

North Eastern  
Inshore Fisheries  
and Conservation  
Authority

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

North Eastern



**IFCA**



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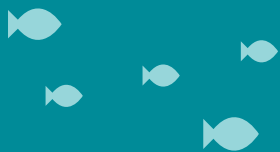
# FOREWORD

This report covers the twelfth year of operations and provides a summary account and review of the authority's main outputs and achievements up to the year end on 31 March 2023.

The reporting year was dominated by organisational transition from the restrictions imposed by the global COVID-19 pandemic to more normalised operations. This included a graduated increase in 'face to face' contact in terms of enforcement and compliance work, general 'day to day' working, the commencement of officer inspections at sea and offshore marine survey programmes. The year also presented some significant unforeseen challenges for NEIFCA, particularly relating to extensive shellfish mortality which occurred during October 2021 in inshore crab and lobster stocks in waters surrounding the Tees Estuary and the North Yorkshire coast. The subsequent investigation and monitoring work endured throughout the reporting year and placed unprecedented challenges on all parties involved, not least the affected fishing communities. NEIFCA Officers also had to manage a major engine failure onboard the Authority's main offshore vessel which occurred during July 2022 which also placed significant strain on service provision.

Outside the enduring challenges presented by the shellfish mortality event there were some notable organisational achievements within NEIFCA which included successful delivery of the first year of the European Lobster Settlement Index (ELSI) project in partnership with the Holderness Fishing Industry Group, and the commissioning of a new bespoke fisheries permitting database and catch return system.

**Clerk of the Authority**



## NATIONAL 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. ”

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) was formally established on 1 April 2011 under provision contained within the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act. The authority replaced North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee (NESFC), assuming new duties and responsibilities for managing the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources within its district.

This Annual Report produced by North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. It provides a comprehensive review of the authority's twelfth year of operations and charts its main outputs and achievements across key work areas including: Organisational, Legislative Enforcement; Environmental and Scientific Research; Staff training and development; Communications; Partnership working and the delivery of national work streams. The report also provides a summary of the authority's performance and progress against both its national and local working objectives.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Main achievements and outputs during 2022/2023 included the following:
- ▶ Agreement achieved on an uplifted sound and stable operational budget of £1,377,464.
  - ▶ During 2022/2023, the first field trials for the DEFRA funded European Lobster Settlement Index project were completed successfully and the first ever Early Benthic Phase Lobster was captured.
  - ▶ During October 2022 a new online fishing permit system was launched and permit renewals are now processed with the new system.
  - ▶ On the 1 December 2022 the Authority made two new byelaws. Important Eelgrass habitat within the Humber Estuary will be further protected via a new Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw and the new flexible shellfish management system will also be implemented via a new byelaw regulation.
  - ▶ During February 2023, officers successfully completed the recruitment process and appointed two new Environmental and Scientific Officers. All newly appointed staff are progressing positively through their respective probationary programmes.
  - ▶ Authority agreement achieved to formally progress the replacement of the main fisheries vessel, 'North Eastern Guardian III', through procurement to formal tender.
  - ▶ Successful management of a major engine failure onboard the authority's main fisheries vessel, North Eastern Guardian III, necessitating the removal, repair, re-installation and commissioning of both engines.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

### Partnership Working

- ▶ The authority retains a strong commitment to active partnership working and is seeking to build on that commitment. In many ways in managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shellfish mortality in October 2021, officers have strengthened active partnership working with all key partner agencies particularly the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the Environment Agency (EA), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) and DEFRA. Active engagement in monthly tasking and coordination group meetings continued throughout the year alongside active sharing of intelligence and undertaking several joint enforcement operations to target illegal activities.
  
- ▶ During 2022/2023 further joint working was undertaken in conjunction with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the Borders Agency and local policing and public protection teams in response to the illegal gathering of intertidal shellfish within the authority's district. Officers also worked actively with the EA policing intertidal netting activity along the coast and the MMO policing minimum landing sizes and fisheries technical regulations at key ports and landing pints throughout the NEIFCA district.



# North Eastern Guardian III

*Whitby Harbour 2019*





# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

This twelfth annual report was developed in consultation with authority members. It provides a summary of the main outputs and achievements across the Authority including: Central policy, encompassing strategic development and legislative review. Legislative enforcement. Environmental and Scientific research. Fisheries stock assessment, marine survey and monitoring, data management, review of marine consents and licensing applications and marine habitat protection. Staff training and development. Communications and partnership working. The report complements the authority's 2022/2023 annual plan and also provides a summary of progress against the national IFCA success criteria and high level objectives.

## Background

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) was 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 continues to draw professional service provision including legal, financial and human resource support from its lead Local Authority member, East Riding of Yorkshire Council. NEIFCA membership comprises of 13 elected councillors representing eleven coastal local authorities together with 14 members appointed by the Marine Management Organisation and singular members representing Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation. The total membership of the authority is 30 which is the maximum level permitted under statute.

## Financial Overview

The authority's total annual budget for the reporting period 2022/2023 was agreed by members during March at £1,337,343. The budget is allocated across four main areas:

### Corporate

Expenditure relating to corporate governance.

### Headquarter

The cost of management and administrative support.

### Operations

Direct expenditure incurred in the performance of the authority's objectives comprising of offshore, land-based and environmental activities.

### Grant aided projects

Projects which are specific or time bound and wholly funded by external sources.

See table on Page 10

# COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

2021/2022		2022/2023				
Net Expenditure		Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Original Budget	Variance
£406,215	Central / Headquarters	£420,169	£17,194	£402,975	£431,690	-£28,715
£117,755	Land Based Operations	£133,761	£5,964	£127,796	£127,970	-£174
£455,827	Offshore Operations	£857,288	£186,475	£670,812	£532,270	£138,542
£83,765	Environment	£113,125	£11,400	£101,725	£132,510	-£30,785
£0	Grand Aided Projects	£124,715	£155,728	-£31,013	£10,000	-£41,013
<b>£1,063,562</b>		<b>£1,649,057</b>	<b>£376,762</b>	<b>£1,272,295</b>	<b>£1,234,440</b>	<b>£37,855</b>

Income	Sources of Finance	Expenditure	Income	Net Income	Original Budget	Variance
£1,298,390	Annual levy on Local Authorities	£0	£1,337,344	£1,337,344	£1,337,340	£4
£233,961	Contribution from Reserves	£0				
-£243,079	Contribution to / from Capital - Vehicles	£0				
-£112,900	Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	£112,900		-£112,900	-£112,900	
<b>£1,176,372</b>		<b>£112,900</b>	<b>£1,337,344</b>	<b>£1,224,444</b>	<b>£1,224,440</b>	<b>-£4</b>

# NORTH EASTERN GUARDIAN III

*Fisheries Patrol*



## ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW 2022/2023

### Main Achievements

- During April 2022, the authority endorsed and fixed an operational budget of £1,377,464 providing a stable and uplifted funding base.
- During 2022/2023, the first field trials for the DEFRA funded ELSI project were completed successfully and the first Early Benthic Phase lobster was caught. The first ever in the UK.
- During October 2022 a new online permit system was launched and permit renewals have been successfully processed with the new system. Work also extended to the commencement of a new pilot online catch reporting system.
- On the 1st of December 2022 the Authority made two new byelaws which will, subject to process replace existing regulations these will enhance the protection of expanding eelgrass habitat in the Humber Estuary and enable the more effective management of potting effort going forward.
- During February 2023 officers successfully completed the recruitment and appointment of two new environmental and scientific officers. All newly appointed staff are progressing positively through their respective probationary programmes.
- During March 2023 the Authority published an Invitation to Economic Operators to build and commission a new replacement main vessel.
- During July 2021 the Authority's main fisheries vessel, North Eastern Guardian III, suffered a catastrophic engine failure. Over the course of a five month period NEIFCA officers oversaw the successful removal, repair, re-installation and re-commissioning of both engines.



## CENTRAL POLICY 2022/2023

### **Central Policy and Strategic Development**

Central policy and strategic development is supported by two key internal sub-groups, the Executive Committee and the Science Advisory Group. The Science Advisory Group comprises of MMO appointees and representatives from Natural England, the Environment Agency and the MMO and is responsible for overseeing regulatory review, development and implementation, scientific and survey work, projects and licensing applications and consents. The Executive Committee comprises of elected and appointed MMO members and provides a smaller more focused decision making group to undertake any work delegated by the full authority, including ratifying emergency byelaw provisions and considering appeals against process. These groups work in tandem with recommendations passing through the Executive Committee for final endorsement by the full authority.

### **Risk Management**

The effective management of risk remains a key priority for officers and members of the authority. A formal strategy supporting the identification and management of risk was first agreed and adopted by members of the shadow authority on 25 January 2011. The strategy and its provisions are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure

that it remains 'fit for purpose'. Alongside the strategy, the identification and management of risk is supported through a number of risk registers covering both strategic and operational risk, including a risk-based enforcement matrix. All risk registers are subject to six-monthly review with updates reported to authority members and posted on the authority's website. During the reporting year, these reviews and updates were completed during March and September 2022.

### **Emergency IFCA Byelaws**

Section 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides a mechanism for IFCA's to introduce emergency byelaw regulations to deal with unforeseen issues requiring urgent action. Emergency byelaws are time limited to a maximum period of eighteen months. Since its inception in 2011, the authority has effectively utilised its emergency byelaw making powers on five separate occasions, most recently on 13 August 2019 to ensure continuity of minimum size regulations.

## LEGISLATIVE ENFORCEMENT

Legislative enforcement forms a key element of the authority's drive to achieve the sustainable management of sea fisheries resources within its district. Enforcement is undertaken by fourteen warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) who are responsible for monitoring and inspecting fisheries activities, both offshore and along the coast. Enforcement work is supported by a dedicated 26 metre patrol vessel, North Eastern Guardian III, which carries a 6.4 metre rigid inflatable boat (RIB) that is utilised to board and inspect fishing vessels at sea and a 9.5 metre cabin RIB to support its offshore operations.

During 2022/2023 officers were still transitioning to more normalised legislative enforcement activities following the easing of restrictions put in place to manage the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The 2022/2023 enforcement outputs were also impacted by a major engine failure onboard North Eastern Guardian III (NEG III) which significantly limited offshore operational activity between July and December 2022.

## ENFORCEMENT OUTPUTS 2021/2022

Enforcement Output	Frequency
Vessel Inspections	353
Vessel observations	1140
Inspection Reports completed	316
Verbal Warnings	13
Written Warnings	0
Offences Reported	9
Formal Cautions	3
Financial Administrative Penalties	1
Formal prosecutions	2



## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Marine environmental and scientific research functions continue to develop and expand in line with the developing role and remit of the authority.

The environmental and science team undertake fisheries stock assessment work, collate and analyse seabed habitat and water column data generated by NEG III, review marine licensing applications and consents, support marine habitat conservation and management through engagement with European Marine Site (EMS) management schemes and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) programmes and oversee the internal management of data. This work is guided by an annual research and evidence plan and a five year strategic plan. Separate to this annual report, findings from the environmental and scientific research work are published within an annual research report.

### **Fisheries Stock Assessment work**

The majority of species exploited within the NEIFCA district are a component of wider stock units which extend beyond the six mile limit. During 2011/2012 officers proposed and presented multiple indicator frameworks, a combination of specific reference points and proxies for measuring progress towards achieving sustainable fisheries. Alongside and

at the request of authority members, officers have incorporated a broader overview, detailing information on gear types, additional species, economic and socio-economic factors. This analytical work is supported, in the main, by a comprehensive stock assessment programme which includes quayside sampling at four main ports including Hartlepool, Whitby, Scarborough and Bridlington and an offshore monitoring programme covering each of the five main ICES areas located within and surrounding the authority's district. During August 2020, officers received notification from the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) that they had upgraded their sustainability score for North Sea dredge caught scallop which continues to be a developing focus. This decision had been taken in recognition of the improvements that the authority had made to the management of the inshore fishery during the last four years.

### **Marine Licensing and Consents**

The development of the authority's capabilities to assess and map seabed habitats has been one of the main areas of focus for both the offshore and environmental teams. Ongoing work in this area has included the full commissioning of an onboard WASSP multi-beam system and the development of underwater camera technologies.

The focus of underwater video camera work during 2019 was to collect evidence on which to assess the impact of the scallop dredge fishery on habitats and commercially important shellfish species. Over 16km of video footage was collected and analysed, allowing a comparative study of impacts based on varying levels of fishing intensity. The information will form a baseline which may be used to support any future management decisions.

# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

## **Shellfish Mortality - Tees & North Yorkshire**

Since the shellfish mortality event in October 2021, NEIFCA Officers have been supporting the key agencies (DEFRA, EA, CEFAS & MMO) with sampling and logistics, dissemination of any further wash-up events and reports, liaising between agencies and engaging industry through working groups. Officers organised three successful meetings between the Universities, industry and agencies to promote a better collaboration. Working alongside the affected industry, Officers collected data on lobster and crabs through observer trips and potting surveys from NEGIII between May and August 2022. The results were published together with the assessment of landings data in a stock monitoring report in September 2022. Since then, the assessment of MMO landings data has continued and a second 'follow up' report will be published during the second quarter of 2023 assessing any changes in landings for 2022 compared to previous years.

A wash-up log was initiated at the start of the shellfish mortality event in October 2021 and officers are continuing to record any wash up events and reports from the industry, public and social media. This log also supported the assessment of the shellfish mortality event by an Independent, expert panel appointed by government in December 2022. The panel reviewed and assessed all available evidence and published its findings in January 2023 concluding that it was highly unlikely that capital dredging works surrounding the Tees estuary could have caused the mass mortality. Officers are continuing to work with key partner agencies monitoring ongoing trends within the fisheries and the affected industries but it has proved extremely challenging for all those involved.



# Education and Outreach

Scarborough 2019



# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## **European Marine Sites (EMS)**

The NEIFCA district contains five European Marine Sites (EMSs); Northumbria Coast, Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast, Flamborough Head, Humber Estuary and the Greater Wash. Flamborough Head and the Humber Estuary are each supported by a management group comprising statutory authorities and other relevant bodies and NEIFCA plays an active role in each. NEIFCA workstreams within the EMSs focus on four main areas; active participation in the EMS management schemes and associated projects; the provision of guidance to developers and input into the licensing conditions of development consent orders within and adjacent to EMSs; stock assessments of commercially important finfish and crustacea; and the appropriate assessment and management of fisheries within EMS boundaries through both voluntary and regulatory measures. Significant progress was made during 2019/2020 in reducing risk to designated Marine Protected Area (MPA) features associated with fishing activity. A seasonal netting prohibition in the waters surrounding Flamborough Head

and Filey Brigg came into force to protect the largest mainland UK breeding seabird colony; home to 412,000 seabirds. In addition, a trawling permit management system was introduced for the Humber Estuary. Control of trawl effort will help to protect the valuable habitats and species within the estuary, which also acts as vital spawning and nursery grounds for a range of fish species. Regulations to improve fishery data collection have also been approved.

## **Marine Conservation**

The NEIFCA district contains two MCZ sites; Runswick Bay and Holderness Inshore. Full assessments have been completed on both sites and appropriate management measures supporting their protection are already in place. Work to establish a new Management Group to encompass both MCZs is done through the Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership.

## **Data Management**

All raw data gathered from the authority's district is stored electronically in a format enabling ease of manipulation, import into other programmes and statistical analysis. Spatial data is stored in shape file format for presentation and analysis in the GIS platforms. This is a developing workstream that aims to generate key data layers that present information related to the authority's district, such as management regimes, fishing effort, habitat types and commercial species ranges.

## EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

### **European Lobster Larval Settlement Index Project**

Funded through the Defra UK Seafood Scheme this is a two-year partnership project with the Holderness Fishing Industry Group which commenced during February 2022. The project aims to better understand the distribution and abundance of newly settled post-larval lobster (Early Benthic Phase Lobster) within the NEIFCA district. This information will be key for predictive stock assessment work. For this project, 40 settlement cages were deployed across the district between May and September 2022. At the end of the first survey season all cages were recovered and the first Early Benthic Phase (EBP) lobster was found in one of the cages off Flamborough Head. This is the first time an EBP lobster was captured in the UK using this method. Additional valuable data was collected on the biodiversity of the benthos and seasonal abundance of planktonic lobster larvae. More data will be collected throughout the 2023 season.

## STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A new staffing appraisal system was implemented during November 2021 and has been further developed through 2022/2023. This new system has strengthened the identification of individual training and development needs across all the operational teams. Alongside it, progress against staff training and development needs are now monitored centrally and reviewed on a six monthly basis. Further ongoing work is also supporting leadership and management development across the authority's senior management team.



# COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

## **NEIFCA Website**

The authority's website and social media, such as Facebook, remains at the forefront of its drive to improve overall communications, accessibility to information and associated services. A new authority website 'went live' during March 2022. It carries a much clearer, simpler format which is more straightforward to navigate. Authority staff can now edit and update the content directly which means that information can be updated on a much more regular basis. Stakeholders can access a range of services from the website including applications for fishing permits and provision of feedback on a wide range of topical issues.

## **Tyne to Tees, Shores and Seas - SeaScapes Partnership**

The SeaScapes project is a partnership of local, regional and national organisations working in the coastal, marine and heritage sectors that have come together to better protect and celebrate the unique coastline between the rivers Tyne and Tees. The first National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Marine Landscape Partnership will deliver around 23 projects over the next four years worth £5 million to the communities of South Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham and Hartlepool.

## **Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership**

Delivery of a well managed network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is a key work area for NEIFCA. With the growing number of MPAs, effective site management requires new ways of working and a collaborative approach. As a member of the Flamborough Head European Marine Site Management Group, National Lottery Heritage Funding was obtained to establish the Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership. The emerging partnership is focussed on supporting, understanding, managing and caring for Yorkshire's seas, coastline and hinterland, working with cross-sector partners to achieve shared aims and promote holistic action in the marine and coastal environment.

### **Feedback System**

During March 2022 NEIFCA agreed a new service level agreement with East Riding of Yorkshire Council for the provision of enhanced support covering both feedback and information governance. This support was utilised extensively during 2022/2023 to assess and respond to a number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and two formal complaints which were primarily driven by concerns arising from the 2021 shellfish mortality event.

### **Partnership Working**

During April 2011, the authority signed a number of 'high level' MOUs with key partner organisations. These endorsed the principles of communication and positive partnership engagement and continue to support positive working relationships. NEIFCA actively engages in the national intelligence gathering project in collaboration with other IFCAs and the MMO, which includes monthly regional tasking and co-ordination meetings. Since the project was first established NEIFCA has captured and shared 656 fisheries intelligence reports. Active operational partnership working took place throughout 2021/2022 including joint enforcement work with both the MMO and EA. During the year the shore operations team continued to support a national project to encourage anglers to recycle discarded fishing line. Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic active operational partnership working took place on several occasions with both the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Environment Agency (EA) to monitor the setting of illegal fixed nets from the shore and check compliance on the quayside.

During 2021/2022 extensive joint working was also undertaken in conjunction with the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the Borders Agency and local policing and public protection teams in response to an upsurge in the illegal gathering of intertidal shellfish across the Authority's district. This work resulted in the issue of a number of formal sanctions for fisheries offences and led to wider national investigations into Organised Crime Groups engaged in modern day slavery. Very active partnership working also continued through 2022/2023 with colleagues from the MMO, EA, Defra and the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture services (CEFAS) in response to the shellfish mortality and 'wash up' events which occurred in waters surrounding the Tees and North Yorkshire.

### **National IFCA Association**

A national association was established on 24 March 2011 to represent and support the work of IFCAs. NEIFCA continues to play an active role in this association through the chairman, clerk and chief officer. Throughout 2022/2023 the national IFCA Association has played a key role in supporting the development of new national marine and fisheries legislative frameworks following the UK's formal exit from the EU on 31 December 2020. This work will continue into and beyond the next reporting year and includes the Joint Fisheries Statement and Fisheries Management Plans.



North Eastern IFCA staff and BBC presenter Tom Heap courtesy of BBC Countryfile following a film shoot on 18 June 2021 which aired on 4 July 2021.

## NATIONAL IFCA SUCCESS CRITERIA

IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders; IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime;

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts;

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional;

IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives;

NEIFCA work streams and organisational priorities are geared towards the positive achievement of the national vision: outlined on page 4.

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

### **Focus and Priorities for the Year - Annual Plan 2021/2022**

Each year authority members agree and set their objectives and priorities for the year ahead which are outlined within the summary work programme contained within the authority's 2022/2023 annual plan. The 2022/2023 plan was adopted by members on 30 March 2022.



# NATIONAL IFCA WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVES

The following tables provide a summary of the authority's progress towards achieving the Success Criteria and supporting Working Level Objectives (WLO) during the 2022/2023 reporting period.

31 March 2023



Completed



Ongoing



Not started

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.

The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

Through its fishing permitting schemes NEIFCA maintains an annual database of some 3,000 individual contacts covering both commercial and recreational fishing.

The authority maintains a formal communication strategy which is reviewed annually.

Copies of annual plans are sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Secretary of State by 30 April each year.

The IFCA will maintain its website ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the district, including management requirements and byelaws. non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published.

The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.

A new authority website 'went live' during at the beginning of April 2022 and information is updated on a daily basis which includes information on live projects or events occurring within the NEIFCA district.

Copies of annual reports are sent to Defra's Secretary of State by 30 November in the year in which they are published.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level.

## OUTCOME(S)

By 31 March each year the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified within the annual plan.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

Throughout the reporting year authority officers have engaged extensively in a wide range of nationally coordinated work streams including joint training and joint intelligence gathering through the National Association of IFCAs, the National IFCA Chief Officers Group, the National IFCA Technical Advisory Group and the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group. In addition, throughout 2022/2023 NEIFCA played a full and active role in newly established Regional Fisheries Groups and maintained active engagement and participation in the national fisheries intelligence gathering programme.

The IFCA and its principle partners will have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Services (CEFAS) will be maintained.

The IFCA will have reviewed all of its MoUs by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed standard.

The National Association of IFCAs supports the regular review of MoUs with partner organisations.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will publish its enforcement risk register and strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year.

The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to AIFCA for collation and publish them on its website.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

The authority publishes a comprehensive annual risk register which covers all aspects of risk including enforcement. The authority publishes details of its enforcement activity within its annual report and provides statistics to the National Association of IFCAs in a standard format.

The IFCA will manage operational activity and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations.

Working to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and participating actively through Tasking and Coordination Groups (TCGs).

Throughout 2022/2023 Officers have been actively engaged in the joint fisheries intelligence gathering programme, collating, assessing and exchanging intelligence in accordance with NIM principles.

This involved active participation in the TCG process including joint TCGs with MMO officers.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will adopt the national code of conduct for IFCOs which will be reviewed annually and published on its website.

Warranted Officers attain accreditation. ALL undertaking continuing professional development.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

Authority Officers undergo a wide range of training supported by a twelve month probationary process. That training incorporates an induction, an IFCA residential course and 'on-the-job' training and evaluation.

A national code of conduct for IFCA enforcement officers was agreed in 2010 and was adopted by the authority. It is reviewed annually.



## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the IFC District; undertake risk assessment and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the authority.

The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

Authority officers have completed extensive site feature/activity interaction risk matrices for all Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), including European Marine Sites (EMSs) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) occurring within the NEIFCA district. A significant supporting management programme commenced during 2013 prioritised towards high risk activities. This work was advanced during 2019/2020 with the confirmation of two regulations protecting features at Flamborough Head, Filey and the Humber Estuary.

On the 1 December 2022 the Authority approved the extension of the protected Eelgrass area at Spurn Point in the Humber Estuary Byelaw

The IFCA actively supports implementation of a well managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria based management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development.

Proportionate regulation (for example introducing a legal mechanism such as a byelaw) is used as a last resort; The effectiveness of interventions to improve the delivery of beneficial outcomes is continuously monitored; and

There is a clear IFCA Committee process for dealing with agreed interventions quickly, efficiently and effectively, particularly for emergency byelaws.

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own annual plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.

Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including maximum sustainable yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's annual report.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

The sustainable management of key lobster and edible crab stocks was further enhanced during 2019/2020 through measures introduced in the revised Crustacea Conservation byelaw. Protection for soft shelled and berried lobsters will help to bolster spawning stock of this species, while the introduction of a maximum pot size and reducing the maximum size of vessel permitted to fish within inshore areas are important effort controls that will help to ensure the continued viability of the regionally significant fishery. A new minimum size byelaw, developed in collaboration with a number of other IFCAs, was also introduced, confirmed during February 2021. As was a catch return byelaw aimed at improving data capture to inform future management decisions.

A new Fisheries Management Plan has been adopted to support the inshore scallop dredging fishery. The plan has been informed by a four year pilot trial which commenced following the introduction of emergency control measures at the beginning of 2015. The plan describes the state of the stocks and the fishery derived from research undertaken by the authority, it outlines current national and local management policy and objectives, and highlights the conservation and fishery management measures in place to ensure a sustainable fishery. The plan will guide development of the dredge fishery, balancing the needs of different stakeholders.

## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year.

Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria.

There will be an induction procedure for new joiners.

Staff training and development needs will be identified.

Performance will be managed and where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed.

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## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA will publish a plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.

After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.

IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 May each year.

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## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

The authority has produced an annual plan and annual report since 2010. The 2022/2023 plan was considered and endorsed by the committee on 30 March 2022 and submitted to the Secretary of State. The annual report covering the 2021/2022 period was submitted to the Secretary of State during August 2022.

A new staffing appraisal system commenced during November 2022 which incorporated performance related pay progression. This system enables a bespoke annual training plan to be set to meet individual staff needs underpinned by personal set of work objectives for the year ahead. All staffing appraisals were completed by 1 April 2023.

During 2022/2023 the authority maintained a system of 'hybrid' meetings providing for attendance in person combined with virtual engagement to conduct its business. Agendas, supporting papers and minutes were published in accordance with the authority's standing orders and posted on the authority's website.



## WORKING LEVEL OBJECTIVE

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

## OUTCOME(S)

The IFCA's contribution to Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and progress that it has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's annual report.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATOR(S) UPDATE 2022/2023

The authority's environmental and scientific leads are fully engaged with other IFCA colleagues through the national IFCA Technical Advisory Group. Through this group, the authority's officers have developed and implemented standard operating practices across most of its work streams.

Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community.

Non-confidential data is shared reducing the need for duplication of survey effort.

Authority officers share non-confidential meta data through MEDIN and 'one drive' and improving internal data sharing within the authority's membership remains an ongoing work stream.



**North Eastern Inshore Fisheries  
and Conservation Authority**

**2022/2023  
Annual Report**