



Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Communication Plan

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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

Purpose of the Document

This document sets out of Southern IFCA will approach Communication and aspects of engagement with the community and stakeholders. This plan focuses on getting our engagement and communication right for the Southern IFCA. It aims to ensure that people understand how as an organisation we plan to engage with others to help us to make the right decisions for delivering our vision.

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Communication Plan

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1. Purpose of this plan

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) must communicate effectively with the local community and engage with stakeholders in the local decision process if we are to deliver our vision, which is to “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”.

This plan focuses on getting our engagement and communication right for the Southern IFCA. It aims to ensure that people understand how as an organisation we plan to engage with others to help us to make the right decisions for delivering our vision.

The plan describes how we will go about delivering our high level objectives as they relate to communication, but more than that it also guides our ways of working throughout all aspects of our tasks and duties.

This plan identifies the key strategic objectives for our engagement, these objectives are to; raise awareness, identify issues, and to seek shared solutions. The plan also establishes guiding principles for engagement. These principles have been established to underline our commitment to creating and maintaining an honest, open and transparent culture of engagement.

This plan describes context of the Southern IFCA and considers the sometimes complex stakeholder and community ‘landscape’: whereby there are sometimes competing demands upon the same resources. This is particularly interesting as within this complexity there are both challenges and opportunities.

In this plan some more detailed messages are presented; these will guide officers to deliver consistent communication. These detailed messages will be used when developing annual actions: actions which will be monitored and updated annually. This report therefore forms a resource for members, officers and partners. Indeed the diverse IFCA membership is a key strength of the Authority and this plan will ensure that members and officers have access to resources to engage with stakeholders and communities they serve.

Throughout this communication plan we refer to stakeholders and communities, and we consider these to be any individual or group who is, or could become, interested in, involved in or affected by, or have an effect on, our policies and activities. This plan therefore also outlines the communities and groups we serve and how we may be able to engage effectively.

2 Aims & Objectives

2.1 Overall Aim & Vision

The overall aim of this plan is to support effective engagement with the local community and to participate effectively with regional and national stakeholders so as to deliver the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities vision which is to:

“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”.

The IFCAs are a new organisation, formed in 2011 and whose duties are wide ranging. The vision for IFCAs encapsulates the core role of the Authority and is shared by the 10 IFCAs in England. This vision translates the legal duties placed upon the IFCA which are (largely) contained in the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009.

2.2 Success Criteria

Southern IFCA has a number of ‘success criteria’, these criteria outline the types of activities which may be expected of IFCAs in their pursuit of their vision. Success criteria are the tangible aspects that underpin the vision. To be successful, the Southern IFCA must strive to engage in the delivery of all aspects of work and the success criteria which most strongly emphasise the importance of communication are:

IFCAs are recognised and heard

- “Each IFCA, and IFC authorities as a group, have a vision and plan for future management of inshore fisheries and conservation. This will help them to be a recognised ‘brand’, managing their public voice so that they are respected and trusted for the expertise they offer.”

IFCAs work in partnership and are engaged with their stakeholders

- “IFCAs will work across boundaries, engaging effectively with local and central government, other government bodies, other delivery bodies, industry and other NGOs, recreational users and individuals in the work that they do. Through this partnership approach to working IFCAs will deliver the socioeconomic and environmental outcomes they were created under the Marine and Coastal Access Act to deliver.”

The Southern IFCA is committed to a series of high level objectives, which include to, by April 2013, develop a strategy and corresponding plan for promotion of the

work of IFCA's and the benefits that they offer to the local community, and demonstrate implementation of the plan by April 2015.

By developing and delivering aspects of this strategy now, we recognise the importance of engagement and that it underpins our high level strategies. Without effective engagement it will not be possible to effectively develop or implement our:

- Review of byelaws
- Compliance and Enforcement Plan
- Research plans

2.3 Engagement objectives

We consider the engagement objectives to be

Raise Awareness

- Stakeholders and communities have an understanding of the role and duties of the IFCA
- Stakeholders and communities have a greater understanding of the types of fishing and the value of marine fisheries (both commercial and recreational) in the IFCA District.
- Stakeholders and communities have a greater understanding of the marine environment and are able to perceive tangible improvements to their local environment.

Identify Issues

- Stakeholders and communities add value to the shared understanding of issues and they feel empowered to engage with the IFCA to take action where it is needed.
- More local communities are interested in local fisheries and engage with us and the fishing communities to improve their coastal marine fisheries and environment.

Seek Shared Solutions

- Stakeholders and communities know how and when to input into IFCA planning and delivery and can do so in an open and constructive way.
- Wider environmental, social and economic improvements are integrated into delivery when appropriate.

These objectives are continuously being updated and as such this plan will be a working document.

2.4 Guiding principles for all communications

The IFCA will:

- Be generous in sharing our data and information
- Use information and learn from others
- Be open to including community action that may not directly contribute to Southern IFCA's objectives
- Be open to exploring what might need to be done, even if we cannot pin down costs and actors

3.0 Influence

3.1 The Community and Stakeholder Landscape In developing our communication strategy it is essential to examine the wider stakeholder environment. Well established and functioning networks exist and we should aim to work within and respect those networks engaging where appropriate.

The marine sector is comprised of commercial, recreational and public interests. Naturally within this context there are some shared and collective issues and some issues where there is tension between interests. There is also often significant diversity within each sector. In this environment it is the role of the IFCA to seek shared solutions and to make sometimes tough decisions in an appropriate and timely manner.

As the IFCA is new it is unknown to some or may be perceived to be a variation on the old Sea Fisheries Committee to others. The challenge in this context is great as the organisation has extensive new powers, responsibilities and duties. We must therefore seek to make ourselves known, to send out our message, and to ensure that we listen to others and we are able to constructively receive their feedback.

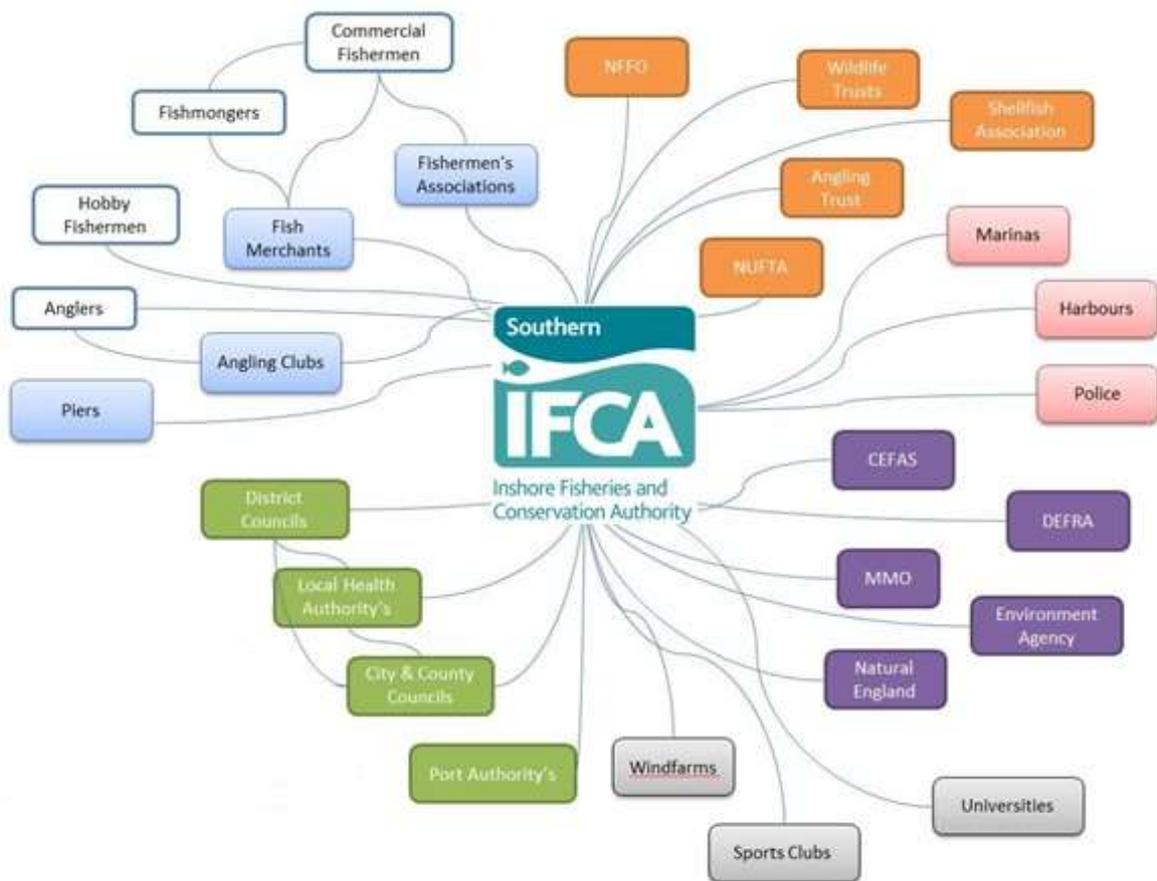


Figure 1. Stakeholder and Community Web.

3.2 What can be influenced?

The scope of influence of the IFCA is wide and through engagement with the community and our stakeholders we can influence a range of decisions and activities. In the coming months and years the IFCA shall be putting in place a series of strategic plans which will form part of our plan to deliver our vision. Communities and stakeholders have a unique opportunity to shape those plans and in doing so the plans will be most effective.

3.3 The evidence based cycle

The role of communication is central to Southern IFCA's evidence-based marine management cycle. Guidance to IFCAs on evidence-based marine management is at: <http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/ww/ifca/>

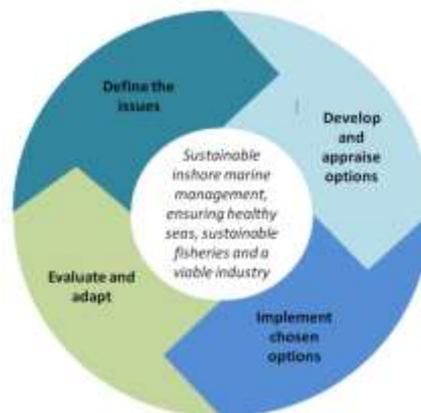


Figure 2. The evidence based marine management cycle

During 2012 we will commence a review of our management systems, gather evidence and deliver compliance through the following plans

1. How we manage fisheries and marine protected areas: principally through our review of byelaws
2. How we gather evidence: principally through the development of a Research Plan and through the provision of information to support an impact assessment which will accompany any regulatory proposal. In an Impact Assessment we will put together the best available information on both the socioeconomic impacts and the environmental impacts in order to inform the decisions we make.
3. How we ensure compliance: principally through our Compliance & Enforcement Plan and through the delivery of a Risk Based Approach.

3.3 What cannot be influenced?

One of the challenges facing inshore managers is that of the transboundary nature of many (but not all) of the marine fisheries resources which are only within the District from time to time, thus the IFCA may contribute to, but not have full control, over the management of many stocks. Regulation by the IFCA must be consistent with The Common Fisheries Policy and the Directives of the European Union, but the IFCA may influence policy through engagement.

3.4 Role of Officers and Members and monitoring delivery

To deliver the objectives detailed the IFCA members shall oversee actions and progress against which shall be reported at IFCA quarterly meetings, by the Fisheries and Conservation Officer with special responsibilities for community liaison but the delivery and actions against the engagement plan shall be undertaken by all employees and members of the authority. Members should also expect to guide officers on the most pressing issues in the District, shaping the plan and monitoring progress against the plan.

3.5 Role of National Groups and Associations

The IFCA Chief Officers Group and The IFCA Technical Advisory Group are both important routes to exchange information and engage with other IFCAs, and partner organisations: we will support their development and their role in coordinating national activities. With IFCA's key partners, Natural England, Environment Agency, CEFAS and Marine Management Organisation we will ensure that we proactively engage, listen and feedback into the regional and national policy development process.

In 2012/13 the Association of IFCAs will be developing a communication plan. The aim of the Association of IFCAs is to assist and promote the ten regional IFCAs to ensure that the authorities develop a leading and effective national role in fisheries and conservation management in line with the IFCA vision. Southern IFCA will support that process.

4. Key messages

4.1 Purpose of key messages

These key messages must be consistent in all communications, internal or external, including press releases, letters to stakeholders, engagement materials, display panels, newsletters, website, interpretation boards and informal engagement with stakeholders and communities, however initiated.

These messages need regular review to remain accurate, and care should be taken to target the right messages at the right people.

4.1 Headline messages

1. Southern IFCA's aim is to lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment. and inshore fisheries.
2. We will work with the community to secure the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits
3. We will work to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.
4. Through our local management and funding structures, the Southern IFCA helps to put local authorities, local communities, local businesses and individual citizens in the driving seat, allowing them to play a bigger part in the protection and enhancement of their inshore marine environment.

4.2 Detailed messages

1. The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority is one of ten IFCAs whose jurisdictions cover the entire coastline of England. The marine element of the IFCA District extends 6 miles seaward and the terrestrial element covers the constituent local Authority areas.
2. The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) was created in 2011. Southern IFCA is a joint committee of the Councils which fund the Authority. Southern IFCA is tasked with the sustainable management of inshore sea fisheries resources in its District.
3. The IFCA is funded through its constituent local authorities by an annual levy. That levy is supported by central Government to enable the Authority deliver on national management objectives. We will as a public service, deliver our duties in a cost effective and professional manner.
4. The Southern IFCA sets out its priorities for the year in an annual plan, and reports upon progress against that plan in the following year.

5. The duties and powers of the Southern IFCA can be principally found in the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009. The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 has modernised the way that inshore sea fisheries resources are managed in England.
6. IFCAs have a diverse membership. IFCA members are representatives from the constituent local authorities (who provide funding for the IFCA) along with people from across the different sectors that use, or are knowledgeable about the inshore marine area, such as commercial and recreational fishermen, environmental groups and marine researchers, who offer their time voluntarily. The Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency and Natural England also each have a statutory seat on the IFCA. Through this structure the Southern IFCA helps to put local authorities, local communities, local businesses and individual citizens in the driving seat, allowing them to play a bigger part in the protection and enhancement of their inshore marine environment.
7. Southern IFCA has a duty to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and take necessary steps to balance socio-economic considerations with the need to protect and promote the recovery of the marine environment.
8. Southern IFCA has a duty to ensure that the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones are furthered and we will develop management measures to support and further the conservation objectives of Marine Protected Areas (including Sites of Special Scientific Interests, European Marine Sites and Ramsar Sites).
9. The IFCA District extends 6 nautical miles to sea from, and includes parts of, Chichester Harbour to Lyme Regis. These shallow coastal seas are some of the most diverse and productive in the Country and the District is home to one of the largest coastal fleets in England.
10. Southern IFCA is committed to working in partnership and we will cooperate with neighbouring IFCAs and other public authorities that are involved with research, monitoring, regulation or enforcement in the sea within our District.
11. The Southern IFCA recognises that fisheries management for many transient species within the Southern District is delivered at a stock level through international policies (i.e. through the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy), but is committed to using appropriate local management measures that may augment those national/international measures to protect those stocks whilst in the Southern District and in so doing secure access to fisheries for the coastal communities of Southern and beyond.

4.3 Timescale

The IFCA has the High Level Objective to, by April 2013, develop a strategy and corresponding plan for promotion of the work of IFCAs and the benefits that they offer to the local community, and demonstrate implementation of the plan by April 2015. We will establish Annual Targets, in our Annual Plans, which will be monitored and reported.

5 The case for engagement

5.1 Why we need to work with others

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority needs to work with others in order to:

- **Inform.**
To let others know about progress.
- **Gather Information.**
To gather knowledge and community views to inform our work.
- **Involve.**
To work closely with others to allow an opportunity for genuine discussion about the management of the inshore marine environment.
- **Inspire.**
To promote the value of improving local fisheries and a sustainable marine environment; the win-win outcomes that can be achieved for local amenity and nature conservation.
- **Form Partnerships.**
To share decision-making and responsibility with others.
- **Efficiency.**
To deliver cost effective public service with limited resources

5.2 Why we need to work with the community and others, and how we want them to respond?

We can be more effective by working together than we can be if we work alone. We can do more to improve the local environment with help from others. Other groups hold data and expertise, ideas and opinions which will help deliver our vision. They may also be able to help with work on the ground and monitoring, and many have access to volunteer groups. We want to be able to co-operate with such groups and individuals and for them to respond positively to requests. Other groups and people can help through using their powers of influence, help with communicating and publicising the role of the Authority, becoming partners, to help co-fund and deliver. We want people to respond with enthusiasm and offer help where possible.

Influential people can help through being politically and publicly supportive of the IFCA, aiding our management and helping to facilitate discussions. Working with stakeholders early on will enable the IFCA to be formed on sound principles. Early engagement will enable us to understand their concerns, what they want and why, and working closely with them to decide how best to move forward. We may still make the final decision, but we will have worked with others to come up with the best solution.

5.3 Why will the community and others want to work with us, and how do they want us to work?

- In order to help to deliver more sustainable fisheries and an environment for marine life, for recreation or enjoyment or the value of nature.
- We are a potential source of funding or resource - to achieve their personal or professional objectives, plans and aspirations or to deliver joint goals within the inshore marine environment.
- To identify other opportunities for work and to undertake joint projects. In order to have influence in their community, and over the way their local environment is managed. To be listened to, give ideas and options, to have their say, and in order to know what is happening.
- In order to have confidence that options proposed will work, and that we are competent and confident in planning and delivery.

6. Annual Objectives

TARGETS

6.1 Develop Tools for engagement

- To engage with established groups and form new partnerships where appropriate.
- To identify shared goals and ways of working together with these groups and partnerships which are able to achieve goals effectively and efficiently.
- To produce a quarterly Newsletter.
- To update and review contact lists the community contacts lists.
- To develop a set of presentation material including PowerPoint slides, banners and, poster, fliers & etc. on the role and function of the IFCA which may be used by members and all officers.
- To generate a 'press pack' and a list of local and regional press contacts.
- To redevelop the Southern IFCA website.
- To develop a template press release.
- To provide media training to all relevant staff.
- To identify a process through which to monitor the effectiveness of engagement.
- To use social media in interesting and engaging way.
- To accompany major projects engagement plans with major projects.
- To assist the Association of IFCAs in the development of their engagement platforms.
- To replace the IFCA Knowledge Hub, an online community to the exchange of information between IFCAs with another platform
- To post, in a timely manner, agendas, papers and minutes on our website.
- To create a members area on the Southern IFCA website.

6.2 To raise awareness & identify issues;

- In the recreational and commercial fishing communities about the duties and function of the Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority and hold relevant stakeholder meetings at least on a six monthly basis.
- In the community and with key stakeholders on the progress towards the establishment of a network of marine protected areas.
- By attending and presenting relevant materials at community events.
- By attending and presenting relevant materials at marine festivals.
- By presenting the role and work of the IFCA at local, regional, national and international science and management conferences and workshops.
- By keeping up to date material on the website.
- By preparing reports and papers in a suitable format for publication and to host (or provide links) on the Southern IFCA website.