

Sussex IFCA Shellfish Permit Catch Returns Data Summary

October 2016 to September 2017

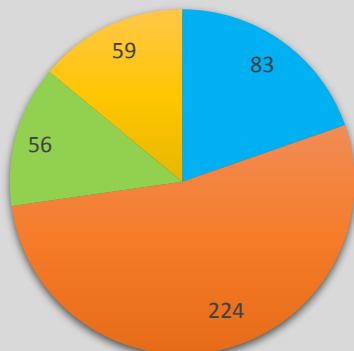
The Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's purpose is to develop sustainable inshore fisheries whilst providing appropriate protection for the marine environment and the fisheries resources it supports.

In 2016 the Authority introduced a comprehensive suite of management measures for pot and trap shellfish fisheries under the Shellfish Permit Byelaw. The new inshore controls built upon existing measures such as minimum sizes and introduced effort limitation, better selectivity for juvenile stock and protection of berried lobsters. The Byelaw effort and gear restrictions enable effective controls on the impacts of fishing activity on the District's shellfish populations and help achieve more productive and sustainable fisheries through improved stock management.

The Sussex IFCA Shellfish Permit Byelaw requires all permit holders to provide shellfish catch and fishing effort information to support inshore shellfish fisheries. This catch returns data is a vital part of shellfisheries' management and will help the IFCA to gather the evidence needed to make future management decisions. The Authority understands that permit data may also be of interest to permit holders, providing a better understanding of the fishery in the context of their own detailed knowledge. Trends such as seasonality of different fisheries and catch rates might be of particular interest for future planning.

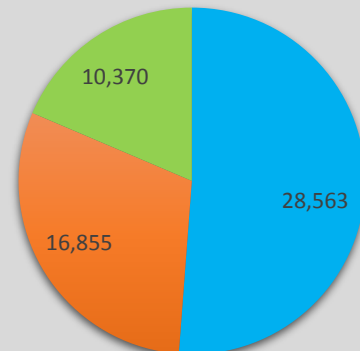
Overview:

- Since October 2016, 70% of the total 161 permits have been assigned to commercial fishermen, with 30% to recreational fishers.
- However, 99% of the total numbers of tags have gone to commercial fishermen.



■ Whelk Pots ■ Lobster/Crab Pots ■ Cuttlefish Pots ■ Prawn Pots

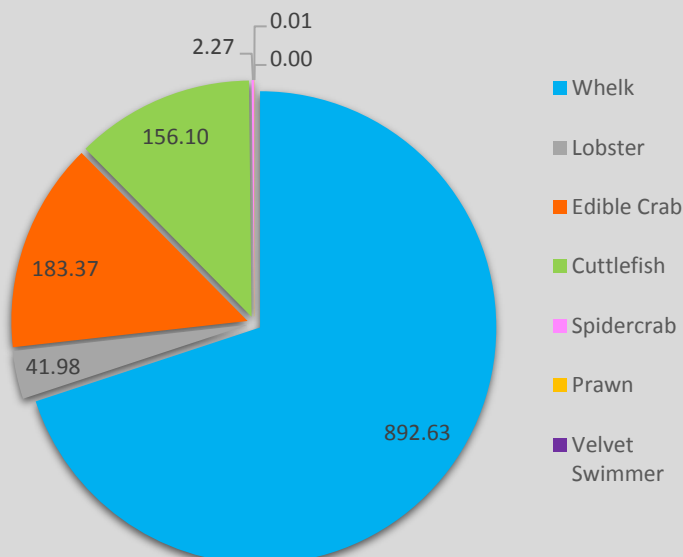
Total tags issued to recreational fishers 2016–2017



■ Whelk Pots ■ Lobster/Crab Pots ■ Cuttlefish Pots

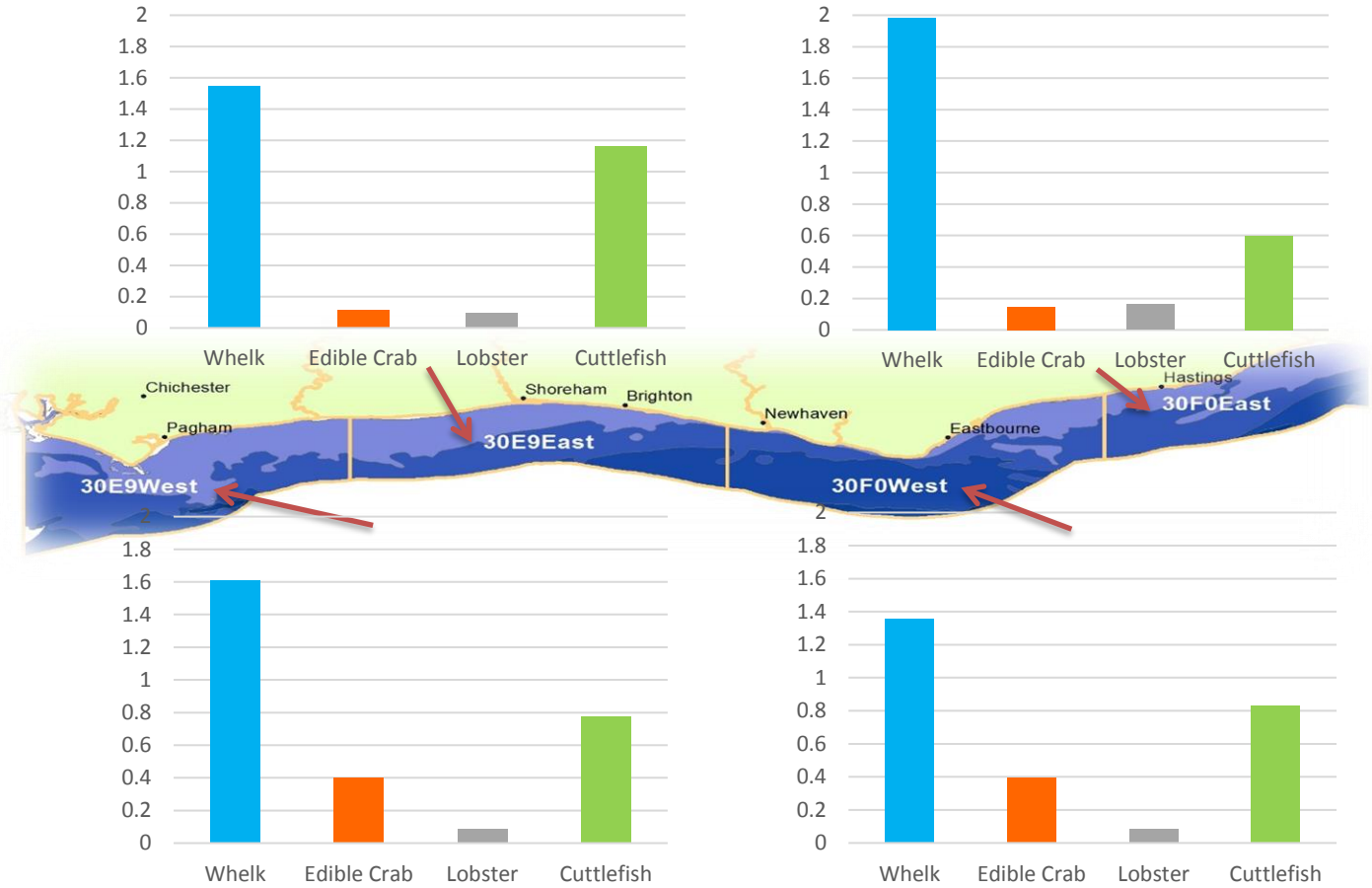
Total tags issued to commercial fishers 2016–2017

Total weight (tonnes) of each species landed 2016 – 2017

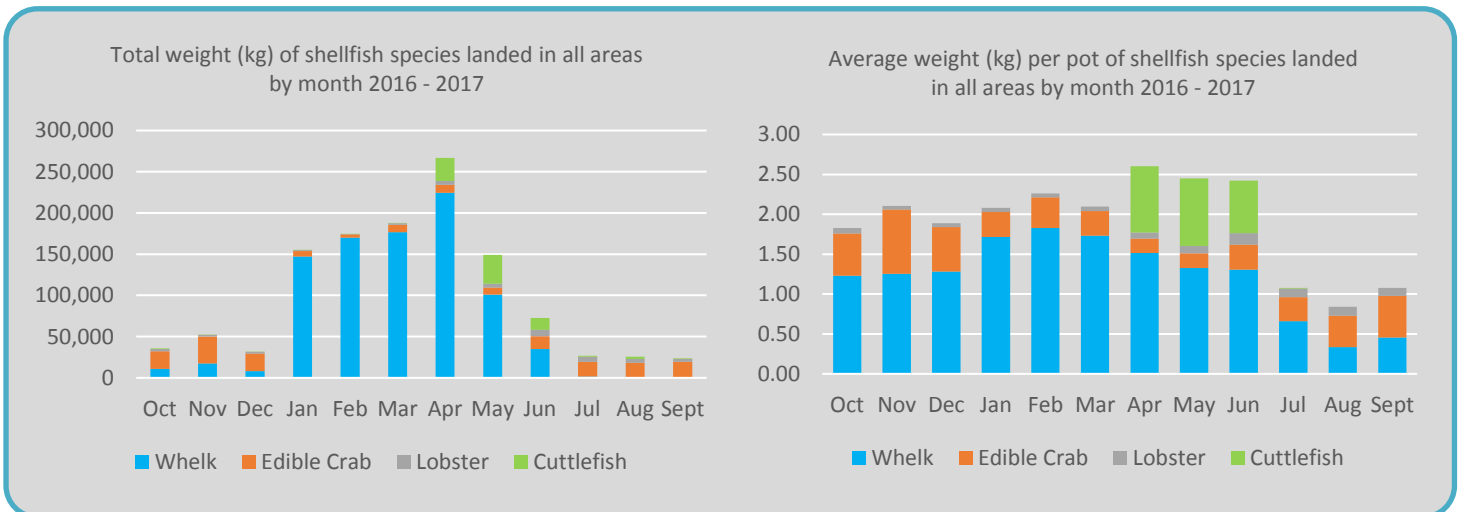


- A total of 1,276 tonne of shellfish was reported being landed on catch returns between October 2016 and September 2017.
- The four-main species landed were whelks (70%), edible crab (14%), cuttlefish (12%) and lobster (3%).
- Very few spider crabs or prawns and no velvet swimming crabs were reported as being landed.

Mean weight (kg) per pot of shellfish species in the Sussex IFCA areas 30E9West, 30E9East, 30F0West and 30F0East



- The weights of species per pot, or catch per unit effort (CPUE), is similar in each area of the District.
- CPUE for whelks is greatest in area 30F0East, edible crab 30E9West, lobster 30F0East and cuttlefish 30E9East.
- There is an increase in CPUE during July and August for whelks.
- CPUE is greatest for edible crab in October to December.
- CPUE for lobster was highest in June to August.
- The cuttlefish season is clearly shown in May, June and July with no catches reported outside these 3 months.



Catch data submitted will enable Sussex IFCA and others to better understand the seasonality of the shellfish fisheries and changes over longer time periods. The data will also help to understand the changes in catches and the status of stocks in response to the levels of fishing effort within the fisheries.