



ANNUAL REPORT

April 2022-March 2023

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Chairman's Welcome

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Cllr Mr Mark Roberts,
September 2023**



Chief Executive Officer's Welcome

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

**Pia Bateman,
September 2023**

1.0 Background to Annual Reporting

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

1.1 The IFCA Model

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

1.1.1 National IFCA Vision

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

1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives and Success Criterion

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

Table 1: High Level Objectives & Success Criterion

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

1.1.3 Southern IFCA Annual Plan

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

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

1.2 The Annual Report 2022-2023

Sections 2.0 – 5.0 of this report provide an overview of how Southern IFCA have performed in their delivery of its Annual Plan priorities for the period April 2022 to March 2023, via achievement of:

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

1.2.1 Legends, Symbols and Reporting Metrics

The following symbols are used throughout this document:







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

2.0 Achieving Success Criteria










2.1 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 1

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

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

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






2.2 Performance Indicators for Success Criteria 2



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

2.3 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 3

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

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








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

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

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




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

Outcomes	Performance Indicators		End of Year Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year. Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and, where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed. The IFCA Committee will be supported by an organised, efficient and effective secretariat. New members will receive an induction pack and briefing from the Authority. There will be a rolling twelve-month schedule of quarterly Authority meetings. Notices of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with Standing Orders. IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972 	SC4A	The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.		Authority Reports : Southern IFCA (southern-ifca.gov.uk)
	SC4B	After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.		A summary of audited financial information is integrated into this report.  6  7
	SC4C	IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 March each year.		
	SC4D	An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.		
	SC4E	The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.		In addition, we continue to engage with partnerships in integrated catchment management and in the establishment of management systems in transitional and coastal waters.







2.5 Performance Indicators Success Criteria 5





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














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
















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












3.0 Achieving Southern IFCA Delivery Priorities













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






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

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













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



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

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

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

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & POLICY TEAM DELIVERY PRIORITIES

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

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

4.0 Supporting Defra's Delivery of Fisheries Act Objectives

Fisheries Management Plans (ongoing)	
<p>Relevant to the Crab and Lobster, Whelk, Bass, Scallop and Non-Quota Species Front Runner FMPs, Southern IFCA are required to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Support planning/preparation phase (ongoing) (2) Support publication phase – review and evaluate (to begin c. March 2023) (3) Log requests and feedback concerns (ongoing) 	<p>The FMP Programme was initially delivered by the Senior Management Team at Southern IFCA between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023. A Project Officer for FMPs was employed from end of February 2022 and has taken on the delivery of this function within Southern IFCA since this time.</p> <p>A breakdown of work delivered under the FMP Programme in the 2022-2023 year, in accordance with the IFCA Requirements and Deliverables for FMPs defined by Defra is captured in Annex 1</p>
MPA Programme (delivery by end of 2024)	
<p>To conclude the implementation of all appropriate management measures for all MPAs by 2024, identifying strategic blocks to delivery and establishing a narrative around the delivery of these plans.</p> <p>Of relevance to the Southern IFCA District, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTFG (currently stage 3 of 5 in byelaw development process) • Shore Gathering (currently stage 1 of byelaw development process) • Black Bream – (awaiting conservation advice from NE before able to consider management measures) 	<p>In the 2022-2023 year this work was undertaken by the Research and Policy Team. Due to the timing of the funds received for this workstream, a Project Officer role was in place from 2nd May 2023.</p> <p>In response to the Government Target for all appropriate management measures for all MPAs being in place by 2024, at the meeting of the Southern IFCA in March 2023, Members agreed to adopt a phased approach to the review of BTFG management and the review of Shore Gathering management. This split each review into two phases, the first phase being to develop management for designated features of National Site Network Sites (Special Protection Areas [SPAs], Special Areas of Conservation [SACs] and Marine Conservation Zones [MCZs]). The second phase for each will explore wider sensitive habitat management, outside the scope of the Government 2024 deadline.</p> <p>For the BTFG Review, a set of principles for developing management under Phase 1 were developed which ensured a transparent and consistent approach across the District. Draft management was then developed based on these principles with a view to taking a proposed BTFG Byelaw 2023 to the Authority in the early part of the 2023-2024 year.</p> <p>For Shore Gathering, Members of the Authority reviewed existing information on shore gathering in the District and considered the scope of the review. The initial stages of relevant environmental assessments were completed for all relevant MPAs and consulted on with Natural England. The review is currently in Stage 2 of the Byelaw Making Process with a set of principles to be developed following the decision to move to a Phased Approach.</p> <p>For the development of management for black bream fisheries, Southern IFCA have been awaiting the provision of additional evidence from Natural England on the location and extent of black bream nesting sites. The review is currently in Stage 1 with evidence being gathered to inform potential management measures.</p>
Marine Consents (delivery by summer 2024)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) To engage with the Marine Spatial Prioritisation Programme via scenario testing, stakeholder engagement and data and evidence (impacts of co-location work relating to fishing, aquaculture, marine licenses and MPAs). (2) To contribute to the development of 2nd generation Marine Plans, via data and evidence, stakeholder engagement and policy development. NB 2nd South Report due July 2024. (3) Contribution of delivery of Aquaculture and Mariculture Strategy. (4) Contribution of delivery of Angling Strategy. 	<p>For the 2022-2023 year the Southern IFCA work on the Marine Consents Programme consisted of reviewing and, where appropriate, providing responses to Marine Licence Applications sent to Southern IFCA as a consultee via the MMO Marine Case Management System.</p> <p>During the 2022-2023 year 26 MLAs were reviewed of which 20 MLAs were determined to require no comment from Southern IFCA.</p> <p>Responses were developed and submitted for 6 MLAs all of which were presented to the Authority at relevant Authority meetings throughout the year.</p>

5.0 Spotlights

Spotlight 1: Working with Other Regulators



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

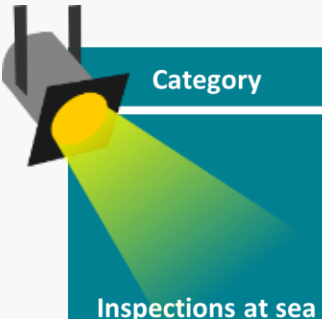
Between April 2022 and March 2023 Southern IFCA Officers were involved in 19 joint patrols both at sea and on land. The FPT held 12 external Tactical Co-ordination Groups (TCG) in which 7 different partner organisations were represented. The External TCG Meetings allow the FPT to share ideas, ongoing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

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

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

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

Spotlight 2: Enforcement Statistics



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

Spotlight 3: National Accreditation Programme: Southern IFCA Officers



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

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

The qualification covers:

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

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

Spotlight 4: Ensuring Compliance in the Poole Harbour Aquaculture Fisheries



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

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

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

Spotlight 5: Fisheries Management Plans



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Spotlight 6: Consolidated Revenue Account

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

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

Spotlight 7: Consolidated Balance Sheet



Notes on notable variances

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

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

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

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

Spotlight 8: Enforcement Outcomes



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

Spotlight 9: Marine Asset Procurement



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

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

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

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

Spotlight 10: Engagement



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

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

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

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

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

Spotlight 11: Chartering Assets



- Over the last year, Southern IFCA have supported the MMO by providing an 'at sea' asset to carry out patrols of Studland Bay in order to raise awareness of the recently introduced **MMO Voluntary No Anchor Zone**. Officers from the MMO engaged with over 120 vessels over the course of 5 IFCA charters. The voluntary no anchor zone has been introduced to provide protection for Studland Bay's long-snouted seahorse and seagrass beds. The seagrass beds provide several vital ecological functions. Most notably, seagrass beds stabilise sediments, provide habitat for species such as commercially important fish and seahorses, and act as a sink for atmospheric carbon. Studland is also home to bass and undulate rays. Long-snouted seahorses are a designated feature of the MCZ. Southern IFCA has provided this service under a charter agreement with the MMO on a cost recovery basis.
- Southern IFCA have for many years assisted BCP Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with **Shellfish classification and water sampling** in Poole Harbour. Southern IFCA are contracted annually by BCP Council to provide a vessel and staff to carry out this work. The sampling is coordinated by BCP Environmental Health Officers and Southern IFCA, who match suitable dates, tides and weather with resource requirements. The Southern IFCA vessel Endeavour, a skipper and 2 crew are required for this task, The sampling is carried out monthly. A total of 12 sampling runs were completed between April 2022 and March 2023. There are currently 10 sample sites in Poole Harbour. Sampling is mainly of mussels, which are previously harvested from an area of leased aquaculture seabed in Poole Harbour. Officers bag the mussels up into roughly equal amounts. The mussel samples are deposited at each of the sample sites after the previous month's classification samples have been removed. The classification samples go to the UKHSA laboratory for analysis. In addition, a biotoxin water and shellfish sample are collected and sent to CEFAS for testing.

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

'A' classification means that the shellfish within that zone can be harvested direct for human consumption. 'B' Classified shellfish can be supplied for human consumption after either purification in an approved establishment, relaying for at least one month in a classified Class A relaying area, or after an approved heat treatment process.
- IFCOs were joined by officers from the MMO to carry out 2 patrols on board FPV Protector in **Lyme Bay to inspect and engage with netting vessels**. There has been an increase in the number of netting vessels targeting sole in the Lyme Bay area due to the increase in sole quota. Officers boarded a number of vessels and recorded effort data, such as the time fished, the length and number of nets used, the species and quantities hauled. This information will help regulators further their understanding of current effort levels in the area and the potential impacts on the fishery. Outcomes are being shared back through the South West Regional Fisheries Group.

Spotlight 12: IFCA Led Surveys



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Spotlight 13: Net Fishing Byelaw



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

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

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

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

Spotlight 14: Pot Fishing Byelaw



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

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

Spotlight 15: Working with Academic Institutes



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

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

Spotlight 16: Marine Licensing



The purpose of marine licencing is to facilitate sustainable use of the UK marine environment so that economically beneficial activities such as construction, deposits (e.g., sediment deposits), removals (e.g., marine aggregates), and dredging can be permitted whilst minimising negative environmental effect and avoiding interference with navigation. Southern IFCA is a consultee on Marine Licence Applications (MLAs). When an application is submitted to the MMO and is sent out for consultation, the Authority is notified and given the opportunity to comment and provide advice relevant to its remit within a 21-day consultation period. In developing responses to MLAs, the Southern IFCA has regard to the South Marine Plan, which sets out a number of policies aimed to address issues and encourage sustainable development. There are 11 policies in the South Marine Plan which are of particular relevance to fishing activity, these are S-CO-1, S-FISH-1 to 4, S-MPA-1 to 4 and S-AQ-1 and 2 (details of these policies can be found in the South Marine Plan, online at [The South Marine plans documents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91234/South_Marine_Plan_documents.pdf)).

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

6.0 Member Attendance

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

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

7.0 Feedback & Glossary of Abbreviations

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

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

8.0 Annex 1: FMP Programme Delivery Breakdown

IFCA Requirements and Deliverables for FMPs (defined by Defra):

Support planning/preparation phase

1. Provide appropriate IFCA representatives (single point of contact [SPOC] and deputy) to attend and contribute to FMP working group meetings
 - **9 Working Group Meetings attended**
 - **13 engagement events attended (online & in person)**
 - **4 other meetings/conferences attended where FMPs discussed**

Breakdown

- Attendance at working group meetings for the Bass FMP, 6x meetings held
 - Attendance at working group meetings for NQS FMP, 3x meetings held
 - Southern IFCA also attended:
 - 4x specific engagement events on Bass FMP
 - 3x specific engagement events for shellfish FMPs
 - 6x specific angling engagement events for NQS FMP
 - RFG meetings for VIId and VIle,f,g where FMPs were discussed
 - Attendance at IFCA TAG Conference – FMP presentations and discussion
 - Attendance at Fisheries Management and Innovation Group online bite-size session
2. Contribute expert sectoral and inshore fisheries management advice to FMP projects
 - Evidence summary for whelk, crab & lobster and King scallop FMPs provided via AIFCA for review and comment. Input provided on updates to current management, information on whelk fisheries and additional information on recreational fisheries
 - Review of information on current legislation provided for all FMPs
 3. Contribute evidence and data as requested by delivery partners
 - Request from AIFCA to populate legislation mapping tool and IFCA inshore RD mapping 2023 – information completed and submitted via AIFCA
 - Evidence summaries for FMPs on existing management measures reviewed and updated as required – submitted via AIFCA
 - Specific information provided on the King Scallop FMP to indicate that Solent fishery had not been included in the evidence document and was missing from relevant maps and quantification of fishing levels
 4. Evaluate draft FMP content; to include commenting on objectives, management measures, evidence plans
 - Review of draft FMP and annexes for FMPs where this was provided to Southern IFCA, these included:
 - Crab & Lobster FMP
 - Whelk FMP
 - King Scallop FMP
 5. Provide links between delivery partners and local IFCA representatives to help co-ordinate engagement with the inshore fishing sector
 - Information sent to Seafish regarding potential engagement opportunities for shellfish FMPs in Southern IFCA District

- *FMP page created on Southern IFCA website to host information on each FMP, contact details and engagement events for stakeholders*
- *Details of engagement events for all FMPs uploaded to Southern IFCA website and promoted across social media*
- *For King Scallop FMP, information on engagement events and summary document sent to Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw permit holders*
- *Facilitated presentation by the MMO on the NQS FMP to Southern IFCA TAC Members*
- *Completed request from MMO to disseminate information relating to NQS FMP engagement on the south coast*
- *Meetings arranged with key stakeholders for Bass FMP*
- *Information on relevant engagement events distributed to Poole & District Sea Angling Association, Poole & District Fishermen's Association, South Coast Fishermen's Council and the Southern IFCA Recreational Angling Sector Group*
- *Updates provided to IFCA Members through standing updates at TAC and Authority meetings each quarter*

Supporting publication phase – review and evaluate

1. Support the pre and post consultation evaluation of draft/final FMPs

a. Contribute to the review/assurance process as required

- **3x FMPs where Southern IFCA request to review drafts and associated annexes**

Breakdown

- *Review of draft FMP and annexes for FMPs where this was provided to Southern IFCA, these included:*
 - *Crab & Lobster FMP*
 - *Whelk FMP*
 - *King Scallop FMP*

b. Review efficacy of implementation plans

- *Implementation plans not yet developed in 2022-2023 year*

2. Contribute to environmental assessments

a. Evaluate effectiveness of plans in relation to the conservation of MPA features, sensitive species and habitats

- *No requests for input on this basis in 2022-2023 year – publication phase occurred in 2023-2024 year*

b. Contribute evidence and data to inform assessments

- *No requests for input on this basis in 2022-2023 year – publication phase occurred in 2023-2024 year*

3. Contribute to financial and resource assessments

- *No requests for input on this basis in 2022-2023 year – publication phase occurred in 2023-2024 year*

Log requests and feedback concerns

1. Maintain a log and track requests to IFCA from delivery partners, FMP projects and Defra across the programme regarding the requirements set out above
 - a. Log existing and ongoing requests

- **22 requests logged and actioned from delivery partners, Defra or AIFCA**
- **5 responses to requests for reviews of FMP content with input provided by Southern IFCA**

Breakdown

- *Crab & Lobster FMP*
 - *Request for input into identification of potential meetings/events for Seafish to use as engagement events*
 - *Request to disseminate information on engagement events*
 - *Request to review evidence summary*
 - *Request to review updated evidence summary and provide information on recreational fishing*
 - *Request to review draft FMP and Annexes*
- *Whelk FMP*
 - *Request to disseminate information on engagement events*
 - *Request to review evidence summary*
 - *Request to disseminate information on online drop-in sessions*
 - *Request to review updated evidence summary and provide information on recreational fishing*
 - *Request to review draft FMP and Annexes*
- *King Scallop FMP*
 - *Request to disseminate summary document and details of engagement events*
 - *Request to share information on a series of online engagement events*
 - *Request to review updated evidence summary and provide information on recreational fishing*
 - *Request to review draft FMP and Annexes*
- *NQS FMP*
 - *Request to review current legislation information*
 - *Request from MMO to disseminate information relating to NQS engagement on South Coast*
- *Bass FMP*
 - *Request to disseminate information on Poole drop-in session*
 - *Request to signpost co-design workshops*
 - *Request to disseminate online survey*
 - *Request to disseminate link to online co-refine survey*
- *Relevant to multiple FMPs*
 - *Request via AIFCA to populate legislation mapping tool and IFCA inshore RD mapping 2023*
 - *Request from AIFCA to publicise details of Defra sessions on Crab & Lobster, Whelk and King Scallop FMPs*

- b. Log when requests have been actioned

- *All requests and responses logged on central spreadsheet*
 - *All requests actioned and responses provided either directly to FMP delivery partner or via AIFCA depending on origin of request*
- c. SPOCs to feedback concerns to delivery partners/projects
- **5x concerns fed back to delivery partners and via AIFCA**

Breakdown

- *2x requests made via AIFCA for details on Working Groups for FMPs to allow for Southern IFCA to be able to attend as needed*
- *3x requests made for Solent Scallop Fishery information to be included in the King Scallop FMP and associated annexes, offer to provide information required from Southern IFCA data*