

North Eastern
Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation
Authority

ANNUAL PLAN



North Eastern

IFCA

Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority

2024/2025

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North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

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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. ”

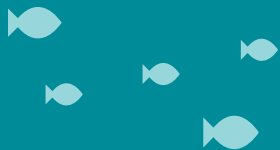
FOREWORD

During December 2023 Caroline Lacey stepped down from her role as Clerk to NEIFCA. Caroline was first appointed as Deputy Clerk to NEIFCA on 10 September 2015, taking over the role of Clerk following her appointment as Chief Executive to East Riding of Yorkshire Council during 2018. As Clerk to NEIFCA Caroline supported the continuing development and modernisation of NEIFCA and played a key role in securing the decisions taken during 2023, to build and commission a new replacement fisheries vessel for NEIFCA. As Chair of NEIFCA and on behalf of all the officers, staff and members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Caroline for all the dedication and commitment she gave to NEIFCA over the years.

Looking ahead, 2024/2025 will be an important year for NEIFCA with the progression of the new vessel build and the implementation of key fisheries management byelaws alongside supporting the further development of new national fisheries programmes.

Finally, I would like to pass on my very best wishes for 2024/2025 to all NEIFCA staff, officers and members and in particular to those that have recently been appointed into the Authority.

Professor Mike Elliott Chair of North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority



SPURN POINT



INTRODUCTION

PLAN CONTENT

NEIFCA is now in its fourteenth operational year and this Plan has been developed through the Authority's main committee and internal working groups. The plan sets out the main performance targets and objectives for the year ahead and will 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

NEIFCA 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 it 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. NEIFCA 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). NEIFCA'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).

NEIFCA maintains a range of resources and assets to support the effective delivery of its statutory duties, most notably, its main fisheries vessel, North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III) which plays a central role in supporting offshore enforcement and compliance work and monitoring the impact of offshore fisheries activities through the digital recording of sightings information, water column sampling (including temperature, salinity, turbidity, dissolved oxygen), acoustical seabed assessment, underwater and remote camera assessment, grab sampling and wider fisheries stock assessment work using a range of trawls and dredges.

NEG III is now over 16 years old and no longer provides an effective enough platform that meets current service needs. In response, during June 2023 NEIFCA, in partnership with its lead Local Authority, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, took the decision to replace NEG III with a new bespoke vessel which will be built by Parkol Marine Ltd in Whitby North Yorkshire during 2024.

The Authority can also make byelaw regulations (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 statutory function also extends to emergency byelaw regulations which are time limited to a maximum period of eighteen months.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Since its inception in 2010 NEIFCA's role in marine conservation and protection has continued 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. NEIFCA 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, removal and deposition of dredged materials, 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 NEIFCA 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, Dr Ralf Bublitz. 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, NEIFCA is also a "Relevant and Competent Authority" under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994. This means that it, along with other partners, has a statutory duty to ensure that the conservation objectives of European Marine Sites are upheld. Currently five European Marine Sites are designated within NEIFCA's jurisdiction: Northumbria Coast, Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast, Flamborough Head, Humber Estuary and the Greater Wash site 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 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.



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 2024/2025 financial year has been agreed and set by the Local Authority members at £1,535,870, an 11.5% uplift on the previous year. Although a notable increase on previous years this uplift includes additional revenue funding to cover the projected increase in costs associated with the financing and leasing of the new fisheries vessel which will take effect in 2025.

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 2024/2025

Net Expenditure

Central Management **£455,820**

Operations

Land Based **£145,140**

Offshore Operations **£586,450**

Environment **£146,020**

Grant Funded **£17,000**

Net Cost of Service £1,350,430

Funding (Contribution)

Contribution to Renewals Fund **£192,440**

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

Transfer to revenue from renewals fund **-£17,000**

Local Authority Levy £1,535,870

FINANCIAL RISKS

The following key financial risks have been identified:

- Impact of increased inflation resulting in a continuing pressure on wages, energy, fuel and other supplies in 2024/25.
- Interest rates are expected to remain high, affecting the cost of borrowing and NEIFCA indirectly through the finance lease with ERYC for the build & commission of the new patrol vessel.
- Changes to government funding for local authorities. Departmental resource and capital budgets beyond 2024/25 will be set at the next Spending Review. It is not yet known how this will impact on the specific grant local authorities receive for Inshore Fisheries & Conservation work.
- Pressures on local authority budgets to make savings may impact on the income generated by the levy on local authorities in the future.

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 1 April 2024 is £228,450.

SPECIFIC RESERVES

This reserve is used to manage the risk associated with patrol vessel maintenance and the expected opening balance is £88,689 at 1 April 2024.

RESERVES

The vehicle replacement reserve is used to fund the maintenance and replacement of vehicles. The balance on the reserve is forecast to be £32,782 at 1 April 2024.

Funding has been set aside to fund the build and commission of a new 24.5m Fisheries Patrol/Research vessel along with a finance lease agreement with East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The vessel build is now underway and it is anticipated that it will be commissioned in 2025.

The balance on the reserve is forecast to be £1,638,090 at 1 April 2024.

The external projects reserve is used to manage and utilise external funding sources to support a range of work including national policy delivery and other project work.

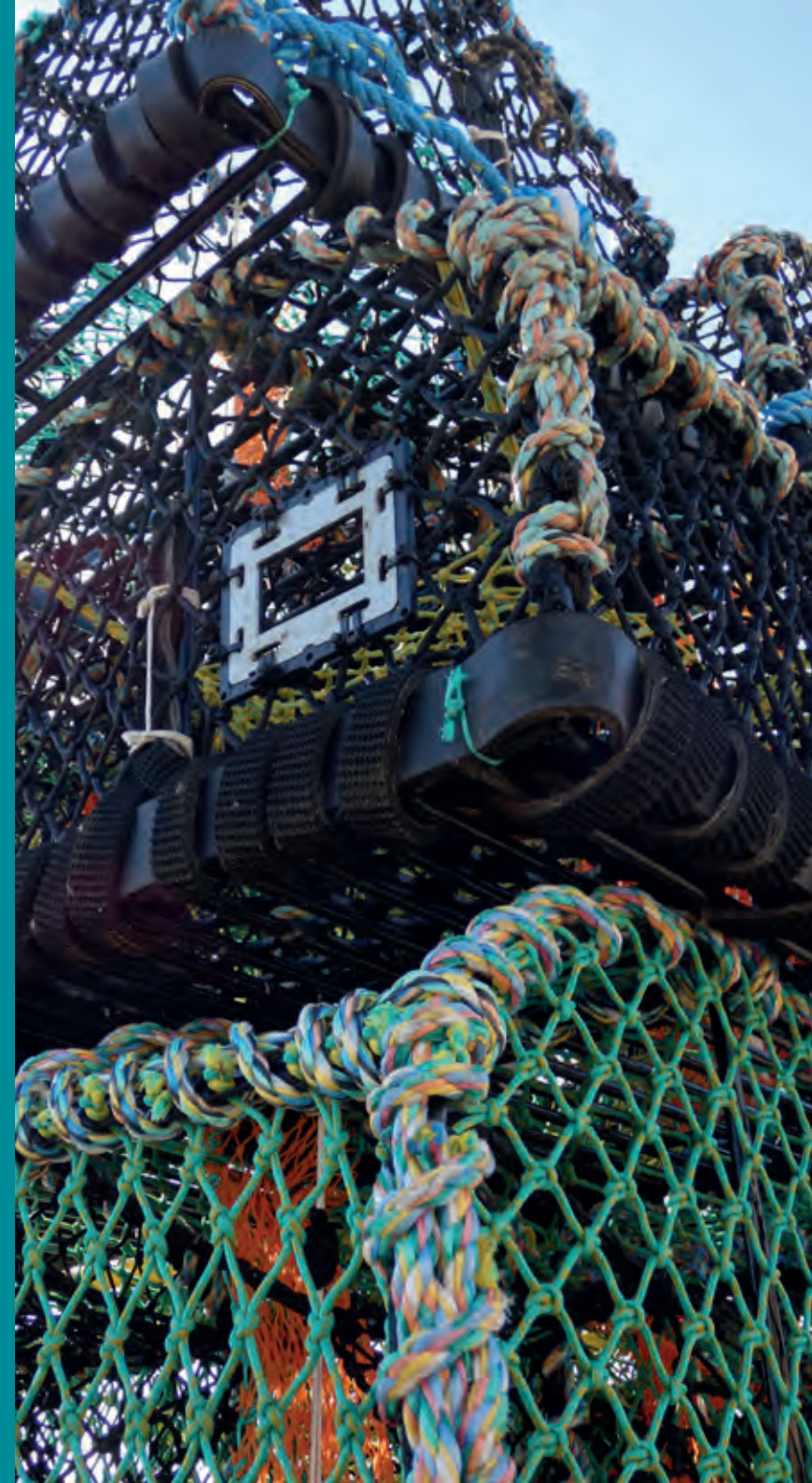
The balance on the reserve is forecast to be nil at 1 April 2024.

ASSETS

NEIFCA'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 NEG 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.

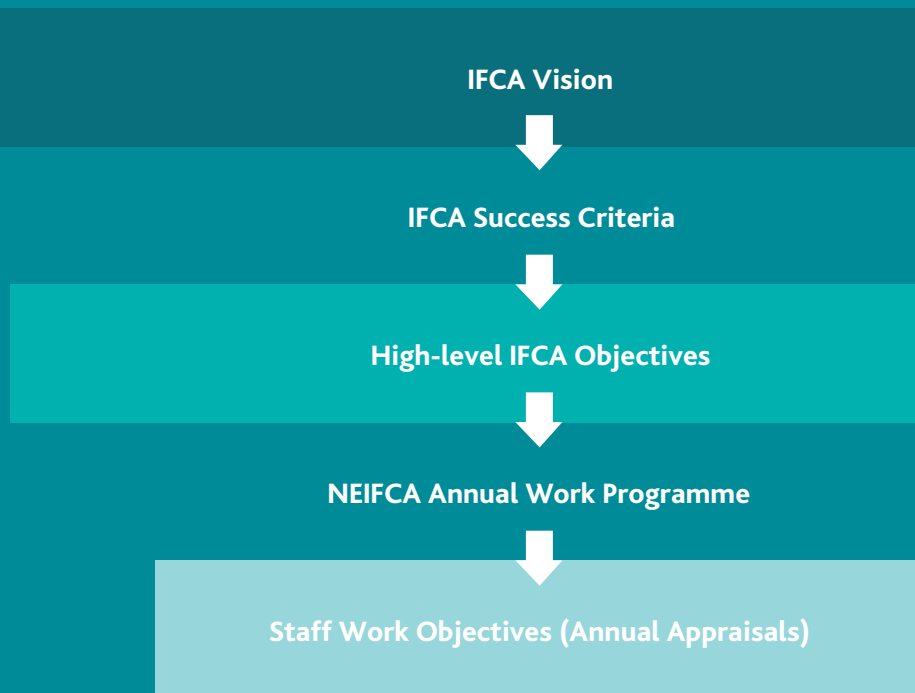
At a NEIFCA meeting held in in June 2023 members agreed to support further plans to replace NEG III and during October 2023 a contract was signed with Parkol Marine Ltd, Whitby, to build a new bespoke fisheries vessel. The build commenced during February 2024 and the vessel is expected to be launched and commissioned sometime during the Spring of 2025.

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. R Creevy

HULL CITY COUNCIL

Cllr. R Furley

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. S Harness

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. N Poole

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr. D Chance (VC,E)

Cllr. N Swannick

REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. C Cawley

SOUTH TYNESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. E Gibson

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllr. C Gamble

SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL

Cllr. P Stewart

APPOINTED BY MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Professor Mike Elliott (C,E)

Ms R Hanbury

Mr M Montgomerie

Mr W Jenkinson

Mr T Pearson

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 C Proud

Mr A Earle

APPOINTED BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Mr M Christmas

Mr P Slater

APPOINTED BY NATURAL ENGLAND

Mrs C Argent

(C) Chairman

(VC) Vice Chairman

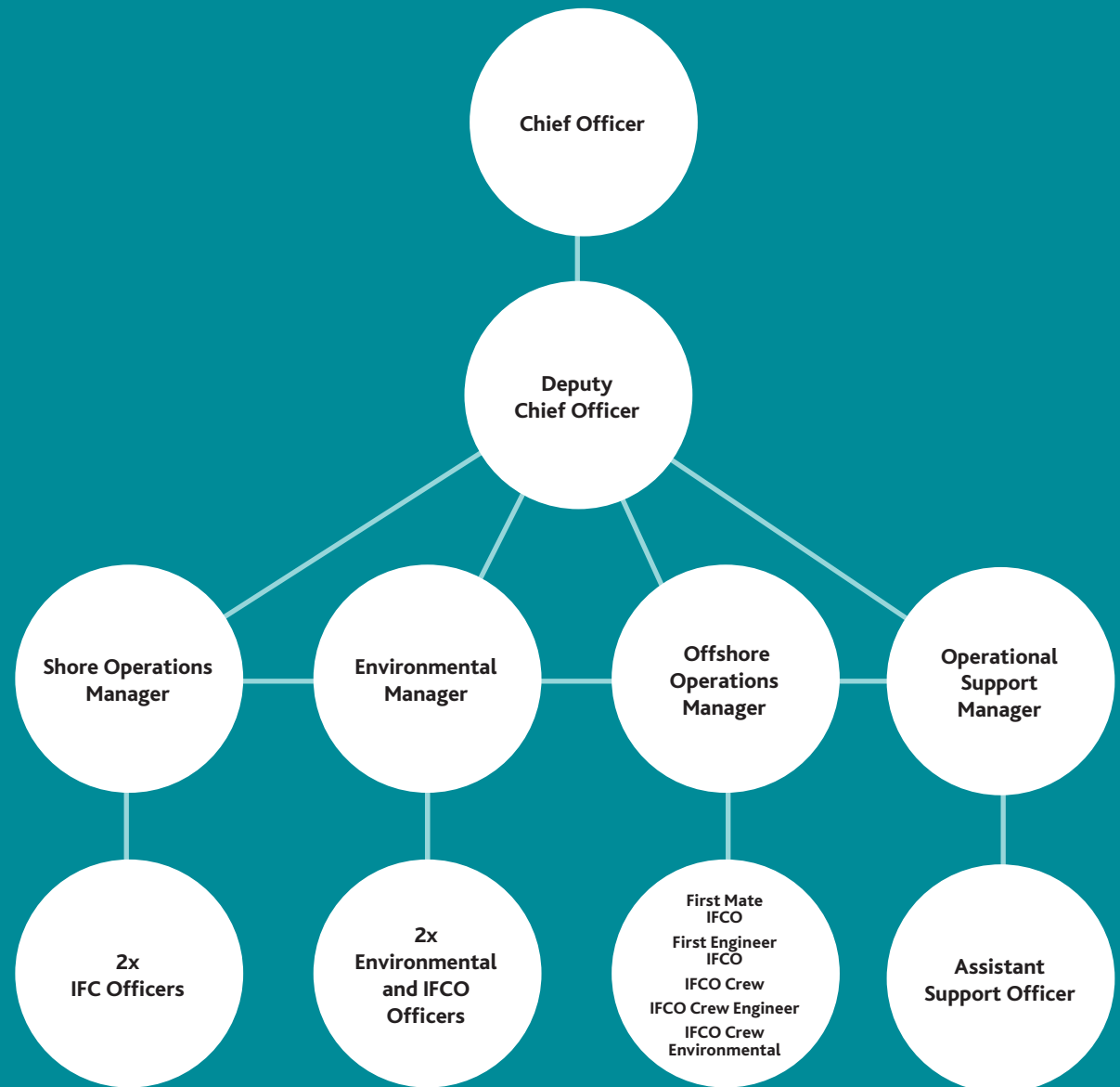
(E) Members of the Executive Committee

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 a staffing and organisational review in December 2020 a new annual appraisal process was implemented during November 2021 and is now well established. This process remains central to supporting the ongoing training, development and support needs of all NEIFCA staff. Annual appraisals are typically held between January and March supported by continuous supervision throughout the year. All training and development needs identified through the appraisal process, are incorporated into a training plan which is centrally managed within the operational support team. The Appraisal process also links to progression through NEIFCA's 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 mutual commitment from both the employee and manager. NEIFCA 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

NEIFCA's operational delivery 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.

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. These 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 2024/2025

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 2024/2025 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.

PERFORMANCE MATRICES

NEIFCA is currently working with the national Association of IFCAs 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 of programmed work through 2024/2025, NEIFCA is committed to developing a number of new strategies as follows:

Incident and Response Strategy and Monitoring Policy

In light of the ongoing response to the shellfish mortalities and associated challenges, NEIFCA introduced a new incident response strategy building 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. NEIFCA is committed to periodically reviewing and developing this strategy in close collaboration with the relevant agencies. As part of this work, during 2024/2025, NEIFCA will participate in the delivery of a joint national project designed to improve our understanding of the health of the coastal ecosystem and establish a comprehensive coastal monitoring framework. The project titled 'CHLE', 'Coastal Health Livelihoods and Environment' will be led by CEFAS and funded by Defra.

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 2024/2025. 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 2024/2025 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 in the UK has increased during the last few years. Within the NEIFCA district, one company has established a business growing and harvesting seaweed at Scarborough, North Yorkshire and is now expanding into further offshore aquaculture. Further initiatives involving the culture of native oysters have also been established at sites located in Sunderland and Spurn Point on the Humber Estuary. Over the past 2 years, the NEIFCA also received a few enquiries for wild harvesting of seaweed in the intertidal areas. Currently NEIFCA does not 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 continuation of the development of such a strategy is therefore planned during 2024/2025.

IT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Website

A new NEIFCA website was launched during February 2022 and officers are committed to both maintaining and developing its functionality through 2024/2025.

Fisheries Database

Throughout 2021 to 2023 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 live and supporting the management of NEIFCA's shellfish permit schemes. Work will continue through 2024/2025 to finalise the implementation of the new electronic capture of catch and effort information directly from fishermen.

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 alongside imputing some key data onto national systems. Active work will continue in this area during 2024/2025 both in terms of strengthening integration with the national fisheries enforcement and compliance database MCSS and supporting the commissioning of a new joint intelligence gathering system, 'Clue' with the MMO.

BYELAW DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW 2024/2025

Potting Flexible Byelaw

A new flexible shellfish byelaw was approved by the Science Advisory Group on 23 September 2022 and made by the Authority on the 1 December 2022. The formal consultation of this byelaw closed on the 27 October 2023 and the draft regulation has now been submitted to the MMO for Quality Assurance. 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

- MMO Quality Assurance – provisionally complete by June 2024
- DEFRA Review & Confirmation - October 2024
- Implementation – January 2025

Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw

The Humber Estuary Fishing byelaw was approved by the Science Advisory Group on 23 September 2022 and made by the Authority on the 1 December 2022. The formal consultation of this byelaw closed on the 27 October 2023 and has now been submitted to the MMO for Quality Assurance. 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

- MMO Quality Assurance – provisionally complete by June 2024
- DEFRA Review & Confirmation – October 2024
- Implementation – November 2024

Flexible Beam Trawling Byelaw

In 2023 the NEIFCA noticed an increase in Beam Trawling activity targeting King Scallop stocks outside the permitted dredging area. To minimise the risks of overexploitation, NEIFCA implemented an Emergency Byelaw on 17 July 2023 prohibiting beam trawling across the NEIFCA district. Since the prohibition of the beam trawling activity, NEIFCA has issued 5 scientific dispensations to allow a few vessels to continue their fishing activity under tightly regulated conditions and to collect further scientific evidence. The Emergency Byelaw will expire on the 17 July 2024. A new flexible Beam Trawling Byelaw is currently under development to replace the emergency regulation. NEIFCA will most likely need to apply for a further six month extension to the emergency regulation to support this work.

Provisional Timescales

- Formal consultation to commence - June/July 2024
- MMO Quality Assurance - August/September 2024
- DEFRA Review and Confirmation - January 2025

NATIONAL WORK STREAM ENGAGEMENT

Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)

In December 2023, DEFRA published the first 5 Fisheries Management Plans for Bass, Channel demersal non-quota species, Crab & Lobster, King Scallop and Whelk with the purpose of meeting the requirements set out in the Fisheries Act 2020. These plans set out specific objectives that address specific requirements for each of the fisheries in English Waters. For the lobster & crab and King Scallop FMP, the key goals are to improve the evidence base and to introduce short-term and medium to long-term measure to increase protection for stocks. The NEIFCA together with the NIFCA will also be part of pilot for regional fine scale management of crabs. Throughout 2024/25 the NEIFCA will be working in collaboration with the AIFCA, MMO, DEFRA and other IFCAs on the implementation process for the Crab & Lobster and King Scallop FMP.

NEIFCA FISHERIES ASSESSMENT PLANS & PROGRAMMES 2024/2025

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. The NEIFCA will continue to support the recording, sampling, and coordination of responses to any future wash up events throughout 2024/25.

FISHERIES STOCK ASSESSMENT WORK 2024/2025

Stock assessment for lobster & crabs

Collection of biometric data for lobsters and edible crabs at the quayside remains ongoing and additional offshore observer trips and surveys are planned for the 2024/25 season.

Following agreement to proceed with the build and commission of a new vessel to replace NEG III, officers have been contingency planning on the assumption that NEGIII will be sold before the end of the annual survey programme in September 2024. Currently that planning is focusing on making greater use of the fishing industry to support the continued collation of offshore stock data with a particular emphasis on observer trips to sea.

Scallop dredging fishery

The current Scallop dredging fishery in the NEIFCA district is restricted to two defined areas and three permits were issued for the 2023/2024 season (November to April). The submission of monthly catch and effort returns has remained a mandatory condition of holding a permit. Offshore observer trips on permitted vessels started in November 2023 and will continue until the end of April 2024. Additional surveys are planned for summer 2024 season to assess stock status.

Beam trawling for Scallops

The recent emerging beam trawling fishery targeting King Scallops is managed through the current Emergency Byelaw. Better understanding of the stocks outside the permitted Scallop dredge areas is needed and the potential impacts through this new activity is unknown. The collection of further data on the King Scallop stocks and fisheries are planned for the 2024/25 season. Additional surveys on habitat impacts on the seabed using beam trawls, modified beam trawls and dredges are planned as well for the 2024/25 season.

Intertidal fixed net fishery

This fishery was 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 1st of October 2021 and the 2024/2025 season (October to June) commenced on 1st October 2024. Catch returns and bycatch are continuously analysed as part of a long-term monitoring strategy for this fishery and that will continue during 2024/2025. Officers are also planning to enhance that work where possible by periodically gathering length, weight and age data from sea bass caught in the fishery through the 2024/2025 season.

Recreational Sea Angling

NEIFCA officers are planning to work in collaboration with the Angling Trust to gather additional biometric data on sea bass from recreational sea anglers in 2024/25. This work will enhance the new sea bass monitoring program and support a stock assessment for the local sea bass populations.

Cockle monitoring

NEIFCA management of cockles is delivered through Byelaw XXIV, which includes a permit and catch return system, a closed season between the 1st of May and the 31st of August, daily catch limits, technical gear restrictions and minimum landing size. Three areas of intertidal habitat in the NEIFCA district are routinely monitored to assess cockle stocks in the Tees and Humber Estuaries; Middleton Basin and Bran Sands in the Tees Estuary and the intertidal sands of Cleethorpes known as Wonderland. Standardised surveys began in 2014 and following a review of evidence in 2020, it was agreed that monitoring would be carried out every two years. The surveys undertaken in 2022 found very low abundances of sized cockles (over 20mm shell width) at all sites and it was recommended that the beds remain closed to exploitation. Officers are planning to survey the intertidal habitats in April 2024.

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)												
Sea bass monitoring Intertidal nets and Recreational Sea Angling												
Scallop Meat Yield												
Observer trips on potting vessels for lobsters and crabs												
Observer trips on Scallop vessels, dredging and beam trawling												
NEIFCA/permitted offshore Scallop surveys												
Cockle survey												
Eelgrass survey at Spurn Point												
European Lobster Settlement Index Project - Plankton trawl and reports												

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 seventeenth 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 vessel programme has been re-vitalised in part through the delivery of a new 9.5m Cabin RIB during 2021 and during June 2023, NEIFCA and its lead Local Authority, East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) agreed to support the build and commission of a new bespoke vessel to replace NEG III. This capital project will be funded through a number of sources including monies set aside annually by NEIFCA since 2007, Defra's IFCA capital delivery funding programme,

monies realised from the sale of NEG III and additional funding provided through East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) via a joint leasing agreement.

On 6 October 2023 a contract was confirmed with Parkol Marine Ltd, based in Whitby, North Yorkshire to build and deliver the new vessel. The project is being led and 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 successful delivery of the project is also being supported by relevant leads from East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) covering procurement, legal and financial requirements.

Provisional Timescales

- Build contract agreed and signed – 6 October 2024
- Commencement of Build – February 2024
- Completion and Delivery – March 2025

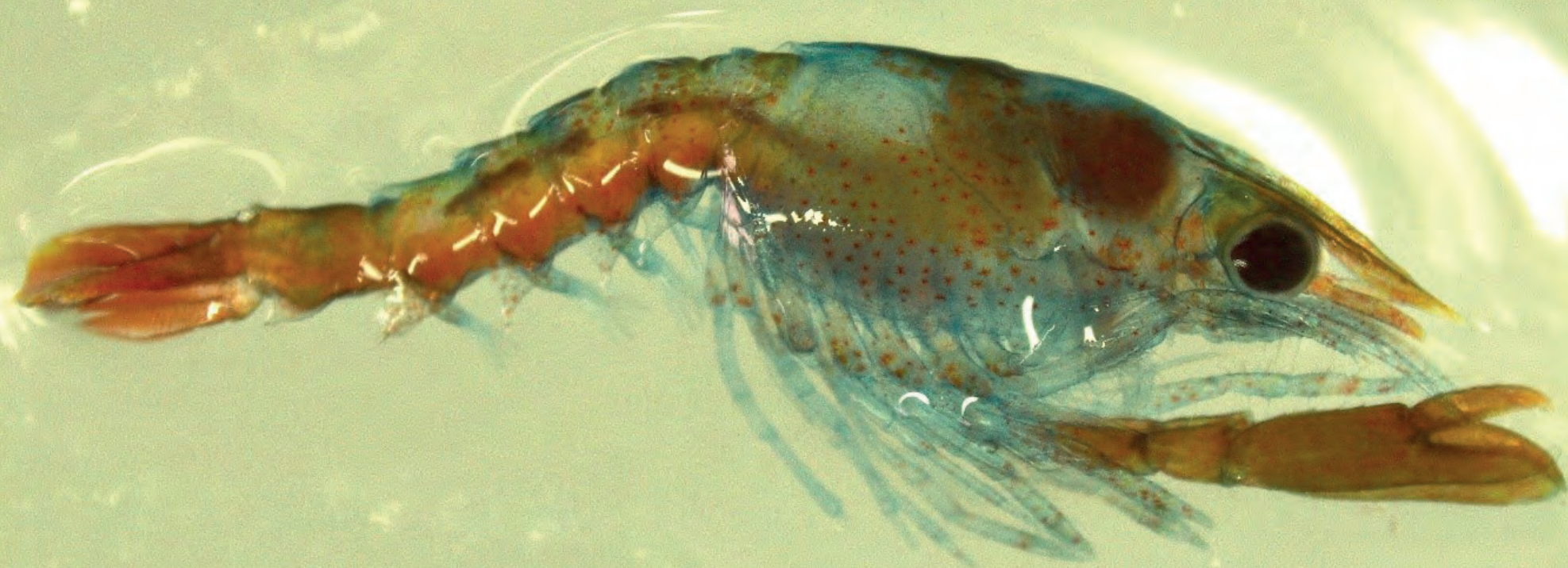
OTHER PROJECTS

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 October 2024. The project is unique in the UK and involves testing a methodology to capture 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 field trials in 2022 and 2023 have been completed successfully with the capture of the first EBP lobster. A final field trial is planned for the summer 2024 and the final report will be submitted in October 2024.



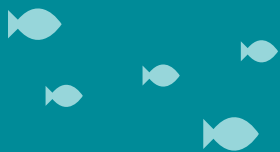


IFCA SUCCESS CRITERIA

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.

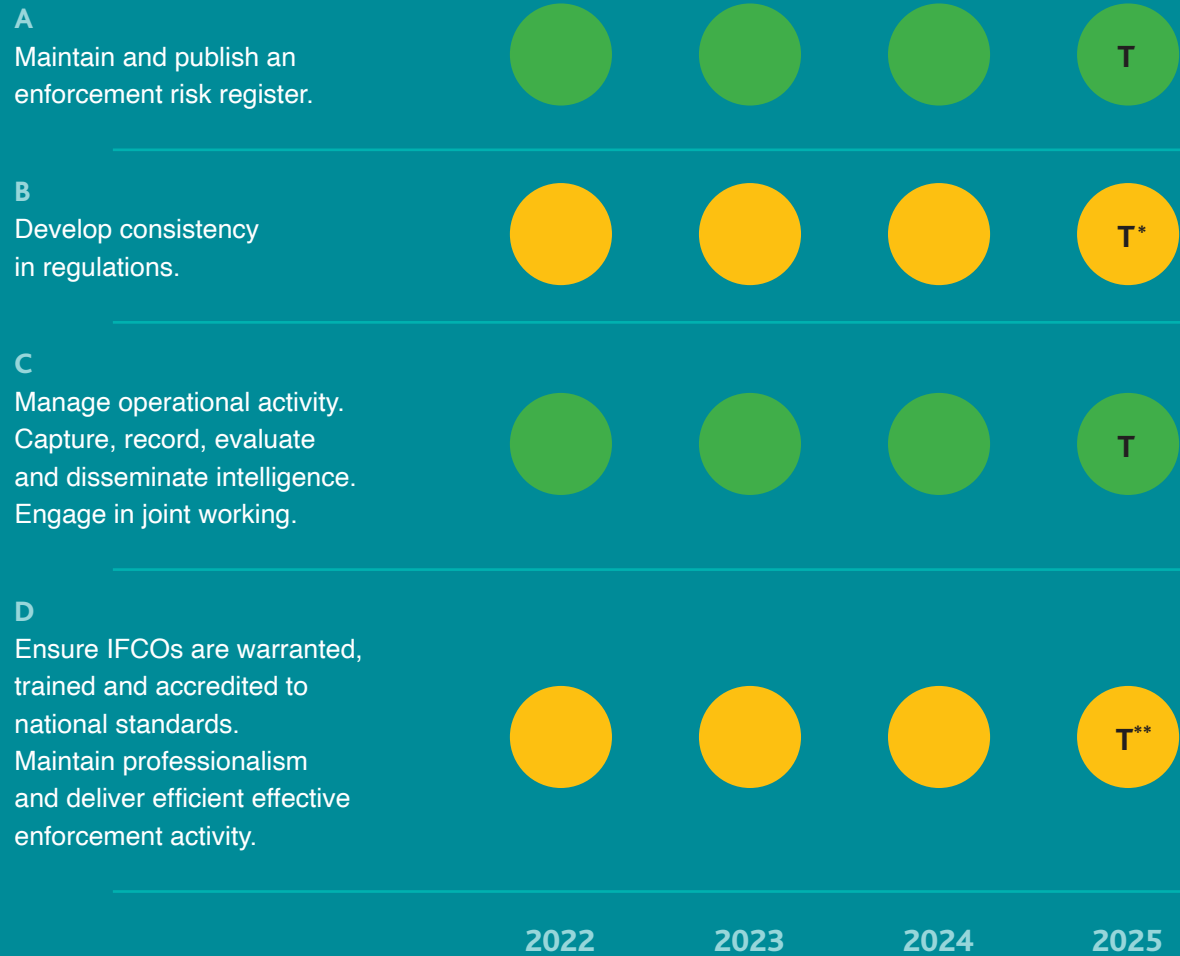
A Implement an effective communication strategy.				
B Maintain a website.				
C Maintain MoUs with the MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and CEFAS and explore and implement opportunities for effective joint working.				
	2022	2023	2024	2025

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

* MoUs have now largely been superseded by a range of active joint working groups both at regional and national level.

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.

** NEIFCA continues to work in partnership through the National IFCA Training Group and Chief Officers Group to maintain and enhance training standards..

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.



2022

2023

2024

2025

● 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 2024/2025.

SUCCESS CRITERIA 4

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
A Demonstrate a long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management.	●	●	●	● T
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.	●	●	●	● T
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.	●	●	●	● T
D IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential or exempt.	●	●	●	● T

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.



2022

2023

2024

2025

North Eastern



Inshore Fisheries and
Conservation Authority



North Eastern Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation Authority

2024/2025
Annual Plan