

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Pia Bateman – Chief Executive Officer



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BH15 2AA
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13th September 2023

Dear Member,

MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

A meeting of the Authority will be held at The Lighthouse, 21 Kingland Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1UG on **21st September 2023 at 14:00**, to discuss the business on the under mentioned Agenda.

The Dolphin Shopping Centre have a multi-story car park which is opposite The Lighthouse, there is a small gravel car park just before the multi-story car park and there is also parking on the surrounding roads. Please be careful when parking on the road as you may need to pay at a 'pay and display meter' and some roads are permit holders only. Poole Park also have pay and display parking spaces and is only a short walk to the venue.

Members of the public can request to attend the meeting through emailing enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Chaplin, Office Manager
maria.chaplin@southern-ifca.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interest

All Members are to declare any interests in line with paragraphs (16) and (17) of the Southern IFCA Code of Conduct for Non-Council Members.

3. Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2023 (Marked A).

- a. Recommendation 318:** To receive a verbal update from DCO Dell
- b. Recommendations 319:** To receive a verbal update from DCO Birchenough.
- b. Recommendations 325:** To receive a verbal update from DCO Birchenough.

4. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any updates from the Chairman.

5. Sub-Committees

To receive the Minutes of the following Sub-Committees and to consider the adoption of the recommendations contained therein:

- a) Executive Committee** held on 6th June 2023 (Marked B).
- b) Technical Advisory Committee** held on the 4th May 2023 (Marked C).

6. Progress Reports

To consider the following:

- a. **Budget Control Statement.** To consider a report from the CEO/Accountant (Marked D).
- b. **Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2023.** To consider an update following the submission of the above-named document for external audit (Marked E)
- c. **Chief Executive Officer updates.** To receive a verbal report from the CEO.
- d. **Marine Asset Procurement.** To consider a verbal update from DCO Dell.
- e. **Net Fishing Byelaw.** To consider a verbal update from DCO Dell & DCO Birchenough on the implementation planning for the NFB.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

7. Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw

To consider the making of the above-named Byelaw, following receipt of written notice of the intention to make the byelaw on the 18th May 2023. Report from DCO Birchenough (Marked F)

8. Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw: Scallop Fishery

To consider the management of the Solent scallop fishery. Report from DCO Birchenough (Marked G)

9. Annual Report 2022-2023

To consider the submission of the Annual Report to Defra in accordance with the requirements under the MaCAA, 2009. Report by the CEO (Marked H)

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

10. Joint Working with the Marine Management Organisation

To receive a report from Senior IFCO Parry (Marked I)

11. Compliance and Enforcement Report

To receive the report from DCO Dell (Marked J)

12. Research and Policy Team: Behind the Scenes

To receive a report from DCO Birchenough (Marked K)

13. Sector Group Meetings

To receive the minutes from recent meetings of The Fisherman's Council and The Recreational Angling Sector Working Group (Marked L)

14. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next Authority meeting on the 7th December 2023 at the RNLI in Poole. A Christmas meal will follow the meeting at the RNLI.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Full Authority Meeting – 8th June 2023

A meeting of the Full Authority was held at 2pm on 8th June 2023 at the St Alphege Building, Winchester University, Winchester.

Marked A

Present

Cllr Mark Roberts	Dorset Council (Chairman)
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee (TAC Chairman)
Mr Richard Stride	MMO Appointee (TAC Vice Chairman)
Mr Neil Hornby	MMO Appointee
Mr James McClelland	Natural England
Cllr Rob Hughes	Dorset County Council
Cllr Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Matthew Winnington	Portsmouth City Council
Ms Louise MacCallum	MMO Appointee
Mr Gary Wordsworth	MMO Appointee
Ms Rachel Irish	MMO
Dr S Cripps	MMO Appointee
Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones	MMO Appointee
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Mr Sam Dell	Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)
Dr Sarah Birchenough	Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)

Mr Ted Legg (MMO Appointee) and Ms Gemma Roberts (Accountant) attended virtually.

296. The Chairman opened the meeting by expressing thanks to the CEO, DCOs and Permit & Administration Officer Jo Wilson for their work on administration and finance matters following the departure of the Finance and Administration Manager. Thanks were also given to Southern IFCA's new accountant Gemma Roberts and the support she has provided to the CEO. The Chairman recognised and thanked Council Members who are no longer serving on the Authority; Cllr Debbie Curnow-Ford, Cllr David Furnell, Cllr Alexis McEvoy and expressed thanks to Cllr Paul Fuller who had been acting as Vice Chairman for the Authority and indicated he would take this role for the first agenda item of the meeting covering the Election of Chairman in accordance with Standing Orders.

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2023-2024

297. That Cllr M Roberts be elected as Chairman for the year 2023-2024. The CEO explained that in accordance with Standing Orders, two nominations had been received in writing nominating Cllr. M Roberts to continue in his role as Chairman. In accordance with Standing Orders, the CEO asked the Vice Chairman, Cllr P Fuller to propose this motion, which was subsequently seconded by Mr R Stride. All Members were in favour.

That Cllr P Fuller be elected as Vice Chairman for the year 2023-2024. This motion was proposed by Cllr M Roberts and seconded by Cllr R Hughes. All Members were in favour.

Appointment of Sub Committee Membership for 2022-2023

298. The Chairman outlined that the Authority are expecting new elected Members from Hampshire County Council, BCP Council and Southampton City Council. It was therefore outlined that, once those Members are known, that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and CEO organise a Teams meeting with all elected Members to arrange appointments to Sub Committees. The Chairman outlined that Cllr P Fuller would now serve on the Executive Sub-Committee and expressed that he hoped Cllr R Hughes would continue to serve on the Executive Sub-Committee and Cllr M Winnington on the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee.

Apologies

299. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Colin Francis (MMO Appointee) and Mr Phil Rudd (Environment Agency). The CEO outlined that Mr P Rudd has had an internal promotion and will no longer sit on the Authority, the Environment Agency has yet to appoint a new Member.

Declarations of Interest

300. The following pecuniary interests were declared: Mr G Wordsworth (8d, 11), Mr T Legg (10). The following prejudicial interests were declared: Mr G Wordsworth (17). The following non-pecuniary interests were declared: Mr James McClelland (10), Mr Neil Hornby (11).

Minutes

301. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th March 2023. The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 269, in that Defra are still working towards a spring/summer date for a formal consultation on the frontrunner FMPs. The CEO outlined that DCO Birchenough and PO Mullen have been working to structure a Working Group for Members which will assimilate information for all 6 frontrunners and will be arranging a suitable date with Members shortly.

The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 278 regarding the Annual Plan and High Level Objectives (HLOs) which sit under the IFCA Vision. At a MAFCO meeting on 24th May, a Defra led agenda item confirmed that it was likely, following the release of the Conduct and Operations Report, that the HLOs may be looked in addition to an update of the annual reporting metrics. The CEO outlined that the matter of HLOs sits with Defra but that it was positive that Defra were looking at the IFCA model and modernisation. If action is not taken following the release of the Conduct and Operations Report, the CEO will seek further clarity on this matter.

DCO Birchenough provided an update that Recommendation 281 had been completed, to include a footnote to reference Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) as a term that is aligned to the Net Fishing Byelaw for the Southern IFCA Juvenile Fish Surveys in the Research & Policy Team Plan for 2023-2024.

DCO Birchenough provided an update that Recommendation 282 had been completed, to include a footnote to reference that the use of EFH in relation to the Angling for Sustainability Project in the RPT Plan for 2023-2024 is in response to the term being used directly by the project lead.

DCO Birchenough provided an update that Recommendation 283 had been completed, with Mr Steve Matthews having been contacted directly on the points raised on his behalf at the Authority meeting in March 2023.

Resolved

302. Cllr P Fuller proposed that the minutes be confirmed and signed, seconded by Mr R Stride. All Members in favour.

Chairman's Announcements

303. The Chairman referred to the Oil Spill Incident in Poole Harbour and thanked the Team for their input, rapid response and provision of equipment which played a key role in the response effort.

Sub Committees

304. Members received the minutes of the Executive Sub-Committee held on 14th March 2023 and the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee held on the 2nd February 2023.

Resolved

305. That Members received and agreed the minutes of the Sub-Committees.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Chief Executive Officer Updates

306. The CEO referenced that the AGM was being held on World Oceans Day and that the main decision item would be consideration of making the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 which brings home the impact that the IFCA is able to have at the local and District level and the contribution that this management makes to national and international agendas to commit to marine environment management. The CEO thanked all Members and staff for the part that they play in this process and emphasised the privileged position that the IFCA is in to make a difference.

The CEO covered national matters. At the Authority meeting in March, the CEO outlined a business case which was made to Defra aiming to secure £250,000 funding to contribute to the purchase of the cabin RHIB. The business case was directly related to a wider business case by the AIFCA and an investment for all IFCAs. The CEO confirmed that this funding has now been received and that the Accountant is working with the CEO and DCO Dell on a Capital Replacement Program which would form one aspect of a Reserve Policy which will be presented to Members at a future meeting following consideration by the ESC. The CEO also outlined that £150,000 had been received from Defra for the previous financial year to support Defra in achieving work under the Fisheries Act 2020. There are now two Policy Officers in post, Celie Mullen in the FMP role and Chelsea Perrins in an MPA role to aid the Research & Policy Team in delivering MPA workstreams working towards the Government 2024 deadline.

The CEO referenced the Conduct and Operations Report, Defra are no further forward in the process of delivering this with delays experienced during the May local elections. Defra are aiming to deliver on this in June/July.

The CEO covered General Member updates. Mr R Stride has extended his tenure by 2 years, the CEO thanked Mr Stride for his ongoing commitment to the Authority and welcomed the extended tenure. The CEO advised Members that in recent months the MMO have undertaken a number of General Member recruitment campaigns, one specifically for our District for a recreational sea angling member, and that there was no interest from this sector for this position in our District. This matter has been raised with the ESC and the CEO will continue to work with the ESC and the MMO Governance Team to resolve the situation. The CEO also discussed that General Members appraisals will be carried out over the summer.

The CEO spoke on Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) and outlined that Defra were holding two online meetings this week, one of which overlapped with the Authority meeting. The CEO explained that the PO for FMPs is attending both meetings and will incorporate information into the Members Working Group which is planned for the Formal Consultation. Mr G Wordsworth queried whether information on FMPs would be disseminated amongst the fishing industry, the CEO confirmed that the PO would be keeping resources such as the website up to date and providing information to stakeholders. The CEO outlined that the upcoming Formal Consultation is likely to be short and contain a lot of information so there will be a requirement to direct significant resources to this workstream. Dr A Jensen outlined that there was not a large amount of information of note in the public domain at this time. Mr R Stride commented that there are stakeholder opportunities for fishers but that they don't tend to be organised at a time which is suitable for the fishing industry and that there is little information on management measures and outcomes which is the main point of interest for fishers. The CEO outlined that the current meetings were tending to focus on the process of development rather than management measures but that the focus of the Member Working Group for the Formal Consultation would be on proposed management measures and the relationship between these and the Southern IFCA District.

The CEO covered District matters. On 24th April, the CEO and DCOs met with the MMO CEO Tom McCormack, the MMO Head of Operations Peter Clark and the SMO for the Southern Team Gordon Chittenden. The CEO thanked Rachel Irish for organising and facilitating the meeting. Discussion was had on annual strategies, directions of both organisations and joint challenges that both organisations face with the meeting being very useful. Discussion was also had on the way that the two organisations work together with recognition of the relationship between Southern IFCA and the MMO Southern Team and this being a blueprint for how the MMO wish to take forward working relationships between the MMO and IFCAs.

The CEO provided a staffing update following the resignation of the Finance and Administration manager after three months in post, with the CEO's current focus since the resignation being delivery of finance and securing sourcing of an external payroll provider, which forms part of a wider consideration of the Southern IFCA business model.

The CEO outlined there are three recruitment campaigns underway at present, one for an IFCO role in the Compliance and Enforcement Team and two focusing on the administrative and finance positions. In addition we will shortly begin the recruitment process for a Senior IFCO in the Research & Policy Team.

The CEO covered the recent oil spill incident in Poole Harbour outlining the IFCA remit for the wild fisheries, aquaculture, recreational fisheries and hand gathering but emphasising that the IFCA is not the responsible authority for determining if these fisheries should be open or closed in response to a pollution incident, rather this duty sits with the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council Environmental Health Officers to provide their expertise on Poole Harbour to Cefas and the FSA. The priority following the incident was related to shellfish fisheries, with the aquaculture fishery as the main priority, given the seasonal closure of the wild dredge fishery at the time of the incident. The incident underwent debate at the House of Lords and resulted in questions being raised in Parliament, the work of all agencies involved including Southern IFCA was recognised at this level. The CEO emphasised the impact that the incident had on the business-as-usual function of the IFCA and extended thanks to the DCOs and the wider team who worked long hours during a sustained two-week period. The CEO outlined that the incident remains ongoing but that the intensity of the work for the Southern IFCA has eased. The aquaculture fishery was able to open relatively quickly, which was made possible as a result of the quick actions of Southern IFCA and BCP Council, but it is recognised that there was a business impact to aquaculture operators. The wild dredge fishery opened as usual on 25th May therefore there was no impact to activity under this fishery which is a positive outcome. Mr G Wordsworth expressed his thanks to Southern IFCA and BCP Council for their actions in supporting the aquaculture industry and wider fisheries.

Resolved

307. That Members noted the verbal update.

Budget Control Statement

308. The CEO provided an overview of the draft Budget Control Statement for the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 which showed an excess in income of £121k. The CEO reviewed the main headers. Under the administration header, there was a positive variance of £63k, majority (£45k) due to a reduction in staff salary and pensions and associated reductions in costs for training, PPE etc. The detailed results show a c. 16k variance in prosecution costs due to the issuing of three FAPs in the past year. An additional saving of c. £4k was made as a result of the breakdown of the national AIFCA training model and training commitments not being delivered. In addition, there was a saving of c. £4k from survey work planned for March which had to be deferred to April following bad weather. The positive variance under the Marine Assets Header (c. £9k), was due to a lower than anticipated maintenance costs for vessels and FPV Endeavour coming into service sooner than expected. The c. £11k positive variance under Vehicles & Travel header is primarily due to a reverse of a prior year's accrual for MMO Appointee Expenses (c. £8k). The negative variance under the Capital Equipment Header (c. £5K) is due to the earlier arrival of the new FPV Endeavour. The CEO explained the increase in income of c. £43k which arose from project income, chartering of patrol vessels, interest and an increase on permit fees for Poole which is ringfenced for the MSC fishery Recertification.

Mr S Cripps queried whether surplus could be carried forward and if so whether it was carried forward under the same budget headings. The Chairman indicated that yes it could be carried forward into General Reserves. The CEO outlined that c. £20k will be ringfenced for office improvements which have not been made since the Southern IFCA moved to the new office just prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and that additional funds (c.10k) would also be made available for staff training.

Resolved

309. That Members noted the report.

Marine Asset Procurement

310. DCO Dell provided Members with an update on the Southern IFCA MAR and its continued progression. The update related specifically to the build approval for the Cabin RHIB. Since the Authority meeting in March, the DCO and Senior Officer have attended a further two meetings with Ribcraft Ltd. to confirm and finalise technical detail prior to the commencement of the build. The build commenced on 15th May

as scheduled with the lamination of the cabin and hull structures now underway. A visit with the factory surveyor is likely to go ahead in August. At this stage, delivery is anticipated in October 2023. Following a recommendation from Officers and agreement from the Executive Sub-Committee it has been agreed that the new vessel will be named Vigilant. This allows coding paperwork associated with the new vessel to be progressed by DCO Dell.

Resolved

311. That Members noted the update.

MSC Recertification of Poole Clam and Cockle Fishery

312. DCO Birchenough outlined that the Poole Clam and Cockle Fishery has been certified under the MSC program since 2018 with the certification valid for five years. The recertification audit for the fishery took place in September 2022 and the fishery has continued to maintain high standards in sustainability as well as showing improvements in scoring under the certification through the undertaking of a project on the management of the fishery in relation to Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species. The fishery has been successfully recertified for another five years from 2023 and MSC produced media outputs to celebrate this fact promoting the positive story of the fishery in line with the opening of the 2023 season, which is especially important following the oil spill incident in Poole Harbour. The Chairman queried whether the certification is supported by the fishers, DCO Birchenough commented that it was, the Chair of the PDFA Tommy Russell has been instrumental in taking the certification forward and engaging other fishers in the process. He has been invited to attend a number of engagement and media events to promote the fishery and there have been additional market opportunities from the certification for example the selling of Poole clams and cockles in Waitrose. The Chairman also queried the level of work required for the recertification and DCO Birchenough explained that the resource input had been much less than was required for the original certification process. Dr A Jensen commented that there is a continuous commitment to this as the survey work carried out by the IFCA each year contributes to the annual audits and is central to the evidence of a sustainable fishery. Mr S Cripps commented that there is likely to be a link between the success of this fishery and the decline in prosecutions for the IFCA.

Resolved

313. That Members noted the update.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Draft Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2023

314. The Chairman outlined that the update is similar to the Budget Control Statement previously discussed. The Accountant presented the Statement of Accounts which sets out the overall financial position of Southern IFCA covering the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2023 and is a statutory record of the information provided in the Budget Control Statement. The Accountant outlined the increase in income over budget and sought approval from the Authority to submit the accounts to Southern IFCA's accounting firm PK Francis to carry out an independent review and issue a limited scope assurance report. Dr S Cripps queried whether the Executive Sub-Committee had reviewed the accounts, the Chairman confirmed that both the Executive Sub-Committee and the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee had reviewed the accounts. Members express their thanks to the Accountant for preparing the accounts.

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr P Fuller and seconded by Cllr M Winnington. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

315. That Members authorise the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2023.

Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw

316. DCO Birchenough outlined that the Authority was being asked to make the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 ('the Byelaw'). DCO Birchenough informed Members that there was a detailed discussion on the Byelaw at the TAC meeting in May and expressed thanks to TAC Members for their input.

DCO Birchenough outlined that there had been some changes made to the principles and policy which underpinned the Byelaw as a result of these discussions. This included clearer definitions of feature-based management for different types of National Site Network Sites (MCZs and SACs/SPAs) with features being managed within MCZs and within or adjacent to SACs/SPAs under Phase 1 of the review.

The other discussion point from the TAC was on areas currently closed under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 with the initial proposal being to re-open those areas under the Byelaw. DCO Birchenough outlined that a new Principle had been developed for Phase 1 to maintain these areas as prohibited under Phase 1, with the intention to re-visit these areas in Phase 2, taking into account socio-economic evidence in combination with conservation considerations.

DCO Birchenough informed Members of the contents of the Byelaw package which included the Byelaw, an Impact Assessment and a Management Intentions Document. She explained that the proposed Byelaw creates prohibited areas for BTFG covering 743.12km², which equates to 27.2% of the district, which is an increase of 46.8km² or 1.7% compared to the BTFG Byelaw 2016.

DCO Birchenough explained the process that would be followed should the Authority resolve to make the Byelaw will include a period of Formal Consultation and consideration of the outcomes of that Formal Consultation by the Authority prior to submission to the MMO and Secretary of State.

Mr T Legg raised whether there were any methods by which the fishing industry could receive updates to regulated areas electronically that could be transferred to the equipment used on fishing vessels. DCO Dell commented that this matter had been discussed previously and that historically the Kingfisher Project had helped in this regard, DCO outlined that he would be progressing this and determining whether updates could be made and improvements to the usability by the industry. Cllr P Fuller supported that this should be explored and queried whether DCO Dell could provide an update on progress with this. Dr A Jensen outlined that the issue of access to electronic spatial information is wider than the IFCA as the issue of cruise ships anchoring in sensitive areas during the Covid-19 Pandemic was also partly a result of those areas not being marked on charts and that this may be being looked at by other groups as well. Members discussed the issue of anchoring in relation to MPAs, engagement and the role of different authorities, DCO Dell clearly outlined that this sits outside the remit of the Southern IFCA.

Mr S Cripps raised a disconnect between what the Government is saying is being done in relation to progression to 30x30 and what is being done in practice in terms of feature-based management. Dr S Cripps referenced the IFCA legal duties and queried whether the IFCA has the ability to go further than those requirements where it is felt that there is a genuine advantage, for example managing within the areas between prohibited areas to achieve more holistic management. DCO Birchenough outlined that the aim of Phase 2 was to consider wider sensitive habitat management across the District, both within and outside of MPAs. DCO Birchenough outlined that once Phase 2 commences, the Authority will have the ability to define the scope of that Phase and Principles for defining management in accordance with IFCA duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and consider socio-economic information in combination with that of conservation, to ensure marine protection is balanced with a sustainable fishing industry. DCO Birchenough acknowledged that Phase 2 this will require extensive consultation.

Mr James McClelland discussed the assessments which underpin the Byelaw, committing that NE require confidence that the assessments carried out in 2016 had been reviewed more recently. DCO Birchenough outlined the process that had been followed since receipt of the updated evidence base from NE in 2020, with changes in evidence identified for reef and seagrass features informing updated District-wide assessments for those features. The conclusions in the HRAs referenced from 2016 were deemed to still be appropriate under the updated evidence base and were therefore carried through into the BTFG review which commenced in 2020. DCO Birchenough informed Members that additional protections had also been afforded to areas within the Solent which were covered by these assessments through the introduction of the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw which was underpinned by separate environmental assessments.

The recommendations were taken as one, proposed by Cllr P Fuller, seconded by Ms L MacCallum, all Members were in favour.

Resolved

317. a) That the Authority proceeds to make the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023.

- b) That the Byelaw is advertised in accordance with IFCA Byelaw Guidance from Defra.
- c) That the TAC will consider outcomes of the formal consultation, prior to review by the Executive Sub-Committee, who, under delegated powers, are required to report with recommendations to the Authority following the making of statutory interventions, prior to MMO quality assurance and an application to the Secretary of State to confirm the byelaw.

Recommended

318. That DCO Dell provide an update to the Authority on the Kingfisher Project, considering the ability to update IFCA regulations and improve usability to aid the fishing industry in having access electronically to locations of spatial regulations.

319. That DCO Birchenough add information to the Management Intentions Document as a supporting document for the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 to reflect that environmental assessments carried out in 2016 were reviewed in line with the 2020 Natural England database.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident

320. DCO Dell provided Members with an update on Southern IFCA's response to the Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident. On 26th March a leak was detected in a pipeline owned by Perenco and a major incident was declared with Southern IFCA contacted by Poole Harbour Commissioners requesting assistance including the use of FPV Endeavour and the drone. IFCA Officers worked with Oil Spill Response Ltd. personnel between 27th March and 30th March to help carry out Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Techniques (SCATs) using the drone for aerial surveillance and FPV Endeavour to reach remote parts of the Harbour.

Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council, Cefas and the FSA to help coordinate a shellfish sampling program to test multiple shellfish species to help inform the FSA position on harvesting and marketing of shellfish for aquaculture and the wild fisheries.

DCO Dell outlined the current situation and advice provided, in that fishing and netting for fish within the Harbour was able to resume from midnight on 5th April, providing that activities avoid any areas of the Harbour which are obviously contaminated with oil, which is now mainly contained to the spill site. Any fish found to be dead, dying or visibly contaminated with oil residue should not be consumed or marketed. Aquaculture areas have been open since 20th April with the FSA advising that operators should continue to take appropriate action to ensure any harvested shellfish are fit for consumption. Sampling of wild shellfish beds was also undertaken; the results have now been received and the dredge fishery was able to open as normal on 25th May with hand gathering activities for shellfish also able to resume.

DCO Dell informed Members that Southern IFCA has committed significant time and resource to date to support the initial and ongoing incident. DCO Dell thanked the IFCOs involved, their commitment shown has been exemplary and feedback from Poole Harbour Commissioners and other authorities was that the knowledge and assets held by the IFCA were key in helping the operation progress without delay. DCO Dell also added that the impacts on fisheries in Poole Harbour were reduced as much as possible by the dedicated work of the team in carrying out sampling and working closely with the appropriate authorities and that thanks has been expressed from both the commercial and recreational sectors. The Incident Commander has passed on thanks to the IFCA.

The Chairman stated that recovery of the costs to the IFCA as a result of the incident are being sought. DCO Dell elaborated that a full cost recovery assessment has been undertaken by the DCOs and has been passed to Perenco via the claims process with confirmation that the claim has been received. DCO Dell was unable to provide the value of the cost claim due to the ongoing process with the insurance company for Perenco. DCO Dell confirmed that the claims process was open to all sectors which had been affected and both commercial and recreational fishers were able to submit a claim if they wished. Ms L MacCallum queried whether any IFCOs were trained oil spill responders from previous roles, DCO Dell outlined that no officers were formally trained to the level of oil spill responders but there was some experience from those who had held previous roles with harbour authorities. Members recognised the role that the team had played in the response and expressed their thanks.

Compliance and Enforcement Report

321. DCO Dell reported to Members on the compliance and enforcement activities for the quarter, describing the statistical nature of the first part of the report referring to numbers of inspections, patrols, intelligence reports and offences detected. DCO Dell outlined that the figures are reported on an annual basis to Defra via the AIFCA and are made available through the Southern IFCA website. DCO Dell outlined that the report also provides sanitized information on enforcement outcomes and a summary of key enforcement operations and activities for the last quarter.

Research and Policy Team: Behind the Scenes

322. DCO Birchenough provided Members with an update on aspects of the work that the Research and Policy Team have been delivering behind the scenes through a series of reports. DCO Birchenough outlined that the last quarter has been dominated by survey work, necessitated by the movement of planned surveys due to bad weather.

Sector Group Meetings

323. DCO Birchenough provided Members with the minutes of sector meetings to include the Recreational Angling Sector Group (RSAG), the South Coast Fisherman's Council and the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group. Mr R Stride provided some additional detail on the minutes for the South Coast Fisherman's Council, centering on FMPs and medicals for fishers.

DCO Birchenough raised a point in relation to the RASG and the Marine Conservation Group that attendance of these groups was low and asked Members for thoughts on moving to meetings being conducted at the request of the respective groups rather than arranged every quarter to improve the efficiency of running these groups. DCO Birchenough outlined that the aim was for those meetings to provide the ability for discussion and sharing of information which was not able to be realized as much currently due to low attendance. Ms L MacCallum commented that attendance could be improved by pre-setting meeting dates a year in advance but recognises that if Members of each group do not have agenda items to raise then the meeting doesn't need to be held. Dr A Jensen commented that meetings could be reduced to twice a year rather than four per year (quarterly) and stated that if meetings are pre-arranged then it is more likely that agenda items will develop. The Chairman added to this by suggesting that a meeting could be called between two fixed meetings if required.

Proposed Meeting Dates 2024

324. Members considered a report from the CEO on proposed meeting dates for Authority meetings and Sub-Committee meetings for 2024.

The CEO also asked Members for input on the venue for the Christmas meal for Members for 2023. It was determined that Members wished to use a different venue to previously and alternative venues would be explored taking into account access to public transport and the venue of the December Authority meeting.

Recommended

325. That the CEO and DCO Birchenough explore alternative venues.

Date of Next Meeting

326. The next Authority Meeting will be held on the 21st September at 2pm at The Lighthouse, Poole. Prior to the meeting a boat trip has been arranged for Members in Poole Harbour between 10:00 and 12:00. More details will be provided to Members nearer to the time.

Exclusion of the Public

327. In accordance with the Local Government Act (1972), Members of the public accessing the meeting left the meeting on the grounds that the following item of business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Para 7 part 1 of the Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act (1972). There were no members of the public present in person at the meeting.

Poole Harbour Several Order – Request to Amend Business Plan

328. DCO Dell asked Members to consider a confidential report giving details of a proposed change to the Business Plan for Lease Bed 3, which the Southern IFCA manage under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015. The proposed changes have been reviewed and the proposed changes to the Business Plan are in line with the current Appropriate Assessment for the issuing of leases under The Order. Mr R Stride queried whether the vessel in question under the amendment conformed with requirements for vessels under the Order, DCO Birchenough confirmed the vessel was already in use on other lease beds under the Order. All Members gave mutual consent.

Resolved

328. That Members approve the proposed changes to the Business Plan 2020-25 for lease bed 3.

329. Mr N Hornby raised a matter of AOB, he outlined that the Cefas vessel Endeavour would be coming to the District on Monday 17th July with an open day held in Portland and extended an invitation to the Membership and members of the Southern IFCA team to attend.

330. Dr S Cripps raised that a paper had been published by the scientific team at the Wildlife Conservation Society exploring a new methodology using AI to calculate productivity of multi-species fisheries in data poor areas to aid developing management. Dr S Cripps stated he was happy to distribute the paper to interested Members.

Meeting concluded at 16:51.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee (ESC) was held at **14:00 on 6th June 2023** via video conferencing.

Present

Cllr Mark Roberts	Dorset Council (Chairman)
Mr Richard Stride	MMO Appointee
Cllr Rob Hughes	Dorset Council
Cllr Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Acting Vice Chairman)
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Mr Sam Dell, DCO Ms Sarah Birchenough and Accountant Gemma Roberts were also present.

304. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

305. Declarations of Interest

There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests declared.

306. Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting held on the 14th March 2023 were considered by Members.

Resolved

307. The minutes from the previous meetings were agreed by Members.

308. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman provided a brief update on the Poole Harbour Oil Spill and the significant impact that the associated work had had on the Southern IFCA team and the wider impact on constituent Local Authorities, to include Dorset Council.

Progress Reports

309. Chief Executive Officer Updates

The CEO provided an update on staffing matters, discussing the recent resignation of the Finance and Administration Manager. The CEO discussed the current recruitment campaign, which was underway and seeking applications for a part time Accounts Administrator position and a full time Administration Officer role.

The CEO discussed the sourcing of an external payroll contractor, expressing her thanks to the Accountant for her ongoing support in the matter, as well as recognition to both Deputy Chief Officers for their resilience, adaptability and dedication over recent weeks in particular.

The CEO provided a general overview of the staffing body and forthcoming recruitment campaigns.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Resolved

310. That Member's noted the verbal update.

311. Budget Control Statement (April 2022-March 2023)

The CEO and Accountant provided an overview on the positive variance, which in large part is due to a reduction in staff salary and pension contributions, accounting for c.50k, which is a result of in-year staff movements, departures and recruitment.

The costs for prosecutions saw a positive variance of c.16k, this is due to the issuing of three FAPs (due to the nature of the offences) which, if contested would have resulted in court costs which, on average can cost between 3-5k per case (c.15k). An additional saving of c.4k reflects the breakdown of the National AIFCA training model, where training commitments were not delivered. We also saw a saving of c.4k for planned survey work which, due to inclement weather in March 2023, saw these surveys fall outside of the 2022-2023 financial year.

The Accountant also discussed the unforeseen income of projects (c.16k) and chartering of marine assets (c.11k).

The CEO discussed the intention to ringfence some of the unexpended balance to carry forward for specific functions, namely staff training and office infrastructure. The Members discussed the importance of investing in the staff body. Cllr. P Fuller proposed the Recommendation, which was seconded by Dr A Jensen.

Resolved

312.a That Member's noted the verbal update.

312.b That the following approximate amounts of the unexpanded balance at the end of the prior fiscal year are ringfenced within the General Reserve for the following functions in the 2023-2024 budget:

- c.10k for additional unforeseen training requirements for officers
- c. 20k for necessary office improvements.

313. Marine Asset Procurement

DCO Dell updated Members, explaining since the contract of sale was signed by the CEO, both DCO Dell and IFCO Parry have attended a further two build meetings with Ribcraft Limited to confirm technical detail prior to build commencing. He also stated that the build had commenced on the 15th May 2023 as agreed in the Terms and Conditions, with anticipated delivery of the vessel in October 2023.

Resolved

314. That Member's noted the update.

315. Draft Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2023

The Accountant provided an overview of the Statement of Accounts, noting the context that had been provided in the previous agenda item. Cllr. P. Fuller proposed the Recommendation, which was seconded by Dr A. Jensen.

Resolved

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

316. That Members of the ESC make a recommendation to the Authority on the 8th June 2023 for the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2023.

317. Executive Sub-Committee Membership 2023-2024

The Chairman began by thanking Cllr A. McEvoy (Hampshire) for her years of service to Southern IFCA. In addition, the Chairman thanked Cllr. D. Curnow-Ford (Hampshire) and Cllr. D. Furnell (Southampton City Council) for their work on the Authority in recent years.

The Chairman discussed the intention to invite existing Members of the ESC to stand for another term on the Sub-Committee, noting that the ESC is to comprise of two or more Elected Members. However, recognising that, as a result of recent local elections, there were no representatives present from Hampshire County Council, it was suggested that a meeting for Elected Members be held prior to the September Authority meetings in order to determine attendance on each Sub-Committee.

With consideration of the local election timetables, the Members present discussed the suggestion to approve an update the Southern IFCA Standing Orders (SO) to enable the AGM for the Authority to be held in September (beginning 2024), in order to facilitate business proceedings surrounding Sub Committee Membership.

Recommendation

318. For the Chairman, Cllr P. Fuller and the CEO to arrange a virtual meeting for all elected Members, prior to the September meetings in order to allocate Sub-Committee Membership responsibilities.

Recommendation

319. For the CEO to bring to the next ESC meeting an amendment to the SOs in order to reflect a change in the timing of the AGM (September 2024 onwards), to therefore align future Sub-Committee Decision Making matters with the changes in elected membership.

320. General Membership (Marked Confidential)

The CEO discussed the sector balance of the Authority and the intention to timetable General Member appraisals during the summer months.

321. Accident, Incident and Near Miss Report

DCO Dell first advised members that the reporting period had been readjusted to the period between Executive Committee meetings opposed to quarterly. DCO Dell informed the Members that there had been three incidents during the previous reporting period. The first involving an Officer falling from a ladder into Weymouth Harbour and the second two incidents involving Authority vehicles.

Resolved

322. That Member's noted the update.

323. Fisheries and Seafood Scheme Funding Opportunity

DCO Dell explained that the purpose of the report was to ensure compliance with Standing Orders, to seek approval for an initial payment of £11,793.80 to be made in order to train eight IFCOs in recognised Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) and five

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

IFCOs in Radar & Electronics. DCO Dell further explained that Seventy-Five percent (£8,845.35) of this initial outlay will be reclaimed to Southern IFCA following completion of the training under the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FASS). This means that with the total overall sum paid by Southern IFCA (following the reclaim) will be £2,947.65.

DCO Dell explained that the 2023-2024 Budget forecast (as agreed in December 2012), £1,600 was assigned to train three IFCOs in STCW with a further commitment planned for the 2024-2025 financial year to train a further 5, at an estimated cost of £2,666. He asked Members when considering the opportunity that the FASS funding is providing, Southern IFCA will see an overall saving of £1,318.35, which can then be utilised for other training opportunities.

Resolved

301. That in accordance with paragraphs (10) and (32) of the Southern IFCA Financial Regulations, that Members of the Executive Sub-Committee approve an initial payment of £11,793.80 to secure the FASS funding opportunity.

302. Date of Next Meeting

Members considered the date of the next Executive Sub-Committee, timetabled for the 19th September 2023.

Resolved

303. The date of the next virtual meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee is confirmed as the 19th September 2023.

The meeting closed at 17:00.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at **14:00 on 4th May 2023**

Present

Dr Antony Jensen	(Chairman, MMO Appointee)
Mr Richard Stride	(Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee)
Ms Louise MacCallum	(MMO Appointee)
Mr Gary Wordsworth	(MMO Appointee)
Mr Neil Hornby	(MMO Appointee)
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Deputy Chief Officers (DCOs) Ms Sarah Birchenough and Mr Sam Dell, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) Ms Emily Condie, Ms Liberty Cast and Mr Dominic Parry and Project Officers (POs) Ms Celie Mullen and Ms Chelsea Perrins were also present. Co-opted Member Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones was also in attendance.

Mr Gavin Black (Natural England) and Mr Edward Baker (MMO) attended the meeting virtually.

Dr A Jensen opened the meeting by inviting all attendees to introduce themselves. Members were informed that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of producing the meeting minutes.

Apologies

179. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee), Mr Phil Rudd (Environment Agency), Ms Rachel Irish (MMO) and Mr Ted Legg (MMO Appointee).

Declarations of interest

180. The following pecuniary interests were declared: Mr G Wordsworth (7 and 8). The following non-pecuniary interests were declared: Mr Richard Stride (6), Mr Neil Hornby (7, 8 and 12).

Minutes

181. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2023 and following an amendment to paragraph 5 of section 174, these were confirmed and signed. It was confirmed that Recommendation 175 was completed.

Guest Speaker: MMO, Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation

182. Members received a virtual presentation from Mr Edward Baker of the MMO, on the MMO Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation. DCO Dell provided Members with background on the involvement of the Southern IFCA in this matter to date including sitting on a steering group set up to investigate issues relating to Lyme Bay sole and involvement in joint patrols with the MMO.

Dr A Jensen thanked Mr E Baker for an interesting and informative presentation and invited any questions. Dr A Jensen commented that it appeared the fishery itself was quite healthy and it was more about being able to accommodate and balance different gear types to avoid conflict. Mr E Baker commented that the only area of concern for the stock was a low recruitment in 2021 in VIIe and the TAC for 2022 having decreased by 23% to account for this. He commented that this, combined with the decrease in the size of sole being caught by

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

trawlers may be an emerging issue but that it is very difficult to attribute causality to the data. The MCRS is one topic of the consultation with potential links to be made with the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP.

Mr R Stride raised that the original issue in Lyme Bay had stemmed from local boats having a code of practice to help limit individual fishing effort but that it was felt that visiting boats were not necessarily following that. He stated that it is hoped an outcome of the consultation would be protection for those local boats. He queried the increase in CPUE on the basis of an increase in effort and whether the quantity of nets fished could be obtained from catch data to better inform quantification of effort. Mr E Baker responded that catch data was only available for 2022 so there is no back reference which makes evaluation of net fishing activity more difficult, days per sea for trawlers makes this calculation possible for that gear type. He stated that the MMO were open to the outcomes of the consultation in terms of potential ways of moving forward.

Mr E Baker stated that the current voluntary code of conduct does not extend as far out to sea as the current extent of fixed net activity, with more activity outside of closed trawl areas due to closed areas being less productive for sole. He asked Members whether they were able to provide any insight on this, there was no information which Members could provide on this point.

Ms L MacCallum asked about the market for sole. Mr E Baker responded that the majority is taken abroad, sold through the Brixham Trawler Agents.

The CEO asked how the development of the consultation is considering the objective of equal access under The Fisheries Act 2020. Mr E Baker responded that the MMO have considered that they cannot limit access to the area to only local vessels, the same opportunity to fish in Lyme Bay must be afforded to all vessels. He stated that the objectives of The Fisheries Act 2020 needed to be balanced but that there wasn't currently direction on how to prioritise those objectives.

DCO Dell commented that IFCOs would be attending port drop-in sessions on the consultation. He also informed Members that any resulting management outcomes would be explored by the MMO through licence variations rather than via IFCA management or enforcement. DCO Dell reminded the Members that Southern are proposing gear marking regulations under the proposed Net Fishing Byelaw and that this has also been reflected in the consultation document.

Mr E Baker informed Members that the MMO has committed to undertaking a more detailed environmental assessment as well as a socio-economic assessment alongside the consultation. Natural England are helping with the environmental assessment, Mr E Baker asked what the Members opinions were on implementing management outside of MPAs as it was the impression that the majority of IFCA management focused on inside of MPAs. The CEO responded that the IFCA undertakes district-wide management, inside and outside of MPAs.

PROGRESS REPORTS

183. Chief Executive Officer Updates

The CEO informed Members that the updates provided at the TAC meetings going forward will be aligned with the scope of the TAC as given in the Standing Orders to avoid repetition between updates given at TAC meetings and the Authority meeting. Updates will relate to

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

matters regarding statutory and non-statutory interventions, fisheries management and policy, consultations, and aquaculture.

The CEO outlined that there would be a rolling agenda item on the TAC agenda for Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) which will be delivered by the FMP Project Officer. Marine licensing updates have also moved to the TAC agenda from the Authority agenda.

The CEO covered the recent oil spill incident in Poole Harbour outlining the IFCA remit for the wild fisheries, aquaculture, recreational fisheries and hand gathering but emphasising that the IFCA is not the responsible authority for determining if these fisheries should be open or closed in response to a pollution incident. This duty sits with the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council Environmental Health Officers to provide their expertise on Poole Harbour to Cefas and the FSA. The priority following the incident was related to shellfish fisheries, with aquaculture as an active activity at the time being the main priority as the wild dredge fishery was closed at the time of the incident, fish species were of less concern due to their ability to more readily metabolise any contaminants. The incident underwent debate at the House of Lords and resulted in questions being raised at Parliament, the work of all agencies involved including Southern IFCA was recognised at that forum. The CEO emphasised the impact that the incident had on the business-as-usual function of the IFCA and extended thanks to the DCOs and the wider team, who worked long hours during a sustained two-week period.

The CEO outlined consultations that were taking place. Members were informed that the outcomes of the MMO consultation on a closed season for the Vllid and Lyme Bay king scallop dredge fisheries had been published and concluded that for Vllid for UK and EU vessels >10m the closed season would be from 1st July to 30th September and for Lyme Bay for vessels >12m in length for the same time period. The closure will be enacted through a licence variation. The CEO also covered that there had been an MMO consultation on bottom towed fishing gear in offshore MPAs, the outcomes of this consultation are yet to be published. The CEO also referenced the MMO Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation which is to run until 28th May 2023. The Government is also currently consulting on proposed measures to ban industrial fishing for sand eels in UK waters which closes on 29th May 2023.

The CEO spoke about the recent Government launch of the Net Zero Growth Plan, it was outlined that the Plan is mainly related to terrestrial habitats but that there are two marine blue carbon habitats referenced; saltmarsh and seagrass, and their potential contributions to Net Zero ambitions. The CEO outlined how current workstreams are related to these habitats and how proposed management by Southern IFCA is aiming to contribute to their protection.

The CEO covered two species specific related matters. It was outlined that information relating to bass would be covered in a later agenda item. The second species was spurdog, which as of 1st April is now a species which is permitted to be caught. The species is not subject to a targeted fishery within the district but has been prohibited for the past five years with a determination that stocks have now recovered to the point where landings can be supported again.

The CEO informed Members of a project that the AIFCA were involved in called 'Catchwise', described as ground-truthing new survey for recreational sea fishing, taking place across England and Wales in 2023 and 2024. Developed by the Angling Trust and Cefas in conjunction with the recreational sea angling community, with the AIFCA sitting on the project steering group. The main aim is to improve the recognition of sea angling's value to coastal communities and inform relevant fisheries management decisions as a result. The project is

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

asking for persons who work in the sector to be shore survey gatherers to help collect data for the project, positions are paid, and more detail is available on the project website.

Resolved

184. That Members note the updates.

185. Deputy Chief Executive Officer Updates

DCO Birchenough updated Members that on 3rd April 2023 the Net Fishing Byelaw has finished the MMO QA process and has been passed from the MMO to Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State. The MMO had reviewed the Byelaw and supporting documentation and had recommended that the Secretary of State confirms the Byelaw. There were no substantial changes made to the Byelaw as a result of the MMO QA process. Defra have indicated that the Byelaw has been received but there is not a timeframe for confirmation.

For the Pot Fishing Byelaw, Southern IFCA submitted a response to the first round of QA by the MMO on 10th January 2023. On 28th March 2023, the MMO sent correspondence that there is a delay in the MMO legal team which has prevented them sending us any further rounds of QA, as of 19th April 2023 this is still the case. It is understood that this is due to a capacity issue rather than the content of the Byelaw.

The DCOs have been working with IFCOs across both teams to develop a process and materials for the implementation of these byelaws to allow the team to be prepared ahead of any decisions to confirm either the Net Fishing Byelaw or Pot Fishing Byelaw.

Resolved

186. That Members note the update.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

187. Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

DCO Birchenough gave Members an overview of the development of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (the Byelaw). It was explained that the background of the review started in 2020, primarily as a review of spatial management in response to the designation of Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), with bottom towed fishing gear (BTFG) being identified as a priority for management through the outcomes of MCZ Assessments on T3 sites. In addition, an updated evidence base was received in 2020 from Natural England providing updates on the location and extent of designated and supporting features of MPAs and wider sensitive habitats outside MPAs.

DCO Birchenough outlined that all required MPA Assessments had been completed for the sites covered by the Byelaw and that consultation on these assessments had been sought and received from Natural England. A BTFG review was formally commenced with a Members Working Group to consider management requirements on the basis of the assessment outcomes.

In August 2021 the TAC agreed to proceed the review to Stage 2 – draft measures, with three initial drivers. On this basis an informal consultation was held, and Members agreed to move to Stage 3 – draft byelaw. DCO Birchenough outlined that in 2023 the Government's Environment Improvement Plan 2023 was introduced which identified overall and interim goals for the Government to contribute to global aspirations for protection of the marine environment. For the IFCAs, as an appropriate regulator, this included an interim goal to strengthen MPA

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

protections by 2024 which required management measures for all Southern IFCA MPAs to be in place by this 2024 deadline. DCO Birchenough outlined that this had resulted in a prioritisation of workstreams and the proposal to adopt a phased approach to the management of BTFG which was agreed by Members on the adoption of the Research and Policy Team Plan for 2023-2024 at the Authority meeting in March 2023.

Members worked under the Phased Approach to develop a set of principles to underpin the definition of spatial closed areas under the Byelaw. DCO Birchenough provided an overview of these principles. DCO Birchenough outlined the byelaw package consisting of the Byelaw, an Impact Assessment and a Management Intentions Document and explained the contents of each including the differences in spatial area closed between the current BTFG Byelaw 2016 and the BTFG Byelaw 2023.

DCO Birchenough informed Members about the process following this meeting should Members agree to the recommendations and invited Members to consider the byelaw package and provide any comment.

Mr N Hornby queried areas in the Byelaw which currently closed under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 but were proposed to be re-opened and also asked for more clarity on the potential impact to the fishing industry including points of displacement and considering what fishing activity occurred where, what the level of pressure being alleviated and therefore environmental benefit being afforded would be from the proposed prohibited areas. DCO Birchenough responded that the principles which had been developed as part of the review were designed to ensure that management decisions were made consistently across the district without changes made on site-specific considerations. One of the principles, developed in line with the IFCA's legal duties, was that management is feature-based with the incorporation of buffers. It was discussed that this approach may not have been taken when previous iterations of the BTFG Byelaw had been developed in 2016. DCO Birchenough discussed the difficulty in valuing the BTFG fisheries based on the data that is available from MMO landings data and that as a result, displacement cannot be quantified. DCO Birchenough outlined the process that had been followed in order to make an estimation of the potential cost to the fishing industry, as captured in the Impact Assessment. Mr N Hornby identified that further information may be available through the consultation process.

Ms L MacCallum stated that there are currently areas within certain sites, using Langstone Harbour as an example, where not all the mapped designated features are covered by proposed prohibited areas. It was also queried how confident the Southern IFCA was that socioeconomics did not need to be taken into account. DCO Birchenough outlined that one of the principles defined that for SPAs and the Solent Maritime SAC the outcome of relevant assessments would be followed which was that not all of the designated features required protection in order to ensure site integrity but, good examples of those habitats would be included in prohibited areas, maintaining those areas which had been defined for the BTFG Byelaw 2016. The CEO directed Members to the relevant section of the Management Intentions document which outlined Southern IFCA's legal duties in relation to the consideration of socioeconomics under Phase 1 of the review.

Ms E Bussey-Jones queried whether any of the areas which were proposed to be re-opened from the BTFG Byelaw 2016 would be likely to be closed again following the considerations under Phase 2 of the BTFG review. DCO Birchenough explained that this was unlikely as there was no mapped feature present in those areas, and that if there was this would have been included under the current phase. It was explained that Phase 2 would also be looking at sensitive features therefore with no feature present it was unlikely that these areas would be identified for management under Phase 2. Mr N Hornby queried whether there was enough

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

of a benefit to warrant opening these areas and whether they could be left closed as there would be no additional loss to the industry from doing that as they are already closed. The CEO commented that under Phase 2 there would be an opportunity to consider the socioeconomic value of the areas under discussion, and therefore ascertain a benefit of having them opened or closed. It was raised that the potential of opening and closing these areas between the two phases could be problematic for any environmental protection afforded by those areas. Mr R Stride also added that it is likely that some of those areas had become areas which static gear fishers relied on in the absence of BTFG and by re-opening those areas there was the potential for conflict between gear types.

Ms E Bussey-Jones queried whether the BTFG Byelaw 2016 could be revoked only in part in so much as it affected any areas proposed to be managed under the BTFG Byelaw 2023 which would allow existing closed areas under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 that were proposed to be re-opened by the BTFG Byelaw 2023 to be maintained.

Ms E Bussey-Jones raised a point related to the review section of the Byelaw and what the intention of this provision in the Byelaw was. DCO Birchenough explained that part of the IFCA Byelaw Making Guidance provided by Defra was that byelaws should either contain a sunset clause or have the ability to be reviewed.

Mr R Stride queried the definition under the Byelaw of BTFG being 'inboard and above the sea' when a vessel is transiting through a prohibited area and asked whether it was necessary to have both 'inboard' and 'above the sea' in that definition. DCO Birchenough explained that this definition mirrored that in the current BTFG Byelaw 2016, that it had been discussed with the Compliance & Enforcement Team in terms of enforceability and that it was felt that, as the definition had been working there was not a need to change from what the fishers are currently used to.

Mr R Stride also raised a point in relation to the extension of a prohibited area outside of an MPA where a feature crosses a boundary. He queried that if the aim was to protect a feature, then are the MPA boundaries inaccurate. Using seagrass as an example, Dr A Jensen felt that an extension of that feature outside the boundary was a sign of successful conservation management inside the MPA and therefore that extended feature should be protected. Mr R Stride commented that for features which extend outside of an MPA, then management of that feature, outside the boundary should consider socioeconomics, with the main concern being around MCZ sites. Mr R Stride also commented that stakeholders are told that one of the benefits of MPAs is the ability for improvements spilling over to adjacent areas, however if those areas are then also not able to be accessed by fishers, then that benefit cannot be realised.

The MCZ designation process was discussed, with the point made that it had been the intention of this process that suitable areas would be identified which held certain features and habitats but also minimised the socioeconomic impact on stakeholders. It was raised that if the entirety of a feature had required protection, then it would have been assumed that the MCZ boundary would have been drawn to encompass the whole feature. The CEO commented that there may be a risk of not being able to meet the Conservation Objectives for a site if only part of the feature inside the boundary is protected and invited Natural England's view on this.

Mr G Black from Natural England outlined that in theory it is possible to alter an MPA boundary but that in practice it is a rare event, he commented that for features within an MPA to recover to a point where they are extending outside the boundary of the MPA is also not common. Mr

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

G Black provided information on different types of habitats and the difference between static and more movable habitats likely to require different considerations.

Mr G Black raised a point in relation to the best available evidence. He commented that Natural England are happy to provide the data that is available to them but raised the point that there may be additional evidence available which Natural England are unable to gather given resource constraints and that for other industries, the onus would be on the applicant/industry concerned to gather together that evidence. Dr A Jensen commented that in his view the IFCA was managing on behalf of the fishing industry rather than being the relevant industry itself and that the IFCA does not have the resources to gather the kind of data which is being discussed and the fishing industry does not have the financial resources to employ companies to undertake scientific work. He also commented that the fishing industry exists under a different legislative regime than for example terrestrial development. Members discussed the different approaches that could be taken in the development of evidence.

Members discussed the Government targets under the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 and it was queried what the outcome would be if the Southern IFCA did not meet the 2024 target for MPA management. The CEO outlined that there would need to be a strong rationale which would need to be discussed with Defra as to the reasons why that deadline could not be met.

The CEO asked Members how they would like to proceed with areas under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 which are proposed to be re-opened, taking into account Members concerns with this aspect of the proposals. Mr N Hornby outlined that the approach needed to be transparent. The DCOs explained that the consultation which would occur if this Byelaw were made by the Authority would be a Formal Consultation therefore specific questions would not be posed but the Byelaw and all supporting documentation would be provided for stakeholders to consider and respond to. It was also confirmed that the outcomes of the Formal Consultation would come back to the TAC for consideration and that amendments could be made at that point.

The Chair invited Members to indicate if they were in favour of the recommendation; Dr A Jensen, Mr R Stride, Mr G Wordsworth, Ms L MacCallum and Mr N Hornby were all in favour.

Resolved

188. a) Provide comment on the draft Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 and Supporting Documentation:

- i. The draft Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023
- ii. The draft BTFG 2023 Management Intentions Document
- iii. The draft BTFG 2023 Impact Assessment

b) In accordance with IFCA Byelaw Guidance, Members agreed to formally notify Authority Members and the Secretary of State of the intention to make the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 at the Authority meeting on 8th June 2023.

Recommend

189. That Officers consider options for the areas which are proposed to be reopened under the 2023 Byelaw and report back to the Authority.

190. Annual review of the Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan (2023 update)

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the management associated with The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 was required to be in line with a Management Plan which

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

accompanies the Order. The Southern IFCA is required to undertake an annual review of the Management Plan and publish an updated version on the website. If there are any significant changes required, then interested parties must be notified and take account of any representations received on that basis. The Management Plan takes into account the management of leases, the Habitats Regulations Requirements and the IFCA's duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The 2023 review of the Management Plan, there were two inconsequential changes identified, therefore interested parties were not required to be notified. DCO Birchenough outlined that the updates were in relation to providing information on survey work on Pacific oysters and updates from Defra on their national position on Pacific oysters.

Due to a pecuniary interest, Mr G Wordsworth was unable to vote on the matter. All remaining Members were in favour of the Recommendation.

Resolved

- 191. a)** That Members approve the 2023 updates to the Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan
b) That Members approve the above-named document for publication on the Southern IFCA website.

Recommended

- 192.** That the CEO confirm whether the above Recommendations is to be upheld following exploration of the Southern IFCA Standing Orders and the Local Government Act 1972, regarding the definition of 'present' and its relation to the specified quorum and report back to the Authority.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

193. Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident

DCO Dell provided Members with an update on Southern IFCA's response to the Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident, focusing on the operational response. On 26th March a leak was detected in a pipeline owned by Perenco and a major incident was declared with Southern IFCA contacted by Poole Harbour Commissioners requesting assistance including the use of FPV Endeavour and the drone. IFCO Officers worked with Oil Spill Response Ltd. personnel between 27th March and 30th March to help carry out Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Techniques (SCATs) using the drone for aerial surveillance and FPV Endeavour to reach remote parts of the Harbour.

Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council, Cefas and the FSA to help coordinate a shellfish sampling program to test multiple shellfish species to help inform the FSA position on harvesting and marketing of shellfish for aquaculture and the wild fisheries.

DCO Dell outlined the current situation and advice provided, in that fishing and netting for fish within the Harbour is able to take place providing that activities avoid any areas of the Harbour which are obviously contaminated with oil, which is now mainly contained to the spill site. Any fish found to be dead, dying or visibly contaminated with oil residue should not be consumed or marketed. Aquaculture areas have been open since 20th April, wild shellfish beds remain closed, sampling has been undertaken to inform advice on these areas with results expected this week. This advice will inform the dredge fishery activity, due to start on 25th May, and at this time hand gathering shellfish from the intertidal should not take place until the results have been received and advice issued.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

DCO Dell informed Members that Southern IFCA has committed significant time and resource to date to support the initial and ongoing incident. An account of this is currently being prepared with a view of submitting as a claim to seek remuneration of costs. The DCOs thanked the IFCOs involved, their commitment shown has been exemplary and feedback from Poole Harbour Commissioners and other authorities was that the knowledge and assets held by the IFCA were key in helping the operation progress without delay. The Incident Commander passed on thanks to the IFCA.

Dr A Jensen added his thanks as Chair of the TAC to all those involved stating that there had been nothing but positive comments on Southern IFCA's work related to the incident. Mr G Wordsworth also extended his thanks and stated that the IFCA did an excellent job in relation to the incident along with other partners and commented that the oil spill response plan which was in place for the Harbour had worked and been implemented successfully. He commented that the efforts of Southern IFCA and BCP Council had helped initiate the FSA response in a timely manner. Ms L MacCallum and Mr R Stride echoed the thanks to the IFCA staff.

Mr R Stride queried whether costs could be recovered. DCO Dell informed Members that there is active work ongoing in this regard and that the IFCA had received the forms to submit such a claim.

Resolved

194. That Members note the update.

195. 2023 Survey Program

DCO Birchenough updated Members on the survey work which had been undertaken by the Southern IFCA in the spring, consisting of a bivalve and scallop survey in The Solent and a bivalve survey in Poole Harbour. The surveys were required to be completed over a tight time scale this year due to bad weather preventing them taking place when originally scheduled. DCO Birchenough extended her thanks to the IFCOs and POs for their flexibility and willingness to adapt to undertake the survey work in a short space of time.

The surveys which have been completed include the Solent Scallop Survey which looks at the population of King Scallop in the Solent, the spring surveying informing a post-fishing season view of the stocks, the Solent Bivalve Survey, which is conducted in Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour to look at populations of commercially important bivalve species, again as a post-fishing season survey. Both surveys will be conducted again in the autumn to look at a pre-fishing season perspective. The annual Poole Bivalve Survey is one of the Southern IFCA's most established surveys with seven years of data under the current methodology. In all cases CPUE and length frequency data is collected and time series datasets are being built which will help inform management decisions for the fisheries.

A new survey was also undertaken looking at whelk populations across the district as part of the Whelk Monitoring Programme committed to in the development of the Pot Fishing Byelaw. Samples were collected from four areas across the district which are known to be important areas for whelk fishing, working with local fishers. Samples are awaiting processing and will be analysed for size frequency and CPUE. The aim is to build a dataset which, in the future, can be used to help inform management decisions.

196. Bass Guidance 2023

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

DCO Dell provided Members with an update on the rules and regulations for bass fishing as of 1st April 2023 and provided a copy of the recreational fishing poster developed to aid recreational fishers in understanding the relevant regulations.

Resolved

197. That Members note the report.

198. Review of Net Fishing Around Piers Code of Practice

IFCO Parry provided Members with background as to the development of the Code of Practice. At the point of implementation, a review date was set for the CoP of 31st December 2022.

A review of the CoP indicated that there had only been five reports of non-compliance with the CoP since its implementation with IFCOs engaging with persons involved in all cases. Engagement was sought with representatives from the South Coast Fishermen's Council and the Recreational Angling Sector Group as part of the review. Input from the RASG indicated that they felt the CoP worked well and were happy for it to continue in its current form, input from the SCFC also expressed no issues and that they were happy for the CoP to continue.

It is therefore the intention to maintain the CoP in its current form with no changes to the provisions contained within it. The Southern IFCA will continue to monitor compliance with the CoP and consideration will be given as to whether any future changes are required if the CoP is seen to not be meeting its objectives.

Ms L MacCallum queried whether all piers in the district were included, Dr A Jensen stated that the nine piers which had been included were not all but were the piers identified by the recreational angling sector as being most important to them.

Resolved

199. That Members note the report.

200. Fisheries Management Plans

PO Mullen provided an update to Members on the development of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). PO Mullen provided background information on what FMPs are and how they are being developed as well as outlining the 6 Fronrunner FMPs.

For shellfish FMPs (King Scallop, Whelk and Crab & Lobster), initial drafts were considered in February with comments from that process being reviewed ahead of the public consultation. The target for final publication of these FMPs is the end of October 2023. Proposed management measures being explored by these FMPs were provided to Members in an Annex to the report.

For the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP, PO Mullen provided Members with an overview of species to be included and updated that some species which had previously been considered for this FMP may be moving to the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP, but this has yet to be confirmed and that smoothound had been added. Key engagement has been held in February and March this year both online and in-person for commercial and recreational sectors. Discussions on proposed management measures is currently taking place in the relevant working groups with public consultation in summer 2023 and aiming for publication at the end of December 2023.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

For the Bass FMP the initial engagement took place in October 2022, since this time there has been little public information available but there is an intention for more engagement in the coming months with an aim for publication at the end of 2023.

For the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP, PO Mullen outlined the species to be included. Engagement on this FMP is expected to begin in the coming months and it is being considered whether the lead for this FMP will change from Defra to the MMO.

PO Mullen outlined general feedback on FMPs which included a general support for them and an interest in the development of collaborative management. Effective engagement has been highlighted as key, continuing post implementation of the FMPs so that ideas can continue to be shared and avenues for input be maintained. There is support for increased and improved data to aid in decision making, particularly with data poor species such as non-quota species. FMP leads have indicated that there will be full transparency in decision making around FMPs.

PO Mullen outlined the FMPs which were intended for future tranches with the development process commencing in 2024 to 2025. Members were informed that Defra had developed information posters and copies were provided.

Mr R Stride commented that the port visits for the NQS FMP had not been well attended and it was felt this could be because the information provided was high level and not enough information had been provided on specific management measures for fishers to consider. It was also raised that there was concern over the Bass FMP as there had been a lot of engagement early on but updates since that time had been limited and fishers are concerned at what point they will be able to feed into the process again. The CEO informed Members that the first draft of the Bass FMP had been released to arm's length bodies from Defra which will come into the public forum in due course, the timelines for this FMP are being met but it is not as public facing as some of the other FMPs.

Dr A Jensen queried what the TAC role would be in consultation on the FMPs. DCO Birchenough stated that the aim would be to hold some Member workshops with information on proposals provided by PO Mullen and discussion with Members on these to help frame a Southern IFCA response.

Resolved

201. That Members note the report.

202. Marine Licencing Update

IFCO Cast updated Members that 14 marine licence applications had been received by the Southern IFCA for consultation in the period January to April 2023. One had been sent to Southern IFCA in error and information was provided to the MMO licencing team on the extent of the Southern IFCA district.

Four of the applications were deemed to require a response from Southern IFCA. An outline of the nature of these responses was provided to Members as part of the report. IFCO Cast provided detail on the relevant South Marine Plan policies which were taken into account when drafting any responses and also outlined that information had been sought from local fishers to help inform the response.

Points which were raised through the responses included sediment transport and smothering, release of contaminants, location of current Southern IFCA regulations and key fisheries, the need to include the most recent Southern IFCA survey data, the need to clearly identify how

**SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY**

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED C

works related to relevant Marine Plan policies and that applicants should seek direct liaison with representatives from commercial and recreational fisheries as appropriate in order to ensure that all relevant information is captured. In all cases Southern IFCA offers to help facilitate making connections between the applicant and relevant fishers.

Resolved

203. That Members note the report.

Date and time of Next Meeting

204. That the meeting of the TAC will be on the 24 August 2023 at Southern IFCA Offices, Unit 3, Holes Bay Park.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 17:00.

Chairman:

Date:

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

BUDGET CONTROL STATEMENT

Report by CEO and Chartered Accountant

A. Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with a summary of the Authority's accounts for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 30th June 2023.

This report will be considered by the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee at 10am on the 19th September 2023, the Executive Sub-Committee at 2pm on the 19th September 2023 and the Authority on the 21st September 2023.

B. Recommendation

That the report be received.

C. Annexes

Annex 1: Summary Budget Control Statement

Annex 2: Detailed Budget Control Statement

1. Budget Control Statement

- 1.1 The Summary Budget Control Statement to 30th June 2023 is shown at Annex 1, showing a **118k deficit of income against budget**.
- 1.2 The notes accompanying in the Summary (Annex 1) and Detailed Budget Control Statement (Annex 2) provides an overview of all positive and negative variance equal to or greater than 1k.

2. Summary of Major Budget Headers

- 2.1 The positive variance captured under the Compliance & Enforcement Header (c.32k) is due in part (c.17k) to a new approach to accounting (in accordance with best recognised practice), where monies to replenish the Patrol Vessel Reserve fund are to be transferred at the end of the financial year, rather than in year. Marine Insurance was c.7k lower than anticipated (relating to FPV Vigilant and the point in which she will enter service) and costs associated with prosecutions (c.5k) remain lower than budget. Berthing fees for FPV Vigilant entering service were budgeted from June 2023.
- 2.2 The positive variance captured under the Research and Policy Header (c.4k) reflects pending surveys, pending byelaw adverts (relating to the formal advertisement of byelaws) and money ringfenced for legal scrutiny of byelaws not being utilised to date.
- 2.3 The positive variance captured under the Business Service Header (c.55k) is due to a reduction in staff salary and pension contributions as a result of in year staff movements, specifically carrying vacancies for Office Manager, Finance

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Administration and Senior IFCO Research & Policy (c.34k). In addition, a payment to the AIFCA (15k) is due July 2023.

- 2.4 The positive variance under the Capital Equipment Header (c.9k) is due to budgeting for FPV Vigilant to enter service earlier than anticipated.

3. Total Income

A deficit in projected income of c.219k reflects outstanding receipt of DEFRA grant for project work 2023-2024 (150k). The additional 80k outstanding relates to anticipated disposal of FPV Stella Barbara and 3 x Authority vehicles following FPV Vigilant coming into service. This income is anticipated to be realised late 2023/early 2024.

4. Payment of Amounts Exceeding £5,000

- 4.1 Paragraph (11) of Southern IFCA's Financial Regulations 2022 require that all ex. VAT payments over £5,000 (with the exception of salaries, PAYE, pension contributions and regular payments outside of the Financial Manager's control) are to be reported to the Authority via a BCS.
- 4.2 Between the 1st April 2023 and the 30th June 2023, the following payments equal to or greater than the above-mentioned figure are as follows:

Amount	What	Who
£7,280	Development fees (shared across three IFCAs) associated with online permit system platform.	Sussex IFCA
£66,850	Staged Payment (1) Cabin RHIB	Ribcraft Ltd
£5,248	Upfront payment for IFCO training, of which 75% will be reclaimed under the Fisheries & Seafood Scheme (FASS) following completion of training for eight IFCOs in recognised Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW), and five IFCOs in Radar & Electronics.	Fire Aid Academy Ltd

SUMMARY RESULTS Major Budget Headers	Apr23- Mar24 12 mths Budget	YTD			YTD Notes for positive & negative variance ≥£1k
		1 Apr 23 - 30 Jun 23 (3 mths)			
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY		Actual	Budget	Variations	
Compliance and Enforcement	169,529	21,695	53,982	↑ (32,547)	£16.6K pending transfer to the Marine Renewal Reserve which despite being budgeted for in-year cannot be transferred until EOY. Insurance £6.7K lower than budgeted. Prosecution costs £5.3K lower than budgeted. Berthing fees for FPV Vigilant not yet in service, budgeted from June 2023.
Research and Policy	33,631	5,053	9,057	↑ (4,004)	A no. of surveys outstanding c.£1K, £1.2K for byelaws adverts pending, Legal scrutiny £1.6K not utilised to date.
Business Services	895,839	197,313	249,468	↑ (55,363)	Majority related to salary & pension savings (£33K). £3.5K National Training anticipated Feb 2024. AIFCA subscription (£15K) pending July.
Capital Equipment	126,055	10,074	19,330	↑ (9,256)	£7K relates to depreciation on Stella Barbara replacement budgeted to be on service in June 2023.
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,225,054	234,135	331,837	↑ (101,170)	
TOTAL INCOME	1,175,441	851,194	1,070,750	↓ (219,556)	DEFRA grant (£165K) 2023/24 pending. Pending sale of FPV Stella Barbara (£55K) & 3x vehicles (c.25K). Offset by £28K relating to Poole Dredge permits not budgeted for until next month.
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(49,613)	617,060	738,913	↓ (118,386)	YTD there is a deficit in income of £118k against budget.

DETAILED RESULTS Minor Budget Headers	Apr23-Mar24 12 mths Budget	YTD			YTD Notes for positive & negative variance ≥£1k		
		1 Apr 23 - 30 Jun 23 (3 mths)					
		Actual	Budget	Variances			
Compliance & Enforcement	Total Vehicle Fuel	4,835	950	1,209	↑	(259)	
	7150-100 Vehicle roadside assistance	210	0	53	↑	(53)	
	7160-100 Vehicle maintenance	3,222	1,337	806	↓	531	
	7170-100 Vehicle road tax	1,396	218	349	↑	(132)	
	7180-100 Vehicle Insurance	3,805	4,222	3,805	↓	417	
	6068-100 Drone insurance	2,400	0	2,400	↑	(2,400)	This cost has been captured under 6070 Marine Insurance.
	6066-100 Drone running costs	644	327	161	↓	166	
	6000-100 3x FPV Fuel	12,709	2,282	3,177	↑	(895)	
	6005-100 FPV Berthing	10,352	1,295	2,588	↑	(1,293)	Budget includes berthing fees for Vigilant from June 2023.
	6006-100 FPV Maintenance	19,173	5,280	4,793	↓	487	
	6070-100 Marine Insurance	9,260	5,138	9,260	↑	(4,122)	Premium lower than expected based on previous years.
	4910-100 Patrol Vessel Reserve Fund	66,667	0	16,667	↑	(16,667)	Recognised accounting treatment requires the £66,667 to be transferred out of General Reserves and into the Marine Vessel Renewal Reserve at year end.
	5040-100 Protective clothing (PPE)	6,306	646	1,576	↑	(930)	
	5233-100 Enforcement Equipment	3,222	136	806	↑	(670)	
5234-100 Industry compliance aids	3,847	(136)	962	↑	(1,098)	Incorrect coding to be rectified.	
5090-100 Prosecution costs	21,480	0	5,370	↑	(5,370)	Budget is evenly phased by month. We are not accruing each month but will account for these costs as they hit.	
TOTAL	169,529	21,695	53,982	↑	(32,547)		

Research & Policy	5140-100 Adverts - Byelaws	10,842	1,493	2,711	↑	(1,218)	Budgeted for 3 MPA byelaws - anticipated BTFG Autumn 2023, SG & BB 2024.
	5096-100 Legal scrutiny (including byelaws)	6,444	0	1,611	↑	(1,611)	Budget is evenly phased by month. We are not accruing each month but will account for these costs as they hit.
	5099-100 Consultation costs	1,074	0	269	↑	(269)	
	5201-100 Poole Bivalve Survey	1,100	1,200	1,100	↓	100	
	5202-100 Solent Scallop Stock Survey	3,029	940	1,514	↑	(574)	Miscoding between 5202 and 5206 to be rectified - this survey not yet undertaken for 2023
	5206-100 Solent Bivalve Stock Assessment	3,029	1,420	0	↓	1,420	Phasing of budget - anticipated July
	5207-100 Whelk Survey	1,718	0	1,718	↑	(1,718)	Survey pending
	5217-100 Survey Equipment & Maintenance	537	0	134	↑	(134)	
	5231-100 Poole Harbour MSC Re-certification	1,025	0	0	⇒	0	
	5230-100 Poole Harbour MSC Annual Audit	4,833	0	0	⇒	0	
	TOTAL	33,631	5,053	9,057	↑	(4,004)	

Business Services	Office expenditure	32,089	8,283	8,023	↓	260	
	5060-100 Communications	8,055	2,286	2,014	↓	272	
	5070-100 General insurance	20,479	20,267	20,479	↑	(212)	
	5075-100 Rates	21,086	5,479	5,271	↓	208	
	5110-100 Misc	4,296	1,064	1,074	↑	(10)	
	5130-100 Financial Audit costs	3,866	0	0	⇒	0	
	5065-100 New accounting software - Xero	541	0	0	⇒	0	
	5680-100 Bank charges	930	232	233	↑	(1)	
	5160-100 AIFCA	15,000	0	15,000	↑	(15,000)	To be paid in July 2023
	5080-100 General Subscriptions	4,854	1,623	1,214	↓	409	
	5056-100 Permit Database	1,257	0	314	↑	(314)	
	5105-100 Authority meetings	2,685	(49)	671	↑	(720)	
	4862-100 Meetings - NIMEG	0	419	0	↓	419	
	5150-100 Adverts - Recruitment	2,148	429	537	↑	(108)	
	5097-100 Legal support (HR)	1,611	0	403	↑	(403)	
	5010-100 Salaries and other labour costs	658,369	134,573	164,592	↑	(30,019)	Vacancies (SNR IFCO, Office Manager & Finance Admin positions (OM, FA filled August, Snr pending October 2023).
	5020-100 LGA Pension Scheme	87,892	18,820	21,973	↑	(3,153)	As per 5010
	Training	22,307	2,109	5,577	↑	(3,468)	National Training costs (Competent Officer Course) anticipated Feb 2024
	Staff Expenses	4,400	1,928	1,099	↓	829	
	7130-100 Chairman's fund	1,074	20	269	↑	(249)	
7145-100 Members networking	752	0	188	↑	(188)		
7140-100/7144-100 MMO appointee expenses	2,148	(171)	537	↑	(708)	This is the release of 2022/23 accrual. No new accruals made.	
TOTAL	895,839	197,313	249,468	↑	(55,363)		

DETAILED RESULTS		Apr23-Mar24 12 mths Budget	YTD			YTD Notes for positive & negative variance ≥£1k	
Minor Budget Headers			1 Apr 23 - 30 Jun 23 (3 mths)				
			Actual	Budget	Variance		
Capital Equipment	9120-100 Premises	4,988	1,247	1,247	↑	(0)	
	9140-100 Equipment	4,039	1,142	1,010	↓	132	
	9180-100 Vehicles	12,376	1,749	3,094	↑	(1,345)	Awaiting FPV Vigilant arrival prior to disposal/purchase of vehicles (this was budgeted for in April).
	9160-100 FPV's	99,282	5,937	12,636	↑	(6,699)	Budget estimated Stella Barbara replacement (i.e. Vigilant) to be in use from Jun 2023.
	8010-100 Small items of equip (<£500)	5,370	0	1,343	↑	(1,343)	Phased evenly by month for the Budget. This is an estimate.
	TOTAL	126,055	10,074	19,330	↑	(9,256)	
Income	4210-100 Levy - Hants	328,489	328,489	328,489	⇒	0	
	4220-100 Levy - IOW	116,678	116,678	116,678	⇒	0	
	4230-100 Levy - Dorset	201,537	201,537	201,537	⇒	0	
	4250-100 Levy - BCP	90,607	90,607	90,607	⇒	0	
	4260-100 Levy - Southampton	34,963	34,963	34,963	⇒	0	
	4270-100 Levy - Portsmouth	40,817	40,817	40,817	⇒	0	
	4845-100 Poole Harbour Dredge Permits	27,000	28,155	0	↑	28,155	Income to be realised in July. Additional amount due to MSC certification uplift on permits
	4846-100 Solent Dredge Permits Category A	7,740	0	0	⇒	0	
	4850-100 Poole Order Aquaculture Leases	31,530	5,059	0	↑	5,059	Income to be realised in July
	4847-100 Net fishing permits	2,890	0	722	↓	(722)	
	4851-100 Pot Fishing Permit - commercial	3,600	0	900	↓	(900)	
	4852-100 Pot Fishing Permit - recreational	1,050	0	263	↓	(263)	
	4895-100 Poole Council Shellfish Sample	2,835	-	709	↓	(709)	
	4190-100 Bank interest receivable	1,000	3,506	250	↑	3,256	Budget set before interest rate increases.
	4890-100 Misc income (including DEFRA refund)	2,500	0	625	↓	(625)	
	4200-100 DEFRA Fisheries Act Fund (SR21)	165,000	0	165,000	↓	(165,000)	No update on DEFRA funding for 2023-24 - anticipate will receive this during the financial year. Expected to be £150K.
	4897-100 Poole Harbour Fishery Reserve tfr	33,930	0	8,483	↓	(8,483)	Recognised accounting treatment requires transfer from the Poole Order Reserve to the General Reserve at year end to cover costs.
5170-100 (Surplus)/deficit on equip sale	79,851	0	79,851	↓	(79,851)	Relates to sale of Stella Barbara (£55K) & 3 x vehicles (£25K) awaiting disposal following FPV Vigilant coming into service.	
4600-100 Court costs recovered	3,424	1,383	856	↑	527		
TOTAL	1,175,441	851,194	1,070,750	↓	(219,556)		

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Marked E

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 ANNUAL RETURN FROM PKF FRANCIS CLARK

Report by the Accountant and CEO

A. Purpose of the Report

To formally accept the Statement of Accounts for the financial year April 2022 to March 2023, following completion of external auditing by accountancy firm PKF Frances Clark, based in Poole, Dorset.

B. Recommendation

1. That Members note the outcomes of the external audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2023.
2. That Members formally accept the Annual Return, and subject to approval of a recommendation by the ESC on the 19th September 2023, the document is signed at the meeting by the Chairman, the CEO and the Accountant on behalf of the Authority.
3. That Members formally accept the final Statement of Accounts, and subject to approval of a recommendation by the ESC on the 19th September 2023, the document is signed at the meeting by the CEO on behalf of the Authority.

C. Annexes

1. Annual Return for financial year ended 31 March 2023.
2. Frances Clark Review Report (letter dated 26th August 2023)
3. The Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. Background

At the meeting of The Executive Sub-Committee on the 6th June 2023, following Members consideration of the draft Statement of Accounts for the previous financial year, it was agreed that the Executive Sub-Committee make recommendations to the Authority authorising the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors, PKF Frances Clark for consideration.

At the meeting of The Authority on the 8th June 2023, Members authorised the submission of the draft Statement of Accounts to the external auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2023.

2. Outcomes of Annual Financial Audit conducted by PKF Francis Clark.

Following discussions with PKF Francis who conducted the Independent Assurance Review, the DEFRA Grants have been removed from deferred income on the balance sheet and recognised as income during the financial year.

The amendments to the Net General Fund Surplus in the Revenue Account since the June meeting are as follows:

2022-23 Net General Fund Surplus presented at June Meeting	121,869
Add DEFRA grants previously held on the balance sheet as deferred income now recognised in income in the revenue account	400,000

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Marked E

Deduct income released relating to the DEFRA resource grant. This will be transferred in reserves.	(4,048)
Final 2022-23 Net General Fund Surplus	517,821

The amendments to the Net Assets in the Balance Sheet since the June meeting are as follows:

2022-23 Net Assets presented at June Meeting	1,669,958
Remove DEFRA grants previously held on the balance sheet as deferred income now recognised in income in the revenue account (add back as a liability)	395,952
Final 2022-23 Net Assets	2,065,910

2.1 Assurance Review Observations and Recommendations

'...We encountered some difficulty during the expenditure testing that was performed on site. Part of our review involves selecting a sample of transactions and checking these back to source documentation. Some of the requested expenditure invoices could not be found which led to a larger sample being tested. We also observed a lack of order regarding the filing of 2022/23 expenditure documentation. We understand there were staffing changes in the finance team during this period which contributed to this issue....'

'...We recommend an alphabetical filing system is adopted to improve the organisation and to make it easier to locate paperwork if needed. A further recommendation would be to consider a paperless filing system as many suppliers now send invoices electronically and this option may provide savings on printing costs in addition to being environmentally friendly and reducing storage space...'

2.2 Conclusions

'...Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements have not been prepared so as to present fairly the state of the Authority's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and its surplus for the year then ended...'

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Annual return for the financial year ended 31 March 2023

The annual return on pages 2 to 5 is made up of four sections:

- Sections 1 and 2 are completed by the person nominated by the Authority.
- Section 3 is completed by Francis Clark LLP as the reviewer appointed by the Authority.
- Section 4 is completed by Gemma Roberts, the Authority's internal audit provider.

Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed-		'Yes' Means that the body:
	Yes	No*	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the guidance notes within this Annual Return.	YES		Prepared its accounting statements and approved them.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	YES		Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with generally accepted good practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the body to conduct its business or on its finances.	YES		Has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with generally accepted good practice.
4 We provided opportunity during the year for interested persons to inspect and ask questions about the accounts.	YES		Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about these Authority accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the body and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	YES		Considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the body's accounting records and control systems.	YES		Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the body.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal audit and external reviews.	YES		Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external reviewers.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the body and where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	YES		Disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.

This annual governance statement is approved by the Authority and recorded as minute reference

Signed by:

Chair MARK ROBERTS

Dated

Signed by:

Clerk PIA BATEMAN

Dated

MINUTE REFERENCE	
DATED	

*Note: Please provide explanations on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the Authority will address the weaknesses identified

Section 2 – Accounting statements 2022/23 for: Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

	Year ended		Notes and Guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £	
1 Balances brought forward	909,202	974,699	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil Balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the body's financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Income from local taxation and/or levy	813,090	789,408	Total amount of local tax and/or levy received or receivable in the year including funding from a sponsoring body. Excluding any grants received.
3 (+) Total other receipts	518,709	112,949	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the taxation and/or levy (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	(566,081)	(666,078)	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the body's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	(377,825)	(301,776)	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	1,297,095	909,202	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	1,608,167	1,569,090	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – to agree with bank reconciliation.
9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets	1,176,046	1,001,469	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the body as at 31 March
10 Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer:

Signature

Date

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the Authority on:

Date

And recorded as minute reference

.....

Signed by Chair of meeting approving these accounting statements:

Signature

Date

Section 3 – Review report 2022/23 Certificate

We present the findings from our review of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2023 in respect of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Respective responsibilities of the Authority and the reviewer

The Authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The Authority prepares an annual return which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on various governance matters in accordance with generally accepted good practice.

We have reviewed the annual return and set out our findings below. Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and therefore does not provide the level of assurance of a statutory audit.

Report

Please see the attached report dated 25 August 2023.

Review signature



Reviewer

Anne-Marie Gates

Date

25 August 2023

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report 2022/23 to Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

The Authority's internal audit service provider, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2023. Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year	YES		
B. The Authority's financial regulations have been met, payments were approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
C. The Authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES		
D. The annual taxation or levy or funding requirements resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate	YES		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	YES		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the body approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	YES		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and, where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES		

For any other risk areas identified by the Authority (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

The internal audit was conducted by Mike Ratsey up to and including February 2023 when he retired from SIFCA. His replacement, Gemma Roberts, continued with this work from March 2023 onwards.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:

Print name GEMMA ROBERTS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: Signature Date

***Note:** If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

****Note:** If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Francis Clark LLP
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Private & Confidential

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Unit 3, Holes Bay Park
Sterte Avenue West
POOLE
Dorset
BH15 2AA

Our ref:
PS866B-AMG/CW

26 August 2023

Dear Sirs

Independent Chartered Accountants' Review report to the Committee of Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority ("the Authority")

We have reviewed the Statement of Accounts of the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2023, as prepared by Gemma Roberts.

This report is made to the Committee, as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 15 September 2020. Our review has been undertaken so that we may state to the Authority those matters agreed in our engagement letter and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority for our work, for this report or the conclusions we have formed.

The Authority's responsibility for the Statement of Accounts

As explained at Section 2.2.1 of the Statement of Accounts set out on page 4, the Authority is responsible for making arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and ensuring that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. The Authority is also responsible for managing its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and to safeguard its assets.

Accountants' responsibility

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion based on our review of the Statement of Accounts. We conducted our review in accordance with International Standard on Review Engagements (ISRE) 2400 (Revised), *Engagements to review historical financial information* and ICAEW Technical Release TECH 09/13AAF *Assurance reviews on historical financial statements*. ISRE 2400 also requires us to comply with the ICAEW Code of Ethics.

Scope of the Assurance Review

A review of financial statements in accordance with ISRE 2400 (Revised) is a limited assurance engagement. We have performed additional procedures to those required under a compilation engagement. These primarily consist of making enquiries of management and others within the entity, as appropriate, applying analytical procedures and evaluating the evidence obtained. The procedures performed in a review are substantially less than those performed in an audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

Assurance Review Observations and Recommendations

We encountered some difficulty during the expenditure testing that was performed on site. Part of our review involves selecting a sample of transactions and checking these back to source documentation. Some of the requested expenditure invoices could not be found which led to a larger sample being tested. We also observed a lack of order regarding the filing of 2022/23 expenditure documentation. We understand there were staffing changes in the finance team during this period which contributed to this issue.

We recommend an alphabetical filing system is adopted to improve the organisation and to make it easier to locate paperwork if needed. A further recommendation would be to consider a paperless filing system as many suppliers now send invoices electronically and this option may provide savings on printing costs in addition to being environmentally friendly and reducing storage space.

Conclusion

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements have not been prepared so as to present fairly the state of the Authority's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and its surplus for the year then ended.

Yours faithfully

Francis Clark LLP

FRANCIS CLARK LLP

E-mail: mail@pkf-francisclark.co.uk

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Unit 3, Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole, BH15 2AA

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

1 FOREWORD TO THE ACCOUNTS

Provided by Chief Executive Officer Pia Bateman and Chartered Accountant Gemma Roberts

This Statement of Accounts sets out the overall financial position of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority for the year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

The core financial statements are:

- **The Statement of Accounting Policies** which details the principles on which the Statement of Accounts has been prepared.
- **The Consolidated Revenue Account** which covers the income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023.
- **The Consolidated Balance Sheet** which sets out the financial position of the Authority as at 31st March 2023.
- **The Statement of Total Movements in Reserves** which brings together all the recognised gains and losses of the Authority during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
- **The Consolidated Cash Flow Statement** which summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.

During the year to 31st March 2023 the Consolidated Revenue Account shows that the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority recorded a net surplus of £517,821 (2021-2022 deficit of £23,619), this was taken to the General Reserve. Of this £517,821 surplus, £400,000 related to two DEFRA grants (Capital grant £250,000, Revenue grant £150,000) which will be fully utilised over the next few years. £4,048 of the DEFRA Revenue grant was utilised during the year. £16,000 of the surplus was transferred to the Research Reserve (2021-22: £0).

Levies upon the six constituent councils of Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, BCP, Portsmouth and Southampton raised £813,091 (2021-2022: £789,409) (see Section 5 & Note 5.1.8). At the year-end net assets were valued at £2,065,910 (2021-2022: £1,548,089) (see Section 6).

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2 STATEMENTS ON INTERNAL CONTROL AND RESPONSIBILITIES PLUS CERTIFICATE BY THE TREASURER

2.1 Statement on Internal Control

2.1.1 Scope of Responsibility

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority ('The Authority') takes responsibility for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, used economically, efficiently, and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, The Authority takes responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of The Authority's functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2.1.2 The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of The Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority for the year to 31st March 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

2.1.3 The Internal Control Environment

The key elements of the internal control environment, includes:

- the facilitation of policy and decision-making.
- ensuring compliance with established policies, procedures, laws, and regulations including how risk management is embedded in the activity of The Authority, how leadership is given to the risk management process, and how staff are trained or equipped to manage risk in a way appropriate to their authority and duties.
- ensuring the economical, effective, and efficient use of resources, and for securing continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- the financial management of The Authority.
- the overview of the Executive Sub Committee, in accordance with their functions, as specified under The Authority's Standing Orders.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2.1.4 Review of Effectiveness

The Authority takes responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within The Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

2.1.5 Significant Internal Control Issues

The most significant Internal Control Issue is the small number of staff to whom tasks can be allocated. There is little or no flexibility in the case of leave or sickness which means that mundane and routine tasks have to be constantly planned in advance.

2.1.6 Financial Internal Audit

Financial internal audit was carried out by the outgoing Accountant M B Ratsey MA ACA for April 2022 to March 2023 prior to retirement. Areas examined include:

- Variance of budget against actual
- Prompt banking of receipts
- Authorisation of expenditure
- Salaries, pensions, and PAYE
- Control over fixed assets
- VAT
- MMO appointees' expenses
- Bank reconciliations

The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of officers of the Authority,
- the work of the internal auditor as described above, and
- the external auditors in their limited scope assurance report

Pia Bateman
Chief Executive Officer

Gemma Roberts
Chartered Accountant

Date:

Date:

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2.2 Statement on Responsibilities

2.2.1 The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority:

- Makes arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority that officer is the Treasurer.
- Manages its affairs to secure economic, efficient, and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

2.2.2 The Treasurer's Responsibilities

The Treasurer takes responsibility for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts which, in terms of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in Great Britain ("the Code of Practice"), is required to present fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023.

In preparing these accounts, the Treasurer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently.
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent.
- complied with the Code of Practice; kept proper accounting records which were up to date.
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

2.3 Treasurer's Certificate

I hereby certify that the Statement of Accounts for the year to 31st March 2023 has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996.

I further certify that the Statement of Accounts presents fairly the financial position of Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority at 31st March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year to 31st March 2023.

Signed:

Date:
Pia Bateman
Treasurer to the Authority

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

3 AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

With effect from 1st April 2015 Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities are no longer required to have their accounts audited. In order to give a degree of comfort regarding this Statement of Accounts, The Authority has appointed Francis Clark LLP, registered auditors, to carry out a "limited scope assurance report" ('the Report'), a formal procedure recognised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. This Report will be available from 30th September 2023 and copies may be requested.

4 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

4.1 Accounting Principles

The general principles applied in compiling these accounts are those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The accounts have been prepared in accordance with their Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and with the guidance notes issued by CIPFA on the application of accounting standards (SSAPs).

4.2 Accruals and Historic Cost Convention

The accounts have been prepared under the accruals concept where income and expenditure are brought into account as they are earned and incurred and not as money received or paid and under the historic cost convention adjusted to include the revaluation of assets.

4.3 Basis of Debtors and Creditors

Revenue creditors are recorded on an Income and Expenditure basis, with estimated creditors being introduced into the accounts to cover goods and services received but not paid for by the year to 31st March 2023.

Revenue debtors are accrued to reflect the latest estimates of amounts due. There are no losses or anticipated losses, from non-collectible debts.

4.4 Stocks and Work in Progress

There are no stocks or work in progress included in the accounts.

4.5 Depreciation Policy

Depreciation is charged on all fixed assets. Premises are written down on a straight-line basis at 1% per annum. All other assets are depreciated on the reducing balance method at a rate of 25% per annum.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

4.6 Basis for Charges for Capital

Up to 31st March 2019 the Consolidated Revenue Account was charged to reflect the use of capital assets. The charges were in accordance with the minimum charge required under the accounting regulations and comprised depreciation and an interest charge. The interest charged was 3% and it was offset by a corresponding amount which was credited to an Asset Management Revenue Account. Since this simply charged one part of the consolidated revenue account and credited another part there was no effect on the surplus (or deficit) for the year. With effect from the year to 31st March 2020 this interest adjustment was discontinued.

4.7 European Commission Grant Aid

There are no outstanding payments in respect of support for fisheries training of employees of the Authority.

4.8 Pension Fund

The Authority is a scheduled body within the Pension Fund administered by Hampshire County Council. The Authority's staff are eligible to participate in this scheme and all have elected to do so. Costs shown represent contributions paid by the Authority into this scheme. Contributions to the fund are determined on a triennial basis by the Actuary. During the year to 31st March 2023 employee contribution of their salary was as follows:

Earnings	Contribution
Up to £15,000	5.5%
£15,001-£23,600	5.8%
£23,601-£38,300	6.5%
£38,301-£48,500	6.8%
£48,501-£67,900	8.5%
£67,901-£96,200	9.9%

The Authority contributed 14.5% of employee's earnings (Previous year: 14.5% of employee's earnings). Employer's contribution during the year to 31st March 2023 was £72,579 (2021-2022: £85,755).

4.9 Interest and Investments

All interest is from bank accounts. The Authority holds no investments.

4.10 Cost of Services

Recharges for work required under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 are made to The Authority's General Reserve from the Poole Harbour Reserve. In the year to 31st March 2023 there was a recharge of £17,021 (2021-2022: £14,398).

4.11 Finance Leases and other Financing Arrangements

The Authority had no finance leases, operating leases or hire purchase agreements in operation during the year to 31st March 2023.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

4.12 Reserves and Provisions

The Authority holds a **Marine Asset Renewal Reserve**, the purpose of which is to provide funds for unforeseen repairs and in the longer term to contribute towards the replacement of Marine Assets.

The **Marine Act Reserve** held funds for expenditure likely to be required in delivery of duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009. ('the Act'), to be used at the Chief Executive Officer's discretion to match expenditure in pursuit of achieving the objectives of the Act.

The **Research Reserve** is funded from surpluses on third party contracts to fund ongoing research.

In 2021, a formal policy on the reserves held by the Authority was established. This stated that reserves would be held for three main purposes:

- To establish and maintain an adequate balance of working capital to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows.
- To create a contingency to protect against the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.
- To build up funds to meet known or predicted requirements.

Following the approval of the annual accounts by The Authority's external auditors an annual presentation will be made to The Authority's Audit and Governance Committee to justify the existing reserves and their adequacy or otherwise for the following 10 years.

The Executive Sub Committee will review the Reserves Policy every three years. The next review will be undertaken in the financial year 2023-2024.

4.13 Contingent Liabilities

The Authority has no contingent liabilities.

4.14 Related Party Transactions

In accordance with The Accounting Code of Practice the following Related Party Transactions are disclosed for the year to 31 March 2023.

	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payments</u>
Levy (receipts), Pension (payments)	£813,091	£72,579
Levies received in advance (This amount has been included in creditors)	(£620,633)	

4.15 Disclosure of Fees

The fees expected to be charged by Francis Clark for The Report are approximately £3,300 for the year to 31 March 2023.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED **31 MARCH 2023**

		2022-2023	2021-2022
	Notes	£	£
<i>Expenditure</i>			
Employees	5.1.1	566,081	666,078
Premises - General Office	5.1.2	31,738	26,320
Transport Related Costs	5.1.3	15,203	25,944
Supplies and Services	5.1.4	61,740	69,348
Marine Asset Costs:			
	<i>PV Endeavour</i>	9,457	7,691
	<i>PV Stella Barbara</i>	2,860	7,781
	<i>PV Protector</i>	3,419	3,617
	<i>Drone costs</i>	2,629	461
	<i>PV Fuel</i>	9,129	7,946
	<i>Insurance</i>	4,607	5,747
Depreciation	5.1.5	46,550	43,239
Establishment expenses	5.1.6	60,566	61,805
Total Gross Expenditure		<u>813,979</u>	<u>925,977</u>
<i>Income</i>			
Interest		5,879	137
Other Income		109,668	104,027
Profit on Sale of Fixed Assets	5.1.7	3,162	8,785
		<u>118,709</u>	<u>112,949</u>
Total Net Operating Expenditure, to be met from Levies upon Constituent Authorities		<u><u>695,270</u></u>	<u><u>813,028</u></u>
Hampshire County Council		328,489	318,921
Isle of Wight Council		116,678	113,280
Dorset Council		201,537	195,667
BCP Council		90,607	87,968
Southampton City Council		34,963	33,945
Portsmouth City Council		40,817	39,628
Total Financing	5.1.8	<u>813,091</u>	<u>789,409</u>
DEFRA Grant Income	5.1.9	400,000	-
Net General Fund Surplus / (Deficit)		517,821	(23,619)

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5.1 Notes to the Consolidated Revenue Account

5.1.1 Employees

At year end (31 March 2023) the Authority employed 13 full time and 2 part time staff (2021-2022: 12 full time, 3 part time), at agreed pay bands linked to Local Government Pay Scales. The Authority is required to report specifically on two issues:

1. Employees with remuneration in excess of £50,000. One employee received emoluments at this level in the year to 31 March 2023 (2021- 2022: Two).
2. The cost of providing pension contributions for employees: In the year to 31 March 2023 this was £72,579 (2021-2022: £85,755)

5.1.2 Premises – General Office

Premises - general office expenses are principally rates, utility bills and other costs incurred in providing the offices at 3 Holes Bay, Poole.

5.1.3 Transport Related Costs

Transport related costs cover mainly the travel and subsistence allowances of the Authority's operational staff.

5.1.4 Supplies and Services

Supplies and services relate principally to protective clothing, legal costs, training, rent, audit, project and miscellaneous costs together with bank interest.

5.1.5 Depreciation

The total is derived as follows:

Premises	Marine Assets	Vehicles	Equipment	Total
£4,988	£26,715	£9,387	£5,460	£46,550

5.1.6 Establishment Expenses

Establishment expenses relate to subscriptions to National associations, printing, advertising, stationery, telephones and communications licences, postages, interest payments and insurance other than those relating to the marine assets.

Under this heading the Authority is required to report specifically under Section 4(5) of the Local Government Act 1986 regarding the amount it spent on publicity. In the year to 31st March 2023 £0 was charged to public notices to advertise the audit and byelaws (2021-2022: £4,900). A total of £1,109 (2021-2022: £690) was spent on recruitment advertising.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

5.1.7 Other Income

Other income relates principally to income from Defra, in order to support Defra's work in achieving its objectives under the Fisheries Act 2020, the Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), The Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), rent from leases under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (administrative cost recovery only), grants received, third party project fees, chartering of marine assets, training provided to other authorities and costs awarded from court cases (cost recovery only).

5.1.8 Local Authority Contributions

	2022-23	2021-22
Dorset Council	24.79%	24.79%
Hampshire County Council	40.40%	40.40%
Isle of Wight Council	14.35%	14.35%
BCP Council	11.14%	11.14%
Southampton City Council	4.30%	4.30%
Portsmouth City Council	5.02%	5.02%
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%

5.1.9 DEFRA Grant Income

This comprised two grants made relating to 2022 – 23. An amount of £250,000 relating to Capital and the purchase of a new vessel. An amount of £150,000 relating to Revenue to support delivery of statutory duties laid out in section 153 and 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) and regulation 19 of the Marine Strategy Regulations, 2010.

5.1.10 MMO appointee expenses

MMO appointee general expenses provided in the year to 31 March 2023 were -£4,883, a credit to the Revenue Account (2021-2022: £5,664). Details as follows:

	Outstanding at 1 Apr 22	Paid in year	Outstanding at 31 Mar 23	Total per a/cs
T Legg	(3,000)	-	-	(3,000)
L MacCallum	-	161	-	160
R Stride	(1,200)	1,370	-	170
G Wordsworth	(1,820)	-	-	(1,820)
N Hornby	(52)	199	-	147
Provision for o/s claims	(1,600)	60	(1,000)	(540)
	(7,672)	1,790	(1,000)	(4,883)

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

6 CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2022-2023 £	2021-2022 £
Fixed Assets			
Office and Equipment	6.1.1	496,692	504,952
Marine Assets	6.1.1	94,984	96,262
Vehicles	6.1.1	27,981	37,667
Assets under construction	6.1.1	149,150	-
		768,807	638,881
Current Assets			
Debtors	6.1.2	375,444	8,347
Cash at Bank and In Hand	6.1.3	1,608,167	1,569,090
		1,983,611	1,577,437
Total Assets		2,752,418	2,216,318
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	6.1.4	686,508	668,229
Current Assets Less Liabilities		1,297,103	909,208
Total Assets Less Liabilities		2,065,910	1,548,089
Represented by			
Capital Finance Account	7	768,807	638,881
Marine Assets Renewal Reserve	7	275,287	405,213
Marine Act Reserve	7	-	-
Research Reserve	7	16,000	-
General Reserve	7	1,005,816	503,995
Total Financing		2,065,910	1,548,089

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

6.1 Notes to the Balance Sheet

6.1.1 Movement of Fixed Assets

	Premises	Marine Assets	Vehicles	Equipment	Assets Under Construction	Total
Book value 1 Apr 2022	483,413	96,261	37,667	21,539	-	638,880
Additions	-	25,438	-	2,188	149,150	176,776
Disposals	-	-	(2,200)	-	-	(2,200)
Depreciation	(4,988)	(26,715)	(9,387)	(5,460)	-	(46,550)
Adjustment on disposal	-	-	1,901	-	-	1,901
Book value 31 March 2023	478,425	94,984	27,981	18,267	149,150	768,807

6.1.2 Debtors

	2022 – 2023 £	2021 - 2022 £
Prepayments	16,689	-
VAT Control Account	8,755	8,347
Accrued income	350,000	-
	375,444	8,347

Accrued income represent amounts due from Dorset County Council in respect of two DEFRA grants for the year to 31 March 2023.

6.1.3 Cash at Bank and In Hand

The amount held at the bank, in petty cash and in stamps.

6.1.4 Creditors

	2022 – 2023 £	2021 - 2022 £
Deferred income	620,633	620,633
Other creditors	18,000	22,283
Accruals	47,875	25,313
	686,508	668,229

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

7. STATEMENT OF TOTAL MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES

	Capital Finance Reserve	Marine Assets Renewal Reserve	Research Reserve	General reserve	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
B/F 1 April 2022	638,881	405,213	-	503,995	1,548,089
Surplus for the year	-	-	-	517,821	517,821
Transfer to/(from) General Reserve	-	-	16,000	(16,000)	-
Fixed asset movement:					
Additions	176,776	(176,776)	-	-	-
Disposals	(2,200)	2,200	-	-	-
Rounding	(1)	1	-	-	-
Revaluations	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	(46,550)	46,550	-	-	-
Adjustment on disposal	1,901	(1,901)	-	-	-
C/F 31 March 2023	768,807	275,287	16,000	1,005,816	2,065,910

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

8. CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2022-2023 £	2021-2022 £
Expenditure			
Cash paid to and on behalf of employees		(546,358)	(668,137)
Other operating costs		<u>(215,372)</u>	<u>(239,536)</u>
		(761,730)	(907,673)
Income			
Local Authority Precept/Levy (includes early payment for following year)		813,091	1,091,121
Grant income		50,000	-
Insurance Claim		1,810	-
Cash received for goods and services		<u>94,461</u>	<u>74,658</u>
Net Cash In/(Out)flow from Revenue Activities	8.1	197,632	258,106
Servicing of Finance			
Interest Received		5,879	137
Capital Activities			
Expenditure			
Purchase of fixed assets (including AUC)		(167,895)	(55,390)
Rounding		-	1
Income			
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets (Patrol vessel/van)		<u>3,461</u>	<u>6,536</u>
Net in/(de)crease in cash	8.1	<u>39,077</u>	<u>209,390</u>
		2022-2023 £	2021-2022 £
8.1 Reconciliation			
General Fund Surplus/(Deficit)		121,869	(23,620)
Interest Received		(5,879)	(137)
Revaluations of fixed assets		-	(11,002)
Disposal of fixed assets		2,200	73,248
Adjustment on disposal		(1,901)	(65,252)
Net proceeds from sales of fixed assets		(3,461)	(6,536)
Depreciation		46,550	43,239
Sundry Debtors		(367,097)	(5,444)
Sundry Creditors		405,351	280,332
Movement on other Reserves		<u>-</u>	<u>(26,722)</u>
Cash movement		<u>197,632</u>	<u>258,106</u>
Reconciliation			
Balance brought forward 1 April		1,569,090	1,359,700
Balance carried forward 31 March		<u>1,608,167</u>	<u>1,569,090</u>
		<u>39,077</u>	<u>209,390</u>

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

9. POOLE HARBOUR FISHERY ORDER 2015

The Authority manage aquaculture activity within a defined area of Poole Harbour under [The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015](#) (1346/2015). In accordance with Section 6(1) of this Order, The Authority is required to account for the relevant income and expenditure associated with its duties under this Order. The rents received include the costs associated with the reallocation of lease beds in 2020 (Tranche 2) for the period 2020-2025, as well as annual costs associated with the management under this Order. The initial costs associated with the reallocation of lease beds were incurred in 2020 when the previous Tranche 1 (2015-2020) expired, and are being written off over a 5 year period.

The balance for the Poole Order is held within the Authority's General Reserve. In the year to 31st March 2023, £17,021 (2021-2022: £14,398) of this balance was used to account for work delivered in accordance with required duties under this Order £20,000 was ringfenced to cover the initial costs associated with the MSC Re-certification fees, which will be credited back to the reserve over a five year period.

<i>Expenditure</i>	2022-2023	2021-2022
	£	£
2.5% Of Total Employee Costs	14,152	16,652
Legal costs	750	750
Transfer to General Reserve	20,000	-
TOTAL	34,902	17,402
 <i>Income</i>		
Rents	31,923	31,800
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(2,979)	14,398
 <i>Balances</i>		
B/F 1 April	121,770	107,372
Net Income for the year	(2,979)	14,398
C/F 31 March	118,791	121,770

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

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BOTTOM TOWED FISHING GEAR BYELAW 2023

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose of the Report

For Members to consider the submission of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 ('the Byelaw') to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for confirmation by the Secretary of State.

B. Recommendation

(1) That the Authority submits the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 to the Marine Management Organisation for confirmation by the Secretary of State.

C. Annexes

1. Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023
2. BTFG Byelaw 2023 Impact Assessment
3. BTFG Byelaw 2023 Management Intentions Document

In addition to the Byelaw package annexed to this report, the MCZ Assessments and HRA Assessments (for SACs and SPAs) which underpin the Byelaw are available on the Southern IFCA website at <https://www.southern-ifca.gov.uk/ongoing-reviews>.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the decision to **make the Byelaw at the Authority Meeting on the 8th June 2023**, Southern IFCA undertook a period of formal consultation that concluded on the 28th July 2023.
- 1.2 In line with Defra's guidance on the IFCA Byelaw Making Process¹, the Byelaw and Impact Assessment were advertised for two consecutive weeks in relevant publications and media platforms across the District. These include the Fishing News, the Southern Daily Echo, the Dorset Echo, the Isle of Wight County Press and the Authority's website. Respondents had 28 days following the final advert in which to respond to the formal consultation.
- 1.3 A total of **seven responses were received by the Authority, these consisted of one letter of support and six objections.**
- 1.4 Guidance outlines how the Authority should '*...examine all timely objections before the byelaw is submitted for confirmation, respond in writing to objectors and, where appropriate, liaise with objectors with a view to resolving the objection. The IFCA may wish to consider amending the byelaw in light of those objections. Objections that cannot be resolved do not preclude confirmation but the IFCA must provide sufficient explanation as to why they have decided to disregard the objections. When responding to objectors, IFCAs should explain that their objections have been considered and why the byelaw has not been amended as they might have wished...*'

¹ www.association-ifca.org.uk/Upload/About/ifca-byelaw-guidance.pdf

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

2. Authority Consideration of Responses to Formal Consultation

On the 24th August 2023, Southern IFCA's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) considered the Summary Response Table (Table 1) and concluded that on review of the feedback received from the formal consultation, that no amendments are required to be made to the byelaw or supporting documentation.

In addition, the TAC concluded that a summary of TAC discussions be provided to the Executive Sub-Committee (ESC), to inform ESC Members subsequent decisions on the 19th September 2023, as to whether a recommendation be made to the Authority on the 21st September 2023 to submit the byelaw to the MMO for confirmation by the Secretary of State.

The recommendations of the ESC will be provided verbally at the meeting of the Authority on the 21st September 2023, following the ESC review of the following at their meeting on the 19th September 2023:

- a) feedback received (letters of objection & support) following the formal byelaw consultation, *and*
- b) a summary of TAC discussions on the 24th August 2023.

3. Next Steps

That the Authority are invited to consider whether to submit the Byelaw to the MMO for confirmation by the Secretary of State.

Once submitted, the MMO will make final quality assurance checks and assess the evidence prior to recommending the Byelaw for confirmation by the Secretary of State.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Table 1: Response Summary Table

The general themes raised in the objections are summarised in the table below. An overview of the points encompassed in Southern IFCA responses which have been viewed by the Executive Sub-Committee is provided.

General Theme	Sector	Nature of Objection	Scope of IFCA response
Whole site management	Conservation	That the full extent of MPAs should be prohibited for BTFG activity it has the potential to adversely impact on the marine environment and biodiversity, with one response stating that bottom trawling and dredging are incompatible with MPAs with the byelaw falling short of adequately protecting and restoring habitats and promoting wider recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain Southern IFCA's legal duties in the context of whole site/feature-based management in accordance with sections 1.5 to 1.11 of the Impact Assessment which accompanies the Byelaw. To discuss the Authority's intention to consider wider sensitive habitat/species management under Phase 2 of the BTFG review following the completion of Phase 1 in accordance with section 2.2.1 of the Management Intentions document which accompanies the Byelaw.
Extent of site-specific boundary	Industry	Objection to the southern boundary of the prohibited area for the Southbourne Rough MCZ, stating that the line is south of any known features of the site and that the southern part of the site is sand habitat. The same response also stated that with compulsory VMS there should be no need for buffer zones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the feature designated for the Southbourne Rough MCZ (Black seabream [nesting]) alongside outcomes of the Tranche 3 MCZ assessments which determine that this feature is sensitive to the potential impacts from BTFG.
Evidence base & sensitive biotopes	Conservation	The data for Purbeck Coast MCZ and Studland to Portland SAC is incomplete and has not taken account of biotopes sensitive to BTFG. An 'Area of Concern' was identified by one response and supported by another as containing sensitive biotopes but is not subject to a prohibited area under the Byelaw and is not included in relevant MPA assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide details of discussions between NE and Southern IFCA in 2022 & 2023 regarding this 'Area of Concern' (reef). The NE data layer is formed of mostly polygons with a few data points which represent Dorset Seasearch records and DORIS data. At a meeting in January 2023, NE informed Southern IFCA that the data for that particular area was deemed to be of low confidence due to the nature of the data being modelled data and therefore NE agreed that this area should remain open to BTFG. To provide outcomes of the relevant MPA Assessments for the areas in question.
Non-designated features	Conservation	That other, non-designated, biotopes and nationally scarce species, including those determined as potential MCZ Features of Conservation Interest, had been identified in the Purbeck Coast MCZ and Studland to Portland SAC as part of Seasearch studies. It was suggested that these sensitive habitats should also be afforded protection under the Byelaw in addition to designated features. That <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> reefs, recorded in 1998 and mapped in 2000 with further reports in 2013 east of Swanage as well as in the Southbourne Rough MCZ, had not been included in prohibited areas under the Byelaw.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain that Phase 1 of the BTFG review is defined to consider feature based management for designated features. Non-designated biotopes, scarce species and features of conservation interest are not included in this definition. In the MPAs in question <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> is not a designated feature. To discuss the Authority's intention to consider wider sensitive habitat/species management under Phase 2 of the BTFG review following the completion of Phase 1 in accordance with section 2.2.1 of the Management Intentions document which accompanies the Byelaw.
Evidence base	Conservation	That a single evidence base should not be used as best	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain the role that NE have as the Government's Nature Conservation

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

General Theme	Sector	Nature of Objection	Scope of IFCA response
		<p>available evidence to inform management and that there is other survey work available, namely multibeam echosounder data for Dorset's inshore waters, should also be used.</p> <p><i>For Members interest: it is assumed that the evidence referred to is a recent multibeam echosounder survey, the data for which would require interpretation to be transferred into polygons illustrating extent and distribution of features. It is also indicated that the data is difficult to interpret for some features. On this basis, Southern IFCA do not have the expertise to interpret data in its raw format and would be reliant on those with the expertise to undertake this analysis and work with those who can verify this data to provide a data source in a format and at a confidence level that could then be used by Southern IFCA in management development.</i></p>	<p>Advisors, who aid Southern IFCA in management development via the provision of advice and information on the location, extent and condition of designated features. To discuss where additional survey work may be considered by NE for inclusion in the evidence base if NE deem it to be compatible with recognised data standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the Authority's intention to consider wider sensitive habitat/species management under Phase 2 of the BTFG review following the completion of Phase 1 in accordance with section 2.2.1 of the Management Intentions document which accompanies the Byelaw.
Provision of wider protections	Conservation	That broadscale habitats should be included in prohibited areas and that sediment habitats in the Studland MCZ should be protected as it was deemed that lack of activity had been used as the reason not to protect this feature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide outcomes of the relevant MCZ Assessments specific to sediment habitats.
Evidence Base	Conservation	That there was reef habitat shown in small areas to the east of Portland Bill in the Studland to Portland SAC which had not been included in prohibited areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The advice provided to Southern IFCA by NE is that this is modelled data of low confidence.
Evidence Base	Conservation	That a data layer identifies much of the sediment areas of the Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges MCZ as potential oyster bed habitat with the MCZ having the native oyster as a 'recover' feature, it is felt that this potential oyster habitat should be protected from BTFG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain that there are currently no mapped areas in the NE dataset which are identified as being potential oyster bed habitats within this MCZ. The rock features which provide a potential supporting habitat for native oyster have all been protected under proposed prohibited areas due to their designation as a feature in their own right. To discuss ongoing national work on Native oyster bed potential, as well as ongoing restoration projects in the context of Phase 2.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009

BOTTOM TOWED FISHING GEAR BYELAW 2023

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 155(1) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, hereby makes the following byelaw for that District.

INTERPRETATION

(1) In this byelaw:

- a) All positions given by means of coordinate are defined on World Geodetic system 1984 Datum (WGS84);
- b) "the Authority" means the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority as defined in Articles 2 and 4 of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 (SI 2010 No 2198);
- c) "bottom towed fishing gear" means any fishing gear which is capable of being pulled or pushed along the seabed;
- d) "the District" means the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District as defined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010;
- e) "prohibited area" means an area defined in the Schedule.

PROHIBITION

- (2) A person must not, subject to paragraph (4), use bottom towed fishing gear within a prohibited area.
- (3) A person must not, subject to paragraph (4), use a vessel carrying bottom towed fishing gear while transiting through a prohibited area unless all parts of that gear are inboard and above the sea.

DISPENSATIONS

- (4) Paragraphs (2) and (3) do not apply to any person committing an act which would otherwise constitute an offence against this byelaw if that act was carried out in accordance with a written dispensation issued by the Authority authorising that act for the purpose of educational, scientific, stocking or breeding purposes
- (5) A dispensation issued under paragraph (4) will only be valid if:
 - a. The act being undertaken is in accordance with the purpose for which the dispensation was issued;
 - b. The dispensation is carried on board and produced for inspection when requested by an Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer of the Authority or any other person authorised by the Authority to make such a request.

REVIEW

- (6) The Authority (or a sub-committee thereof authorised by the Authority to do so) will review the suitability of the byelaw in accordance with any changes in available evidence, to include any statutory advice provided by Natural England or other such bodies, organisations or persons as the Authority deem fit.

REVOCATIONS

- (7) The byelaw with the title 'Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016' made by the Authority, in exercise of its powers under sections 155 and 156 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, confirmed on 17th November 2017, and in force immediately before the making of this byelaw is revoked

I hereby certify that the above byelaw was made by Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority at their meeting on 8th June 2023.



.....
Pia Bateman
Chief Executive Officer
Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in exercise of the power conferred by section 155(3) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, confirms the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 made by the Southern IFCA on 8th June 2023 (TBC).

.....
A Senior Civil Servant for, and on behalf of, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Date:

SCHEDULE

DEFINITION OF "PROHIBITED AREAS"

<u>Point Number</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	
Chichester and Langstone Harbours – Areas 1-6			
Area 1			
1	50 ° 49.030 minutes N , 000 °	57.295 minutes W	to
2	50 ° 49.035 minutes N , 000 °	56.921 minutes W	to
3	50 ° 48.320 minutes N , 000 °	56.647 minutes W	to
4	50 ° 48.149 minutes N , 000 °	56.821 minutes W	to
5	50 ° 48.054 minutes N , 000 °	57.177 minutes W	From point 5 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to
6	50 ° 48.175 minutes N , 000 °	58.000 minutes W	to
7	50 ° 48.410 minutes N , 000 °	57.880 minutes W	From point 7 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to
8	50 ° 48.602 minutes N , 000 °	58.085 minutes W	to
9	50 ° 48.641 minutes N , 000 °	58.084 minutes W	From point 9 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 1.
Area 2			
10	50 ° 47.803 minutes N , 000 °	57.392 minutes W	to
11	50 ° 47.664 minutes N , 000 °	56.579 minutes W	to
12	50 ° 47.200 minutes N , 000 °	56.590 minutes W	From point 12 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to
13	50 ° 46.991 minutes N , 000 °	57.058 minutes W	to
14	50 ° 47.062 minutes N , 000 °	57.076 minutes W	From point 14 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to
15	50 ° 47.376 minutes N , 000 °	57.410 minutes W	to
16	50 ° 47.654 minutes N , 000 °	57.331 minutes W	From point 16 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 10.
Area 3			
17	50 ° 49.515 minutes N , 000 °	59.104 minutes W	to
18	50 ° 49.437 minutes N , 000 °	59.165 minutes W	to
19	50 ° 49.440 minutes N , 000 °	59.314 minutes W	to
20	50 ° 49.495 minutes N , 000 °	59.456 minutes W	to
21	50 ° 49.609 minutes N , 000 °	59.418 minutes W	to
22	50 ° 49.663 minutes N , 000 °	59.367 minutes W	to
23	50 ° 49.731 minutes N , 000 °	59.246 minutes W	to
24	50 ° 49.842 minutes N , 000 °	58.961 minutes W	to
25	50 ° 49.703 minutes N , 000 °	59.004 minutes W	From point 25 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 17.

Area 4												
26	50	°	47.775	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.516	minutes	W	to
27	50	°	48.140	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.446	minutes	W	to
28	50	°	48.600	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.363	minutes	W	to
29	50	°	48.465	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.117	minutes	W	to
30	50	°	48.781	minutes	N	,	000	°	59.704	minutes	W	to
31	50	°	48.887	minutes	N	,	000	°	59.273	minutes	W	to
32	50	°	48.824	minutes	N	,	000	°	59.154	minutes	W	From point 32 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 26.

Area 5												
33	50	°	48.998	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.917	minutes	W	to
34	50	°	48.961	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.710	minutes	W	to
35	50	°	48.711	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.953	minutes	W	to
36	50	°	48.760	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.107	minutes	W	From point 36 to point 33.

Area 6												
37	50	°	50.635	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.544	minutes	W	to
38	50	°	50.331	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.766	minutes	W	to
39	50	°	50.031	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.121	minutes	W	to
40	50	°	49.842	minutes	N	,	000	°	59.961	minutes	W	to
41	50	°	49.633	minutes	N	,	000	°	59.942	minutes	W	to
42	50	°	49.264	minutes	N	,	001	°	0.090	minutes	W	to
43	50	°	49.264	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.237	minutes	W	to
44	50	°	48.937	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.267	minutes	W	to
45	50	°	48.840	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.369	minutes	W	to
46	50	°	48.711	minutes	N	,	001	°	1.599	minutes	W	to
47	50	°	48.711	minutes	N	,	001	°	2.375	minutes	W	From point 47 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 48
48	50	°	50.006	minutes	N	,	001	°	3.280	minutes	W	to
49	50	°	50.027	minutes	N	,	001	°	3.257	minutes	W	From point 49 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 37.

Portsmouth Harbour – Areas 7-12												
Area 7												
50	50	°	49.514	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.450	minutes	W	to
51	50	°	49.448	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.103	minutes	W	to
52	50	°	49.271	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.148	minutes	W	to
53	50	°	49.219	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.585	minutes	W	to

54	50 ° 49.387 minutes N , 001 ° 7.930 minutes W	From point 54 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 50.
Area 8		
55	50 ° 50.180 minutes N , 001 ° 7.501 minutes W	to
56	50 ° 50.059 minutes N , 001 ° 7.667 minutes W	to
57	50 ° 49.937 minutes N , 001 ° 7.326 minutes W	to
58	50 ° 49.846 minutes N , 001 ° 7.426 minutes W	to
59	50 ° 49.986 minutes N , 001 ° 7.809 minutes W	to
60	50 ° 49.782 minutes N , 001 ° 8.074 minutes W	to
61	50 ° 49.630 minutes N , 001 ° 8.160 minutes W	to
62	50 ° 49.632 minutes N , 001 ° 8.251 minutes W	to
63	50 ° 49.791 minutes N , 001 ° 8.419 minutes W	to
64	50 ° 49.853 minutes N , 001 ° 8.396 minutes W	to
65	50 ° 50.370 minutes N , 001 ° 8.972 minutes W	to
66	50 ° 50.406 minutes N , 001 ° 9.079 minutes W	to
67	50 ° 50.471 minutes N , 001 ° 9.102 minutes W	From point 67 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 55.
Area 9		
68	50 ° 49.798 minutes N , 001 ° 8.864 minutes W	to
69	50 ° 49.700 minutes N , 001 ° 8.682 minutes W	to
70	50 ° 49.616 minutes N , 001 ° 8.829 minutes W	to
71	50 ° 49.722 minutes N , 001 ° 8.965 minutes W	From point 71 to point 68.
Area 10		
72	50 ° 50.211 minutes N , 001 ° 9.300 minutes W	to
73	50 ° 50.289 minutes N , 001 ° 9.169 minutes W	to
74	50 ° 50.177 minutes N , 001 ° 9.030 minutes W	to
75	50 ° 50.103 minutes N , 001 ° 9.049 minutes W	to
76	50 ° 50.093 minutes N , 001 ° 9.079 minutes W	From point 76 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 72.
Area 11		
77	50 ° 50.567 minutes N , 001 ° 9.265 minutes W	to
78	50 ° 50.425 minutes N , 001 ° 9.700 minutes W	to
79	50 ° 50.499 minutes N , 001 ° 9.779 minutes W	From point 79 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 77.
Area 12		
80	50 ° 50.256 minutes N , 001 ° 9.627 minutes W	to
81	50 ° 50.300 minutes N , 001 ° 9.685 minutes W	to

82	50 ° 50.356 minutes N , 001 ° 9.580 minutes W to
83	50 ° 50.345 minutes N , 001 ° 9.529 minutes W From point 83 along the base of the jetty until the southerly end of the jetty, then along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 80.

Southampton Water – Areas 13-18

Area 13

84	50 ° 49.275 minutes N , 001 ° 15.186 minutes W to
85	50 ° 49.156 minutes N , 001 ° 15.368 minutes W to
86	50 ° 49.576 minutes N , 001 ° 16.473 minutes W to
87	50 ° 49.739 minutes N , 001 ° 16.334 minutes W From point 87 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 84.

Area 14

The Part of the District that lies below mean high water springs and north of a line drawn from:

88	50 ° 52.381 minutes N , 001 ° 18.341 minutes W to
89	50 ° 52.385 minutes N , 001 ° 18.783 minutes W

Area 15

The Part of the District that lies below mean high water springs and north of a line drawn from:

90	50 ° 54.097 minutes N , 001 ° 27.122 minutes W to
91	50 ° 54.133 minutes N , 001 ° 27.119 minutes W to
92	50 ° 54.290 minutes N , 001 ° 27.587 minutes W to
93	50 ° 54.287 minutes N , 001 ° 27.875 minutes W to
94	50 ° 54.424 minutes N , 001 ° 27.900 minutes W to
95	50 ° 54.614 minutes N , 001 ° 28.103 minutes W to
96	50 ° 54.687 minutes N , 001 ° 28.027 minutes W

Area 16

97	50 ° 48.910 minutes N , 001 ° 18.557 minutes W to
98	50 ° 50.213 minutes N , 001 ° 20.155 minutes W From point 98 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 97.

Area 17

99	50 ° 50.762 minutes N , 001 ° 20.979 minutes W to
100	50 ° 51.901 minutes N , 001 ° 23.316 minutes W From point 100 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 99.

Area 18

101	50 ° 48.749 minutes N , 001 ° 18.690 minutes W to
102	50 ° 48.506 minutes N , 001 ° 18.359 minutes W to
103	50 ° 47.792 minutes N , 001 ° 19.800 minutes W to
104	50 ° 47.807 minutes N , 001 ° 19.970 minutes W From point 104 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 101.

Lymington, Keyhaven and Beaulieu – Areas 19-21**Area 19**

105	50	°	47.107	minutes	N	,	001	°	21.922	minutes	W	to
106	50	°	46.897	minutes	N	,	001	°	21.560	minutes	W	to
107	50	°	46.953	minutes	N	,	001	°	20.936	minutes	W	to
108	50	°	46.650	minutes	N	,	001	°	20.963	minutes	W	to
109	50	°	46.458	minutes	N	,	001	°	22.196	minutes	W	to
110	50	°	46.563	minutes	N	,	001	°	22.317	minutes	W	to
111	50	°	47.119	minutes	N	,	001	°	22.011	minutes	W	From point 111 to point 105.

Area 20

112	50	°	45.756	minutes	N	,	001	°	26.754	minutes	W	to
113	50	°	45.189	minutes	N	,	001	°	28.936	minutes	W	to
114	50	°	43.792	minutes	N	,	001	°	32.437	minutes	W	From point 114 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 112.

Area 21

115	50	°	43.786	minutes	N	,	001	°	32.446	minutes	W	to
116	50	°	42.860	minutes	N	,	001	°	33.300	minutes	W	From point 115 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 116.

Yarmouth – Area 22**Area 22**

117	50	°	42.419	minutes	N	,	001	°	31.204	minutes	W	to
118	50	°	42.478	minutes	N	,	001	°	31.199	minutes	W	to
119	50	°	42.512	minutes	N	,	001	°	29.845	minutes	W	to
120	50	°	42.677	minutes	N	,	001	°	28.848	minutes	W	to
121	50	°	42.776	minutes	N	,	001	°	28.496	minutes	W	to
122	50	°	43.041	minutes	N	,	001	°	27.362	minutes	W	to
123	50	°	43.011	minutes	N	,	001	°	27.295	minutes	W	From point 123 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 117 including the waters within the River Yar below mean high water springs.

Yarmouth to Cowes – Areas 23-24**Area 23**

124	50	°	43.288	minutes	N	,	001	°	26.599	minutes	W	to
125	50	°	43.503	minutes	N	,	001	°	26.805	minutes	W	to
126	50	°	43.796	minutes	N	,	001	°	26.198	minutes	W	to
127	50	°	43.572	minutes	N	,	001	°	25.127	minutes	W	to
128	50	°	43.973	minutes	N	,	001	°	23.302	minutes	W	to

129	50 ° 44.133 minutes N , 001 ° 23.059 minutes W	to
130	50 ° 44.095 minutes N , 001 ° 22.852 minutes W	to
131	50 ° 44.406 minutes N , 001 ° 21.559 minutes W	to
132	50 ° 44.614 minutes N , 001 ° 21.362 minutes W	to
133	50 ° 44.806 minutes N , 001 ° 20.847 minutes W	to
134	50 ° 45.022 minutes N , 001 ° 21.043 minutes W	to
135	50 ° 45.482 minutes N , 001 ° 20.707 minutes W	to
136	50 ° 45.629 minutes N , 001 ° 20.205 minutes W	to
137	50 ° 45.507 minutes N , 001 ° 19.642 minutes W	From point 137 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 124 including the waters within Newtown Harbour below mean high water springs.

Area 24

138	50 ° 44.453 minutes N , 001 ° 22.726 minutes W	to
139	50 ° 44.372 minutes N , 001 ° 22.729 minutes W	to
140	50 ° 44.374 minutes N , 001 ° 22.863 minutes W	to
141	50 ° 44.455 minutes N , 001 ° 22.860 minutes W	From point 141 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 138.

The Medina, Cowes and Osbourne Bay – Areas 25-28

Area 25

142	50 ° 46.027 minutes N , 001 ° 18.427 minutes W	to
143	50 ° 46.071 minutes N , 001 ° 18.422 minutes W	to
144	50 ° 46.070 minutes N , 001 ° 18.255 minutes W	to
145	50 ° 46.023 minutes N , 001 ° 18.253 minutes W	From point 145 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 142.

Area 26

The Part of the District that lies below mean high water springs and south of a line drawn from:

146	50 ° 44.962 minutes N , 001 ° 17.588 minutes W	to
147	50 ° 44.962 minutes N , 001 ° 17.419 minutes W	

Area 27

148	50 ° 45.767 minutes N , 001 ° 17.319 minutes W	to
149	50 ° 45.846 minutes N , 001 ° 17.444 minutes W	to
150	50 ° 45.803 minutes N , 001 ° 17.749 minutes W	to
151	50 ° 46.029 minutes N , 001 ° 17.847 minutes W	to
152	50 ° 46.155 minutes N , 001 ° 17.043 minutes W	to
153	50 ° 45.976 minutes N , 001 ° 16.618 minutes W	From point 153 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 148.

Area 28

154	50	°	45.947	minutes	N	,	001	°	16.346	minutes	W	to
155	50	°	45.985	minutes	N	,	001	°	16.314	minutes	W	to
156	50	°	45.976	minutes	N	,	001	°	16.089	minutes	W	to
157	50	°	44.473	minutes	N	,	001	°	12.484	minutes	W	to
158	50	°	44.346	minutes	N	,	001	°	12.409	minutes	W	to
159	50	°	44.261	minutes	N	,	001	°	12.813	minutes	W	From point 159 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 154 including those waters within Kings Quay.

Ryde to South Wight – Areas 29-31**Area 29**

160	50	°	44.000	minutes	N	,	001	°	10.372	minutes	W	to
161	50	°	44.343	minutes	N	,	001	°	10.582	minutes	W	to
162	50	°	44.578	minutes	N	,	001	°	8.742	minutes	W	to
163	50	°	43.891	minutes	N	,	001	°	9.112	minutes	W	From point 163 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 160.

Area 30

164	50	°	43.778	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.541	minutes	W	to
165	50	°	43.553	minutes	N	,	001	°	6.856	minutes	W	to
166	50	°	43.430	minutes	N	,	001	°	6.845	minutes	W	to
167	50	°	43.648	minutes	N	,	001	°	7.636	minutes	W	From point 167 to point 164.

Area 31

168	50	°	41.008	minutes	N	,	000	°	58.440	minutes	W	to
169	50	°	40.615	minutes	N	,	000	°	57.901	minutes	W	to
170	50	°	40.248	minutes	N	,	000	°	57.780	minutes	W	to
171	50	°	40.293	minutes	N	,	000	°	58.351	minutes	W	to
172	50	°	40.555	minutes	N	,	000	°	58.501	minutes	W	From point 172 to point 168.

South Wight – Area 32**Area 32**

173	50	°	43.039	minutes	N	,	1	°	6.443	minutes	W	to
174	50	°	43.052	minutes	N	,	1	°	6.359	minutes	W	to
175	50	°	42.409	minutes	N	,	1	°	5.752	minutes	W	to
176	50	°	42.345	minutes	N	,	1	°	5.163	minutes	W	to
177	50	°	42.751	minutes	N	,	1	°	4.492	minutes	W	to
178	50	°	42.750	minutes	N	,	1	°	4.446	minutes	W	to

179	50	°	42.620	minutes	N	,	1	°	4.447	minutes	W	to	
180	50	°	42.244	minutes	N	,	1	°	3.526	minutes	W	to	
181	50	°	42.255	minutes	N	,	1	°	3.459	minutes	W	to	
182	50	°	42.320	minutes	N	,	1	°	3.453	minutes	W	to	
183	50	°	42.368	minutes	N	,	1	°	3.203	minutes	W	to	
184	50	°	42.327	minutes	N	,	1	°	2.422	minutes	W	to	
185	50	°	41.856	minutes	N	,	1	°	2.645	minutes	W	to	
186	50	°	41.126	minutes	N	,	1	°	0.206	minutes	W	to	
187	50	°	40.052	minutes	N	,	0	°	59.524	minutes	W	to	
188	50	°	39.752	minutes	N	,	0	°	59.424	minutes	W	to	
189	50	°	39.759	minutes	N	,	0	°	58.110	minutes	W	to	
190	50	°	35.443	minutes	N	,	1	°	9.921	minutes	W	to	
191	50	°	33.183	minutes	N	,	1	°	17.943	minutes	W	to	
192	50	°	38.734	minutes	N	,	1	°	34.406	minutes	W	to	
193	50	°	38.867	minutes	N	,	1	°	33.829	minutes	W	to	
194	50	°	38.300	minutes	N	,	1	°	31.200	minutes	W	to	
195	50	°	39.764	minutes	N	,	1	°	30.342	minutes	W	to	
196	50	°	38.949	minutes	N	,	1	°	35.194	minutes	W	to	
197	50	°	39.368	minutes	N	,	1	°	36.454	minutes	W	to	
198	50	°	39.370	minutes	N	,	1	°	36.840	minutes	W	to	
199	50	°	39.685	minutes	N	,	1	°	37.105	minutes	W	to	
200	50	°	40.026	minutes	N	,	1	°	36.504	minutes	W	to	
201	50	°	39.910	minutes	N	,	1	°	36.242	minutes	W	to	
202	50	°	40.243	minutes	N	,	1	°	34.990	minutes	W	to	
203	50	°	40.438	minutes	N	,	1	°	35.012	minutes	W	to	
204	50	°	40.562	minutes	N	,	1	°	33.841	minutes	W	to	
205	50	°	41.335	minutes	N	,	1	°	33.851	minutes	W	to	
206	50	°	42.075	minutes	N	,	1	°	32.266	minutes	W	to	
207	50	°	42.049	minutes	N	,	1	°	32.074	minutes	W	to	From point 207 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 173.

Poole Bay – Areas 33-34

Area 33

208	50	°	41.486	minutes	N	,	001	°	46.576	minutes	W	to	
209	50	°	40.461	minutes	N	,	001	°	46.581	minutes	W	to	
210	50	°	40.465	minutes	N	,	001	°	48.873	minutes	W	to	

211 50 ° 41.490 minutes N , 001 ° 48.869 minutes W From point 211 to point 208.

Area 34

212 50 ° 41.729 minutes N , 001 ° 52.368 minutes W to

213 50 ° 40.632 minutes N , 001 ° 52.363 minutes W to

214 50 ° 40.637 minutes N , 001 ° 53.947 minutes W to

215 50 ° 41.738 minutes N , 001 ° 53.961 minutes W From point 215 to point 212.

Poole Harbour – Areas 35-36

Area 35

216 50 ° 41.842 minutes N , 001 ° 56.556 minutes W to

217 50 ° 41.654 minutes N , 001 ° 56.514 minutes W to

218 50 ° 41.622 minutes N , 001 ° 56.143 minutes W to

219 50 ° 41.328 minutes N , 001 ° 56.590 minutes W to

220 50 ° 41.351 minutes N , 001 ° 56.911 minutes W to

221 50 ° 41.852 minutes N , 001 ° 56.718 minutes W From point 221 to point 216.

Area 36

222 50 ° 42.236 minutes N , 001 ° 56.820 minutes W to

223 50 ° 42.127 minutes N , 001 ° 56.780 minutes W to

224 50 ° 42.047 minutes N , 001 ° 56.569 minutes W to

225 50 ° 42.017 minutes N , 001 ° 56.553 minutes W to

226 50 ° 41.998 minutes N , 001 ° 56.558 minutes W to

227 50 ° 41.996 minutes N , 001 ° 56.630 minutes W to

228 50 ° 42.025 minutes N , 001 ° 56.847 minutes W to

229 50 ° 42.243 minutes N , 001 ° 57.150 minutes W to

230 50 ° 42.292 minutes N , 001 ° 57.024 minutes W From point 230 to point 222.

Studland Bay – Area 37

Area 37

231 50 ° 39.383 minutes N , 001 ° 57.149 minutes W to

232 50 ° 39.280 minutes N , 001 ° 56.014 minutes W to

233 50 ° 38.683 minutes N , 001 ° 55.529 minutes W to

234 50 ° 38.543 minutes N , 001 ° 55.407 minutes W From point 234 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 231.

Purbeck Coast – Area 38

Area 38

235 50 ° 38.581 minutes N , 001 ° 55.350 minutes W to

236	50	°	38.670	minutes	N	,	001	°	55.337	minutes	W	to
237	50	°	39.307	minutes	N	,	001	°	54.575	minutes	W	to
238	50	°	39.297	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.813	minutes	W	to
239	50	°	38.613	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.833	minutes	W	to
240	50	°	38.551	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.482	minutes	W	to
241	50	°	37.312	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.483	minutes	W	to
242	50	°	37.315	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.917	minutes	W	to
243	50	°	36.942	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.913	minutes	W	to
244	50	°	36.948	minutes	N	,	001	°	54.724	minutes	W	to
245	50	°	36.461	minutes	N	,	001	°	54.711	minutes	W	to
246	50	°	36.294	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.214	minutes	W	to
247	50	°	35.588	minutes	N	,	001	°	53.219	minutes	W	to
248	50	°	35.078	minutes	N	,	001	°	54.044	minutes	W	to
249	50	°	33.132	minutes	N	,	001	°	54.051	minutes	W	to
250	50	°	29.849	minutes	N	,	002	°	6.019	minutes	W	to
251	50	°	31.461	minutes	N	,	002	°	14.535	minutes	W	to
252	50	°	33.393	minutes	N	,	002	°	14.549	minutes	W	to
253	50	°	33.869	minutes	N	,	002	°	11.239	minutes	W	to
254	50	°	33.770	minutes	N	,	002	°	10.355	minutes	W	to
255	50	°	33.987	minutes	N	,	002	°	9.864	minutes	W	to
256	50	°	34.642	minutes	N	,	002	°	10.242	minutes	W	to
257	50	°	34.853	minutes	N	,	002	°	9.850	minutes	W	to
258	50	°	36.098	minutes	N	,	002	°	11.026	minutes	W	to
259	50	°	34.620	minutes	N	,	002	°	14.981	minutes	W	to
260	50	°	34.675	minutes	N	,	002	°	15.818	minutes	W	to
261	50	°	34.064	minutes	N	,	002	°	15.909	minutes	W	to
262	50	°	34.066	minutes	N	,	002	°	19.968	minutes	W	to
263	50	°	37.914	minutes	N	,	002	°	20.335	minutes	W	From point 263 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 235.

Portland and Stennis Ledges – Areas 39-40

Area 39 - Portland

264	50	°	32.533	minutes	N	,	002	°	25.117	minutes	W	to
265	50	°	31.400	minutes	N	,	002	°	21.983	minutes	W	to
266	50	°	30.690	minutes	N	,	002	°	23.424	minutes	W	to
267	50	°	30.761	minutes	N	,	002	°	23.676	minutes	W	to

268	50	°	30.330	minutes	N	,	002	°	24.397	minutes	W	to
269	50	°	30.219	minutes	N	,	002	°	24.380	minutes	W	to
270	50	°	29.683	minutes	N	,	002	°	25.467	minutes	W	to
271	50	°	29.000	minutes	N	,	002	°	20.700	minutes	W	to
272	50	°	28.412	minutes	N	,	002	°	19.352	minutes	W	to
273	50	°	28.254	minutes	N	,	002	°	18.393	minutes	W	to
274	50	°	27.883	minutes	N	,	002	°	18.757	minutes	W	to
275	50	°	27.883	minutes	N	,	002	°	26.000	minutes	W	to
276	50	°	27.483	minutes	N	,	002	°	26.033	minutes	W	to
277	50	°	27.483	minutes	N	,	002	°	27.917	minutes	W	to
278	50	°	29.138	minutes	N	,	002	°	28.706	minutes	W	to
279	50	°	27.749	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.096	minutes	W	to
280	50	°	28.273	minutes	N	,	002	°	32.496	minutes	W	to
281	50	°	30.378	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.391	minutes	W	to
282	50	°	29.691	minutes	N	,	002	°	28.929	minutes	W	to
283	50	°	29.741	minutes	N	,	002	°	28.692	minutes	W	to
284	50	°	32.761	minutes	N	,	002	°	27.683	minutes	W	to
285	50	°	33.646	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.087	minutes	W	to
286	50	°	33.690	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.019	minutes	W	to
287	50	°	33.875	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.282	minutes	W	to
288	50	°	34.213	minutes	N	,	002	°	28.701	minutes	W	to
289	50	°	33.391	minutes	N	,	002	°	27.436	minutes	W	to
290	50	°	33.641	minutes	N	,	002	°	26.984	minutes	W	From point 290 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 264.

Area 40 - Stennis Ledges

291	50	°	35.541	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.288	minutes	W	to
292	50	°	35.479	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.010	minutes	W	to
293	50	°	35.128	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.582	minutes	W	to
294	50	°	34.666	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.358	minutes	W	to
295	50	°	34.174	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.913	minutes	W	to
296	50	°	34.293	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.098	minutes	W	to
297	50	°	32.960	minutes	N	,	002	°	32.067	minutes	W	to
298	50	°	33.462	minutes	N	,	002	°	33.808	minutes	W	to
299	50	°	35.194	minutes	N	,	002	°	31.545	minutes	W	to
300	50	°	35.255	minutes	N	,	002	°	31.656	minutes	W	From point 300 to point 291.

Chesil and The Fleet – Areas 41-42**Area 41**

301	50	°	35.990	minutes	N	,	002	°	29.940	minutes	W	to
302	50	°	35.860	minutes	N	,	002	°	30.170	minutes	W	From point 302 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 303.
303	50	°	38.680	minutes	N	,	002	°	35.510	minutes	W	to
304	50	°	38.775	minutes	N	,	002	°	35.410	minutes	W	From point 304 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 301.

Area 42

305	50	°	37.569	minutes	N	,	002	°	34.394	minutes	W	to
306	50	°	36.901	minutes	N	,	002	°	33.020	minutes	W	to
307	50	°	36.757	minutes	N	,	002	°	32.952	minutes	W	to
308	50	°	36.565	minutes	N	,	002	°	34.060	minutes	W	to
309	50	°	37.401	minutes	N	,	002	°	35.673	minutes	W	From point 309 to point 305.

Lyme Bay – Area 43**Area 43**

310	50	°	41.735	minutes	N	,	002	°	43.267	minutes	W	to
311	50	°	41.000	minutes	N	,	002	°	44.020	minutes	W	to
312	50	°	40.790	minutes	N	,	002	°	44.768	minutes	W	to
313	50	°	40.180	minutes	N	,	002	°	44.767	minutes	W	to
314	50	°	39.764	minutes	N	,	002	°	45.035	minutes	W	to
315	50	°	39.970	minutes	N	,	002	°	43.721	minutes	W	to
316	50	°	39.864	minutes	N	,	002	°	43.212	minutes	W	to
317	50	°	39.219	minutes	N	,	002	°	42.925	minutes	W	to
318	50	°	38.702	minutes	N	,	002	°	42.963	minutes	W	to
319	50	°	38.538	minutes	N	,	002	°	43.162	minutes	W	to
320	50	°	38.485	minutes	N	,	002	°	42.086	minutes	W	to
321	50	°	38.839	minutes	N	,	002	°	42.418	minutes	W	to
322	50	°	39.186	minutes	N	,	002	°	41.962	minutes	W	to
323	50	°	39.609	minutes	N	,	002	°	39.759	minutes	W	to
324	50	°	39.141	minutes	N	,	002	°	39.243	minutes	W	to
325	50	°	39.045	minutes	N	,	002	°	38.214	minutes	W	to
326	50	°	38.600	minutes	N	,	002	°	36.833	minutes	W	to
327	50	°	37.920	minutes	N	,	002	°	36.743	minutes	W	to
328	50	°	38.210	minutes	N	,	002	°	37.356	minutes	W	to

329	50 °	37.548	minutes	N	,	002 °	42.154	minutes	W	to
330	50 °	38.938	minutes	N	,	002 °	44.570	minutes	W	to
331	50 °	38.939	minutes	N	,	002 °	45.676	minutes	W	to
332	50 °	39.653	minutes	N	,	002 °	45.683	minutes	W	to
333	50 °	39.653	minutes	N	,	002 °	48.090	minutes	W	to
334	50 °	39.458	minutes	N	,	002 °	48.942	minutes	W	to
335	50 °	38.949	minutes	N	,	002 °	48.945	minutes	W	to
336	50 °	38.956	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.009	minutes	W	to
337	50 °	38.869	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.502	minutes	W	to
338	50 °	39.000	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.807	minutes	W	to
339	50 °	38.969	minutes	N	,	002 °	54.864	minutes	W	to
340	50 °	38.705	minutes	N	,	002 °	54.856	minutes	W	to
341	50 °	38.705	minutes	N	,	002 °	55.000	minutes	W	to
342	50 °	38.617	minutes	N	,	002 °	55.000	minutes	W	to
343	50 °	38.284	minutes	N	,	002 °	53.089	minutes	W	to
344	50 °	38.290	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.785	minutes	W	to
345	50 °	38.167	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.433	minutes	W	to
346	50 °	37.866	minutes	N	,	002 °	52.817	minutes	W	to
347	50 °	37.667	minutes	N	,	002 °	54.300	minutes	W	to
348	50 °	37.267	minutes	N	,	002 °	53.600	minutes	W	to
349	50 °	37.084	minutes	N	,	002 °	53.830	minutes	W	to
350	50 °	37.000	minutes	N	,	002 °	54.185	minutes	W	to
351	50 °	37.433	minutes	N	,	002 °	55.300	minutes	W	to
352	50 °	37.382	minutes	N	,	002 °	56.083	minutes	W	to
353	50 °	38.124	minutes	N	,	002 °	56.780	minutes	W	to
354	50 °	43.070	minutes	N	,	002 °	56.780	minutes	W	From point 354 along the coast at the level of mean high water spring tide to point 310.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Explanatory Note (not part of the byelaw)

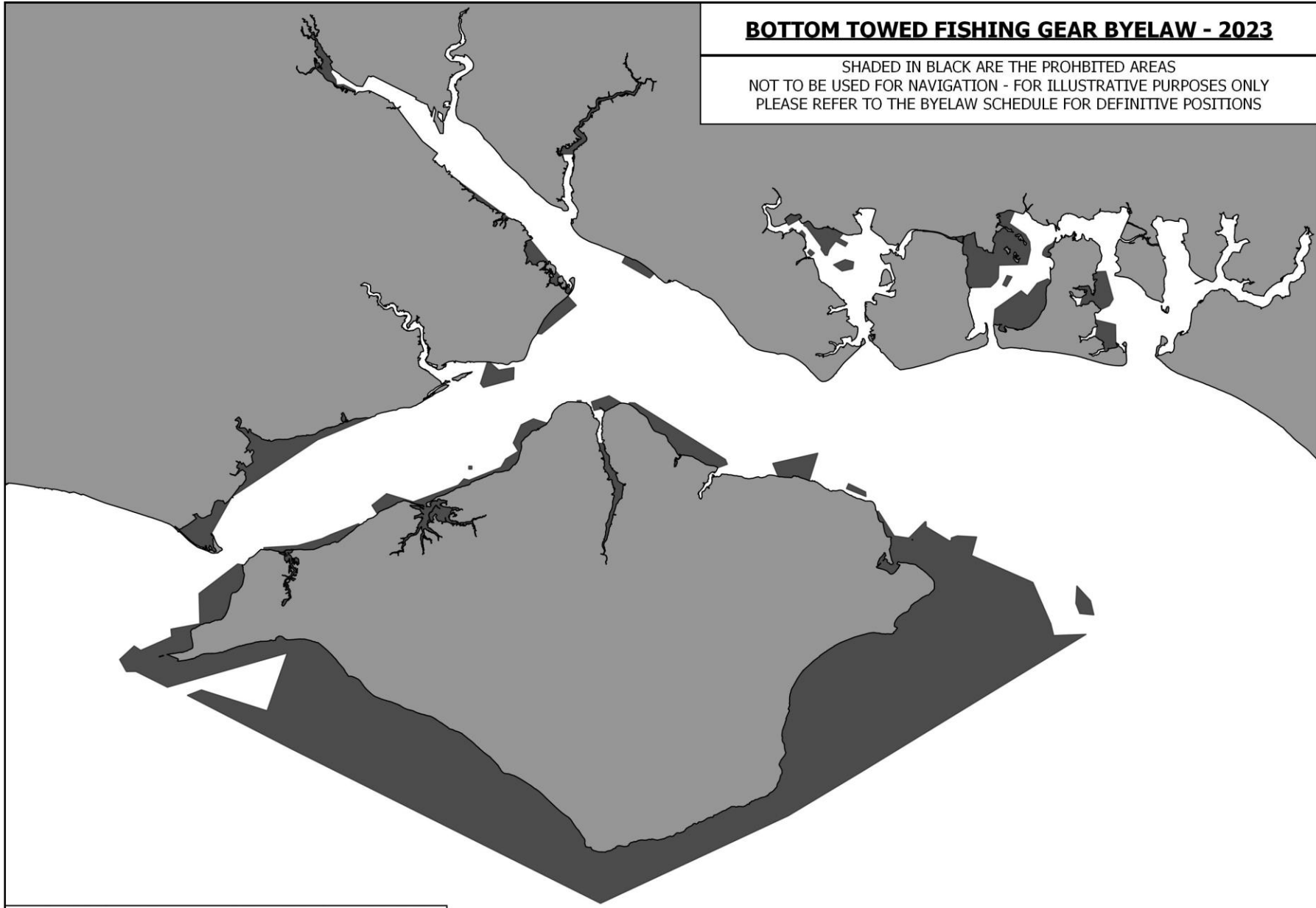
This byelaw prohibits the use of bottom towed fishing gear for the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in areas of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority District in order to protect designated features and supporting habitats within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and within or adjacent to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The byelaw also requires a vessel carrying bottom towed fishing gear while transiting through a prohibited area to have that gear inboard and above the sea.

Prohibited areas are defined in the Schedule and are shown, for illustrative purposes only, on the maps below.

BOTTOM TOWED FISHING GEAR BYELAW - 2023

SHADED IN BLACK ARE THE PROHIBITED AREAS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION - FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY
PLEASE REFER TO THE BYELAW SCHEDULE FOR DEFINITIVE POSITIONS



BOTTOM TOWED FISHING GEAR BYELAW - 2023

SHADED IN BLACK ARE THE PROHIBITED AREAS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION - FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY
PLEASE REFER TO THE BYELAW SCHEDULE FOR DEFINITIVE POSITIONS



Title: Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 IA No: SIFCA 0123 RPC Reference No: Lead department or agency: Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Other departments or agencies: Marine Management Organisation, Natural England	Impact Assessment (IA)
	Date: 08/06/2023
	Stage: Development
	Source of intervention: Domestic
	Type of measure: Secondary Legislation
	Contact for enquiries: Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, 01202 721373, enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk

Summary: Intervention and Options	RPC Opinion: RPC Opinion Status
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Cost of Preferred (or more likely) Option (in 2019 prices)			
Total Net Present Social Value	Business Net Present Value	Net cost to business per year	Business Impact Target Status Qualifying provision
£m -0.21236	£m -0.21236	£m 0.024670	

What is the problem under consideration? Why is government action or intervention necessary?

Bottom towed fishing gears, or mobile demersal gears, such as otter trawls or shellfish dredges, have the potential to impact or adversely affect certain sensitive features for which Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are designated. Management intervention is required to ensure that the Southern IFCA can continue to meet its duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 to manage fishing activities for MPAs to ensure that designated features are not adversely affected (SACs and SPAs), and that Conservation Objectives of the sites (MCZs) are furthered. A review of the existing Southern IFCA BTFG Byelaw 2016 is required in response to the creation of new Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) within the Southern IFCA District and updated evidence on location and extent of designated features in other MPAs.

In accordance with the Government’s Environmental Improvement Plan 2023, IFCAs are required to ensure that **management measures are in place for designated features in MPAs by 2024** in order for the Government to achieve an **interim target where 48%** of designated features in MPAs are in a favourable position by 31st January **2028**, with the **ultimate target where 70%** of designated features in MPAs are in a favourable position, with the remainder in a recovering condition by **2042**.

- What are the policy objectives of the action or intervention and the intended effects?**
- To avoid adverse impact from bottom towed fishing activity on SACs and SPAs, and further the conservation objectives of MCZs in the Southern IFCA District
 - To incorporate updates to the Marine Protected Area network in spatial management of bottom towed fishing gear
 - To review existing spatial management of bottom towed fishing gear to ensure that it is based on best available evidence
 - To manage bottom towed fishing activity proportionately by considering management for designated features within MCZs and designated features within or adjacent to SACs and SPAs
 - To enhance environmental sustainability within the Southern IFCA District
 - Intended effect is protection of designated sensitive features in MPAs from bottom towed fishing gear, success of this measure is measured by compliance with the regulation, measured through outputs from compliance and enforcement monitoring and, if required, associated enforcement action

What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation? Please justify preferred option (further details in Evidence Base)

0. Do nothing.
1. Update an existing Southern IFCA byelaw in order to introduce new and revised spatial management for bottom towed fishing gear in Marine Protected Areas, ensuring feature protection consistent with Southern IFCA legal duties for SACs, SPAs and MCZs.
2. Create a Southern IFCA byelaw to prohibit bottom towed fishing gear across the full extent of all Marine Protected Areas.
3. Voluntary measures.

The preferred option is **Option 1**. The revocation of the 'Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016' and the creation of the 'Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023' would best enable Southern IFCA to meet its duties. The use of spatial management in MPAs utilising a feature-based approach is in line with the current legal duties of the Southern IFCA and is a proportionate response to ensuring appropriate protection of the marine environment from bottom towed fishing gear.

Will the policy be reviewed? It will be reviewed. If applicable, set review date:

Is this measure likely to impact on international trade and investment?					
Are any of these organisations in scope?		Micro Yes	Small Yes	Medium Yes	Large Yes
What is the CO ₂ equivalent change in greenhouse gas emissions? (Million tonnes CO ₂ equivalent)			Traded: N/A	Non-traded: N/A	

I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed by the responsible CHAIR: _____ Date: _____

Summary: Analysis & Evidence

Policy Option 1

Description:

FULL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Price Base Year 2019	PV Base Year 2020	Time Period Years	Net Benefit (Present Value (PV)) (£m)		
			Low: Optional	High: Optional	Best Estimate: -0.212356

COSTS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
Low	Optional	Optional	Optional
High	Optional	Optional	Optional
Best Estimate	0.179640	0.007515	0.212356

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

The average annual monetised costs for the UK fishing industry following the introduction of the proposed measures is estimated to be £75,147.32. These costs are likely to arise as a consequence of loss of fishing access. The cost to Southern IFCA associated with ensuring compliance with the new measures is estimated to be £14,970 and would come in the first year of the byelaw, the transitional phase. Ongoing compliance costs would form part of the normal annual delivery of work by Southern IFCA.

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

As a consequence of loss of access to certain areas, there is the potential for displacement of fishing effort to other areas, potentially creating additional conflict with other users and reducing the sustainability of fisheries and the marine environment.

BENEFITS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
Low	Optional	Optional	Optional
High	Optional	Optional	Optional
Best Estimate	-	-	-

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

It is not possible to estimate monetised benefits at this point.

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

It is anticipated that the proposed measures will benefit the sustainability of the marine environment through the protection of sensitive designated features within MCZs and within or adjacent to SACs and SPAs (definition of adjacent is provided in S.1.26 of this IA) that would otherwise be vulnerable to potentially damaging fishing techniques. These features can act as important nursery, feeding, breeding and protective areas for fish & shellfish with the potential for net migration of species & larvae into adjacent areas benefiting commercial and recreational fisheries. Recreational users and commercial static gear fishers are anticipated to benefit from the closed areas, potentially benefiting the local economy. Certain protected habitats are also blue carbon habitats contributing to offsetting climate change. Such benefits are difficult to quantify.

Key assumptions/sensitivities/risks

Discount rate (%)

3.5

A key assumption is that the management intervention will be successful in preventing bottom towed fishing gear from fishing within prohibited areas and that the exclusion of these activities will lead to maintenance and/or recovery of designated sensitive features. Costs to industry have been calculated using MMO landings data with the information required to be generalised over the district concerning the origin and distribution of catches within that data. Landings data is fishery dependent and assumes catches and landings have been correctly reported.

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Option 1)

Direct impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m:			Score for Business Impact Target (qualifying provisions only) £m: 0.1234
Costs: 0.024670	Benefits: N/A	Net: 0.02467	

Evidence Base

1. Problem Under Consideration and Rationale for Intervention

- 1.1 This Impact Assessment (IA) is for the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (“the Byelaw”). The Byelaw will manage bottom towed fishing gear in the Southern IFCA District and has been developed through reviews of MPA management and bottom towed fishing gear undertaken by the Southern IFC Authority.
- 1.2 Bottom towed fishing gear fisheries (from here on referred to as “BTFG fisheries”) refer to fisheries where fishing gear is pushed or pulled along the seabed and occur across the Southern IFCA district for a variety of fish and shellfish species. Southern IFCA require commercial fishers to hold a Southern IFCA permit to fish in the district (freely available) and when applying for a permit, indicate types of fishing activity carried out. From these records, there are currently 159 fishers engaged in bottom towed fishing gear fisheries within the district, this incorporates fishers who have indicated either ‘trawling’ or ‘dredging’ or both on for their permit to fish. There is no pelagic trawling in the Southern IFCA district therefore ‘trawling’ is taken to mean bottom towed fishing gear.
- 1.3 Bottom towed fishing activity can potentially cause negative outcomes as a result of ‘market failures’. These failures can be described as:
 - **Public goods and services** – a number of goods and services provided by the marine environment such as biological diversity are ‘public goods’ (no-one can be excluded from benefiting from them, but use of the goods does not diminish the goods being available to others). The characteristics of public goods, being available to all but belonging to no-one, mean that individuals do not necessarily have an incentive to voluntarily ensure the continued existence of these goods which can lead to under-protection/provision.
 - **Negative externalities** – Negative externalities occurs when the cost of damage to the marine environment is not fully borne by the users causing the damage. In many cases no monetary value is attached to the goods and services provided by the marine environment, and this can lead to more damaging occurring than would occur if the users had to pay the price of damage. Even for those marine harvestable goods that are traded (such as wild fish), market prices often do not reflect the full economic cost of the exploitation or of any damage caused to the environment by that exploitation.
 - **Common goods** – A number of goods and services provided by the marine environment such as populations of wild fish are ‘common goods’ (no-one can be excluded from benefiting from those goods however consumption of the goods does diminish that available to others). The characteristics of common goods (being available but belonging to no-one, and of a diminishing quantity), mean that individuals do not necessarily have an individual economic incentive to ensure the long-term existence of these goods which can lead, in fisheries terms, to potential overfishing. Furthermore, it is in the interest of each individual to catch as much as possible as quickly as possible so that competitors do not take all the benefits. This can lead to an inefficient amount of effort and unsustainable exploitation.
- 1.4 The Byelaw aims to redress these sources of market failure in the marine environment through the following ways:
 - Management measures to ensure that designated features and supporting habitats are not adversely affected (SACs and SPAs) and to ensure that Conservation Objectives

are furthered (MCZs) will ensure negative externalities are reduced or suitably mitigated.

- Management measures will support continued existence of public goods in the marine environment, for example conserving the range of biodiversity in the Southern IFC District.
- Management measures will also support continued existence of common goods in the marine environment, for example ensuring the long-term sustainability of stocks of sea fisheries resources in the IFC District.

Southern IFCA Legal Duties

- 1.5 Southern IFCA is responsible for the management of fishing activities in the coastal waters of Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These waters contain highly biodiverse and ecologically rich habitats, providing a range of valuable ecosystem services. The value of these habitats and species is recognised through a range of Marine Protected Area (MPA) designations, collectively contributing to the UK's MPA Network ("the National Site Network").
- 1.6 Southern IFCA has duties under section 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009¹ ("the MaCAA") for the protection of features within marine conservation zones as follows:
- (1) The authority for an IFC district must seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any MCZ in the district are furthered.
 - (2) Nothing in section 153(2) is to affect the performance of the duty imposed by this section.
 - (3) In this section –
 - a. "MCZ" means a marine conservation zone designated by an order under section 116;
 - b. the reference to the conservation objectives of an MCZ is a reference to the conservation objectives stated for the MCZ under section 117(2)(b)
- 1.7 Section 125 of the MaCAA also requires that public bodies (which includes the IFCA) exercises its functions in a manner to best further (or, if not possible, least hinder) the conservation objectives for MCZs.
- 1.8 Southern IFCA has duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017² and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019³ (referred to jointly in this document as the "Conservation Regulations"). The Conservation Regulations transpose the land and marine aspects of the Habitats Directive and Wild Birds Directive into domestic law and outlines how the National Site Network will be managed.
- 1.9 The National Site Network is a network of protected sites which are designated for rare and threatened species and rare natural habitat types. These sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under the EC Habitats Directive 1992⁴ and the EC Birds Directive 2009⁵, respectively. The National Site Network also includes MCZs designated under the MaCAA.

¹ [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

² [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

³ [The Conservation of Habitats and Species \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁴ [EUR-Lex - 31992L0043 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu)

⁵ [EUR-Lex - 32009L0147 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu)

- 1.10 Under Regulation 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, Southern IFCA, as a named competent authority, must ensure that fishing activity within or adjacent to an SAC or SPA does not damage, disturb or lead to a deterioration of a species which receives protection under the relevant designation, so as to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive.
- 1.11 For MCZs, where section 154 of the MaCAA states that an IFCA's performance in meeting the duty to further Conservation Objectives for features within an MCZ should not be affected by anything listed in the general IFCA duties under section 153, this includes social or economic considerations. Likewise, for SACs and SPAs, the overarching legislation does not provide for the consideration of social or economic factors/impacts when making management decisions which are required to ensure that the duty of no adverse effect is met for activity within or adjacent to these sites.

Review of Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Management

- 1.12 Bottom towed fishing gears, or mobile demersal gears such as otter trawls or shellfish dredges, have been used by fishers for generations in the coastal waters of Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. In certain areas these techniques have the potential to adversely affect sensitive habitats and species.
- 1.13 In line with the duties of the Southern IFCA, in 2020 Members of the Southern IFC Authority considered the need for a review of management of bottom towed fishing gear in the district in response to a change in the National Site Network through the addition of new MCZs under Tranche 3, the addition of new features to already designated MCZs and updates to the best-available evidence which had been used to inform the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 - the current management mechanism for these gear types in the district.
- 1.14 The evidence to support this review was collated through a series of environmental assessments for MCZs, SACs and SPAs.
- 1.15 In order to document and determine whether management measures are required to further the Conservation Objectives of MCZs, Southern IFCA is required to undertake an assessment relevant to fishing activities.
- 1.16 The assessment process is staged, comprising of an initial screening stage to establish whether an activity occurs or is anticipated to occur/has the potential to occur within the site. Activities which are not screened out are subject to a simple 'Part A' assessment, akin to the Test of Likely Significant Effect required under the Habitats Directive. The aim of this assessment is to identify pressures capable of significantly affecting designated features or their related processes. Fishing activities and their associated pressures which are not screened out in the Part A assessment are then subject to a more detailed 'Part B' assessment, where assessment is undertaken on a gear type basis. The Part B assessment is akin to the Appropriate Assessment required under the Habitats Directive. The aim of this assessment is to determine whether there is a significant risk of the activity hindering the Conservation Objectives of the MCZ. If the Part B assessment is unable to conclude that there is no significant risk of an activity hindering the Conservation Objectives of the MCZ, then the activity may be subject to management.
- 1.17 In relation to bottom towed fishing gear and MCZs, assessments were undertaken for the following areas so as to secure compliance with the MaCAA:

- Bembridge MCZ
- Yarmouth to Cowes MCZ
- The Needles MCZ
- Southbourne Rough MCZ
- Poole Rocks MCZ
- Studland Bay MCZ
- Purbeck Coast MCZ
- South of Portland MCZ
- Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges MCZ

1.18 In order to document and determine whether management measures are required to ensure no adverse effect on the features and supporting habitats for which SACs and SPAs are designated, Southern IFCA is required to undertake an assessment relevant to fishing activities.

1.19 The first stage to this assessment is a Test of Likely Significant Effect (TLSE), which is designed to test whether a fishing activity is likely to cause a significant effect on the designated features of an SAC or SPA. All the features/sub-features and supporting habitats for a site are subject to the TLSE assessment. Where the potential for a likely significant effect cannot be excluded an Appropriate Assessment must then be undertaken which must consider, in detail, the potential effects of the activity being assessed on any features/sub-features and supporting habitats where a likely significant effect has been identified and indicate whether management of that activity is required to ensure no adverse effect. The full assessment (TLSE and Appropriate Assessment) is referred to as a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

1.20 In relation to bottom towed fishing gear and SACs/SPAs, assessments were undertaken for the following areas so as to secure compliance with the Conservation Regulations:

- Solent Maritime SAC
- Chichester and Langstone Harbour SPA
- Portsmouth Harbour SPA
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA
- District-wide HRAs for seagrass and reef as features of multiple sites

1.21 The outcomes of the assessments indicated that a review of management of bottom towed fishing gear in the Southern IFC District was required to meet the legal duties of the Southern IFCA in relation to MPAs, driven by updates to the National Site Network and a need to review existing spatial management as a result of an update to best-available evidence on feature/supporting habitat location and extent.

1.22 In 2023, The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 was introduced by Government as the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Plan identified the Government's intention to support progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals under the Global Biodiversity Framework which includes protection of 30% of the global ocean by 2030. At a domestic level, the Government aim to achieve this by enhancing protection for MPAs. Under the Goal of Thriving Plants and Wildlife in the Environment Improvement Plan 2023, there is a target for 70% of designated features in MPAs to be in favourable condition by 2042 with the remainder in recovering condition and a new interim target of 48% of this to be achieved by 31st January 2028. The delivery of this is to be supported through strengthened protections in MPAs by 2024. Appropriate regulators, including IFCAs, are required to ensure that management measures are in place for all

MPAs by 2024 in order for this interim target to be achieved. This includes the management of bottom towed fishing gear in MPAs.

- 1.23 In order to meet the Government target, Southern IFCA identified a need to prioritise workstreams and adopt a phased approach to the delivery of the bottom towed fishing gear review. This is based on the resource requirements for meeting the Government target and aims to allow for the consideration of wider district wide sensitive habitat management following an initial consideration of feature-based management for MPAs.
- 1.24 Consideration of feature-based management for MPAs is in line with the legal duties of Southern IFCA in relation to the different designations of MPA. In all cases the term ‘feature’ is used to refer to designated features and supporting habitats for designated features under SPA designations. For MCZs, under S154 of the MaCAA, Southern IFCA must ensure that the Conservation Objectives of any MCZ in the district are furthered. Under Article 6 of the Conservation Regulations, Southern IFCA as a named competent authority must ensure that fishing activity occurring within or adjacent to an SAC or SPA does not damage, disturb or lead to a deterioration of a species or habitat which receives protection under the relevant designation, so as to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive. These legal duties are related to the phased approach to bottom towed fishing gear management in the below sections.
- 1.25 The phased approach is split into two, Phase 1 and Phase 2.
- 1.26 Phase 1: To consider feature based management interventions within MPAs: sites designated under the National Site Network (Special Areas of Conservation [SACs], Special Protection Areas [SPAs] and Marine Conservation Zones [MCZs])**
- Phase 1 will consider management of bottom towed fishing gear for features which exist within any MCZ and which exist within or adjacent to any SAC/SPA. For the purposes of Phase 1, ‘adjacent’ means a feature (to include any buffer) which extends across the boundary of the designated site, to ensure that the integrity of that part of the feature which exists within the boundary of the site is not affected by activity occurring over that same feature where it extends outside the boundary of the site. The Authority has developed a set of principles for Phase 1 in order to guide and maintain consistency in decision making which will ensure that any subsequent management is applied equally and with full transparency across the Southern IFCA District, where applicable.
- 1.27 Phase 2: To consider district wide management interventions for sensitive habitats.**
- Following the completion of Phase 1 it is the intention of the Authority to commence Phase 2 of the review. Phase 2 would consider features which exist adjacent to an MCZ boundary (i.e., any part of a feature which extends across the boundary of an MCZ) as well as any sensitive habitats and species (yet to be defined, pending the scope of Phase 2) across the district, both inside and outside National Site Network Sites and MCZs. This would also include consideration of features and sensitive habitats/species within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are not also designated under overlapping MPAs, where IFCA duties under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) require the Authority to take ‘reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exerciser of the authority’s functions’ to further Conservation Objectives for features within these sites.
 - Phase 2 will also consider those areas which are currently closed under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 which, according to the principles developed for Phase 1 (S.1.31), will remain closed under Phase 1 of the review. In order to determine if any spatial changes are needed for these areas, socio-economic and environmental assessments will be carried out to create an evidence base to ensure all potential impacts of any potential change are considered.

- Under this Phase, social and economic factors/impacts can be considered alongside the need for protection of the marine environment, operating under the IFCA duties outlined under S153 of the MaCAA, namely balancing the protection of the marine environment with a sustainable fishing industry, balancing the needs of different persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources and ensuring sustainable fishing and continued sustainable development. In addition, Phase 2 will allow for the consideration of outcomes of currently ongoing restoration projects for specified habitats and consideration of how the IFCA can align with the Government's Vision of protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030 ("30x30").
- 1.28 A phased approach allows for the consideration of wider sensitive habitat management beyond the feature-based management approach taken in Phase 1. In staging the approach, Phase 2 will benefit from the inclusion of outcomes from ongoing research programmes and projects, currently underway in the district, to include those which are specifically focused on areas which may provide habitat restoration potential, ecosystem services, blue carbon habitats and Natural Capital benefits. Research in these areas will contribute vital information to help the IFCA to contribute to wider conservation targets and understand how the wider management of sensitive habitats can contribute to meeting the objectives of the Fisheries Act 2020. In addition, during Phase 2, and in order to deliver Southern IFCA's core duties under the MaCAA, extensive consultation across the district's communities will be required to capture site specific information regarding the social and economic benefits of fishing, coupled with the need to protect the marine environment.
 - 1.29 The phased approach to the delivery of this workstream was adopted by the Southern IFC Authority at their meeting on 16th March 2023. This development of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 falls under Phase 1 of this phased approach.
 - 1.30 Members of the Southern IFC Authority agreed, through a series of Working Groups in early 2023 and following consideration of the outcomes of the IFCA Technical Advisory Committee in May 2023, a set of principles which would underpin management decision defining management of bottom towed fishing gear under Phase 1 of the review. Defining these principles ensures a transparent approach and that the approach is applied consistently across the district.
 - 1.31 The principles are as follows:
 1. Proposed closed areas are considered for designated features within MCZs
 2. Proposed closed areas are considered for designated features within and adjacent to SACs and SPAs
 3. Proposed closed areas for feature-based protections under Principles 1 & 2 incorporate buffers in accordance with national JNCC/NE buffer guidance
 4. The best available evidence used to inform feature-based protection is the Natural England database provided to Southern IFCA in 2020
 5. With the exception of seagrass, the extent and distribution of feature-based management in the Solent Maritime SAC and district wide SPAs will be informed by outcomes of the relevant Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
 6. Existing 2016 BTFG closures which do not meet Principles 1 & 2 will remain in place under Phase 1. These areas will be subject to socio-economic and environmental assessments in Phase 2, forming an evidence base to allow for the consideration of any changes to the spatial extent of these areas to ensure that all potential impacts are considered

- 1.32 More detail on the principles concerning best available evidence, use of buffers and feature-based management in the Solent Maritime SAC and District wide SPAs (excluding seagrass) can be found in the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 Management Intentions Document.

2. Rationale and evidence to justify the level of analysis used in the IA (proportionality approach)

- 2.1 The level of evidence presented through the environmental assessments to inform management intervention is appropriate to the problem under consideration. These assessments have been based on best available evidence of feature/supporting habitat location and extent in MPAs as provided to the Southern IFCA by Natural England, as the Government's Nature Conservation Advisors, in 2020. In understanding the location of features/supporting habitats and the sensitivity of these to fishing activity, Southern IFCA utilise information made available by Natural England through their Designated Sites View⁶.
- 2.2 Given the phased approach adopted by Southern IFCA and the development of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 under Phase 1, namely considering feature-based management interventions for designated features within MCZs and within and adjacent to SACs and SPAs, the development of management through the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 is unable to consider social or economic factors.
- 2.3 Information has been sought from MMO landings data to inform the anticipated cost to industry through the implementation of the Byelaw, however no further information on socio-economic impacts of the prohibited areas under the Byelaw has been sought from the industry on the prohibited areas as defined in the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 given the inability for the IFCA to consider this information when making feature based management decisions for MPAs under the National Site Network.
- 2.4 Once the Southern IFCA begin undertaking Phase 2 of the review of bottom towed fishing gear, extensive consultation will be held with all interested parties, reflecting the ability (outside of feature-based management under Principles 1 & 2 of Phase 1 of the review) for the Southern IFCA to consider potential management under its wider duties under the MaCAA, namely *to 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 to promote its recovery from the effects of such exploitation.*

3. Description of options considered

3.1 Option 0: Do Nothing

Under this option, management of bottom towed fishing gear would continue to be managed under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016.

- 3.1.1 This would result in no management of bottom towed fishing gear within MCZs designated under Tranche 3 and would not provide full feature-based protection for features/supporting habitats, in line with the duties of Southern IFCA, in relation to their location/extent under the updated best available evidence base. Under this approach, the

⁶ [Site Search \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Southern IFCA would not meet its duties under the MaCAA or the Conservation Regulations.

3.2 RECOMMENDED OPTION

Option 1: Update an existing Southern IFCA byelaw in order to introduce new and revised spatial management for bottom towed fishing gear in Marine Protected Areas, ensuring feature protection consistent with Southern IFCA legal duties for SACs, SPAs and MCZs

Under this option a byelaw would be created to replace the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 to introduce new and revised feature-based spatial management for bottom towed fishing gear in Marine Protected Areas under the National Site Network (SACs, SPAs, MCZs).

3.2.1 This option would allow Southern IFCA to meet its duties for MCZs under the MaCAA and for SACs and SPAs under the Conservation Regulations. This option, operating under Phase 1 of the review of bottom towed fishing gear and under the principles defined by the Authority will allow the IFCA to meet the Government target of ensuring that management measures are in place for all MPAs by 2024.

3.2.2 Under this option the Southern IFCA 'Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016' would be revoked.

3.3 Option 2: Create a Southern IFCA byelaw to prohibit bottom towed fishing gear across the full extent of all Marine Protected Areas.

Under this option a single byelaw would be created to prohibit bottom towed fishing gear use within the full spatial extent of all MPAs under the National Site Network (SACs, SPAs, MCZs).

3.3.1 This approach would allow Southern IFCA to meet its duties under the MaCAA, however under the Conservation Regulations, Southern IFCA must ensure that fishing activity does not damage, disturb or have an adverse impact upon the features for which an SAC or SPA has been legally protected. As such, full spatial closures of MPAs would not align to the legislative requirements upon IFCA's under the Conservation Regulations.

3.4 Option 3: Voluntary measures

Due to the total area and environmental value of the District's MPAs, coupled with the number of fishery participants and the complexity of the different types of bottom towed fishing gear, it is believed that a voluntary agreement would pose too great a risk to the integrity of the environmental designations. In addition, when Defra implemented the Revised Approach to the management of commercial fisheries in the then European Marine Sites (EMS) (now National Site Network), it was Defra's expectation that regulatory management measures would be introduced. The ongoing management of bottom towed fishing gear in the National Site Network is a continuation of the initial management implemented through the Revised Approach.

4. Policy objectives

4.1 The Policy Objectives of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 are:

- To avoid adverse impact from bottom towed fishing activity on SACs and SPAs, and further the conservation objectives of MCZs in the Southern IFCA District

- To incorporate updates to the Marine Protected Area network in spatial management of bottom towed fishing gear
- To review existing spatial management to ensure that it is based on best available evidence
- To manage bottom towed fishing activity proportionately by considering management for designated features within MCZs and designated features within or adjacent to SACs and SPAs
- To enhance environmental sustainability within the Southern IFCA District
- Intended effect is protection of designated sensitive features in MPAs from bottom towed fishing gear, success of this measure is measured by compliance with the regulation, measured through outputs from compliance and enforcement monitoring and, if required, associated enforcement action

5. The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

- 5.1 Building on the 2016 Byelaw (currently in force), the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 will introduce a series of prohibited areas across the Southern IFCA District within which the used of bottom towed fishing gear for the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is prohibited.
- 5.2 The byelaw will prohibit the use of bottom towed fishing gear in 42 areas of the District (Table 1). The Area numbers align with those in the schedule of the byelaw and Annex 2 of the Management Intentions Document.

Area of District	BTFG Prohibition Area Numbers
Chichester and Langstone Harbours	1 – 6
Portsmouth Harbour	7 – 12
Southampton Water	13 – 18
Lymington, Keyhaven and Beaulieu	19 – 21
Yarmouth	22
Yarmouth to Cowes	23 – 24
The Medina, Cowes and Osbourne Bay	25 – 28
Ryde to South Wight	29 – 31
South Wight	32
Poole Bay	33 – 34
Poole Harbour	35 – 36
Studland Bay	37
Purbeck Coast	38
Portland and Stennis Ledges	39 – 40
Chesil Beach and The Fleet	41 – 42
Lyme Bay	43

- 5.3 The Byelaw requires a vessel carrying bottom towed fishing gear while transiting through a prohibited area to have that gear inboard and above the sea.

- 5.4 The Byelaw provides for the Authority to issue a written dispensation to any person committing an act which would otherwise constitute an offence against the byelaw if the act is for the purpose of educational, scientific, stocking or breeding purposes, is being undertaken in accordance with that purpose and the dispensation is carried on board and produced for inspection when requested by an IFCO of the Authority or any other person authorised by the Authority to make such a request.
- 5.5 The Byelaw provides for the Authority to review the suitability of the byelaw in accordance with any changes in evidence, to include any statutory evidence provided by Natural England or other such bodies, organisations or persons as the Authority deems fit. At the time that any such evidence is available, prior to any review taking place, consideration will be given to the evidence provided in conjunction with the IFCA's priority workstreams, balancing any identified need for a review with resource capacity.
- 5.6 There have been prohibited areas for bottom towed fishing gear across the Southern IFCA District since the introduction of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw in 2013. The network of prohibited areas was increased following the introduction of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016. In adopting the principles agreed by the Authority to define the prohibited areas under the 2023 Byelaw, the resulting prohibited areas represent a combination of extensions to previous closures and the inclusion of new prohibited areas.
- 5.7 The total area closed to bottom towed fishing gear through the prohibited areas under the Byelaw is 743.12km² representing 27.2% of the Southern IFCA District. This is compared to a total area closed under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 of 696.3km² representing 25.5% of the District. **The difference between the 2016 and 2023 byelaws is an increase in the total area closed of 46.8km² or 1.7% of the District.**

6. Consultation

6.1 Informal Consultation

- 6.1.1 An informal consultation on an initial set of proposed prohibited areas developed by the Authority prior to the decision to adopt a phased approach was held between 17th June and 1st August 2022.
- 6.1.2 Responses were invited by email, post and via an online form. Throughout the consultation period, Southern IFCA officers contacted key stakeholders to inform them of the consultation and engaged with fishers whilst out on patrol. Officers helped fill out response forms where required and signposted fishers to the consultation document.
- 6.1.3 A total of 74 responses were received by the Authority through the duration of the consultation⁷.

6.2 Formal Consultation

6.2.1 To be added following completion of Formal Consultation.

⁷ The Summary of Responses document for the informal consultation is available upon request from the Southern IFCA.

7. Monetised and non-monetised costs and benefits

- 7.1 Option 1 will be analysed in comparison to Option 0
- 7.2 The creation of the Southern IFCA Net Fishing Byelaw may result in the following costs:
- Direct costs to the fishing industry as a result of reduced access or loss of access to fishing grounds;
 - Indirect costs to the fishing industry associated with displacement to other fishing grounds;
 - Costs to Southern IFCA for compliance and enforcement activities
- 7.3 Costs to the fishing industry from reduced access or loss of access to fishing grounds and compliance costs to Southern IFCA can be monetised and these estimated values have been collated and presented as part of this IA.
- 7.4 Indirect costs to the fishing industry associated with displacement are difficult to value and are therefore described here as non-monetised costs.

Costs to the fishing industry

- 7.5 Bottom towed fishing gear users have the potential to incur costs as a result of reduced access or loss of access to fishing grounds within prohibition areas under the Byelaw. These costs will be incurred as a direct result of the closure of the fishing area.
- 7.6 Southern IFCA require commercial fishers to hold a Southern IFCA permit to fish in the district (freely available) and when applying for a permit, indicate types of fishing activity carried out. From these records, there are currently 159 fishers engaged in bottom towed fishing gear fisheries within the district, this incorporates fishers who have indicated either 'trawling' or 'dredging' or both on for their permit to fish. There is no pelagic trawling in the Southern IFCA district therefore 'trawling' is taken to mean bottom towed fishing gear.
- 7.7 To estimate the economic costs of the proposed management, Marine Management Organisation (MMO) catch data for bottom towed fishing gear catches landed to ports within the District between 2021 and 2023 (to Feb 2023) from UK registered vessels was analysed. Table 2 provides the quantity landed (kg) and the associated value (£) of all species landed by either trawling or dredging into ports in the Southern IFCA District for those years.

Year	Total quantity of all species landed by BTFG (tonnes)		Total value of all species landed by BTFG (£)	
	Dredges	Trawls	Dredges	Trawls
2021	1093.90	246.00	2,265,420.56	920,376.30
2022	1219.00	218.97	2,273,778.66	1,081,131.24
2023 (to Feb 2023)	75.58	34.57	194,097.50	151,716.63
Total for 2 full years (2021 and 2022)	2,312.90	464.97	4,539,199.22	2,001,507.54
Average per year (based on 2021 and 2022)	1156.45	232.49	2,269,599.61	1,000,753.77

(*) Note the 2023 data only represents two months of the year

- 7.8 It has to be assumed that the landings into these ports were made by vessels which are registered with the Southern IFCA under the Fish for Sale permit. On this basis, splitting the average values from the above table equally between the 159 registered vessels equates to an estimated average landings value per vessel of £14,274.21 per year for dredging and £6,294.05 for trawling.
- 7.9 These figures can be based on access to the area of the District available to bottom towed fishing gear under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 = 2036.7km². Converting the average value of landings for 2021 and 2022 for each gear type to a (£) value per square km, and then applying this value to the additional area which is proposed to be closed through prohibited areas under the 2023 Byelaw compared to the 2016 byelaw, an average value per year can be estimated of the proposed cost to industry from the new byelaw. This equates to an approximate annual cost (across all fishery participants) of £52,151.65 for dredging and £22,995.67 per year for trawling. Giving a combined approximate annual cost of £75,147.32. Dividing this cost by the 159 BTFG vessels in the District equates to an estimated cost of £472.62 per vessel per year.

Costs to Southern IFCA

- 7.10 Southern IFCA is anticipating that additional costs for compliance and enforcement as a result of the Byelaw, over and above those already directed towards compliance and enforcement for the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016, will be minimised due to the total footprint of prohibited areas changing by 46.8km² from the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 (1.7% increase).
- 7.11 Under section 153 of the MaCAA, Southern IFCA has the lead responsibility of enforcing an IFCA byelaw. The Authority's existing compliance and enforcement strategy would be the most likely and effective method of enforcing the recommended byelaw.
- 7.12 Based on knowledge of the compliance and enforcement resource requirements for the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 and the relatively small increase in total prohibited area size across the District it is anticipated that, in the first year of the byelaw being in place, there would be a day required per Fisheries Protection Vessel to update plotter information relating to positions of prohibited areas, this is anticipated at a total cost of £1,290 based on three patrol vessels. In the first year there would also be a requirement for 10 additional sea patrols across the District to engage with the bottom towed fishing gear industry on changes to prohibited areas, the cost of this would be £14,970.
- 7.13 The best form of engagement will be with the industry whilst they are on the water therefore the increased costs are based around sea patrols. It is anticipated that, given the relatively small increase in total prohibited area size across the District, there will not be a need for additional land patrols utilising assets such as the Southern IFCA drone, the current level of land patrols will be sufficient to ensure compliance and enforcement activities can be carried out in relation to the new byelaw.

Total monetised costs

- 7.14 The Equivalent Annual Net Direct Costs to Business (EANDCB) as a result of the proposed measures are estimated to be £24,670.00

Non-monetised costs

- 7.15 There is likely to be displacement of bottom towed fishing gear activity as a result of the proposed byelaw. The consequences of this displacement include potential conflict with other users, an increase in exploitation of other fisheries and an increased environmental impact as a result of increased bottom towed fishing gear in other areas.
- 7.16 The level of displacement cannot be quantified, however the combination of management measures for gear types across the Southern IFCA District will provide a form of mitigation in relation to an increase in exploitation of other fisheries. The likely increase may be in the form of pot fishing, net fishing or shore gathering activities. The former two are aiming to be managed through Southern IFCA byelaws which are currently undergoing scrutiny through the MMO QA process prior to being considered by the Secretary of State. These byelaws seek to regulate the use of these gear types to limit impacts on stocks (whelk fisheries) and impacts on fish species utilising habitats for feeding, breeding and protection and impacts on migratory fish species and other sensitive species (net fisheries). The Southern IFCA are also undertaking a review of shore gathering activity across the National Site Network in the District which will inform appropriate management to avoid any adverse impact to the marine environment. Phase 2 of the bottom towed fishing gear review will also consider management of sensitive habitats in the wider District, both inside and outside of MPAs.

Benefits

- 7.17 The creation of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 may result in the following benefits:
- Improved sustainability of the marine environment through the protection of sensitive designated features within MCZs and within or adjacent to SACs and SPAs that would otherwise be vulnerable to potentially damaging fishing techniques
 - A potential increase in the delivery of ecosystem services
 - A potential increase in the sustainability of the fisheries, leading to a socio-economic benefit for fishermen and associated businesses
 - A potential increase in opportunities for other fishing gear types
 - Potential reputational benefits to bottom towed fishing gear users and the fishing industry
- 7.18 These benefits are difficult to value and are therefore described here as non-monetised benefits.
- 7.19 The MCZ and HRA assessments carried out to inform the review of bottom towed fishing gear demonstrate that methods of bottom towed fishing gear are likely to have a significant effect on certain sensitive features/supporting-habitats for which sites in the District are designated and therefore prevent the furthering of Conservation Objectives for MCZs and lead to an adverse effect on features within or adjacent to SACs and SPAs, in all cases affecting overall site integrity. The creation of prohibited areas under the Byelaw provides a benefit to these MPAs through protection of these sensitive features/supporting-habitats allowing them to be maintained and/or recovered where required contributing to the achievement of overall site integrity.
- 7.20 The sensitive habitats and species designated for the National Site Network sites in the Southern IFCA District which relate to the assessments for bottom towed fishing gear include: seagrass, reef features, estuarine habitats (i.e. saltmarsh, intertidal sediments), sea-pens and burrowing megafauna, subtidal sediment habitats, black seabream, native oyster, maerl beds, pink sea fans and bird species with associated supporting habitats.

The outputs from the assessments indicate that abrasion, penetration or disturbance of the seabed, removal of non-target and target species, changes in suspended solids, smothering and siltation rates and disturbance of bird species were identified as the main pressures which required management consideration. The degree to which each of these pressures requires management in relation to bottom towed fishing gear will vary between sites taking into account the evidence in literature as to the potential impacts of different types of fishing gear on each habitat/species.

- 7.21 The sensitive habitats and species listed above contribute to the biodiversity of the marine environment and provide a variety of roles in supporting food webs, providing areas for feeding, breeding, roosting and protection for species and supporting the development of species communities and characteristic biotopes. These services would be maintained and potentially enhanced by the Byelaw.
- 7.22 Protection of these features/supporting habitats is also anticipated to deliver additional ecosystem services. The range of habitats and species protected within the prohibited areas are known to provide a degree of coastal protection (reefs, saltmarsh, mudflats) and are important areas for nutrient cycling, carbon and nitrogen fixing and sediment stabilisation. By protecting areas of sensitive habitat, a natural refuge is created for populations of exploited and bycatch species.
- 7.23 It is anticipated that the closure of sensitive areas will benefit adjacent fisheries through two mechanisms: net emigration of adults and juveniles across borders (termed 'spill over') and the export of pelagic eggs and larvae. Inside the prohibited areas, there is the potential for populations to increase in size, with individuals able to live longer, grow larger and develop increased reproductive potential. This has the potential to lead to increased catches outside of these areas. Within carefully managed, sustainable fisheries, additional fishing opportunities provided through increased catches may potentially offer employment opportunities, thus supporting the local economy.
- 7.24 In some areas, methods of towed fishing gear can restrict opportunities for other fishing activities such as static gear, shore gathering and recreational sea angling due to the potential for damage to fishing gear or through competition for a resource. Previous experience from the Lyme Bay area suggests that closures to bottom towed fishing gear may lead to an increase in fishing opportunities for other gear types such as pot fisheries. Within carefully managed, sustainable fisheries additional fishing opportunities may potentially offer employment opportunities, thus supporting the local economy.
- 7.25 It is anticipated that this byelaw will manage the fishery-ecosystem interaction, supporting biodiversity within the prohibited areas. The effective management of bottom towed fishing gear in MPAs demonstrates that these fisheries can be managed in an appropriate way in designated sites. This byelaw therefore provides these fisheries with the opportunity to demonstrate their environmental credentials. In an ever-more environmentally aware society, this information may increase consumer confidence in these fisheries which may in turn have associated social and economic benefits.

8. Risks and assumptions

- 8.1 Cost estimates are based on estimates of UK landings values. Landings information is reported by port landed into and therefore it is not possible to ascertain what proportion of the landings value was derived directly from the proposed prohibited areas under the Byelaw.

- 8.2 The number of potentially affected vessels has been obtained through analysing the number of fishers in the District who have indicated to the Authority when registering to fish for sale, that they fish with either trawls or dredges or both. From officer knowledge, it is known that there are no pelagic trawling vessels operating in the Southern IFCA District therefore trawling is taken to represent bottom towed fishing gear.
- 8.3 Displacement of fishing effort is difficult to quantify, and impossible to predict where exactly activities will be displaced to.
- 8.4 Estimated costs to the fishing industry are likely to be an overestimate, as vessels are likely to offset some of the lost revenue by fishing in other areas. It is also possible that the increased environmental status within the prohibited areas could coincide with relatively more abundant fishing grounds, and therefore the analysis may have underestimated the value of reduced fishing ground.

9. Impact on small and micro businesses

- 9.1 The Byelaw will impact micro businesses (1-9 employees). There are two fishing vessels operating in the Southern IFCA District using bottom towed fishing gear which are >12m, all other vessels are <12m. The majority of vessels operate as a single business operated by one owner. Vessels will operate both single handed with only a skipper, and with a skipper and crew (maximum 2 crew).
- 9.2 It would not be possible to exempt small and micro businesses from the Byelaw.
- 9.3 Due to the size and range of these vessels, some may not be able to access alternative sources of income. These businesses may fail as a result. This has aimed to be mitigated by aligning the prohibited areas with the principles developed by the Authority to ensure consistency in approach across the District and ensure that closures are developed around feature-based management in MPAs in line with the Southern IFCA duties for different designation types. This has resulted in some new prohibited areas and extensions to some existing prohibited areas. The total difference in area closed to bottom towed fishing gear between the 2016 byelaw and the 2023 byelaw is 46.8km² (696.3km² under the 2016 byelaw compared to 743.12km² under the 2023 byelaw), this equates to a difference in the percentage of the District closed to bottom towed fishing gear of 1.7% (from 25.5% under the 2016 byelaw to 27.2% under the 2023 byelaw).

10. Wider impacts

- 10.1 There is the potential for businesses directly related to fishing to be affected as a result of the proposed measures. This is aimed to be abated through the mitigation to the fishing industry by the relatively small difference in the total size of the prohibited areas within the District.
- 10.2 As a result of possible environmental and fisheries benefits, there is the potential for other fishing and environmental businesses to benefit from the proposed measures, for example due to increased fishing opportunities.
- 10.3 There are potential social implications associated with the proposed byelaw, these have the potential to include the suppliers, fuel costs and time costs associated with sourcing new suppliers, travelling to and utilising alternative fishing grounds.

- 10.4 It is anticipated that the introduction of the proposed measures will achieve the conservation objectives of the MPAs within the district in the National Site Network (SACs, SPAs, MCZs) thus maintaining the overall integrity of these sites.
- 10.5 Increases in the density and biodiversity of species in the prohibited areas will positively contribute towards the health of the marine environment.

10.6 South Marine Plan

As per paragraph 58(3) of the MaCAA, Southern IFCA must have regard to the South Marine Plan⁸ when undertaking any decision which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision. By definition, as per paragraph 58(4), a byelaw would fall under the definition of 'authorisation or enforcement decision'.

10.6.1 That said, the proposed measures ensure compatibility with the following objectives and policies of the South Marine Plan:

- **Objective 3:** To support the diversification of a sustainable fishing industry **S-FISH-1**
- **Objective 10:** To support marine protected area objectives and a well-managed ecologically coherent network with enhanced resilience and capability to adapt to change **S-MPA-1, S-MPA-2**
- **Objective 12:** To safeguard space for, and improve the quality of, the natural marine environment, including to enable continue provision of ecosystem goods and services, particularly in relation to coastal and seabed habitats, fisheries and cumulative impacts on highly mobile species **S-BIO-3**

11. Monitoring and evaluation

- 11.1 The Authority is able to review the suitability of the byelaw in accordance with any changes in evidence, to include any statutory evidence provided by Natural England or other such bodies, organisations or persons as the Authority deems fit. At the time that any such evidence is available, prior to any review taking place, consideration will be given to the evidence provided in conjunction with the IFCA's priority workstreams, balancing any identified need for a review with resource capacity.
- 11.2 Monitoring of compliance with the Byelaw will be carried out through the Authority's compliance and enforcement framework⁹.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/south-marine-plans>

⁹ [Compliance-and-Enforcement-Framework-2023.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#)



Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

Management Intentions Document

Supporting document for the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear
Byelaw 2023

Document Control

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Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Rationale	4
2. Review of Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Management.....	4
2.1 Review Drivers for Drafting Management Measures.....	5
2.1.1 Driver - Updates to the Marine Protected Area Network.....	5
2.1.2 Driver - Review of Existing Spatial Management	5
2.1.3 Driver - Protection of Sensitive Habitats Outside MPAs	6
2.2 Progression of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review.....	6
2.2.1 Phased Approach to MPA Management Review	6
2.2.2 Delivery of Phase 1	12
2.2.3 Best Available Evidence.....	12
2.2.4 Buffer Guidance	12
2.2.5 Feature-based management in the Solent Maritime SAC and District wide SPAs (excluding seagrass).....	13
3. The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023	14
3.1 Prohibited Areas.....	14
4. Review	15
5. Phase 2 of Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Management	15
6. Annex 1: Byelaw Maps – Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2023 and Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2016.....	16
7. Annex 2: Site Specific Maps for Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023.....	18

1. Introduction

This Management Intentions document has been produced to accompany the Southern IFCA Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (“the Byelaw”).

This document seeks to provide clarity of intention and process which has underpinned management decisions concerning bottom towed fishing gear in the Southern IFCA district.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Byelaw. This document will be reviewed in line with any future review of bottom towed fishing gear.

1.1 Rationale

Southern IFCA is responsible for the management of fishing activities in the coastal waters of Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These waters contain highly biodiverse and ecologically rich habitats, providing a range of valuable ecosystem services. The value of these habitats and species is recognised through a range of Marine Protected Area (MPA) designations, collectively contributing to the UK’s MPA Network (“the National Site Network”).

Bottom towed fishing gears, or mobile demersal gears such as otter trawls or shellfish dredges, have been used by fishers for generations in the coastal waters of Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. In certain areas these techniques have the potential to adversely affect sensitive habitats and species.

The Southern IFCA has a duty to manage fisheries within MPAs ensuring that designated features and supporting habitats are not adversely affected (SACs and SPAs) and that Conservation Objectives of the sites (MCZs) are furthered. These duties are set out in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009¹ (“the MaCAA”) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019² (“Conservation Regulations”).

2. Review of Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Management

In line with the duties of the Southern IFCA, in 2020 Members of the Southern IFC Authority considered the need for a review of management of bottom towed fishing gear in the district in response to a change in the National Site Network through the addition of new Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and updates to the best-available evidence which had been used to inform the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 as the current management mechanism for these gear types in the district.

The evidence to support this review was collated through a series of MCZ Assessments and Habitats Regulations Assessments which were reviewed and agreed by the Southern IFCA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in February 2020 and May 2020 as well as standing assessments which were compiled for the 2016 byelaw and were deemed to still be relevant to the evidence base in 2020.

¹ [Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/23/section/1)

² [The Conservation of Habitats and Species \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2019/111/section/1)

2.1 Review Drivers for Drafting Management Measures

At a meeting of the Southern IFCA TAC in August 2021, following consideration of the evidence to support a review, Members agreed to proceed the review of bottom towed fishing gear management to Stage 2 of the Byelaw Making Process, to draft management measures, operating under defined drivers.

2.1.1 Driver - Updates to the Marine Protected Area Network

On the 31st May 2019, the Government announced a third tranche (T3) of Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) designations which included 6 new sites within the Southern IFCA district and a further 12 new features added to existing MCZs, these are given in table 1.

In line with Southern IFCA's duties under the MaCAA, the Authority was required to undertake an assessment of the potential impacts of fishing activities on designated features to ensure that these activities are compatible with the site's Conservation Objectives, seeking to ensure that the Conservation Objectives are furthered. These assessments consider the nature of the gear type, scale of fishing activity, overlap between the extent of the feature and fishing and the vulnerabilities of the features. The Authority is required to consult with Natural England, the Government's statutory nature conservation advisors, on the outcomes of these assessments. The outcomes of the MCZ Assessments indicated that additional measures would be required for the management of bottom towed fishing gears in MCZs to ensure the Conservation Objectives for the sites can be furthered.

Table 1: Updates made to the Marine Protected Area Network in the Southern IFC District

T3 MCZs	MCZs with Additional Features
Bembridge	Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges
Yarmouth to Cowes	Poole Rocks
Southbourne Rough	The Needles
Studland Bay	
Purbeck Coast	
South of Portland	

2.1.2 Driver - Review of Existing Spatial Management

Previous management of bottom towed fishing gear under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 was informed by best-available evidence. In 2020 Southern IFCA were provided with an updated evidence base by Natural England as the Government's nature conservation advisors. Details on the best-available evidence used in the 2020 review is given in Section 2.2.3. The evidence base provided in 2020 became the best-available evidence used to inform the review and provided updates, particularly in relation to MPA feature condition and extent. It was identified that these updates related to seagrass and reef features across the district. To ensure that management measures for bottom towed fishing gear are appropriate, additional MPA assessments were undertaken on a district-wide basis, focusing on reef and seagrass features against the updated evidence base. Other assessments completed in 2016 were reviewed in 2020 in line with the updated evidence base (as provided by NE in 2020) and determined to still be appropriate in their evaluation and management recommendations.

The package of assessments indicated that changes would be required to the management of bottom towed fishing gear in the district's MCZs as well as in Special Areas of Conservation

(SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in relation to reef and seagrass features. For MCZs, these assessments are MCZ Assessments and for SACs and SPAs they are Habitats Regulations Assessments. All MPAs within the National Site Network in the Southern IFCA District which are subject to consideration for management under the bottom towed fishing gear review are detailed in table 2.

Table 2: SACs, SPAs and MCZs that form part of the National Site Network which occur within the Southern IFCA District and are subject to consideration for management under the bottom towed fishing gear review

District SACs	District SPAs	District MCZs
Lyme Bay and Torbay	Chesil Beach and the Fleet	Bembridge
Solent Maritime	Chichester and Langstone Harbour	Yarmouth to Cowes
Studland to Portland	Poole Harbour	The Needles
South Wight Maritime	Portsmouth Harbour	Southbourne Rough
	Solent and Southampton Water	Poole Rocks
		Studland Bay
		Purbeck Coast
		South of Portland
		Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges

2.1.3 Driver - Protection of Sensitive Habitats Outside MPAs

Under the initial scope of the review, Members considered a third driver which considered where areas of sensitive habitat outside of MPAs may require management for bottom towed fishing gear. The identification of this driver was based on the Southern IFCA duty under the MaCAA to *‘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 to promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation’*.

During the progress of the review, it was determined that this driver would sit in a subsequent phase of reviewing management for bottom towed fishing gear. The rationale for this and an outline of how this second phase is intended to be delivered is given in Section 2.2.1.

2.2 Progression of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review

Following the progression of the review to Stage 2, an initial set of proposed management measures was drafted on the basis of the three review drivers outlined in Section 2.1. An informal consultation with the stakeholder community was held on these measures between 17th June and 1st August 2022³. Members considered the outcomes of this consultation at a meeting of the TAC in August 2022 and a meeting of the Authority in September 2022 where it was agreed to progress the review to Stage 3 which involved drafting a new byelaw to replace the existing Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016.

2.2.1 Phased Approach to MPA Management Review

In 2023, The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 was introduced by Government as the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Plan identified the Government’s intention to support progress towards the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals

³ Copies of the Consultation Document and Summary of Responses from this informal consultation can be obtained from the Southern IFCA upon request.

under the Global Biodiversity Framework which includes protection of 30% of the global ocean by 2030. At a domestic level, the Government aim to achieve this by enhancing protection for MPAs. Under the Goal of Thriving Plants and Wildlife in the Environment Improvement Plan 2023, there is a target for 70% of designated features in MPAs to be in favourable condition by 2042 with the remainder in recovering condition and a new interim target of 48% of this to be achieved by 31st January 2028. The delivery of this is to be supported through strengthened protections in MPAs by 2024. Appropriate regulators, including IFCAs, are required to ensure that management measures are in place for all MPAs by 2024 in order for this interim target to be achieved. This includes the management of bottom towed fishing gear in MPAs.

In order to meet the Government target, Southern IFCA identified a need to prioritise workstreams and adopt a phased approach to the delivery of the bottom towed fishing gear review. This is based on the resource requirements for meeting the Government target and aims to allow for the consideration of wider district wide sensitive habitat management following an initial consideration of feature-based management for MPAs.

Consideration of feature-based management for MPAs is in line with the legal duties of Southern IFCA in relation to the different designations of MPA. In all cases the term 'feature' is used to refer to designated features and supporting habitats for designated features under SPA designations. For MCZs, under S154 of the MaCAA, Southern IFCA must ensure that the Conservation Objectives of any MCZ in the district are furthered. Under Article 6 of the Conservation Regulations, Southern IFCA as a named competent authority must ensure that fishing activity occurring within or adjacent to an SAC or SPA does not damage, disturb or lead to a deterioration of a species or habitat which receives protection under the relevant designation so as to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive. These legal duties are related to the phased approach to bottom towed fishing gear management in the text boxes on the following page.

The phased approach to management of designated features and sensitive habitats/species across the District is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 shows how feature-based management will be considered under Phase 1 based on the legal duties underpinning the IFCA's Core Functions in relation to MCZs and SACs/SPAs and Figure 2 shows how wider management of designated features as well as sensitive habitats/species will be considered under Phase 2, noting that the principles for this Phase of the review have yet to be determined by the Authority.

Phased Approach to the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review

The phased approach is split into two, Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Phase 1: To consider feature based management interventions for MPAs: sites designated under the National Site Network (Special Areas of Conservation [SACs], Special Protection Areas [SPAs] and Marine Conservation Zones [MCZs])

In line with the IFCA's Core Functions under both the MaCAA (2009) and the Conservation Regulations, Phase 1 will consider management of bottom towed fishing gear for features which exist within any MCZ and which exist within or adjacent to any SAC/SPA. For the purposes of Phase 1, 'adjacent' means a feature (to include any buffer) which extends across the boundary of the designated site, to ensure that the integrity of that part of the feature which exists within the boundary of the site is not affected by activity occurring over that same feature where it extends outside the boundary of the site.

For MCZs, S154 of the MaCAA states that an IFCA's performance in meeting the duty to further Conservation Objectives should not be affected by anything listed in the general IFCA duties under S153 of the MaCAA, which include social or economic considerations. Likewise, for SACs and SPAs, the overarching legislation does not provide for the consideration of social or economic factors/impacts when making management decisions which are required to ensure that the duty of no adverse effect is met.

The Authority has developed a set of principles for Phase 1 in order to guide and maintain consistency in decision making which will ensure that any subsequent management is applied equally and with full transparency across the Southern IFCA District, where applicable.

Phase 2: To consider district wide management interventions for sensitive habitats.

Following the completion of Phase 1 it is the intention of the Authority to commence Phase 2 of the review. Phase 2 would consider features which exist adjacent to an MCZ boundary (i.e., any part of a feature which extends across the boundary of an MCZ) as well as any sensitive habitats and species (yet to be defined, pending the scope of Phase 2) across the district, both inside and outside National Site Network Sites and MCZs. This would also include consideration of features and sensitive habitats/species within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are not also designated under overlapping MPAs, where IFCA duties under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) require the Authority to take 'reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions' to further conservation objectives for features within these sites.

Phase 2 will also consider those areas which are currently closed under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 which, according to the Principles developed for Phase 1 (S2.2.2), will remain closed under Phase 1 of the review. In order to determine if any spatial changes are needed for these areas, socio-economic and environmental assessments will be carried out to create an evidence base to ensure all potential impacts of any potential change are considered.

Under Phase 2, social and economic factors/impacts can be considered alongside the need for protection of the marine environment, operating under the IFCA duties outlined under S153 of the MaCAA, namely balancing the protection of the marine environment with a sustainable fishing industry, balancing the needs of different persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources and ensuring sustainable fishing and continued sustainable development. In addition, Phase 2 will allow for the consideration of outcomes of currently ongoing restoration projects for specified habitats and consideration of how the IFCA can align with the Government's Vision of protecting 30% of land and sea by 2030 ("30x30").

A phased approach allows for the consideration of wider sensitive habitat management beyond the feature-based management approach taken in Phase 1. In staging the approach, Phase 2 will benefit from the inclusion of outcomes from ongoing research programmes and projects, currently underway in the district, to include those which are specifically focused on areas which may provide habitat restoration potential, ecosystem services, blue carbon habitats and Natural Capital benefits. Research in these areas will contribute vital information to help the IFCA to contribute to wider conservation targets and understand how the wider management of sensitive habitats can contribute to meeting the objectives of the Fisheries Act 2020. In addition, during Phase 2, and in order to deliver Southern IFCA's core duties under the MaCAA, extensive consultation across the district's communities will be required to capture site specific information regarding the social and economic benefits of fishing, coupled with the need to protect the marine environment.

The phased approach to the delivery of this workstream was adopted by the Southern IFCA Authority at their meeting in March 2023 and is outlined in the Southern IFCA Research and Policy Team Plan for April 2023 to March 2024⁴.

⁴ To be added once uploaded onto website

PHASE 1

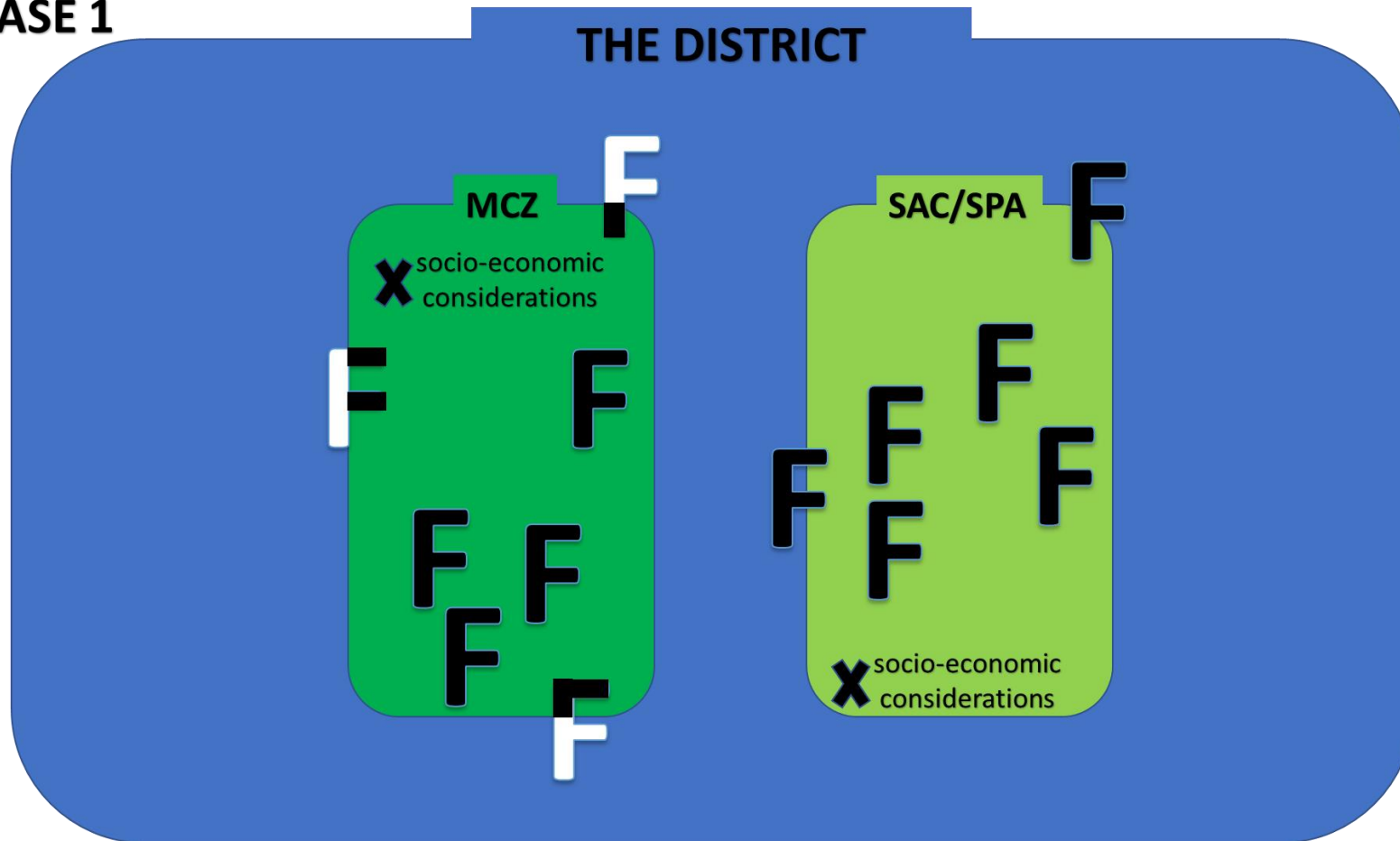


Figure 1: Feature-based management in the Southern IFCA District under Phase 1 of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review. **F** = designated features, black letters indicate where a feature will be protected under Phase 1, white indicates where features will be considered for protection under Phase 2. For MCZs the duty of the IFCA is to further the conservation objectives for features where they occur within the boundary of the site, for SACs/SPAs the duty of the IFCA is to ensure that fishing activity occurring within or adjacent to an SAC or SPA does not damage, disturb or lead to a deterioration of a feature which receives protection under the relevant designation.

PHASE 2

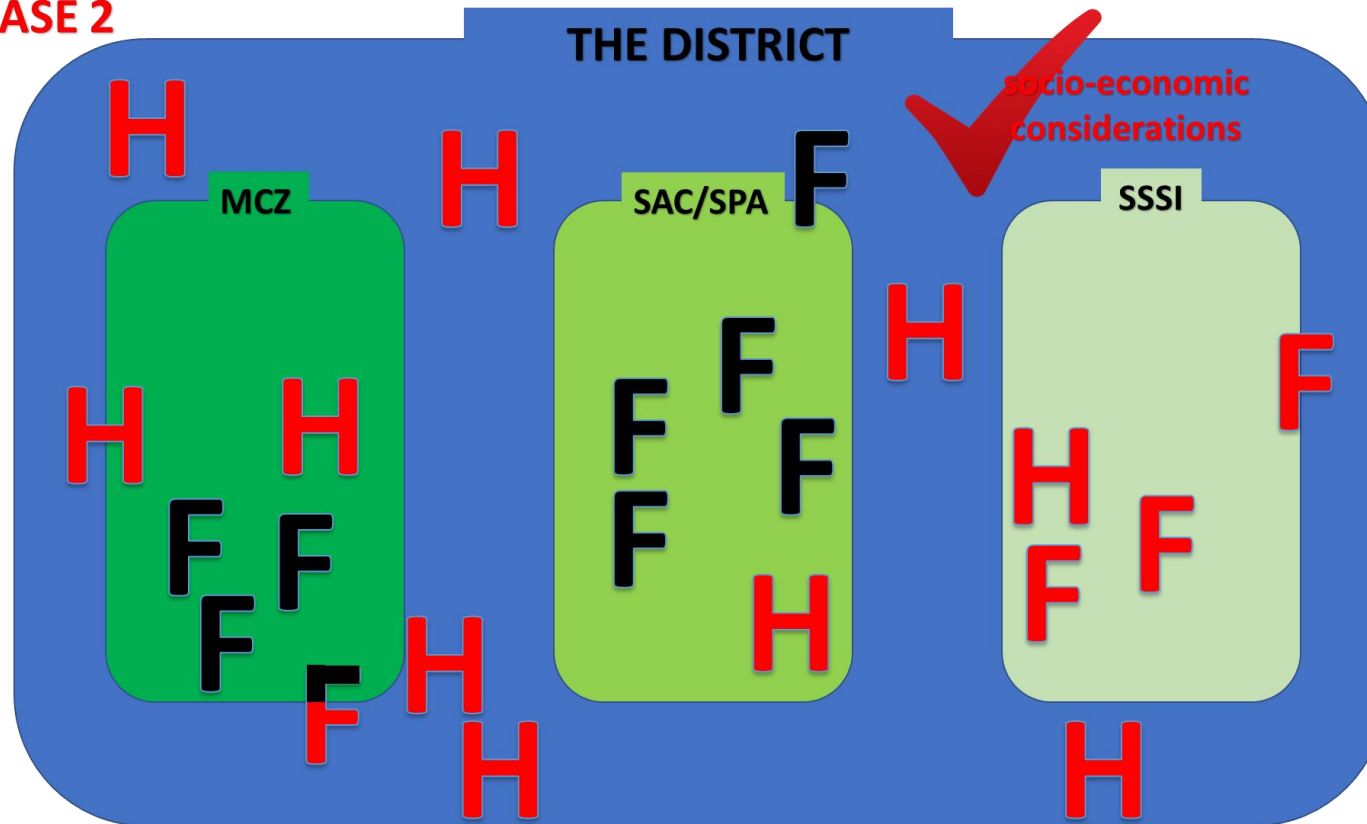


Figure 2: Management under Phase 2 of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review. **F** = designated features, **H** = sensitive habitats and species which are not designated for an MPA, black letters indicate where a feature will be protected under Phase 1, red letters indicate where management will be explored through Phase 2, incorporating consideration of features which exist outside of MCZ boundaries (i.e., any part of a feature which extends across the boundary of an MCZ) as well as the location of sensitive habitats and species (yet to be defined, pending the scope of Phase 2) across the district, both inside and outside National Site Network Sites and MCZs. This would also include consideration of features and sensitive habitats/species within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are not also designated under overlapping MPAs.

2.2.2 Delivery of Phase 1

Members of the Southern IFC Authority agreed, through a series of Working Groups in early 2023 and following consideration of the outcomes of the IFCA Technical Advisory Committee in May 2023, a set of principles which would underpin management decisions defining management of bottom towed fishing gear under Phase 1 of the review. Defining these principles ensures a transparent approach and that the approach is applied consistently across the district.

The principles are as follows:

1. Proposed closed areas are considered for designated features within MCZs
2. Proposed closed areas are considered for designated features within and adjacent to SACs and SPAs
3. Proposed closed areas for feature-based protections under Principles 1 & 2 incorporate buffers in accordance with national JNCC/NE buffer guidance
4. The best available evidence used to inform feature-based protection is the Natural England database provided to Southern IFCA in 2020
5. With the exception of seagrass, the extent and distribution of feature-based management in the Solent Maritime SAC and district wide SPAs will be informed by outcomes of the relevant Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
6. Existing 2016 BTFG closures which do not meet Principles 1 & 2 will remain in place under Phase 1. These areas will be subject to socio-economic and environmental assessments in Phase 2, forming an evidence base to allow for the consideration of any changes to the spatial extent of these areas to ensure that all potential impacts are considered

These principles were then applied to take Stage 3 of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review forward through the drafting of a new byelaw titled the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 which will replace the existing Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016.

2.2.3 Best Available Evidence

Under the principles defined in Section 2.2.2, the best available evidence used to inform the prohibited areas under the Byelaw is the Natural England database provided to Southern IFCA in 2020. This database consists of spatial data on the extent and distribution of designated features and supporting habitats within and adjacent to MPAs and extent and distribution of habitats and species outside of MPAs. This data layer is compiled by Natural England combining data from a variety of sources and is periodically updated. When an updated database is published, it is provided to Southern IFCA to aid in management decision making. The latest update is the database provided to Southern IFCA in 2020 which is the data that has been used to inform the Byelaw.

2.2.4 Buffer Guidance

A buffer is a spatial extension applied to known feature extent in order to safeguard the feature from damage by an activity. The process of applying a buffer around a feature is frequently used in fisheries management and was used in the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016. Natural England, utilising guidance from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), provide advice on the application of buffers which is available to IFCAs to use in determining management.

The JNCC guidance provides “the appropriate distance beyond the seabed extent of the habitat by which the site boundary as the sea surface may be extended according to the maximum actual water depth of the feature in question...as a minimum measure to reduce the likelihood of habitat damage from demersal fishing” i.e., the potential unintentional incursion of mobile fishing gear on a feature. The guidance distances were based on generalised warp length to water depth ratios, thereby taking into account water depth at the site and the possible location of mobile gear on the seabed relative to a vessel at the sea surface.

The following table is provided in the guidance.

Water depth	Ratio warp length:depth	Approx. length of trawl warp	Boundary extension (i.e., buffer) to be added to the habitat area of interest
Shallow waters (\leq 25m)	4:1	100m at 25m depth	4 x actual depth
Continental shelf (25-200m)	3:1	600m at 200m depth	3 x actual depth
Deep waters (200 to over 1000m)	2:1	2000m at 1000m depth	2 x actual depth

2.2.5 Feature-based management in the Solent Maritime SAC and District wide SPAs (excluding seagrass)

For designated habitats other than seagrass in the Solent Maritime SAC and District wide SPAs the management under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 is in line with an agreement on how to manage these habitats under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016. This agreement was based on the Authority’s consideration of the outcomes of HRAs relevant to those sites and feedback from two informal consultations held between January and September 2016.

The agreed approach was the identification of areas which provided good examples of SAC and SPA habitat and having those as prohibited areas to maintain the integrity of the sites whilst offering long-term stability to guard against the effects of fishing effort displacement. The approach was deemed to offer pre-emptive and precautionary measures which were proportionate to the risks to the site identified through the assessments. Factors considered in identifying these areas included existing levels of human disturbance, energy levels, habitat type and recoverability. A number of low-energy areas were identified as being most suitable for prohibited areas where levels of abrasion from bottom towed fishing gear activity would not allow the features and supporting habitats to reach favourable condition.

Good examples of estuarine habitat were also identified which included intertidal mud, subtidal mud and saltmarsh. These areas included parts of the River Hamble, Sinah Lake, Broom Channel, Russell’s Lake, the River Medina, King’s Quay, Newtown Creek, the River Yar, Ashlett Creek, Hythe foreshore, the River Test, Lymington, Keyhaven and additional parts of Langstone Harbour.

Protection of features and supporting habitats in these areas is also supplemented by management through the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (and previously the Solent Dredge Byelaw). The closed seasons under this byelaw are designed to enable the recovery of infaunal communities and to maintain the structure of intertidal and subtidal habitats, as well

as supporting breeding shellfish populations. This approach acknowledges that dredge fishing will still take place within these sites, but the mitigation provided by a combination of closures to bottom towed fishing gear and through the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw is considered sufficient to enable the physical and biological recovery of designated features and supporting habitats.

Members of the Authority considered this approach through consideration of the principles for the review and agreed to maintain this approach in the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023. It was determined that seagrass within these sites required an updated assessment in line with the wider district due to changes in extent and distribution identified in the 2020 evidence base. Management related to seagrass was underpinned by a specific district wide HRA for this habitat in relation to bottom towed fishing gear.

3. The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (“the Byelaw”) prohibits the use of bottom towed fishing gear for the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in areas of the Southern IFCA district in order to protect designated features within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and within or adjacent to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The Byelaw also requires a vessel carrying bottom towed fishing gear while transiting through a prohibited area to have that gear inboard and above the sea.

The Byelaw will revoke the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 made by the Authority in November 2017 (see Annex 1 for a visual comparison of prohibited areas in the 2016 and 2023 byelaws).

3.1 Prohibited Areas

Prohibited areas are defined within the following areas under the Byelaw (please see the Schedule in the Byelaw for full coordinates). Site specific maps have been created showing the individual prohibited areas within each of these wider areas, these can be viewed in Annex 2 to this document.

- Chichester and Langstone Harbours
- Portsmouth Harbour
- Southampton Water
- Lymington, Keyhaven and Beaulieu
- Yarmouth
- Yarmouth to Cowes
- The Medina, Cowes and Osbourne Bay
- Ryde to South Wight
- South Wight
- Poole Bay
- Poole Harbour
- Studland Bay
- Purbeck Coast
- Portland and Stennis Ledges

- Chesil Beach and The Fleet
- Lyme Bay

4. Review

The Byelaw provides for reviewing management through a provision allowing the Authority (or a sub-committee thereof authorised by the Authority to do so) to review the suitability of the byelaw in accordance with any changes in available evidence, to include any statutory advice provided by Natural England or other such bodies, organisations or persons as the Authority deem fit.

At the time that any such evidence is available, prior to any review taking place, consideration will be given to the evidence provided in conjunction with the IFCA's priority workstreams, balancing any identified need for a review with resource capacity.

5. Phase 2 of Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Management

Following the completion of Phase 1 of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review it is the intention of the Authority to commence Phase 2 of the review as outlined in Section 2.2.1. Following the implementation of any outcomes from Phase 2, this document will be updated accordingly.

6. Annex 1: Byelaw Maps – Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2023 and Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2016

The maps provided in Figures 3 & 4 in this Annex reflect the maps provided as part of the byelaws for both the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2023 and Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2016 byelaws. There are two maps produced for each byelaw, one showing the eastern end and one showing the western end of the Southern IFCA District. The maps from the 2023 and 2016 byelaws have been provided side by side in each case to illustrate the additional locations and/or extent of prohibited areas from the 2016 to 2023 byelaws.

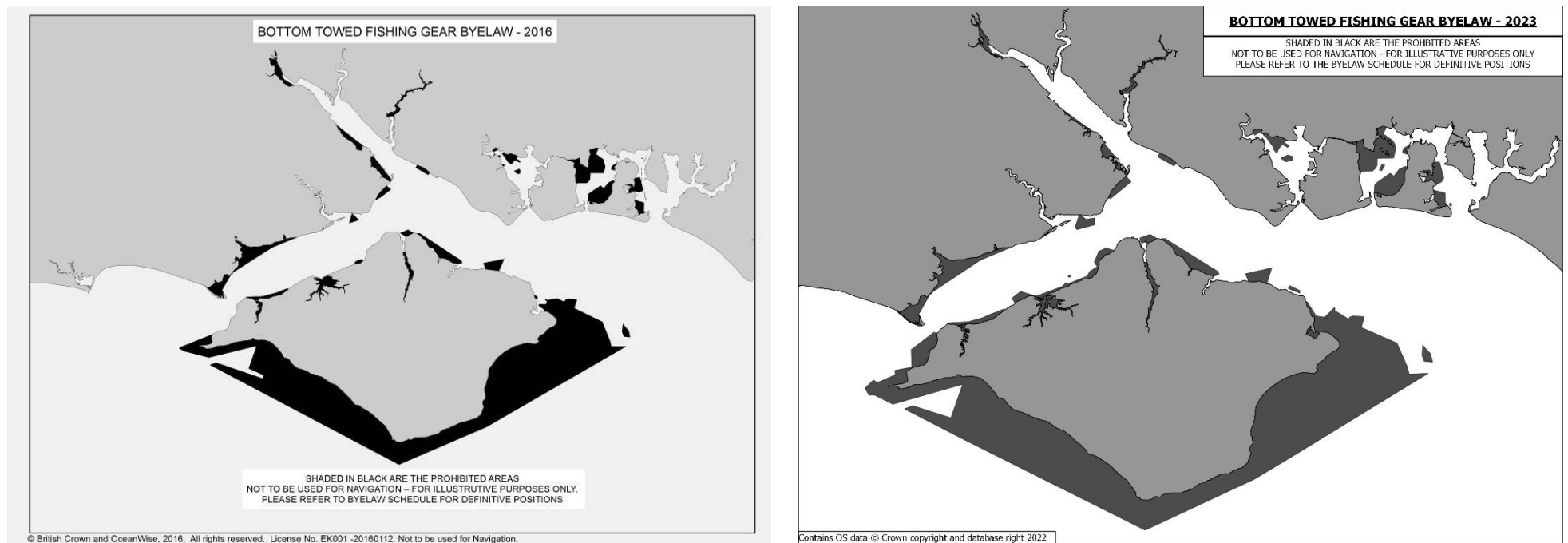


Figure 3: Maps of the eastern end of the Southern IFCA District from the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 (left) and the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (right).

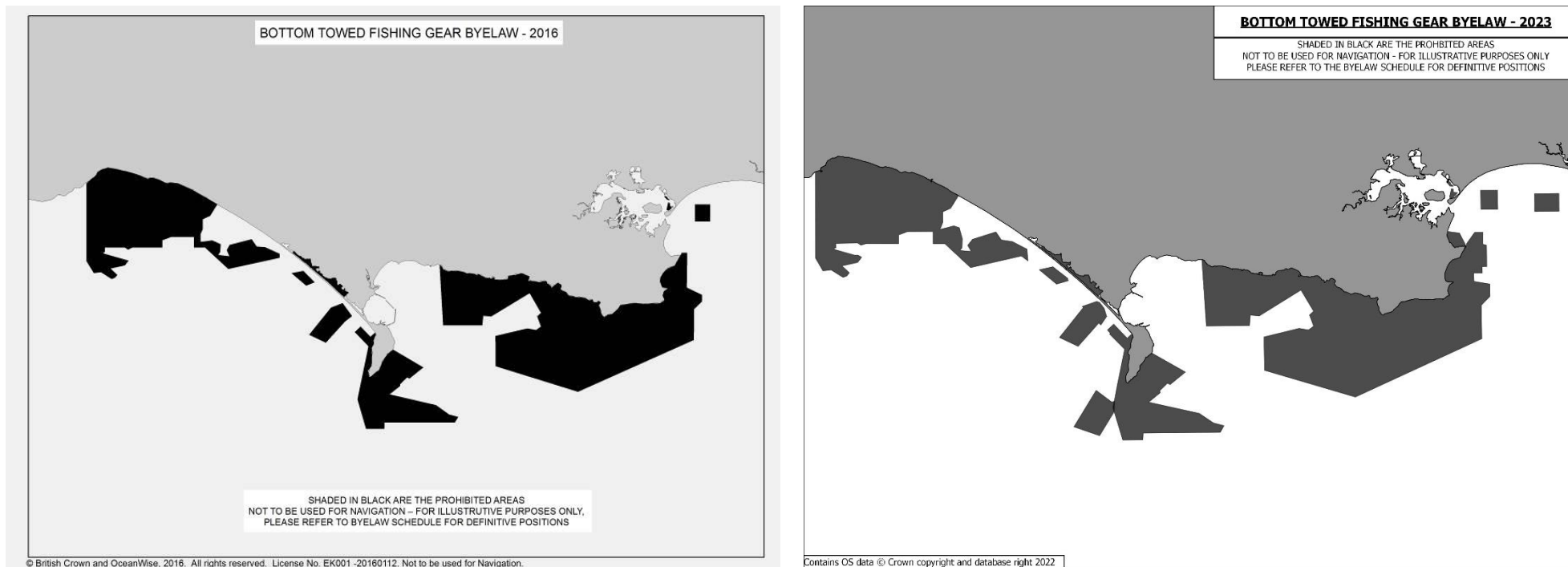


Figure 4: Maps of the western end of the Southern IFCA District from the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 (left) and the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (right)

7. Annex 2: Site Specific Maps for Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

The maps provided in this annex show the prohibited areas under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 along with the location of designated features, the buffers applied to those features and the boundaries of MPAs in the district.

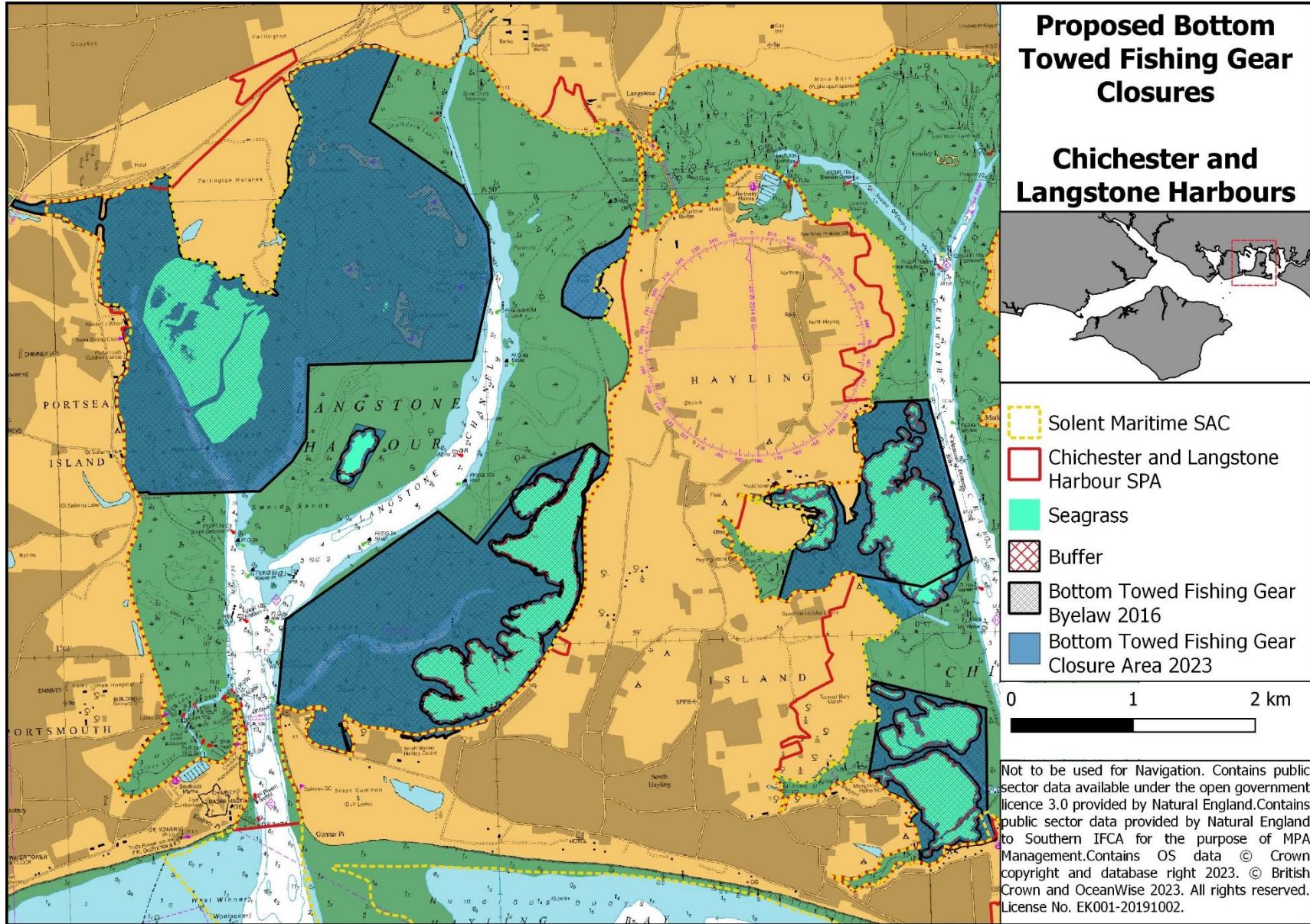
The maps also illustrate the prohibited areas under the Byelaw in relation to the prohibited areas under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016. In adopting the Principles agreed by the Authority to define the prohibited areas under the Byelaw (2023), the resulting prohibited areas represent a combination of extensions to previous closures and the inclusion of new prohibited areas.

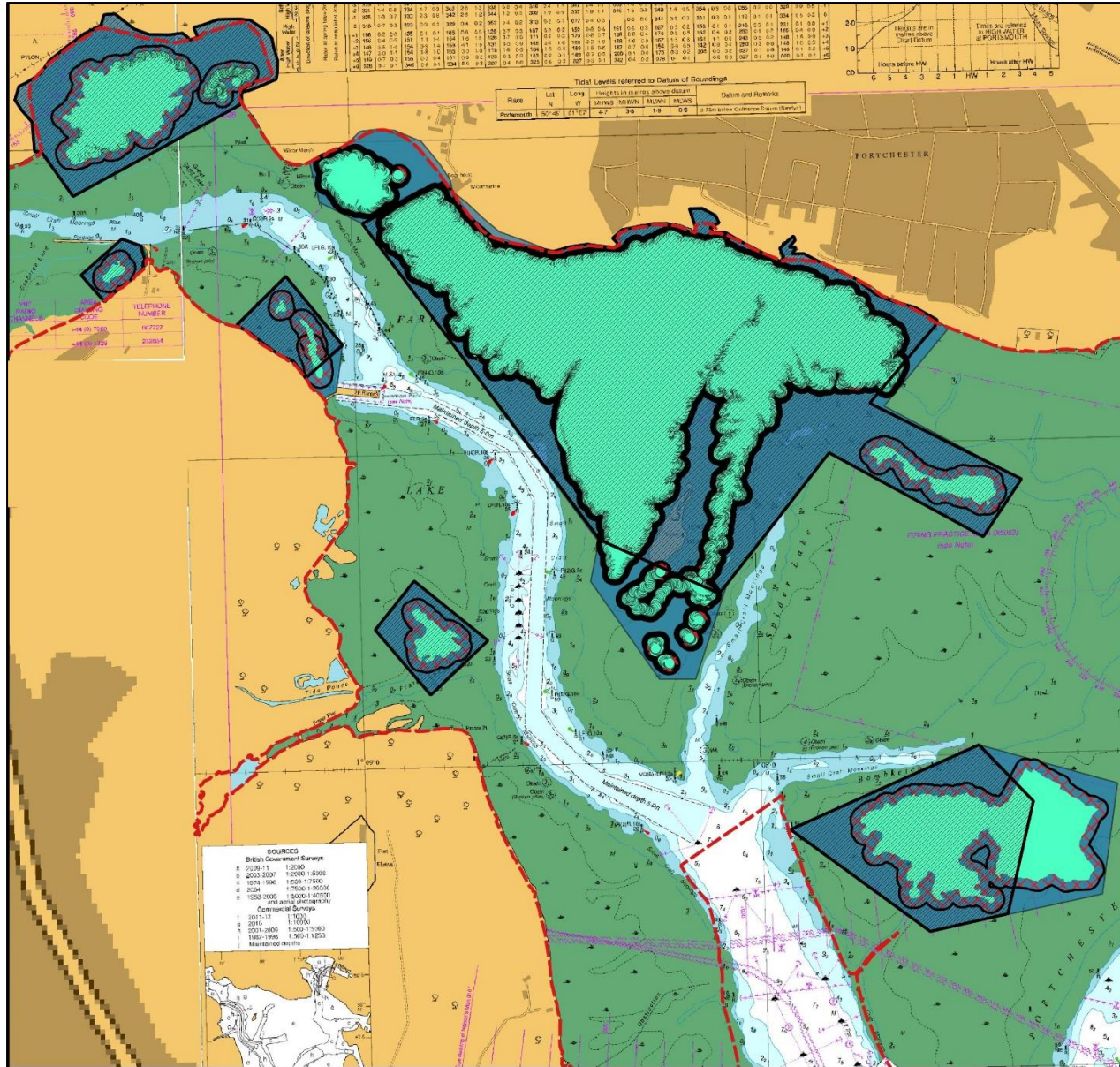
The total area closed to bottom towed fishing gear through the prohibited areas under the Byelaw is 743.12km² representing 27.2% of the Southern IFCA District. This is compared to a total area closed under the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016 of 696.3km² representing 25.5% of the District. **The difference between the 2016 and 2023 byelaws is an increase in the total area closed of 46.8km² or 1.7% of the District.**

The following table provides page numbers for each map.

Area Map	Byelaw Prohibited Area Numbers	Page Number
Chichester and Langstone Harbours	1 – 6	20
Portsmouth Harbour	7 – 12	21
Southampton Water	13 – 18	22-23
Lymington, Keyhaven and Beaulieu	19 – 21	24-25
Yarmouth	22	24
Yarmouth to Cowes	23 – 24	25
The Medina, Cowes and Osbourne Bay	25 – 28	26
Ryde to South Wight	29 – 31	27
South Wight	32	28-29
Poole Bay	33 – 34	30
Poole Harbour	35 – 36	31
Studland Bay	37	32
Purbeck Coast	38	33

Portland and Stennis Ledges	39 – 40	34
Chesil Beach and The Fleet	41 – 42	35
Lyme Bay	43	36





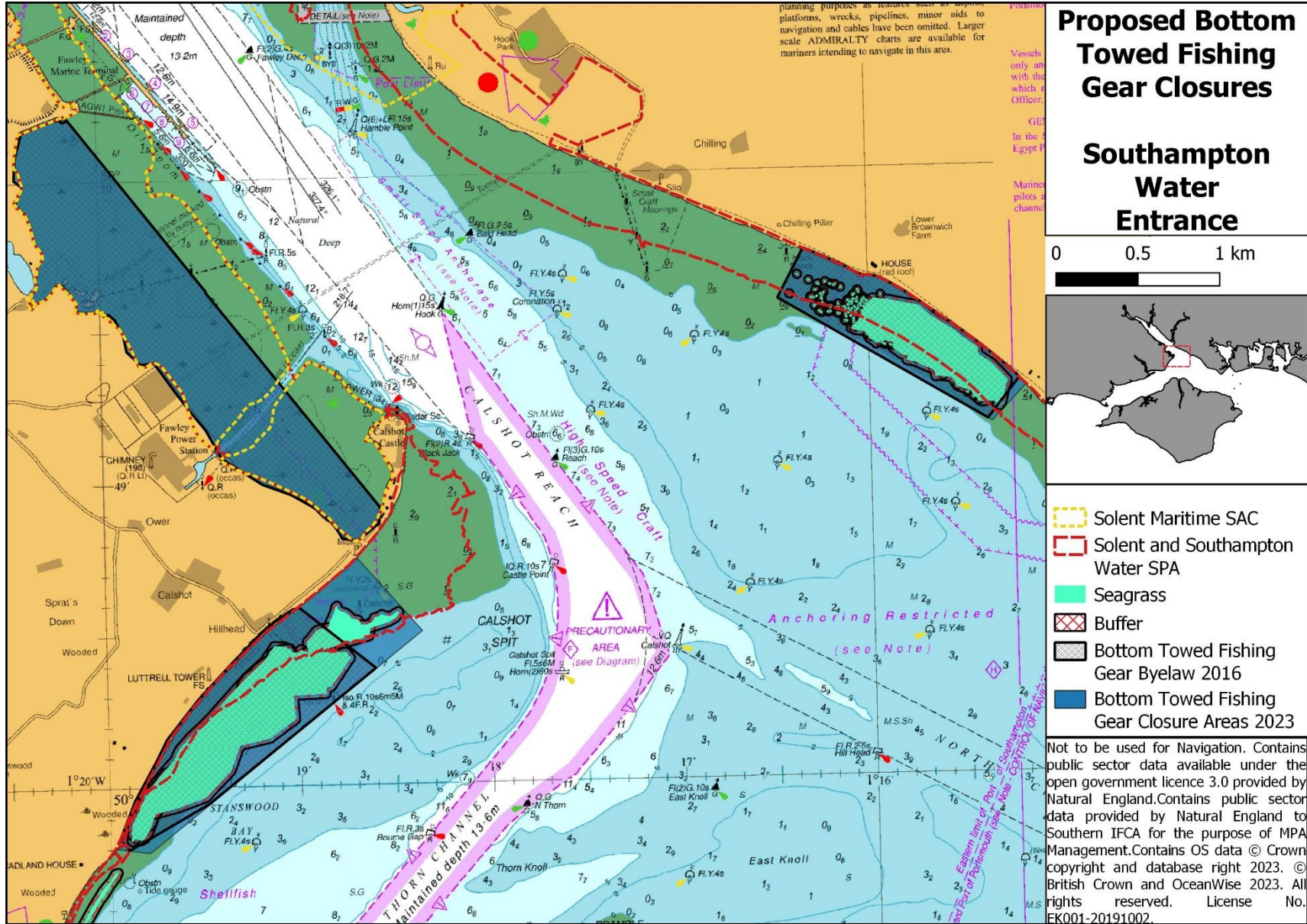
Proposed Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closures

Portsmouth Harbour

- Portsmouth Harbour SPA
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016
- Seagrass
- Buffer
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closure Areas 2023

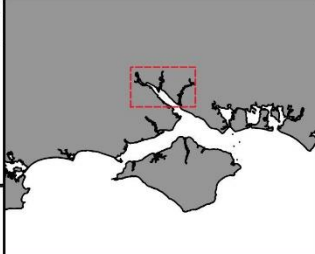


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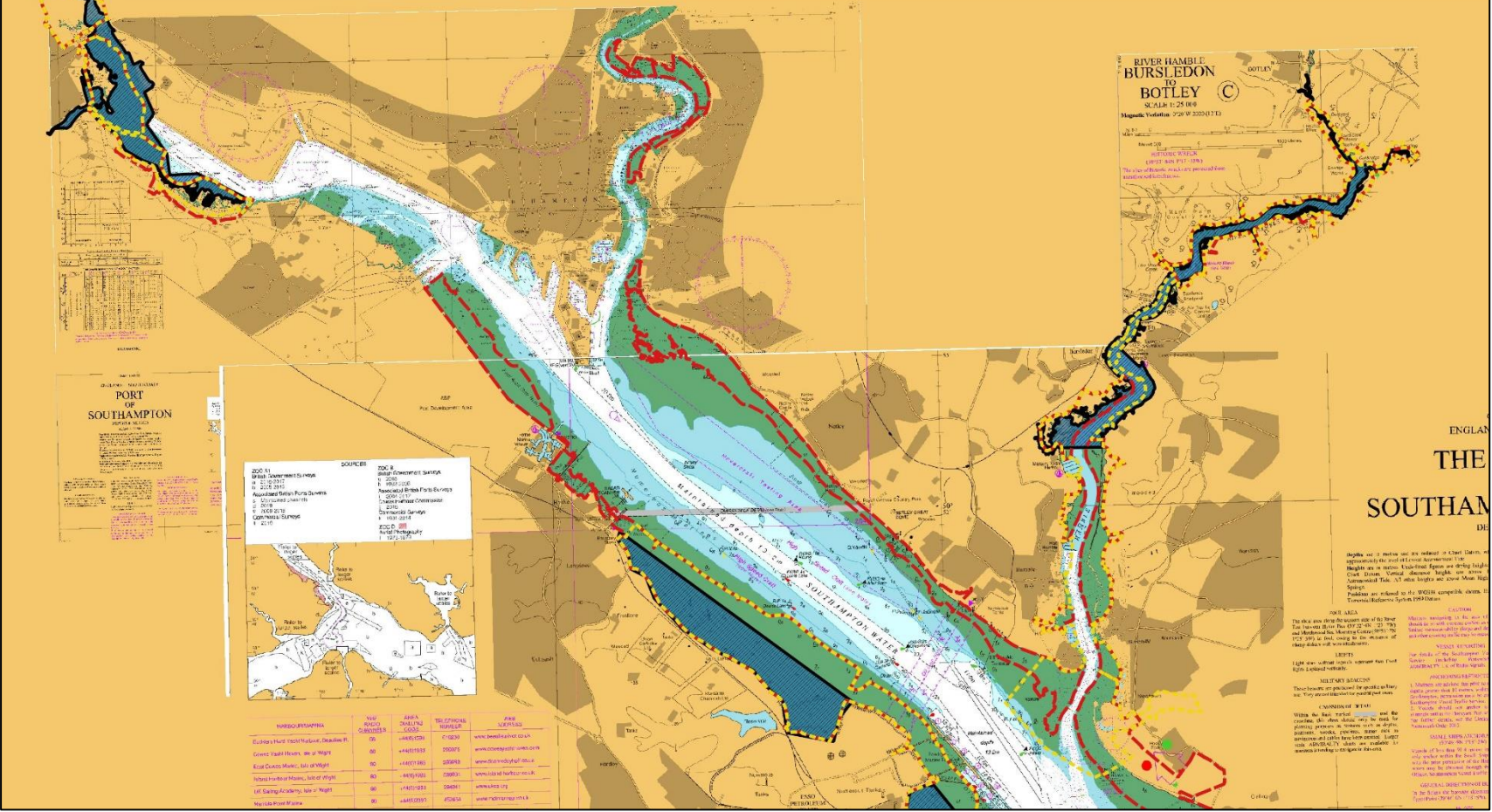
Proposed Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closures

Southampton Water



- Solent Maritime SAC
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closure Area 2023

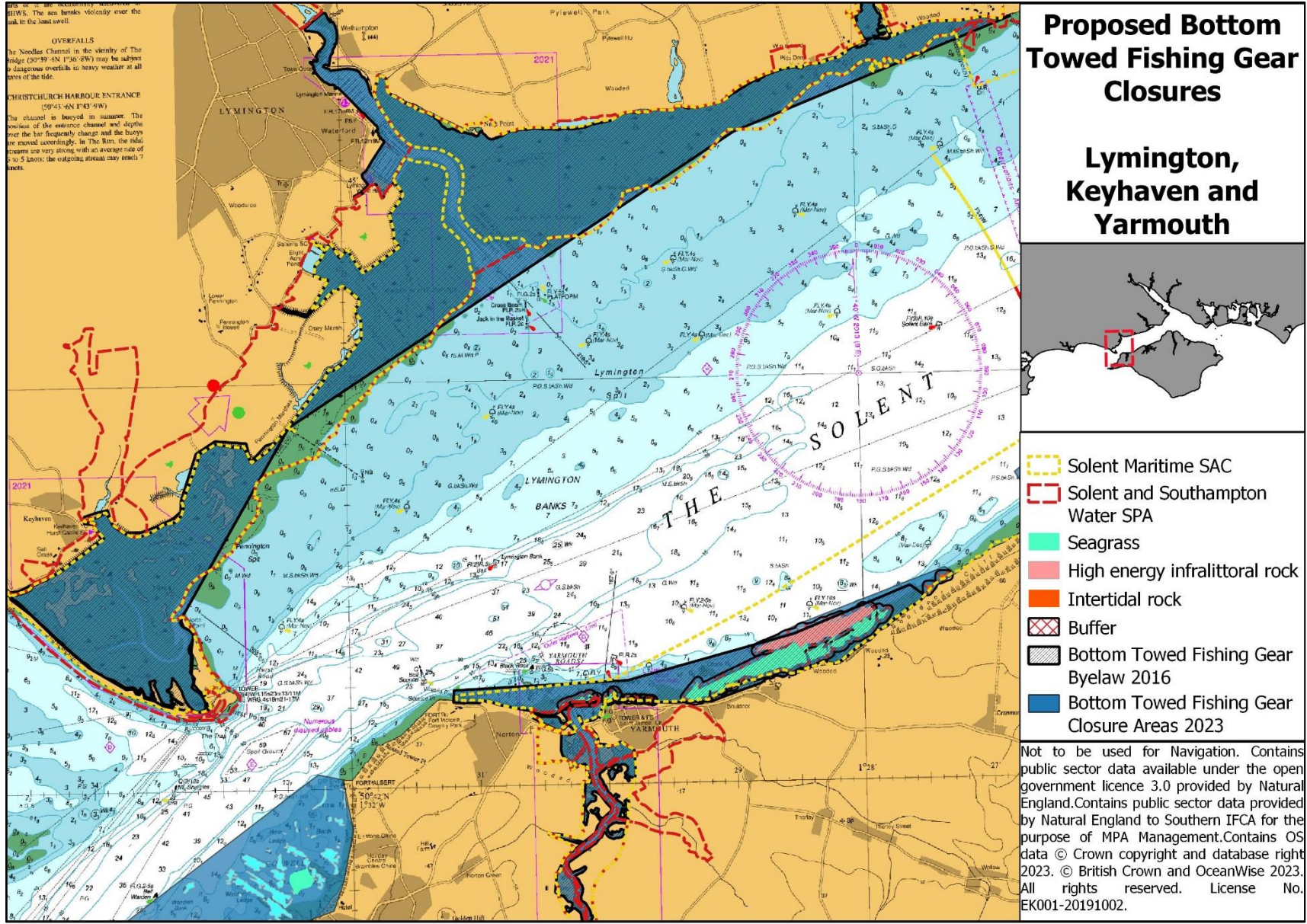
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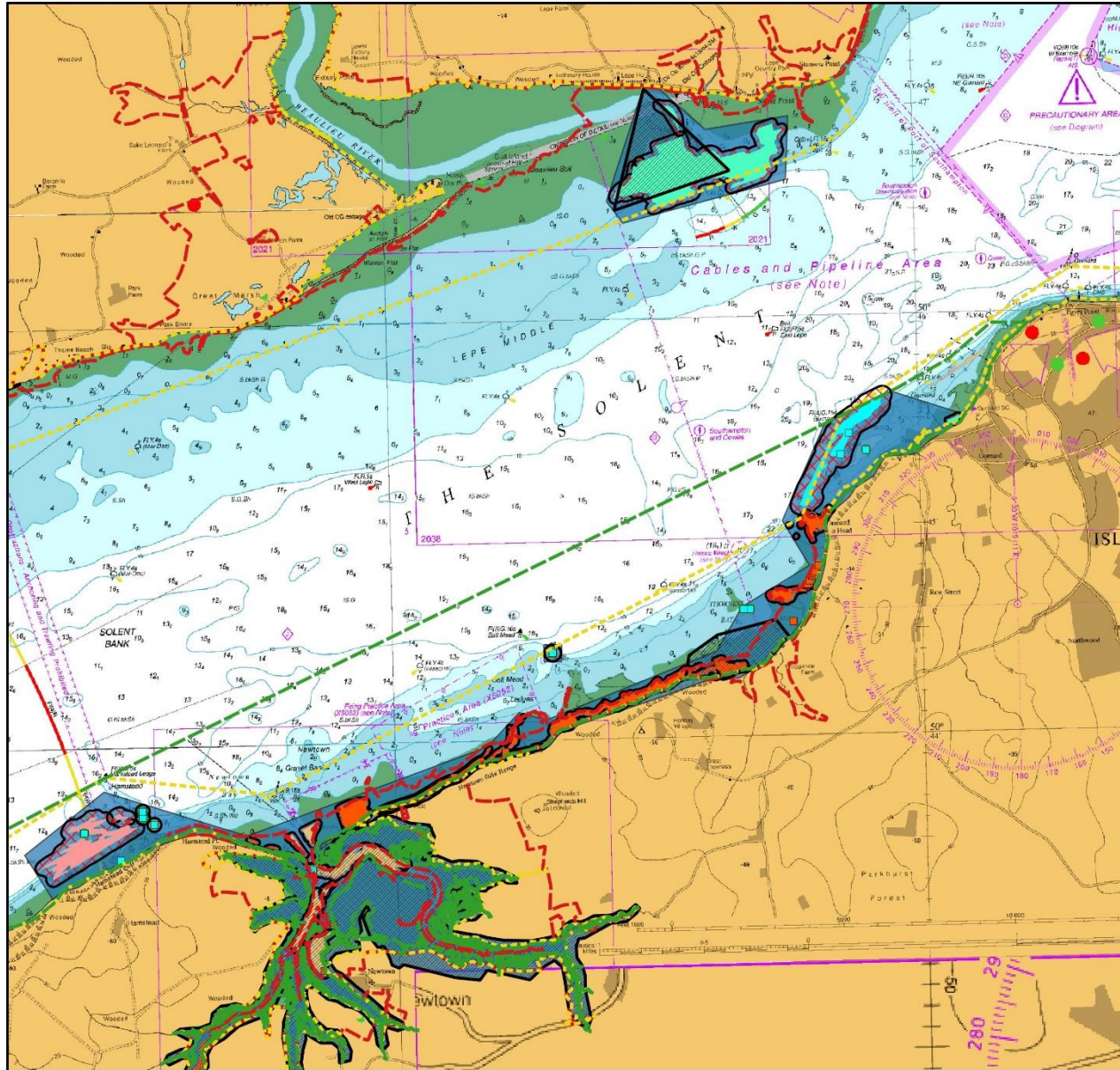


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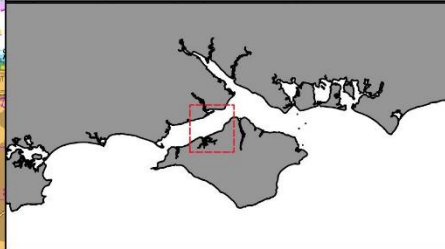
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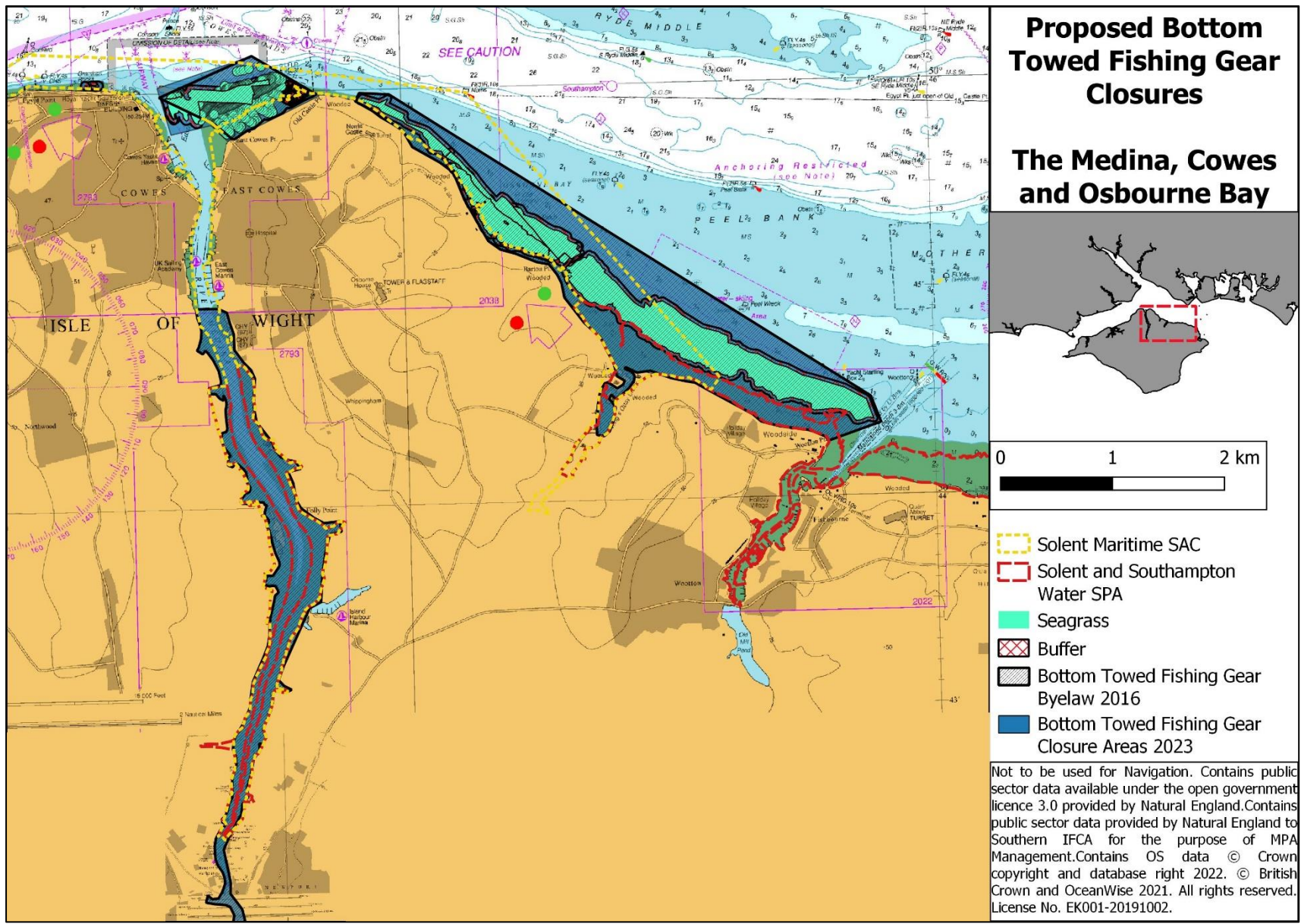
Proposed Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closures

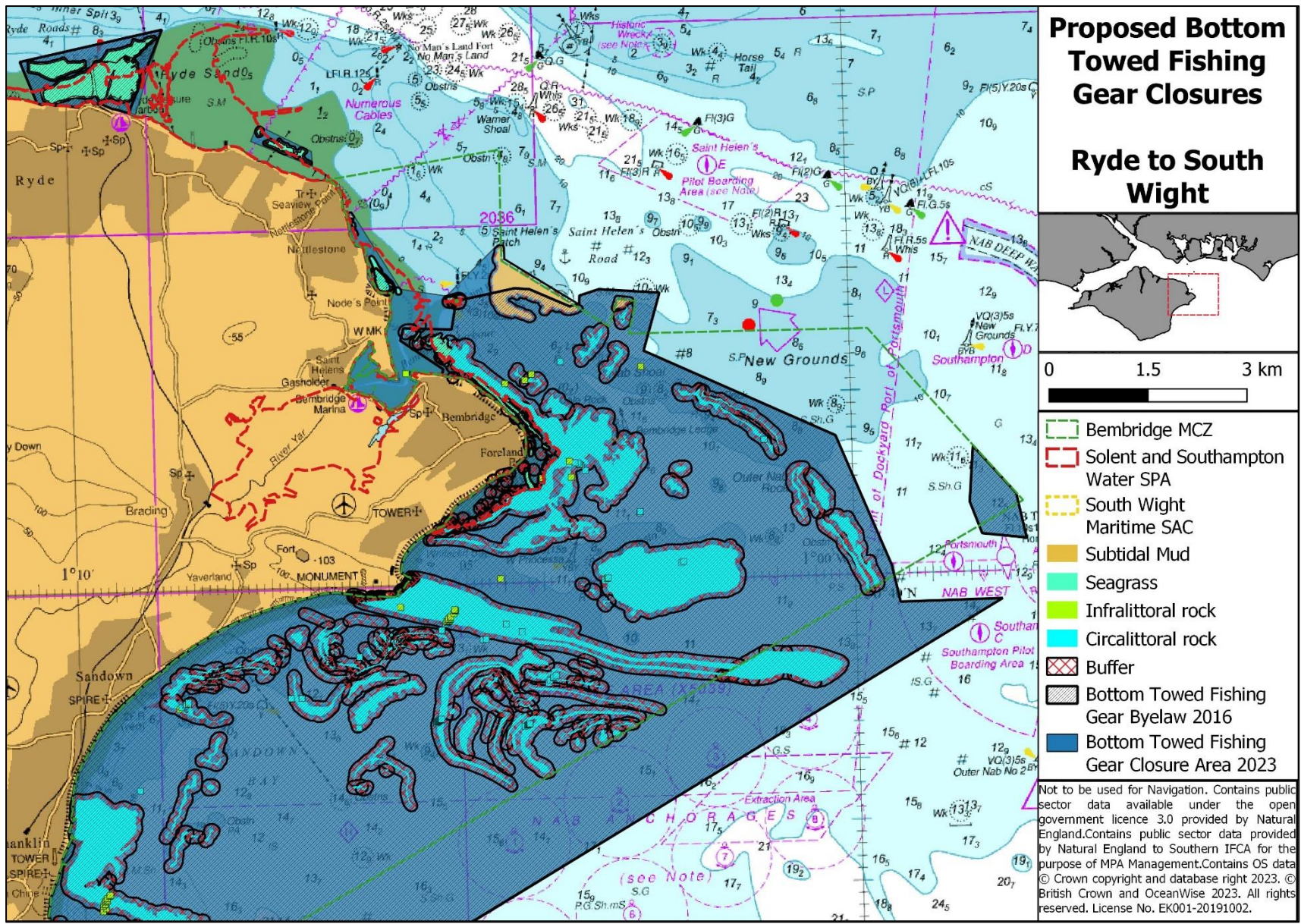
Beaulieu and Yarmouth to Cowes

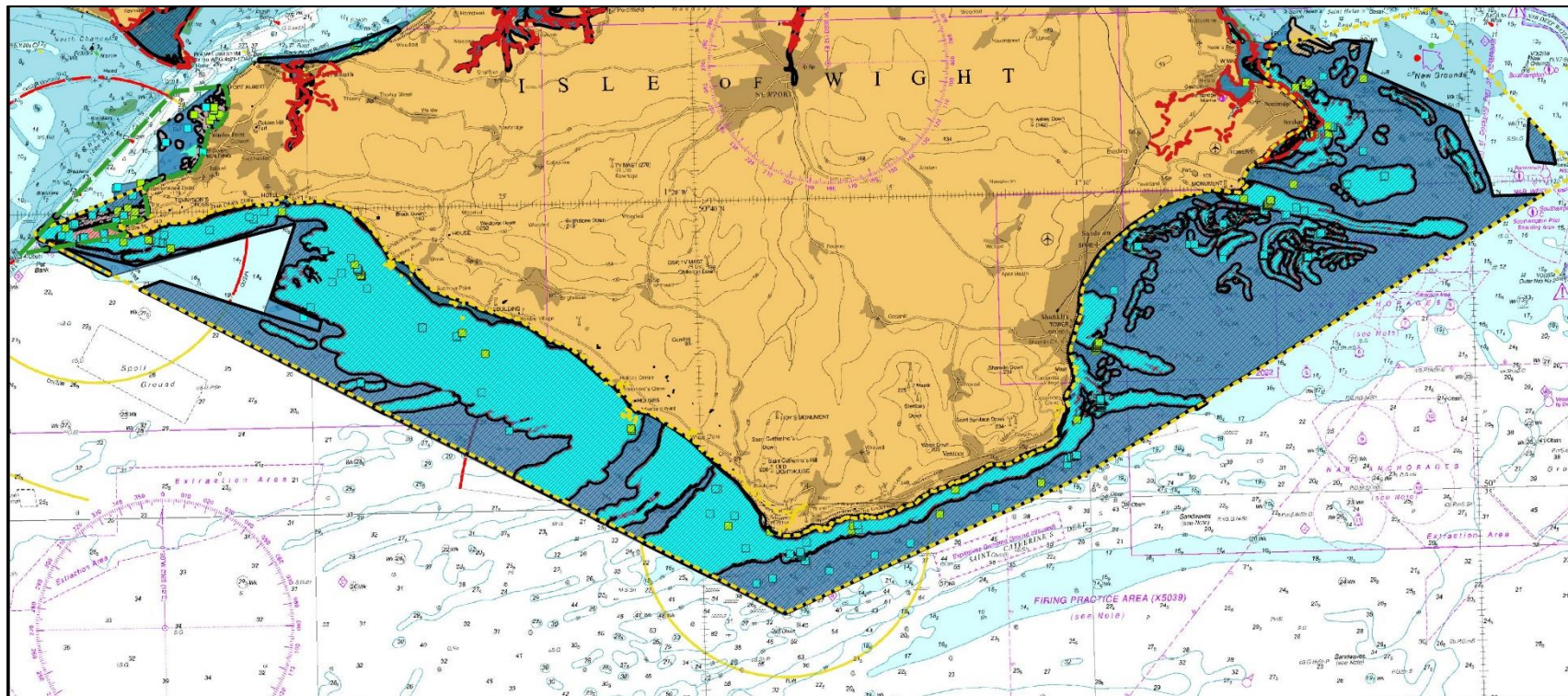


- Yarmouth to Cowes MCZ
- Solent Maritime SAC
- Solent and Southampton Water SPA
- Intertidal rock
- Circalittoral rock
- High energy infralittoral rock
- Subtidal mud
- Seagrass
- Buffer
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2016
- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closure Areas 2023

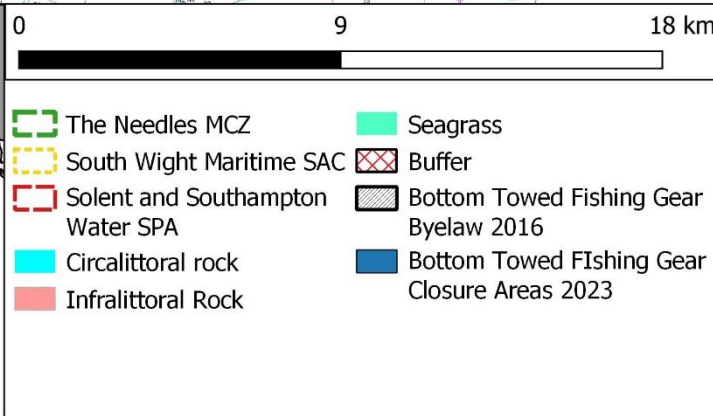
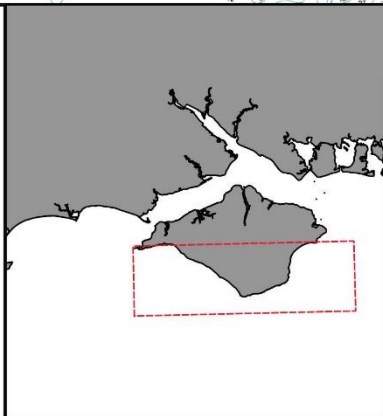
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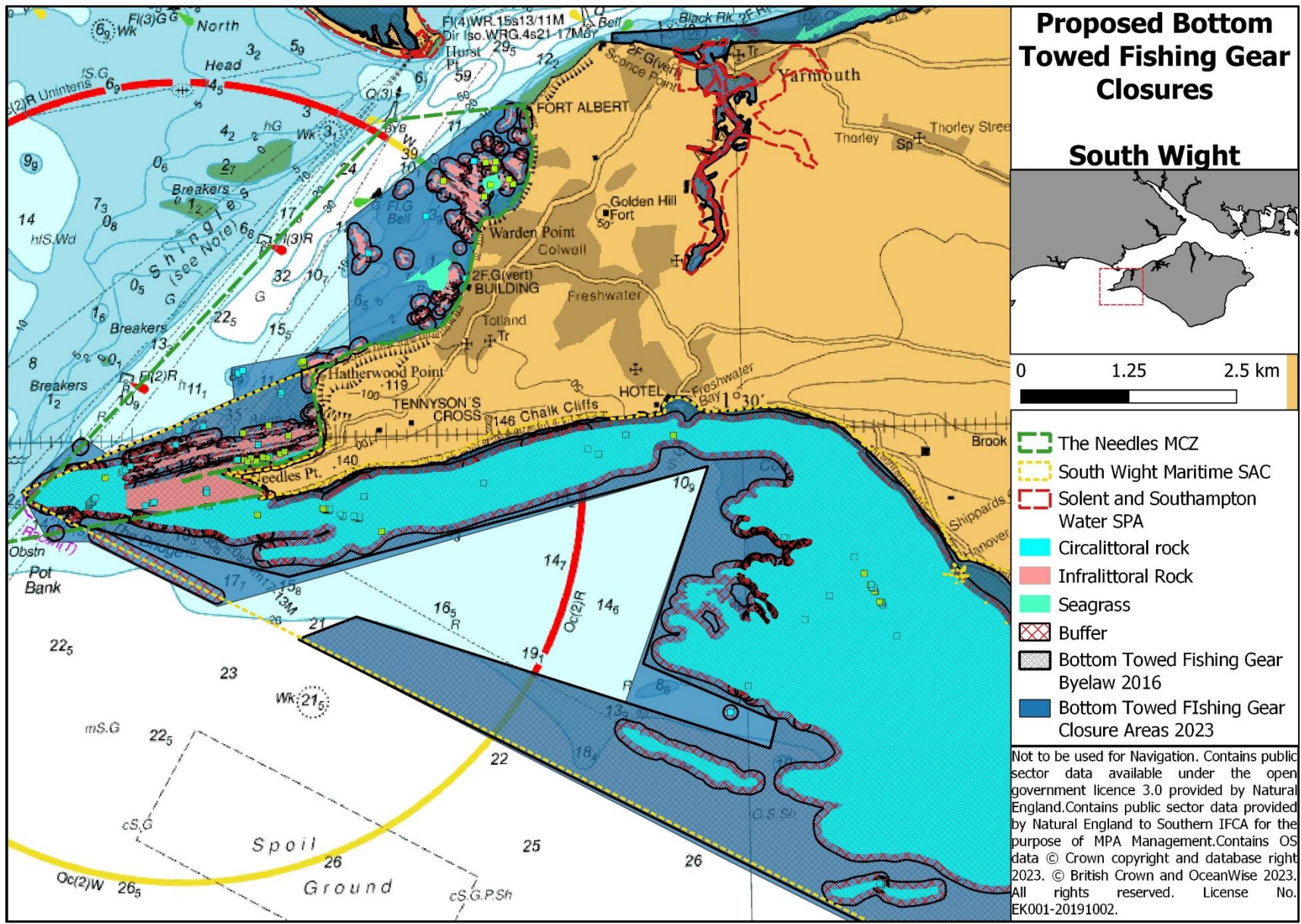


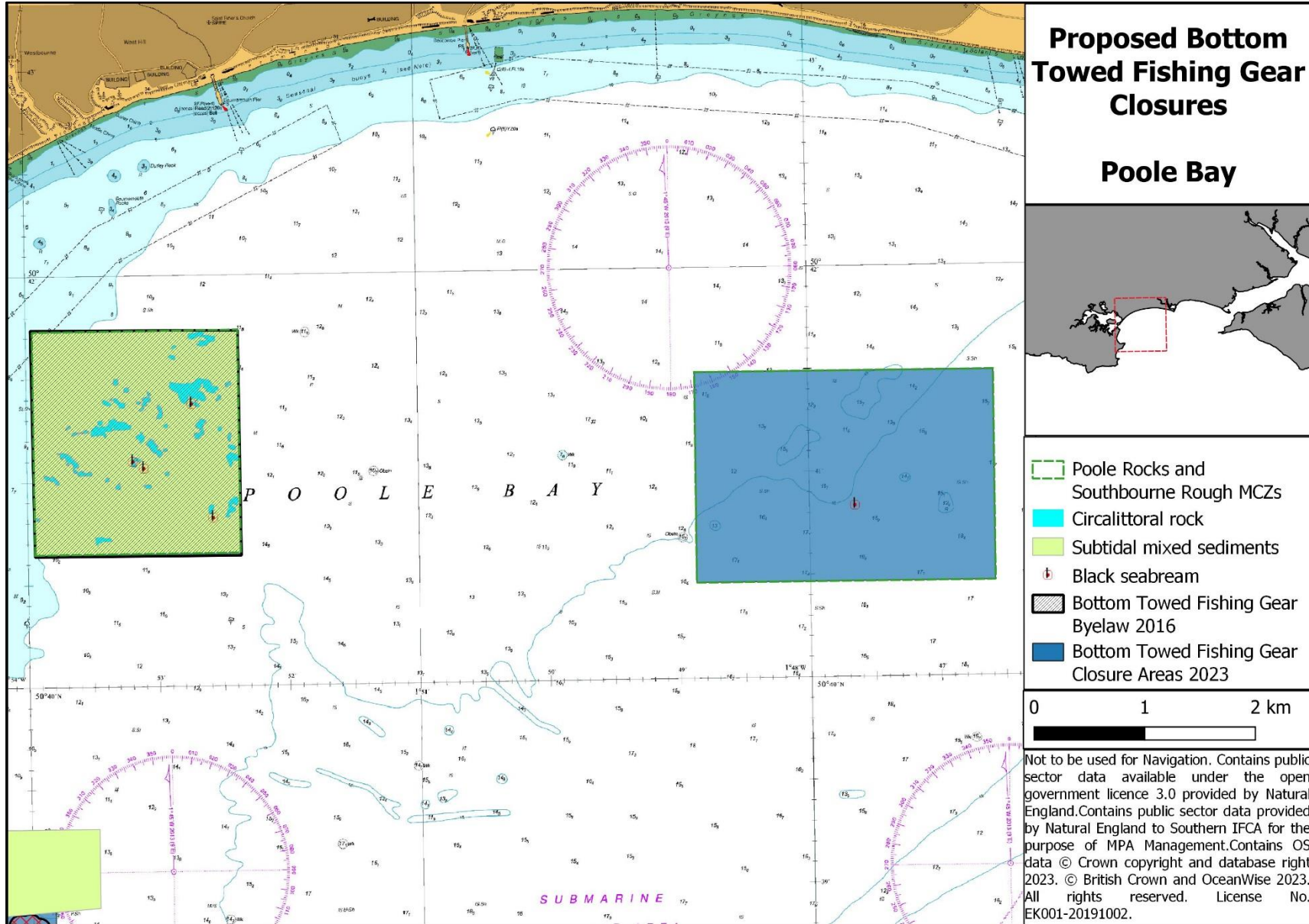


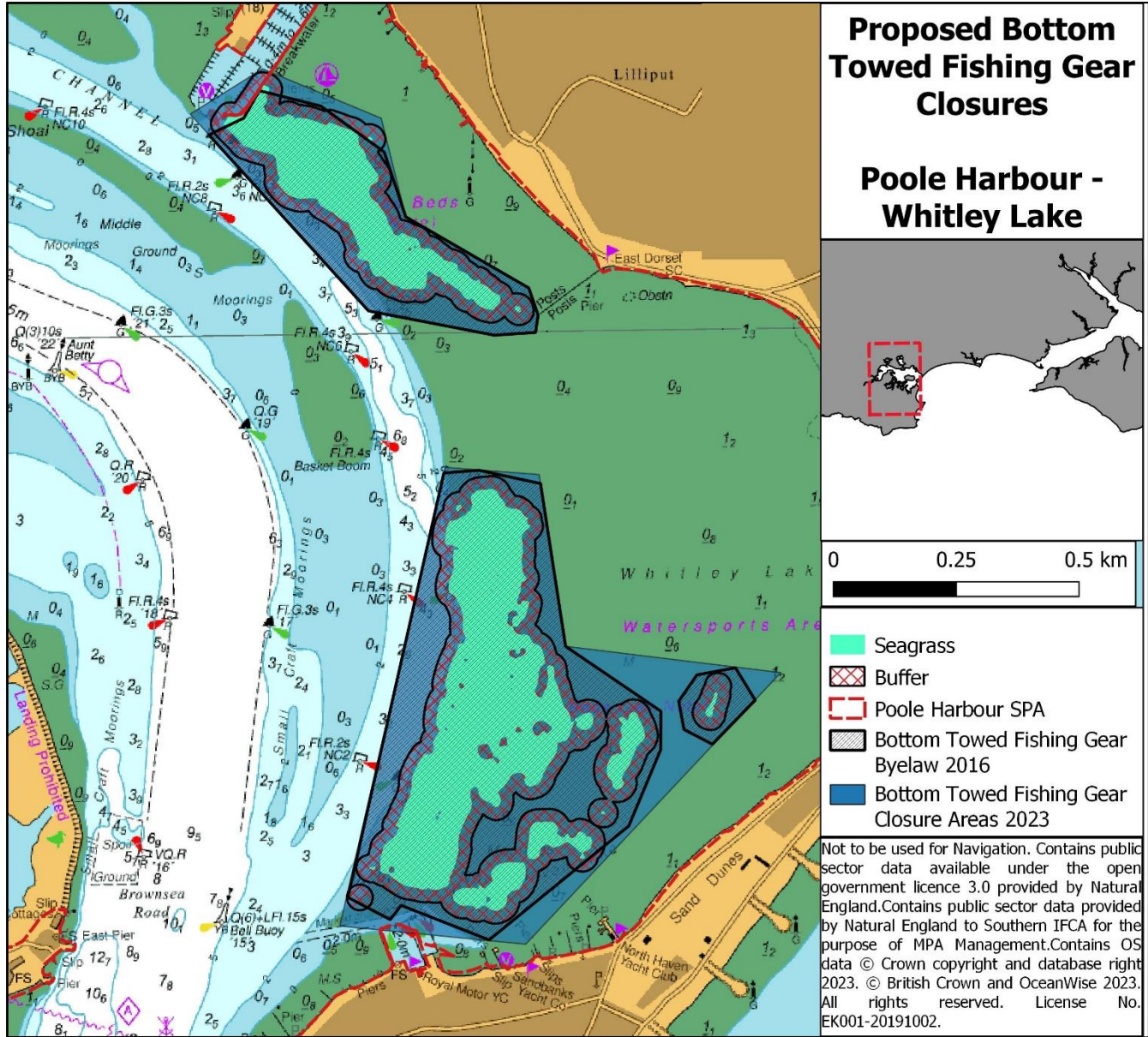
Proposed Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Closures
South Wight

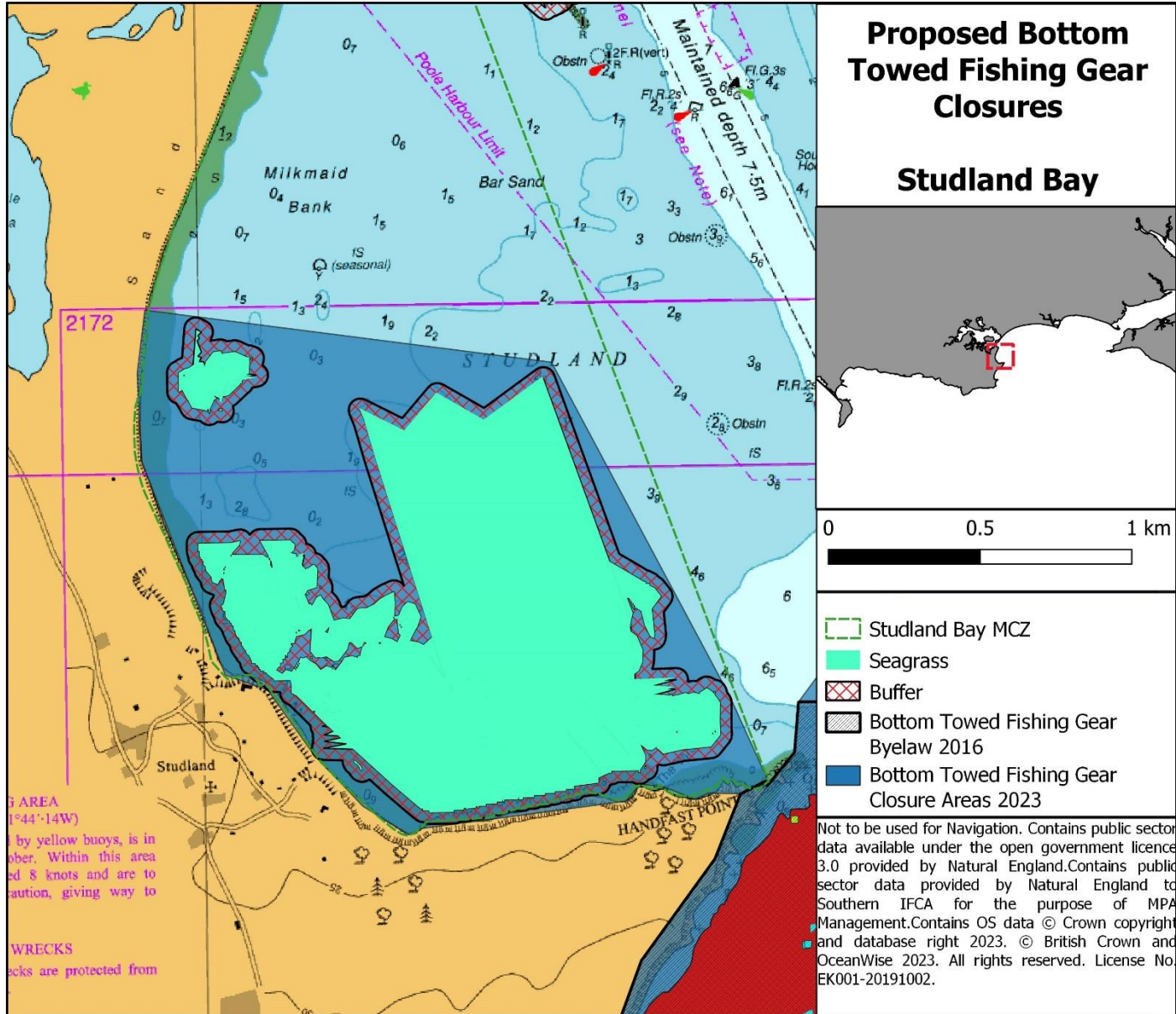


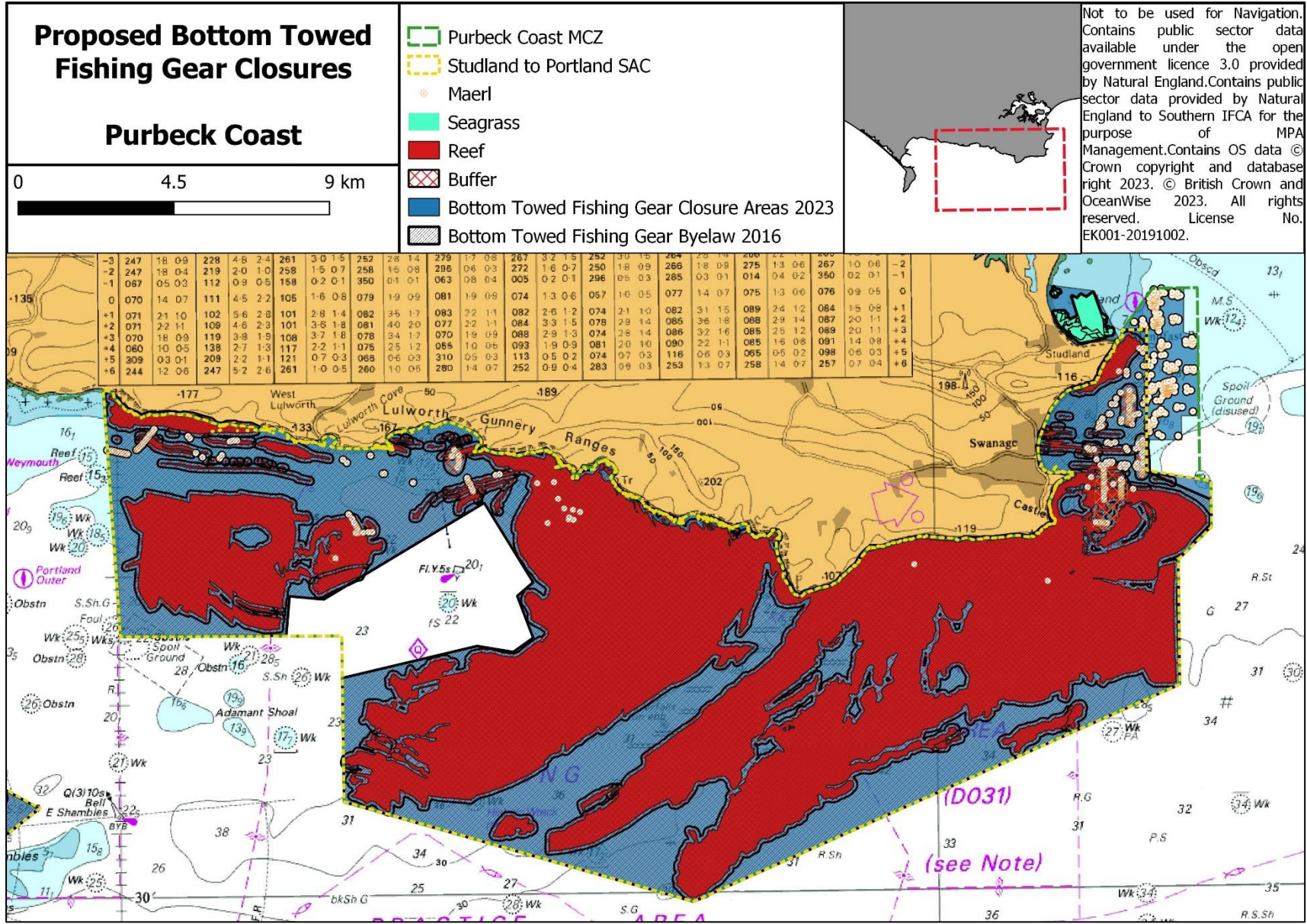
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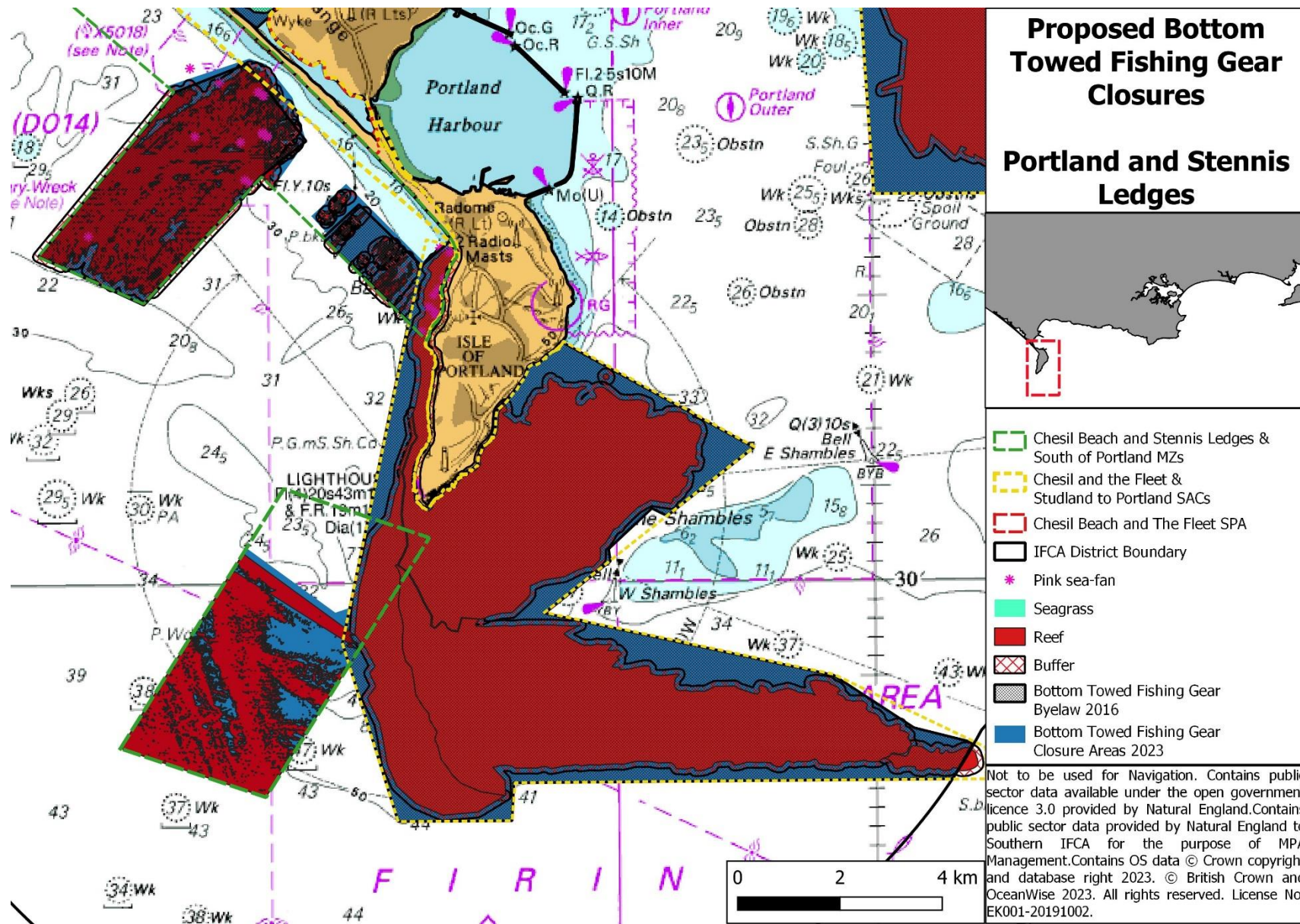


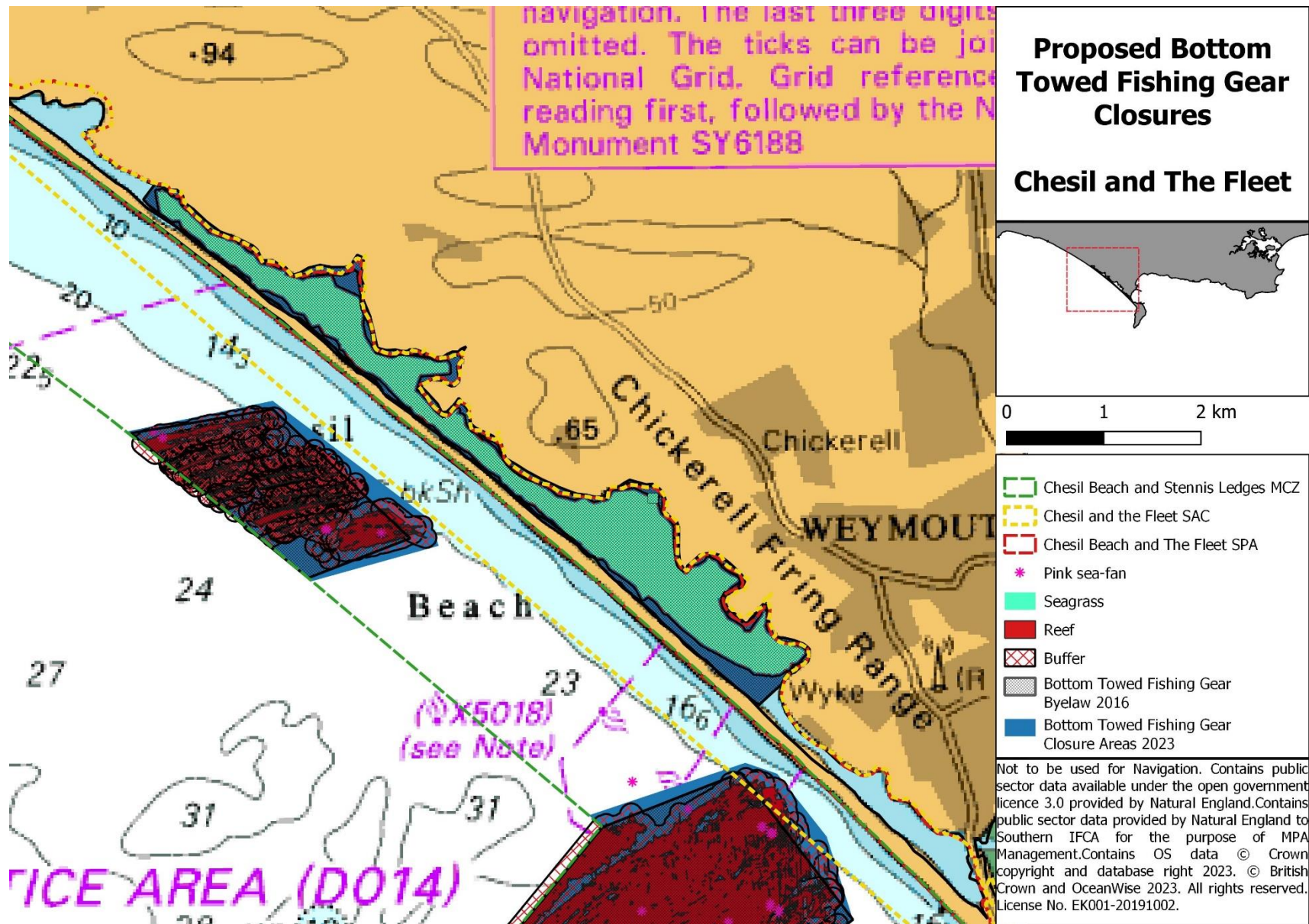


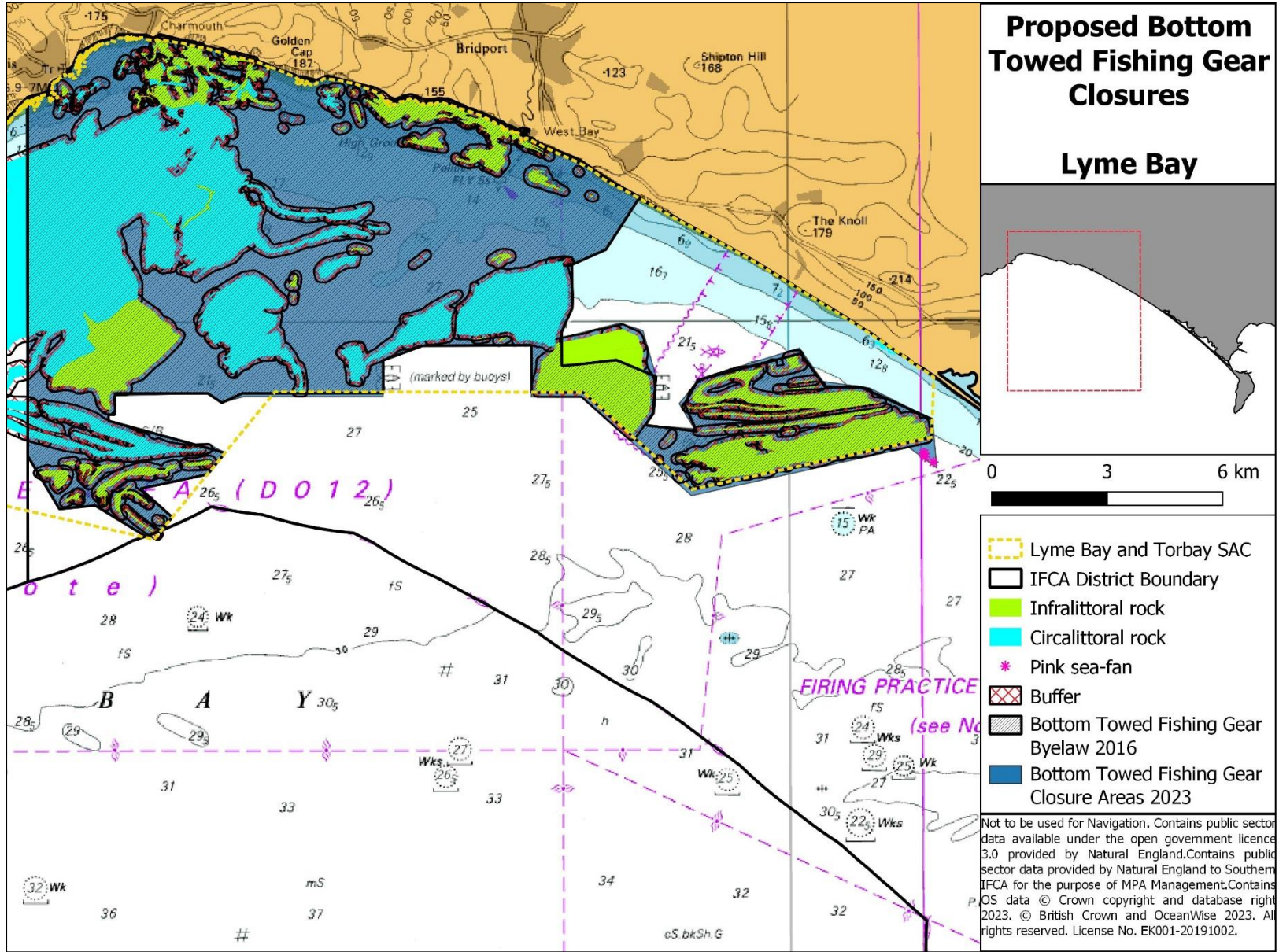












Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Marked G

Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw: Scallop Fishery

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose of the Report

For Members to consider in response to best available evidence, which suggests a decline in Solent scallop stock, whether management intervention is required in the Solent Scallop fishery.

B. Recommendation

(1) That permit condition (3) and (7) from the 2022-2023 Category A Permits (as issued under the SDPB) are revoked and replaced with a provision that ensures that scallops are not fished for or removed from the Solent fishery from 1st October to 31st October 2023, and subsequently:

- a) That a period of consultation with 2022-2023 32 permits holders be held between the 22nd September until 26th September in accordance with requirements under the SDPB.
- b) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Authority and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee are delegated by proxy to consider the outcomes of the above-mentioned consultation and determine management measures on behalf of the Authority, with subsequent outcomes to be disseminated to fishers by 28th September 2023.

(2) That fishing for scallops is not permitted under the 2023-2024 SDPB Category A Permit, and subsequently:

- a) That a period of consultation with 34 applicants who have applied to fish under the 2023-2023 SDPB Category A Permit be held between the 22nd September until 26th September.
- b) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Authority and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Technical Advisory Committee are delegated by proxy to consider the outcomes of the above-mentioned consultation and determine management measures on behalf of the Authority, with subsequent outcomes to be disseminated to fishers by 28th September 2023.

1. Background

- 1.1 Figure 1 in this report shows a timeline of the development of management for the Solent scallop fishery under the SDPB.
- 1.2 The Solent scallop fishery emerged in 2013 as a small-scale fishery for King Scallop (*Pecten maximus*) to the east of the Isle of Wight and in/around Sandown Bay. The fishery was noted to peak in the summer of 2013 and in the years following, a small scallop fishery also emerged to the north-east of the Isle of Wight, principally around the Solent Forts. The fishery expanded from here covering the eastern Solent and harvesting moved from being during the winter months to year round.
- 1.3 As the fishery expanded, the number of participating vessels increased and industry

raised concerns with the Authority regarding the levels of fishing effort and the implications for the sustainability of the fishery.

- 1.4 This resulted in the development of management for this fishery through a review initiated by the TAC in November 2020 which incorporated an evidence-gathering exercise. The review resulted in the introduction of the **Solent Scallop Fishery Code of Conduct** (CoC), agreed by the Authority in March 2021. Subsequently, due to observed non-compliance with the CoC, the TAC resolved to develop **permit conditions** specific to the scallop fishery which were agreed at the TAC meeting in February 2022 and introduced through a variation to the SDPB Category A Permit for 2021-2022. In developing these permit conditions, consultation was had with both permit holders and a wider stakeholder group and additional representations were made at the February 2022 TAC meeting which resulted in the proposed closed season for scallop fishing being reduced from 7 months to 6 months (April to September).

2 Current Management

- 2.1 The permit conditions related specifically to the Solent scallop fishery in the SDPB Category A Permit are:

- (3) Within the Solent, between the 1st April and 30th September each year, both days inclusive, a person must not, a) Use a dredge by means of a relevant fishing vessel to fish for or remove from the fishery any scallops; or b) Retain any scallops on board a relevant fishing vessel whilst using a dredge
- (7) Within the Solent a person must not, at any one time, use more than two scallop dredges from a relevant fishing vessel when harvesting scallops.

- 2.2 **The permit conditions relating to the scallop fishery remain in place with the current permit period running from 1st November 2022 to 31st October 2023.**

- 2.3 The Southern IFCA Scallop Fishing Byelaw 2019¹ also applies to the fishing for scallops in the Solent, with a daily temporal regulation stating that fishing for or taking any scallop from any fishery must be between 0600 and 1800 local time.

- 2.4 Additional regulations are also given in The Scallop Fishing (England) Order 2012², including technical provisions for scallop dredge construction and operation and provisions relating to MCRS, although these measures are not specific to the Solent. The Southern IFCA has the ability to be more restrictive in its District management than national management.

3 Current Health of Solent Scallop Stocks (Best Available Evidence)

In order to determine whether management intervention is required for the Solent scallop fishery ahead of the final month of fishing under the current permit (October 2023) and the start of a new permit season for 2023-2024 (from 1st November 2023), the best available evidence (as defined in the SDPB) relating to the fishery has been collated.

This includes:

- Initial analysis of Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) data from the autumn survey in relation to the spring survey and data from 2022 surveys
- Industry concerns raised on the 11th September 2023
- Analysis of catch data as provided by permit holders for the 2021-2022 and 2022-

¹ [Scallop-Fishing-Byelaw-2019-Final-APPROVED.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#)

² [The Scallop Fishing \(England\) Order 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

2023 (to date) seasons

- Landings data from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for the period prior to the SDPB (2015-2020)

3.1 **Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Survey Data**

3.2 The Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Survey is carried out twice per year in Spring (to represent post-fishing season) and in Autumn (to represent pre-fishing season). The survey has been run in this format since 2022 therefore data is currently available for 2022 and 2023.

3.3 The data for Autumn 2023 was collected between 4th – 6th September 2023 using two local fishing vessels. Initial analysis of CPUE data has been carried out for this survey and comparisons have been made between the Autumn 2023 survey and surveys completed in 2022 and 2023.

3.4 **The general trend in the data is that the CPUE is declining at a number of sites surveyed.**

3.5 Based on median values, when comparing the Autumn pre-season CPUE data (2023) to the Spring post-season (2023), we are seeing a decline in 'Total CPUE' at 9 of 18 sites (4/18 2022), a decline in 'Under MCRS CPUE' at 14 of 18 sites (9/18 2022) and a decline in 'Over MCRS CPUE' at 6 of 18 sites (4/18 2022).

3.6 Based on median values, when comparing the Autumn CPUE data (2023) to the Autumn (2022), we are seeing a decline in 'Total CPUE' at 14 of 19 sites, a decline in 'Under MCRS CPUE' at 16 of 19 sites and a decline in 'Over MCRS CPUE' at 10 of 19 sites.

3.7 Further detail on the analysis will be provided at the Authority meeting on 21st September 2023.

3.8 **Concerns from Permit Holders**

A letter was received from permit holders on 11th September 2023 expressing the following concerns and suggestions for management:

- **That the scallop stocks in the Solent have declined**
- That this was primarily evident in deep water areas which is likely to increase fishing effort in shallow water areas which will affect the overall stock
- That with an increase in vessels participating in the fishery, fishing effort needs to be reduced
- That fishing hours should be reduced to 0800 to 1400 each day
- That fishing should only be allowed from Monday to Friday

3.9 **SDPB Catch Data and MMO Landings Data**

3.10 Under the SDPB Category A Permit, permit holders are required to submit catch data to the Authority throughout the permit period. The shellfish harvested is recorded by weight (kg) and the BMA from which the catch is harvested is also recorded.

3.11 The general trend is demonstrated in Figure 2, which shows the total weight of scallop harvested for each month of the fishing season for the 2021-2022 permit period and the 2022-2023 permit period (not including Oct 23), the figure also shows the number of boats who recorded scallop catches for each month.

- For the 2021-2022 permit period, the catch recorded for **October 2022 (136 tonne) equated to 45.7% of the total catch.**
- The maximum number of boats fishing in a single month for this period was 17 in January 2022.

- For the 2022-2023 permit period, without the data for October 2023, the highest catch was recorded in November 2022 (60.8 tonne) which equated to 39.6% of the catch taken between November 2022 and March 2023.
- The maximum number of boats fishing in a single month for this period was 18 in November 2022.
- For three out of the five months that were fished in both permit periods, the catch weight is greater in the 2022-2023 period than the 2021-2022 period.

3.12 Table 1 shows landings data for last complete permit year (2021-2022: 297 tonnes) Currently 153 tonnes has been fished in the 2022-2023 permit year. October 2023 figures are anticipated to align with previous years effort (136 tonnes in October 2022). Also shown is MMO landings data for 2015-2020.

4 Other Considerations

(a) Socio-economic Considerations of Changes in Management

Any changes in the management of the Solent scallop fishery will have short term socio-economic impacts on the fishing industry. While these cannot be quantified in this report, it is likely that these may arise from potential loss of access to the scallop fishery. In addition, impacts may arise for fishers who have not yet engaged in the fishery but have submitted applications for the forthcoming 2023-2024 season through vessel purchase and/or fishing gear based on the intention of fishing for scallops. Existing permit holders may also have purchased new vessels and/or fishing gear prior to October 2023 with associated potential socio-economic impacts from loss of access. There may also be impacts to businesses through any changes to the quantity of scallops landed from the Solent.

(b) Undefined Spring Mortality

In March 2023 Southern IFCA received reports from permit holders that mortality was being observed in the scallop population in the Solent. In response, Southern IFCA engaged with the Cefas Fish Health Inspectorate team and arranged for analysis of scallop samples which were obtained during the spring Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Survey. The results of this analysis did not identify a cause for the observed mortality.

It was agreed that the situation would be monitored at the autumn Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Survey. On carrying out this survey work between 4th – 6th September 2023 using two local fishing vessels, mortality was not observed at the levels it was in the spring. At this time, on the basis of survey observations, it has been determined that no further action is required with regard to the mortality issue raised in the spring.

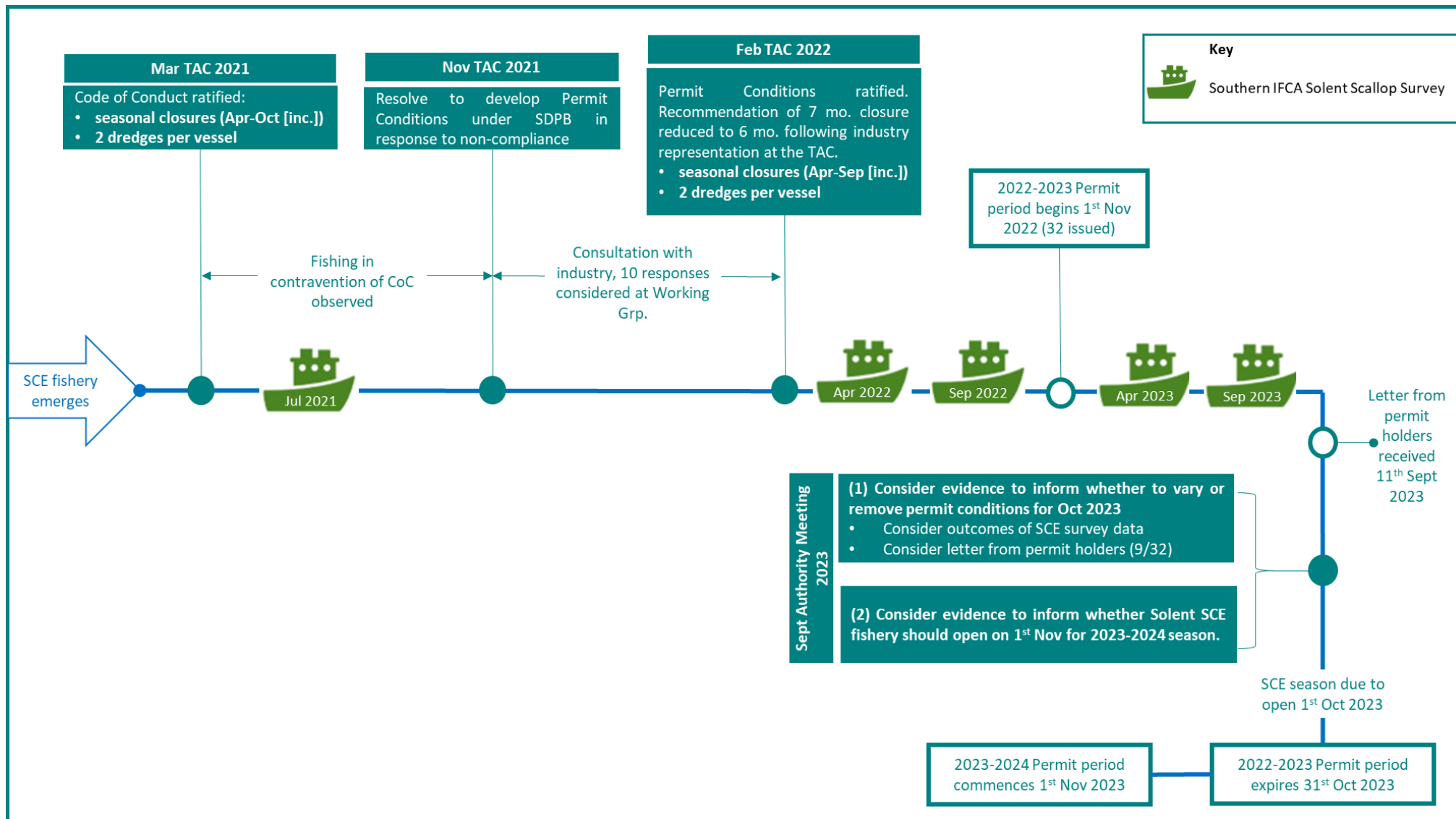


Figure 1: Timeline for the development of the Solent scallop fishery

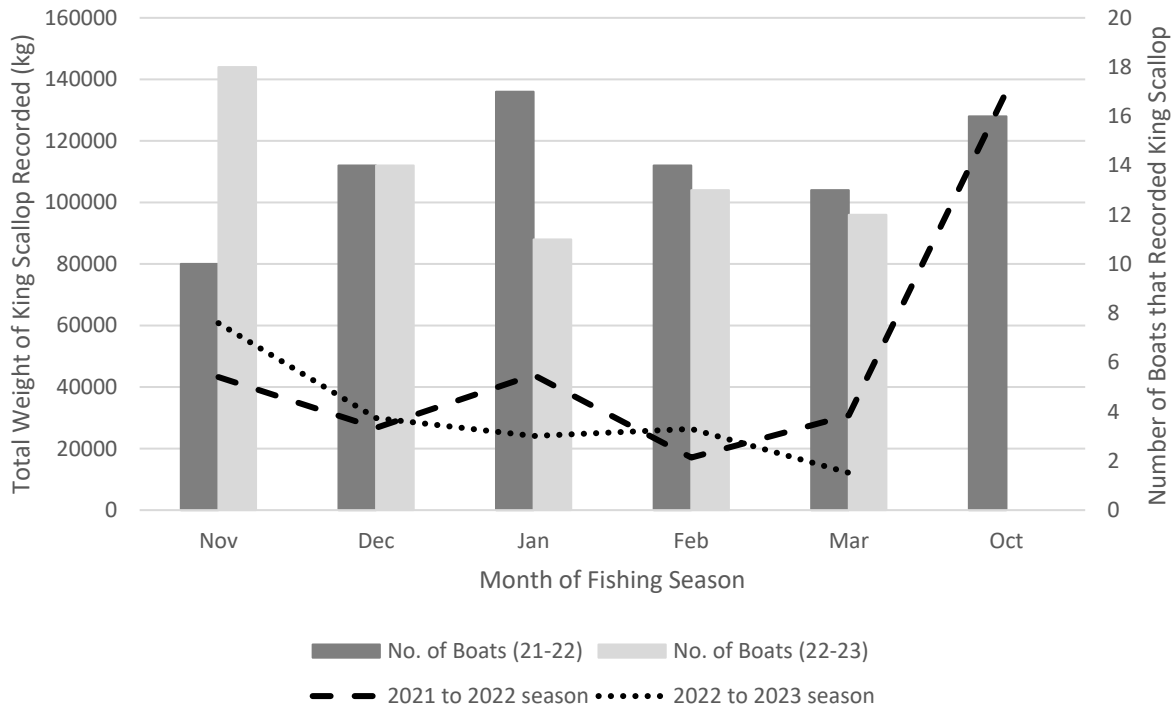


Figure 2: Total weight of King scallop (kg) recorded on SDPB catch returns for each month available for fishing during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 permit periods alongside the number of vessels recorded as landing scallops each month. Note that no data is available from October 2023.

Table 1: Landings data (tonnes and corresponding value in £) from the MMO for scallops in ICES rectangle 30E8 caught by UK vessels using dredges between 2015-2019 and catch data (kg) recorded for the SDPB fishery by permit holders for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 permit periods with and estimated value (£) based on average value from MMO data for 2018-2020.

The Landed Weight (tonnes) and Value (£) of scallops recorded in MMO data in ICES rectangle 30E8 by UK vessels using dredges between 2015 and 2020.			The Weight (tonnes) & estimated value (£) of scallops recorded on SDPB catch returns.		
Year	Weight (tonne)	Value (£)	Permit Period	Weight (tonne)	Estimated Value (£)
2015	30.76	54,421	2021-2022	297.8	457,722
2016	42.61	67,368	2022-2023 (*)	153.3	235,626
2017	37.55	69,144			
2018	11.89	20,792			
2019	26.00	38,698			
2020	91.82	126,125			

(*) Note data for 2022-2023 excludes October 2023 as data is not available

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Marked H

SOUTHERN IFCA ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Report by the Chief Executive Officer

A. Purpose of the Report

To receive the Annual Report for the year April 2022 to March 2023, in accordance with paragraph (178) of The Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009.

B. Recommendation

- a) That Members consider and provide comment on the draft Annual Report.
- b) That Members approve the Annual Report for submission to the Secretary of State.

1. Background

1.1 Paragraph (178) of The Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 under the title 'Annual Report' requires that:

- as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, every IFCA Authority must prepare a report on its activities in that year.
- a report under this section must be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary of State may require.
- a report under this section must be published in such manner as the Secretary of State may require.
- the IFCA must send a copy of the report to the Secretary of State.



Marked H

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2022-March 2023

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Table of Contents

Chairman’s Welcome & Chief Executive Officer’s Welcome	3
1.0 Background to Annual Reporting	5
1.1 The IFCA Model	5
1.1.1 National IFCA Vision	5
1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives and Success Criterion.....	5
1.1.3 Southern IFCA Annual Plan	5
1.2 The Annual Report 2022-2023	6
1.2.1 Legends, Symbols and Reporting Metrics.....	6
2.0 Achieving Success Criteria	7
2.1 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 1	7
2.2 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 2	8
2.3 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 3.....	9
2.4 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 4.....	11
2.5 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 5.....	12
3.0 Achieving Southern IFCA Delivery Priorities.....	13
4.0 Spotlights	21
Spotlight 1: Working with Other Regulators.....	21
Spotlight 2: Enforcement Statistics.....	22
Spotlight 3: National Accreditation Programme: Southern IFCA Officers	23
Spotlight 4: Ensuring Compliance in the Poole Harbour Aquaculture Fisheries	23
Spotlight 5: Fisheries Management Plans	23
Spotlight 6: Consolidated Revenue Account.....	25
Spotlight 7: Consolidated Balance Sheet	26
Spotlight 8: Enforcement Outcomes.....	27
Spotlight 9: Marine Asset Procurement.....	27
Spotlight 10: Engagement.....	28
Spotlight 11: Chartering Assets.....	29
Spotlight 12: IFCA Led Surveys.....	30
Spotlight 13: Net Fishing Byelaw	31
Spotlight 14: Pot Fishing Byelaw	31
Spotlight 15: Working with Academic Institutes.....	32
Spotlight 16: Marine Licensing.....	32
5.0 Member Attendance	33
6.0 Feedback & Glossary of Abbreviations.....	34

Chairman's Welcome

This year's annual report demonstrates the continuing progress of Southern IFCA as a leading authority. The superb management by the Chief Officer and her two deputies of both the policy and enforcement teams ensures a fully supportive and enthusiastic staff. We lead the way with accreditation of our IFCO's.

Our Technical Advisory Committee is recognised for their willingness to listen to industry and make changes following constructive feedback, as is current with the Pot Fishing Byelaw development. The collection of evidence is one of our key roles, working closely with all sectors of our fishing industry.

Defra have funded the recruitment of project officers for various work streams in particular national input into the Fisheries Management Plans.

Partnership working continues with many projects; excitingly the procurement and commissioning of our new RHIB is one of the most awaited – we look forward to the forthcoming sea trials.

We welcome new Members of the Authority both appointed and elected, and are very grateful that three highly experienced appointees have renewed their tenures.

I would like to thank all the staff, including our new finance and administrative team, as well as all our Authority Members for their support over the past year.

**Cllr Mr Mark Roberts,
September 2023**



Chief Executive Officer's Welcome

The 2022-2023 Annual Strategy set a new approach for how Southern IFCA quantify the work that is achieved. In addition to delivery against National IFCA Objectives & Success Criteria, we recognised the importance of demonstrating how the work we deliver considers the Fisheries Objectives, as listed under the Fisheries Act 2020. This encapsulates Southern IFCA's intent in demonstrating how we support the UK Government's commitment to sustainable fishing, whilst ensuring marine environments thrive.

The Southern IFCA Team and Membership continue to strive to achieve a balance between socio-economic aspects of fishing with those of conservation, in accordance with our core duties under the Marine & Coastal Access Act, and in combination with our remit under relevant Conservation Regulations.

Ensuring this approach is at the heart of all we do has allowed us as a collective to seek innovative solutions to inshore fisheries management. The Net Fishing Byelaw provides a good example of how management can facilitate fishing activity whilst remaining compatible with achievement of conservation objectives.

In delivering our legislative remit, we recognise that decisions made may not be supported by all our stakeholders, however we must unite in recognising the shared benefits across all of the inshore community, where good



management can enhance fisheries at the same time as protecting the environment upon which these fisheries depend.

Engagement remains the keystone of all we do, and we will continue to encourage and facilitate input from our stakeholders when developing our fisheries reviews. This year, following feedback from industry, the policies underpinning the Pot Fishing Byelaw were amended to account for unforeseen socio-economic impacts that the proposed byelaw would have had on fishers at the point of implementation.

I am proud of both the strength and resilience of the Southern IFCA team in response to in-year internal staffing fluctuations and changes in national policy (to include the introduction Fisheries Management Plans, the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan and MPA management targets). With this ever-evolving backdrop, we have continued to promote compliance across our regulated fisheries, advanced the procurement of a new Fisheries Protection Vessel and invested in improving and developing our ways of working.

**Pia Bateman,
September 2023**

1.0 Background to Annual Reporting

Under Section 178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009), Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's) are required to produce an Annual Report, which seeks to provide an account of the work delivered during the previous reporting year. This report must be sent to the Secretary of State annually following the end of the financial year.

1.1 The IFCA Model

A 'golden thread' demonstrates the connection between IFCA aims and objectives on a national stage (Vision, High Level Objective and Success Criterion), with operational delivery at the local level (Southern IFCA Annual Plan's and Team Strategies).

1.1.1 National IFCA Vision

"Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry"

1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives and Success Criterion

High-Level Objectives and Success Criterion (Table 1) were developed nationally to support attainment of the IFCA Vision and to reflect the developing programme of work delivered by IFCA's nationally and to demonstrate the IFCA's contribution to the delivery of the UK Marine Policy Statement.

Table 1: High Level Objectives & Success Criterion

High Level Objective		Success Criterion	
HLO1	Achieving a sustainable marine economy	SC1	IFCA's are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders
HLO2	Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society	SC2	IFCA's implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime
HLO3	Living within environmental limits	SC3	IFCA's use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage sustainable exploration of SFR
HLO4	Promoting good governance	SC4	IFCA's have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional
HLO5	Using sound science responsibly	SC5	IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives

1.1.3 Southern IFCA Annual Plan

The Southern IFCA Annual Plan details how the Authority intends to support the attainment of High Level Objectives and Success Criterion (and ultimately the IFCA vision) when mapping out the work priorities for the year ahead. The Annual Plan 2022-2023¹ was published on the 1st April 2022.

¹ [Annual-Plan-2021-2022-FINAL.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#)


1.2 The Annual Report 2022-2023

Section 2.0 of this report provides an overview of how Southern IFCA have performed in their delivery of its Annual Plan priorities for the period April 2022 to March 2023, via achievement of:

1. National IFCA Success Criteria **Performance Indicators**, as set out in the Annual Plan 2022-2023.
2. Southern IFCA's **Delivery Priorities**, as set out in the Annual Plan 2022-2023, which have a direct link to each Success Criteria. A number of **Spotlight** Sections provide further details of the Delivery Priorities.
3. Where Southern IFCA's work is aligned to the **Fisheries Objectives**, objectives which are identified under the Fisheries Act 2020.
4. Where Southern IFCA's work is aligned to the **UK Net Zero Strategy**.

1.2.1 Legends, Symbols and Reporting Metrics

The following symbols are used throughout this document:







IFCA Success Criteria	No.	Fisheries Objectives
IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.	1	Sustainability 1
IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.	2	Precautionary 2
IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts.	3	Ecosystem 3
IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.	4	Scientific Evidence 4
IFCAs make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives	5	Bycatch 5
		Equal Access 6
		National Benefit 7
		Climate Change 8
UK Net Zero Strategy		
Status Symbols:  Achieved  Ongoing  Spotlight		

2.0 Achieving Success Criteria










2.1 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 1

IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders

Definition: IFCAs will be visible, respected and trusted regulators within coastal communities and will maintain and deliver a strategy to communicate their vision and duties effectively. IFCAs will engage with policy makers, industry, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), recreational and commercial users; and other regulators. They will work jointly and collaboratively with partner organisations across boundaries; will participate and contribute to the development and implementation of regional and national marine policy, including the marine planning regime; will take long-term strategic decisions and manage risks effectively. IFCAs may maintain a national body to co-ordinate the activities of authorities that are party to arrangements.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators		End of Year Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy. The IFCA will maintain its website, ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the District, including management requirements and byelaws. Non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published. The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level. The IFCA and its principal partners will have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and CEFAs will be maintained. Opportunities for greater efficiencies, effective joint working and collaboration will be explored and implemented when feasible. 	SC1A	The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts (in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations 2018 [GDPR]) that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.		
	SC1B	The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	 Southern IFCA have committed to develop and implement a new Communication & Engagement Strategy under the 2023-2024 Annual Plan. This delay is due to in-year reprioritisation following a number of staff changes	
	SC1C	The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.		Southern IFCA continue to undertake monthly reviews and updates of its website to ensure the 'News Items' remain current and links to Stakeholder Consultations remain relevant.
	SC1D	The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.		
	SC1E	The IFCA will have reviewed all of its MoU by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale.		All the local MoUs were reviewed (to include MMO, Natural England & Environment Agency). No updates were deemed necessary during the 2022-2023 period.
	SC1F	By 31 March each year, the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan.		





2.2 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 2



IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime				
Definition: The IFCA enforcement regime is risk-based, makes appropriate use of intelligence, meets legislative standards and complies with the Regulators Code. It should make effective use of the resources available to regulators; complement and align, if possible, with the regimes in adjacent IFC Districts and management by other organisations including the MMO and Environment Agency. Consistency and fairness are important. Regulatory compliance is promoted. Enforcement action is carried out by trained, professional officers working to clear standards of conduct.				
Outcomes	Indicators		End of Year Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will publish its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences. The IFCA will have developed consistency in regulations (byelaws) with other organisations The IFCA will manage operational activity (e.g., through a Tasking & Co-ordination Group) and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations. Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity 	SC2A	The IFCA will ensure its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.		See Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)
	SC2B	The IFCA will demonstrate in its Annual Report how it has worked with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.		
	SC2C	The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and publish them on its website.		
	SC2D	The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April.		See Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)
	SC2E	The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all Warranted Officers.		In line with the Southern IFCA Performance & Appraisal Policy
	SC2F	Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		

2.3 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 3

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts

Definition: The IFCA were created as statutory inshore regulators by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. They are relevant authorities for implementing international environmental commitments including the Birds, Habitats, Water and Marine Strategy Framework Directives and make an important contribution to securing a network of well managed marine protected areas, including European Marine Sites and Marine Conservation Zones. Fisheries Management Plans identify local management measures which should be based on evidence; be timely; subject to appropriate consultation and in step with national initiatives and priorities. An IFCA should balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting sea fisheries resources with the need to protect the environment. It should make a contribution to sustainable development.








Outcomes	Performance Indicators		End of Year Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the District; undertake risk assessments and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions. The IFCA will support implementation of a well-managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria-based management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to 	SC3A	The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority		The strategic direction provided in the Annual Plan ensures that the TAC will consider management considerations on a quarterly basis, prior to making recommendations to the Authority on actions to take.
	SC3B	The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website		Outcomes of Stock Assessments and Surveys can be found here: Fisheries & Research : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)
	SC3C	Management information (e.g., sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention		Ongoing reviews for voluntary Codes of Conduct and Byelaws are in place across the District. This includes data collection via survey and stock assessment, as well as relevant Monitoring and Control Plans for new management interventions.
	SC3D	The IFCA will have developed a range of criteria-based management options that are explained to stakeholders through the IFCA website, and reviewed by 31 March each year		Southern IFCA's Developing Fisheries Management Interventions-Process Document Developing-Fisheries-Management-Interventions.pdf (toolkitfiles.co.uk) is published to support stakeholders' understanding of management intervention process.
	SC3E	New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales		Delivery timetables are identified in the Fisheries Management and Policy Team Strategy 2022-2023. Authority Reports : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)

<p>managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development. 	<p>SC3F</p>	<p>The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.</p>		<p>Southern IFCA continue to collate and examine peer-reviewed literature in order to inform best practice in the application of management interventions across the District and use this knowledge to inform and evolve Southern IFCAs existing FMPs, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrasse Monitoring and Control Plan Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredging Management Plan Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Management Intentions Document <p><u>National Fisheries Management Plans</u>: The Chief Officer continues to collaborate at a National level to support the development of FMPs under the Fisheries Act 2020.</p> <p>A Defra funded FMP Project Officer further supports this area of work on behalf of Southern.</p> 
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2.4 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 4

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional




Definition: IFCAs are statutory authorities and sit within the local government family. Authority members may be either general members or local councillors. They comply with Codes of Conduct and the Standing Orders that apply to meetings of local government committees. General members are appointed on merit, through open competition and for a term. They are subject to an annual performance appraisal. An IFCA is funded by levy, charged to its member councils. Funding originates in local taxation. An IFCA is accountable for its use of public resources and should ensure that a proper auditing regime provides confidence in its commitment and spend of public money. It should make effective use of its resources, including staff and assets. An IFCA has a statutory obligation to prepare and publish Annual Plans and Annual Reports.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators		End of Year Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year. Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and, where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed. The IFCA Committee will be supported by an organised, efficient and effective secretariat. New members will receive an induction pack and briefing from the Authority. There will be a rolling twelve-month schedule of quarterly Authority meetings. Notices of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with Standing Orders. IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972 	SC4A	The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.		Authority Reports : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)
	SC4B	After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.		A summary of audited financial information is integrated into this report.  
	SC4C	IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 March each year.		
	SC4D	An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.		
	SC4E	The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.		In addition, we continue to engage with partnerships in integrated catchment management and in the establishment of management systems in transitional and coastal waters.







2.5 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 5





Success Criterion 5: IFCA's make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives

Definition: IFCA's are statutory regulators for their Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District. Decision-making should be based on evidence. All IFCA's are supported by officers who pool their expertise and share best practice as a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). A programme of research activity and monitoring is planned, developed and updated in consultation with partners. The programme informs management decisions and supports justification for additional research and evidence gathering.







Outcomes	Performance Indicators		End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic research plan that contributes to greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources Standard Operating Procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners A list of research databases held by the IFCA and the frequency of their review Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community 	SC5A	The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year	 <p>The Fisheries Management and Policy Team Strategy 2021-2022 was published on the Southern IFCA Website alongside the Annual Plan. Authority Reports : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)</p>
	SC5B	The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making	 <p>The Fisheries Management and Policy Team Strategy 2021-2022 is integrated into this Annual Report, with each work area publishing reports to the TAC to evidence decision making.</p>
	SC5C	The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress that has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report	 <p>Southern IFCA actively participate and assist in the TAG.</p>

3.0 Achieving Southern IFCA Delivery Priorities










STRATEGIC DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status		Reporting Metric
	Review of Southern IFCA Constitution [CEO]	To review and update for Authority sign off by September 2022		Standing Orders, Financial Regulations & General Member Code of Conduct all reviewed and updated and ratified by the Authority in June 2022.	
	Communication & Engagement Strategy [CEO]	To review and update by March 2023		Southern IFCA have committed to develop and implement a new Communication & Engagement Strategy under the 2023-2024 Annual Plan. This delay is due to in-year reprioritisation following several staff changes.	
	FP Team Strategy [DCO]	To set out the team priorities for April 2022-2023 feeding directly from the Annual Plan delivery priorities. The Team Plans will allocate resources and identify timelines to ensure that the Annual Plan is achieved and provide the foundations for IFCO Personal Work Plans [DCOs]		Authority Reports : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)	
FMP Team Strategy [DCO]					






POLICY REVIEW DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status		Reporting Metric
	Review of HR Policy & Procedures [BSM]	a) Staff Handbook (to amalgamate Conflict of Interest Policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policy) (b) Employee Codes of Conduct (c) Grievance Procedure and Policy (d) Capability Procedure and Policy, (e) Disciplinary Procedure and Policy, (f) Recruitment Policy (g) Staff Performance and Appraisal Policy (h) Stress Management Policy and Complaints Procedure		Southern IFCA have committed to deliver this area of work under the 2023-2024 Annual Plan. This delay is due to in-year reprioritisation following several staff changes.	
Health and Safety Policy (DCO & BSM)	To ensure the Policy remains robust and fit for purpose				

FISHERIES PROTECTION TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status		Reporting Metric	
	Intelligence led risk-based enforcement [DCO C&E]	To work in line with national intelligence reporting frameworks to ensure a strategic approach to intelligence gathering and analysis		Southern continue to work in line with National intelligence reporting frameworks and requirements to ensure a strategic approach to intelligence gathering and analysis through the CIU, MMO and NIMEG, submitting 189 intelligence reports.		       
		To develop intelligence profiles to inform risk-based enforcement		During the 2022-23 period, IFCOs generated intel pictures of non-compliance in the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit fishery, specifically relating to potential undersized offences and spatial closure incursions. The CET also worked with the GLAA to contribute to a National Handgathering Problem Profile. This intelligence profile was used by the GLAA to plan several Joint Working Operations to tackle multi-agency concerns surrounding Handgathering.		
		To maintain a risk register		The Risk Register forms part of the Compliance and Enforcement Framework, providing focus and priorities for Southern IFCA’s compliance and enforcement activities. The Risk Register identifies enforcement priorities in specific areas at different times of the year, allowing operational plans to be adjusted as necessary, in order to make best use of resources and provide the best possible protection for fisheries and the marine environment The Register is a “live document” which is reviewed regularly and informed by information recorded in the Southern IFCA’s intelligence systems.		
		To undertake enforcement action in accordance with the Compliance and Enforcement Framework		Updated Compliance & Enforcement Framework in March 2023 Compliance-and-Enforcement-Framework-2023.pdf (toolkitfiles.co.uk)		
						













FISHERIES PROTECTION TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status	Reporting Metric	
	Delivering Compliance [DCO C&E]	To ensure compliance with IFCA Fisheries Codes of Practice	  2&4&9	2	
		To ensure compliance with IFCA Byelaws			1
		To ensure compliance with National Fisheries Legislation.	2		
		To grant and monitor dispensations for the purposes specified in Southern IFCA byelaws and develop a Policy to support this area of work	3		
	Communication & Engagement [DCO C&E]	To support compliance with the introduction of all new IFCA management interventions via appropriate communication channels.	 7	1	4
		To support compliance with the management of seasonal fisheries via appropriate communication channels.			5
	Investigations [Senior IFCO, DCO FP]	To conduct all investigatory work in line with Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984	  9	2	6
		To manage case files in accordance with recognised guidelines and practice			7
		Investigation outcomes to be shared with NIMEG and media channels			8



FISHERIES PROTECTION TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)		End of Year Status		Reporting Metric	
	Marine Operations [DCO FP]	Maintenance of vessel, drone and vehicles used for the purposes for land based and sea-based compliance and enforcement		✓		2	
		To undertake a Vehicle Asset Review in order to consider Southern IFCA's contribution to Net Zero		✓	Re-timetabled to align with arrival of Cabin RHIB, anticipated Autumn 2023	4	
		To continue with Phase 2 of the Marine Asset Review, in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of current marine assets and make recommendation for future service provision. Net zero context to be considered.		✓	10		
Working in Partnership [DCO FP]	National	National Intelligence Management and Enforcement Group (NIMEG)	✓	11	1	5	
	Key Liaison Groups	Fisherman's Council, Recreational Sea Angling Group, Professional Boatman's Association, Southwest Aquaculture Network Group	✓			6	
	Local Engagement Groups	Attendance across several advisory groups and committees relevant to the work of the FPT	✓			7	8

FISHERIES PROTECTION TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status	Reporting Metric
	Working In Partnership (continued) [DCO FP]	To work with the FMP Team to develop management interventions which consider the compliance and enforcement aspects relevant to implementation and ongoing compliance.	 <p>The CET DCO ensures attendance at Working Groups where management interventions are being developed in order to contribute to the practicalities of compliance and enforcement of that legislation, attending 8 for work areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw • Pot Fishing Byelaw • Shore Gathering • Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw. 	       
		To review and share best practice to develop consistency between partner bodies in the use of standardised inspection and enforcement procedures both onshore and at sea.	 <p>Through the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) Southern IFCA have a set Code of Conduct which outlines the responsibilities that officers have and the protocols that they should follow when carrying out inspections. The Code of Conduct also details the obligations of those being inspected. This Code of Conduct was reviewed in 2022.</p> <p>The Compliance and Enforcement Framework was reviewed and updated in March 2023. The IFCA is committed to the attainment of a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime. This document is part of a process of demonstrating the use of a transparent, risk-based enforcement framework that meets the standard set out in government guidance and is continuously reviewed and improved</p>	
		To work with the MMO and DEFRA to support the introduction of the MMO Catch App and associated compliance data sharing.	 <p>Southern IFCA continue to support the MMO national IVMS roll out and the MMO Catch App work through signposting industry to key information, publishing national communication through our website, social media platforms and coastal work. Southern IFCA has provided feedback on the draft Statutory Instrument as well as working with the MMO to determine data sharing arrangements</p>	
		To work with the MMO to support the roll out of Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems		
		To work with other enforcement agencies in order to address areas of shared risk.	 <p>Southern IFCA continue to work with the Police, MMO, HSE Local Authorities, EA, NE, Border Force, Harbour Authorities, FSA crime unit, EHOs, CEFAS and rural crime teams in order to address areas of shared risk. Bimonthly external TCGs will be held with partners</p>	
		To work with the Environmental Health Officer from the BCP Council to assist in the monitoring of water quality in Poole Harbour.	 	

Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)		End of Year Status		Reporting Metric	
	IFCA led surveys and stock assessments [DCO MP]	To undertake surveys in order to underpin active management interventions and to ensure that we are continually developing our knowledge of the fisheries throughout the District using the best available evidence. Where possible we will deliver in collaboration with partners as well as the fishing industry.		✓		5
Development of Fisheries Management Interventions [DCO MP]	Inshore Netting Review		✓		3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
	Inshore Potting Review		✓			
	Implementation of Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones via:	<p>Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw Review During the 2022-2023 year the Authority moved to Stage 3 of the Byelaw Making Process, the drafting a new byelaw to replace the BTFG Byelaw 2016. A Phased Approach was applied through the Research & Policy Team Plan for 2023-2024, to meet Government targets for MPA Management, which was agreed by the Authority in March 2023. This determined that Phase 1 would develop management for features of National Site Network Sites with Phase 2 to follow Phase 1 which would look at district wide sensitive habitats.</p> <p>Shore Gathering Review A Member Working Group reviewed existing information on shore gathering in the district and considered the scope of a shore gathering review. The TAC agreed Policy objectives for the review and to move the review to Stage 2: draft measures, of the Byelaw Making Process. The required assessments for shore gathering within designated sites are currently being drafted. As per BTFG it was agreed to adopt a Phased Approach to this review at the end of the 2022-2023 year with management of features for National Site Network Sites being developed in Phase 1 and a subsequent Phase 2 for wider sensitive habitats.</p> <p>Black Bream Review Southern IFCA have been awaiting the provision of additional evidence from Natural England on the location and extent of black seabream nesting sites. The review is currently in Stage 1: Evidence Gathering.</p>				
	Minimum Conservation Reference Size Review	Since April 2020 SIFCA have been reviewing existing evidence, undertaking primary research & developing evidence packages which identify the biological characteristics of key fish and shellfish species within the District which are subject to fishing pressures. This area of work was put on hold during 2022-2023 due to staff changes and resource constraints.				
Reviewing Fisheries Management Interventions [DCO MP]	Southern IFCA Management Plans	Wrasse Monitoring & Control Plan	The M&C Plan is subject to annual review & we continue to build an evidence base to inform any potential future management as determined by the Authority.		3	
		Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan, Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredging Management Plan, Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Management Intentions Document, Net Fishing Monitoring & Control Plan (subject to byelaw ratification)	✓			

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & POLICY TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & POLICY TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES (continued)	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)		End of Year Status	Reporting Metric
	Reviewing Fisheries Management Interventions (Continued) [DCO MP]	Byelaw Reviews	Review of Sea Fisheries Legacy Byelaws 	<p>Reviewing legacy byelaws has been primarily encompassed through reviews of management for BTFG, SG and BB. There are several byelaws which have been identified under these management categories, particularly SG, which could be reviewed. Wider reviews of legacy byelaws have had to be postponed in view of priority MPA workstreams to meet Government targets. The MCRS review is ongoing with species profiles originally developed in 2020-2021 have been updated with any new evidence. Data analysis under a primary research project with the University of Plymouth on size of maturity (SOM) for grey mullet species has concluded, Southern IFCA are currently awaiting the results of this. A new whelk population survey methodology has been developed with one aim being to gather data to inform knowledge of variation in whelk size across the district, the survey aims to be delivered in late spring 2023.</p>	        
			IFCA 'Vessel used in Fishing' Byelaw 	There have been no reviews of or updates to the Vessels used in Fishing Byelaw, due to re-prioritisation of MPA work	
	Permit Condition Reviews	SDPB: pump scoop fishery		Following the implementation of the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (SDPB) on the 1 November 2021, it was the intention of the Authority to begin working with the fishing industry to develop an evidence base to support and explore the potential reintroduction of a pump scoop fishery in the Solent. In order to achieve this Southern IFCA will continue to work with DEFRA to seek revocation of Statutory Instrument No. 2696 The Solent European Marine Site (Prohibition of Method of Dredging) Order 2004. This area of work was put on hold in order to prioritise management in the emerging Solent SCE fishery. Delivery of this work is embedded into the 2023-2024 Annual Plan.	

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & POLICY TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES (continued)	Delivery Priority [Owner]	Key Action(s)	End of Year Status		Reporting Metric		
	Working Partners with	National	National IFCA Technical Advisory Group, IFCA led Whelk Working Grp, SAGB Mollusc Committee, SAGB Crustacea Committee, MSC Project UK Crab and Lobster FIP.	✓	 17&11	3	1
		Key Liaison Groups	Recreational Sea Angling Group, MEG				2
		Local Engagement Groups	Attendance across several advisory groups and Committees relevant to the work of the FMP Team				3
		Academia	Southampton University (scallops), Plymouth University (mullet and whelks)	✓	4		
		Shared Management Plans	The Solent European Marine Site Single Scheme Management Plan	✓	5		
			The Poole Aquatic Management Plan		6		
The Solent Oyster Restoration Plan	7						
Marine Licensing	To work with the MMO in provision of local fisheries data in the context of proposed marine licence applications.	✓	 18	8			

4.0 Spotlights

Spotlight 1: Working with Other Regulators



The Fisheries Protection Team (FPT) work in partnership with a number of other organisations, including law enforcement agencies and local authorities. Section 174 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act places a 'Duty of Co-operation' on the IFCA to work with its adjoining IFCA district and any other public authority who exercises regulatory functions relating to the sea.

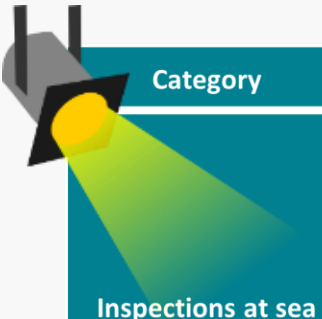
Between April 2022 and March 2023 Southern IFCA Officers were involved in 19 joint patrols both at sea and on land. The FPT held 12 external Tactical Co-ordination Groups (TCG) in which 7 different partner organisations were represented. The External TCG Meetings allow the FPT to share ideas, ongoing trends and plan joint working opportunities with partner organisations.

The FPT assisted **Operation Seabird**, a multi-agency Operation led by Dorset Police seeking to engage with water users on issues concerning wildlife disturbance, water safety, anti-social behaviour and personal watercraft use. IFCOs joined Dorset Police Marine Engagement Team, Neighbourhood Policing Team, Rural Crime Team, Poole Harbour Commissioners, Weymouth Harbour Authority and the MMO for a two-day operation in Poole and Weymouth.

Operation Flashlight is a multi-agency operation led by Southern IFCA to target hand gathering activities, following on from the national, multi-agency Operation Aidant. Operation Flashlight is set up to deal with Fisheries Offences, Environmental and Public Health concerns, Modern Day Slavery and Immigration offences. In 2022, the Southern IFCA FPT worked with Police, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), Border Force and local council Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) across Dorset and Hampshire to tackle multi-agency issues relating to hand gathering activities.

Project Kraken is a joint law enforcement operation tackling maritime border crime. Border Force covers over 11,000 miles of mainland coastline, operating in and around small ports and marinas. Border Force raises vigilance and awareness of suspicious behaviour which may be linked to terrorism or other serious crime. Southern IFCA have promoted the re-launch of Project Kraken as a delivery partner through social media channels, website and internal awareness "Report it, Lets Sort it".

Spotlight 2: Enforcement Statistics



Category	Metric	Details	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Inspections at sea	Vessel patrols	Any patrol vessel or survey (mother /daughter boat combination as one patrol)	83	71	75
	Fishing vessel boarding	Any fishing vessel (including unregistered / unlicensed) inspected at sea, where boarding was in pursuit of any relevant duty	21	70	152
	Fishing gear inspections	Store pots, tiers / strings etc. of fishing gear found deployed in sea, where inspection was in pursuit of any relevant duty. Do not count gear inspected onboard a vessel	0	0	0
Inspections ashore or in port	Shore patrol	Excursion/visit of any length to any part of the coast for an inspection observation of fishing related activity	160	116	107
	Port visits	Individual port/cove/beach visits within the shoreline	362	282	196
	Premises inspections	Markets, merchants refrigerated units, retailers, food producers/outlets etc	4	20	23
	Fish/shellfish landing inspections	Observations of fish/shellfish as landed ashore from a vessel. Does not include inspections of fish in market or in storage unless landing observed	153	157	133
	Other inspections	Vessel gear/fish checks in port/ashore, diver and shore angler catches, vehicle contents, shellfish on lay areas etc.	28	85	60

Spotlight 3: National Accreditation Programme: Southern IFCA Officers



SFJ Awards Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement or National Accreditation Programmes objectives are to provide learners with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of a warranted Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (IFCO).

The qualification is completed using a variety of assessment methods to include written assignments, discussions, Q&A and observations.

The qualification covers:

- The UK and EU legislation governing a wide range of marine activities,
- The powers and jurisdiction of the role(s),
- The procedures to be followed when carrying out inspections of vessels, vehicles or premises for compliance with UK and EU marine environmental legislation,
- The procedures and legislative requirements when conducting fisheries and marine enforcement investigations.

Between April 2022 and March 2023 two IFCOs at Southern IFCA achieved the accreditation and one IFCO qualified as an assessor who is able to support and progress the development of new staff members as they also work towards this qualification. Southern IFCA assessors have also supported other IFCAs in delivery of the accreditation scheme.

Spotlight 4: Ensuring Compliance in the Poole Harbour Aquaculture Fisheries



The Poole Harbour Fishery Order (PHFO) 2015 sets out a defined area in Poole Harbour which is severed from the public fishery, and therefore only lease holders can fish the grounds. This Order gives the Authority the ability to manage aquaculture in Poole Harbour by leasing beds to a number of operators, and ensuring the leaseholders are complying with the Management Plan (MP). The PHFO stipulates that the Authority must manage the fishery area in accordance with the MP. Leaseholders must comply with the arrangements set out in the Leases and Business Plans.

The Southern IFCA is authorised by CEFAS to operate this Aquaculture Production Business (APB) in Poole Harbour. As an APB, the Authority is responsible for ensuring lease holders comply with biosecurity requirements. The CEFAS authorisation requires the Southern IFCA to maintain records of annual shellfish movements and operate in accordance with a Biosecurity Measures Plan (BMP). Southern IFCA are subject to annual inspections from CEFAS, to ensure the APB is operating in accordance with the Authorisation. The Southern IFCA were inspected by CEFAS in August 2022 and all operations were found to be in accordance with authorisation.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, Southern IFCA met with 3 different aquaculture operators on several occasions to discuss Business Plan arrangements. During this period, 4 Authority Reports proposing Business Plan changes were prepared and presented to the Authority.

Spotlight 5: Fisheries Management Plans



Southern IFCA have been involved with the process to develop Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) since autumn 2022. FMPs are evidence-based action plans set in place under the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS) to carry out the objectives of the Fisheries Act 2020. Six Frontrunner FMPs were prioritised for 2022-2023, to act as a baseline framework for the future development of FMPs listed in the JFS. These are: Crab & Lobster, Whelk, King Scallop, Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species (NQS), Bass and Southern North Sea & Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish.

A Project Officer (PO) was employed in February 2022 to coordinate the provision of information, evidence and data to support the development of FMPs, to work with local and national colleagues, to represent Southern IFCA at FMP meetings, and to help coordinate communications and engagement with the inshore fishing community.

In 2022-2023 Southern IFCA provided links between FMP leads and liaison groups including the South Coast Fishermen's Council, the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group, the Recreational Angling Sector Group and the Poole and District Sea Angling Association and the PO has given presentations at these meetings to provide updates on FMP progress.

The Southern IFCA set up a dedicated FMP webpage ([Fisheries Management Plans : Southern IFCA \(southern-ifca.gov.uk\)](https://southern-ifca.gov.uk)) outlining general information, links and details of general engagement events spanning all FMPs. The webpage also hosts dedicated sections for each FMP providing an overview of progress, FMP specific engagement opportunities and contact details for FMP leads. This webpage is continually updated as new information becomes available and new information is reflected across social media platforms.

Southern IFCA have attended numerous meetings and workshops at a local, regional and national level, both online and in person, covering either multiple or specific FMPs. These included attendance at Regional Fisheries Group meetings VIId and VIIe,f,g, the IFCA Technical Advisory Group Conference, a Fisheries Management and Innovation Group bitesize session, two Shellfish FMP online events and monthly NQS FMP meetings. For the Bass FMP, the IFCA has attended meetings with the FMP lead, Policy Lab, an in-person engagement event in Poole, the Collective Intelligence Debate and the Co-Design Workshop. For the NQS FMP, the PO attended in-person events in Poole (recreational event and commercial event), Portsmouth, Weymouth and Lyme Regis and a presentation was arranged to be given to the Members of the Technical Advisory Committee by the FMP Lead.

Southern IFCA has worked closely with the AIFCA in providing evidence and feedback through the FMP development process with tasks including reviewing evidence summaries, providing information on existing regulations through an FMP legislation mapping exercise and commenting on draft documents.

At the end of the 2022-2023 year the Southern IFCA helped signpost the local stakeholders to the Defra Evaluation Survey on the process undertaken for the 6 Frontrunner FMPs. Southern IFCA goes into the coming year, 2023-2024, continuing to engage across all active FMPs and promoting engagement opportunities and facilitating access to information for stakeholders.

Spotlight 6: Consolidated Revenue Account

Accounting Summary	
Funding	The main source of funding for Southern IFCA is through a levy of £813,091 (2021-22: £789,409) on six constituent local authorities in accordance with The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010. Of this, Defra currently reimburses the local authorities £329,425 through 'New Burdens Funding' which is paid through the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Local Services Support Grant.
2022-2023	During the year to 31st March 2023, the Consolidated Revenue Account shows that the IFCA recorded a net surplus of £121,869 (2021-2022 deficit of £23,619) which was taken into the General Reserve. At the year-end net assets were valued at £1,656,458 (2021-2022: £1,548,089).
Notes on notable variances	1) The positive variance) is due to a reduction in staff salaries and pension contributions following in year staff movements, departures, recruitment and unfilled posts. 2) Other Income relates principally to income from Defra, in order to support Defra's work in achieving its objectives under the Fisheries Act 2020, the Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), The Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (administrative cost recovery only), rent from leases under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (administrative cost recovery only), grants received, third party project fees, chartering of marine assets, training provided to other authorities and costs awarded from court cases (cost recovery only).
Accounting Assurance Report	Francis Clark LLP have undertaken an Independent limited assurance report on Southern IFCA Accounts for the year to 31 March 2022.

Consolidated Revenue Account for year ended 31 st March 2023			
		2022-2023	2021-2022
		£	£
	Notes		
Expenditure			
Employees	1	566,081	666,078
Premises - General Office		31,738	26,320
Transport Related Costs		15,203	25,944
Supplies and Services		61,740	69,348
Marine Asset Costs:			
PV Endeavour		9,457	7,691
PV Stella Barbara		2,860	7,781
PV Protector		3,419	3,617
Drone costs		2,629	461
PV Fuel		9,129	7,946
Insurance		4,607	5,747
Depreciation		46,550	43,239
Establishment expenses		60,566	61,805
Total Gross Expenditure		813,979	925,977
Income			
Interest		5,879	137
Other Income	2	113,716	104,027
Profit on sale of fixed assets		3,162	8,785
Levies		813,091	789,409
Net General Fund Surplus/(deficit)		121,896	(23,619)

Spotlight 7: Consolidated Balance Sheet



Notes on notable variances

3) £350,00 of the total represents amounts due in respect of Defra grants for the year to 31 March 2023.

4) c.£400,00 of total represents deferred income relating to Defra grants.

5) Income from an MSC Project completed in March 2022, payment received during 2022-2023 financial year.

Consolidated Balance Sheet as at 31 st March 2023			
		2022-2023	2021-2022
	Notes	£	£
Fixed Assets			
Office & Equipment		496,692	504,952
Marine Assets		94,984	96,262
Vehicles		27,981	37,667
Assets under Construction		149,150	-
		768,807	638,881
Current Assets			
Debtors	3	375,444	8,347
Cash in Hand and in Bank		1,608,167	1,569,090
		1,983,611	1,577,437
Total Assets			
		2,752,418	2,216,318
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	4	1,082,460	668,229
Current Assets Less Liabilities		901,151	909,208
Total Assets Less Liabilities		1,669,958	1,548,089
Represented by:			
Capital Finance Account		768,807	638,881
Marine Assets Renewal Reserve		275,287	405,213
Research Reserve	5	16,000	
General Reserve		609,864	503,995
		1,669,958	1,548,089

Spotlight 8: Enforcement Outcomes



Category	Metric	Details	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Investigation outcomes	Verbal Warnings/advisory letters	Warnings, re-briefs or letters to minor breaches of legislation (no further action taken). Where both were issued to one person/company, count as one action	20	36	18
	Case files generated	For a serious breach of legislation which was thought would or did lead to a formal warning letter or the application of legal sanctions	10	16	14
	Formal written warnings	For a serious breach of legislation where evidence was gathered was sufficient to take legal proceedings, but where a letter was instead deemed the most appropriate action	6	10	18
	Formal cautions	All cautions relevant to any one case	0	0	0
	FAPs offered	All FAPs relevant to any one case	0	4	3
	Individual/companies prosecuted	All persons and companies relevant to any one case	3	1	0

Spotlight 9: Marine Asset Procurement



At the Executive Sub-Committee in June 2022, the Authority agreed to progress Phase Two of the Southern IFCA Marine Asset Review, namely to procure an 11m cabin RHIB (Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boat). Approval was further granted to engage Dorset Council Procurement Services. The boat build tender was subsequently granted to a UK company (RIBCRAFT) in December 2022.

The introduction of the Cabin RHIB as a modern and fit for purpose vessel, with enhanced capabilities will make a substantial contribution to the development of sustainable fisheries off the south coast of England in Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight. The vessel will support the continued delivery of Southern IFCA's statutory Compliance and Enforcement functions, as well as providing a suitable platform for the delivery of any additional functions which may be required under the Fisheries Act, 2020; Environment Act, 2021; and the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009.

The introduction of the new vessel (and wider associated changes in operational delivery to support the vessels introduction, such as a reduction in van fleet) will minimise and reduce emissions as part of Southern IFCA's commitment to the UK Government Net Zero Strategy. The Cabin RHIB will include enhanced fuel management systems for increased fuel efficiency.

The vessel will provide a closed cabin (crew comfort, reduction in exposure, staff welfare, support efficiency in working, longer patrols at sea, and cover greater distances), which collectively will allow for greater fleet understanding and engagement opportunities across the District.

Spotlight 10: Engagement



Engagement is crucial to the delivery of all of Southern IFCA functions and is delivered through:

- attendance at local, regional and national meetings/open days/information events,
- participation in fisher led forums,
- carrying out consultations on management interventions and facilitating the communication of information from other regulatory bodies and government agencies.
- via cross-team collaboration with the FPT team to utilise land and sea patrols as opportunities to engage with stakeholders.

Officers attend an array of the meetings, to include (but not limited to) in 2022-2023:

- national IFCA groups (i.e., the Technical Advisory Group, NIMEG)
- regional and national groups (i.e., Regional Fisheries Group VIId and VIIf,g and the King Scallop and Crab & Lobster FIPs)
- groups within the district (i.e., Dorset Coast Forum, Fleet Study Group, Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve, South West Aquaculture Network)
- Harbour Authority groups (i.e., Langstone Harbour Committee, Hamble Estuary Partnership, Poole Harbour Watch, Portland Harbour Authority)
- MPA management groups (i.e., Poole Harbour Steering Group, Solent Forum)
- restoration/natural capital groups (i.e., REACH Network, Solent Seascapes Project)
- fisher led groups (i.e., South Coast Fishermen's Council, Poole & District Sea Angling Association, Poole & District Fisherman's Association, Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve,)
- Southern IFCA administrated groups (i.e., Recreational Angling Sector Group, Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group).

The Authority also has electronic assets which are utilised for engagement including the Southern IFCA website and social media feeds on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. For 2022-2023 our website was accessed 25,000 times by 16,000 different users with the most viewed pages being the homepage, information on MCRS, bass regulations, our 'all regulations' page and the news page. Our Twitter account currently has 3,529 followers and Southern IFCA put out 81 tweets in the 2022-2023 year, Instagram reached 409 accounts with 279 followers and Facebook reached 6,029 users with 1,664 followers.

Spotlight 11: Chartering Assets



- Over the last year, Southern IFCA have supported the MMO by providing an 'at sea' asset to carry out patrols of Studland Bay in order to raise awareness of the recently introduced **MMO Voluntary No Anchor Zone**. Officers from the MMO engaged with over 120 vessels over the course of 5 IFCA charters. The voluntary no anchor zone has been introduced to provide protection for Studland Bay's long-snouted seahorse and seagrass beds. The seagrass beds provide several vital ecological functions. Most notably, seagrass beds stabilise sediments, provide habitat for species such as commercially important fish and seahorses, and act as a sink for atmospheric carbon. Studland is also home to bass and undulate rays. Long-snouted seahorses are a designated feature of the MCZ. Southern IFCA has provided this service under a charter agreement with the MMO on a cost recovery basis.

- Southern IFCA have for many years assisted BCP Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with **Shellfish classification and water sampling** in Poole Harbour. Southern IFCA are contracted annually by BCP Council to provide a vessel and staff to carry out this work. The sampling is coordinated by BCP Environmental Health Officers and Southern IFCA, who match suitable dates, tides and weather with resource requirements. The Southern IFCA vessel Endeavour, a skipper and 2 crew are required for this task, The sampling is carried out monthly. A total of 12 sampling runs were completed between April 2022 and March 2023. There are currently 10 sample sites in Poole Harbour. Sampling is mainly of mussels, which are previously harvested from an area of leased aquaculture seabed in Poole Harbour. Officers bag the mussels up into roughly equal amounts. The mussel samples are deposited at each of the sample sites after the previous month's classification samples have been removed. The classification samples go to the UKHSA laboratory for analysis. In addition, a biotoxin water and shellfish sample are collected and sent to CEFAS for testing,

The classification samples are tested for *Escherichia coli* (E. coli). Test results of the samples determine the classification for the various species of shellfish that are harvested within the designated shellfish classification zones. Poole Harbour contains the following shellfish classification zones: Brands Bay, Poole Harbour North, Rockley, Southwest Brownsea Island, Wareham Channel, Whiteley Lake, Wych Lake, the West Brownsea Relay Area and the South Deep Relay Area.

'A' classification means that the shellfish within that zone can be harvested direct for human consumption. 'B' Classified shellfish can be supplied for human consumption after either purification in an approved establishment, relaying for at least one month in a classified Class A relaying area, or after an approved heat treatment process.

- IFCOs were joined by officers from the MMO to carry out 2 patrols on board FPV Protector in **Lyme Bay to inspect and engage with netting vessels**. There has been an increase in the number of netting vessels targeting sole in the Lyme Bay area due to the increase in sole quota. Officers boarded a number of vessels and recorded effort data, such as the time fished, the length and number of nets used, the species and quantities hauled. This information will help regulators further their understanding of current effort levels in the area and the potential impacts on the fishery. Outcomes are being shared back through the South West Regional Fisheries Group.

Spotlight 12: IFCA Led Surveys



The Southern IFCA RPT function of Monitoring Inshore Fisheries includes conducting stock assessments and surveys in order to contribute to the IFCA's understanding of the marine environment and fisheries resources therein. The data is used to complement and provide a sound evidence base to aid the Authority in its decision-making process. All surveys involve working with the local fishing industry to help obtain samples, partner organisations are also invited to attend. The following IFCA led surveys were carried out in the 2022-2023 year:

Bivalve Stock Surveys: The Solent Oyster Survey (every other year), Solent Bivalve Survey (twice annually), Solent Scallop Survey (twice annually) and Poole Bivalve survey (annual) were all carried out in the 2022-23 year. These surveys aim to provide data on the population dynamics and range of commercially important bivalve species (native oyster, Manila clam, common cockle, King scallop) within their fishery areas with data on CPUE and length frequency collected at a spatial level appropriate to fishing activity. The aim in all cases is to build timeseries datasets which can be used as an evidence source to inform management of the Solent Dredge Permit Fishery and the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery to ensure that the fisheries continue to be managed sustainably.

[Solent-Oyster-Survey-Report-2022.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#),

[Solent-Bivalve-Report-2022.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#),

[Poole-SA-2022-Report.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#),

[Scallop-Survey-Report-2021-2022-Final.pdf \(toolkitfiles.co.uk\)](#)

Juvenile Fish Surveys: Southern IFCA's Juvenile Fish Survey has records dating back to Spring 2017 at a range of sites across the Southern IFC District. The surveys in 2022-2023 were carried out in The Fleet, Christchurch Harbour, the River Hamble and the River Yar. These estuarine/harbour sites contain examples of habitats which provide nursery areas for juvenile fish and support fish species throughout their lifecycle for feeding, spawning and refuge. As part of the Southern IFCA Inshore Netting Review, Southern IFCA determined to enhance the environmental, socio-economic and sustainability of fisheries within the district by supporting the use of harbours and estuaries by fish populations for these purposes, collectively referring to the areas as Essential Fish Habitats (EFH). Collecting data through the Juvenile Fish Surveys allows Southern IFCA to improve understanding of the use of EFH by commercial and recreational fish species. Building a time-series dataset will allow any changes in fish communities to be observed to help in developing this understanding, contributing to a database that can then be used, in conjunction with other evidence, when reviewing fisheries management and determining suitable management interventions.

Spotlight 13: Net Fishing Byelaw



The Net Fishing Byelaw (NFB) was developed following the Authority's decision to review and, where necessary, develop netting regulations for the district's harbours and estuarine waters to support the use of these areas as essential fish habitats, to provide protection to migratory salmonids as they transit through these areas, to balance the social and economic benefits of net fisheries and to further the conservation objectives of designated sites.

The resulting NFB will enable the Authority to flexibly manage net fisheries in line with policy objectives. Management is informed by best-available evidence and the Southern IFCA has demonstrated a commitment to ongoing monitoring for these fisheries.

Following the decision of the Authority in March 2022 to submit the NFB to the MMO for QA prior to the submission to seek confirmation by the Secretary of State, the NFB was submitted to the MMO in April 2022. There were three rounds of QA between the MMO and the Southern IFCA, during the QA process there were inconsequential updates made but no changes to the intention of the byelaw or associated management.

As of the end of the 2022-2023 year the NFB was in the MMO QA process, however the NFB was passed to Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State at the start of April 2023.

Spotlight 14: Pot Fishing Byelaw



The Pot Fishing Byelaw (PFB) was developed through a review of inshore potting management with a strong call from the fishing industry for Southern IFCA to implement pot fishing regulations. The PFB is a district-wide statutory mechanism encompassing gear specific management which will enable Southern IFCA to meet its duties under the MaCAA 2009. The introduction of Commercial and Recreational Potting Permits will give the Authority the ability to flexibly manage pot fishing activities and accordingly introduce bespoke management as new and improved evidence becomes available. This evidence may include improved knowledge of the impact of the activities covered by the byelaw, or a better understanding of the status of a stock.

The Authority resolved to make the PFB in March 2022 with subsequent Formal Consultation concluding in May 2022. Amendments were made in response to industry feedback to the proposals, to include: a 12-month transition period for commercial pot fishers to fit crab and lobster escape gaps and the introduction of a staged pot limit for two years subject to track records, as well as a commitment to develop a whelk fishery monitoring strategy to support and inform ongoing understandings in this fishery. Additional evidence was incorporated into the Impact Assessment, including updated catch data. On the basis of these updates, the Authority resolved, at their meeting in September 2022, to send the PFB to the MMO for QA prior to the submission to seek confirmation by the Secretary of State.

Spotlight 15: Working with Academic Institutes



Southern IFCA has worked with academic institutions during the year to identify opportunities for integrated research which can provide additional technical expertise in improving understanding of shellfish and fish populations that can in turn provide further evidence to support management development. There are three projects which commenced in the 2022-2023 year, two of these were with the **University of Southampton**, with an MSci student looking at the reproductive patterns in the Eastern Solent population of King Scallop and a BSc student looking at whelk size of maturity (SOM) from samples collected by fishers across the district. Both of these projects are in their final write up stage as of the end of the year.

The third project is with the **University of Plymouth**, where the Southern IFCA is a project partner in the Fishing Industry Science Partnership (FISP) funded project 'Angling for Sustainability'. The project commenced in January 2023, running until 2025, and aims to work with the fishing community to assess the habitats and movement of species including black seabream, sharks, skates and rays. A network of acoustic receivers is to be established in Dorset and Hampshire with 200 black seabream and 100 shark/skate/rays to be tagged. The research will focus on fishing hotspots and the three Dorset MCZs with black seabream as a designated feature to help collect data on migration patterns, site fidelity and potential rod & line fishing impacts. To date Southern IFCA has facilitated communications between the project lead (University of Plymouth) and stakeholders through attendance at meetings of the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group and the Recreational Angling Sector Group. Further engagement and stakeholder workshops as well as deployment of acoustic receivers and tagging of species is planned for the coming year.

Spotlight 16: Marine Licensing



The purpose of marine licencing is to facilitate sustainable use of the UK marine environment so that economically beneficial activities such as construction, deposits (e.g., sediment deposits), removals (e.g., marine aggregates), and dredging can be permitted whilst minimising negative environmental effect and avoiding interference with navigation. Southern IFCA is a consultee on Marine Licence Applications (MLAs). When an application is submitted to the MMO and is sent out for consultation, the Authority is notified and given the opportunity to comment and provide advice relevant to its remit within a 21-day consultation period. In developing responses to MLAs, the Southern IFCA has regard to the South Marine Plan, which sets out a number of policies aimed to address issues and encourage sustainable development. There are 11 policies in the South Marine Plan which are of particular relevance to fishing activity, these are S-CO-1, S-FISH-1 to 4, S-MPA-1 to 4 and S-AQ-1 and 2 (details of these policies can be found in the South Marine Plan, online at [The South Marine plans documents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/south-marine-plan.pdf)).

In the 2022–2023 year, Southern IFCA reviewed 26 MLAs. 20 of these were screened out due to determinations that there was either not an overlap with fishing activity or there was no potential for any impact to fishing activity. For the remaining 6, a response was submitted for each. The nature of the responses provided varied depending on the specifics of the proposed works, however common themes which were raised included reference to contaminants within sediments and general points surrounding potential risks to commercial and recreational species from any potential contaminant release, underwater noise and sediment transport and suspended sediments. In addition, recommendations were made on engaging with the fishing industry and ways of communicating potential impacts to navigation of fishing grounds i.e., suggestions that Local Notice to Mariners (LNTM) be issued. In all responses, information is provided on relevant local commercial and recreational fishing activities, relevant Southern IFCA management and the applicants are encouraged to make direct connections with representatives of relevant sectors in order to gain further site-specific information and discuss any concerns directly. Southern IFCA offers to help facilitate forming these connections between applicants and industry.

5.0 Member Attendance

Elected Members		% Attendance at Meetings		
		Full Authority	Executive Sub-Committee	Audit & Governance Sub-Committee
Cllr. Mr M Roberts (Chair)	Dorset Council	100%	100%	100%
Cllr. Mrs A McEvoy (Vice)	Hampshire County Council	50%	100%	n/a
Cllr. Mrs Curnow-Ford	Hampshire County Council	50%	25%	25%
Cllr. Mr P Fuller	Isle of Wight Council	100%	100%	n/a
Cllr. Mr R Hughes	Dorset Council	100%	100%	n/a
Cllr. Mr P Miles	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council	0	n/a	n/a
Cllr. Mr R Rocco	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council	0	n/a	n/a
Cllr. Mr A Kadir/Cllr. Mr D Furnell	Southampton City Council	25%	n/a	50%
Cllr. Mr M Renyard/Cllr M Winnington	Portsmouth City Council	50%	n/a	75%

General & Additional Members		% Attendance at Meetings		
		Full Authority	Executive Sub-Committee	Technical Advisory Sub-Committee
Dr A Jensen (TAC Chair)		100%	75%	100%
Mr R Stride (TAC Vice)		75%	100%	100%
Dr S Cripps		75%	n/a	100%
Mr C Francis (joined Oct 22)		0%		100%
Mr N Hornby		100%		100%
Mr T Legg		75%		75%
Mr G Wordsworth		75%		100%
Miss L MacCallum		50%		100%
<i>Vacancy</i>				
Dr R Morgan	Natural England	100%		75%
Dr P Rudd	Environment Agency	50%		100%
Miss R Irish	Marine Management Organisation	75%		75%

6.0 Feedback & Glossary of Abbreviations

Southern IFCA are committed to providing an exemplary service. If you are not satisfied with an aspect of our service, we encourage you to let us know and we will do our best to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Full details of the complaint's procedure are published on the IFCA website. <http://www.southern-ifca.gov.uk/feedback>

A list of all abbreviations and acronyms used in this document can be found here: [Authority Reports : Southern IFCA \(southern-ifca.gov.uk\)](#).

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

MARKED I

SOUTHERN IFCA MMO JOINT WORKING OFFSHORE PATROL VESSEL REPORT

Report by Senior IFCO Adam Parry

A. Purpose of the Report

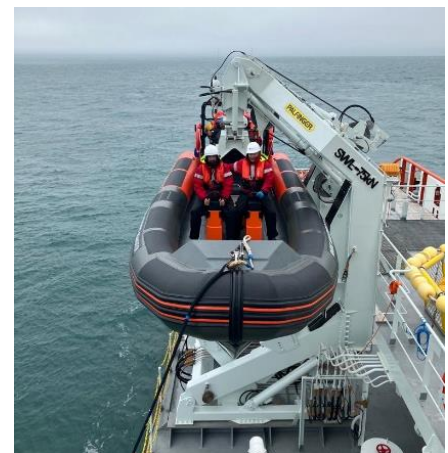
To report to Members on the Southern IFCA and Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Joint Working on the Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), Viking Sentinel.

B. Recommendation

That Members note the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 Through the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG), an initiative has been set up to explore joint working between the IFCAs and the MMO on the MMO Chartered OPVs.
- 1.2 NIMEG aims to bring together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement within inshore fisheries and marine conservation in order to identify, develop and share best practice between fisheries regulators, support joint working and consistency; promote professionalism and competence and align compliance monitoring practices wherever practicable. Due consideration is given to the Fisheries Act and in particular sections of the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS) which relate to working with other fisheries regulators.
- 1.3 Southern IFCA is the second IFCA to deploy an Officer on the MMO OPV.
- 1.4 The MMO OPV Viking Sentinel is a 60m Offshore Patrol Vessel with a 9m Patrol RHIB, similar vessels are currently being used by the EFCA (European Fisheries Control Agency).



Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

- 1.5 A patrol plan setting out Joint Objectives was agreed and would include an inshore sweep south of the Isle of Wight along with Poole and Weymouth bays so that Southern IFCA priorities could also be targeted.

OPV Viking would also be moving out towards the English Channel with the intention of boarding and inspecting over 12 metre vessels working inside the 6-12 nautical mile lines. On the 26th of July Senior IFCO Parry deployed on OPV Viking with the intention of conducting five days on patrol.

1.6 Summary of Objectives

To conduct a high visibility patrol where commercial and recreational fishing vessels can be engaged and where required inspected for compliance relating to catch limits, minimum conservation reference sizes, fishing gear restrictions (SIFCA Byelaws BTFG), etc.

This would be conducted both inside and outside the six nautical mile line to cover the southern IFCA district and Marine Management Organisation priorities. IFCO Parry would act as lead officer inside the IFCA district so that byelaws could be enforced with MEO's leading boardings outside the 6nm limit.

1.7 Outcomes

Initially five days were planned but due to inclement weather this became four, over the four days on OPV Viking several boardings were conducted, with 80% of them being inside the Southern IFCA district. This also included vessel safety drills including, evacuation of OPV, Man overboard, Fire and general muster and boarding operations.



The below outcomes table shows how many boardings were completed along with detected infringements. Two verbal warnings (VW) were issued, one for non-marking of gear inside the 6nm line. Another VW was issued for retention of an undersized Crab. An official written warning was issued for non-marking of gear outside the 12nm line.

Engagement	Boardings	Verbal Warnings	Official Written Warnings
7 Vessels	5	2	1

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Despite the weather impacting the ability to board vessels the Officers still managed to cover some of the Southern IFCA and MMO priorities. It was an extremely useful and informative opportunity which not only highlighted the importance and need for joint working but also how much can be learnt from working with colleagues with differing priorities and remits.

Having a dedicated boarding platform for the MMO is relatively new and the officers and crew of both the MMO and Viking Sentinel were working together to develop and implement the best and safest way of operating when conducting these tasks. This only reinforced the fact that we at Southern IFCA are always striving to develop and implement the safest and most productive way of operating, and many of the procedures that take place on the bigger patrol vessel we already have in place in relation to boarding operations, drills and safety procedures.

- 1.7 At the September NIMEG meeting DCO Dell will provide feedback to the partner agencies and future joint working with the MMO OPVs will be considered.

OFFICER'S REPORT

**COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT
QUARTERLY REPORT**

Report by Deputy Chief Officer Dell

A. Purpose of the Report

To report to Members on the compliance and enforcement activities for the quarter May to July 2023.

B. Recommendation

That Members note the report.

1. Compliance and Enforcement Summary

- 1.1 This report contains information relating to our enforcement activity for this reporting period in statistical format for inspections, patrols and offences detected and a quarterly summary of key enforcement operations and activities.

Sam Dell
Deputy Chief Officer

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
List of Background Papers**

Compliance and Enforcement Report



Compliance & Enforcement Quarterly Report

May – July 2023



Prepared by DCO Sam Dell

Contents

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Background**
 - 2.1 Risk Based Enforcement
 - 2.2 Intelligence Led Approach
 - 2.3 Tactical Coordination Group
 - 2.4 Fisheries Patrol
- 3. Enforcement Activity**
 - 3.1 Intelligence reports
 - 3.2 Enforcement Activity Table
 - 3.3 Offence reports
 - 3.4 Offence Outcomes
- 4. Summary of key Enforcement Operations and Activities**
- 5. Compliance and Enforcement Team**

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of the Southern IFCA risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement, the report also highlights key operational activities and statistical information for the previous quarter May to July 2023. The statistical data included in this report is aligned to national IFCA metrics that are reported to Association IFCAs (AIFCA) and Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) on an annual basis.

2. **Background**

2.1 **Risk Based Enforcement**

Southern IFCA is committed to achieving fair, effective and proportionate enforcement. The Compliance and Enforcement Framework sets out the Authority's approach and details the general principles the Authority will follow and the enforcement actions available. The Risk Register forms part of that Framework, providing focus and priorities for Southern IFCA's compliance and enforcement activities. The Risk Register identifies priorities in specific areas at different times of the year.

2.2 **Intelligence Led Approach**

Intelligence Reports (IRs) are the Authority's method of recording, storing, collating and the dissemination of intelligence that complement our risk-based approach. Additional intelligence together with access to the UK Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System¹ (MCSS) and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) maximizes the efficient use and deployment of resources on the ground. Southern IFCA uses the National Intelligence Model which incorporates a tasking and coordination process.

2.3 **Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)**

The TCG meeting is chaired by the DCO who makes decisions in relation to resourcing and enforcement priorities for the upcoming period (2 weeks). The aim of this meeting is to make decisions around resource allocation in order to make best use of resources and provide the best possible protection for fisheries and the marine environment within the Southern IFCA District, the TCG also decides what operational tactics will be deployed.

2.4 **Fisheries Patrols**

Southern IFCA officers conduct both land and sea-based patrols across the district. Southern IFCA operates three patrol vessels, patrols on board these vessels may take place at any time of day or night, and are used to observe fishing activity, engage with industry, carry out boarding inspections and to target reported illegal activity. On shore, Officers conduct land patrols to engage with industry, carry out inspections, observe activity at sea and in ports, visiting a number of locations across the district including commercial premises, recreational angling hotspots, piers, ports, beaches and quaysides. The Authority has also developed a drone capability and has procured two drones to support operational activity. This has enhanced our operational delivery and is used to record evidence of possible offences using the onboard camera from perspectives not previously possible, it has improved the prevention (deterrent) and detection of offending.

[Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA \(southern-ifca.gov.uk\)](https://www.southern-ifca.gov.uk)

¹ The UK reporting database of sightings, boarding, positions of vessels, prosecutions and other actions against infringements of UK and EU Fisheries. This system is managed by CEFAS on behalf of the MMO (also see RNSS). This also contains access to VMS data.

3. Enforcement Activity

3.1 Intelligence Reports

The following table demonstrates the information reports submitted for this reporting quarter.

Intelligence Reports	May	June	July	Total
IFCOs	15	27	28	70

3.2 Enforcement Activity Table

The following table demonstrates the enforcement activity and offences detected for this reporting quarter, these reporting metrics are aligned nationally to those requested by Defra. Fluctuations that occur in statistical figures can be as a result of a number contributing factors i.e. number of land based as opposed to sea-based patrols in any given month, staff resources, weather, other duties and the objectives of the patrols recognising the Authorities commitment to risk based intelligence led enforcement.

Category	Metric	May	June	July	Total
Inspections at sea	Vessel patrols	3	8	2	13
	Boardings/inspections	13	34	4	51
Inspections ashore or in a port	Metric	May	June	July	Total
	Shore patrols	8	12	7	27
	Port visits	15	15	3	33
	Premises inspections	3	4	1	8
	Landing inspections	4	10	10	24
	Vehicle inspections	1	2	1	4
	Gear Inspections	12	4	0	16
	Person Inspection	0	6	9	15
Offences Detected	Per report	May	June	July	Total
Verbal warnings		0	4	6	10
Written warnings		0	1	0	1
Advisory letter		0	0	0	0
FAP		0	0	0	0
Offence Reports		1	1	4	6

3.3 Offence reports

The following table demonstrates the offence reports & actions submitted by officers for this reporting quarter.

Date of Offence	Offence	Action
31.05.23	Use of a trawl net inside the Fishing Under Mechanical Power Seasonal Closure	Official Written Warning issued to skipper/owner of vessel 07.06.23
13.06.23	Removal from a fishery a quantity of cockles which pass through a square gauge measuring 23.8mm along each side.	Investigation ongoing
13.07.23	Use of a fixed net contrary to the Fixed Engines Byelaw	Official Written Warning issued to skipper/owner of vessel 04.08.23
20.07.23	Breach of Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw Permit Conditions Green Island Closed Area	3x Official Written Warnings issued to 3x owners of vessel 04.08.23

20.07.23	Breach of Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw Permit Conditions Green Island Closed Area	Official Written Warning issued to skipper/owner of vessel 04.08.23
25.07.23	Breach of Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw Permit Conditions Green Island Closed Area	Official Written Warning issued to skipper/owner of vessel 04.08.23

3.4 Offence Outcomes

The following table demonstrates offence outcomes for this reporting quarter.

Date of offence	Offence	Action taken and date
31.05.23	Use of a trawl net inside the Fishing Under Mechanical Power Seasonal Closure	Official Written Warner issued to skipper/owner of vessel 07.06.23

4. Summary of key enforcement operations and activities

May

4.1 Southern IFCA Officers give evidence in Court at Environment Agency Trial

This case was brought by the Environment Agency. At the time of the offence in June 2021, a net limitation order was in place at Christchurch Harbour. This meant the Environment Agency had granted no net licences to fish for salmon and sea trout in the harbour, in order to protect at risk populations. Environment Agency fisheries officers, working with officers from the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA), discovered a fisherman in the harbour. He was found to have a mature sea trout in his haul. Late evening on 3 June 2021, Environment Agency fisheries officers along with colleagues from IFCA were on patrol to detect possible illegal fishing in Christchurch Harbour, near Highcliffe Sailing Club. On arrival, officers used night vision equipment to scan the harbour. About 250 metres offshore, they spotted a male in his small boat 'My Lady' rowing across the harbour, setting a 300m gill net from the stern of the boat. Officers kept the boat under observation for some time, and they saw the male haul the net back aboard the boat. In the early hours of 4 June 2021, he came ashore. Amongst numerous legally caught fish, officers found one dead mature sea trout.

The defendant denied using a net to catch fish when their use was limited, but he was found guilty after a trial at Poole Magistrates Court on 18 May 2023. Williamson was ordered to pay a total penalty of £384. [Netting a sea trout costs Christchurch fisherman nearly £400 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/news/stories/netting-a-sea-trout-costs-christchurch-fisherman-nearly-400)

4.2 Poole Harbour Dredge Fishery Opens

The Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw was introduced on 1st July 2015 to replace the Fishery Order and manage the wild dredge fishery for shellfish. The byelaw permits the use of pump-scoop dredge gear within Poole Harbour and therefore manages the direct use of the fishing gear rather than a particular species, bringing together fishing for multiple species under a single management measure. Permits are issued annually and, currently, 45 permits are issued each year. All vessels in the fishery are less than 9m in length and are small open vessels which carry out day fishing trips during periods of high water. The byelaw regulates a number of areas of the fishing operation including;

- Catch restrictions and reporting
- Gear types
- Gear construction and restrictions
- Spatial and temporal restrictions
- The fitting of specified equipment to vessels

The fishery is seasonal, running from 25th May to 23rd December each year. Outside of the season all dredge equipment must be removed from vessels. On the 24th May officers carried a total of 12 gear inspections to ensure compliance with the byelaw.

4.3 Joint Patrol with the Kings Harbour Master, Portsmouth

Compliance and Enforcement Team officers conducted joint patrol the Southern IFCA FPR Stella Barbara in Portsmouth Harbour to ensure compliance with the Southern IFCA Byelaws, Local Notice to Mariners, and the Harbour Master General Directions.

June

4.5 Sea Angling Classic

The Sea Angling Classic aims to start a unique and global concept, which will benefit the environment, introduce fishing to a whole new generation, deliver key data on the sport and species and secure the future of sea fishing. This is the third year that Officers have attended the registration day to hand out information on minimum conservation sizes, Bass regulations and wish the competitors good luck.

July

4.6 Operation Seabird & Seagoing Dorset

Officers have continued to support Operation Seabird, Operation Seabird is the brainchild of Geoff Edmond, the National Wildlife Coordinator for the RSPCA. It is in response to a rise in marine life disturbances being reported and the predicted rise in numbers of visitors to our coastlines over the previous three years, this has led to the creation of the Operation Seabird (#OpSeabird) campaign which is a national campaign that has been designed to educate and inform visitors to our coastlines. Southern IFCA has also continued to work with Dorset Marine Policing Team to support Operation Seagoing (#OpSeagoing), Operation Seagoing has been set up to tackle the inappropriate use of Personal Watercraft (PWCs) and other craft, again there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour on the water in the last three years. Both Operations have been ran alongside each other as they have similar goals to prevent marine life disturbance, to prevent death or serious injury (both humans and marine life), to reassure and engage with the local marine community.

Southern IFCA unlike the MMO, Police and other partners, do not have a remit for marine wildlife disturbance or anti-social behaviour however we have continued to support these Operations, It also gives Southern IFCA the opportunity to engage with local water users regarding its own remit and the byelaws in which we enforce.

4.7 Conflict Resolution Training

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act the Authority have an obligation to ensure that any potential risk of work-related violence is eliminated or controlled. Officers carried out a one day qualification which provided them with a foundation in conflict resolution, with emphasis on the importance of personal safety to enable them to protect themselves in situations where conflict arises, the course covered;

- The law in relation to controlling conflict and violence in the workplace
- How to assess the risks of workplace conflict
- Appropriate methods to de-escalate confrontational situations

4.8 MMO Patrol to Monitor 7e Scallop Closure

The 7e King Scallop dredge fishery closure is: A closure of Lyme Bay (ICES rectangles, 30E6, 30E7, 29E6 and 29E7) aligning to the agreed closure length in ICES area 7d from 1 July to 30 September 2023. The closures applies to EU and UK scallop dredge vessels and excludes 12-metre and under vessels from the closure. The MMO are chartering the Southern IFCA patrol vessel Protector to conduct a number of patrols under the Agreement for the provision of services at sea to ensure compliance with the closure, these patrols extend out to 12 nautical miles.

4.9 Drone Flights Green Island Spatial Closures

The 2022-2023 Poole Harbour Dredge Permit (PHDP) season saw the inclusion of the Green Island spatial closures under permit conditions. This area is permanently closed to dredging under the PHDP Byelaw permit conditions. Due to an increase in reported incursions IFCOs have been monitoring the areas during vessel patrols and shore patrols to ensure compliance. The Drone, which is fitted with a laser rangefinder and smart-tracking technology, has allowed officers to have an 'Eye in the Sky' and obtain accurate positional data of vessels fishing. Drone deployments carried out in July recorded positional data of a PHDP Holder using a dredge within the closure areas. The imagery and positional data of the vessels were extracted from the drone and mapped, showing the vessels fishing inside the closure.

4.10 Wrasse Monitoring and Control Plan

A fishery for live wrasse species developed in the Southern IFC District around 2015. Live wrasse are bought by salmon farms in Scotland to use as a biological alternative to the chemical treatment for lice. Fishing activity is predominantly based around the ports of Weymouth and Portland and incorporates the use of fish traps and rod and line techniques to target wrasse.

The fishery is managed by Southern IFCA through the Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw, a Monitoring and Control Plan (M&CP) and Fishery Guidance measures. These measures were implemented in 2017 in collaboration with the industry to address sustainability concerns. Measures include Europe's most restrictive maximum wrasse sizes, a prohibition on the removal of cuckoo wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*), a network of 'No Potting' and 'No Take Zones', pot limits and a closed season.

Participants are required to submit monthly catch data. Section seven of the M&CP describes 'Triggers for Assessment'. Each year the fishery is closely monitored during the season and following the seasons completion in accordance with the M&CP. If threshold points are reached then a review of the fishery is to be activated in line with Section 8 of the M&C Plan. In July Officers have conducted regular inspections to ensure compliance with the regulations and the M&C Plan threshold it is anticipated the fishery will reach the set threshold in the next reporting quarter.

5. **Compliance & Enforcement Team**

COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT TEAM



SAM DELL
FPT Deputy Chief Officer
Joined: 2011
Key Responsibilities:
--Strategic Planning
--Operational Delivery
--Marine Operations (FPV Skipper)
--Accountable Manager (Drone)
--Assets
--Policy Adherence & Development
--Line Management
Warranted IFCO

ADAM PARRY
Senior IFCO
Joined: 2018
Key Responsibilities:
-- Marine Operations
--FPV Skipper
--Hampshire & Isle of Wight Area Lead
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement
Warranted IFCO



DAVID MAYNE
Senior IFCO
Joined: 2004
Key Responsibilities:
--Investigations
--FPV Skipper
--Marine Operations
--Central Area Lead
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement
Warranted IFCO



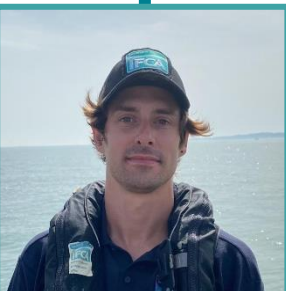
ISABEL GRIFFITHS
IFCO
Joined: 2020
Key Responsibilities:
--Intelligence Lead Officer
--Biosecurity
--Drone Pilot
--West Dorset Lead
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement
Warranted IFCO



FRED HARRIS
IFCO
Joined: 2022
Key Responsibilities:
--MCSS
--Drone Pilot
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement



MEGAN FULBROOK
IFCO
Joined: 2022
Key Responsibilities:
--Intelligence Officer
--Sightings
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement



JOHN LAKIN
IFCO
Joined: 2023
Key Responsibilities:
--Compliance Patrols
--Community Engagement

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

MARKED K

**BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH THE RESEARCH AND POLICY TEAM**

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with an update on aspects of work that the Research and Policy Team is delivering behind the scenes.

B. Recommendation

That Members receive the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 This report from the Research and Policy Team (RPT) Officers captures aspects of work that they are delivering behind the scenes. This may include standalone projects or supplementary work which complements and supports the workstreams presented at meetings of the Authority, or sub-committees.
- 1.2 This report includes updates from DCO Birchenough, from IFCO Dominic Parry on recent statistics training undertaken by the RPT, IFCO Emily Condie on tagging work under a Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) Project, IFCO Celie Mullen on Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) and her change in role to becoming an IFCO and from PO Chelsea Perrins on her work as PO for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).



with DCO Birchenough

Updates from the RPT Deputy Chief Officer:

Summer Quarter

It's been a productive summer for the RPT with the continued development of our MPA workstreams on Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG), Shore Gathering (SG) and Black Seabream (BB). The BTFG Byelaw 2023 was subject to Formal Consultation following the Byelaw being 'made' at the Authority meeting in June and Officers were busy providing information on this consultation to stakeholders and ensuring that engagement was maximised.

The latter part of this quarter has been busy with our Solent Scallop survey, undertaken in September, and preparing for our autumn Solent Bivalve and Juvenile Fish Surveys as well as developing consultation responses for the frontrunner FMPs.



SAGB Conference 2023

In June I attended the annual Shellfish Association of Great Britain (SAGB) Conference. This is always an interesting event and provides an opportunity to share information, ideas and outcomes of survey work on shellfish species amongst a wide variety of attendees including from the commercial fishing industry, aquaculture, academic institutions, NGOs, Government bodies and regulators.

Of particular interest to myself were presentations from the Fisheries Minister, the University of Essex on ecosystem services from native and non-native shellfish by and Cumulus Consultants on developments in understanding crustacean welfare.

Conflict Resolution Training

The team underwent conflict resolution training in July delivered by an external provider. The training was very interesting and covered all aspects from understanding how to avoid conflict to what to do when conflict arises. It was a good team building experience as well as providing useful outputs.





This quarter has been busy but very successful. During this period, members of both the Research & Policy and the Compliance & Enforcement Teams participated in a two day R-Statistics online training course. Not only were officers from Southern IFCA in attendance, but also officers from Cornwall, Sussex and Devon and Severn IFCA.

The course was run virtually via teams and was incredibly efficient by Dr Jez Smith and Dr Rob Thomas at Eco Explore. One ran us through presentations, while another helped anyone if they were stuck and experiencing difficulties which made the whole experience smoother.

On the first day we went through 2 sessions. The first was a basic introduction to the software of R, showing us how to use the editable script window, the console window, the global environment and also the plot and packages windows.

We then went into some basic statistics and what statistical packages are used when and where, as well as reading and understanding the basics of normal and non-normal distributions of data. Later that day we developed our skills on 'data wrangling' which is basically ordering and sorting out data from a main dataset to make more usable data sheets.

Session 1

Data analysis with R statistical software



Getting started with R



Introduction slide lifted from the powerpoint presentation from the Eco-Explore training.

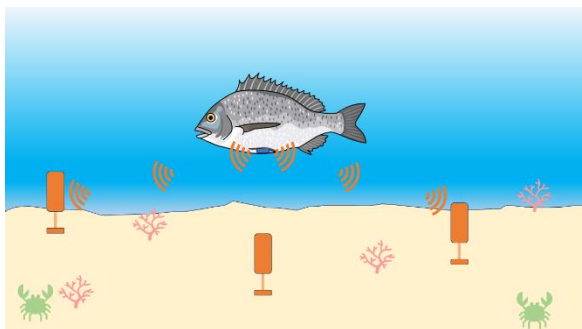
The second day introduced both general linear models and generalised linear models otherwise known as GLM's. General linear models are for data that are normally distributed and represent a bell-shaped curve, not something we often get with population data that we collect within our surveys, and generalised linear models are for when the data is skewed in some way.

The course was extremely useful, and I am confident that it will help all officers who were involved, next steps are to put our newly found R-Statistics skills to the test in our upcoming surveys!

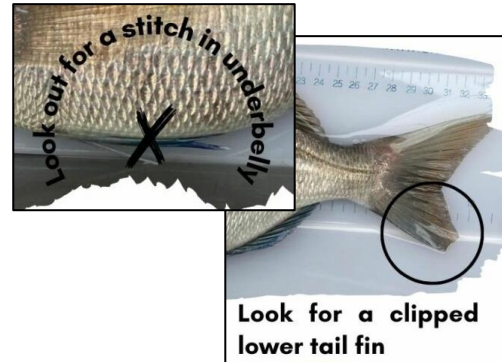


Southern IFCA are currently partners on two Fisheries Industry Science Partnership Projects (FISP Projects). One of them being “Angling for Sustainability”. The project looks to bridge the data gaps on recreationally important species such as Bream, Tope, Smooth Hound and Undulate Ray using acoustic tags and receivers to understand movements and habits. The project is being Led by the University of Plymouth and partners with the Angling Trust, The Professional Boatman’s Association and Natural England as well as Southern IFCA.

I have joined two bream tagging trips focused on the Poole Bay area. The trips left Poole Harbour early morning and had varying degrees of success in terms of the numbers of Bream caught and tagged. Each trip is facilitated by a local charter skipper and member of the Professional Boatman’s Association along with a selection of local anglers.



Acoustic tags and receiver are used to track movements.



How to identify a tagged black bream.

Once caught the fish are brought aboard the boat, they are sedated, weighed, and measured before having an acoustic tag inserted into their underbelly and a small section of tail clipped. Once recovered, the fish are quickly returned to the water with the whole process taking around 10 minutes.

Angling for Sustainability have tagged approximately 120 Black Bream from Poole Bay to Portland since January 2024, with hope to tag a further 100 fish next season.

As of the end of August 2023, no tagged bream have been re-captured but competition to be the first is high within the local angling community!





with IFCO C. Mullen

Since the last Authority meeting, the development of the 6 Fronrunner FMPs has taken off and Defra are currently in their consultation phase, which runs until 1st Oct 2023. This gives stakeholders their final opportunity to give views before the publication of the Whelk, Crab and Lobster, King Scallop, Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species and Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMPs.

Southern IFCA are currently preparing responses, looking at the proposed management and identified evidence needs and how these are related to our current fisheries and survey work. To help the responses, we have delivered FMP workshops to provide information and gather feedback from our TAC Members and have also organised engagement sessions with Defra representatives through attendance at our August TAC meeting.

Looking toward the future, the development of the Tranche 3 FMPs has begun. The stocks included in these are: Cockles (AIFCA), Queen Scallop (TBD), North Sea and Channel Sprat (Cefas), Southern North Sea and Channel Skates and Rays (MMO) and Southern North Sea NQS Demersal (MMO). Not all of these FMPS will relate to the SIFCA District.

My position at Southern IFCA has also changed since the last meeting. I will still be undertaking work related to the FMP program; however, I am pleased to announce that I am now working in a permanent position as an IFCO within the Research and Policy Team.

I am very eager to get started in this position and over the last few weeks I have undergone numerous training courses to help prepare me for this role. This includes my VHF training, STCW and more recent R statistics training.



Left and Right: Photos from the recent Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting Course within the STCW training .

Left photo: IFCO Mullen (left) and IFCO Lakin (right) in kit after practical assessment.





with PO C. Perrins

I started the role of Project Officer for MPAs in May. As well as completing my induction, I've also been assisting my colleagues with the small fish surveys and the whelk survey. The small fish surveys required us to use a beach seine net to collect and identify presence, abundance and size of juvenile species in different areas (Yarmouth, Christchurch, and The Fleet). The whelk survey involved us counting and measuring whelk that were collected from different sites.

Since May I have been assisting with the workstream to develop Black seabream management in Marine Conservation Zones. I've been working on the literature review and updating Southern IFCAs literature log with relevant and up to date studies on Black seabream and their sensitivity to different types of fishing gears. This literature review involved researching the presence and life history of bream populations, the fishing effort in the District and what gears are used in this fishery. I also reviewed the history and management of black bream in other areas such as the Kingmere MCZ, managed by Sussex IFCA.

Being involved in this Bream project has been useful in developing my knowledge of MPAs within the SIFCA District.

Most recently I have been working on compiling a report on shore gathering. Researching the definitions of subtidal and intertidal shore gathering and what activities/gears these cover, how other IFCAs define shore gathering, and any byelaws implemented to manage these activities. As a part of this, I've been working alongside IFCO D. Parry on a literature review of prawn push netting effort within the district, and its impact on habitats and species. The most recent literature suggests that fragile habitats such as seagrass beds and Maerl beds are at risk of trampling if the activity occurs frequently. To date there's only been a low frequency of this gear in Bembridge and Studland.

At the end of August, myself and several IFCOs received training in statistical analysis using R Studio, which I intend to put to use in future projects. At the start of September I've been in the field assisting with the scallop survey, recording presence, size and weight at multiple locations in the Solent.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

OFFICER'S REPORT

Marked L

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose of the Report

To inform Members of the activity undertaken by two stakeholder groups:

- The South Coast Fishermen's Council (Annex 1)
- The Recreational Angling Sector Group (Annex 2)

B. Recommendation

That the Minutes of the South Coast Fishermen's Council and Recreational Angling Sector Group be received.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Minutes of two stakeholder groups for the District; the South Coast Fishermen's Council (minutes dated 17th May 2023 and 16th August 2023) and the Recreational Angling Sector Group (minutes dated 11th September 2023) are presented to the Authority for Members' consideration and to appraise them of the groups' business.
- 1.2 The Authority currently provides a secretariat role for the Recreational Angling Sector Group and also the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group, however, there has not been a meeting of this group since the last Authority meeting and therefore there are no minutes to include in this report. The Authority has given a grant of £300 to the Fishermen's Council in this financial year. All three groups are offered free use of a room, at the Committee's office, for meetings. Meetings are held both virtually and in person as required.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

List of Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

SOUTH COAST FISHERMEN'S COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE 367th MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM AT 7.00PM ON
WEDNESDAY 17th May 2023

PRESENT: R. Stride - Mudeford & District FMA (Secretary)
T. Russell - Poole & District FMA (Vice-Chairman)
Beshlie Pool - South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen

IN ATTENDANCE
S. Dell - Deputy CEO Southern IFCA
Celie Mullen - FMP Project Officer, SIFCA

I APOLOGIES P. Dadds (Chairman), S. Postles, A. Banfield, J. Miller, G. Chittenden, R Irish, H. Hamlett (Fishermen's Mission).

In the absence of the Chairman, who had technical difficulties logging in, the Vice-Chairman took the chair. The minutes of the 366th meeting held via Teams on 22nd March 2023 were taken as read and it was agreed they should be signed as a true record.

II REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUPS

SW RFG (Area 7e)

None of the members present had attended the meeting held on 16th May. S Dell reported that the MMO had made a presentation on the on-going work in relation to the sole fishery in Lyme Bay. The consultation on potential management measures was open until 28th May. The variation in MCRS between neighbouring IFCAs were discussed, particularly in relation to whelks and lobsters. The difficulties faced by vessels that fish both sides of IFCA boundaries had been highlighted.

South RFG (Area 7d)

A meeting will be held on 18th May with quota, FMPs, iVMS and MCA medicals on the agenda. T Russell and R Stride said that they intended to attend. S Dell anticipated that the scallop closure in Area 7d would be discussed, noting that under 10m vessels were exempt. SIFCA will be working with the MMO to look at the position of over 12m vessels that are able to fish in the district under grandfather rights.

III FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

C Mullen introduced herself and explained that her role at SIFCA was to attend all of the FMP engagement events and meetings and study the reports so as to be able to brief the officers and members of the Authority. She was also available to stakeholders for updates and clarification.

The 6 frontrunners are the first of 43 proposed FMPs. They are all of relevance to the District. R Stride noted that the Southern North Sea and East Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP covered Area 7d but had not been discussed locally. Members anticipated that fatigue would set in before all 43 plans were completed. R Stride said that few small scale fishermen had been present at the meetings he had attended but felt that there would be more interest once possible management measures began to emerge.

Shellfish FMPs

A number of early interventions were discussed. These are to address issues that arise during the FMP process that can be implemented using existing tools such as licence variations. B Pool felt that the early interventions do not go far enough, in particular fishermen are pressing for there to be a ban on the use of soft brown crab as whelk bait.

It is DEFRA's intention to consult with industry over a relatively narrow window during summer and autumn. B Pool felt that there would need to be good value for fishermen from engaging at that busy time.

Bass FMP

There was no information about what form the expected consultation in summer would take, S Dell felt that the timing would be important to allow fishermen to engage, working around fishing patterns and providing enough notice.

Channel Non-Quota Species FMP

The next meeting of the working group was expected in early June and would be considering the results of the stakeholder engagement events along the south coast. R Stride is a member of the group.

IV MMO/ DEFRA MATTERS

The situation regarding the suspension by the MMO of the type approval of 2 of the available iVMS devices was discussed. One of these, the Maritime Systems device, is fitted to the majority of members' boats. Members considered the situation to be a fiasco and lamented the lack of a proper procurement process and due diligence on the part of the MMO. The problems had largely been anticipated by industry. The part played by Maritime Systems is still not clear despite the statements issued by both sides. Members could not recall having seen a formal contract or agreement with the supplier. It was hoped that with so many fishermen affected, the MMO would come up with a fair way to replace the devices. In the meantime it seemed sensible to switch the devices off.

V SOUTHERN IFCA MATTERS

S. Dell informed the meeting that:

- The potting byelaw was still in the QA process. There was potential to extend the period of grace for the fitting of escape gaps.
- The netting byelaw has moved on to DEFRA following QA. Once the byelaw is confirmed prohibited areas would be closed immediately but there was a grace period to apply for permits to fish in the permit areas and to comply with the gear marking requirements.
- The revised Bottom Towed Fishing Gear byelaw was due to be put before the full IFCA committee in June.
- The whelk survey was now underway in the District.
- The MCRS review was ongoing.

- MCS certification of the Poole dredge fishery was being renewed. The recent oil spill had caused some concern but all is well and the fishery will open on the 25th May.
- There is a deadline to bring all MPAs under management by 2024, including seabream and shore gathering. Members suggested that shore gathering could be managed through permits. S Dell indicated that any measures would have to be compatible with the principle of equal access.

VI TRAINING GRANT APPLICATIONS

Grant applications for basic safety training courses were considered for:

C Haine, proposed by R Stride, seconded B Pool. All in favour

J Copperthwaite proposed by T Russell, seconded R Stride. All in favour.

H Smith, proposed by T Russell, seconded B Pool. All in favour.

A total of £805 in grants was approved.

VII OTHER BUSINESS

PFDs

B Pool informed the meeting that a PFD, supplied under the second Seafish round, had suffered a punctured bladder due to wear. Problems encountered with zips and wear and tear were discussed. Members felt that the annual service should give an early indication of any developing problems, whatever the age of the PFD.

Medicals

Members discussed the requirement for all fishermen to hold a valid ML5 or ENG1 medical certificate by November this year. B Pool said that early experience with the application of “grandfather rights” had been encouraging. A number of fishermen with existing conditions had been referred to an MCA doctor on failing to pass the ML5 examination and their cases had been resolved favourably. A fisherman with colour blindness had been approved to act as watchkeeper but would not be permitted to work single-handed. Members felt that pressure applied through MPs might be softening the MCA’s approach.

T Russell highlighted the success of the recent Fishermen’s Mission wellness event in Poole where dental treatment and health advice was offered to fishermen.

IX ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETING 2023.

14th June, 12th July, 9th August, 6th September, 15th November and 13th December.

All to be held via Teams at 1900 unless an opportunity to hold a face to face meeting arises.

After thanking everyone for attending and S Dell for hosting the Chairman closed the meeting.

Chairman

SOUTH COAST FISHERMEN'S COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE 370th MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM AT 7.00PM ON
WEDNESDAY 16th August 2023

PRESENT: P. Dadds - Mudeford & District FMA (Chairman)
T. Legg - Hardway FMA
R. Stride - Mudeford & District FMA (Secretary)

IN ATTENDANCE

S. Dell - Deputy Chief Officer, SIFCA
G. Chittenden - Principal Marine Officer, MMO

I APOLOGIES A. Banfield, J. Miller, Hayley Hamlett (Fish Mish)

The minutes of the 36th meeting held via Teams on 12th July 2023 were taken as read and it was agreed they should be signed as a true record.

II REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUPS

SW RFG (Area 7e)

Last meeting was held 16th May. It was noted that Edward Baker had left the MMO.

South RFG (Area 7d)

Last meeting held on 18th May. It is possible that the September meeting may be postponed or cancelled given the number of fisheries engagement events coming up.

III FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

G Chittenden reminded the meeting that DEFRA were holding events in Gosport (22nd), Weymouth (23rd) and Poole (24th) to discuss the FMPs together the other live consultations. DEFRA genuinely wished to hear the views of stakeholders on the FMPs so far and urged members to attend to put forward alternatives that they felt would work as well as commenting on the proposals. Members noted that as many inshore fishermen take part in a number of different fisheries they could be affected by all 6 frontrunner FMPs. Members lamented the fact that fishermen would have to give up a day's fishing to attend the Poole meeting (10 am to 1 pm).

Shellfish FMPs

Members were as yet unfamiliar with the contents of the shellfish FMPs

Finfish FMPs

T Legg expressed his fear that any further changes to the bass MCRS, in particular the introduction of a slot size, would distort the population and have a negative effect on the handline fishery. The increase in the MCRS to 42cm had not improved the fishery and he did not expect to be able catch the full amount of his allowance. He felt that there had been a lot of emotional arguments from RSA and that the FMP could become biased. The FMP should aim to enhance the stock for all stakeholders.

Members generally welcomed the measures for managing cuttlefish in the Channel NQS FMP, concerned that the trawl fishery in the Western Channel was having a

huge impact on the stock. Some doubt was expressed about the effectiveness of a MCRS for cuttlefish given their poor survivability in the trawl fishery but felt that something had to be done. With regard to the protection of deposited eggs in inshore waters, T Legg explained that cuttlefish appeared in his trawl catches after they had moved out, away from the static gear areas. The cuttlefish were currently small but over 23 cm mantle length. He also pointed out the importance of the cuttlefish stock in the food chain.

R Stride noted that the deadline for responding was 1st October so that if members were able to agree a joint position on each FMP then responses would have to be put together at the next meeting.

IV MMO/ DEFRA MATTERS

iVMS Rollout

Members present had received notification of the new roll-out of the remaining approved iVMS devices. G Chittenden explained that fishermen should now choose one of the devices, purchase the device and arrange for installation. Poole was one of the ports for programmed installations. Others could book with the suppliers. Although there is a requirement to purchase the device up front, the grant can be applied for straight away, before installation, and would be paid against the purchase invoice in 3-5 days. The deadline for claims is 30th November. There is no obligation to have the device transmitting until the Statutory Instrument is introduced next year.

Members raised several points:

- They were unhappy that installers were being paid £100 to remove the Maritime Systems devices and suggested that the price of the devices had been increased to fit the available grant. G Chittenden explained that the grant had been set to cover the advertised prices. The cost of removal of the old devices included the cost of disposal.
- Without sight of the SI, concerns remain about provisions for device downtime. G Chittenden explained that the VMS system provides for permission to be given to continue fishing while the device is being repaired and this was expected to apply also to the under 12m vessels.
- It had been said that one of the devices could be transferred to a new owner on sale of the vessel but the other could not. G Chittenden said he would seek clarification. (Post meeting update: the Succorfish device cannot be transferred on sale of the vessel)
- Who owns the Maritime Systems devices already installed on vessels? (Post meeting update: the device belongs to the vessel owner)

Removal of under 10m licence cap consultation The majority of fishermen had been opposed to the imposition of the licence cap for quota species and had foreseen the problems that would arise. These problems had all occurred and there would be many fishermen who had had to pay an inflated price for an uncapped licence. That value would be lost if the cap were lifted but members felt that there was now sufficient quota available and that the cap should be lifted in the interest of fairness and to restore flexibility to the capped vessels. It was agreed by general consent that the Secretary should respond on behalf of the Council in favour of the proposal.

Discards reform consultation (9th October): Members were as yet not familiar with the proposals and so it was decided to revisit the question at the next meeting.

Remote Electronic Monitoring (9th October): The proposals for REM do not apply to under 10m vessels. S Dell stated that SIFCA had looked at how it would affect the fleet in the district and found that 70 10-12m netters and 40 10-12m trawlers would fall within the scope of the proposals.

T Legg lost his connection to the meeting which was no longer quorate from this point.

V SOUTHERN IFCA MATTERS

S Dell provided the meeting with the following update:

- Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw- The formal consultation has now closed; the Authority will consider the consultation responses prior to sending it to the Marine Management Organisation for Quality Assurance. Only once the Byelaw has completed this stage and been signed off by the Secretary of State will it come into effect.
- Pot Fishing Byelaw-The Pot Fishing Byelaw has been submitted to the Marine Management Organisation for Quality Assurance. Only once the Byelaw has completed this stage and been signed off by the Secretary of State will it come into effect.
- Net Fishing Byelaw- Has been through the Marine Management Organisation Quality Assurance process and has been passed to Defra for consideration, once the Byelaw has completed this stage and been signed off by the Secretary of State will it come into effect.
- Minimum Conservation Reference Size Review- Further opportunities to comment and input into the MCRS Review will be available through a period of informal consultation, to be held once measures have been drafted by the Authority.
- Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw- Applications are open for the upcoming season and information can be found on how to apply on the Southern IFCA website.

VI TRAINING GRANT APPLICATIONS

The secretary reported that there had been no further applications. It was a quiet time of year for courses.

VII OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

VII ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS 2023.

6th September, 15th November and 13th December.

All to be held via Teams at 1900 unless an opportunity to hold a face to face meeting arises.

The Chairman thanked S Dell and G Chittenden for making time to attend and S. Dell for hosting the Teams meeting.

Chairman

Recreational Angling Sector Group

AGENDA

MARKED L – Annex 2

Monday 11th September 2023

19:00 – 21:00

Meeting location:

Virtual meeting on MS Teams

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: Alan Deeming and Mike Spiller

Attending: Emily Condie (Southern IFCA), Fred Harris (Southern IFCA), Chris Holloway, Alan Green

Apologies from Emily Condie for having to rearrange the original meeting at short notice.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (12th April 2023)

One amendment regarding the targeting of porbeagles. The restrictions stated by the Shark Trust in item 5b refers only to commercial vessels, but the Sharks Trust suggest not targeting porbeagles from April to August as the pregnant females move through the British isles at this time.

These amendments were agreed.

3. FMP Update – from SIFCA Project Officer Celie Mullen, delivered by IFCO Emily Condie

Emily Condie gave a brief overview of the FMP frontrunner consultations that are running until 1st Oct 2023 (Channel Demersal Non-Quota, Bass, Whelk, Crab and Lobster, King Scallop, and Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish) and expanded on the crab and lobster and bass FMPs.

The Crab and Lobster FMP looks to collate existing evidence and react to evidence gaps such as stock boundaries, spatial inconsistencies in data collection and quality; to standardize or increase the lobster and crawfish minimum landing sizes across English waters to harmonise with existing IFCA measures; to prohibit landing of soft brown crab for bait; to pilot management regimes for brown crab and European lobster in certain areas and develop and refine measures for long term sustainability, including seasonal closures, effort limits, pot and catch limits. Members engaged in brief discussion on the use of shore crabs as bait.

The Bass FMP looks to ensure stock continue to be fished within sustainable limits; address evidence gaps on the number of bass being discarded by commercial fishers; how many are being caught by recreational and the socioeconomic benefit of the stocks to coastal communities. It will address which of the current measures requires improvement (timing and duration of closed season, current ass authorisation system and reference period) as well as mitigate risk of bycatch of marine mammals, seabirds, and other fish.

One member raised that during a meeting with the MMO, commercial and recreational sectors had been in agreement that bass should be rod and line caught only in the Southern IFCA district.

Another member hoped that the bass FMP would align the bass nursery area closed seasons with the bass closed season as it brings confusion to anglers. Fred Harris informed members that the bass closed seasons have been updated for 2023 so as to align recreational fishers with commercial fishers whereas the nursery areas align with the spawning season. He also confirmed that the schematic included in the Poole Tide table is for the nursery areas and not the updated 2023 Bass legislation. Fred Harris gave an overview of bass management in the nursery areas and confirmed he would check that notice boards on Poole Quay are up to date.

4. Southern IFCA Updates/Ongoing Items

a. BTFG Consultation

Emily Condie provided members with an update on the bottom towed fishing gear consultation.

Following a decision to make the byelaw at the authority meeting on the 8th of June 2023. Southern IFCA undertook a period of consultation that ended on the 28th of July. The feedback is currently being reviewed by the Executive Sub-Committee who will consider whether to recommend that the Authority submit the Byelaw to the Secretary of State to seek confirmation.

b. Net Fishing Byelaw

Fred Harris provided Members with an update on the Net Fishing Byelaw (NFB).

The NFB was signed by the Secretary of State in August 2023 and is now active. Stakeholders have been informed and Southern IFCA are engaging with industry. The new management includes Net Permit Areas, with interested fishers having until 9th November to apply for a permit. There are also both Net Restriction Areas and Net Prohibited Areas included under the NFB.

Due to the interests of the members present Fred Harris spoke specifically about the management in Poole Harbour which includes both Net Restriction and Net Prohibition Areas. The NFB includes a provision to prevent the carriage of bass on board a vessel within a Bass Nursery Area (BNA) if using a net.

A Member raised concerns on the illegal recreational trawling for bass in BNAs. Fred Harris said this is something he is aware of and has been carrying out engagement to make anglers aware of the regulations as well as planning patrols around this issue.

A Member questioned what happens if a fisher catches a bass in a net outside of the nursery closure. Fred Harris reiterated that the NFB includes a provision to prevent the carriage of bass on board a vessel within a bass nursery area if using a net.

Members asked how IVMS and REM will be used to help implement this management and how the roll out is progressing. Fred Harris will update Members as this is an MMO matter.

c. Pot Fishing Byelaw

Emily Condie provided members with an update on the Pot Fishing Byelaw (PFB).

No progress on the PFB since the last meeting. The Authority agreed in September 2022 to send the PFB to the MMO to enter the QA process. The Byelaw has been received by the MMO and a first round of QA has been carried out.

Emily Condie and Fred Harris confirmed the draft byelaw includes a commercial whelk pot limit of 600 (with provision for 900 based on track record), commercial and recreational permits, and a recreational limit of 5 pots as well as a landing limit.

d. Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

Emily Condie provided members with an update on the MCRS review.

No change from the last meeting. The review is ongoing with more data gathering activities being carried out at the request of the Authority.

A Member asked for confirmation on the MCRS of live bait as they had heard a length of 8 inches for any live bait in a DEFRA meeting. Fred Harris and another Member confirmed that the Southern IFCA MCRS Byelaw applies to all retention of a mentioned species, including fish to be used as live bait.

e. Angling for Sustainability Project

Before the update, a Member stated that Black bream and Gilthead bream in Poole Harbour are plentiful and stocks thriving. They are found all along the shingle bank to Mudeford and that the recreational sector will oppose any suggested management.

Fred Harris gave an overview of his experience on the Bream and Shark tagging trips with the project.

The Angling for Sustainability project is ongoing with over 100 bream tagged in 2023 aiming for a further 100 in 2024. As far as we know, no bream has been confirmed as recaptured so far, although there was a suspected recapture off of Portland.

During the shark tagging trip, two tope were tagged however they were surprised at the lack of Undulate Ray.

5. Additional Requested Items

a. Thresher Shark satellite tagging project

The Member that requested this item was not present.

6. Any Other Business

A Member raised concerns on the sightings of tuna in the Southern IFCA District. They believe that Southern IFCA or DEFRA should discourage the targeting of tuna to prevent injury, damage or death to one of the species.

Another Member raised the potential catch and release fishery that is being discussed for the next year.

Fred Harris informed members the first two commercially caught tuna had been landed to Brixham in the last week.

7. Date of the Next Meeting

To be confirmed.