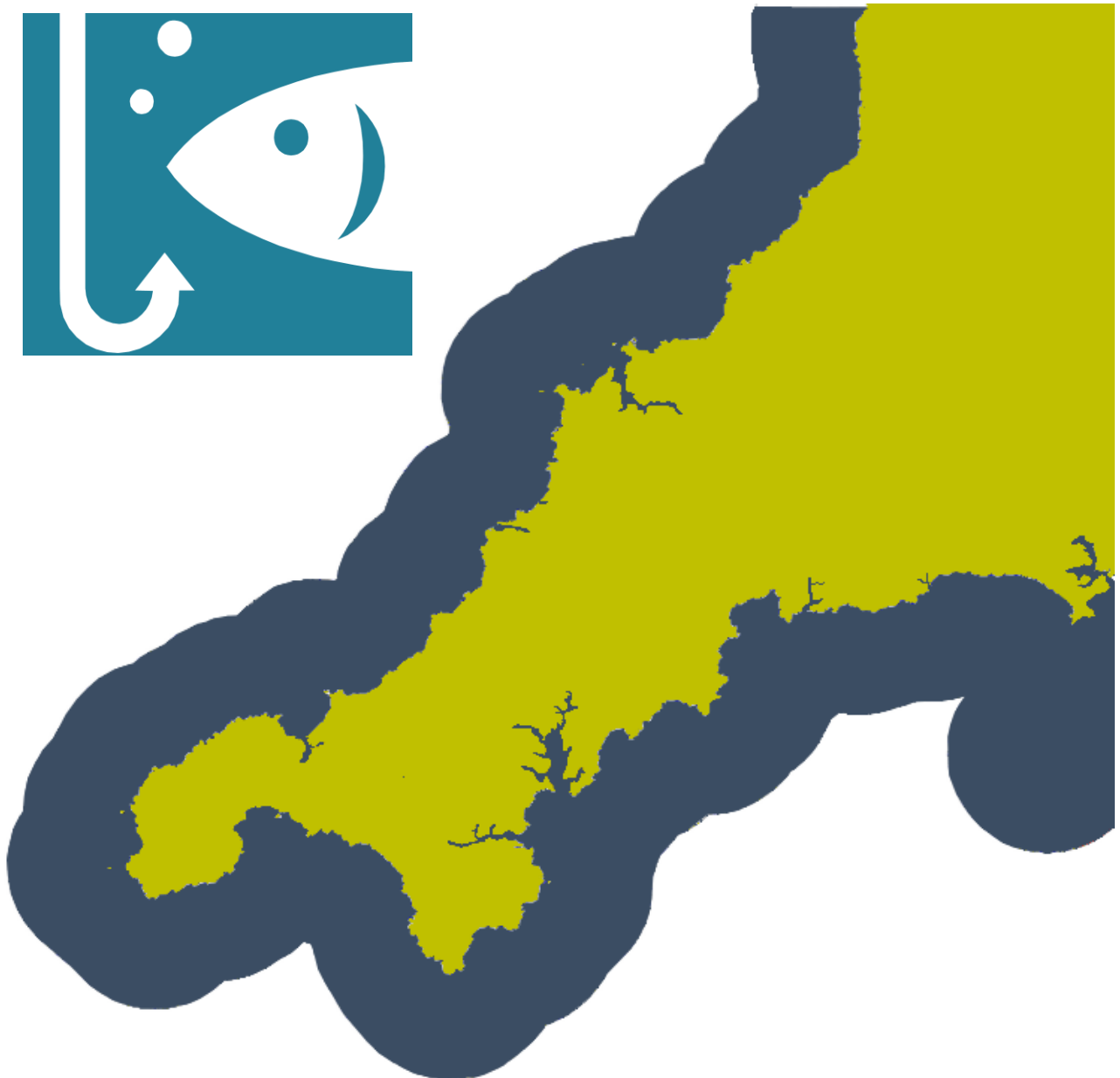
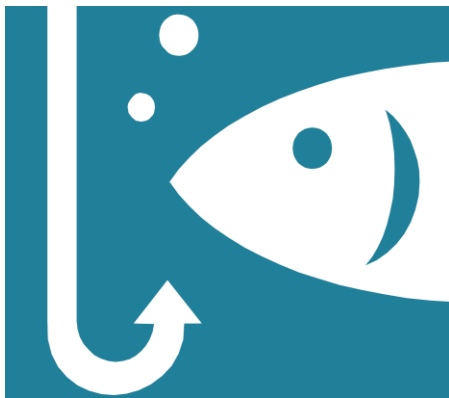




# Recreational Sea Angling Strategy

*Review date 2019*



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## **Cornwall Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) Vision**

Cornwall IFCA will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries. It will do this by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable future.

### **1. What we want to achieve**

- 1.1 Cornwall IFCA will support a healthy, viable recreational sea angling sector for Cornwall, as a vital part of sustainable inshore fisheries.
- 1.2 Cornwall IFCA will include the views and aspirations of the recreational sea angling sector into the management of its fisheries in a transparent and fair manner.
- 1.3 The aims and outcomes of this strategy will be

#### Aims:

- To engage and work effectively with the recreational sea angling sector;
- To acknowledge and celebrate the economic and social benefits of recreational sea angling;
- To bring together existing information and data relating to the recreational sea angling sector in Cornwall as well as nationally; and
- To establish a structure defining how Cornwall IFCA will work with the recreational sea angling sector over the current 4 year reporting period.

#### Outcomes

- For recreational sea anglers to develop their understanding of and support for the work of Cornwall IFCA;
  - To establish a framework where Cornwall IFCA can identify achievable benefits for recreational anglers;
  - Identify future research activities; and
  - Gather data to better understand both the recreational sector, as well as other sectors which target similar species around Cornwall.
- 1.4 All ten IFCA around England work to a four year reporting period. This Recreational Strategy will be reviewed after April 2019 unless matters arise which require review prior to this date.

### **2. Why a recreational Sea Angling Strategy?**

- 2.1 Recreational sea angling is a high-value leisure activity in Europe, with more than 8 million anglers spending over €8 billion on the pursuit each year. During 2012, in England, this expenditure amounted to £1.23 billion on sea fishing, and this was estimated to support over 10,000 full-time equivalent jobs. Recreational sea angling also provides significant social benefits, like accessible relaxation and exercise<sup>1</sup>. Recreational sea angling is a traditional, valuable and important part of the inshore fisheries in Cornwall and must be considered as a vital part of the work of Cornwall IFCA.

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<sup>1</sup> Recreational sea fishing – the high value forgotten catch by K. Hyder, M. Armstrong, K Ferter and H Strehlow. Available at: <http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Documents/Pages%20from%20ICES%20Insight%202014.pdf>

2.2 Cornwall IFCA was vested in April 2011 under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA). It assumed all of the duties of the preceding Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee (SFC) as well as responsibilities for estuarial waters in Cornwall including a section of the Tamar river complex (formerly managed by Devon SFC). The preceding sea fisheries authority for rivers and estuaries in Cornwall was the Environment Agency.

2.3 Within part 6 of MaCAA<sup>2</sup>, which describes Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, the duties of IFCAs are described as:

*153 Management of inshore fisheries*

1. *The authority for an IFC district must manage the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in that district.*
2. *In performing its duty under subsection (1), the authority for an IFC district must—*
  - a. *seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way,*
  - b. *seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation,*
  - c. *take any other steps which in the authority's opinion are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, and*
  - d. *seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.*

2.4 This clearly states that Cornwall IFCA must include the needs of all sectors, including recreational sea anglers, in its overall management of the fisheries within its district.

2.5 In common with some other areas, the preceding Cornwall SFC had a more commercial fishing focus than is expected of the IFCAs. In the five years since its vestment Cornwall IFCA has endeavoured to widen and develop its understanding of and engagement with the recreational sea angling sector. However, in the IFCA quadrennial report published in March 2015<sup>3</sup> it was stated that, in respect of Cornwall IFCA;

*“... Some respondents believed there is still some progress to be made effecting a cultural transition from a Sea Fisheries Committee concerned with regulating commercial fishing activity, to an Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority. However, respondents recognised the motivation, professionalism and dedication of IFCA staff and the evidence based approach to developing environmental measures.”*

Cornwall IFCA accepted that there was a need to develop and improve its involvement and engagement with the recreational sea angling sector and has invested considerable resources in this development.

2.6 In September 2014 Cornwall IFCA held a public meeting to gather opinion about how it could work more effectively with the recreational sea angling sector. The meeting demonstrated a clear desire

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<sup>2</sup> The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 available from <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/contents>

<sup>3</sup> *Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Conduct and Operation 2010 – 2014*: published by Defra available at, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/413425/ifca-review-2010-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413425/ifca-review-2010-2014.pdf)

for greater engagement from within the sector. In the following months Cornwall IFCA has made efforts to increase engagement as well as involve recreational sea anglers more proactively in decision making.

2.7 This recreational sea angling strategy will describe the intent of Cornwall IFCA to transparently bring recreational interests into the wider care and management of its inshore fisheries.

### 2.8 Aspirations of recreational sea anglers

A successful recreational angling sector will support the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors as well as adding to the economy of Cornwall and the UK, through a mix of local anglers and angling related tourism.

2.9 Cornwall IFCA will work with anglers and other sectors, to, where possible, improve the experience of sea anglers in its district. In order to do this we need to understand what would represent an improvement for recreational sea anglers in Cornwall. The following list reflects what we have heard through a series of public meetings, as representing a healthy recreational sector.

Recreational anglers want;

- To catch a wide range of different species;
- A healthy range of sizes and ages within target fish species;
- A growth in the sport fishing sector including more and younger anglers;
- Increased revenue generated from tourists coming on holiday to fish; and
- Better communication and fewer conflicts between all those using the marine environment.

3.1 These aspirations will guide our management of the inshore fisheries as part of our commitment to find the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits of the marine environment and sea fisheries resources.

## 3. Evidence based marine management

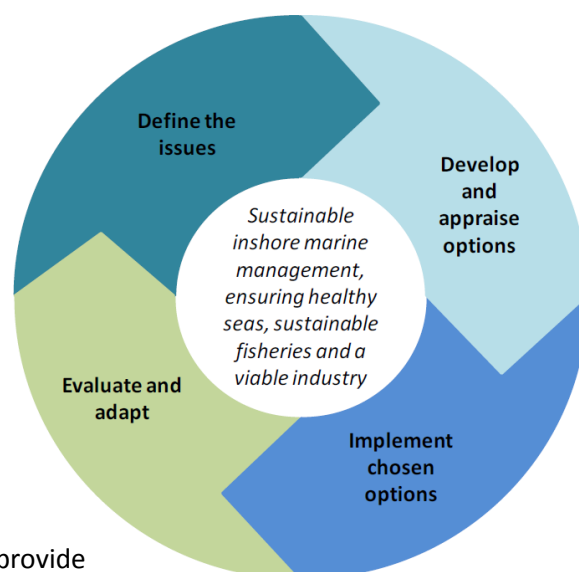
3.2 Cornwall IFCA must base its management of the fisheries and environment in Cornwall on sound evidence. The guidance issued by Defra describes the evidence based marine management cycle as follows.

Define the issues:

- Is it our responsibility to act?
- Prioritise issues.
- Resources/timescales.
- Gather evidence.
- Work with stakeholders to improve evidence.

Develop options:

- Use evidence to inform options – regulation or not?
- What impacts will there be to stakeholders?
- How can it be enforced?
- Develop byelaw or other option and provide



supporting evidence.

Implement:

- Consult on byelaw or other measures.
- Inform stakeholders of outcome and timetable.
- Implement byelaw or other measures.
- Monitor impacts by gathering evidence.

Evaluate

- Talk to stakeholders about impacts.
- Did the measure work and is there evidence?
- Report your findings.
- Review in following year.

3.3 Every stage of the cycle requires sound evidence to demonstrate that Cornwall IFCA is taking appropriate actions.

3.4 Whilst Cornwall IFCA recognises the importance of the recreational sector, activities suggested by this strategy will have to compete for limited resources in terms of staff time and available funds.

## **4. Social, economic and environmental impact of the recreational sea angling sector**

4.1 There have been a number of studies to quantify the social and economic benefits of recreational sea angling, the most recent being Sea Angling 2012. This was a national level survey conducted by Cefas (Centre for Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) on behalf of Defra<sup>4</sup>. The headline figures associated with this study are that:

- There are an estimated 884 000 sea anglers in England
- In 2012 it is estimated that sea anglers resident in England spent £1.23 billion on the sport (£831 million in direct spend, almost £360 million gross value added (GVA) to UK economy)
- Sea angling supported over 23 600 jobs in the UK.

4.2 As well as its financial contribution, angling also provides both health and societal benefits. Angling (coarse, game and sea fishing) provides an opportunity for participants to access the natural environment and to engage in a sport with variable levels of physical demands, allowing for a gradual increase in frequency, duration and intensity of activity for those recovering from illness or injury or developing their level of fitness. Also, by moderating their technique or location, anglers are able to remain physically active long after their ability to participate in other sports has declined. Angling also provides opportunities for promoting good mental health and maintaining social connections<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Armstrong, M., Brown, A., Hargreaves, J., Hyder, K., Pilgrim-Morrison, S., Munday, M., Proctor, S., Roberts, A. and Williamson, K., 2013. Sea Angling 2012 – a survey of recreational sea angling activity and economic value in England. Defra, London.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, A., Djohari, N., Stolk, P., 2012. Fishing for Answers: Final Report of the Social and Community Benefits of Angling project: Section 2: Angling Health and Well-Being. Available at [http://www.resources.anglingresearch.org.uk/sites/resources.anglingresearch.org.uk/files/Substance\\_AnglingReport\\_Section2\\_WellBeing.pdf](http://www.resources.anglingresearch.org.uk/sites/resources.anglingresearch.org.uk/files/Substance_AnglingReport_Section2_WellBeing.pdf)

- 4.3 Tourism is vital to the Cornish economy. In 2011 the GVA (measure of economic output) of Cornwall was £7.5bn<sup>6</sup>. In the same year, a study undertaken by Visit Cornwall showed that total direct visitor spend<sup>7</sup> for the same year was valued at £1.9bn, around 25% of Cornwall's economy.
- 4.4 Recreational fishing potentially adds to this tourist revenue. However, the extent is very difficult to quantify. However, Cornwall IFCA recognises that recreational sea angling may represent added value to the visitor experience of Cornwall, aside from those who may specifically come here to fish.
- 4.5 It is clear that recreational sea angling in Cornwall is a traditional, important and valuable sector exploiting Cornwall's fisheries and must be considered as part of the overall fisheries management, in line with the IFCA vision and Cornwall IFCA's duties under MaCAA.

## 5. Environmental impact of recreational sea angling.

- 5.1 Individual sea anglers have relatively little effect on the marine environment. However, the Sea Angling 2012 survey estimated that there are 884 000 sea anglers in England with almost 4 million days of sea angling recorded in 2012<sup>8</sup>. This scale of effort means that, even if individual anglers have relatively low impact, the impact of the sector as a whole may have a significant effect on the marine environment.
- 5.2 Recreational sea anglers are interested in catching a wide range of different species, and with a range of motivations. However in order to estimate the impact of recreational sea angling on fish stocks Sea Angling 2012<sup>7</sup> looked at two key species which are of interest to both the recreational and commercial sectors, bass and cod. It estimated that in 2012 the annual catches of bass by the recreational sector were 380-690 tonnes, with 230-440 tonnes being retained. This compares with UK commercial landings (mostly to England) of 879 tonnes. The report also estimates that the recreational sector catches 480-870 tonnes of cod, with 430-820 tonnes being retained. This compares to 2012 commercial landings of cod into England from the North Sea, Channel, Celtic Sea and Irish Sea of 1 500 tonnes.
- 5.3 These estimated figures indicate that whilst many anglers practice catch and release, the recreational sector may make a significant contribution to the mortality of key fish species. This view is supported by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF), who have estimated that across Europe, 25% of the bass removed from the fisheries are caught by recreational anglers<sup>9</sup>. This estimated impact has resulted in the first ever bag limit applied to recreational anglers

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<sup>6</sup> Cornwall Council "Cornwall's economy at a glance - January 2013" available at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/3624042/Cornwalls-economy-at-a-glance.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Including second home/holiday accommodation spend as well as friends and relatives with whom the visitors may be staying

<sup>8</sup> Armstrong, M., Brown, A., Hargreaves, J., Hyder, K., Pilgrim-Morrison, S., Munday, M., Proctor, S., Roberts, A. and Williamson, K., 2013. Sea Angling 2012 – a survey of recreational sea angling activity and economic value in England. Defra, London.

<sup>9</sup> STECF, 2014. Request for Services - Sea bass. Commitment No. SI2.680348. Paper for STECF July 2014 Sea bass fisheries in Europe and their management. UK and France (background documents on: <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/plen1402>).

across the EU, of three fish per angler per day. This was reduced in 2016 to one fish per day with catch and release only from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016.

- 5.4 The estimates of the proportion of fishing mortality accounted for by the recreational sector are disputed by some. However, it is clear that the high participation in recreational angling may have an impact on the marine environment. Cornwall IFCA is committed to working with the recreational sea angling sector to promote and support responsible fishing. This will be best achieved by working with recreational sector organisations to support and develop existing campaigns and programmes promoting responsible angling.

## **6. Restrictions which apply to recreational angling in the Cornwall District.**

- 6.1 It is not the intention of this section to document all the restrictions which may apply to the recreational sector, as these are subject to frequent change. The following are the broad areas of restrictions which apply to the recreational anglers in Cornwall.
- 6.2 Recreational anglers must abide by the minimum sizes for various fish species across the district. These sizes may be set by local, national or European legislation. Cornwall will apply appropriate sanctions where any sector, including recreational anglers, are found to be retaining fish under these minimum sizes.
- 6.3 There are a number of species which are protected and may not be removed from the fisheries by any means. These include shads<sup>10</sup> (twaite and Allis), some species of shark (including angel sharks<sup>9</sup> and tope<sup>11</sup>) and some species of ray. These may be protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act or under European or international legislation. The above is not a comprehensive list and may change; please contact us if you need more information.
- 6.4 There are very few restrictions on where recreational anglers can fish in Cornwall with the possible exception of private fisheries, private land or other areas where access may be restricted. In addition there are also areas with some specific restrictions such as bass nursery areas. At the time of writing, bass nursery area legislation<sup>12</sup> is under national review and this may lead to different restrictions on bass fishing in the future. Cornwall IFCA has involved the recreational sector in its part of this review and has committed to do so again in any future consultations on bass nursery areas.
- 6.5 For more information on any restrictions which may apply to fishing activities please visit our website or contact our enforcement team.

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<sup>10</sup> Shad and Angel Sharks are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 along with Basking Shark some species of goby and some other marine organisms.

<sup>11</sup> Tope are protected by a UK Statutory Instrument, the Tope (Prohibition of Fishing) Order 2008

<sup>12</sup> The Bass (Specified Areas) (Prohibition of Fishing) Order 1990



## 7. How will we achieve the aims of this strategy?



### Engagement:

- 7.1 Good engagement is key to the effective working of Cornwall IFCA. Effective engagement means providing helpful information and fostering understanding within a sector, as well as listening to and learning from individuals and organisations.
- 7.2 We maintain links with the primary organisations and clubs which represent individual anglers, as well as interacting with a broad range of individuals through a variety of channels including tackle shops, public forums and public meetings.
- 7.3 We maintain a database of individuals who wish to be included and informed about matters which may affect recreational sea anglers. This database will be regularly reviewed and we will take every opportunity to encourage people to share their details with us.
- 7.4 We hold regular public meetings specifically with the recreational sea angling sector to better inform anglers of the work of Cornwall IFCA, as well as to listen to individuals' views of the health of fisheries and any areas of concern. There will be at least one public meeting held per year specifically aimed at the recreational sector.
- 7.5 We document and use information provided by recreational sea anglers, and will publicise enforcement activities and keep the public informed about our work.
- 7.6 We invest in the production of material aimed at the recreational sea angling sector. Recognising the challenge of engaging with this large and dispersed group, we will continue to develop specific

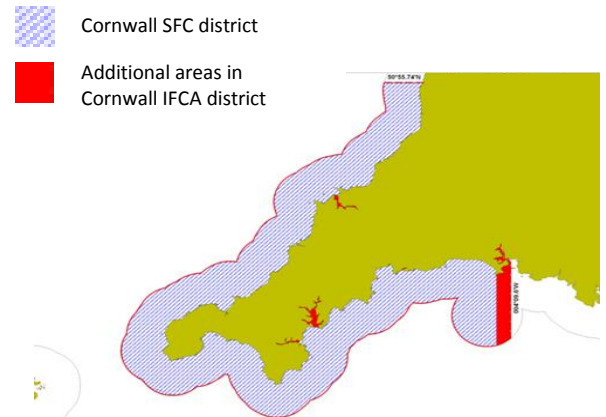
targeted material as well as permanent signage to better promote and inform recreational sea anglers of our work, regulations and contact details. This work will depend on the consistency of national and European legislation for the production of longer time-frame information boards.

- 7.7 Cornwall IFCA has responded to calls for more information to be made available on its enforcement activities by publicising enforcement activities, cases underway, sanctions issued and successful prosecutions. This is clearly laid out on our website, and greater use of social media will be made to inform the public of the work we undertake particularly with regard to enforcement activities.

#### Research:

- 7.8 Cornwall IFCA must manage the impacts of fishing activities with reference, primarily, to ensuring the sustainability of fish and shellfish stocks, as well as impacts on the wider marine environment. We need to better understand both the recreational sea angling sector and commercial sectors where they are exploiting the same fish stocks or negatively impacting on the marine environment. Research programmes will look to engage with the recreational anglers and angling bodies to include them in data gathering and research activities.
- 7.9 We have a statutory duty to undertake extensive research work in relation to our duties to manage the network of Marine Protected Areas in the Cornwall district. Whilst the work relating to the management of MPA may have a benefit for the recreational anglers by improving the protection of some key habitats for juvenile fish, this work will dramatically reduce the available time, in the short to medium term, for other research programmes which may be desirable.
- 7.10 We are committed to working with recreational angling bodies and clubs to see if there is the potential to use data they hold to fill gaps in our research data as part of the evidence based marine management cycle, described previously. These work streams will be identified in future research plans.
- 7.11 We support external research projects, such as the C-Bass and marine recreational survey projects being run by CEFAS as well as other local and national research projects. C-Bass, a four-year bass research programme (“Population studies in support of the Conservation of the European sea bass”) will be publishing its results in 2017 and Cornwall IFCA will look at follow up projects in light of the findings.
- 7.12 Nationally, IFCAs have a commitment to develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species in individual IFCA districts. As part of this process we will work with a range of partner organisations across different sectors including recreational sea angling, to identify and agree shared objectives for the future management of a particular species or fishery.

## Management and Enforcement:



### Management

- 7.13 When Cornwall IFCA was formed in 2011, its district included all estuaries in Cornwall as well as half of the Tamar river systems. These areas had not been previously managed by Cornwall Sea Fisheries committee (SFC).
- 7.14 Cornwall IFCA inherited all of Cornwall SFC's byelaws as well as a wide range of byelaws made by the Environment Agency and Devon and Severn SFC. This has left Cornwall IFCA with a very complex and disjointed patchwork of different legislation across its district. As well as these legacy byelaws, Cornwall IFCA must also enforce a wide range of national and European legislation.
- 7.15 We have reviewed all 64 of these byelaws, and we are in the process of simplifying, improving and unifying them across our District. This is a lengthy process and will take many years as the process of creating or amending legislation must be based on evidence. In the case of many of the legacy byelaws, Cornwall IFCA does not hold any data relating to the background behind the legislation.
- 7.16 Whenever byelaws are made, revoked or amended there is a lengthy period of informal consultation as well as a statutory period of formal consultation on any proposals. Cornwall IFCA has committed to include recreational anglers in the informal consultation to a far greater extent than in the past. We have also committed to use its increased database of recreational sea angling contacts, as well as social media, to better inform recreational sea anglers of informal and formal consultation opportunities as part of any legislative changes.
- 7.17 Cornwall IFCA is looking at the work of other IFCAs in developing new byelaws which look to balance between fishing sectors, particularly where socioeconomic data is used as part of the evidence base. We are also interested in exploring examples of spatial management approaches to manage different fisheries.

### Enforcement

- 7.18 As has already been stated, individual recreational anglers represent a low enforcement risk. This is recognised in our risk based enforcement plan and it is currently not anticipated that this risk level will change over the next four years. As a result it is anticipated that targeted enforcement work directed at the recreational sector will continue to be a low priority in comparison with enforcement work targeted at some of the commercial fisheries.
- 7.19 Enforcement officers engage with recreational anglers as part of their routine patrol work. Officers will talk with recreational anglers as part of shore patrols or by boarding vessels at sea. This kind of contact is a vital resource for intelligence, information and to inform the policies and practices of Cornwall IFCA. Enforcement officers speaking to individuals does not necessarily represent an indication that an offence is suspected, but a normal part of our routine work to develop a better understanding of the various fisheries within our district.

7.20 Cornwall IFCA will issue appropriate sanctions where anglers are found to have acted contrary to any of the legislation enforced by Cornwall IFCA.

## **8. How will the success of this strategy be measured?**

8.1 It is the intention of this strategy to show how the recreational sea angling sector will be included into the overall management of the Cornwall IFCA district in a transparent and fair manner. Therefore the key success measures will be indications that this sector is involved in the identification of potential issues and in the establishment of appropriate management measures.

- 8.2 Fair and transparent involvement will be evidenced through;
- a. Increased participation in public events and consultations by the recreational sea angling sector;
  - b. Increased contact with a wide cross section of this sector through the website, Facebook page and via direct contact with our officers;
  - c. Increased intelligence reports made by this sector; and
  - d. A better understanding of our work and its effect on the recreational sea angling sector, demonstrated through the above contact.

## **9. Looking forwards**

9.1 Changes in fisheries management are often influenced by national and international priorities, as well as the legal framework that underpins new legislation. Changes must be based on evidence which can take considerable time to collect and analyse and will always be open to dispute and new information. For some, change happens far too slowly whilst for others it's a rapidly changing world requiring considerable changes to long established working practices.

9.2 Our role and that of other organisations responsible for fisheries regulation, is to make sure that the reasons behind the need for new management are clearly and effectively shared with everyone who is interested and affected by any changes. It is clear that the successful management of the marine environment and the fisheries it supports can only be achieved by talking openly and frankly about the challenges we all face.