

North Eastern  
Inshore Fisheries  
and Conservation  
Authority

# ANNUAL PLAN

2023/2024

North Eastern

**IFCA**

Inshore Fisheries and  
Conservation Authority



*Bridlington Harbour*



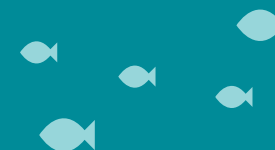
# CONTENTS

Vision	3
Foreword	4
Introduction	6
NEIFCA Work Programme 2023/2024	22
IFCA Success Criteria	29

**North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority**

**Telephone: 01482 393515 Email: [ne-ifca@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:ne-ifca@eastriding.gov.uk)**

**[www.ne-ifca.gov.uk](http://www.ne-ifca.gov.uk)**





## VISION

“ 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. ”

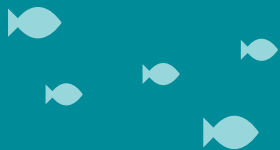
## FOREWORD

The preceding year was characterised by organisational transition out of the impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic and re-establishment of impacted programmes. The year itself presented some notable challenges, not least supporting the Defra led investigations into the shellfish mortalities which occurred off the Tees and North Yorkshire coast at the end of 2021. Despite such challenges there were some significant achievements including the implementation of a new fisheries permitting database and the successful delivery of the first year of the European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI) Project in partnership with the Holderness Fishing industry Group (HFIG). Very notable progress has also been made on the replacement of the Authority's main offshore vessel, North Eastern Guardian III (NEGIII) following the commencement of a tender process at the beginning of March 2023.

This plan sets out the key priorities for the new year ahead which include the piloting and implementation of a new online catch and effort reporting system, formal consultation and confirmation of a new shellfish management byelaw regulation and further advancement of the replacement of NEG III.

Finally, I would like to pass on my very best wishes for 2023/2024 to all NEIFCA staff, officers and members and in particular those that have recently been recruited or appointed into the Authority.

**Caroline Lacey** Clerk of North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority





# HUMBER BRIDGE

*Humber Estuary*



# INTRODUCTION

## PLAN CONTENT

This thirteenth Annual Plan for North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority was developed through its main committee and internal working groups. The plan sets out the main performance targets and objectives for the year ahead, facilitating effective performance management and staff development. This plan will continue to be reviewed and updated annually to reflect improvements in performance brought about by achieved targets and any changes in national objectives and success criteria.

## FUNCTIONS

The Authority is responsible for managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its area of jurisdiction. This includes all animals and plants which habitually live or are cultivated in the sea. In delivering this function the Authority is required to ensure that all exploitation and development, taking place within its District, is sustainable and socio-economic needs are balanced with marine environmental protection. The Authority is also required to balance the needs of all stakeholders exploiting resources within its district and further the conservation objectives of any Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs).

The Authority's principal enforcement functions relate to minimum landing sizes, net and fishing gear regulations, restricted fishing areas, the protection of European Marine Sites (EMSs) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). Apart from the enforcement of these regulations, the Authority's main fisheries vessel, North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III) also plays a central role in monitoring the impact of offshore activities through the digital recording of sightings information, water column sampling, including water temperature, acoustical seabed assessment, underwater and remote camera assessment and wider fisheries stock assessment work using a range of trawls and dredges.

The Authority can make byelaws (subject to final confirmation by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to address a wide range of local fisheries and marine environmental management issues. This also extends to emergency byelaw regulations which are time limited to a maximum period of eighteen months.



## ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority's role in marine conservation and protection continues to develop. The 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act provides clear duties to ensure that any exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way and the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones are furthered. There are currently two Marine Conservation Zones designated within the Authority's jurisdiction: Holderness Inshore and Runswick Bay.

The Authority is also a statutory consultee for all marine licensing applications and consents occurring within its area of jurisdiction. These include applications relating to the discharge of effluents, marine water extraction, harbour and coastal construction projects, scientific investigations and renewable energy projects. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) acts as the primary consultative 'hub' for the majority of licensing applications and consents involving construction. The majority of consultations are now dealt with electronically via a national system operated by the MMO.

Key Authority Officers are registered on this system and receive electronic alerts when relevant licensing consents are opened for consultation, comments are then drafted and submitted electronically on behalf of the Authority. This work is currently led by the Acting Environmental and Scientific Manager. Any consents relating to discharge or extraction are managed by the Environment Agency and a similar electronic consultation process is in place to deal with those also.

In addition, the Authority is also a "Relevant and Competent Authority" under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c) Regulations 1994. This means that the Authority, along with other partners, have a statutory duty to ensure that the conservation objectives of European marine sites are upheld. Currently five European Marine Sites are designated within the Authority's jurisdiction: Northumbria Coast, Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast, Flamborough Head, Humber Estuary and the Greater Wash site. IFCAs, through a formal management group.

During 2012 DEFRA commenced a project aimed at strengthening the assessment and management of fishing activities within European Marine Sites to ensure much greater compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This revised approach was subsequently extended to include Marine Conservation Zones. All UK sites and associated fishing activities have now been categorised according to their features and the level of risk presented by both current and potential fishing activities.

Each site is subject to ongoing monitoring and assessment of the potential impacts arising from fishing activity. This allows tailored management to be introduced to protect and conserve sensitive environmental features such as salt marsh or sub-tidal reef habitat.

Many sites have established management schemes in place that help to coordinate the work of relevant Authorities, including IFCA's, through a formal management group. NEIFCA officers are actively involved in these groups and are currently playing a crucial role in the development of new, regional management groups.





# AUTHORITY AREA

The district of the Authority extends six nautical miles seaward from the baselines, from the River Tyne to a point drawn True East from 'Haile Sand Fort' on the North East Lincolnshire Authority boundary, close to Humberston, on the South Bank of the Humber Estuary. The district also encompasses all estuarine areas, landward to tidal limits, occurring within the boundaries of member Local Authorities.



- |   |              |    |                  |
|---|--------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | River Tyne   | 1  | South Shields    |
| 2 | River Wear   | 2  | Sunderland       |
| 3 | River Tees   | 3  | Seaham           |
| 4 | River Esk    | 4  | Hartlepool       |
| 5 | River Humber | 5  | South Gare       |
| 6 | River Ouse   | 6  | Redcar           |
| 7 | River Trent  | 7  | Marske           |
|   |              | 8  | Saltburn         |
|   |              | 9  | Skinningrove     |
|   |              | 10 | Staithe          |
|   |              | 11 | Port Mulgrave    |
|   |              | 12 | Runswick Bay     |
|   |              | 13 | Sandsend         |
|   |              | 14 | Whitby           |
|   |              | 15 | Robin Hoods Bay  |
|   |              | 16 | Scarborough      |
|   |              | 17 | Filey            |
|   |              | 18 | Flamborough Head |
|   |              | 19 | Bridlington      |
|   |              | 20 | Hornsea          |
|   |              | 21 | Tunstall         |
|   |              | 22 | Withernsea       |
|   |              | 23 | Kilnsea          |
|   |              | 24 | Stone Creek      |
|   |              | 25 | Hull             |
|   |              | 26 | Immingham        |
|   |              | 27 | Grimsby          |
|   |              | 28 | Cleethorpes      |
|   |              | 29 | Humberston       |



# FUNDING

## LEVY

The levy for the 2023/2024 financial year has been agreed and set by Authority members at £1,377,460, a 3% uplift on the previous year. The Authority's budget has been reviewed by the Chief Officer and his senior management team, together with the Clerk and Treasurer, to identify the level of expenditure necessary to meet operational priorities through to 31 March 2023.

## OVERALL BUDGET

The Authority's budget is spent in the following major areas:

## CENTRAL MANAGEMENT BUDGET

Expenditure relating to the cost of corporate management and administrative support, including Human Resource, Legal, financial, administrative support and training. The draft budget resources the main

objectives and work priorities for the year ahead in order to deliver the strategic 'road map' towards the achievement of both the Authority's overarching national vision and local priorities. It has been produced in line with the Annual Plan and Strategic Risk Register.

## OPERATIONS

Direct expenditure incurred in the performance of the Authority's objectives, comprising land-based, offshore and environmental activities, including salaries and asset running costs relating to vessel and vehicle fuel, maintenance, berthing fees, storage costs, leasing and hire costs and the purchase of equipment.

## OPERATIONAL BUDGET FOR THE AUTHORITY FOR 2023/2024

### Net Expenditure

Central Management **£429,330**

### Operations

Land Based **£135,590**

Offshore Operations **£559,510**

Environment **£140,130**

Grant Funded **£20,000**

**Net Cost of Service £1,284,560**

### Funding (Contribution)

Contribution to Renewals Fund **£102,900**

Contribution to Vehicle Replacement Reserve **£10,000**

Transfer to revenue from renewals fund **£20,000**

**Local Authority Levy £1,377,460**



## FINANCIAL RISKS

The Bank of England's February monetary policy report explains that there is a high level of uncertainty in the economic outlook for the UK with GDP projected to fall slightly throughout 2023 and into 2024. Inflation has begun to fall but is still well above the Bank's 2% target with RPI at 10.5% in December 2022 mainly due to the impact of higher energy prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Higher prices due to supply chain disruption following the covid pandemic and shortages in the labour market have also put upward pressure on inflation. The Bank forecasts that inflation will fall quickly this year, to 3% at the beginning of 2024 as the price of energy is not expected to rise so rapidly and higher interest rates will help to reduce the demand for goods and services in the economy. NEIFCA will continue to experience this increase in inflation as a pressure on energy, fuel and other supplies.

# RESERVES

Reserves are held to manage the above risks. In the short-term the general reserve will be available to meet the ongoing known pressures, but it is expected that proposed charges or additional income will eventually balance the budget. The Authority maintains a general reserve to meet unforeseen events and specific reserves to even out cash flow for individual projects or purchases. The Authority currently holds three specific reserves.

## GENERAL RESERVE

The general reserve enables the Authority to demonstrate its financial standing as a 'going concern', to be in a position to meet unforeseen liabilities. The requisite level of reserves is subjective, since any such liability is neither known nor anticipated. Setting the level of general reserves is just one of several related decisions in the formulation of the budget for a particular year. Account is taken of the key risks, stated above, that could impact on the financial assumptions underpinning the budget alongside a consideration of the Authority's financial management arrangements. A good track record for

managing in-year budget pressures and operation of robust financial reporting arrangements is evident. The expected balance of the general reserve as at 31 March 2024 is £228,450.

## SPECIFIC RESERVES

In 2011/12 the Authority created an earmarked reserve to manage the risk associated with patrol vessel maintenance. Due to its nature, certain maintenance is cyclical rather than annual and other maintenance may be of an exceptional and urgent nature.

During August 2022 there was a major mechanical engine failure on board the patrol vessel which resulted in additional expenditure which has been estimated to be up to £240,000. The cost of this work will be funded through a combination of in-year underspends, the Patrol Vessel Maintenance Reserve and the Renewals Fund and could be reduced if the insurance settlement is successful.



## RESERVES

It is anticipated that the £50,000 balance of the patrol vessel maintenance reserve will be fully utilised by 31 March 2023 to fund the cost of the repairs.

The replacement of the patrol vessel remains a key risk for the Authority, included within the levy proposals is a contribution to the renewals reserve of £102,900. The overarching vessel replacement programme consists of three individual components, replacement of the main patrol vessel, alongside the separate build and commission of two daughter craft, a 9.5m cabin rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) and an 8m aluminium inshore work boat. The procurement contract for the build and commission of the 9.5m Cabin RIB was approved at a Special Authority Meeting on 17 August 2020 and the vessel was delivered during May 2021. The vessel was funded from the Renewals Reserve. The Authority may need to utilise some of its vessel renewals reserve to support the costs associated with the repairs to the main engines onboard the current vessel although it is anticipated that this investment will increase future resale value. The balance on the reserve at 31 March 2024 is forecast to be £1,436,864.

A vehicle replacement reserve has been set up to fund the maintenance and replacement of vehicles and the balance of this is estimated to stand at £10,000 at 31 March 2023. Currently the Authority owns three small multi-purpose vans, one large transporter van and leases a further 4x4 'pick-up' and a utility vehicle. Owning vehicles has proven much more cost effective in terms of flexibility of managing mileage and additional 'end-of-term costs' which are applied with each lease agreement. Maintaining a reasonable vehicle replacement reserve enables the fleet programme to be effectively managed.

The NEIFCA External Projects reserve is forecast to be £43,000 at 31 March 2023 with the reserve being fully utilised by the end of 2023/24 financial year. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is supporting the implementation of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs), a new statutory requirement of the Fisheries Act 2020. IFCAs have been asked to support this programme of work and additional funding of £50,000 has been provided by Defra for 2022/2023 to assist in resourcing engagement. At the Authority meeting on 1 December 2022 members approved a supplementary budget of £7,000 in 2022/23 and £43,000 to create a fixed-term Environmental Officer post, initially for one year, to support the programme, fully funded by the Defra grant.

NEIFCA is anticipating that further grant aid will be provided by Defra for the 2023/2024 year to support the delivery of other national work streams including Marine Protected Area (MPA) management of marine licensing. These funding streams will be managed through the External Projects reserve.

## ASSETS

The Authority's largest asset is a 26m-patrol boat, the 'North Eastern Guardian III' NEGIII (built and delivered November 2007), capable of a top speed of 26 knots. The vessel was designed, primarily as a fast patrol craft although it is also routinely utilised to conduct limited offshore marine survey work and carries a 6.4 metre RIB capable of speeds up to 30 knots. The vessel is ageing and during July 2022 suffered a major engine failure which necessitated significant investment to repair. Following delivery of North Eastern Guardian III in 2007, the Authority established a renewals fund to support its replacement underpinned by a well defined vessel replacement plan. As part of that plan the Authority purchased a new 9.5m cabin rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) in 2020. This new vessel came into service in July 2021 and will significantly strengthen the Authority's offshore patrolling capabilities going forward.

At a meeting of the Authority in June 2022 members supported a plan to progress the replacement of NEGIII and a formal procurement process commenced at the beginning of March 2023 to establish a cost to build and commission a new vessel. Subject to final Authority approvals a contract could be awarded sometime later summer 2023.

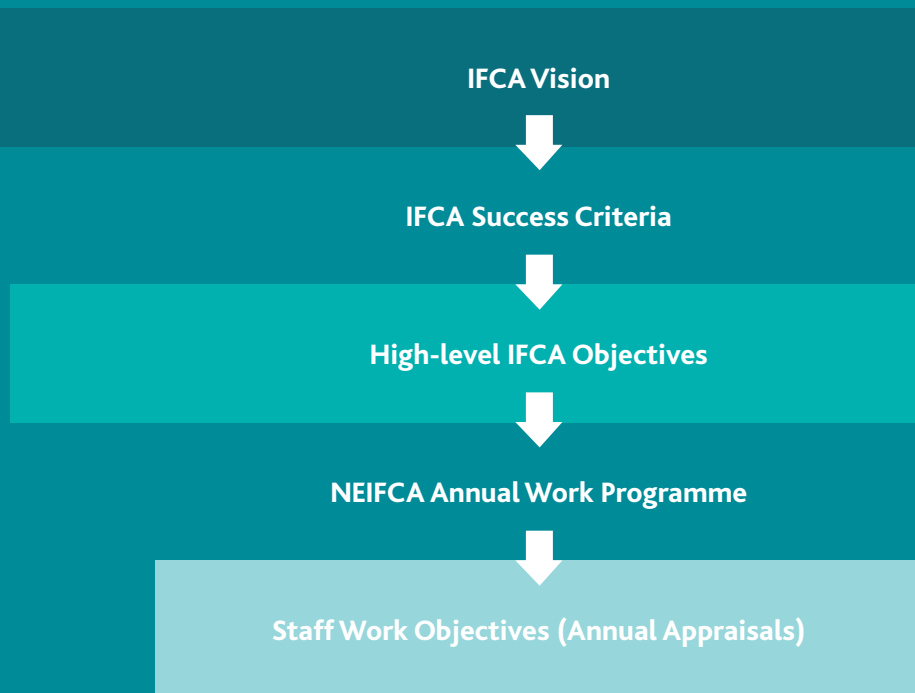
The Authority currently owns a 4x4 truck and an SUV. In addition to a transporter van, it also owns two pick-up trucks and a small caddy van. All the vehicles are used to transport and launch vessels and equipment and access coastal and estuarine areas. The Authority employs fourteen dedicated staff members with a wide variety of expertise and high levels of competency.





# CONSTITUTION

The Authority's work programme for the year ahead is reviewed and adopted annually, reflecting local, regional and national priorities for the year ahead. The relationship between the national IFCA vision, national objectives and the annual work programme is diagrammatically represented below:



North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority is one of ten such Authorities established in October 2010 under provisions contained within the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

On 1 April 2011 the Authority assumed full statutory responsibility for managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its jurisdiction.

The Authority currently consists of representatives from the eleven coastal Local Authorities within its area, comprising 13 local authority members, together with 14 members appointed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and singular members representing Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation. The total membership of the Authority is 30 members.





# HARBOUR

*Scarborough, North Yorkshire*





# MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

## APPOINTED BY CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES:

### EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. C Matthews

Cllr. J Copsey

### DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr. M Wilkies

### HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. S Moore

### HULL CITY COUNCIL

Cllr. R Furley

### NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. S Harness

### NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. R Allcock (E)

### NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr. D Chance (VC,E)

### REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. M Fletcher

### SOUTH TYNESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. E Gibson

### STOCKON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. M Smith

### SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL

Cllr. P Stewart

### APPOINTED BY MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Dr S Axford (C, E)

Ms R Hanbury

Mr M Montgomerie

Mr B Houghton

Mr M Cole

Professor Mike Elliott (E)

Mr A Wheeler (E)

Miss R Lynham

Mr K Woodcock

### APPOINTED BY MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Mr A Faichney

Mr G Redshaw (E)

Mr G Collins (E)

Mrs D.M Mear

Dr C Fitzsimmons

### NOMINATED BY MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Mr A Newlands

Mr P Gray

### APPOINTED BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Mr M Christmas

Mr P Slater

### APPOINTED BY NATURAL ENGLAND

Mrs C Argent

(C) Chairman

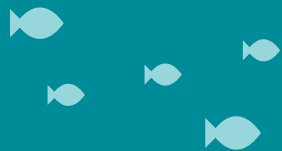
(VC) Vice Chairman

(E) Members of the Executive Committee

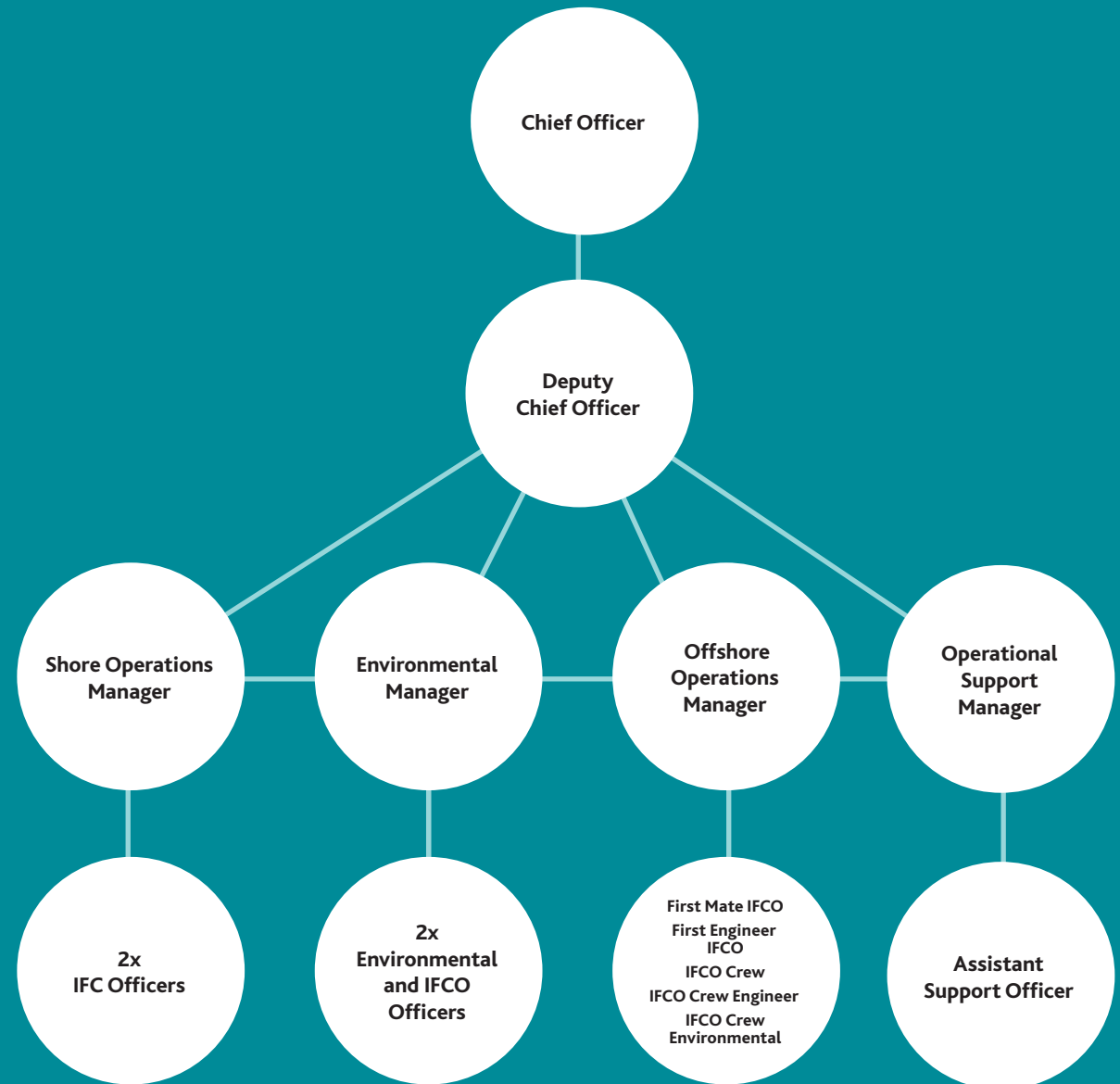
# STAFF AND STRUCTURE

NEIFCA is a direct employer with an establishment currently comprising a Chief Officer (CO); Shore Operations Manager and two Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs); Environmental and Scientific Manager and two Environmental and Scientific Officers; Offshore Operations Manager and First Mate, First Engineer, IFCO Crew Engineer, IFCO Crew and Environmental and Scientific Officer and IFCO Crew; Operational Support Manager and Assistant Support Officer. The Offshore Operations Manager also acts as Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) providing management and leadership across all 'day-to-day' operational activity and support to the CO.

The CO heads NEIFCA's operational delivery and alongside the DCO, is supported by a Senior Management Team comprising of the First Mate, First Engineer, Shore Operations Manager, Environmental & Scientific Manager and Operational Support Manager.



## North Eastern IFCA Organisational Structure





## SERVICE STANDARDS

- ▶ Staff will identify themselves when dealing with you
- ▶ Respond to general correspondence within ten working days
- ▶ Respond to email correspondence within five working days (we will respond by email)
- ▶ Deal with complaints in accordance with the feedback procedure
- ▶ Be courteous and helpful
- ▶ Provide information on our services and facilities
- ▶ Consult on important issues and ask your views about our services
- ▶ Provide confidential interview facilities
- ▶ Provide an SF1 inspection record form at the end of any premise, vessel or vehicle inspection
- ▶ In terms of any formal prosecutions, all proceedings to have commenced within six months of the detection of the original offence

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Following the completion of the staffing and organisational review in December 2020 the Authority's commitment to the training and development of its staff will be further enhanced through 2023. Where possible and practicable this will include active integration with national IFCA officer training programmes. A new annual appraisal process was implemented during November 2021 and is now well embedded in. This process is central to supporting the ongoing training, development and support needs of all NEIFCA staff.

Annual appraisals are typically held between November and January with 'mid-term' reviews completed during June. All training and development needs identified through the appraisal process, are incorporated into a training plan which is centrally managed within the support team. The Appraisal process also links to progression through the Authority's new pay structure. Alongside annual appraisals for established staff, the training, development and support needs of newly appointed staff continue to be actively managed through NEIFCA's probation programme.

It is important that training and development activities are focused on those areas which are relevant to the workplace and that there is the commitment from both the employee and manager. The Authority views training and development in a much wider and holistic sense, including not only specific formal 'classroom' based training courses but also conferences, seminars, workshops, presentations to external groups and representing NEIFCA at relevant public events.



## CORE STRATEGIES

The work of the Authority is guided by a number of core or 'key' strategies and policies which are integral to this plan and its successful implementation. These strategies are reviewed and updated regularly by the Authority. The Risk Management Policy and associated risk registers are reviewed and considered on a minimum sixth monthly basis. Other strategies, such as enforcement and compliance and research are reviewed on an annual basis. The core or key policies which inform the work of NEIFCA are summarised as follows:

### ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE POLICY

The enforcement policy statement has been drafted in accordance with the Regulators' Compliance Code and the regulatory principles required under the Legislative Regulatory Reform Act 2006. It sets out the general principles and approach which NEIFCA will follow. The appropriate use of enforcement powers, including

prosecution, is important both to improve compliance with the legislation and to hold those to account who cause significant harm to marine ecosystems.

### RESEARCH STRATEGIES

The Authority's research work includes fisheries stock assessment programmes, environmental research and monitoring work and occasional 'ad hoc' project initiatives. This work is supported and informed by an annual research strategy and five year strategic plan. The content of the research strategy is agreed annually by the Authority's Science Advisory Group and reviewed throughout the year. The strategy can also be updated to support the planning and delivery of national work streams as and when they arise.

### RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The aim of this strategy is to manage risk and to successfully integrate risk management into existing business and

management processes. Risk management is a key part of this Authority's corporate governance arrangements providing assurance to meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and is reviewed and adopted annually.

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Is a statutory process which aims to provide high level protection of the environment and to ensure integration of environmental considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. This methodology underpins the Authority's fisheries management processes.



# NEIFCA SUMMARY WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

Authority Officers and members have developed the following summary work programme for the year ahead. The work programme covers a wide range of local and regional priorities and links to the delivery of the national IFCA Success Criteria.

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A range of ongoing work is planned through 2023/2024 to develop and foster a strong organisational culture with a clearly defined vision and supporting values. This work will also focus on strengthening leadership, management and communication skill sets across the operational Senior Management Team to improve and strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and will be facilitated through a range of individually focused training and development initiatives and group based activities.

### *Net Zero Ambitions*

**During 2023/2024 NEIFCA will start to build a knowledge and understanding of the impact its operational activities are having on the wider environment alongside a commitment to develop a longer term strategy to reduce those impacts.**

## PERFORMANCE MATRICES

NEIFCA is currently working with the national Association and Defra to develop a set of performance matrices to better inform and publicise the extent of its work and associated outputs across the year. This work is ongoing and will cover a wide range of delivery areas from enforcement, through to fisheries and Marine Protected Area (MPA), marine licensing and consenting and national policy engagement and delivery such as the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) programme.

## POLICY AND STRATEGY WORK

Throughout the scope of this plan NEIFCA officers will lead on the development and implementation of a number of key strategies summarised below. The Authority's Science Advisory Group (SAG) will provide support and oversight at each stage of the work through to final approval.

### *Incident and Response Strategy and Monitoring Policy*

In light of the ongoing response to the shellfish mortalities and associated challenges, this new policy will build on lessons learned and provide a guiding framework for dealing with any similar future events. Whilst there are clearly defined strategies and processes in place for managing anthropogenic events such as oil spillages there is very little guidance on managing naturally occurring events.

### *Recreational Sea Angling Strategy*

NEIFCA has always carried an ambition to strengthen its active engagement with the recreational fishing sector and given the appointment of Kevin Woodcock to the Authority it would seem timely to further that work during 2023/2024. Kevin is a key member of the Angling Trust's North East regional team. During 2022 the Authority's first recreational sea angling strategy was drafted and it is the ambition to actively build on that strategy through 2023/2024 through the further development of projects and initiatives to both strengthen working relationships and support the sector.

### *Aqua/Mariculture Strategy*

The number of aqua/mariculture projects located within the NEIFCA district has increased significantly during the last few years. One company has established a business growing and harvesting seaweed at Scarborough, North Yorkshire and is now expanding into offshore aquaculture. Two further initiatives involving the culture of native oysters have also been established at sites located in Sunderland and Spurn Point on the Humber Estuary. Currently NEIFCA does not currently have an overarching strategy to guide and support the management of these initiatives within its district despite carrying a statutory obligation to ensure that associated activities are managed sustainably. The development of such a strategy is therefore planned during 2023/2024.

## **IT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES**

### *Website*

A new NEIFCA website was launched during February 2022 and officers are committed to both maintaining it and building and developing it's functionality through 2023/2024.

### *Fisheries Database*

Throughout 2021/2022 NEIFCA has been working in partnership with Sussex IFCA and an external IT company to develop a bespoke fisheries database.

This new database is now supporting the management of NEIFCA's shellfish permit schemes and work will continue through 2023/2024 to expand its functionality to include the electronic capture of catch and effort information directly from fishermen. To this end a pilot scheme is planned with 18 fishermen across the district to actively trial the functionality of the system. Eventually this new database will replace the longstanding system that NEIFCA has utilised through East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC).

### *Integration with National Fisheries Systems*

Nationally IFCA's link into enforcement and compliance and intelligence systems which are managed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Engagement is supported by formal data sharing agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). Levels of engagement vary across IFCAs particularly in relation to the input of enforcement and compliance data. Currently NEIFCA maintains its own internal recording processes although it has formally committed to more active engagement with the national enforcement and control system. Active work will continue in this area during 2023/2024.

## **BYELAW DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW 2022/2023**

### *Potting Flexible Byelaw*

During 2023/2024 NEIFCA is planning to move two new byelaw regulations through process to formal confirmation. These byelaws were made in December 2022 and cover the management of shellfishing activities and the improved protection of sensitive habitat within the Humber Estuary. SAG will provide oversight throughout various process stages of the work and support to any associated Authority decision making.

A new flexible shellfish byelaw was approved by the Science Advisory Group on 23 of September 2022 and made by the Authority on the 1 of December 2022. This new framework will establish a permitting system with supporting conditions that can be changed in response to associated changes within the exploited stocks. These conditions will include species, catch, gear, vessel and temporal restrictions. This new byelaw framework will allow NEIFCA to manage its pot fisheries much more pro-actively, efficiently and effectively.

### *Provisional Timescales*

- Formal consultation to commence April/May 2023
- MMO Quality Assurance July/August 2023
- DEFRA Review & Confirmation September 2023

### *Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw*

The Humber Estuary Fishing byelaw was approved by the Science Advisory Group on 23 of September 2022 and made by the Authority on the 1 of December 2022. Results from the most recent surveys of the Spurn point Seagrass Area have shown that the eelgrass continues to expand beyond the borders of the current restricted area necessitating revised protection.

### *Provisional Timescales*

- Formal consultation to commence April/May 2023
- MMO Quality Assurance July/August 2023
- DEFRA Review & Confirmation September 2023

## **NEIFCA FISHERIES ASSESSMENT PLANS & PROGRAMMES 2023/2024**

### *Response to Shellfish Mortalities & 'Wash up'*

Investigations into the cause of the observed shellfish mortalities in the Tees Estuary and surrounding areas South to Robin Hoods Bay have been enduring since October 2021. Priority work for NEIFCA during 2023/2024 will continue to improve the understanding of how the event has impacted on stocks within the affected areas. This work will be supported and guided by the Authority's SAG.

## **FISHERIES STOCK ASSESSMENT WORK 2023/2024**

### *Stock Assessment for Lobster and Crabs*

The planned fisheries stock assessment programme for 2023/2024 is set out below with support provided through the Authority's SAG.

Collection of biometric data for lobsters and edible crabs at the quayside remain ongoing and additional offshore observer trips and surveys are planned for the 2023/24 season. Offshore potting surveys will be done without

escape gaps to capture smaller sized animals to increase the data quality for the stock assessment. Results of the annual stock assessment will feed into the decisions making for gear and fishing restrictions in the coming years.

### *Scallop Fishery*

The current Scallop fishery in the NEIFCA district is restricted to two defined areas and three permits were issued for the 2022/2023 season (November to April). The submission of monthly catch and effort returns has remained a mandatory condition of holding a permit, monitoring work re-commenced in March 2022 and dredge sampling and habitat surveys to monitor long-term impacts will re-commence in 2023.

### *Intertidal Fixed Net Fishery*

This fishery has been closed for three years due to a Europe wide prohibition on the commercial exploitation of sea bass from the shore. Following a change in UK fisheries legislation it reopened on the 1 October 2021 and the 2023/2024 season (October to June) is expected to commence on 1 October 2023. Catch returns and bycatch are continuously analysed as part of a long-term monitoring strategy for this fishery and that will continue during 2023/2024. Officers are planning to enhance that work where possible by periodically gathering length, weight and age data from key species caught in the fishery during 2023/2024.



## NATIONAL WORK STREAM ENGAGEMENT

### *Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)*

The level of active IFCA involvement in the delivery of national work streams is increasing year on year and NEIFCA welcomes the provision of additional grant aid from Defra in recognition of such. Currently, one of the main national work programmes relates to the development of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).

During March 2023 IFCAs received a grant from Defra of £50K to support resourcing and active involvement in the FMP programme with coordination and support provided nationally through the Association of IFCAs.

The first tranche of FMPs are well advanced including king scallop, crab and lobster and sea bass which are of most relevance and interest to NEIFCA.

### *Provisional Timescales*

- Draft priority FMPs released April/May 2023
- Formal public consultation June to July 2023
- Formal publication November 2023

KEY ACTIVITIES WORKSTREAMS	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Monthly quayside sampling for Lobster and edible crab (Whitby, Scarborough and Bridlington)												
Observer trips on potting vessels for lobsters and crabs												
Shellfish mortality & health monitoring												
Offshore observer trips on permitted scallopers												
Scallop stock and habitat surveys (scallop boxes)												
Intertidal surveys for seaweed												
Eelgrass survey at Spurn Point												
European Lobster Settlement Index Project incl reporting												

## CAPITAL PROJECTS

### *Vessel Replacement Programme*

Work on the establishment and development of the vessel replacement programme commenced in 2015 with the intention of replacing NEGIII at ten year's operational service. The vessel has now reached its sixteenth year and during July 2022 suffered a major engine failure due in the main to its age and service.

During the last three years the replacement programme has been re-vitalised in part through the delivery of a new 9.5m Cabin RIB during 2021 and achieving member agreement on a provisional plan to finance the replacement of NEG III during June 2022, subject to cost. The replacement of the main offshore vessel represents the largest capital project that Authority officers will ever oversee. The procurement stage of that work is now well advanced to establish a cost.



The outline specification of the new vessel represents a significant departure from anything that NEIFCA has previously managed and operated. An innovative multi-hull design will significantly strengthen NEIFCA's ability to undertake offshore survey and monitoring work including the assessment of new and exploited stocks, Marine Protected Area habitats and the delivery of national work programmes.

The project is being managed by the Deputy Chief Officer and offshore Operational Manager who carries extensive technical and personal experience in the build and commission of vessels. The project is also being supported by relevant leads from East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) covering procurement, legal and financial requirements. Officers are also working closely with colleagues in Defra and the national shipbuilding programme. A formal tender was published at the beginning of March 2023 with an extended deadline of 6 April 2023 set for submissions from economic operators.

#### *Provisional Timescales*

- Tender published – 6 April 2023
- Tender submission deadline – 31 March 2023
- Tender submission evaluation – 3 to 13 April 2023
- 1 stage consideration Executive Committee – 20 June 2023
- Authority consideration and decision – 30 June 2023
- ERYC capital approvals – June 2023
- Contract award – July/August 2023
- Commencement of build – September/October 2023

## **OTHER PROJECTS**

### *European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI)*

NEIFCA successfully secured £264,264 of funding from DEFRA under the Fishing Industry Science Partnership program. The project started in February 2022 in partnership with the Bridlington based Holderness Fishing Industry Group and is scheduled to complete at the end of February 2024. The project is unique in the UK and involves the capture and analysis of Early Benthic Phase lobsters (EBP) at sites South and North of Flamborough Head. The appraisal of trends in EBP lobster abundance can be utilised to inform predictive stock assessment models and the management of lobster stocks. The first field trials in 2022 have been completed successfully with the capture of the first EBP lobster. More field trials will be completed through 2023/2024.

### *Nephrop Potting*

Setting pots to capture *Nephrops norvegicus*, more commonly known as 'prawns' or 'scampi', has actively taken place for many years within the NEIFCA district mainly off the Durham coast and catches can attract a high value. There is strong evidence that this fishery could be further developed, a view also supported by the fishing industry but further work is required to identify the location and extent of the stock and understand the catch selectivity of the associated fishing gear deployed. NEIFCA officers are planning to further this work during 2023/2024.



# EUROPEAN PLAICE

*Pleuronectes platessa*



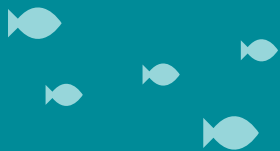


# IFCA SUCCESS CRITERIA

To support the delivery of the national IFCA vision, IFCAs work to a set of success criteria matched with corresponding high-level objectives. The vision, success criteria and high level objectives are designed to assist in the creation of a shared understanding of the collective aims and objectives of IFCAs, and focus service delivery towards achievement of the national vision. These national IFCA performance criteria also link directly to the UK Marine Policy statement.

**The following success criteria have been agreed and adopted nationally**

- 1 IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.
- 2 IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.
- 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.
- 4 IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.
- 5 IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives.





# DELIVERABLES

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

Maintain a database of stakeholder contacts updated annually.

Maintain and review a communication strategy annually.

Review and update website by the end of each month.

Review and update national MoUs annually.

# SUCCESS CRITERIA 1

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.

**A**  
Implement an effective communication strategy.



**B**  
Maintain a website.



**C**  
Maintain MoUs with the MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and CEFAS and explore and implement opportunities for effective joint working.

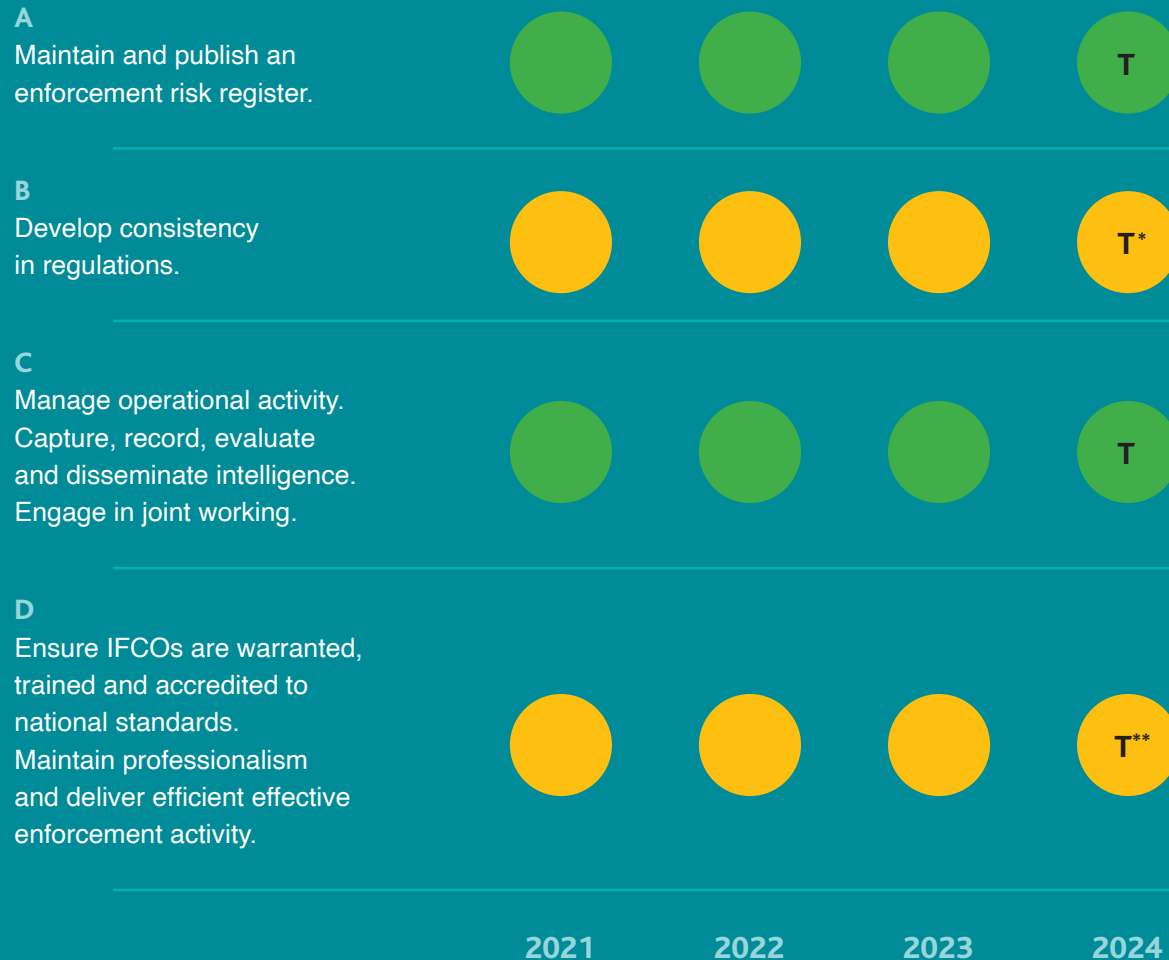


2021      2022      2023      2024

● Achieved / Delivered   ● Partially Achieved / In Progress   ● Not Achieved / Implemented   T Target

# SUCCESS CRITERIA 2

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.



● Achieved / Delivered ● Partially Achieved / In Progress ● Not Achieved / Implemented T Target

\* This is an ongoing national work stream in partnership with both Defra and the MMO.

\*\* Further engagement with national IFCO training programmes planned 2023/2024.

# DELIVERABLES

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

Enforcement strategy and risk register are published annually from 1 April each year.

Detail application and enforcement of management measures within Annual Report.

Compile and publish records of enforcement activity in standard format.

Adopt, review and publish national code of conduct for IFCOs and integrate with annual appraisal process.

Warranted officers attain national accreditation and continue professional development.

# DELIVERABLES

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

Record site-specific management considerations for MPAs and report progress.

Publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures.

Collect information to assess the effectiveness of new management measures.

Develop a range of criteria based management options which are reviewed and updated annually.

Deliver new management measures within agreed timescales.

Management plans published annually and progress noted in Annual Report including MSY commitments.

# SUCCESS CRITERIA 3

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.

### A

Identify issues likely to affect sustainable management, undertake a risk assessment and gap analysis, review appropriateness of existing measures, evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.



### B

Support the implementation of a well-managed network of marine protected areas and contribute to delivery targets for MSFD, WFD and Marine Plans.



### C

Develop fisheries management plans for priority species where appropriate.



2021

2022

2023

2024

● Achieved / Delivered ● Partially Achieved / In Progress ● Not Achieved / Implemented T Target

\* Due to the dynamics and complexities of assessing sustainable management this will remain an 'in progress' work stream for the Authority.

\*\* Due to the dynamics and complexities of assessing well managed MPAs this will remain an 'in progress' work stream for the Authority.

\*\*\* Engaged in the national fisheries management plan work stream through 2023/2024.



# SUCCESS CRITERIA 4

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.

**A**  
 Demonstrate a long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management.

**B**  
 Staff performance management systems are in place that link to IFCA success criteria. Induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs identified. Performance managed.

**C**  
 Efficient and effective secretariat in place to support the Authority. New members will receive an induction pack. There will be a 'rolling' twelve month schedule of Authority meetings. Notice of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with standing orders.

**D**  
 IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential or exempt.

2021      2022      2023      2024

# DELIVERABLES

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

Annual plan published by 31 March each year and submitted to the Secretary of State.

Annual report produced and published by 30 November each year and submitted to the Secretary of State.

All staff have annual performance management plans in place and annual appraisals are completed by 31 March each year.

An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings.

Annual report demonstrates how marine, land and water management mechanisms have worked responsively and effectively together.

All MMO appointees to the Authority have an annual appraisal review.

# DELIVERABLES

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

An annual research plan will be published each year.

An annual research report will be published each year.

The Authority's contribution to Technical Advisory Group and progress towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded within the annual report.

# SUCCESS CRITERIA 5

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders.

A

Strategic research plan that contributes to a greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources.



B

Standard operating procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners.



C

Non-confidential meta-data collected through IFCA research programmes is recorded in databases available to the marine research community.



2021

2022

2023

2024

● Achieved / Delivered ● Partially Achieved / In Progress ● Not Achieved / Implemented T Target



North Eastern

**IFCA**

Inshore Fisheries and  
Conservation Authority



North Eastern Inshore Fisheries  
and Conservation Authority

2023/2024  
Annual Plan