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Wrasse Fishery Guidance

To maintain a sustainable population of wrasse and to enable the enjoyment of the species by other users, the points listed below should be followed by any person commercially fishing for live wrasse within the District of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA):

- **Wrasse Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) now apply under the Southern IFCA MCRS Byelaw, please refer to this byelaw for full prohibitions:** Ballan 18cm, Corkwing 14cm, Goldsinny and Rock cook 12cm.
- **Maximum conservation reference sizes** – All live wrasse above the following size ranges should be returned to the fishery immediately:
 - Ballan wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*): 28cm;
 - Corkwing wrasse (*Symphodus melops*): 22cm;
 - Rock cook wrasse (*Centrolabrus exoletus*): 18cm;
 - Goldsinny wrasse (*Ctenolabrus rupestris*): 18cm;
 - all live Cuckoo wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) should be returned to the fishery immediately.
- **No take zones** – All forms of commercial fishing for live wrasse should not take place within the coastal areas:
 - Within Poole Rocks Marine Conservation Zone¹;
 - From Broad Bench (50° 36.496' N 002° 08.776'W) to Anvil Point (50° 35.466'N 001° 57.588'W);
 - From Grove Point (50° 32.965'N 002° 24.947'W) to Portland Bill (50° 30.818'N 002° 27.352'W);
 - From Chesil Cove (50° 33.549'N 002° 26.940'W) to a point East of Burton Mere (50° 41.063'N 002° 41.409'W);
 - From the base of Golden Cap (50° 43.381'N 002° 50.400'W) to the Southern IFC District west boundary (50° 43.136'N 002° 56.792'W); and
 - within 50 metres of Swanage Pier, Weymouth Pier, West Bay Pier and Ferrybridge.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zone-2013-designation-poole-rocks>

- **No pot fishing Zone** – Pot fishing for live wrasse should not take place between Portland Bill (50° 30.818'N 002° 27.352'W) and Chesil Cove (50° 33.549'N 002° 26.940'W).
- **Effort limitation** – Any fishing vessel using baited wrasse pots should use no more than 80 pots per vessel.
- **Closed season** – The commercial fishing for live wrasse should not take place between the 1st April and the 30th June each year.
- **Maximum fishing depth** – The placing of pots and rod and line fishing for wrasse should not take place in water deeper than 10 metres.
- **Catch data** – All first-sale buyers of wrasse must register with the UK fisheries authorities and submit a 'sales note'. In addition, fishers within the District are requested to submit monthly catch returns no later than **14 days** after the month has ended. Catch return forms should detail the quantities of individual species caught (ballan, corkwing, goldsinny and rock cook), the fishing method, fishing locations and fishing effort. Catch return forms may be submitted by post, email or digital photograph.
- **Biosecurity and husbandry** – When storing and transporting live fish and seawater, appropriate biosecurity and husbandry measures should be followed in order to prevent the mixing of genetic structure and the transport of disease, parasites and non-native species.

Explanatory Note

This Fishery Guidance aims to protect the long-term sustainability of wrasse populations within the Southern IFCA District and maximise the enjoyment of the species by other users, notably recreational sea anglers, divers and snorkelers. This industry-led approach was developed in June 2017 as a first alternative to a byelaw. Should the approach prove ineffective, Southern IFCA will consider the introduction of regulatory measures to address the issue of wrasse fishery management.

Following analysis of the 2020 wrasse fishery in the line with the Monitoring and Control Plan, the Wrasse Fishery Guidance has been updated to include further detail on the Catch Return Form Requirements. In addition, in July 2021, the Southern IFCA Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw came into force, which made the previously voluntary minimum sizes for the four wrasse species a legal requirement.