



Annual Report 2024 to 2025

**Presented to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section
178 of the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009**

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Executive Narrative

The Chairman of the Authority

It is with pleasure that I introduce this year's Annual Report.

As Chair of Southern IFCA it is a pleasure to work alongside our team of dedicated officers, members, partner agencies and stakeholders, working together to ensure that Southern IFCA's work is delivered transparently and is visible to all in our wider communities. On this point, I would like to say a huge thank you to all involved, I see first-hand the enthusiasm with which Southern IFCA operate.

Whilst recognising the balance between our fishing industries and conservation, during the past year we have welcomed the introduction of Community Drop-In Surgeries. This offers a positive opportunity to nurture stakeholder relations, building and strengthening trust across the fishing industry, which Southern IFCA recognise are facing greater challenges in changing times.

This year's Annual Report showcases and highlights Southern IFCA's commitment and dedication to the future, and on a personal basis I have no doubt that our team's commitment to our communities can only strengthen moving forward to support our future generations.

Cllr. Paul Fuller, Chairman



The Chief Executive Officer

Building on the national Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) vision of '*...sustainable seas, thriving fisheries, and viable coastal industries...*', Southern IFCA has, this year introduced its own local vision: to '***champion prosperous inshore fisheries founded upon thriving marine environments***'. The case studies presented in this report illustrate how this vision is being delivered in practice. They build upon last year's focus to strengthen how we capture and communicate the breadth of Southern IFCA's work—always remaining authentic to the IFCA's core duty of achieving the right balance between social, environmental, and economic benefits to secure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries, and a viable industry.

These case studies also highlight the vital role of inshore fishers as key custodians of the marine environment and raise the profile of the industry's positive contribution. Southern IFCA has continued to champion well-managed fisheries that can thrive and co-exist within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). In many cases, this balance has been years in the making and we remain committed to driving this work forward, recognising that effective inshore fisheries management requires ongoing innovation to ensure that symbiotic management approaches continue to achieve dual and multipurpose outputs.

Collaboration—with both industry and partners—has remained at the heart of our work this year. Of note, our review of black seabream has seen the concept of 'co-development' move from theory to practice. At the same time, industry volunteers have played a central role in developing improved understandings of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) in inshore fisheries. Our REM pilot projects, funded by Southern IFCA, are exploring ways in which inshore fisheries management can remain adaptable and bespoke to changing circumstances, while enabling the fleet to evidence how fishing practice can be better understood at higher resolutions. We thank the community for its continued investment in these key areas, recognising that successful fisheries and conservation management is best achieved through collaboration and shared knowledge.

Highlights of 2024–25 include:

- **Research and Evidence:** Completion of stock assessments and data collection programmes for whelks, bivalves, scallops, oysters, and juvenile fish, building robust datasets to inform both district management and national Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).
- **Management Interventions:** Significant progress was made on major regulatory developments which remain relevant in supporting the Government's advance towards protection of 30% of the global ocean by 2030, realised domestically via enhancement of protection for MPAs:
 - The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG) Byelaw remained with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and Defra, undergoing quality assurance in line with due process. The ratification of the Byelaw will see an increase in District wide closures for BTFG from 25.5% (696.3km²) to 27.2% (743.1km²).
 - The Shore Gathering Byelaw was submitted to the MMO in December 2024. Ratification of this Byelaw will see 42.8km² of the District managed under spatial closures which will cover 24.2% of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), 32.4% of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 16.1% of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs in the District.
 - Additionally, work has continued to advance in relation to black sea bream management, with the exploration of a shared principles model to supplement existing protections across three Dorset MCZs.
- **Compliance and Enforcement:** Introduction of Fisheries Protection Vessel (FPV) Vigilant in October 2024 and expanded use of drones for compliance monitoring. A successful prosecution relating to the retention of undersized black seabream demonstrates our ongoing commitment to sustainable fisheries.
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Launch of Community Drop-In Surgeries, creating informal opportunities to meet fishers and the wider community to discuss matters of local and collective importance, strengthening our priorities moving forward.
- **National and Regional Partnerships:** Continued investment in partnerships with Defra, neighbouring IFCAs, the MMO and academic organisations. Contributions to high-profile initiatives such as the national IFCA REM Strategy and Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships (FISP) underscore the value of strong collaborative foundations.
- **Business Services and Governance:** Financial stability was maintained through levies from six constituent councils and Defra project funding. Governance has been modernised with the introduction of a digital permit system, streamlined HR platforms, and enhanced Member engagement through briefings, guest speakers and training. Member attendance and participation across Southern IFCA committee meetings and working groups has remained excellent, ensuring balanced, representative decision-making.

As I reflect on the breadth of this Annual Report, I am struck by the achievements of our team of 16, working alongside the 21 dedicated Members of the Authority. Together, they have delivered not only the significant body of work captured here, but have also continued to evolve and strengthen inshore fisheries management. This reflects the strength of an established and effective regional co-management model—well placed to support and inform national initiatives. I am immensely proud of the team and deeply grateful to the members for their expertise, commitment and guidance. I hope readers will recognise the value of the work Southern IFCA are striving to deliver: **securing the balance where a thriving, sustainable inshore fishing industry can flourish alongside the achievement of vital conservation objectives.**

Pia Bateman, Chief Executive Officer



1.0 Background to Annual Report

Under Section 178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) are required to produce an Annual Report, which provides 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 - National

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 a district level (Southern IFCA Annual Strategy and Team Plans).

1.1.1 National IFCA Vision

*“IFCAs will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment & inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right **balance** between **social, environmental & economic** benefits to ensure **healthy seas, sustainable fisheries & a viable industry**”*

1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives & Success Criterion

High-Level Objectives and Success Criterion were developed nationally to support attainment of the IFCA Vision and to reflect the developing programme of work delivered by IFCAs' nationally and to demonstrate the IFCAs' contribution to the delivery of the UK Marine Policy Statement. More detail can be found in Annex 1.

IFCA High Level Objectives	IFCA Success Criteria
Achieving a sustainable marine economy	IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.
Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society	IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.
Using sound science responsibly	IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts.
Living within environmental limits	IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.
Promoting good governance	IFCAs make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives

1.2 Southern IFCA – Local

1.2.1 Southern IFCA Vision 2024-2025

Building upon and with reference to the National IFCA Vision, Southern IFCA developed its own local vision in 2024-2025, to:

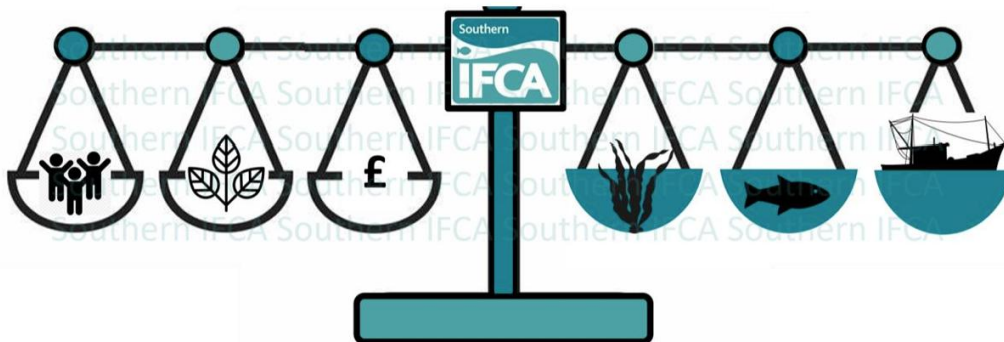
*“ champion **prosperous**
inshore fisheries founded upon **thriving marine environments**”*

This local Southern IFCA vision recognises the symbiotic relationship which exists when well managed inshore fisheries reap environmental and socioeconomic benefit.

1.2.2 Southern IFCA Key Themes 2024-2025

In championing these symbiotic relationships, Southern IFCA set out to draw upon two key themes throughout 2024-2025 which were embedded and threaded through all of Southern IFCA’s work which, as captured within and central to the wider IFCA model, are essential components to facilitate the delivery of the Southern IFCA vision: **industry collaboration** and **partnership working**.

1.3 Measuring Success: Annual Reporting Metrics



This Annual Report provides an overview of how Southern IFCA has performed in its delivery of its Annual Plan priorities for the period **April 2024 to March 2025**, via achievement of, or contribution to the following **reporting metrics**:

- ✓ The **Southern IFCA Vision**
- ✓ The Southern IFCA **Key Themes: industry collaboration** and **partnership working**

In addition, and engrained in the delivery of Southern IFCA’s Core Functions across Research & Policy, Compliance & Enforcement and Business Services, this Annual Report will demonstrate where work has aligned with:

- ✓ the IFCA High Level Objectives via **National IFCA Success Criteria**.

- ✓ **the Eight Fisheries Objectives**, as set out in the Fisheries Act 2020, where IFCAs are required to have regard to the Objectives in delivery of function.
- ✓ where Southern IFCA have **supported Defra in the delivery of additional and specific functions**, which includes MPA work, further supporting achievement of Government targets set out in the **Environment Improvement Plan 2023**, frontrunner **FMPs** and **Marine Consents**.
- ✓ the **UK Net Zero Strategy**, via identification and instigation of changes in operations in order to minimise and reduce emissions.

In addition, following publication of the **2018-2023 IFCA Compliance & Operations Report** in March 2025, this Annual Report will demonstrate where Southern IFCA continue to deliver against the recommendations specified within the above named report.

In delivering the above reporting metrics, Southern IFCA are complying with, and demonstrating their **‘Biodiversity Duty’**; a requirement upon all public authorities in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This duty is intrinsically interweaved into the work that Southern IFCA deliver and have committed to review annually.

1.3.1 Reporting Metric Symbols

The symbols below are used throughout this report to denote where contributions or achievements to the above reporting metrics have been made between the 1st April 2024 and the 31st March 2025.

Southern IFCA Vision

‘champion prosperous inshore fisheries founded upon thriving marine environments’

Southern IFCA Key Themes

National 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

Supporting Defra in delivery of Fisheries Act 2020 & Environment Act 2021 Objectives, encompassing the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP)

FMPs	MPAs	Marine Consents	Net Zero/blue carbon
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2.0 Annual Report 2024-2025: Delivering Southern IFCA's Key Themes

2.1 Industry Collaboration

2.1.1 Co-Designing Black Sea Bream Management



During the year the Southern IFCA has worked closely with all relevant fishing sectors, via a staged approach, to begin the co-developing and co-designing of draft shared principles of management; to be considered as one of the management tools relevant to the black seabream fisheries in three Dorset MPAs.

Following two member working groups, where the drivers and headline objectives to underpin the shared principles were determined, a number of discussion areas were taken forward to the stakeholder community for consideration at an industry workshop.

The industry workshop was attended by all key representatives from the commercial, charter and recreational sectors, covering all relevant gear types and those who operate within or adjacent to the relevant MPAs. This included 12 commercial representatives and 10 recreational/charter vessel representatives. Attendees were provided with a contextual underpinning before being divided into three tables; each with mixed representation across the three sectors, with a facilitator on each table.

Attendees were invited to comment on the proposed discussion areas and invited to put forward any industry-informed proposals. All feedback and input was captured by facilitators and then shared collectively. It became quickly apparent that there was a lot of consistency in comments and suggestions across the three tables and different sectors. Attendees commented that they had found the Industry Workshop useful and to have all sectors in the meeting engaging together and sharing ideas had been very beneficial.

The outputs from both the member working groups and the industry workshop were taken forward to be reviewed by officers as part of a feasibility exercise, to help to support and inform a further member working group, where finalised draft shared principles were agreed to be taken to wider public consultation in spring 2025.

Further information regarding this area of work can be found in Section 3.3.3.

2.1.2 Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM)



This year Southern IFCA have been continuing to explore the use of REM and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in inshore fisheries, facilitated by industry volunteers, funded by Southern IFCA and in close collaboration with Devon & Severn IFCA.

Building on an installation phase during the previous reporting year, the focus this year has been on the continued development and feasibility of small scale pilot trials in three of the districts priority fisheries:

1. **Bottom towed fishing gear (vessels under 12m).** In Partnership with Devon and Severn IFCA REM devices have been installed on two vessels operating in Lyme Bay. The devices allow detection of bottom towed gear being used within MPAs. This year Southern IFCA continued to work with the owner and master on one the trawlers in Lyme Bay, installing additional sensors on the trawl doors to determine whether the gear is inboard or in the water. This work has involved port visits and working directly on the volunteer vessel. Additional cameras overlooking the fish pound have also been installed in order to monitor bycatch, to improve information on stocks, demonstrating the benefits of REM for the marine scientific community and helping to improve the evidence base for Skates and Rays Fisheries Management Plan.
2. **Inshore netting (vessels under 12m)** (Harbour and Estuarine areas of Southampton and Christchurch). The monitoring and control plan within the Net Fishing Byelaw includes salmonid management within MPAs. Netting vessels may have interactions with salmonids which currently relies on self-reporting. The use of AI and REM has the potential to automate interactions between salmonids and netting vessels are occurring. This year, Southern IFCA fitted a under 12m vessel with REM that operates from West Bay, the vessel uses different types of static gear including whelk pots and nets, although the vessel does not fish in the target area (Harbour and Estuarine areas of Southampton and Christchurch – unable to secure industry volunteers), the vessel does net in the Lyme Bay Net Restriction area, a well evidenced migratory salmonid transit route. In this area there is an all year round three metre surface headline depth restriction for the protection of transiting salmonids. The REM fitted on this vessel has dual purpose in that it can also be used to monitor gear marking requirements under the Net Fishing Byelaw.
3. **Pot fishing (vessels under 12m).** The Pot Fishing Byelaw, currently awaiting ratification, introduces pot limits. AI has the potential to count strings of pots as they are hauled onto a vessel, This system could also be used in conjunction with sensors to help determine the start and end of a string. This process would allow for the pot numbers to be monitored and pot limits to be enforced. During this reporting year, Southern IFCA has fitted an under 12m vessel with REM that operates from West Bay, the vessel uses different types of static gear including whelk and crab/lobster pots, to date the REM (cameras) have been installed and video capture has started to be analysed. This work is now looking ahead to view the testing of two sensors on a string of whelk pots. This volunteer vessel also has assisted in the Southern IFCA Whelk populations survey to which REM was used to obtain positional data remotely.

2.2 Partnership Working

2.2.1 Working with other regulators

The Southern IFCA CET 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 (MaCAA) places a 'duty of co-operation' on an IFCA to work with its adjoining IFCA districts and any other public authority who exercises regulatory functions relating to the sea.



Home Office & International Fisheries C&E Training

Following a request from the Home Office, the Compliance and Enforcement Team (CET) worked with the National Wildlife Crime Unit to deliver training to overseas operatives on Environmental Security, as part of a Government to Government assistance programme coordinated by the UK Government.

Defra & MMO C&E Visit

In January, Southern IFCA hosted a meeting with the MMO Director of Operations, Head of Regulatory Assurance and Defra's Compliance & Enforcement National Lead to discuss opportunities and mechanisms through which the three organisations can continue to build upon their existing positive working relationships. The focus of the meeting was on joint working and chartering opportunities.

Joint Patrols with other regulators

During the reporting year the following joint patrols were undertaken with the following regulatory bodies operating in the inshore marine environment:



Regulator	What & Why
Border Force	Poole (land)
Dorset Police	Boscombe & Bournemouth Pier (land)
BCP EHOs	Lytchett Bay, handgathering (land)
MMO South Marine Team	Poole Harbour net fisheries (at sea)
MMO Senior Management Team	Solent, gear compliance (at sea)
Hampshire Police & Fareham EHOs	Hill Head, handgathering (land)
Fareham EHOs	Hill Head, handgathering (land)
Kings Harbour Master	Scallop vessels, main channel (Portsmouth) (at sea)
MMO Operations Team	4-day patrol on MMO offshore patrol vessel out to 12nm covering 80% of district priorities

MMO & Catch App

Southern IFCA have continued to work with the MMO to share Southern IFCA catch returns as part of assurance activities relating to under 10 metre catch recording.

MMO & CLUE

During the year Southern IFCA have continued to work with the MMO to facilitate a smooth transition to a new national intelligence system, with representatives from the CET attending weekly update meetings

to help inform discussions, identify areas of possible troubleshooting, help to develop the system and to support operational officers in their use of the system.

The meetings further provided an opportunity to communicate with IFCA colleagues across the country, as well as the MMO Intelligence Team, working together to ensure that the system under development remains fit for purpose. One key development made in-year were dashboard improvements, such enhancements allow officers to view intelligence relevant to neighbouring IFCA districts, alongside relevant MMO management areas. Additionally improvements were also made to the outcomes register, to facilitate joint access to higher resolution information relating to investigations and sanctions.

Southern IFCA worked with the MMO as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC), primarily responsible for supporting and facilitating communications and resolving issues between IFCAs nationally and the MMO during the CLUE database development and operational roll out. Additionally, the Southern IFCA SPOC informed ongoing matters regarding compliance and standardisation, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) management, training needs and best use guidance. Collectively this work has helped to improve the coordination of enforcement priorities across both organisations.

MMO & National Accreditations

The objectives of an Skills for Justice (SFJ) Award Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement (National Accreditation Programme) 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). This approach forges consistency in operation across regulatory organisations and is completed through a variety of assessment methods which include written assignments, discussions, Q&A and observations. This ensures that a full range of criteria is being met across the units which demonstrates the learner's knowledge and ability in role of an IFCO.

The qualification covers:

- UK and EU legislation governing a wide range of marine activities
- The powers and jurisdiction of the MEO/IFCO function
- 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 investigation

Southern IFCA have continued to work closely with the MMO on National Accreditations during the reporting year. This year one IFCO has successfully completed the qualification.

Environmental Health Officers & Shellfish Sampling

Southern IFCA have continued to facilitate the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with shellfish classification and water sampling, securing in-year, a 5 year contract with BCP Council to provide a marine platform and appropriate staff resource to carry out this monthly work, across 10 sample sites in Poole Harbour. Mussel samples are destined for the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) laboratory for analysis, with biotoxin water and shellfish samples collected and sent to The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Sciences (CEFAS) for testing.

The classification samples are tested for *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), with the test results determining 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.

2.2.2 Working with National IFCAs

National IFCA Enforcement Training

Southern IFCA continue to support the development and delivery of the National IFCA Enforcement Course in Brixham via provision of an experienced course facilitator. This course is designed to provide enforcement officers across the 10 IFCAs with a greater understanding of the IFCA function. The course has a particular focus on the Marine & Coastal Access Act, IFCO powers, provision of basic fish identification, gear technologies, health and safety matters, both at sea and in port, investigatory skills and case file management.

2.2.3 Working with neighbouring IFCAs

Devon & Severn IFCA: REM & AI

The Joint Fisheries Statement provides detail on how the UK authorities, including IFCAs, will deliver on the eight objectives set out in the Fisheries Act 2020. This includes exploring the use of technologies such as REM for scientific purposes and to aid the sustainable management and control of fisheries. It also commits the fisheries policy authorities to working with the fishing industry and interested organisations to develop and implement effective fisheries management. Technological monitoring solutions for scientific research and fisheries management are also the international direction of travel and are part of a wider trend towards digital transformation.

Southern IFCA are piloting how REM and AI could be deployed and utilised in three key fisheries in inshore waters. Southern IFCA are working closely with Devon and Severn IFCA, as well as other IFCAs to help inform a National IFCA Strategy.

Southern IFCA's ambition is for the REM and AI pilot project to inform national discussions and further the outcomes and development of the Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs), seeking novel, low-cost solutions to both evidence collation and control and enforcement, working with and collaborating with other IFCAs, Defra and the Fishing Industry.

Sussex IFCA: 167 Agreement

In year, the Authority approved the ten year renewal of a MaCAA Section 167 Agreement with Sussex IFCA which allows for the continued delegation of IFCA Byelaw making powers to Sussex IFCA for a relevant area of Chichester Harbour. The previous agreement, due to expire on the 30th July 2024 required Secretary of State approval in May 2024. The ratified agreement was confirmed on the 10th December 2024, with the pre-election period cited as the reason for the delay. During the hiatus the relevant area was monitored closely by Sussex and Southern IFCAs. The Section 167 agreement is now in place for a further 10 years.

Devon & Severn IFCA: Drone Surveys

Southern IFCA collaborated with Devon and Severn IFCA to carry out a trial drone survey on the 6th of August 2024. The trial aimed to map mussel beds to investigate the feasibility of using a drone to carry out future bivalve monitoring surveys.

This collaborative work allowed Officers to explore the benefits and challenges of drones use for intertidal survey work. The benefits identified included increased capability in accessing hard to reach or high-risk sites such as soft sediments, increasing the area of coverage for a survey and collecting survey data with reduced resource requirements compared to traditional survey techniques. Challenges were related to the dependence of drone operations on weather conditions, these being in some cases more restrictive

than for boat or foot-based survey work, and the costs associated with analysis of resulting footage. The requirement for stitching software to appropriately analyse the data is a significant limitation found as part of the exploratory work.

2.2.4 Working with Academic Institutes

Plymouth University: Angling for Sustainability FISP

The Angling for Sustainability FISP Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, concluded at the end of March 2025. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA attended monthly project group meetings hosted by the University of Plymouth, participating in the planning, delivery and engagement aspects of the project and provided expert input on fisheries management related to black seabream and elasmobranch species.

Additionally, Southern IFCA took part in eight days of tagging surveys for black seabream and elasmobranch species in the summer of 2024. Southern IFCA's in-kind contribution to the project as a Project Partner was initially intended to be, in part, through the provision of logistical support for receiver retrieval and data downloads. However, it was agreed with the University of Plymouth that the involvement of Officers would be more effective if redirected toward supporting tagging surveys, therefore increased resource in this area was delivered under the project in the 2024/25 year.

Southern IFCA facilitated engagement on the project through the Hampshire, Dorset and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group in September 2024 and attended three project stakeholder workshop events across the District, engaging with stakeholders on the project and relevance to fisheries management for relevant species, which included a cameo role in the project video. Southern IFCA presented at the final project Conference in early 2025, speaking on black seabream management in a local context, reflecting how the outcomes of the project were providing additional evidence to support understandings of sustainable and proportionate approaches to management for black seabream as a designated species within three MCZs in the District.

For further information please see: [Angling for Sustainability Non-Technical Summary](#) and [Angling for Sustainability Project Video](#).

Plymouth University: Fin Vision FISP

The Fin Vision FISP Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, concluded at the end of March 2025. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA facilitated the attendance of Fin Vision researchers in June and October 2024 on the Juvenile Fish Surveys in the District, to facilitate exploratory work relating to the use of project camera equipment in observing juvenile fish and to provide the opportunity for the outputs from the camera system to be compared to data collected using the more traditional seine net method employed in the Southern IFCA surveys.

Officers attended monthly project meetings hosted by the University of Plymouth, related to the planning and progression of the project and helped promote citizen science aspects of the project such as the Zooniverse tool, where anyone can help identify the presence of fish species within project video footage, with the District's angling community. Towards the end of the project, Southern IFCA provided support to an online stakeholder workshop, acting as facilitators for round table discussions as well as attending a more wide-reaching online workshop discussing the outcomes of the project. For further information please see: [FinVision - University of Plymouth](#) and [FinVision | Zooniverse - People-powered research](#).



3.0 Delivering Southern IFCA's Core Functions: Research & Policy

3.1 Data Collection Programme

3.1.1 Permit Fisheries Data Collection



Net Fishing Byelaw (NFB)

Catch reporting requirements under all three Net Fishing Permit Areas require Permit Holders to report the occurrence of any dead salmonids detected in a net, or in the event of an interaction between a net and a salmonid. This data feeds into the On-Site Monitoring Programme, which sits under the NFB Monitoring & Control Plan (M&CP), the outputs of which are linked to control mechanisms which are activated in the event that thresholds are reached.

For Year 1 of the NFB Permits (valid until 28th February 2024), no reported salmonid mortality occurred. There were two reported salmonid interactions, both involving sea trout in Christchurch Harbour; in both instances fish were in good condition and returned. As no trigger levels were reached, the control mechanisms were not activated during the reporting year.

Poole Harbour Dredge Permit (PHDP) Byelaw

Permit Holders are required to submit monthly catch returns detailing, for each day of the month, species harvested & quantities, catch location, fishing duration and buyer information. Commonly harvested species include Manila clam, common cockle, American Hard-Shelled Clam and native clam. Catch return data is used to calculate Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) as kg/day, which provides an indication on the abundance and distribution of target species across Poole Harbour.

In year, the catch data from the fishery indicated that LPUE for Manila clam was lower when compared to previous seasons. Subsequently, LPUE analysis was carried out on a monthly basis, with outcomes reported at the [August 2024](#) TAC and [November 2024](#) TAC, which indicated that LPUE was lower than the period 2020-2023 but remained consistent with levels seen between 2016-2019.

During the 2024/25 year, a M&CP was developed and designed which introduced a monitoring mechanism for Manila clam, using catch data as one of the monitoring variables under an On-Site Monitoring Programme and an In-Season Monitoring Programme. The data is used to assess the sustainability of the Manila clam fishery against Threshold Trigger Levels which, if reached, initiate Control Mechanisms to consider additional management to support a sustainable fishery.

For further information please see Section 3.4.2.

Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (SDPB)

SDPB Permit Holders are required to provide monthly catch returns detailing species caught & quantities, duration fished, location, and number of tows for each of the days fished during that month. The species most commonly reported under this catch data are King scallop and Manila clam.

The catch data is used to monitor trends in the quantities of each species removed from the fishery, allowing comparison with Southern IFCA run stock surveys to monitor the state of commercially important populations.

During the 2024/25 year, the spatial resolution of reporting in the King scallop fishery was refined to provide sub-reporting areas within the main Bivalve Management Area (BMA) used by this fishery (BMA 3) in order to improve the resolution at which catch data can be analysed against outputs from the Solent

Scallop Survey. This update sat alongside refinements to the design of the Solent Scallop Survey to best align survey sites with commercial fishing activity, cumulatively aiming to give a more detailed picture of fishing effort and stock levels to inform sustainable management under the SDPB. In the event that a review of management under the SDPB is required, data from Permit Holders forms one element of scientific and survey data used to inform the review.

For the 2024/25 season, for the two main commercial species, data indicated that average catch rates for King scallop (kg/hour/vessel) had significantly increased compared to the 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons but decreased in comparison to the 2023/24 season. Data for Manila clam showed a significant increase in average catch rates for Manila clam (kg/hour/vessel) in comparison to the 2021/22 and 2024/25 seasons. Overall, the data indicated that both stocks appeared to remain stable under current management.

Catch data reports for the SDPB fishery can be found [here](#).

Wrasse Fishery Data Collection

Wrasse Fishery Guidance requests that fishers submit monthly catch returns detailing the quantities of species caught for ballan, corkwing, goldsinny and rock cook wrasse species, the fishing method, fishing locations and fishing effort. In year, fisher submitted catch data is used to analyse changes in LPUE and compare this to previous years in addition to a review of the fisheries performance against set monitoring variables as listed in the Southern IFCA Studland to Portland SAC M&CP. Accordingly, a [Live Wrasse Fishery Monitoring and Control Report 2024](#) was presented to the Authority, which reported that no fishing had taken place within the Studland to Portland SAC during the relevant season.

Drift Net Fishery Research Project

During 2024, Southern IFCA explored ongoing evidence collection under a proposed research project to improve understanding of potential interactions between drift nets and salmonids in a non-targeted fishery. Southern IFCA engaged with Net Permit Holders on the implementation of this project but were unable to commence the project due to unresolvable factors relating to the collection of evidence. Southern IFCA will continue to explore the most appropriate method of approaching any further evidence collection in Year 2 of the NFB Permits (1st Mar 25 – 31st Mar 26).

3.2 Stock Assessment and Surveys

3.2.1 Whelk Population Survey



This survey assesses the distribution and abundance of common whelk across the Southern IFCA District. Samples sites for the 2024 survey included Weymouth Bay, Poole Bay and the Solent. The sampling site at Lyme Bay was not sampled during 2024 due to logistical difficulties with participating fishing vessels.

The survey involves collaboration with commercial fishers who collect samples of whelk using a standardised number of pots deployed independently, and collaboration with Bournemouth University, who provide access to lab facilities for sample analysis. Whelk samples are analysed to provide Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) data for different size classes and length frequency distribution.

Annual sampling supports the development of a time-series dataset and enables the assessment of stock distribution, abundance, and size trends across the District. This allows for the establishment of a robust evidence base to help address several key elements of whelk management:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of future management strategies within the Southern IFCA District under the Pot Fishing Byelaw
- To contribute to addressing evidence gaps identified in the Whelk FMP, with particular relevance to the definition of regional stock boundaries, Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) and the effectiveness of different types of management measures
- To understand and provide information on potential impacts of future whelk management delivered at a national, regional or stock boundary level on local fisheries within the District.

Data collection for 2024 was carried out between April and July with the 2024 report available [here](#). The 2024 dataset builds upon the baseline data obtained during the inaugural survey in 2023. Findings indicated that features of whelk populations vary across different areas of the District and may even show small subpopulation variations over small distances.

3.2.2 Poole Bivalve Survey



The Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey took place over three days in April 2024. Southern IFCA charter a vessel which is active in the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit (PHDP) fishery, which facilitates the collecting of length frequency data for all bivalve species sampled and CPUE data for individuals over and under the respective MCRS for the two most commonly harvested species, Manila clam and common cockle. Data is analysed for length frequency by sampling site and at the level of Permit Holder Catch Zones, allowing for comparisons between survey outputs and catch data supplied by Permit Holders during the previous fishing season.

The survey data contributes to a time-series dataset which looks at the populations of commercially harvested species, aiming to identify the sustainability of the population and any trends or patterns in stock changes over time. This data forms one of the evidence sources used to inform any reviews of management under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw (PHDPB).

Analysis of the [2024 Survey Results](#), along with time-series comparisons indicated that the harvestable populations of both Manila clam and common cockle remained stable with CPUE showing either no significant difference between years or, for common cockle, an increase in CPUE in the last two survey years. Catch levels and length frequency were also noted to remain stable.

The data obtained through the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey forms one of the Monitoring Variables under the On-Site Monitoring Programme for the M&CP. Data from the 2025 survey will be used for the first time to assess Manila clam CPUE against defined Threshold Trigger Levels, aiming to identify if additional management intervention will be required ahead of the 2025/26 fishing season.

For more information on this area of work, please see Section 3.4.2.

3.2.3 Solent Bivalve Survey



Two separate Solent bivalve surveys were undertaken over three days in October 2024 (pre-season) and three days in March 2025 (post season). These surveys, facilitated by the chartering of an industry vessel, sampled shellfish beds in Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour, collecting weight and length data for Manila clam, common cockle and American Hard-Shell clam. The presence of other bivalves, such as native oyster and Pacific oyster were also recorded. The data collected was used to determine CPUE and length-frequency for relevant shellfish populations in these

areas, with the data contributing to a time-series dataset allowing for the identification of trends in stock data and an assessment of the sustainability of the fishery

This data forms one of the evidence sources used to inform any reviews of management under the SDPB.

The 2024 survey report is available [here](#) concluded that the current fishing effort in the SDPB fishery is not having a significant impact on the stock levels, and that the trends observed could be related to the influence of environmental variables. Accordingly, it was determined that the SDPB management measures would not require review.

3.2.4 Solent Scallop Survey



Three separate Solent Scallop Surveys (1 x post fishing season closing: April 2024, 1 x pre- season opening: September 2024 and 1 x mid-season: February 2025) were undertaken with each running for 2-3 days using a commercial fishing vessel based out of a local port, with the aim of sampling the King scallop population in the Solent, collecting weight and length data which is used to determine CPUE and length-frequency with data contributing to a time-series dataset (3 years of consecutive data collection to date).

The 2024 survey [report](#) demonstrated a pattern of stock changes in relation to the fishing season which would be expected, with an overall decrease in CPUE during the fishing season and then an increase in CPUE during the period when the fishery is closed, demonstrating population recovery. The fishery appears to remain stable to fishing pressure and indicates current management remains suitable to support a sustainable fishery, which includes additional effort controls introduced in 2023 under the Solent Dredge Category A Permit.

The mid-season survey introduced the pilot of new survey methodologies following consideration of how to align Southern IFCA's surveys with monitoring at a national level to facilitate provision of data from the Solent into national datasets to help inform the implementation of the King Scallop FMP and the addressing of identified evidence gaps. The new methodology includes the use of a Queen scallop dredge alongside the standard dredge type used in the fishery, aiming to provide a greater range of size classes in samples, and refinement of survey areas to align with areas of greatest use by the fishery. The new methodology was successfully delivered in the February 2024 survey and will continue to be used in future surveys.

3.2.5 Solent Oyster Survey



The biennial Solent oyster survey took place over three days in July 2024, facilitated by a commercial fishing vessel with a historic involvement in the Solent native oyster fishery, allowing for the use of fisher knowledge and expertise to support and contextualise the survey. The survey took samples from locations throughout the north and eastern Solent, including Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour.

The survey collected weight and length data for native oysters to determine CPUE and length-frequency to provide an indication of the health of the population, in addition to contributing to a time-series dataset to identify population trends. The 2024 [survey](#) saw low CPUE figures across the Solent, with the data indicating that the native oyster population continues to show a fluctuating pattern of stock abundance with the general trend being low CPUE and/or low oyster numbers, both over and under the MCRS. Based on this information, the fishery remains closed for the 2025/26 fishing season.

3.2.6 Juvenile Fish Survey



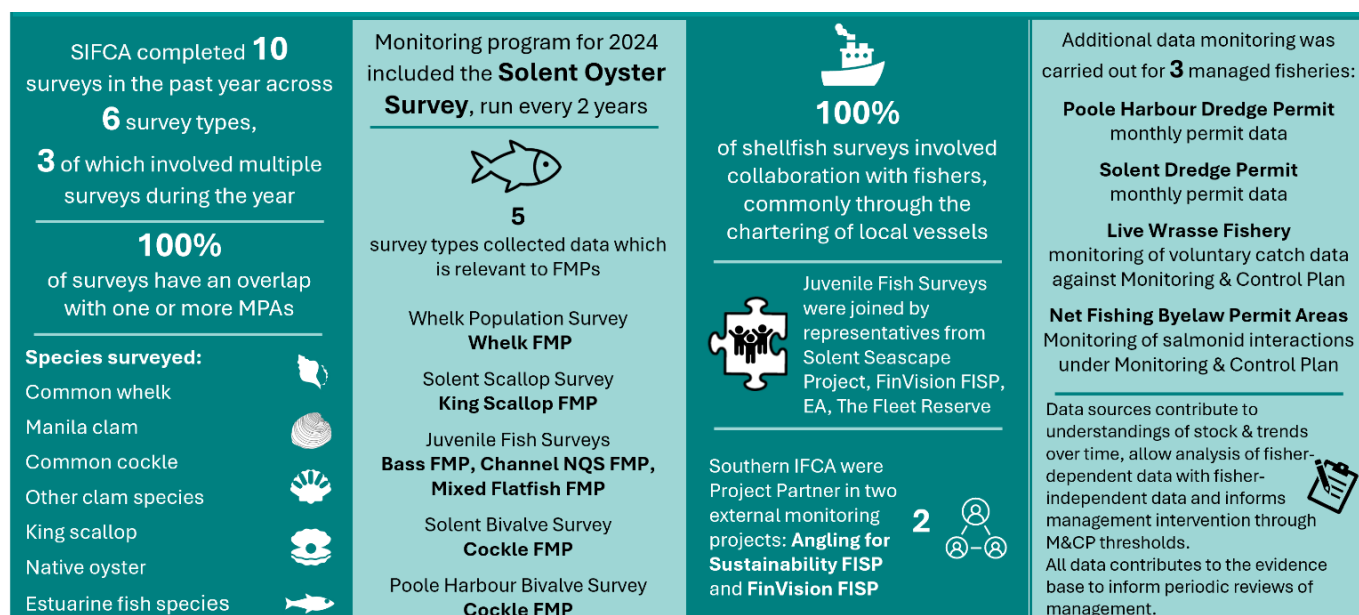
As part of the Juvenile Fish Monitoring Programme, surveys are carried out at a range of sites across the district in order to monitor the occurrence and distribution of juvenile fish species and the size frequency of species sampled. The surveys are carried out twice a year across four sites, with data added to a time-series dataset that allows any changes in fish communities to be observed.

Data from the programme contributes to understandings of the use of Essential Fish Habitats (EFHs) by commercially and recreationally important fish species. As part of the Southern IFCA Inshore Netting Review, one of the objectives of the review was to enhance the environmental, socio-economic and sustainability of fisheries within the District by supporting the use of harbours and estuaries as EFH. Of the four areas currently surveyed, three are identified through the Net Fishing Byelaw as requiring management which is linked, in part, to their importance as EFH. Additionally, understandings of EFH are highlighted as an evidence gap across FMPs for fish species, with data from this survey therefore having the potential to contribute to addressing evidence gaps at a national level. The data from this programme has also been provided at the FMP planning and preparation stage for the T4 FMPs Wrasses Complex and Seabreams.

Juvenile Fish Surveys took place in June and October 2024, with the outcomes captured in a [time-series analysis](#). The report looked at total and relative species abundance, species richness and the Shannon Diversity Index for all fish species sampled. To date there are no observable long-term trends in species abundance and species richness varies between sites. For all sites sampled, a variety of fish species are utilising the estuarine habitats with bass, goby species, sand smelt and grey mullet species being the most commonly occurring.

The surveys offer opportunities to work in collaboration with research establishments and organisations with an interest in fisheries and associated management. In 2024, Southern IFCA were joined by a representative from the Solent Seascope Project, a research student from the University of Plymouth FinVision FISP Project, The Environment Agency and the Fleet Reserve team.

3.2.7 Data Collection, Stock Assessment & Survey Summary Infographic



3.3 Developing of Management Interventions

3.3.1 BTFG Review



The Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG) Byelaw 2023 was submitted to the MMO at the end of 2023 for quality assurance. During the 2024/25 year, four rounds of QA were completed with the MMO between April and September 2024. In September 2024 the byelaw package was submitted to Defra for consideration. Three rounds of QA were completed with Defra between December 2024 and March 2025. At the end of the 2024/25 year, the Defra team were completing final checks of the byelaw package before submission to the Minister's Office for ratification.

The MMO QA undertaken during this period related to minor updates to wording, style and formatting of the Byelaw and Impact Assessment with some additional comments on clarity of providing information within the Impact Assessment. Following submission of the byelaw package to Defra, the first round of Defra QA consisted of providing clarity on the spatial footprint of the new byelaw compared to the existing BTFG Byelaw 2016 and further detail on the outcomes of the formal consultation.

There were two new elements introduced to the byelaw process through the subsequent rounds of Defra Quality Assurance (QA) which have been addressed and are now being applied to all Southern IFCA byelaw development. The first is the need to report costs to industry in the Impact Assessment as profit costs rather than revenue costs. The determination of costs using landings and catch data is defined as revenue costs, the Seafish Fleet Enquiry Tool is then used to determine, by the appropriate gear type, the profit costs with providing information on Fishing Income relative to Operating Profit. The second was the need to reference how the proposed legislation and its development has considered the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Environmental Principles Policy Statement.

3.3.2 Shore Gathering Review



Work under the Shore Gathering Review during the 2024/25 year followed an Authority Member Working Group held towards the end of the 2023/24 year where Members considered draft management measures for shore gathering activities, informed by the best available evidence (Site Specific Packages), the use of a GPS buffer for spatial management and consideration of how spatial and temporal measures would be defined in accordance with the feature-based requirements of differing MPAs. In-year, draft measures were formulated into the Shore Gathering Byelaw, supported by a Conservation Assessment Package (inclusive of Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and MCZ Assessments for all relevant MPAs) and an Impact Assessment. The Impact Assessment was developed following a targeted engagement exercise with representatives from the relevant shore gathering activities proposed to be managed (bait digging & collection, shellfish gathering, crab tiling/collection, shrimp push netting, mechanical harvesting and seaweed harvesting). This engagement exercise was undertaken due to the lack of data available from catch records due to the nature of the activities and the large proportion of recreational participation in shore gathering.

Alongside the development of the Shore Gathering Byelaw, the Authority developed an update to the Fishing for Cockles Byelaw, in order to remove provisions related to hand gathering; in addition to a Seaweed Harvesting Code of Conduct, deemed to be an appropriate management mechanism for this activity outside of spatial management areas in the Shore Gathering Byelaw.

The progression of the development of the Byelaws through the 2024/25 year included:

- Finalisation of draft measures and supporting documents following the May 2024 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting.
- Submission of the byelaws package to Natural England for Formal Advice.
- Consideration by the TAC of the full Byelaw Package, including Formal Advice from NE at the August 2024 TAC Meeting, where two subsequent updates were made to the Byelaw relating to ensure that the proposed management provided appropriate mitigations for the relevant MPAs.
- At the August 2024 TAC Meeting Members agreed to formally notify the Secretary of State of the intention to make the Shore Gathering Byelaw and the Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw at the September Authority Meeting.
- The Shore Gathering and Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw were Made at the September Authority Meeting
- A period of Formal Consultation on both byelaws was run following the September Authority Meeting, concluding on 14th November 2024
- Responses from the Formal Consultation were considered by Members at the November 2024 TAC Meeting, the December 2024 Executive Sub-Committee Meeting and the December 2024 Authority Meeting, no changes were recommended to either byelaw.
- The byelaws package was submitted to the MMO for QA prior to confirmation by the Secretary of State in December 2024.
- The first round of QA from the MMO was received in February 2025.

The total area of the District proposed to be managed under spatial closures (permanent and seasonal) under the Shore Gathering Byelaw is 42.8km², representing 1.56% of the area of the District. For all relevant MPAs covered by the Shore Gathering Byelaw (up to the 2m contour), management will cover 24.2% of SPAs, 32.4% of SACs and 16.1% of MCZs, in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs¹ in the District.

Further information and all documentation can be found [here](#).

3.3.3.Black Sea Bream Review



Background pre-April 2024:

TAC Members agreed, in February 2024 the following General, Evidence and Spatial Principles to help facilitate the progression of management considerations for black seabream (BSB) across 3 Dorset MCZs:

(1) 'further' will be defined as 'to take to a greater degree or a more advanced stage' in line with the Oxford English Dictionary definition

(2) The best available evidence used to inform nest locations for black seabream is that provided in:

- a) The Natural England designated features layer provided to Southern IFCA in 2023
- b) Data from Cefas Project Report for NE (2021)
- c) Data from Southern IFCA side scan sonar of Chapmans Pool (2016)
- d) Data collected by Collins, K. Side scan sonar survey (2010)

(3) Any additional evidence received after the 29th January 2024 will be considered during the period of formal byelaw consultation (where relevant) and then (subject to byelaw ratification), in subsequent byelaw reviews, as determined under the provisions of the byelaw.

- (4) In accordance with the best available evidence, three data types are to be used to identify nest locations.
'Nest Data'
a) Individual nests (Cefas and NE data)
b) Polygon data (Southern IFCA data)
c) Nest areas of 50m x 50m where nest(s) have been noted to occur (Collins, K. data)
- (5) A 10m buffer will be added to all nest locations to account for confidence in GPS accuracy. This will be referred to as '**GPS Buffer**'.
- (6) Nest data and GPS Buffer combined will be called '**Nest Units**'
- (7) Three or more Nest Units existing within 320m of another will be grouped using straight lines to form '**Hotspots**'.
- (8) Collectively principles 4-7 build to provide '**Indicative Habitat Areas**'.
- (9) Management will be considered within 'Indicative Habitat Areas'.

BSB Roadmap 2024-25: Quantification Of Impact Exercise

In order to gain an understanding of the potential impact that the introduction of no take zones across 13 IHAs could have, a 'Quantification Of Impact Exercise' was undertaken with the community. The aim of which was to understand the type and volume of fishing activity which occurs within the IHAs. In addition, this exercise considered social, economic, culture and heritage aspects of impact, as well as providing an opportunity to explore some of the existing self-governed mechanisms in place across some of the community to support the sustainability of the BSB fisheries. During this initial evidence gathering exercise, 23 stakeholders (6 from the charter fleet, 4 from the RSA community and 13 from the commercial fishing sector) were engaged via targeted coastal engagement, with additional via in-person (13) and 1 via phone. A review of data available online on charter vessels, data obtained from the MMO and data obtained from literature was also undertaken as part of this exercise

At the May 2024 TAC, Members received [cumulative economic assessments](#) which concluded that the introduction of no take zones across the 13 proposed IHAs had the potential to cost the Dorset community c.£1.3million over the course of one fishing season.

BSB Roadmap 2024-2025: In Year Review

The 'Quantification of Impact Exercise' instigated a three month review of BSB work undertaken to date. This process consolidated all relevant material considerations which included exploration of the mode by which the BSB had been designated by Natural England under the MaCAA 117(5) ('...to conserve diversity due to ecological significance...area considered to be of critical importance to life cycle, where if not protected [the BSB] would be affected at population or sub-population level...and where [BSB] occur at high densities in contrast to surrounding areas'). This route of designation is unique when compared to other MPA work that Southern IFCA have undertaken to date; whereby feature based management of designated species or habitats has been developed following NE designation in accordance with MaCAA 117(4): where species or habitats are rare or threatened due to limited numbers or limited locations where present.

This renewed understanding, alongside consideration of all other relevant material considerations (to include the BSB Conservation Objectives, best available evidence, the Authority's legal duties, improved understandings of site relevant fishing activity and consideration of how existing management already provides protections to the BSB), provided the Members at the subsequent Working Group with wider contextual understandings which were required to inform the next stages in the decision making process.

Entering the Co-Development Phase

(1) Member Working Group: Exploring Draft Principles

In August 2024, a Member Working Group was held where Members considered whether additional management intervention was required in the BSB fishery, in addition to the protections currently afforded to the BSB under existing statutory management mechanisms across all the MCZs, as well as MOD spatial closures relevant to the Purbeck Coast MCZ. Specifically, with regard to Southern IFCA management, under the 2016 BTFG Byelaw where 63% of the 3 MCZs are closed to BTFG, which under the proposed BTFG 2023 Byelaw (awaiting SoS ratification) would see an increase to 98%. Additionally, Members considered the protections already afforded to BSB under the MCRS Byelaw. The Working Group agreed the following **Drivers** to underpin the exploration of a Shared Principles Model, to supplement the protections already in existence across the 3 x MCZs, recognising a need for consideration of additional management to:

Drivers

- (1) Improve understandings of BSB behaviours, fisheries (socioeconomic) and ecosystem management, recognising that these are currently data poor.
- (2) be proportionate in the application of precaution, complementing existing statutory measures for lower impact fisheries (adaptive management approach).
- (3) be precautionary, as despite evidence suggesting that current effort is not having an impact, this remains data poor. Additionally, potential future impact also remains unknown.

Subsequently, Members drafted the following **Headline Objectives** which provide the rationale for the exploration of additional management solutions:

Headline Objectives

- (1) To ensure current and future sustainability of BSB populations for the benefit of the marine environment and all sectors.
- (2) to improve understandings via data collection.
- (3) to monitor and review measures (adaptive management).
- (4) include users in policy development and ongoing management interventions.

Members discussed the following **Management Proposals** that they wanted to be taken forward to the stakeholder community for further discussion:

Measure	Member Management Proposal
Spatial	No take zone in IHAs during breeding season (April – July inclusive)
Temporal	
Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of circle hooks • Use of barbless hooks
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational bag limit (5 or 6) • 0% bycatch during breeding season in IHAs (April – July inclusive)
Technical Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase MCRS to 30cm (to align with L50) • Introduce Max. landing size April – July (to avoid removal of males)
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational data collection • Fishery dependant and independent data collection • Supplementary info. for commercial data (where not already provided for by other means) • M&C Programme with thresholds.

Continuing the Co-Development Phase

(2) Industry Working Group: To consider & further inform draft principles

In October 2024, an Industry Workshop was held with representatives from the commercial (12) and recreational/charter (10) sectors, covering all relevant gear types. Attendees at the Industry Workshop were provided with a contextual underpinning framed around the Drivers and Headline Objectives developed by the Members. Attendees were invited to comment on proposed management options and put forward any additional industry informed management suggestions:

Measure	Industry Management Proposal
Spatial	No take zone in IHAs during breeding season (April – July inclusive) where there is less social economic impact, e.g. IHAs 4&5. NB – not a preferred option
Temporal	
Gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of less impactful types of hooks
Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational bag limit (6) Commercial effort cap 6.2tpa (rod, line, netting)
Technical Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase MCRS to 29cm
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational data collection and charter logbooks to include: no. of fish caught, no of fish retained, no. of oversized, no. of undersize, no. of anglers, areas fished, no. of hours fished in MCZs.

(3) Officer Feasibility Exercise

Between August and November 2024, the suggested management options proposed by the Members and Industry were reviewed by officers who undertook a plausibility & feasibility check against all material considerations. This exercise encompassed cross-checking of all of the proposals with compatibility with the MCZ Conservation Objectives, the Headline Objectives, compliance & enforcement considerations, as well as with consideration of overarching policy directives, to include the progression of the BSB FMP. In addition, a literature review for BSB was finalised, with the inclusion of updated evidence coming from publications on BSB tagging studies in Sussex by the University of Plymouth FishIntel Project. Collectively these components informed the feasibility exercise

(4) Member Working Group

In February 2025 a Members Working Group was held with the overall objective of drawing together and reviewing all of the co-developed components and to consider these in parallel with the outcomes of the officer feasibility exercise. The Members subsequently finalised the following CoD Principles to be taken forward to public consultation in the 2025/26 year:

Application of CoD Principles:	
Voluntary, applying within the 3 Dorset MCZs, and in force during the period 1st April to 31st July.	
Proposed CoD Principles:	
Minimum Conservation Reference Size	28cm
Maximum Conservation Reference Size	38cm
Recreational Bag Limit	6 fish per person per day
Guidance	Good practice fishing & handling
Data Collection	Year-round, all sectors

3.4 Reviews of Existing Management

3.4.1 Poole Order 2025



Tranche 3 Delivery

Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity within The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (The Order) in accordance with the Shellfish Act 1967. The issuing of leases under The Order is in a series of five-year tranches. The Tranche 2 (T2) period 2020 – 2025 concluded on the 30th June 2025, requiring the issuing of leases for a new Tranche 3 (T3) lease period from 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2030.

As part of this process, an initial review of potential lease bed reallocations was undertaken, which concluded no further action in order to continue to support the objectives of the Poole Harbour SPA, as well as other water users.

All eligible T2 leaseholders formally submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to renew their existing leases for the T3 period, along with an End of Tranche 2 Lease Report and a T3 (2025 – 2030) Business Plan.

In order for Southern IFCA to continue to manage aquaculture into the T3 period, the following Supporting Documents were reviewed and amended accordingly:

- The Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan: demonstrates how Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity under The Order. Significant amendments were made to the document, including the introduction of a section describing how the management supports delivery of national legislation and policy, in addition to the inclusion of a “Shellfish Movement Guidance Document” to aid collection and provision of data. (Poole Harbour Management Plan: 2025 Update)
- The Poole Order Biosecurity Measures Plan: which outlines both regulator and leaseholders’ responsibilities in upholding biosecurity standards. No consequential changes were required for T3. (Poole Order Biosecurity Measures Plan: 2025 Update)
- The Habitat Regulations Assessment 2025 – 2030 (HRA) document assesses the proposed activity under T3 of The Order against the designated features and supporting habitats of the Poole Harbour SPA, Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar Site in line with Southern IFCA’s duties as a Competent Authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Additional evidence was provided through a new “Literature Review of Bivalve Aquaculture Ecosystem Services”, and a “Pacific Oyster Monitoring Report”. ([Poole Order 2015 HRA: 2025-2030 Update](#)).

Following Members consideration of this area of work, it was concluded that the issuing of T3 leases would not have an adverse effect, alone or in combination, on designated features and their supporting habitats within the Poole Harbour SPA.

Annual Management Review and BAU



- In accordance with the Order, Southern IFCA are required to undertake an annual review of the Management Plan. The TAC considered the annual update in May 2024. It was resolved that no significant changes were required to the MP for 2024/25.

- Shellfish Movements: Southern IFCA operates as the Aquaculture Production Business (APB) for The Order and accordingly are required to record and submit data of all on-shore and off-shore movements to CEFAS in line with biosecurity requirements. In-year 53 on-site movements and 26 off-site movements were reported.
- Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) Inspection: The FHI conducts APB annual inspections to observe aquaculture operations, engage with leaseholders, and ensure that Southern IFCA comply with its biosecurity responsibilities. Southern IFCA received notification of a pass for the 2024 APB inspection, which maintains Southern IFCA's APB status. A simplified Business Management Plan (2024) was agreed following FHI feedback.
- A Shellfish Movement Guidance Document was developed and provided to leaseholders following the Annual Shellfish Movements Data submission and APB Inspection. The document outlines the reporting requirements for leaseholders in relation to shellfish movements and how this data will be recorded. This document was integrated into the Management Plan (2025) in preparation for the rollout of T3.
- Lease Bed Visits: Lease bed visits are conducted throughout the year following notable changes to a leaseholder's aquaculture operations. The visits allow IFCOs to observe and discuss how BP amendments impact aquaculture operations on the water with leaseholders. Additionally, these visits offer IFCOs an opportunity to engage with leaseholders and fishermen about developments in Poole Harbour or the wider inshore community. Two lease bed visits were conducted this financial year.

Further information can be found in Annex 2.

3.4.2 PHDPB: Permit Condition Review 2024



The PHDP regulates dredging for shellfish in Poole Harbour through the annual issue of permits. Under the PHDPB, the Authority conducts a review of the suitability of permit conditions, permit fees and limitations on the number of permits every three years or sooner.

During the early 2024 fishing season (25th May – 23rd Dec), Southern IFCA received reports from permit holders regarding a reduction in the levels of Manila clams when compared to previous years. Following high resolution analysis of the monthly 2024 catch data; when compared to catches for 2020-2023, the 2024 catch was found to be lower, but consistent with the catch rates seen between 2016-2023. This position was presented to the TAC in November, where it was subsequently determined to develop a [M&CP](#) for the fishery in November 2024, which introduced specific On-Site and In-Season Monitoring Programmes for the Manila clam fishery. Additionally, potential changes to permit conditions were considered for implementation should in-season management be required to support the fishery.

A consultation with permit holders and other interested parties took place between 10th December 2024 and 10th January 2025. The outcomes of the review were agreed by the TAC in February 2025. Following the adoption of the M&CP, LPUE data from the 2024 fishing season and CPUE data collected in the 2025/26 year from the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey will be analysed against the On-Site Monitoring Programme and, in the event that a Control Mechanism is activated, a decision on the requirement for any additional management to support a sustainable fishery will be taken at the TAC meeting in May 2025.

This program of action sought to facilitate proactive, co-designed collaborative management of the fishery.

3.4.3 NFB: Permit Condition Review: Year 1



The Southern IFCA NFB (ratified in August 2023) defines three Net Permit Areas (NPA) in the District: Christchurch Harbour NPA, Southampton Water NPA and the River Hamble NPA. A net permit for each NPA has associated net permit conditions which provide flexible management measures for each NPA. 17 Net Permits were issued for Year 1 under the NFB.

Under the NFB, the Authority reviews the suitability of permit Conditions, permit fees and limitations on the number of permits issued annually or, if required, the temporary closure of an NPA in accordance with the NPA M&CP. During the 2024/25 year Southern IFCA undertook the first annual review under the NFB, considering evidence related to Year 1 Net Permits. This process involved looking at the available evidence feeding into the Annual Review and consultation with Net Permit Holders.

Key Considerations: Available Evidence Feeding into the Annual Review		
NPA M&CP		
<i>Informs annual management of permitted net fisheries to ensure the Authority are using best available evidence regarding understandings of interactions between net fishing and migratory salmonids within the District's harbours and estuaries.</i>		
On-Site Monitoring Programme	Provides triggers for different control mechanisms based upon the type of data collected	No Trigger Threshold Levels were reached under any of the 5 Monitoring Components
Indicators of Salmonid Health Over Time	Supports understandings of salmonid health based on best available data from partner organisations	A review of the listed data sources was conducted which identified new salmon run data. Where available, data up to 23/24 was used to inform the annual review.
Consultation with Net Permit Holders		
<i>Took place between 10th December 2024 and 22nd January 2025. During this period Permit Holders were provided with two opportunities to provide comment or feedback.</i>		
Consultation Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 requests for a reduction in the cost of an annual permit • 1 request for a reduction in the number of permits for Christchurch Harbour based on competition for space • 1 request to use a drift net in the Southampton Water NPA • 1 comment on Year 2 TTLs being too low as affected by poor run years 	

Following an assessment of best available evidence, it was resolved by the TAC in February 2025, that no changes were required to be made to flexible permit conditions, permit fees or the number of permits for the Year 2 season. Accordingly:

- The number of net permits is to remain at 17, as compatible with the outcomes of the Conservation Assessments for the NFB
- The calculations informing the cost of a net permit continue to accurately represent the Authority expenditure in managing the NPA
- The use of drift nets in the Southampton Water NPA remains incompatible with the Conservation Assessments specific to the River Itchen SAC and Functionally Linked Areas in the River Test and Southampton Water
- Threshold Trigger Levels (TTLs) are updated in accordance with the agreed calculation method in the M&CP, analysis on an annual basis allows incorporation of changes in run data.

The Atlantic salmon run data was updated in the [NPA M&CP: 2025 Update](#), the TTL for salmonid interactions was updated in line with the new salmon run data, the TTL for salmonid mortality remained at 1 fish:

NPA M&CP TTLs for Salmonid Interactions				
Year 1			Year 2	
	S'ton Water (inc. River Hamble)	Christchurch Harbour	S'ton Water (inc. River Hamble)	Christchurch Harbour
TTL: Interactions	10	10	4	8
Best available data	2018-2020	2017-2020	2021-2023	2021-2023

(*) For Christchurch Harbour in Year 1 there was no data available for 2018

The [Inshore Netting Review: Process, Tools & Intentions 2024 document](#) was updated with access criteria for Year 2 with the Year 2 Permits being valid from 1st March 2025 – 31st March 2026, from Year 3 onwards the Permits will align with the financial year.

3.4.4. Mussel Authorisation for Aquaculture Purposes



A request was made to the Authority for consideration of a continuation of an authorisation under the Southern IFCA Mussels Byelaw, which permitted the removal of mussels from the District (less than 50mm) for the purpose of relaying on a lease bed, managed under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015, for cultivation.

The proposed activity under the 2025 authorisation mirrored that of the previous authorisation, and when considering the best available information provided, it was determined that the authorisation could continue for the period 1st January to 31st December 2025. Conditions specified in the authorisation included that the activity must take place outside of the boundaries of the relevant MPAs, a limit was placed on the quantity of mussels that could be removed, as well as a time period within which relaying must take place. Removal would be undertaken with Southern IFCA being aware of the activity and electronic monitoring equipment would be operational. At the end of the activity a catch report would be provided.

3.4.5 Wrasse Fishery Review



No Triggers were reached under any of the Monitoring Variables set for the [Live Wrasse Fishery Monitoring and Control Plan](#), therefore there was no requirement to review the Wrasse Fishery Guidance or the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Studland to Portland SAC during the 2024/25 year.

3.4.6 MCRS Review



During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA continued to engage in the post-publication phase for FMPs, reviewing outputs from the implementation of FMP actions and providing comment where required, attending workshops and meetings on relevant FMP actions and maintaining oversight of identified FMP Evidence Gaps. The cumulative outputs of this work have provided an ongoing understanding of the timescales over which FMP actions may be delivered and how any actions relate to existing management within the Southern IFCA District and/or the relevant fisheries. As of the end of the 2024/25 year, it was

not deemed appropriate to proceed with the MCRS Review at a Southern IFCA level and Southern IFCA continue to review the scope and requirements under this review alongside the development of the national direction in fisheries management.

4.0 Delivering Southern IFCA's Core Functions: Compliance & Enforcement

2



4.1 High Risk, Intelligence Led Work

The Southern IFCA is committed to achieving fair, effective and proportionate enforcement. The [Compliance and Enforcement-Framework](#) sets out the Southern IFCA's approach and principles the Authority follow and the enforcement actions available. As directed by Defra, Southern IFCA apply a risk-based approach, captured in the Southern IFCA [Compliance Risk Register](#) which, in addition to intelligence reporting, informs operational planning via a TCG to focus and prioritise Southern IFCA's compliance and enforcement activities.

Intelligence Reports (IRs) are Southern IFCA's method of recording, storing, collating and disseminating intelligence that complement a risk-based approach. Additional intelligence gained via access to the UK Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System (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.

Between April 2023 and March 2024 12 TCGs were held by Southern, to include representation from Devon and Severn IFCA, Sussex IFCA, Dorset Police, Hampshire Police, Devon & Cornwall Police, Environment Agency (EA), Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), South East Marine Team (MMO), South Marine Team (MMO), Environmental Health Officers (BCP Council), Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and UK Border Force.

4.1.1 Operational Deployment

IFCOs conduct both land and sea-based patrols across the district with the overarching purpose to ensure compliance with 24 x [Byelaws](#), 7 x [CoP](#) and the [Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015](#).

Southern IFCA operates three patrol vessels which are used to observe fishing activity, engage with industry, carry out boarding inspections and to target reported illegal activity. On shore, IFCOs 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 a [drone capability](#) to support operational activity. This has enhanced 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.

4.2 Monitoring & Control of Existing Statutory & Non Statutory Measures

4.2.1 Compliance Inspections undertaken

Category	Metric	Details	2023/24	2024/25
Inspections of sea	Vessel patrols	Any patrol vessel or survey (mother /daughter boat combination as one patrol)	57	61
	Fishing vessel boarding	Any fishing vessel (including unregistered / unlicensed) inspected at sea, where boarding was in pursuit of any relevant duty	169	175
	Fishing gear inspections	Store pots, tiers / strings etc. of fishing gear found deployed in sea, where inspection was	0	0

		in pursuit of any relevant duty. Do not count gear inspected onboard a vessel		
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	105	125
	Port visits	Individual port/cove/beach visits within the shoreline	183	207
	Premises inspections	Markets, merchants refrigerated units, retailers, food producers/outlets etc	31	29
	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	118	140
	Other inspections	Vessel gear/fish checks in port/ashore, diver and shore angler catches, vehicle contents, shellfish on lay areas etc.	73	100
Drone	Drone Flights	No. of times drone has been deployed for operational purposes.	24	38

4.3 Enforcement Actions

4.3.1 Southern IFCA Byelaws: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Actions Taken

Verbal Warning	23	16 x MCRS byelaw 1x Net Fishing byelaw 1x Periwinkle byelaw 4x BTFG 2016 byelaw
Official Written Warning	7	2x MCRS byelaw 1x Net Fishing byelaw 2x PHDP byelaw (spatial) 1x BTFG byelaw (catch return) 1x SDPB (spatial)
Fixed Administrative Penalty (FAP)	6	2x MCRS byelaw (£500 & £1500) 2x PHDP byelaw (spatial) – 2x £1000 2x BTFG area 40 – £3000 & £2,000 (1x led by D&SIFCA)
Prosecution	1	1x MCRS byelaw – failed to pay FAP, found guilty (costs £5,435.25)
Ongoing investigations	2	1x PHDP byelaw (spatial) – FAP issued 1x SDPB, BTFG, Cockles

4.3.2 MaCAA: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Actions Taken

Ongoing investigations	1	Failure to comply offences.
------------------------	---	-----------------------------

4.3.3 National Measures: Non Compliance identified and Enforcement Action Taken

Verbal Warning	7	6x MCRS/Tech Con 1x Berried lobster
Official Written Warning	3	3x Bass regs – u/s, BNA, exceed rec quota

Southern IFCA v Chi Keung LEUNG media release 31/03/2025



On Tuesday 25th March 2025, Portsmouth Magistrates Court heard how Mr Chi Keung Leung of Southsea, Portsmouth, removed from the sea and retained on board his vessel a quantity of black sea bream that were below the minimum conservation reference size, contrary to the Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority's (Southern IFCA) **Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw**. The charges were laid by the Southern IFCA and the case was heard in Mr Leung's absence. Mr Leung was ordered to pay costs and fines totalling £6,135.25.

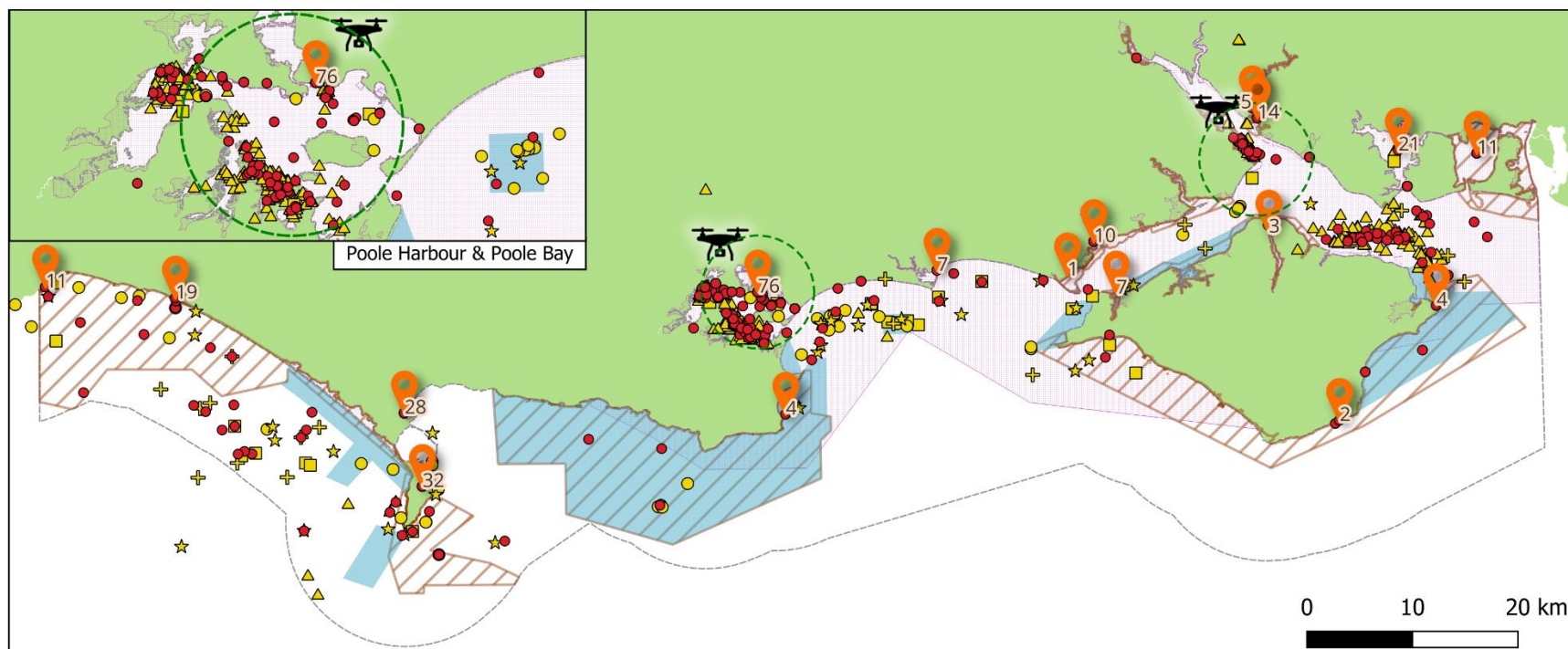
On Monday 29th July 2024, Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers saw Mr Leung fishing with a rod and line from an inflatable dinghy in Langstone Harbour. With the assistance of Langstone Harbour Master, the Southern IFCA officers intercepted Mr. Leung aboard his vessel. **An inspection of his vessel and catch was carried out, with officers finding 88 black sea bream in total. Of the 88 fish, 77 were found to be below the Minimum Conservation Reference Size of 23cm (87.5% of the total catch).**

Following a full investigation by the Southern IFCA, Mr. Leung was given the opportunity to discharge any criminal liability for his offending via payment of a £500 Financial Administrative Penalty (FAP) Notice. However, on receipt of the FAP Notice, Mr. Leung informed Southern IFCA of his intent to decline payment. Legal proceedings were subsequently initiated by Southern IFCA following Mr Leung's failure to pay the FAP Notice within the statutory 28-day period and the case was heard in Mr. Leung's absence, after he failed to attend court.

The magistrates were advised that the number of undersized fish retained in the case was exceptionally high and described the unique behaviours of black sea bream who move into inshore waters during the spring and summer months in order to nest. Satisfied with the prosecution's evidence, the court issued a £500 fine and awarded the full investigation and legal costs of £5,435.25, plus a victim surcharge of £200, making a total of £6,135.25.

When asked to comment, Southern IFCA's Principal Deputy Chief Officer Sam Dell said, *"This case sends a clear message that failing to comply with the Authority's regulations will not be tolerated. I would like to publicly thank the Langstone Harbour Master and the IFCA officers involved in this case and recognise their tenacious approach in pursuing all lines of enquiry during this investigation. The Southern IFCA is committed to the protection of fish stocks and coastal fisheries, ensuring healthy seas and a viable industry. By dealing with offenders robustly, we aim to support sustainable local fisheries."*

4.4 Compliance & Enforcement of Marine Protected Areas 2



Sightings (by gear type):

- Inspections
- + Trawl
- ★ Trap/Pot
- ▲ Dredge
- Net
- Line

Drone and Port Inspections:

- 📍 Port visits
- 🚁 Drone flights

- Marine Conservation Zones
- ▨ Special Areas of Conservation
- ▨ Special Protection Areas
- ▨ SIFCA 6 nm boundary

Not to be used for navigation. Contains public sector data provided by Southern IFCA for the purpose of MPA Management.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY Sightings and Inspections in Relation to Marine Protected Areas

SIFCA conducted
531
sightings in the past year

93% were within
SIFCA's Marine Protected
Areas



39
sightings were
recreational vessels



492
sightings were
commercial vessels



SIFCA sightings
recorded gear types:

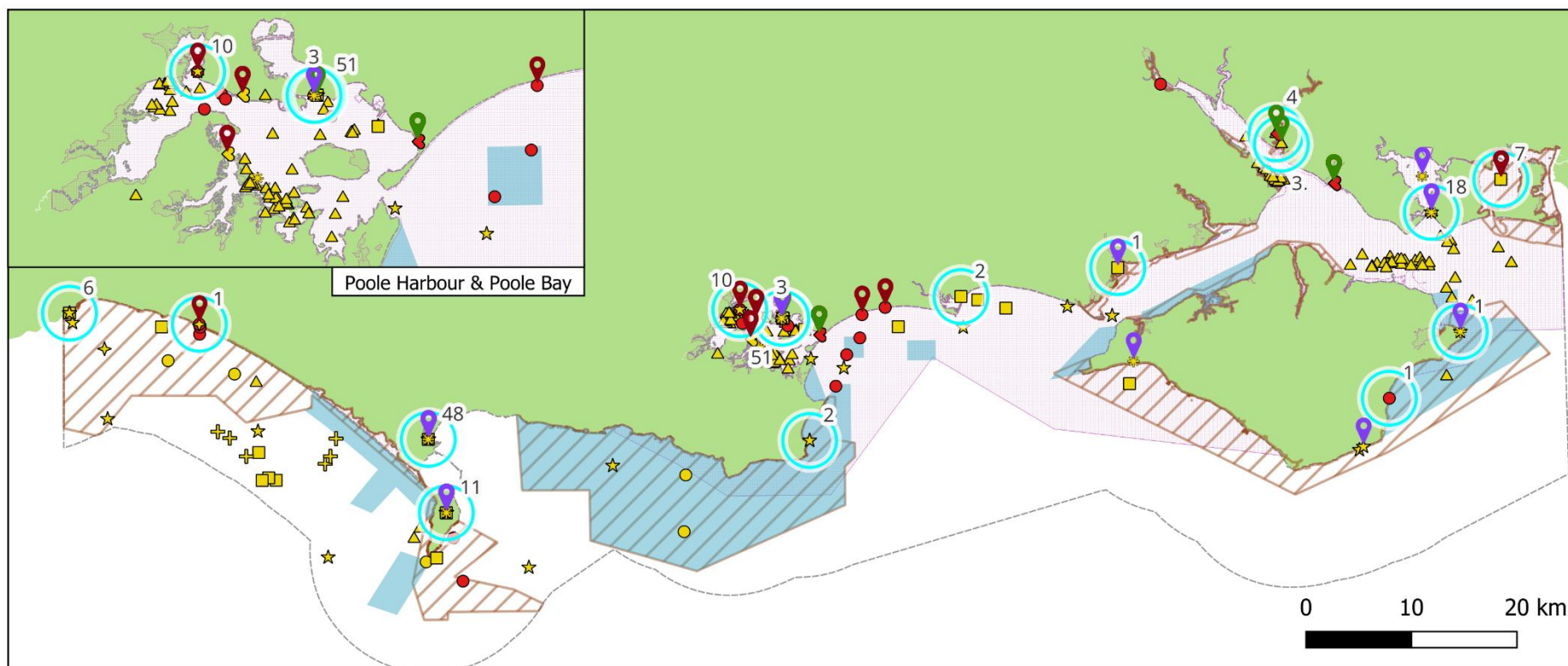
17 Trawlers
31 Pots and Traps
25 Nets
55 Lines and Rod & line
403 Dredges

Out of all of the
inspections conducted by
SIFCA in the past year,

45%
were within SIFCA's
Marine Protected Areas

SIFCA conducted
38
drone flights,
100% were in MPAs





Port inspections:

- Premises
- Person
- Vehicle

- Port landing inspections

- Marine Conservation Zones
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas

- Commercial gear
 - Recreational gear
- Inspections by gear type:

- Diving
- Hand gathering
- Trawling
- Mixed gear
- Pots
- Net
- Rod & line
- Dredge

Not to be used for navigation. Contains public sector data provided by Southern IFCA for the purpose of MPA Management.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Inspection Records in Relation to Marine Protected Areas

SIFCA conducted

441

inspections in the past year

168 of these were at sea, with **45%**

of all inspections being conducted within Marine Protected Areas

63

inspections related to recreational gear



378

inspections related to commercial gear

Inspections - recorded gear types (% in MPAs):

- 2 (50%) Diving
- 6 (0%) Trawling
- 25 (24%) Mixed gear
- 30 (27%) Net
- 36 (31%) Hand gathering
- 53 (49%) Lines / Rod & line
- 83 (13%) Pots & Traps
- 205 (66%) Dredging

A total of **169** Port landing inspections were conducted across the district

Also **33** Premise inspections, **42** Person inspections, and **29** Vehicle inspections



4.5 Operational Procurement

4.5.1 Marine Assets: FPV Vigilant



Between April and September Southern IFCA visited Ribcraft on thirteen occasions in order to maintain project oversight and collaboratively work on vessel design with the manufacturer, given the bespoke nature of the build. Some of these visits involved attendance by the surveyor, which in turn informed staged payments made by the Authority, ensuring compliance with the agreed contract of sale for FPV Vigilant.

FPV Vigilant was craned in at Portland Port on the 17th September 2024. A Vessel Acceptance Document provided a structure for sea trials, with the document setting out five key parts, to include crosschecking the vessel with the contractual specification (to ensure it was aligned to the signed Contract of Sale e.g. ensuring specified equipment had been fitted to the vessel), testing, which were designed around the requirements in the original tender, to include the Harbour Acceptance Test, the Sea Acceptance Test and the Coding Acceptance Test. In addition an agreed snagging list was drawn up to include contractual provisions for Ribcraft UK Ltd to resolve in a timely manner.

The Authority took ownership on the 11th October 2024 having satisfied the Vessel Acceptance Programme. The change of ownership required a final stage payment which contractually was subject to satisfactory sea trials. The Vessel Acceptance Document was utilised to underpin that decision.

FPV Vigilant entered service on the 14th October 2024.

4.5.2 Land Assets: Drone



In year saw the procurement of two new controllers with IP45 rating which allows for drone operations to continue in less favourable weather conditions. The new controllers also have a larger screen to allow the operators wider views when conducting drone operations. Officers have subsequently added spatial management data into the controller to allow for target overlay with spatially managed areas, for example areas closed to bottom towed fishing gears.

4.6 Updates to Operational Policy and Procedure

4.6.1 Marine Assets: FPV Vigilant Introduction to Service



Following FPV Vigilant's introduction to service, 25 sea patrols have been undertaken; 20 of these east patrols covering the areas between Poole and the Solent, 3 were west patrols covering Poole to Lyme Regis and 2 were undertaken in Poole Bay.

FPV Vigilant has improved endurance for the crew (in line with health and safety requirements, as well as with consideration of officer wellbeing, with provisions for a water boiler, a lavatory, comfortable seating, Wi-Fi connectivity and more. The vessel itself can go further for longer periods due to the added protections (cabin) which increases its capability in district coverage. Officers now spend more time at sea opposed to the road network, which in turn has seen a reduction in use of the Authority's vehicle fleet. As a result, Officers are more efficient when delivering regulatory functions, including but not limited to

the monitoring spatial closures, gathering sightings data, as well as more time engaging with fishers across the district. Officers are also now able to access control and enforcement systems on FPV.

When the vessel entered service Officers had a series of training days to include familiarisation with new systems onboard. This included specific guidance for the safety rail system in order to facilitate boarding operations, training on communication systems and the camera suite. Due to the introduction of Workboat code 3 we now operate with 4 officers onboard.

Since entering operation, FPV Vigilant has been visited by Defra Compliance & Enforcement and the MMO Senior Leadership Team who have indicated an interest in chartering FPV Vigilant to deliver regulatory functions beyond the IFCA boundary. During the first six months of service, there have been two joint deployments with MMO operatives.

The team have embraced the introduction of Vigilant and are continuing to ensure its success.

4.6.2 Workboat Code 3 Compliance



Small commercial vessels operating in UK waters must comply with MCA codes of practice. Workboat Code Edition 3 which entered force in December 2023), specifies details of the technical requirements for equipment, practices and procedures to be followed for new vessels entering service (FPV Vigilant).

The code permits existing vessels (FPVs Endeavour & Protector) that are certificated under Workboat Code Edition 2 to comply with the code by either the vessels next renewal examination or no later than three years following the date of entry into force (December 2026), whichever is later.

In-year, Southern IFCA have started to implement the codes of practice ahead of specified dates, recognising the health and safety consequences if compliance was not achieved. Section (28) of Workboat Code Edition 3 refers to manning requirements, *'...the purpose of this section is to set out the minimum safe manning requirements for the number of the crew members and their qualifications necessary to ensure the safe operation of a vessel...'.* Under (28.2.1) it states *'...single handed operations are not permitted where a vessel is involved in the transfer of personnel at sea...'.* This requirement has required an update to normal operating procedures, whereby previously single handed operations were permitted where a skipper would remain onboard the FPV whilst boarding operations occurred. Southern IFCA now ensure that an additional officer remains present on the FPV when conducting boarding operations. The changes in manning requirement have been implemented through the Southern IFCA Health and Safety Policy ensuring that operations are now compliant with the new Workboat Code.

Under (28.1.2) of Workboat Code Edition 3, *'...all licences and Certificates of Competency (CoC) shall be appropriate to the vessel's area category of operation and type of operation...and...all Masters and crew responsible for navigation shall complete the required training...'.* In June 2023 Southern IFCA was successful in securing external funding under the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FASS) for these additional training requirements which included electronic chart systems & radar training for five IFCOs, this training was completed during 2025.

4.6.3 Dispensations Issued

During the reporting period 26 Dispensations to Southern IFCA Byelaws were issued. Annex 3 provides further detail on these.

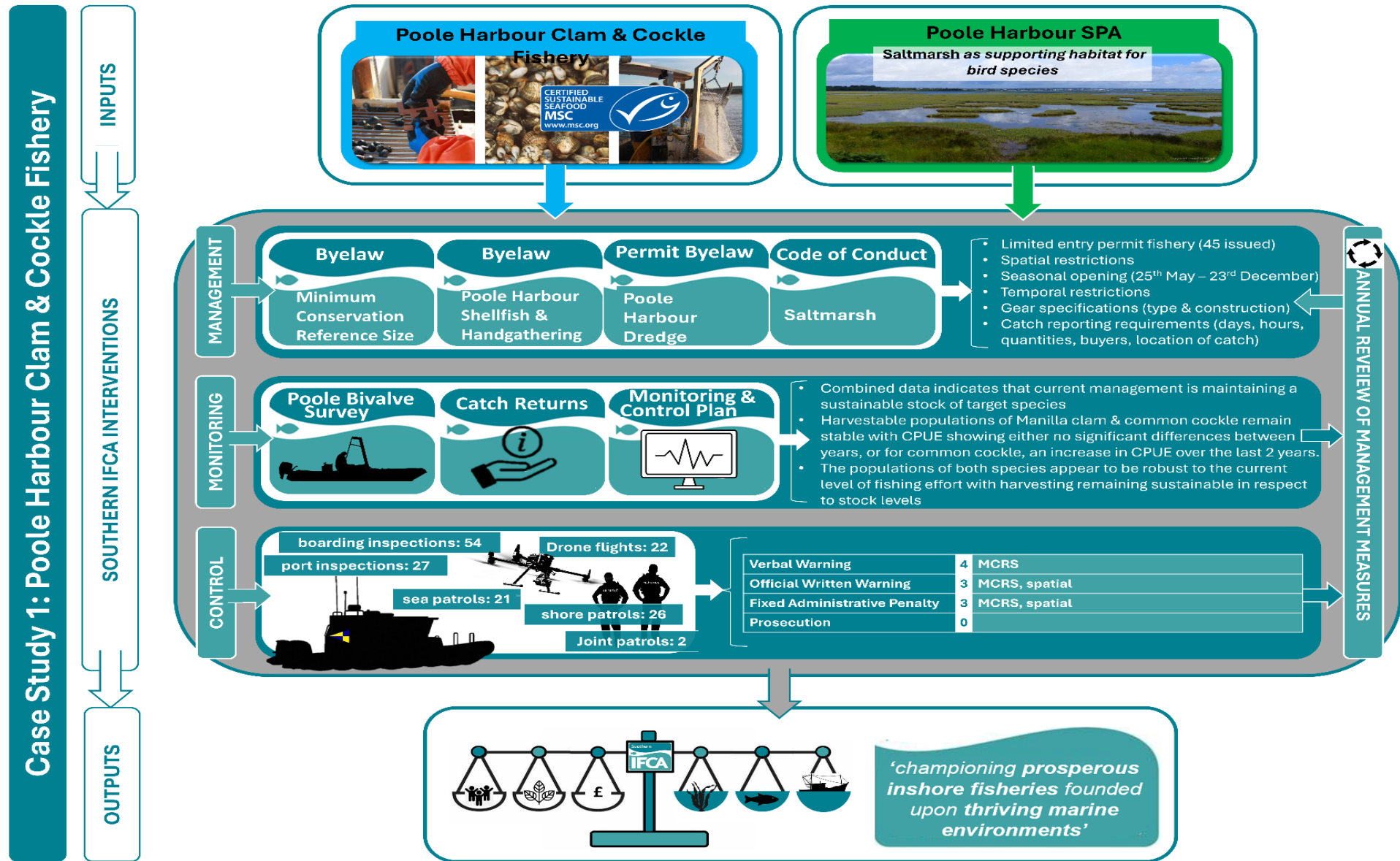
4.7 Project Work: REM & AI Pilot Projects



Building on the work undertaken by Devon & Severn IFCA, Southern committed to pilot two small scale REM and AI Inshore solutions. As part of this work officers have continued to engage with industry seeking additional volunteers across the priority fisheries, in addition to maintaining the REM suite fitted in a trawler in Lyme Bay. An additional priority fishery has been explored in year, reflecting both the evolving nature of the work, as well as the challenges faced with identification of suitable vessels and willing volunteers across the two original priority fisheries. Further information can be found in Section 2.1.2.

5.0 Case Studies: Where Fishing and Conservation Co-Exist

The following four case studies demonstrate where symbiotic management interventions are applied proportionality, a synergy is generated where both fisheries and conservation can flourish across the district:



Case Study 2: Solent Bivalve Fisheries

INPUTS

SOUTHERN IFCA INTERVENTIONS

OUTPUTS

Solent Bivalve Fisheries



MPAs

Solent & Southampton Water SPA
Portsmouth Harbour SPA
Chichester & Langstone Harbours SPA
Solent Maritime SAC
Yarmouth to Cowes MCZ
Bembridge MCZ

Estuarine habitats as features & supporting habitats for bird species



MANAGEMENT

Byelaw

Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw

Byelaw

Scallop Fishing Byelaw 2019

Byelaw

Minimum Conservation Reference Size

Byelaw

Fishing for Cockles

Byelaw

Oyster Dredges

- Spatial restrictions
- Seasonal harbours opening (1st Nov – 28th Feb)
- Seasonal SCE fishery (1st Nov – 31st Mar)
- Temporal restrictions
- Gear specifications (type & construction)
- Catch reporting requirements (days, hours, quantities, buyers, tows, location of catch)
- Catch restrictions

MONITORING

Solent SCE Survey



Solent Bivalve Survey



Solent Oyster Survey



Catch Returns



Management Intentions Doc



- Data for King Scallop, Manila clam and Common cockle indicates that current management is maintaining a sustainable stock of target species
- 2024 Solent Oyster survey CPUE assessed against management thresholds – thresholds not met, no Category B Permits issued
- King Scallop & Manila clam are primary harvested species and appear to be robust to current fishing effort

CONTROL

boarding inspections: 61

sea patrols: 20

drone flights: 12

port inspections: 28

joint patrols: 2

shore patrols: 18

Verbal Warning

7

Official Written Warning

2

Fixed Administrative Penalty

0

Prosecution

0

MCRS & spatial

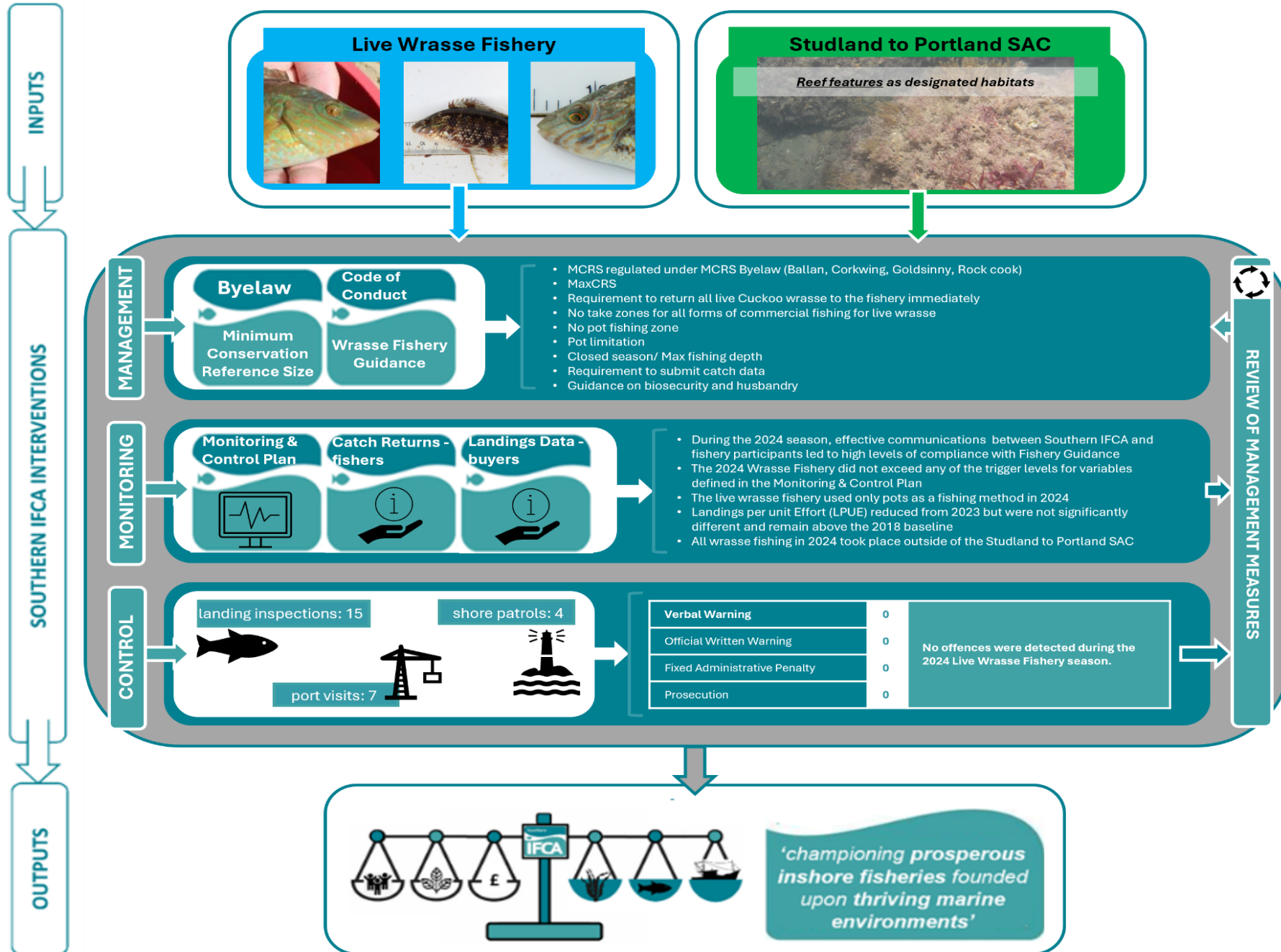
Spatial & catch return

REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT MEASURES

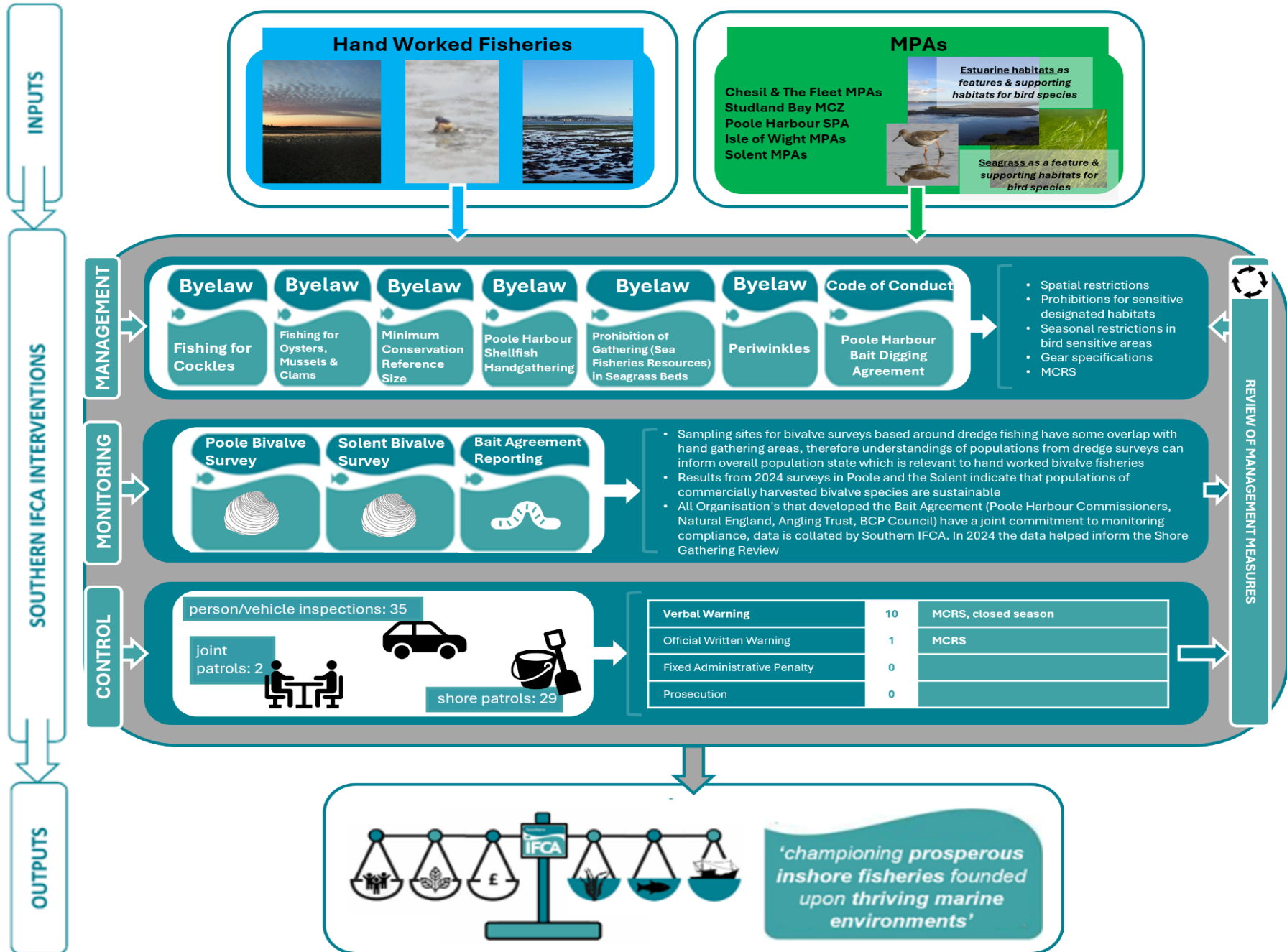


'championing prosperous inshore fisheries founded upon thriving marine environments'

Case Study 3: Live Wrasse Fishery



Case Study 4: Hand Worked Fisheries



6.0 Community Engagement

6.1 Community Drop-In Surgeries

Community Drop-In Surgeries are a new pilot initiative which began in late Autumn 2024, whereby the Chairman of the Authority, the Chairman of the TAC, the CEO and Principal Deputy Chief Officer attend Community Drop-In Surgeries across the district every c.4-5 months, with the intention of meeting fishers and the wider community in informal settings to in order to discuss any matters of importance to individuals and the collective across the District.

The overall aim of the Surgeries is to identify where Southern IFCA can focus its attentions to make the inshore industries daily lives less challenging, where we are able, whilst balancing conflicting priorities.



The poster features the Southern IFCA logo at the top, which includes a stylized fish and the text 'Southern IFCA's'. Below the logo, it says 'Community Drop-in Surgery'. A pair of scissors is shown cutting a vertical strip from the poster. This strip is divided into five sections, each containing the text: 'Lyme Regis: 14th November, Fisherman's College, 16:00-19:00'. To the right of the poster, there is text inviting people to join for a chat, enjoy a cup of tea, and share thoughts on local fisheries and conservation matters. It also states that the first surgery will be held in Lyme Regis at Fisherman's College on Thursday 14th November between 16:00-19:00. At the bottom right, it says 'We look forward to seeing you there.'

Southern IFCA's
Community Drop-in Surgery

Join us for a chat! Meet the Chairman, Chief Officer and some of the team.

Enjoy a cup of tea (with a biscuit or two) and share your thoughts on local fisheries and conservation matters.

The first **Community Drop-in Surgery** will be held in **Lyme Regis** at the **Fisherman's College** on **Thursday 14th November** between **16:00-19:00**.

We look forward to seeing you there.

These sessions are not meetings or gatherings for the sake of meetings, they will be used to inform and shape some of Southern IFCA's priorities moving forward. Reflecting on the outcomes of the first two surgeries, it is the iterative intention to develop an Action Plan over time to consider and identify any common challenges faced by the community across the District and use this to look for opportunities to problem solve across organisations and jurisdictions, for example where Southern borders other coastal IFCAs or the MMO at 6nm.

Southern IFCA are striving to embed in the community, listen and understand, and bring back differing perspectives to help inform and steer better ways of working.

6.1.1 Lyme Bay: November 2024

The pilot meeting in Lyme Regis saw attendance from a cross section of industry (11 in total) from the ports of Lyme Bay and West Bay, to include one of the youngest commercial fishers in the district (21) who skippers a trawler from Lyme Regis. In addition the Chief Executive of the Lyme Bay Community Interest Company popped in, as well as MEOs from the MMO. The main matters of discussion, relevant to the IFCA jurisdiction included recreational potting, gear conflict & spatial squeeze).

6.1.2 Weymouth: February 2025

The focus of conversations in Weymouth were on the whelk fisheries in the context of the Southern IFCA Pot Fishing Byelaw, Black seabream management, FMPs, in particular the intention for Defra to raise the LBE MCRS and the opportunities with regard to the MMO managed Bluefin Tuna fishery. During the afternoon and evening session, there was attendance from 14 stakeholders, to include merchants, commercial fishers, charter anglers, and NGOs. A young demographic of fishers were present at the meeting and spoke pragmatically about the need to diversify their fishing operations in

order to maintain viability in their business practice. This insight was really impressive to see. Attendees were interested to hear about the ways in which science of fish stocks underpins Authority decision making, with a particular focus on whelks and the differing populations across the District. This wider context was welcomed by the attendees who were keen to understand the level of information considered across multiple scopes (science, social, economic) in the decision making processes and how these discussions were informing management decisions, with productive discussion had regarding the ways in which industry could help with supporting our data collection and knowledge of fisheries from the ground.

6.2 Community Consultations

During the year community consultations were held for the NFB annual review, the PHDP Byelaw annual review and ongoing engagement sessions relevant to the black seabream review. Further details can be found in Annex 4.

6.3 Community Meeting Attendance

During the year Southern IFCA officers are in attendance at community meetings across the District. Further details can be found in Annex 5.

6.4 National Meeting Attendance

During the year Southern IFCA officers attended a number of national meetings. Further details can be found in Annex 6.

6.5 Engaging with Coastal MPs

Building on ways in which Southern IFCA can engage with local MPs, this year Southern IFCA met with West Dorset MP Edward Morello on salmonid management in the district and its relevance to Dorset rivers. Southern also met with Poole MP Neil Duncan-Jordan to discuss the value of aquaculture in Poole harbour and its unique role as a natural barrier which can mitigate the effects of poor water quality, and of course the role that SIFCA play in managing the Poole Harbour aquaculture fisheries under the Poole Harbour Regulating Order.

6.6 Community Delivery on behalf of the Constituent Local Authorities

Please follow the links provided below to find out more about Southern IFCA's delivery relevant to each of our six Local Authorities', at a community level.

6.6.1 Dorset Council

[Dorset Council: Local Authority Report](#)

6.6.2 Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

[BCP Council: Local Authority Report](#)

6.6.3 Hampshire County Council

[Hampshire County Council: Local Authority Report](#)

6.6.4 Southampton City Council

[Southampton City Council: Local Authority Report](#)

6.6.5 Portsmouth City Council

[Portsmouth City Council: Local Authority Report](#)

6.6.6 Isle of Wight Council

[IOW Council: Local Authority Report](#)

7.0 Delivering Additional Functions

7.1 Supporting Defra's Programme of Works

7.1.1 Fisheries Management Plan Programme



A Project Officer is employed by Southern IFCA to coordinate the provision of information, evidence and data to support the development of Defra led FMPs, to work with delivery partners, to work with local and national colleagues and to help coordinate communications and engagement with the inshore fishing community. The Project Officer also represents Southern IFCA at FMP meetings and working groups. Additional support and expertise is provided by the Senior Managers. A full summary of work achieved by Southern IFCA during this reporting period can be found in Annex 7.

7.1.2 Marine Consents



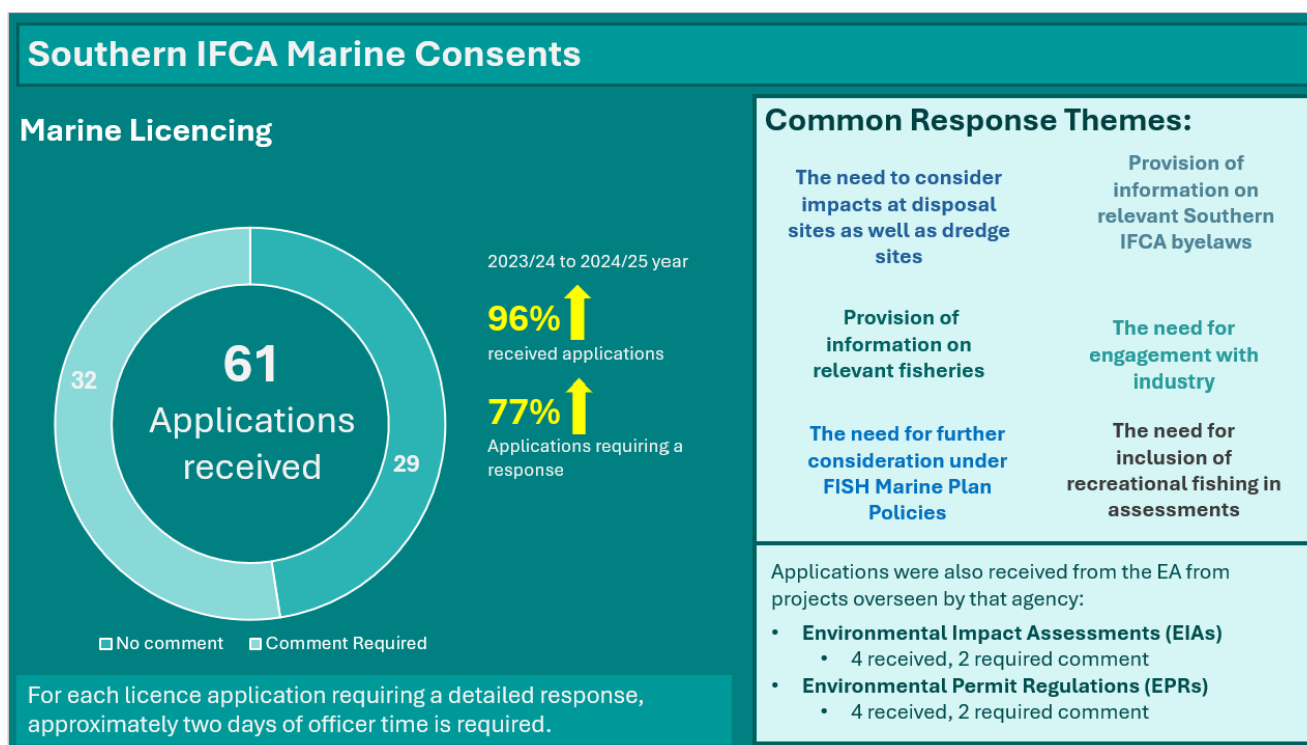
Southern IFCA's work on Marine Consents focused on the marine licencing system administered by the MMO, for which the Southern IFCA is a statutory consultee.

A standing agenda item on marine licence applications received, including a summary of those deemed to require a response, is provided to the quarterly Authority meetings. During the 2024/25 year, Southern IFCA received 61 marine licence applications for review, a 96% increase on the 2023/24 year, 32 of which were determined to require a comment or more detailed response, a 77% increase in the previous year.

Common themes across responses included consideration of impacts at dredge disposal sites, provision of information on relevant Southern IFCA regulations, fisheries & survey work, the need for engagement with industry and the inclusion of recreational fishing in assessments and the need for applicants to consider in more detail the relevance of applications to relevant FISH Marine Plan Policies.

Additionally, Southern IFCA receives Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Environmental Permit Regulations (EPRs) applications directly from the Environment Agency. During the 2024/25 year, 8 of these received (4 of each type) of which 2 EIA and 2 EPR responses were determined to be required.

Southern IFCA continue to attend meetings with the MMO Licencing Team, to discuss common themes, challenges and consistency in responses across IFCAs. Where applications are cross IFCA boundaries, engagement with the relevant IFCA is sought to identify a collaborative response. Engagement with stakeholders occurs where necessary to allow the provision of specific activity data and to ensure that the views of industry are best represented. This engagement also helps raise awareness of the marine licencing process with the fishing community and Southern IFCA's role as a consultee.



7.1.3 Marine Protected Areas



A Project Officer is employed by Southern IFCA to support MPA work. Specifically for this reporting period, this has included ongoing work on three priority workstreams, identified to support the UK Government progression towards protections of 30% of the marine environment by 2030, realised domestically via enhancement of protections for MPAs.

In addition to the three priority workstreams, detailed research into MPAs within the district has continued to ensure that the spatial extent, designated features, relevant pressures relating to fisheries and the conservation objective are fully understood and easily available for use in MPA related reviews and management development. This information along with Southern IFCA compliance & enforcement data has been compiled in GIS to produce visual representations of the relevant interactions in MPAs. For further information see Section 4.4.

Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Review (BTFG): Phase 1

Following a review of the BTFG 2016 Byelaw between 2019-2023 (with a restructure and reprioritisation exercise undertaken in March 2023, following the release of the UK Government's Environmental Improvement Plan in January 2023), a 2023 iteration of the Byelaw was submitted to the MMO. During the 2024-2025 reporting year, the quality assurance process remained ongoing with the MMO and Defra. Following the Byelaws pending ratification, district wide BTFG closures will increase from 25.5% (696.3km²) to 27.2% (743.1km²). Further information please see Section 3.3.1.

Shore Gathering Review

During the reporting year, the Shore Gathering Review has come to a conclusion, with the Byelaw being submitted to the MMO for quality assurance, prior to consideration by the Secretary of State. Further details on this review can be found in Section 3.3.2.

Subject to ratification of the Byelaw, the total area of the District proposed to be managed under spatial closures (permanent and seasonal) under the Shore Gathering Byelaw is 42.8km², representing 1.56% of the area of the District. For all relevant MPAs covered by the Shore Gathering Byelaw (up to the 2m contour), management will cover 24.2% of SPAs, 32.4% of SACs and 16.1% of MCZs, in total covering 23.1% of the relevant MPAs¹ in the District.

Black Seabream Review

The progression of the BSB Review can be found in Sections 2.2.1 and 3.3.3.

8.0 Business Services **4**

8.1 Funding

8.1.1 Levies

Paragraph (16) of The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019 states that the expenses incurred by Southern IFCA must be defrayed by the relevant councils, of which there are six. Dorset Council, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and BCP Council receive a grant from central government (via the New Burdens Doctrine³) which totals £329,425.

The constituent Local Authorities (LA) are levied on an annual basis by Southern IFCA in accordance with a prescribed formula, as captured in the table below. The total LA levy contributions in 2023-2024 were **£845,615**. This was an increase of **4%** on the previous year.

Constituent Council	Formula (%)	Levy 2024-2025 (£)
Hampshire County Council	40.40	341,629
Dorset Council	24.79	209,599
Isle of Wight Council	14.35	121,345
BCP Council	11.14	94,231
Portsmouth City Council	5.02	42,449
Southampton City Council	4.30	36,362
		845,615

8.1.2 Defra Project Funding

As part of the Government Spending Review 2021, Defra committed to a provision of funding (150k per IFCA) for three financial years (2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25). The funding provision is to enable IFCA's to support Defra in their delivery of the Fisheries Act 2020 objectives, specifically MPA, FMP and Marine Consents work. This Section 31 Grant is to support IFCAs in wider extended responsibilities to support the delivery of statutory duties under the MaCAA 2009 and Marine Licensing (Delegated Function) (As amended) Order (2015). The following amounts were received in year across three programmes of work:

- Fisheries Management Plans: **£50,000** (received January 2025)
- Marine Protected Areas: **£50,000** (received January 2025)
- Marine Consents: **£30,000** (received January 2025)

In addition **£10,000** was received from Defra in year (February 2025) to recognise retrospective works that Southern IFCA had completed on aquaculture and recreational sea angling in the financial year 2023-2024.

8.2 End of Year Accounts

With effect from 1st April 2015, Southern IFCA were no longer required to have their accounts audited. However, in order to ensure that the Authority's financial business is conducted in accordance with proper recognised standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, the Authority appointed Francis Clark LLP, registered auditors to carry out a "limited scope assurance report" which is a formal procedure recognised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. At the time of writing, this external audit is being undertaken. The following information provides a **Draft Statement**

of Accounts which sets out the overall financial position of Southern IFCA for the financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. These Accounts were approved by the Authority on the 12th June 2025 for external audit. The full report is available [here](#) (pages 31-47) which includes a Consolidated Revenue Account and consolidated Balance Sheet.

During the year to 31st March 2025, the consolidated revenue account recorded a net deficit on General Reserve of £39,879. Details of this variance are available [here](#) (pages 27-31).

8.3 Resources

8.3.1 The Team

	1 st April 2024	31 st March 2025
Full Time, Permanent	13	14
Part Time, Permanent	2	2
Full Time, Fixed term	3	3

Fifty three percent of the staff body are female and 47% are male, with 58% of employees aged 20-30 years, 11% aged 30-40 years, 11% 40-50 years and 20% 50-60 years. The change in headcount recognises the carryover of a vacancy in the Compliance & Enforcement Team from the previous financial year.

Leavers 2024-2025

Job Role	Team	Time in Post	Reason
Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team	24 months	Resignation
Finance Administrator (part time post)	Business Services Team	15 months	Resignation

Staff Recruitment Campaigns 2024-2025

Job Role	Team
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	Compliance & Enforcement Team
Accounts Administrator (part time post)	Business Services Team

Professional Development

All Southern IFCA employees are set Personal Work Plans which underpin and describe professional development. In year Compliance & Enforcement Officers have become proficient and trained in the use of QGIS mapping software. Two officers completed Radar and Electronic Chart Training. One officer completed a joint patrol with another IFCA. All officers have been developing their presentation skills and have delivered Member Briefing on fisheries within the district.

In year the Research & Policy Officers have attended various webinars, undertaken MEDIN data courses and undertaken time management training. The emphasis this year has been in-team personal development, via provision of expertise and knowledge within the team, particularly across GIS and data analysis.

IFCO Warranting

There are ten operational officers across the teams, of which 6 hold IFCA warrants (this includes 2x DCOs). 1x officer achieved warranted status in the reporting period which took 9 months from commencement of employment to issue of warrant. The decision to warrant new entrants is underpinned by completion of the national accreditation programme.

IFCO Accreditation

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 MEO or IFCO. 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 investigation

The Qualification is completed through a variety of assessment methods which include written assignments, discussions, Q&A and observations. This is to ensure that a full range of criteria is being met across the units which demonstrates the learner's knowledge and ability in role of an Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer. Between 31st March 2024 and 1st April 2025 one IFCO met the required standard and achieved the qualification

8.4 Health & Safety

During the reporting period there were 6x accidents 2x incidents and 1x near miss. All Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses are reported to The Executive Sub Committee, where suitable mitigations and changes in policy and procedure are considered. Further details can be found in Annex 8.

8.5 Governance

8.5.1 Governance Improvement Programme

As part of a review of process and policy, with the purpose to identify efficiencies, maximise performance and consider staff retention strategies, the following improvements across the BST were made:

HR Bright Online Platform

Following a trial period in 2023-2024, in April 2024 an online system called HR Bright was introduced to the team, with the idea to reduce the administrative burden associated with time recording of employee hours by the Office Manager and individuals. The online system is accompanied by an App, as well as providing access to a range of online training tools. The use of this system remains under review to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Online Permit Platform

Southern IFCA committed to reducing and eventually removing the manual inputting requirement for fisheries which are permitted in the district. Specifically 85 permits across the PHDP, SDPB and NFB (correct as of 2023). This initiative will provide a user-friendly platform for fishers to reduce a paperwork burden.

During the reporting year, over 50% of the Fish for Sale Permits were transferred to the online Permitting System.

The PHDP have been rolled out for the 2025-26 season using the online platform, with all 45 eligible fishers submitting their applications via the Permitting System.

The system will keep a record of payment of permit fees and all permit documentation will be sent via e-mail resulting in zero postal costs. Applicants are able to see the status of their permits via their individual portals and once the permits have been issued they can also access their permit and guidance documents.

8.5.2 GDPR

During the reporting period 4 Freedom of Information requests, 3 Environmental Information Regulation requests and 1 Data Subject Access Request were received in accordance with [Public Access to Information](#). In addition, 2 requests under the Data Protection Act 2018 were received, one from the MMO (14th June 2024) and one from Devon & Severn IFCA (8th November 2024), both for use in accordance with ongoing investigative matters.

Further information can be found in Annex 9.

8.5.3 Formal Complaints

No formal complaints were received during the reporting period.

8.5.4 Authority & Sub Committee Meetings

In accordance with the Southern IFCA Standing Orders, between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025, four meetings of the Full Authority were held at the following locations across the district: Winchester, Isle of Wight, Poole and Dorchester.

Four Executive Sub-Committee meetings were held, two¹ Audit and Governance Sub-Committee Meetings and four Technical Advisory Sub-Committee Meetings were also held.

8.5.5 Working Groups

Date	Format	Attendance	Workstream	Purpose
24 th April 24	Online	9	Black Seabream	To discuss material considerations and decision making in the context of black seabream management
15 th August 24	In-Person	10	Black Seabream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the scope of objectives for developing measures for black seabream and potential intervention options presented through a Management Matrix. Agreement of Drivers, Headline Objectives and discussion of management options to be taken forward to the stakeholder community for further discussion.

¹ In accordance with paragraph (40) of the Southern IFCA Standing Orders, a minimum of three Members to be in attendance for business to be transacted Accordingly the June and September meetings of the Audit & Governance Sub-Committee were cancelled.

9 th December 24	Online	2	FMPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the Formal Consultation on T3 FMPs relevant to the Southern IFCA District; Cockle FMP, Queen Scallop FMP, Southern North Sea and Channel Skates and Rays FMP, North Sea and Channel Sprat FMP. Members provided feedback to be included in Southern IFCA Formal Consultation responses.
15 th January 25	Online	6	Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review available evidence and discuss the proposed outcomes of a review under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw considering the development of a program of action to allow the Authority to be proactive in the management of the fishery. Members recommended the progression of a Monitoring and Control Plan for Manila clam in the fishery.
25 th March 25	In-Person	10	Black Seabream	Members reviewed fishing activity risk factors related to BSB and discussed finalisation of proposed voluntary Shared Principles to take to the stakeholder community prior to Authority consideration.

8.5.6 Member Attendance: Elected Members

Elected Members (from constituent Local Authority's)		Attendance		
		FA	ESC (v)	AGSC (v)
Cllr Mr. P Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chair)+	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. R Hughes	Dorset Council (Vice Chair)	100% (4/4)	50% (2/4)	50% (1/2)*
Cllr Mr. B Dunning	Hampshire County Council	25% (1/4)	0% (0/2)*	
Cllr Mrs. K Wheller	Dorset Council	50% (2/4)		100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. P Miles	BCP Council	0% (0/4)		
Cllr Mr. C Goodall	BCP Council	75% (3/4)	100% (2/2)*	
Cllr Mr. J Savage	Southampton City Council	50% (2/4)		
Cllr Mr. R Cooper	Hampshire County Council	0% (0/4)		100% (2/2)*
Cllr Mr. M Winnington	Portsmouth City Council	50% (2/4)	Attended 100% (2/2) following cancellation of June & Sept AGSC	50% (1/2)*

+Elected as Chairman on 13th June 2024.
 *Elected to Sub Committee 19th September 2024 following outcomes of Council Elections.

8.5.7 Member Attendance: General Members

General Members (appointed by the Marine Management Organisation)		In person Attendance		
		FA	ESC	TAC
Dr. A Jensen (Chair of the TAC)	Marine Environment/Academic Sector	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)
Mr. R Stride (Vice Chair TAC)	Commercial Fishing Sector	75% (3/4)	100% (4/4)	100% (4/4)
Dr. S Cripps	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	75% (3/4)		50% (2/4)
Mr. C Francis	Recreational Sea Angling Sector	50% (2/4)		75% (3/4)
Mr. C Brock	Commercial Fishing Sector	0% (0/4)		50% (2/4)
Ms. L MacCallum	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	100% (3/3)		66% (2/3)
<i>Resigned 6th December 2024.</i>				
Mr. G Wordsworth	Aquaculture Sector	100% (4/4)		75% (3/4)
Mr. N Hornby	Other: Fisheries Science and Policy Sector	100% (4/4)		75% (3/4)
Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones	Other: Legal/Marine Heritage	100% (4/4)		100% (4/4)
Dr Heidi Guille	Marine Environment/Conservation Sector	0% (0/1)		100% (1/1)
<i>Joined 15th January 2025</i>				

General Member biographies can be found [here](#).

8.5.8 Member Attendance: Partner Organisation Members

Representatives of Partner Organisations		In person Attendance	
		FA	TAC
Mr. Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency	75% (3/4)	75% (3/4)
Dr. R Morgan	Natural England	75% (3/4)	50% (3/4)
Mr. J Morgan	Marine Management Organisation	75% (3/4)	0% (0/4)

8.5.9 General Member Appraisals

In accordance with the Terms and Conditions of IFCA General Membership, as determined by the Marine Management Organisation, annual Member Appraisals are held to consider the contributions that appointees make to the work of the IFCA, as well as consideration of behaviours in accordance with NOLAN principles and community representation. The appraisals also provide a useful opportunity for feedback to the CEO and Chair of both the Authority and Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee. All Member Appraisals were held in August 2024.

8.5.10 Member Briefings

This initiative was introduced following a suggestion raised during the Members Appraisals in August, with the purpose to provide Members with contextual and site specific information on fisheries and

conservation within the district, and where possible, information relevant to specific Authority meeting locations. The Briefings are optional to Members and held prior to the start of the formal meeting.

- **Key Fisheries and Conservation, relevant to the Isle of Wight and Solent** (September 2024), presented by PDCO Dell & DCO Birchenough.
- **Key fisheries and conservation considerations in Christchurch Bay and Poole Bay**, (December 2024) presented by Senior IFCO Mayne and IFCO Mullen.
- **Key fisheries and conservation considerations in Weymouth Bay**, (March 2025) presented by Senior IFCO Condie and IFCO Fullbrook.

8.5.11 Elected Member Training

The CEO provided an online Elected Member Briefing to help induct new Elected Members to the Authority.

8.5.12 General Member Induction

In Year the CEO inducted one new General Members to the Authority.

8.5.13 Public Questions at Authority Meetings

Mr T Lankford (Full Authority Meeting, March 2025)

Mr T Lankford addressed Members with concerns he had regarding the reduction in the inshore fishing community in recent years. He discussed the impact that regulations were having on the fishing fleet and the lack of opportunity for new entrants. He discussed the ban on pollack for commercial fishers, noting that recreational fishers were not subject to restrictions. He discussed the Southern IFCA Net Fishing Byelaw and the restrictions relating to salmon, in addition to the Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Byelaw, and the impact this will have on young fishers handgathering.

8.5.14 Guest Speakers at Authority Meetings

Angling for Sustainability, a Fisheries Industry Science Partnership Project (Full Authority Meeting, June 2024)

Members received a presentation from Dr Peter Davies, Post Doctoral Researcher in Marine Ecology at the University of Plymouth, on a collaborative project run between scientists, fishermen, conservation advisors and fisheries managers, funded by the Defra FISP scheme. The project, Angling for Sustainability, aims to support sustainable fisheries management by filling key knowledge gaps by tracking shark, ray and black seabream movements. Dr Davies presented an overview of the methods used in the project which involves the deployment of receivers, including in fine scale arrays, in locations across Dorset and Hampshire, and the tagging of black seabream and elasmobranch species with acoustic tags so that movements can be tracked using the receiver network. Dr Davies presented some initial findings from the project and outlined that the further receiver downloads which are planned for the autumn will provide further data to inform reporting on these key species. This was followed by a Q&A session. Members expressed their thanks to Dr Davies for an interesting and informative presentation, recognising how the project outcomes would be helpful in informing discussions on black seabream management in the district.

Seagrass Conservation and Restoration in a WILDER Solent (Full Authority Meeting, September 2024)

Members received a presentation from Dr Tim Ferrero, Senior Specialist in Marine Conservation from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) on seagrass conservation and restoration in

the Solent including WILDER, the Trust's vision for wildlife conservation to 2030 which includes three goals looking at nature in recovery '30 by 30', 1 in 4 people taking action and nature as a solution. Dr Ferrero provided an overview of seagrass, the key benefits offered by the species, the pressures that seagrass habitats face and the intention to protect the seagrass which exists in the Solent and restore where the habitat has been lost. Dr Ferrero reviewed initiatives for protection and restoration including work undertaken by Southern IFCA in managing fishing activities and other activities in the marine environment. Dr Ferrero outlined two restoration projects which are operating in the Solent, the Solent Seagrass Restoration Project and the ELSP Solent Seascape Project and the methods employed to work towards restoration, working with academic institutions and commercial companies.

9.0 The IFCA Compliance & Operations Report 2018-2022

9.1 Background to Report

In accordance with requirements specified under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, The IFCA Compliance & Operations Report is laid in Parliament by the Secretary of State as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of the relevant four year period. The above named report was published in February 2025.

The report considers IFCAs from a national perspective and identifies the following overarching themes: Accountability, Governance & Finance*, Engaging Stakeholders, Working in Partnership, Evidence & Data, Fisheries Management and Compliance & Enforcement.

The report identifies thirteen government conclusions, eight of which, as specified by the Minister, require immediate consideration (3,5,6,8,9,11,12,13).

9.1.1 Consideration of Report Findings through a Southern IFCA 2024-2025 Lens

The following table considers where the recommendations identified in the report are already being delivered in the Southern IFCA district, when considering through the Annual Reporting lens of 2024-2025. Southern IFCA remain committed to continue to deliver its work in accordance with the recommendations:

Government Conclusions	How Southern IFCA are performing in accordance with the Government Conclusions (2024-2025 Lens)
(1) IFCA Committee Structure & Membership: that there is an imbalance between fisher and environmental interests.	General Membership remains balanced at Southern IFCA, with four General Members representing environmental interests and four sector representatives. In addition, one General Member with legal expertise falls into the 'other' category. Further details General Membership areas of expertise and meeting attendance can be found in Section 8.5.7.
(2) Oversight of IFCA activities: duplication of work with the MMO.	Information on how Southern IFCA work with MMO colleagues on the coast, can be found in Section 2.2.
(3) Transparency around Decision Making: stakeholders not being sufficiently engaged, nor understand how their input has influenced decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern IFCA provide detailed information on the Southern IFCA website describing the stages of Decision Making Processes, which builds on the National IFCA Byelaw Guidance, as provided by Defra. Where management intervention is recommended, A Management Intentions Document accompanies any proposed management intervention in order to provide contextual understandings which have underpinned management decisions. In accordance with the National IFCA Byelaw Guidance, where objections are received in response to a proposed management intervention, full written responses are provided following consideration at Executive Committee level. These responses are subsequently scrutinised by Defra as part of the Defra QA process.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full meeting agendas (to include Executive Summaries of each agenda item) and meeting minutes are published online in accordance with Southern IFCA Standing Orders. • More information on stakeholder engagement can be found in Sections 6.0 and 2.1.
(4) Funding & Accountability	<i>Matter being addressed nationally via AIFCA & Defra</i>
(5) Transparency around consultations & (6) Tailoring engagement	Information on consultations and the various engagement methodologies can be found in Section 6.2.
(7) Promoting partnership working arrangements	Information on partnership working can be found in Section 2.2.
(8) Stakeholder engagement through data collection: fishers want to be able to contribute more to data collection.	Information on industry led data collection initiatives in the Southern IFCA District can be found in Section 3.0.
(9) Balancing stakeholder views in decision making: how fishers can influence management decisions	More information on consultations and the various engagement methodologies can be found in Section 6.2.
(10) Byelaw Making Process – efficiencies across partners	<i>Matter being addressed nationally via AIFCA</i>
(11) Building Trust: that there is a disproportionate emphasis on enforcement.	<p>Southern IFCA is committed to achieving fair, effective and proportionate enforcement in accordance with the Compliance and Enforcement Framework Compliance & Enforcement Framework (published online). Further information can be found here: Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA.</p> <p>Information on specific enforcement actions taken during reporting year 2024-2025 can be found in Section 4.0.</p>
(12) ...differences in MMO and IFCA enforcement approaches and decisions.	<p>Southern IFCA work closely with the MMO locally and nationally. All Southern IFCA enforcement decisions are in accordance with recognised powers, codes of practice and principles.</p> <p>Information on joint patrol work can be found in Section 2.2.</p>
(13) Complaints: for a consistent complaints procedure to be introduced nationally.	<p>The Southern IFCA Complaint Procedure can be found here: Customer Complaints Procedure</p> <p><i>The wider matter to address is being considered nationally via the AIFCA.</i></p>

10.0 Feedback

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 complaints procedure is published.







12.0 Annexes

Annex 1: Achieving National Success Criteria







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

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	Status
<p>The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level.</p> <p>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.</p>	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.	
	The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	
	The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month	
	The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.	
	The IFCA will have reviewed all MoU's by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale.	
	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	







Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 2

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime		
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	Performance Indicators	Status
<p>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.</p> <p>The IFCA will have developed consistency in regulations (byelaws) with other organisations</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	The IFCA will ensure its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.	
	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.	
	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.	
	The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April.	
	The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all Warranted Officers.	
	Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	

Performance Indicators for 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






The IFCAs 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	Status
<p>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.</p> <p>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 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> <p>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>	The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority	
	The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website	
	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	
	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	
	New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales	
	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.	

Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 4

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




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	Status
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972</p>	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.	
	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.	
	IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 March each year.	
	An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.	
	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.	

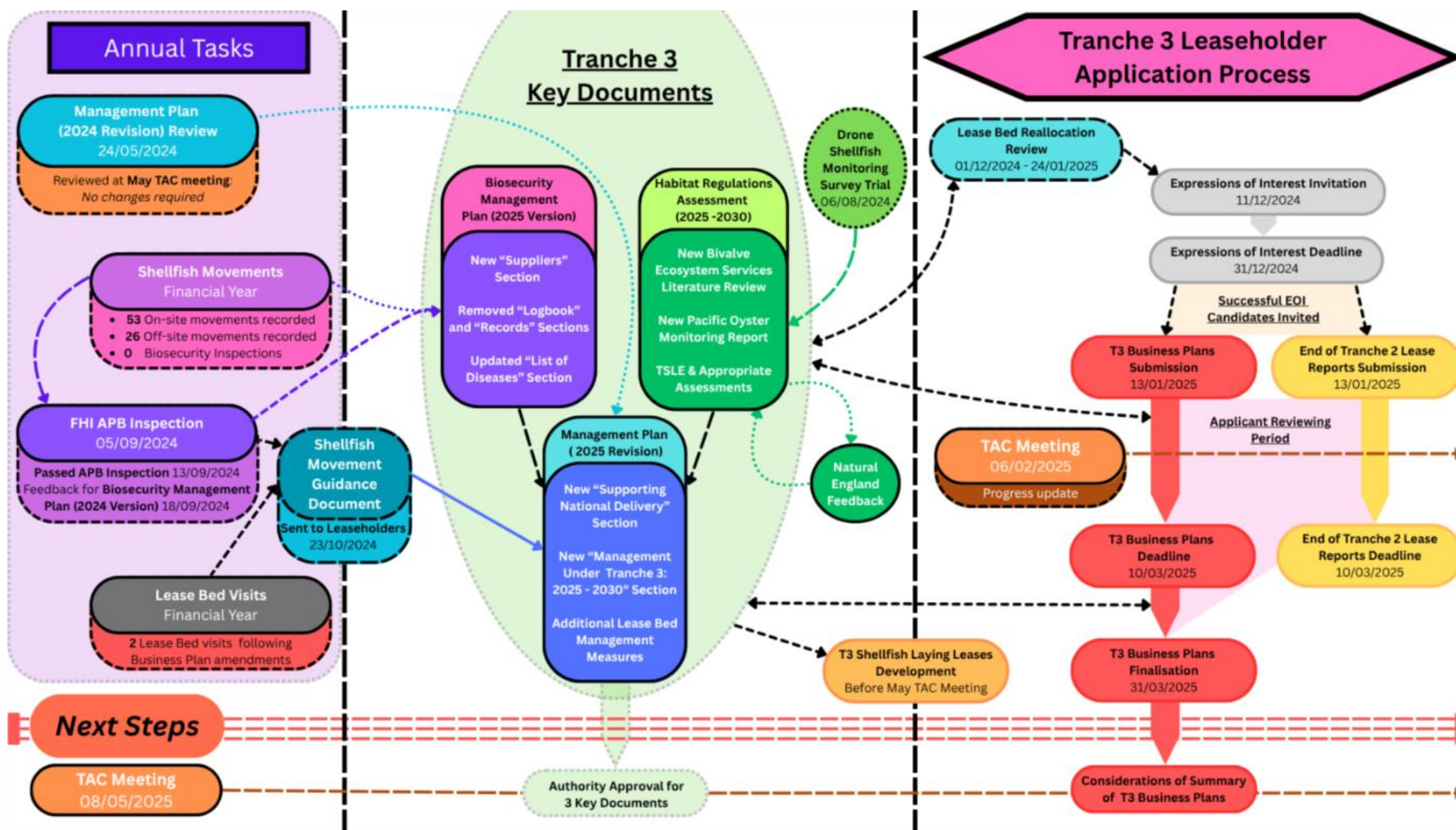
Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 5

IFCAs make the use of evidence to deliver their objectives

IFCAs are statutory regulators for their Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District. Decision-making should be based on evidence. All IFCAs 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	Status
A strategic research plan that contributes to greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources	The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year	
Standard Operating Procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners	The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making	
A list of research databases held by the IFCA and the frequency of their review	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	

Annex 2: Poole Order Work 2024-2025



Annex 3: Dispensations Issued 2024-2025

Dispensation Type	Applicant	Reason	Byelaw Dispensing Against
Stocking and Breeding	Commercial Operator (Aquaculture)	Maintain aquaculture operations on lease beds (carriage of gear)	PHDP Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Ecological Assessment for Water Framework Directive Purposes	MCRS Byelaw & Vessels Used in Fishing Byelaw
Scientific	CEFAS	Scientific survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Environment Agency	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Stocking and Breeding	Commercial Operator (Aquaculture)	Maintain aquaculture operations on lease beds (carriage of gear)	PHDP Byelaw
Scientific	Langstone Harbour Board/ RSPB	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	CEFAS	Scientific Survey	MCRS Byelaw & Vessels Used in Fishing
Educational	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Education Centre	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Portsmouth City Council (Port Health Authority)	Shellfish Classification	SDP Byelaw, Fishing for Cockles Byelaw & MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	Southern IFCA	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Scientific	University of Essex	Small fish survey	MCRS Byelaw
Educational	Hampshire County Council (Calshot Activity Centre)	Small fish seine net	Net Fishing Byelaw & MCRS Byelaw

Annex 4: Community Consultations

Consultation	Dates	How	Use of Outcomes	Management Outcomes
NFB: Year 1 Review with Permit Holders	12/12/24 - 22/01/25	Phone calls, consultation letter, emails, in person meetings	Formed part of the evidence base used to inform Authority decision making as to whether the NFB remained fit for purpose	No changes required to be made for Year 2.
PHDP Byelaw Permit Condition Review with Permit Holders	10/12/24 - 10/01/25	Consultation letter, questionnaire, evidence document, in-person meeting & individual meetings	Formed part of the evidence base used to inform Authority decision making re: consideration of the development of a M&CP alongside potential actions to support a sustainable fishery if required.	Development of the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring & Control Plan Administrative changes to Permit conditions to facilitate future use of Southern IFCA Online Permitting System
Ongoing consultation opportunities for Black Seabream development of	Mar 23 - May 24	Direct in-person engagement exercise with representatives to understand specific information on BSB fisheries	Informed the development of a report on the Quantification of Impact Exercise in relation to an initial iteration of draft measures for the management of BSB in three Dorset MCZs	Quantification of Impact Exercise Report provided to the TAC in May 2024.

Shared Principles with all relevant sectors	31/10/25 onwards.	In-person meeting and email/letter workshop follow up	<p>Opportunity to provide contextual underpinning for development of draft measures for BSB in Dorset MCZs framed around Drivers and Headline Objectives developed by Authority Members</p> <p>Opportunity to comment on management options and put forward any additional industry informed management options</p>	Proposed management options from industry combined with those from Authority Members reviewed by Officers under a feasibility exercise to inform draft Shared Principles for review by Authority Members at a subsequent Working Group.
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Annex 5: Community Meetings

Meeting	Format	Meeting/Group Purpose
Fleet Management Group	In-Person (1)	Management group for all activities relevant to The Fleet
Hamble Estuary Partnership	In-Person (1)	Organised by the River Hamble Authority – to discuss issues affecting the River Hamble, monitor & facilitate priority projects and cover issues of shared interest.
Langstone Harbour Board Advisory Committee	Online (3)	Run by the Langstone Harbour Board, a forum for consulting with Langstone Harbour users comprising both statutory members (Southern IFCA) and invited attendees.
Poole Harbour Steering Group	In-Person (2)	A partnership group consisting of PHC, BCP Council, Dorset Council, EA, MMO, NE, Southern IFCA and Wessex Water to discuss and promote the safe and sustainable use of Poole Harbour, balancing the demands on its natural resources, minimising risks and resolving conflicts of interest.
Poole Harbour Study Group	In-Person (2)	A group comprising organisations and individuals involved and interested in the physical and biological interests of Poole Harbour. The groups acts to centralise and encourage the dissemination of knowledge about the Harbour, remaining neutral with regard to planning and other issues involving the Harbour.
SEMS Management Group	In-Person (1)	Partnership of the Solent's Relevant Authorities to deliver a Solent site-wide management scheme guiding the way in which RAs exercise their functions so as to secure compliance with the requirements of the Solent European Marine Site.
Solent Forum	In-Person (2)	Independent coastal partnership to develop a greater understanding among local authorities, harbour authorities, user groups, marine businesses and agencies involved in planning and management in the Solent.
Solent Forum Natural Environment Group	In-Person (2)	To progress strategic actions from the SEMS management scheme and provide the coordination of implementation of cross-cutting nature conservation actions by facilitating networking and communication.
Solent Seagrass Network	Online (10)	Comprising organisations involved in seagrass monitoring, research and restoration across the Solent.
Solent Seascapes Project	Online (10)	A collaborative long-term initiative working to restore multiple habitats across the Solent strait to create a more resilient coastline, enhance biodiversity and support the sustainable delivery of ecosystem benefits.
Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Online (one-off)	To understand the focus of the Dorset LNRS and potential for overlap with the intertidal area and relevant fisheries activities.
Hurst Spit to Lymington Strategy	Online (one-off)	To maintain knowledge of the strategy and progression of different stages to help inform any marine licence application responses and/or identify and potential for overlap with fishing areas.
Professional Boatman's Association Annual Meeting	In-Person (one-off)	To give a presentation on Southern IFCA's development of measures for Black Seabream in three Dorset MCZs, delivering the presentation given at the Angling for Sustainability project conference and discussing black seabream management with the PBA.
Poole & District Sea Angling Association	In-Person (3)	Association for recreational sea angling clubs within the Poole & District area to discuss issues and topics of interest, engage with Southern IFCA and facilitate communication.
South Coast Fishermen's Council	Online (6)	A group comprised of commercial fisher representatives from ports within the Southern IFCA District to discuss issues and topics of interest, engage with Southern IFCA and facilitate communication.
Recreational Angling Sector Group	Online (3)	To promote more effective communication between the RSA sector in Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Dorset, and the Southern IFCA.
Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group	Online (2)	To provide a forum for discussion, knowledge exchange and collaboration between Southern IFCA, organisations, projects & persons working in marine conservation across the District.

Regional Fisheries Group 7d	Online (2)	RFGs are an initiative set up to enable the inshore fishing sector to come together to share views and promote collaborative working with organisations such as MMO, Defra, Cefas and local IFCA's.
Regional Fisheries Group 7 e,f,g	Online (3)	
Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee	In-Person (1)	A cross section of stakeholders including fishers operating within the Reserve, fishing organisations, statutory authorities, conservation bodies, research institutes and local councils working together to develop, promote and implement best practice in sustainable fishery and conservation management within the Lyme Bay Reserve.
Solent scallop survey methods with Cefas & Industry	Online (one-off)	To understand methodologies for SCE surveys at a national level to help inform the updates to the Southern IFCA Solent SCE survey to enable data to be fed into national datasets and inform evidence gaps under the King Scallop FMP. Engagement with industry to support this process and gauge expert input on Solent SCE scallop grounds and potential for updates to the survey methodology.
Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Community Forum	In-Person (2)	Held up to twice a year, pre-fishing season and, if required, post-fishing season to provide a forum for Permit Holders to engage with Southern IFCA, discuss any updates or emerging issues within the fishery, survey data and key points ahead of the fishing season commencing each year.
Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Pre-Season	In-Person (1)	Held pre-fishing season annually on the quayside to provide an opportunity for Permit Holders to engage with Southern IFCA, discuss any updates or emerging issues within the fishery, survey data and key points ahead of the fishing season commencing.
Poole and District Fishermen's Association	In-Person (3)	A group comprised of commercial and recreational fisher representatives from Poole and the surrounding area to discuss issues and topics of interest, Southern IFCA are periodically invited to attend to speak on a specific topic.
Bangor University Whelk CPUE Project	Online (one-off)	Meeting held to understand work being undertaken to collect whelk CPUE data in Welsh waters which is feeding into evidence gaps identified in the Whelk FMP. Prior to commencement of Southern IFCA Whelk LPUE Pilot Project to ensure methodologies were aligned with other research.
Poole Harbour Watch	In-Person (4)	Run and managed by boat owners and clubs within the approaches and confines of Poole Harbour and surrounding shoreline, operating with the co-operation of PHC and both marine and land-based police. Aim is deterrence of crime to boats and equipment and where possible, to improve the safety of those using the waters.
Dorset Coast Forum Annual Conference 2024	In-Person (annual)	Hosted by the Dorset Coast Forum, the conference agenda included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on current challenges for the Dorset coast with presentations from the Environment Agency and Shoreline Management Plan lead advisors for Dorset • Positive actions, looking at a deep dive into key areas where proactive measures are addressing challenges in Studland, Charmouth and North Swanage • Connecting people to coastal change, hearing from the Jurassic Coast Trust on how to engage wider audiences and a workshop on communicating difficult conversations with coastal communities • Hands-on engagement tools offering practical experience with interactive tools for delivering essential coastal change information
Fleet Management Group Annual Conference	In-Person (annual)	Southern IFCA presented at the conference on the results and dataset from the Juvenile Small Fish Survey Programme, with a particular focus on the sampling sites within The Fleet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the conclusion of the Angling for Sustainability (AfS) Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) Project, of which Southern IFCA was a Project Partner, the University of Plymouth hosted a conference on both this project and the Pollack FISP. The event showcased the results of the two projects and included presentations from project partners and guest speakers. • Southern IFCA presented "Managing Black Seabream in a Local Context", with a focus on how the AfS Project was helping inform understandings for black seabream and thus contributing to the evidence base to inform the development of a sustainable management model. The presentation gave an overview of Southern IFCA's work on developing proportionate management for black seabream within three Dorset MCZs and the important of stakeholder & industry collaboration and engagement through this process. • The conference was well attended by representatives from the scientific community, the fishing industry (both commercial and recreational) and partner Organisations including other IFCA's. • Workshops held to provide updates and outcomes from the Angling for Sustainability and FinVision FISP projects. Workshops were either targeted towards particular sector groups or run as open meetings for all those interested in the project progression and results.
Angling for sustainability and Pollock FISP Conference & Workshops	In-Person (one-off)	

Annex 6: National Meeting Attendance

Meeting	Format/Frequency	Purpose
MAFCO	1/1 attended online	For the 10 Chief Officers along with the AIFCA Chief Officer and representatives from Defra to meet to discuss relevant strategic matters.
Association of IFCA's (AIFCA) Forum	Quarterly – CEO (3/4) & Chairman attend (4/4)	For the Chairman and Chief Officer of each of the 10 IFCA's to receive updates on the progress of the AIFCA work areas.
AIFCA Directorship	None held	For the Chief Officers of the 10 IFCA's to ensure the effective governance and management of the AIFCA
Chief Officer Group (COG)	Monthly(12 x online)	For the 10 Chief Officers and AIFCA Chief Officer to meet to discuss national matters.
National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG)	2 x in-person, 1 x online -presenting on a range of topics relating to Control and Enforcement Systems, the application of Workboat Code 3 and aligning Compliance and Enforcement Frameworks	To bring together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement within inshore fisheries and marine conservation in order to develop and support joint working and consistency; identify and share best practice; and to promote professionalism and competence.
IFCO & MMO Licencing Engagement	Online (3)	Meeting between IFCA's and MMO nationally to discuss marine licencing common themes, challenges and consistency in responses across IFCA's as statutory consultees.
IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG)	3 of 3: 2 x online, 1 x in-person attendance	Promotes and facilitates communication, collaboration and coordination between IFCA's and other government organisations in relation to fisheries research and marine science. In the 2024/25 year three TAG meetings were held, Southern IFCA attended two of the meetings online (June 2024 and March 2025) and one in person (November 2024).
SAGB Crustacea Committee	Online (2)	Focusing on issues relating to crustacean species such as crab, lobster, nephrops and whelks (due to method of capture).
SAGB Mollusc Committee	Online (2)	Focusing on issues relating to mollusc species including oysters, mussels, clams, cockles as well as octopus and squid.
UK King Scallop Fishery Improvement Project	Online (4)	An industry-led partnership to improve sustainability in UK scallop fisheries and work towards MSC certification.
Whelk Working Group	Online (2)	Facilitate the exchange of information relating to the common whelk between IFCA's, other government agencies, fisheries authorities, academics, researchers and others interested in whelk fisheries.
Defra Fisheries Negotiations	Online (annual)	To understand process and outcomes from Defra fisheries negotiations and relevance to stocks and fisheries in the District.
Pollack FISP Consultative Forum	Online (one-off)	Outcome meeting for the Pollack FISP project, providing data and outputs from research on Pollack fisheries in the South West.
Southern IFCA/MMO Marine Planning	Online (one off)	To meet MMO Marine Planning team, understand further the marine planning process and potential long-term timelines for updates to the South Marine Plan.
All Party Parliamentary Group (Fisheries)	Online (frequency: various)	Attendance at webinars hosted by the APPG which provides a neutral, cross-party forum for debate, discussion and learning within Parliament with a focus on fisheries.
NE Parliamentary Reception	One off/In person	The CEO attended on behalf of Southern IFCA.
AIFCA Parliamentary Reception	One off/In person	The CEO and Chairman attended on behalf of Southern IFCA. In addition General Member Richard Stride was also in attendance.
Defra: FMPs – Progress Made	One off/In person & online	Meetings attended on individual FMPs and the collective FMP Programme to receive information on process progression, updates and provide the opportunity for discussion.

Annex 7: FMP Work 2024-2025

Front Runners Tranche 1&2: Post Publication	Tranche 3: Awaiting Publication	Tranche 4: Planning and Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crab & Lobster Whelk Bass King Scallop Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species North Sea & Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern North Sea & Channel Skates & Rays North Sea & Channel Sprat Queen Scallop Cockles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celtic Sea & Western Channel Pelagic, Celtic Sea & Western Channel Demersal, Seabream Wrasses Complex
Planning and preparation phase	Planning and preparation phase	Planning and preparation phase
Publication phase	Publication phase	Publication phase
Post publication phase	Post Publication phase	Post publication phase

Work undertaken relating to Specific FMP Tranches during 2024-2025

Tranche 1&2 'Front Runners'

During the **Post Publication Phase**, Southern IFCA continued to:

- participate in implementation planning discussions and relevant working groups/workshops, providing input to support the seeking of industry representation to implementation groups
- participated in and provided comments on reports and documents related to the development of the Cuttlefish Action Plan (Channel Demersal Non-Quota FMP), associated roadshow and round table engagement events.
- Support the implementation of management measures that resulted from Crab & Lobster, Bass and Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMPs delivered through an MMO Licence Condition and The Sea Fisheries (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2024.
- provide ongoing participation in an IFCA workshop on the proposal for an English whelk permit & Whelk Management Science Group Meetings (Whelk FMP)
- provide information to relevant fishers on joining the King Scallop FMP Implementation Group.
- Responded to request for information related to an octopus evidence project (Channel Demersal Non-Quota FMP).
- Develop new methodologies for the Solent Scallop Stock Survey in order to address evidence gaps in the Scallop FMP.
- Expand the Whelk Monitoring Programme, through the development of a District wide Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) Pilot Project in order to address evidence gaps in the Whelk FMP.
 - The project aims to contribute to the evidence base for whelk stocks in the UK, through systematically gathering evidence on fishing effort and landings of common whelk through monthly catch returns. The development of a timeseries dataset of whelk data throughout the District will assist in achieving objectives set under the Whelk FMP to improve data gaps and develop data collection programmes. It will also help inform future management such as the Southern IFCA Pot Fishing Byelaw at the point that this Byelaw comes into force and ensure that reviews of management continue to be based on best-available evidence.

- The project consists of voluntary monthly catch sought from fishers across the District which focuses on the collection of information relating to fishing duration, location, type of bait, the number of pots used, soak time, and total kg of whelk landed. In the 2024/25 financial year, Southern IFCA engaged with fishers while the project was developed and established a list of volunteers to provide us with data throughout the following whelk season. SIFCA consulted with representatives of other whelk data initiatives including Bangor University to understand how similar data was being collected for other fisheries and how this was feeding into developing an evidence base under the Whelk FMP. Volunteer packs were sent to fishers including the relevant information surrounding the project at the end of the 2024/25 year, data will be analysed following the first year of data collection at the end of December 2025.

Tranche 3

During the **Planning & Preparation Phase**, Southern IFCA continued to:

- supply expertise and knowledge for the FMPs in the development of final drafts for consultation
- provide feedback on all Tranche 3 FMPs through the Formal Consultation and promotion of engagement opportunities within the District
- attend FMP engagement events for Queen Scallop, Southern North Sea and Channel Skates and Rays, North Sea and Channel Sprat and Cockles FMPs

During the **Publication Phase**, Southern IFCA:

- continued to promote Formal Consultations providing relevant links on the Southern IFCA website via the FMPs page and News Page, as well as across all social media platforms including engagement events for the District
- hosted a Southern IFCA Authority Workshop in December 2024 to discuss each FMP and to consider points for inclusion in Southern IFCA formal responses
- attended 2 x in-person engagement events in the District
- attended 3 x online engagement events
- submitted responses to all Tranche 3 FMPs in line with the 19th January 2025 deadline.

Tranche 4

During the **Planning & Preparation Phase**, Southern IFCA:

- have continued to attend and contribute to working groups and provide expertise and knowledge to FMP drafting.
- maintained extensive involvement in working groups, engagement, provision of information and commenting on FMP drafts, specifically:
 - **Celtic Seas and Western Channel Pelagic FMP**
 - Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, attendance at Partnership meetings (online), submission of feedback on draft FMP to MMO
 - **Celtic Seas and Western Channel Demersal**
 - Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, attendance at MMO/IFCA scoping meeting, attendance at online stakeholder engagement event
 - **Seabream**
 - Participation in a Working Group, provided links to relevant stakeholders who may be interested in being on the Seabream FMP Working Group, attended a meeting with MMO team to understand developments made to draft FMP pre-public consultation, held

a discussion with MMO & Sussex IFCA on relevant wording for the Seabream FMP to reflect IFCA work in management for Marine Conservation Zones ahead of public consultation.

- **Wrasse**

- Participation in Working Group for this FMP, provision of links to relevant stakeholders who may be interested in being on the Wrasse FMP Working Group, submission of feedback on the draft FMP to MMO team, actioned a request for information from MRAG, working on behalf of the MMO, to provide support/data for FMP drafting and provided information on data collected for the Live Wrasse Fishery.

- **Tasks spanning both Seabream and Wrasse FMPs**

- Promotion of Defra T4 information webinar, actioned request for information from MRAG, working on behalf of the MMO, to provide support/data for FMP drafting, provided information from the Southern IFCA Juvenile Fish Survey dataset - species, location, date, number and length data, responded to a request to contribute feedback on the wording of two questionnaires regarding IFCA Management Measures for the Wrasse Complexes and Seabream FMP, promoted the MMO FMP survey on social media, website and emailed to all relevant District stakeholder groups, promoted 3 x in-person MMO FMP workshops held within the District on IFCA website and social media and dissemination of information to relevant District stakeholder groups, attended MMO FMP workshop in Mudeford, Poole and Weymouth, promotion of MMO online workshop advertised on website and social media, attended the MMO FMP feedback workshop (online) and submitted feedback on the draft FMP to MMO team.

Work undertaken covering multiple FMPs during 2024-2025

- Throughout the FMP process to date, Southern IFCA have provided links between FMP delivery partners and the following district industry liaison groups:
 - South Coast Fishermen's Council
 - Camber Docks Fishermen's Association
 - The Recreational Angling Sector Group
 - The Poole and District Fishermen's Association
 - The Poole and District Sea Angling Association
 - Lyme Bay CIC
- Information has been provided directly to relevant fishers via Southern IFCA held contact details.
- The Southern IFCA continue to host dedicated FMP webpage ([Fisheries Management Plans : Southern IFCA](#)) which outlines general information, links to where more information can be found and details of general engagement events which spanned all FMPs. The webpage also hosts dedicated sections for each of the frontrunner, Tranche 3 and Tranche 4 FMPs relevant to the District. These sections provide information as required on the development stage, FMP specific engagement opportunities and contact details for FMP leads. This webpage is continually updated as new information becomes available and new information regarding engagement and consultation is reflected across social media platforms. Southern IFCA have added links to the North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish in October 2024 in addition to the first five published FMPs to the FMP page of the Southern IFCA website.
- Southern IFCA continue to have a standing agenda item at the quarterly TAC which provides Members with an update on any matters relating to FMPs
- Southern IFCA submitted a formal response to the Defra Consultation on proposed amendments to Annex A of the Joint Fisheries Statement. A response was submitted by the 21st November 2024 deadline.
- Southern IFCA have attended various meetings and workshops at local, regional and national levels, both online and in person, covering multiple FMPs. These have included attendance at:

- T4 information webinar (online) on 17th April 2024 which launched the Tranche 4 FMP process
- The Science and Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs): Progress Made and Exploring the Future event, in London on 18th March 2025
- Southern IFCA continue to disseminate information for communities awareness, to include the publicising of Defra FMP Blog to all relevant channels.
- Southern IFCA have had continued engagement with the AIFCA responding to requests to submit information, review evidence summaries and provide details on existing IFCA management.

Annex 8: Accident, Incident & Near Miss 2024-2025

Category	Overview	Actions Taken
Accident	Operational work undertaken without following manual handling training, resulting in injury.	All staff completed a refresher Manual Handling course
Accident	Dehydration and sickness following operational delivery at sea onboard a fishing vessel where there was no access to lavatory facilities.	Review of H&S Policy and Risk Assessment undertaken, which led to a change in operational practice for survey work.
Accident	Cut sustained whilst undertaking a boarding at sea	Review of H&S Policy and Risk Assessment undertaken. NFA
Accident	Damage to FPV A-Frame whilst undertaking compliance work at sea.	Review of relevant Risk Assessments undertaken with relevant changes to operational practice introduced.
Accident	Damage to FPV tubing whilst undertaking compliance work at sea,	Full internal investigation undertaken. Review of relevant Risk Assessments and H&S Policy undertaken with relevant changes to operational practice introduced.
Accident	Vehicle damage following contact with a low wall in a car park.	NFA
Incident	Speeding fine	Actioned in accordance with Vehicle policy
Incident	Speeding fine	Actioned in accordance with Vehicle policy
Near Miss	Rope attached to A-Frame on survey vessel came loose and made contact with IFCO. No damage or injury sustained.	Risk Assessment reviewed. NFA.

Annex 9: GDPR Data Requests

Type	Date Received	Detail	Response Date
Freedom of Information	15 th Apr 2024	Seeking information on the Net Fishing Byelaw and supporting documents.	Request withdrawn on 17 th Apr 2024
Data Subject Access Request	1 st May 2024	Former employee seeking information	20 th May 2024
Freedom of Information	10 th May 2024	Request for information relating to Net Fishing Permits	21 st May 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	30 th July 2024	Consultant requesting information on fisheries activities and species	7 th Aug 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	2 nd Aug 2024	Consultant requesting fisheries activities and species	22 nd Aug 2024
Environmental Information Regulations	4 th Sep 2024	Legal firm seeking stock status of fishery	10 th Sept 2024
Freedom of Information	20 th Sep 2024	Seeking information on the banking and insurance arrangements	10 th Oct 2024
Freedom of Information	16 th Oct 2024	Seeking information on the number of registered fishing vessels in the district.	5 th Nov 2024