

Association of Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation Authorities

The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities 2011 to 2015

**Achievements and success in delivering fisheries
and conservation management**

www.association-ifca.org.uk

About the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)

The IFCA Vision

"IFCAs will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry".

- The IFCAs vision aims to achieve the intentions of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) (MaCAA), and wider UK and EU marine legislation and national strategies; it summarises the core role of the IFCAs as the new lead inshore regulators out to six nautical miles.
- Seven Success Criteria (SCs) and multiple High Level Objectives (HLOs) were established for the IFCAs' first 4 years to steer work streams towards achievement of the IFCA vision.

IFCAs are the Lead Agency in managing fishing in **70%** of the Marine Protected Area sites currently designated in English waters

- These SCs and HLOs are currently under review so that over the next 4 years they continue to steer the IFCAs through future challenges and remain current, whilst still working towards achievement of the IFCA vision.

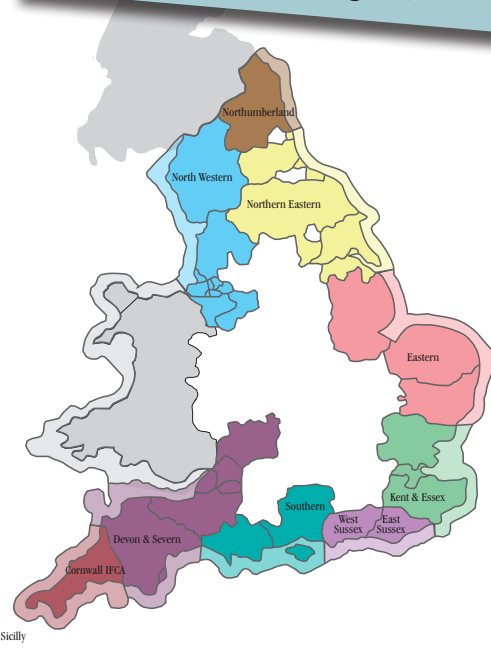
The Association of IFCAs

All 10 IFCAs are members of the Association of IFCAs (AIFCA). AIFCA acts in a representation, co-ordination and communication role for the IFCAs; it has no statutory or regulatory function. AIFCA provides a national platform for two-way communication between the IFCAs with their local and regional issues and Central Government.



IFCAs have over 30 vessels, carrying out enforcement, monitoring and research with over 1400 days at sea per year

10 regional IFCAs championing a local approach with over 140 paid staff managing a total of 28,607 km² sea area using £8.7M combined annual budget to manage the seas to 6 nautical miles around the coast of England



How is an IFCA Committee made up?

- Membership of each IFCA is described in their Statutory Instrument.
- Voluntary members from local councils, from other marine regulators e.g. the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation and “general members” (MMO appointees) are appointed from the local community with specific knowledge.
- Members decide and comment on the strategy and direction of their IFCA, making key strategic decisions.
- MMO appointees bring a range of skills and knowledge to each Authority from practical knowledge of specific commercial fishing activities to life long recreational angling experience, to national and international environmental and marine science expertise.
- The flexible IFCA model allows Authorities to be tailored to specific regional demands, utilising local expertise.
- Public meetings allow communities to be involved, and technical meetings are held to address specific sector-related concerns.

**At the Heart of the
Community...Local People,
Local Decisions**

49 funding Local Authorities

*224 Committee Members providing an
unique skills balance*

*Over 140 Meetings held per year
including Quarterly Public and Technical
panel meetings*

*Thousands of voluntary hours given to
the IFCAs each year*



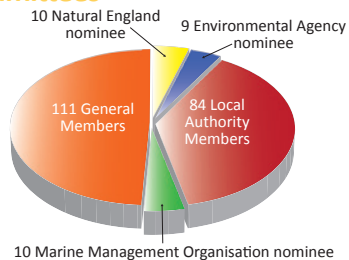
Committees and funding

IFCAs are funded by

- sponsoring Local Authorities (see pages 23- 24)
- Defra for their new duties (for 4 years initially, and currently under review)
- through revenue from permits, etc.
- interest on bank reserves (accrued to replace Fisheries Patrol Vessels).

IFCAs are encouraged to explore ways of supplementing their income by creating commercial revenue through, for example, survey work, data management or support for leisure activities.

Membership profile of the IFCA committees



Over half of members on each Authority are general members from the public appointed by MMO. Recruitments are held regularly and advertised on MMO website. (and the website for the IFCA where there is a vacancy). There is 1 appointee per IFCA from 3 other regulatory bodies with marine responsibilities: EA, MMO and NE. All Councils which pay towards IFCA have at least 1 representative on the Authority.

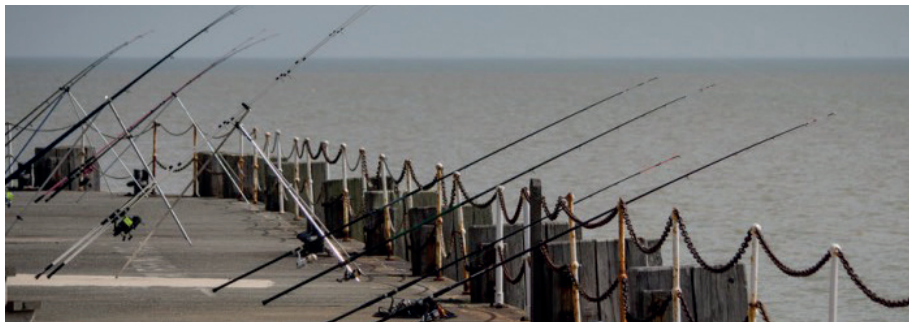
Inshore fishing

Inshore fisheries facts

- There are around 3,000 under 10 metre 'day boats' representing 80% of the English fleet *
- In 2013 catches totalling 200,000 tonnes with a value of over £200 M were landed into the UK by these vessels **
- There are around 884,000 sea anglers in England**



Small businesses...vulnerable communities...IFCA stakeholders



* www.gov.uk/uk-sea-fisheries-statistics-report-2013

** www.gov.uk/defra

Sustainable use of the seas

The Marine Policy Statement (2011)

sets out the approach for integrated multiple uses of the seas.

It outlines a marine planning regime and describes how sea users could help achieve sustainable development. The Marine Policy Statement recognises the importance of fishing and aquaculture in food security; this has helped to shape the IFCAs involvement in marine planning according to the framework outlined in the Common Fisheries Policy. The Marine Policy Statement set five objectives, all of which are supported by normal operation of IFCAs:

- (1) *achieving a sustainable marine economy,*
- (2) *ensuring a strong, healthy and just society,*
- (3) *using sound science responsibly,*
- (4) *living within environmental limits,*
- (5) *promoting good governance.*

Peacock Worm (*Sabella pavonina*)



Voluntary Agreement case study

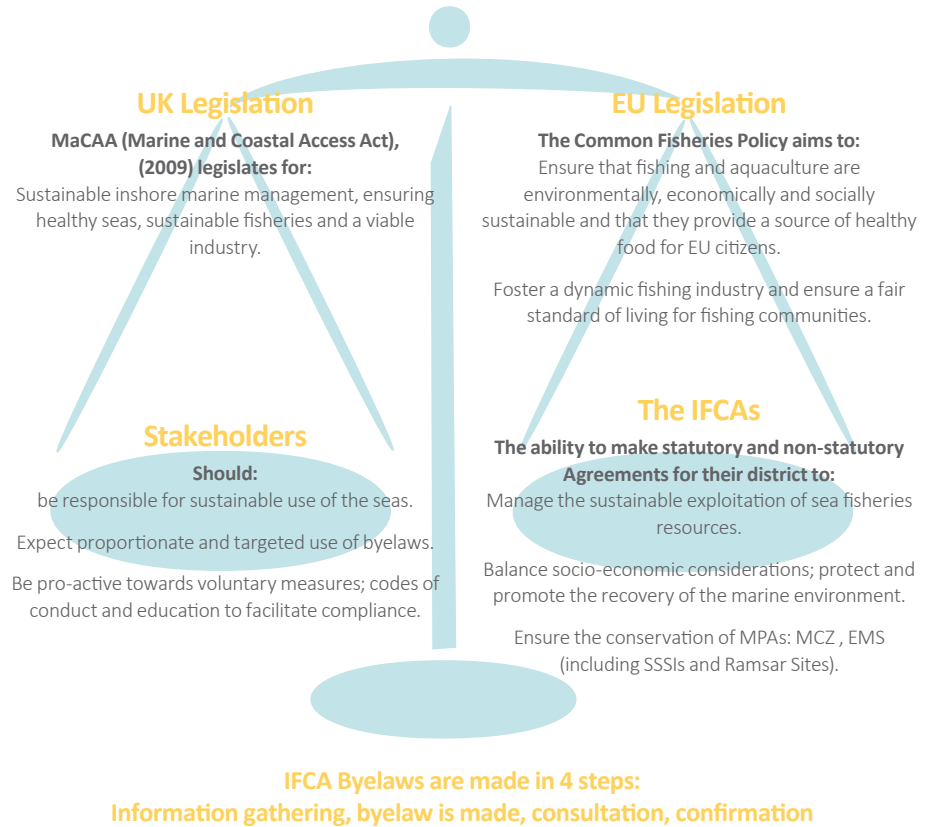
Southern IFCA Memorandum of agreement for Bait Digging within Poole Harbour

has established the basis for a joint approach to the management of bait digging activity within Poole Harbour between relevant stakeholders and their representatives.

This agreement has enabled the development and maximisation of the protection and improvements to the marine environment of the inshore waters in Poole Harbour and to further the sustainable use for the purpose of the conservation of biodiversity, recreation, amenity and education.

The wording and provisions in these agreements were formed through the Bait Working Group with stakeholder involvement in determining the sensitive closed areas, time periods and other provisions. Southern IFCA has found so far that there has been greater understanding of the agreement and compliance through this approach.

Balancing needs....



...through byelaws and voluntary agreements

A byelaw should be used only when it can be demonstrated that existing activities are having an impact on the achievement of IFCA objectives, the marine environment or MPA conservation objectives or that there is a significant risk that they may do so both now and in the future.

Other options to control fishing activity for the protection of stocks and/or habitats include flexibility within the Byelaw e.g. Seasonal Byelaws and Controlling measures (such as Temporal restrictions, Conditional restrictions and Permits) and also Voluntary Agreements (codes of conduct).

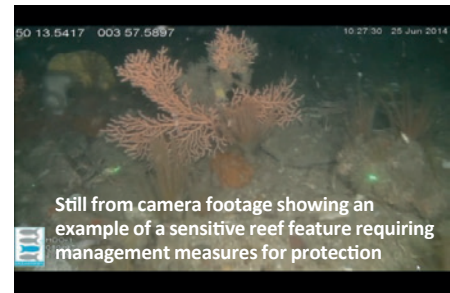


Byelaw case study

Cornwall IFCA balances needs of fishermen with feature protection

In order to provide protection to sensitive reef features within the Eddystone section of the Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SAC, Cornwall IFCA identified an opportunity to enable zoned access for bottom towed fishing gear in areas between these reefs.

Using a range of different sources of seabed information, it was possible to map the reef edges and identify buffer areas around them. A byelaw was developed which protected the conservation features whilst balancing this against the needs of the fishing industry. A monitoring project is in place to assess the recovery of the areas closed to bottom towed fishing gears.



Creating a framework for local business: Case study

Kent and Essex IFCA whelks

Towards the end of 2011 local fishermen expressed concerns that whelk stocks in the district were being overfished. Due to their sedentary nature and lack of planktonic larval stage whelks are very susceptible to over exploitation. KEIFCA used its new emergency byelaw making power to rapidly address these concerns and passed an emergency byelaw that required each vessel to be permitted and limited the number of whelk pots that can be used by each vessel to 300. In April 2013 the emergency byelaw was superseded by a full permit byelaw which continues to limit pot numbers to 300, although flexibility in the byelaw allows the number of pots as well as other technical aspects to be reviewed and adjusted annually. KEIFCA values the continued input of local whelk fishermen and sends out an annual questionnaire seeking views about the fishery, the results of which are discussed when the permit conditions for the following

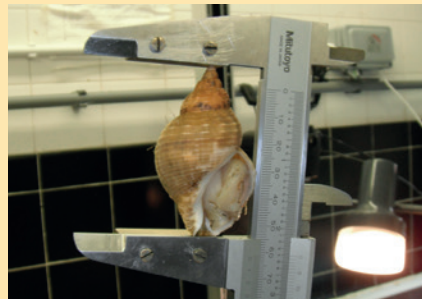


year's fishery are decided by the Authority.

As a result of the byelaw requirement to provide monthly catch return data KEIFCA can show that landings in the



district are steadily increasing year on year. For the 16 months when the emergency byelaw was in place 570 tonnes of whelks were landed with an approximate first sale value of £342,000. For the year 2013-14 over 834 tonnes of whelks with a value of up to £500,000 were landed, by 2014-15 whelk landing figures rose to over 100 tonnes with an approximate value of £1,000,000. It is clear from these figures that the whelk fishery is providing a key income for a significant number of vessels as well as employment for approximately 40 fishermen in the district.



Mindful of the role of IFCA's to "ensure sustainable exploitation of fisheries; balancing socio-economic benefits with the protection of the marine environment", KEIFCA recognises that research is vital for the development and sustainable management of the whelk fishery. Whelks are a data limited species and for this reason we have worked with Cefas as well as Bangor University & St Mary's University on various research programmes. Research into population genetics using whelk samples taken from KEIFCA waters is due to report later this year and will identify if the whelk stocks in our district are one inter-breeding stock or several smaller distinct stocks.

Staff Profile: Eastern IFCA Inshore Fishery and Conservation Officer/Project Officer

Name: Luke Godwin **Age:** 27 **Date joined:** March 2012
Qualifications: BSc Marine Biology (Hons) MSc Environmental Biology (Distinction)

Luke joined Eastern IFCA as a Marine Environment Officer with a particular remit to improve the quality and utility of the Authority's fishery and marine conservation data holdings to ensure that management decisions are underpinned by sound and transparent science.

He has designed databases to collect and manipulate both fisheries and marine conservation data as well as lending his expertise to the design of an officer time management initiative that saw timesheets move from hand written to electronic forms that can be analysed to produce personnel and activity management information.

Luke joined the Enforcement team in May 2014 and assumed duties as both a warranted IFCO and Project Officer. As part of the Enforcement team he is central to ensure compliance amongst stakeholders through a blend of education, information and enforcement both at sea and ashore.

In addition to these duties, he has led projects to reorganise and rejuvenate the application for, and award of, leases to grant lays to local mussel aquaculture business which included brokering both legal and ministerial agreements. Using his academic background and experience in the Environment team, he has provided a useful link between scientific theory and enforcement practice in his pivotal role in the development of both marine conservation and fisheries byelaws.

He has written comprehensive Regulatory Impact Assessments, analysed scientific data and devised innovative regulatory approaches to achieve the IFCA vision of successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.

Luke's professional and personal journey effectively mirrors that which IFCAs have travelled in the transition from Sea Fisheries Committee. The remit is large and demanding, the timescales for delivery are pressing but through rigour, good humour and a very 'can do' attitude significant results have been achieved, which represent excellent value for money.



Compliance and enforcement

Intertidal enforcement case study

In 2012, North Western IFCA enacted a new byelaw and permit scheme to manage cockle and mussel fisheries in the District. This introduced stronger safety measures for working in intertidal areas including requirements for permit holders using boats to have fishing vessel training courses.

The Byelaw made areas of Morecambe Bay and the Ribble commercial fishing areas, so that an enforcement loophole of gathering shellfish for personal consumption was significantly reduced.

An annual charge for permits of £500 was introduced to discourage casual workers from holding permits. This has had the beneficial effect of significantly reducing the number of permit holders, giving those that do have permits better access to limited stocks of shellfish while creating more sustainable and better managed fisheries.

One of the IFCA's success criteria is

“To work with local communities to achieve compliance with statutory and non-statutory regulations as laid down by the Government and the Authority.”

Enforcement is essential in helping to achieve sustainable fisheries and habitats. The IFCA's are regulating bodies and enforce their own byelaws and orders as well as national and certain EU legislation relating to sea fisheries. The key to achieving high compliance is the IFCA's engagement with local users who may be affected by the measures. As well as an effective deterrent system with penalties and fines for non-compliance, each IFCA also has the option to operate a system of Voluntary Agreements and issue Codes of Conduct to protect stock and/or habitats rather than enforcing a byelaw.



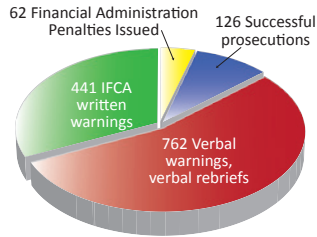
Total IFCA enforcement action

The IFCAs use various compliance measures to ensure, where possible, that no person(s) illegally engaged in fishing related activities removes fishing opportunities for others or gains an unfair

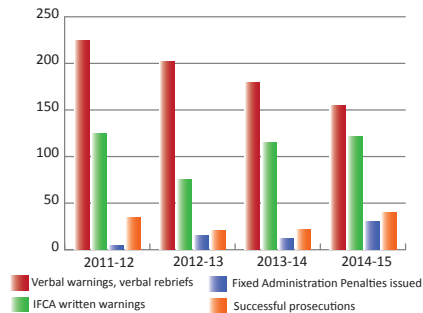
market advantage by breaking the rules and that law abiding person(s) are not disadvantaged by being compliant. The IFCAs will also seek to use appropriate compliance and enforcement measures,

where it considers it to be necessary to ensure that the marine environment is not adversely affected by fishing activities.

Total 2011-2015



Total 2011-2015



IFCA research

The IFCA's undertake research to inform management decisions

Monitoring individual species and habitats.

Gathering evidence and data regularly to update risk matrices.

Informing stock and habitat management, and Enforcement .

Answering specific local focused questions, and helping shape national policy.

Promoting sustainable use of the seas, and management and conservation of features.

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Facilitates exchange of fisheries, marine science and technology information between IFCA's and other government agencies.

Develops co-operation and consistency between organisations, identifying joint working opportunities between member organisations.

Ensures that the IFCA's are valued as national and international fisheries managers.

Improves the quality and extent of fisheries management information through better coordination and dissemination of fisheries related scientific research.

Defines and applies best practice relating to the scientific and technical functions responsibilities of IFCA's.

The National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG)

NIMEG brings together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement in order to develop and support joint working and consistency, identify and share best practice, and to promote professionalism and competence by:

Promoting joint working at national, regional and local levels.

Developing and implementing, where appropriate, national policy, process and procedure based upon best practice.

Promoting consistency in regulation across jurisdictional boundaries.

Identification of training and development needs for constituent organisations.

Implementation of training strategy, including governance of the Centre for Marine Environmental Compliance Training.



The Association has obtained around £1M of capital and revenue grants from DEFRA over the last 2 years which has enabled the IFCA's to purchase equipment and provide staff to facilitate habitat research and stock assessments. This research will inform management plans for MPAs



Fish Survey in the Aln Estuary MCZ in Northumberland

Working to answer local issues

The Isles of Scilly IFCA have recently undertaken a jointly funded * Data Storage Tagging Project on both the European common lobster (*Homarus gammarus*) and the European spiny lobster (*Palinurus elephas*), also referred to as the crawfish.

Both are commercially important, however, a decline in populations of *P. elephas* has led to very few fisheries for the species remaining. One such fishery is found on the Isles of Scilly which are renowned as a pristine marine environment, important to many nationally rare, threatened or vulnerable marine species and habitats. The islands' shellfish industry consists of 23 vessels and is still an important economic sector providing employment for a much larger number of people, relatively, than in the rest of the South West UK.

Working with local fishermen, the Lobster Hatchery, Cornwall IFCA, NE IFCA, the Environment Agency, the JNCC, universities and aquariums in England, the primary goal of this project is to show the viability of shellfish stocks and ensure that current levels of exploitation are managed correctly so that sustainable fishing may continue around the islands for many generations to come.

For an interim report on this project please go to the Association Website page www.association-ifca.org.uk/news/isles-of-scilly-lobster-and-crawfish-tagging-project



* funded by the European Fisheries Fund, Seafish, Natural England and St Mary's Harbour Office

Management of marine protected areas

The IFCA's are committed

to implementing a well-managed network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2016 comprising of European Marine Sites (EMS) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ). EMS include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) of European importance along with Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), RAMSAR sites and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ). These are intended to form a well-managed ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas and meet the government's commitment to the OSPAR agreement.

Management measures, enforcement and research are the three areas the IFCA's concentrate on when managing MPAs. Review of existing byelaws has helped the IFCA's identify and develop long term non-regulatory and regulatory solutions which reflect local, national and EU needs. The IFCA's and the Association have worked closely with Defra to agree a delivery plan for EMS and MCZ management measures, balancing sustainable exploitation of marine species with conservation of habitats.



The IFCA's have been instrumental in the designation of 27 new Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) around the English coastline

These have been created to help protect our rich marine life such as Coral Reefs, Oyster Beds and Seahorses from damaging activities, to ensure their features are conserved. The UK has one of the world's richest marine environments and these new sites will join over 500 Marine Protected Areas (MPA) that already exist to safeguard our rich marine environment and keep our seas sustainable, healthy and productive for future generations.

Total IFCA's Sea Area	28,607km ²	
European Marine Sites	11,581 km ²	40% of IFCA Sea area
Marine Conservation zones	4,642 km ²	16% of IFCA Sea area
Total Marine Protected Areas*	13,213 km ²	46% of IFCA Sea area

* Total includes overlap between MCZ and EMS



European marine sites: areas protected from bottom towed gear

In the first round of protection in Marine Protected Areas, the IFCA worked closely with Natural England to identify areas where fishing activities could damage sensitive habitats. This resulted in a series of IFCA management measures to close areas to bottom towed gear.



IFCAs are the lead regulators in inshore fisheries and through their local membership, knowledge and expertise have been working hard to deliver a proportionate system of management within European Marine Sites in accordance with Defra's overall delivery policy and the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives. So to balance the needs of the fisheries with the strict requirements of the habitat regulations, IFCAs have also gathered further data to support proportionate management measures.

Note that the map contains only those areas where management has been introduced to achieve the conservation objectives of European Marine Sites, other extensive spatial restrictions also apply.

In 2015 and 2016 further work is ongoing to ensure that all fisheries within European Marine Sites are compatible with the conservation objectives of Marine Protected areas.

By 2015 there were over 80 areas closed to bottom towed gear equating to 3250 square kilometres

Case study

Southern IFCA completed sonar and drop down camera work in the South Wight SAC using the expertise of a local fishing vessel. The aim of the survey was to further ground truth a habitat map and confirm the presence or absence of the protected reef. The survey was necessary as the available evidence on the extent of reef was poor in a small area that was very important to the local fishing industry. The survey used a High Definition underwater camera 'sledge' purchased with support from Defra funding.

The use of the new camera allowed more detailed assessments of the seabed that revealed the reef features in this section of the SAC to be further inshore and the majority of the substrate over the trawling grounds to be composed of shell, sand, pebbles, mixed sediment and mud. The use of the camera therefore allowed Southern IFCA to protect sensitive reef areas through byelaws, but allowed an open area where fishing vessels can fish without having a detrimental effect on the protected features of the site. By working in partnership the IFCA was able to target effectively research resources to economically important areas and engage directly with the community to ensure the best evidence was used to manage this important site.

Sussex IFCA — The Kingmere MCZ

In 2014, Sussex IFCA conducted a side scan sonar survey of Kingmere MCZ in collaboration with Cefas and Eastern IFCA to investigate the extent of black sea bream nests. This successful survey has helped to shape management of the newly designated Kingmere MCZ.

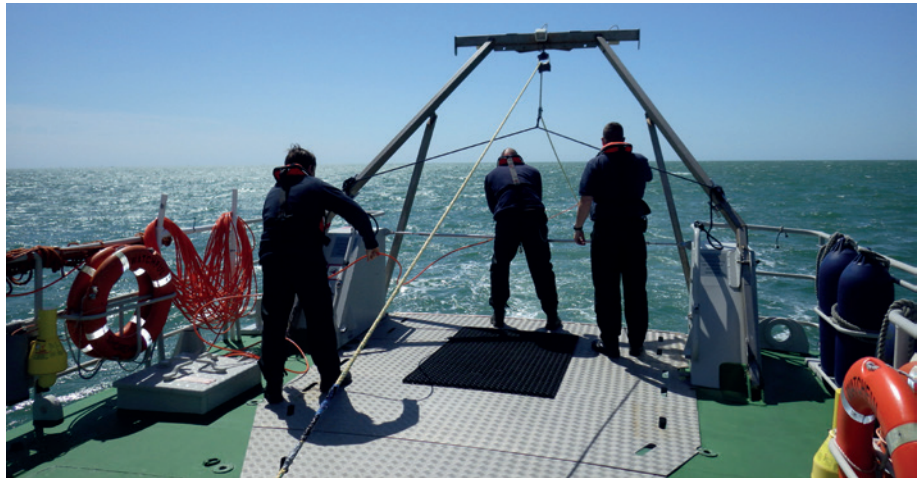
Kingmere MCZ has been designated due to the spawning stock and preferred habitat of the black sea bream.

Later in 2014, working with recreational anglers and charter vessel skippers, Floy identification tags were attached to over 850 bream. By January 2015, there had been 20 recaptures of tagged fish, most of them within or close to the MCZ, but others were recaptured as far afield as France.

Using a Defra grant, the project was expanded and five thousand Floy tags were purchased; data from these have shown bream site fidelity and temporal and spatial movements. Temperature data loggers will monitor temperature trends within this MCZ which are theorised to be linked to bream migrations. For Kingmere MCZ, this has enabled the production of informative maps, detailing the distribution of fishing activity, necessary for the informed management of these activities.

The IFCAs delivered management plans for high-risk EMS by early 2014 including 13 new byelaws

With delivery partners Natural England and the Marine Management Organization, they worked together following the Defra revised approach to management of EMS, to comply with the EU Habitats Directive. Thirteen new byelaws were proposed, widely consulted with stakeholders and confirmed by the Secretary of State by early 2014. The IFCAs are now focusing on delivering site specific management plans for medium risk sites, working with Defra and delivery partners. This process makes best use of the IFCAs' limited resources and targets sites with the highest risk and therefore bringing real conservation benefits.



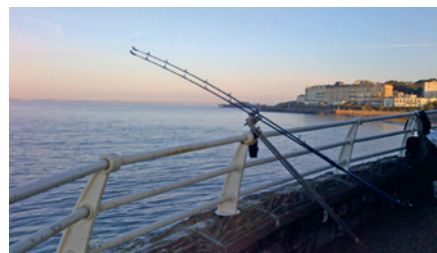
Case Study Devon and Severn IFCA involvement in Sea Angling 2012

Devon and Severn IFCA Angling Work

Between 2012 and 2014 Devon and Severn IFCA liaised significantly with the Recreational Sea Angling (RSA) community, largely through meetings with individual clubs and associations. Subsequently, the IFCA produced a short RSA strategy that highlights its intention of developing responsible RSA activities within the district in recognition of its socio-economic benefits and the increasingly conservation minded approach of the sport.

Of the concerns of the RSA sector which were manageable at a local level, conflicts with netting activities was one of the most prevalent. In response to this Devon and Severn IFCA officers, in close consultation with the RSA representatives on the authority developed three pilot Angling Zones which include shore and boat marks in areas important to the RSA sector. An online consultation was held for each site, followed by a series of face to face meetings for the more complex Skerries Bank Angling Zone and management measures were designed accordingly.

Each Angling Zone includes a voluntary Code of Conduct which limits netting and longlining (and in one case potting) activities depending on the site. At sites which were thought to have low levels of activity upon designation, netting and longlining activities were banned completely (the Emsstrom wreck and Burnham, Berrow and Brean). At the Skerries Bank Angling Zone which has a small beach drawn fleet fishing from beaches within the zone, vessel sizes for boats engaged in netting and longlining activities were capped at 10m to keep fishing effort limited to the small local boats. Additionally, the commercial sector agreed not to target plaice, the most important species for the RSA sector on the Skerries Bank. The voluntary code on the Skerries Bank also includes a bag limit for recreational anglers for the main species for which the Angling Zone was designated. The bag limit is large enough to allow normal angling activities (10 plaice and 3 rays per anglers per day) but draws a clear line between recreational and unregistered commercial fishing, which was one of the concerns of the commercial fishermen engaged in the consultation process for the Angling Zones.



Case Study Devon and Severn IFCA bass nursery area infringements

Bass nursery areas are an important part in the legislative framework set up nationally to protect juvenile bass stocks as well as spawning females.

Part of an IFCA's role is to protect these areas from illegal fishing methods such as monofilament nets or rod and line. The hardest part is always to prove that the bass the enforcement officers find on the boat were actually caught inside the protected area. There are numerous defences to being caught inside an area which are well known to those involved in illegal activity.

The Devon and Severn IFCA (D&SIFCA) had had reports of illegal bass fishing, from a well known fisherman, in the Salcombe / Kingsbridge estuary on the south coast of Devon. The tides and conditions were right for night time fishing and so the D&SIFCA working alongside Salcombe Security Solutions and the local police deployed officers to undertake surveillance around the estuary at likely launch points, recovery points and more importantly the edge of the bass nursery area to establish that the fishing boat had not left the estuary during its fishing operations. This operation continued over four nights in succession.

At 0109hrs on 30th September 2014 the FV Deano II was stopped by local police at a slipway on the Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary. On board were 15 bass, a quantity on monofilament net, the skipper and his crew.

The three organisations working together were able to prove that the FV Deano II had no fish on board when she left the slipway, that the vessel had not left the bass nursery area during the night, the vessel had been engaged in fishing inside the bass nursery area and that the vessel had not displayed the correct navigation lights during this time.

The skipper was offered a Financial Administrative Penalty (FAP) of £2,000

for the offences. He decided because of the amount of the FAP that he would plead not guilty and go to the magistrates court. A FAP is required to be paid with 28 days of acceptance, whereas if found guilty in court the fine can be paid over a much longer period as determined by the court.

On 22nd April 2015 at Newton Abbot Magistrates court the skipper of the FV Deano II was found guilty of both charges brought by the D&SIFCA and fined £2,000 and £750 costs. The fine is now being paid off at £20 per month.



Working with partners

Partnership work is crucial to the IFCAs at both national and local levels, as it ensures communication of local issues at a national level. Maintaining trust and involvement at a local level is key for success of the bottom-up approach of the IFCAs; successful relationships with all users of the seas will ensure that the aims of the IFCA vision are met. National partnership working allows for continuity and sharing resources and information helps to ensure that common goals are being met.

The Association plays a key role nationally on behalf of the IFCAs

at high-level meetings not only with the Minister and Central Government (via DEFRA), but also with the IFCAs' key partners Natural England (NE), The Environment Agency (EA), The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS). Other agencies that the Association and the IFCAs liaise with include the Shellfish Association of Great Britain (SAGB), The International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES), and OSPAR (North-East Atlantic Preservation and Protection). Management groups such as MPA management groups, enforcement working groups and technical advisory groups are attended by AIFCA and IFCA representatives.

At a local level, the IFCAs meet with their funding Local Authorities, and also with local interest groups such as Fishermen's Associations, Coastal Partnerships, Wildlife Trusts and Angling groups. They also work with Port and Harbour Authorities and local Police forces.

As MPAs develop, and stocks of fish fluctuate, management must change to reflect new challenges, to ensure protection of the seas, and sustainable use. There will always be the need to develop new working relationships with organisations affected by the remit of IFCAs and the IFCAs being local and accessible bodies are best placed to forge these relationships.



Working with partners

Cornwall IFCA have implemented a low-cost, high-impact measure which benefit their stakeholders

In July 2013 Cornwall IFCA moved into a shared building with the regional office of the MMO and CEFAS. The three organisations share the same reception and offer a one stop shop for stakeholders. This has greatly improved the service to local stakeholders, reducing the time spent dealing with licence and permit issues. The shared accommodation has also



greatly improved joint working and improved sharing of information and best practice.

North Western IFCA (NWIFCA) facilitate the Bivalve Mollusc Working Group

Morecambe Bay has stocks of shellfish which vary greatly from year to year. The causes of population fluctuations are not yet understood but are difficult to manage. In recent years Morecambe Bay seed mussel has become an increasingly sought after resource and when opened is fished by dredge vessels and hand-workers in huge quantities. Conflict between sectors over Morecambe Bay shellfish has led the Authority to set up a new multi-sectoral management committee, the Bivalve Mollusc Working Group to advise the Authority on management options for shellfish stocks. This Committee has now met twice and has approved a draft management plan for Morecambe Bay mussels.

Northumberland IFCA Case Study

In order to improve our understanding of lobster stock status and population dynamics within the Northumberland IFCA district, in May 2014 NIFCA began a 2-year data collection programme, whereby an officer goes out once a month on each of 4 potting vessels from various port across the district. During these survey trips all lobsters caught in the pots are measured and additional information is recorded including quantities of bycatch, the position of fleets, the types of pots used and soak times. Tissue samples are also taken from lobsters to inform a population genetic study at Manchester University. This project would not be possible without the co-operation of the fishing boats involved and the information captured will be invaluable for informing future assessments and management of shellfish stocks in the district.

Working with communities

Putting local communities at the heart of the process

Listening and working with commercial fishermen, anglers, angling charter boat skippers, local wildlife trusts and environmental groups as well as local and national governmental organisations is a core part of helping the IFCAs to deliver their vision. It is important that stakeholders and local communities are at the heart of the management process and understand the requirement for the IFCAs to make balanced decisions based on social, economic and environmental data.

Using local knowledge to help identify priorities

The IFCAs work with stakeholders to understand local issues; stakeholders can help to fill in any gaps in knowledge or data. Stakeholders will also be asked to help identify the key threats or issues that might hinder the sustainable exploitation of the stock or habitat and to help rank and prioritise the impacts and likelihoods of these risks. The IFCAs can then work with stakeholders to help prioritise which actions should take place with which stocks and in which order. The IFCAs look to local communities to help develop solutions to these issues. An effective communication strategy is vital to develop this information flow and allow local communities voices to be heard and a two-way dialogue to be established.

North Eastern IFCA (NEIFCA) have worked closely with the Holderness Coast Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG)

Support has been reciprocal between North Eastern IFCA and the Holderness Coast FLAG, with projects to benefit local fishermen and the marine environment:

- NEIFCA obtained funding and supplied 42,000 escape gaps to commercial fishermen for lobster pots, to allow juvenile crabs and lobsters to escape, but allowing those above minimum landing size to be retained.
- NEIFCA also obtained funding and supplied 100 pingers (acoustic cetacean deterrents) to reduce incidental catching of cetaceans.
- FLAG awarded funding to NEIFCA to enable Strategic Environmental Assessment of finfish; studying current management plans and harvest.



Northumberland IFCA (NIFCA) have undertaken Community Education

with stakeholders to promote the aims of the IFCAs. They attended the Amble Open fishing competition, to further their understanding of recreational sea angling and strengthen their relationship with the angling community who are an integral part of Northumberland's coastline and a valuable asset to the local economy. NIFCA have also circulated a questionnaire via angling clubs, tackle shops and their website designed to draw a better picture of recreational sea angling in the district and provide anglers with an opportunity to flag up any issues that they would like to see addressed .

NIFCA have also hosted the local Sea Cadets highlighting the work of the IFCAs, 4 workshops, attended in rotation by the Cadets, including ground truthing and camera work, lobster stocks in Northumberland, fishing gear types and stock identification, and a tour of Bravo 1 NIFCA's shore based RIB.

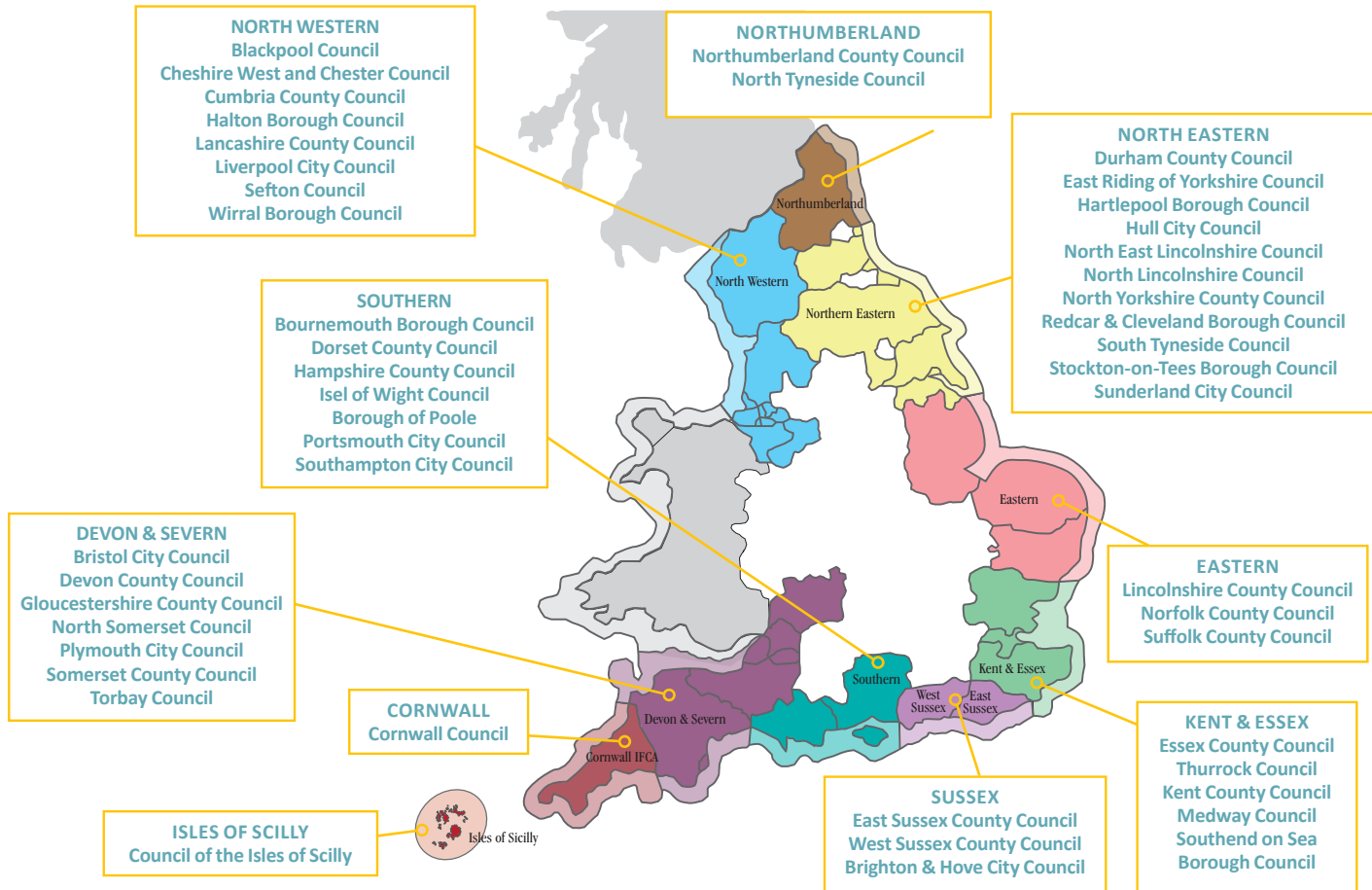
NIFCA attended the Amble Harbour Open Day as part of ongoing support for the Amble 2020 Project . Their stall, which included a wide range of local fish species, enthused the local residents to this project and the part NIFCA play in maintaining stocks and habitats and sustainably managing fishing in the district. Part of the project is the intention to develop a Lobster Hatchery for Northumberland, with particular benefits for education and marine science.

Future challenges

It is both an exciting and challenging time for marine fisheries and conservation. The IFCA's are key to delivering an ambitious programme seeking to achieve sustainable seas for the benefit of all. In the current climate of financial constraint the IFCA's have demonstrated value for money and a "can do" attitude. The IFCA's will continue to deliver through stakeholder engagement against a backdrop of the Governments "Blue Belt" initiative, the EU Directives and the revision of the Common Fisheries Policies and increased public awareness of the importance of marine management and conservation. Nevertheless sustainable funding for the IFCA's remains a key component of our continued success.



IFCA funding authorities





Association of Inshore Fisheries
and Conservation Authorities

Get in touch

If you would like more information on any of the subjects covered by this leaflet, or if you are concerned about fishing activities in your area, we would like to hear from you. Contact us through the following website.

www.association-ifca.org.uk

Links to all 10 IFCAs can be found on this website as well as a website contact form.