments can be completed once the 2016 Crab Tile Survey Report and the 2014 Bait Digging report are completed and signed off. Crab tile counts were completed from the drone imaging of the Exe Estuary, and the crab tiles were mapped in MapInfo. Crab tile HRAs for Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC and Tamar Estuaries Complex SPA were completed this quarter and are ready to be sent formally to Natural England. Crab tile surveys of the Teign, Axe and Dart estuaries were carried out this quarter. These were the final crab tile surveys for all the estuaries in Devon. These surveys will help assess changes in effort in the

estuaries in Devon and inform HRA bait collection assessments for MPAs. All the survey data from 2016 have been mapped in GIS. A subsequent crab tile survey report has been produced detailing counts and distribution maps. A report was completed for the Taw Torridge crab tile survey, which saw the use of a drone for the first time by the environment team.

In order to inform the MCZ assessments on “hand-gathering” activity, surveys have been established to assess the level of effort of shellfish collection and bait-digging activities in the Torbay MCZ. Four surveys are carried out per month; one weekday and one weekend over a neap tide, and one weekday and one weekend over a spring tide. This study commenced in November 2016 and will last for 12 months. Surveys last for one hour either side of low tide, and all hand-gathering activity is recorded.

Fin Fish

European sea bass

A major step forward relating to Devon and Severn IFCA’s work plan for European Sea Bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) was achieved this quarter. The Immature Bass Acoustic Stock Surveillance (IBASS) project, led by the D&S IFCA-Plymouth University co-funded PhD student (Thomas Stamp) and his director of studies (Dr Emma Sheehan) has successfully secured £241,685 of European Marine Fisheries Fund (EMFF) funding in collaboration with D&S IFCA.

The IBASS project will place a series of acoustic receivers in 3 estuaries (Dart, Salcombe, and Taw-Torridge) and tag 50 bass per estuary to look at the movement of juveniles and sub-adults within and in-and-out of estuaries. The aims of the research are strongly management-focused and resulted from questions relating to the functioning of bass nursery areas, especially the suitability of existing boundaries of bass nursery areas and the level of protection offered to different age classes of bass. This project also fits in to the regional management work plan outlined in previous quarterly papers.

A recent meeting of the Cefas C-BASS project was attended with more interesting results from data storage tagging showing a range of movement behaviours in adults from relatively small ranges, to large migrations.

Sharks, skates and rays

A two day workshop facilitated by Cefas and the National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations (NFFO) was attended in York. The workshop focused on developing work areas for future fisher-science partnerships and focused on four case studies: brown crab, skates and rays, bass and monkfish. A number of potential future partnerships were identified and will be taken forward for future Fisheries Science Partnership (FSP) funding.

Importantly, Cefas committed to undertaking some dedicated blonde ray survey work in North Devon. Drawing attention to the need for this work was one of the major goals of the North Devon Ray Pilot Project, so it is a major step forward to see this work planned.

Wrasse

Following on from the information provided in the last quarterly report, officers have been gathering further evidence on the biology, ecology and behaviour of the different wrasse species present in the D&S IFCA district. A non-technical summary document was also produced along with proposals for survey work. More information has been collected from the fishing industry and salmon farms to understand the level of effort that has already been happening on stocks in the South West and what is the likely effort for 2017. A paper has also been prepared on the monitoring and survey work that the IFCA is considering during 2017. These papers were presented to the Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee to allow discussion on what management measures may be appropriate for the fishery in 2017. The Sub-Committee made recommendations on the possible management measures that are being considered and a consultation document was sent out to the Potting Permit holders on Friday 24th February 2017 to seek views on the proposals, the financial impact of the management measures proposed and suggestions on any other suitable measures.

Further research was carried out on the ecology of wrasse this quarter to add to the literature review, including a summary table of their life history characteristics. A non-technical summary document was also produced.

Shellfish

Mussels

Data from the 2016 Taw-Torridge and Exe mussel stock assessments have been fully analysed, and reports are now available for both surveys.

Cockles

Data from the previous seven years of cockle surveys on the Exe Estuary were collated and sorted for analysis. Size frequency and year class distribution graphs, density maps and biomass calculations were made for each year (2010-2016). A report was then produced using this data.

Scallops

Following the analysis of the video footage of The Bag area of the Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary, and the report recommending a trial opening of this area to the winter scallop fishery, advice was received back from Natural England. Natural England raised several questions, largely around the uncertainty of the level of effort, the footprint of the gear and impacts of the fishery on the features of the SSSI and their recoverability. Discussions with Natural England as to how these questions can be answered are still ongoing, but in the meantime, there will no change to the current fishery area.

Some survey planning was carried out for a possible survey investigating the effectiveness of different scallop stock assessment methods, focussing on the use of flying array and scallop dredges. Discussions are ongoing with industry members as to how and where the survey can be conducted. D&S IFCA and Cefas are working collaboratively to undertake scallops surveys in the district to inform national stock assessment. SV Black Jack will be trialled as a platform for this work and it is likely to take pace in April

Recreational Sea Angling

A number of Angling Zone surveys at Burnham, Berrow and Brean have taken place this quarter. Anglers have been present on most surveys, but effort has been low this quarter at Berrow and Brean. Anglers have reported a bad year for shore-caught cod, which may be affecting numbers.

The second film of Devon and Severn's part in the FishTrail project was filmed at Minehead. The video focused on techniques for shore fishing for cod in Somerset, and highlighted good practice to maximise post catch and release survival.

Consultations

A number of consultations were responded to this quarter, including one for the Greenlink Interconnector Project and for the extension of current dredging areas in the Severn. The latter of these projects has potential to impact important fish habitats and so required an in-depth response.

Meetings

A two-day workshop was attended in Norwich hosted by Natural England, to discuss Adaptive Risk Management in MPAs and how Monitoring and Control Plans can be used to inform HRAs and provide additional evidence to ensure the MPA site integrity is not significantly affected by the activities being monitored. DCO Clark gave a presentation on Lundy SAC. A meeting of the National MPA steering group, made up of officers from JNCC, NE, MMO, Cefas and EA, was attended in London, which focussed on research surveys, monitoring and reporting.

An aquaculture workshop was attended in Poole, Dorset. Officers from Southern IFCA and Cornwall IFCA were there together with academics, Cefas, NE and industry members. This was a useful meeting to discuss aquaculture opportunities and how aquaculture development can be included in Marine Planning. Also discussed were the hindrances to aquaculture development and the potential conflicts with other commercial fishing sectors.

Two 'Severn Vision' meetings were attended, with the IFCA acting as an external input on the ecosystem services topic group. The Severn Vision project brings together a number of environmental NGOs around the Severn Estuary and seeks to promote an alternative vision for the estuary, maximising its natural capital and heritage value.

A meeting was held between D&S IFCA, the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities and Natural England to discuss various aspects relating to recreational use of the estuary. New pocket codes of conduct are being designed by ASERA, which cover a number of recreational activities in the estuary. D&S IFCA is going to assist NE with links to the recreational angling sector in the upper Severn, where NE is concerned about disturbance to birds in particularly sensitive area.

A meeting with the MMO Marine Planning Team was held in Brixham to discuss the inclusion of inshore fisheries in the South West Marine Plan and to establish how best the IFCA can feed into the Marine Planning process, and the sharing of data. Subsequent public meetings were attended in Plymouth and Taunton.

A workshop to the sonar camera Sabellaria trial survey was attended in Newport with Natural Resources Wales and NE to discuss the Sabellaria trial survey carried out with the sonar camera in the Severn. The trial was a success and there was discussion on how to analysis the results of this new technique, and how to move forward with the work. Subsequent work is being planned.

The Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) was attended, and update was given on the progress of the Netting Permit Byelaw. Both the Exe Estuary Officer's Working Group and Management Group were attended; a presentation was given at the Management Group on the survey work that has been carried out on the Exe this year. An evening forum detailing the proposed changes to the zonation of activities on the Exe was also joined; this was followed up by a meeting with the crab tilers to discuss updates to the voluntary Code of Conduct. A meeting was also held at the IFCA office with the new "Habitat Mitigation Officers", who will be working on the Exe, to discuss joint-working and how to best use our resources together.

D&S IFCA attended the last steering group meeting of the partnership group Sea Torbay this quarter. With the lack of funding an officer could no longer be maintained to run the group and co-ordinate meetings and undertake project work. The group has been round up for the foreseeable future though a database link of interested parties and those involved in the marine and maritime aspects of Torbay will be maintained.

Teleconferences have been held with Natural England regarding outstanding HRAs and advice relating to the extension of the Salcombe scallop fishery report. A telecom was also held to discuss the towed gear and scallop dredge on sandbanks HRAs. The telecom was used to discuss where to go next with the management of the site. D&S IFCA continues to dial into monthly meetings of the Managing Fisheries in MPA working group.

Environment Officer Lauren Parkhouse is currently the secretary of the IFCA Technical Advisory Group, and as such produced minutes for the last TAG meeting and carries out administration and dissemination of information to other members of the Technical Advisory group. A two-day TAG workshop was held at Cornwall IFCA in February. The focus of the workshop was surveys, from planning the survey, executing the survey, processing the data, and reporting the results.

Project UK Fisheries Improvements meetings which were held in Brixham were attended. One meeting related to the Channel scallop stock and the other covered both the Western Channel crab and Celtic Sea lobster stocks. The meeting was attended by Cefas, Marine Stewardship Council and the industry to discuss the process for the MSC pre-assessment for these species stocks.

There have been a number of phone calls with the shellfish team at Cefas to discuss the potential of scallop stock assessment work on-board Black Jack. They will be chartering the vessel, crew and flying array camera to undertake this work. There is a plan to trial the different camera systems for two days and then use the most appropriate method to carry out scallop stock assessments in areas closed to scallop dredging.

Training

Data Protection training was undertaken in January, to ensure all Officers are familiar with the relevant legislation and responsibilities.

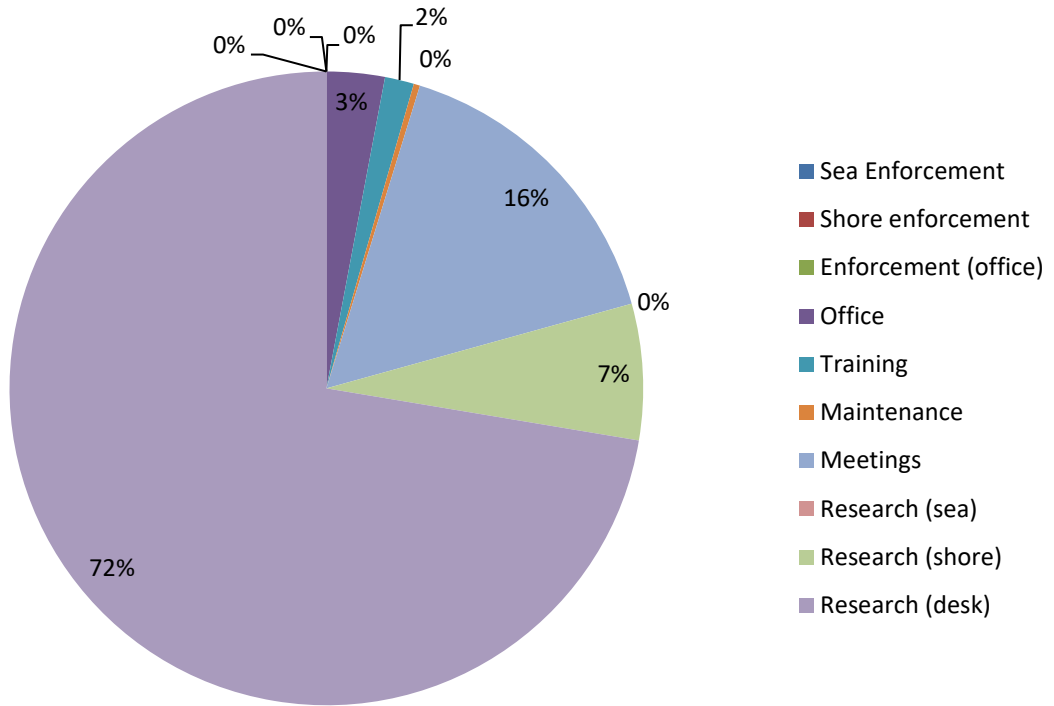
Environment Officer Katherine Stephenson, will be commencing her maternity leave on 3rd March 2017 and in preparation for this, she has been training Research Assistant Steph Davies, who is covering her maternity leave period. 'Maternity Handover' topics include assessing dispensation requests, inter-tidal survey planning, MEDIN, Management of the Waddeton Order and Salcombe Scallop Fishery and other responsibilities and tasks currently undertaken by Katherine.

In house training in Marine Environmental Data and Information Network training was undertaken. It is a key deliverable that the IFCA uploads metadata from all surveys to MEDIN. One of the Environment Team undertook Sea survival training provided by Western Maritime Training.

Success Criteria	
<p>SC 1: IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Officers met, engaged and worked with members of SD&CSA, NE, EA, and with fishers around the district • Telecoms have been attended to discuss EMS and MCZ work. • Responded to research and environment enquiries via telephone, e-mail and attended telecoms. • Officers attended EMS working and management group meetings. • Local partnership meetings and fora were attended. • ASERA meetings were attended and partnership working discussed. • Meetings with NE to discuss HRAs. • IFCA TAG research workshop was attended. • Env Officer is secretary of IFCA TAG. • Presentations given at fora and stakeholder meetings • DCO attended an ARM workshop with other IFCAs, NE, JNCC, EA, WG, industry members, MMO • Aquaculture development workshop was attended with stakeholders and regulators • Officer inputted into the call for evidence for the SW Marine Plan • Severn Vision meetings were attended • Project UK Fisheries improvement meetings were attended • A sharks, skates and rays workshop was attended
<p>SC 2: IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several shore enforcement patrols were undertaken in the district
<p>SC 3: IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRAs undertaken for amber gear / feature interactions in MPA. • Scallop assessment survey planned • Wrasse literature review, collation of information on wrasse biology & ecology & fisheries activities investigations were carried out • Wrasse information was collated and present to Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee to inform management measures • Bass studies have been undertaken • Officer aided the successful funding bid for the IBASS project

<p>protection within their districts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRA undertaken for derogation requests • Meetings held with Natural England on EMS & MCZ in the district. • Meeting attended regarding PhD on Bass with student and supervisors • Crab tile surveys completed on Devon estuaries to inform bait collection HRAs • Crab tile survey data was analysed and locations mapped using GIS • Crab tile survey reports being prepared and some completed • Berrow Brean and Burnham Angling Zone monitoring continued. • Hand gathering surveys undertaken in Torbay MCZ • Cockle and mussel survey data have been analysed to inform stock assessments
<p>SC 4: IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of quarterly reports. • On-going meetings with all environment staff on the progress of research projects and HRA. • Data protection training was undertaken • In-house MEDIN training took place • Hand over training given for maternity cover • Sea survival training undertaken • Personal development plans and performance review interviews took place this quarter with all team members
<p>SC 5: IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R-training course allowed for sharing of assessment techniques and research interests • Env Officer sits on TAG and inputs into SOPS and shares research outcomes • Crawfish monitoring survey is ongoing

Environment Team Hours (excl. Deputy)



Environment Team (excl. Deputy)

