

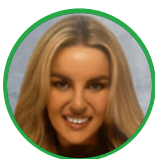
Regional Fisheries Groups NEWSLETTER

Find out more about our upcoming port and coastal visits on our webpage [here](#)

Updates from the Regional Fisheries Group



2023 started with a productive round of Regional Fisheries Group (RFG) meetings in January. The SW 7efg, NW 7a and NE 4b meetings were held as hybrid meetings while the others were held online. Since we last saw everyone in December and January, the RFG team welcomed **Dan** who will be leading the NW engagement, and **Caley** who will be leading the NE engagement.



Pleased to meet you, Hornsea, Withernsea and Scarborough!

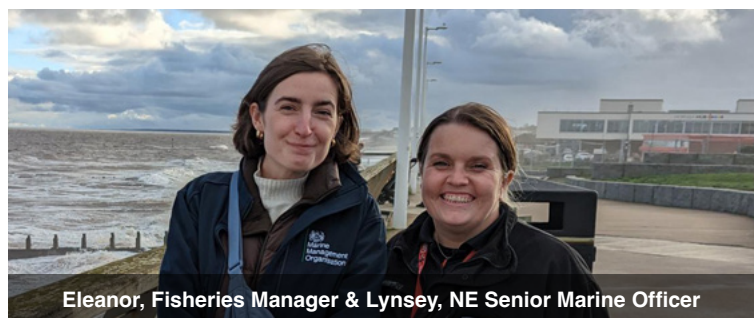
On blustery afternoons in November 2022 and February 2023, Eleanor, Courtney and Caley from the MMO RFG team visited fishers in Hornsea, Withernsea and Scarborough.

The RFG team are evolving their approach to be more present at local ports and speaking to fishers at a time and place that is more convenient to fishers.

During these visits, we heard from several fishers that they would like to know more about the NEIFCA pot limits byelaw and so NEIFCA were invited to speak at the RFG meeting which was held on the 17 January. We heard views on berried lobster and how this may impact future management measures which we've fed back to the Crab and Lobster Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) team and have had conversations with Defra on. Thank you to everyone who took the time to speak to us, and we're looking forward to coming back in the future.



High tide at Hornsea Beach



Eleanor, Fisheries Manager & Lynsey, NE Senior Marine Officer

Grants and Funding

Apply for the UK Seafood Fund: Infrastructure Scheme round 3

[Find out how to apply for round 3: fleet modernisation - engine replacement for the small-scale coastal fleet](#)

Up to £2 million in grant funding is available to modernise the small-scale coastal fleet with replacement engines. This is a trial to gather evidence which will be used to shape future funding opportunities.

To access funding, you must be involved in our evaluation process. The £2 million is from a total of £10 million in grant funding that will be available to the catching sector. The Infrastructure Scheme is part of the [UK Seafood Fund](#).

Regional updates and ongoing actions: **YOU SAID**

North East (NE) 4b

- Industry in Northumberland requested more engagement with management organisations

➔ Caley has been attending IFCA fishers forums to hear views and find ways the RFG team can support the industry

North West (NW) 7a

- The NW initiative recommendations include a new role to support industry and allow it to thrive

➔ Seafish are now advertising the role of Regional Manager [Regional Manager North West England I Vacancies](#) I which closed 6th February

South East (SE) 4c

- Industry asked if the small fish survey could be re-started in 4c
- Industry asked that the RFG team visit ports close to them

➔ Cefas carried out the survey in September 2022 and the report should be finalised soon and we will share the results with industry

➔ Courtney and Tim Dixon (Head of Fisheries Management) visited Leigh-on-Sea, West Mersea and Harwich in January. They'll be in touch with updates soon

South (S) 7d

- Industry requested an update on the Channel demersal non-quota species and Bass FMP

➔ We heard updates from the teams developing these FMPs at the January meetings

South West (SW) 7efg

- Request to see the data on bass effort for EU and English vessels
- The South West group asked if there is grant funding that covers tier 3 engines
- Industry raised points about the potential decline in pollack abundance and size of fish

➔ MMO shared this data with those who requested the data

➔ MMO grants team confirmed that they currently do not fund tier 3 engines, however more information will be sent out in the notes of the South West RFG meeting, which gave details on funding for engines under FaSS

➔ MMO's quota and RFG teams are looking at the data to consider potential new management measures

All regions: **WE DID**

Defra and the MMO have removed the quota cap on 440 under-10m vessels for the remainder of the 2023. Defra will make a final policy decision on the cap before 2024. The cap restricted the total amount of quota species that could be landed in a year to 350kg to remove latent capacity in the fleet. All English under-10m vessels that have their catch limits managed by the MMO will now be able to fish up to the monthly limits published [here](#).

Meet the RFG team

The RFG team has grown over the last few months, from 3 to 6 members. We are all responsible for a different region.

- Our team leader is Courtney Inch, the Principal Fisheries Manager of the RFGs and manages the South East RFG. She joined the MMO in November 2020, and joined Fisheries Management in June 2022. She is based in Hull.
- Emily Theobald is the Fisheries Manager for the South West RFG. She has been working at the MMO since October 2021, and before that, she was working as a lecturer in Marine Biology and Ecology. She is based in Cornwall and travels regularly to South West ports.
- Caley McIntosh is the Fisheries Manager for the North East RFG. She has worked for the MMO since 2017 and has experience working on the coast, at sea, and in the Marine Conservation Team (MCT). She previously worked on a Norwegian trawler in Antarctica and for the Cayman Islands government. She is based in Newcastle.
- Dan Wardle is the Fisheries Manager for the North West RFG. He joined the MMO in 2018 and has experience working as a Marine Officer, as well as at sea across all English waters. He is based in Whitehaven.
- Eleanor Holford is the Fisheries Manager for the South RFG. She joined the team over a year ago and organises meetings and port visits for ICES area 7d. She is based in York.
- Rebecca Thomas is the Fisheries Officer of the RFG. She has been a member of the MMO since October 2022 and before that was researching dolphin acoustics. She is based in Hayle.

Want to learn more about the RFG team and how to contact them? All the details can be found on our webpage by clicking [here](#).



Interview with Rachel Thirlwall, Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) team, MMO

QUESTION

Why should people who work in the fishing industry engage with the FMP programme?

“Now the UK has left the EU, we have the opportunity to manage our fisheries in a way that meets the needs of stocks, the marine environment, and the people whose livelihoods depend on them.

“FMPs are one of the key ways in which we can achieve our ambition for sustainable fisheries. Development of an FMP for demersal non-quota species (NQS) in the Channel was highlighted by the fishing industry and other key marine stakeholders as a necessary move because of concern about potential over-exploitation of some stocks and a lack of data.

“Therefore, being involved in the development of this FMP, enables stakeholders to ensure their concerns around NQS are heard. We cannot address all the issues in the first round of the FMP but any feedback given by industry can help provide vital information to steer the future of the FMP.”

QUESTION

What is your background?

“For as long as I can remember I have loved the sea and so I made it my goal to one day have a career where I was able to influence the management of our seas and coasts.

“I secured my first role within the MMO in the Marine Planning team as a coastal planner, where my main role was stakeholder engagement in the northwest marine plan area.

“I worked in that role for just under two years before taking on a new role 7 months ago with the FMP team.”



QUESTION**Could you please tell us about your day job, what does an average day look like?**

“An average day for me in the FMP team consists of working on the development of the Channel demersal non-quota species FMP.

“I am the secretariat of the working group and therefore organise the working group meetings, including agenda, papers, follow-up conversations with attendees and running workshops. Through my role with the working group, I have tried to develop new ways to get clear information out to stakeholders such as the “You Said, We Did” documents that show how we are taking working group feedback on board as well as video summaries of meetings.

“I am currently working on developing the monitoring approach for the FMP which requires working closely with both stakeholders and other MMO teams to ensure we have the right evidence to measure the effectiveness of the FMP. I also help to manage the team’s mailbox where stakeholders can send in any comments or queries they have about the FMP and make sure that these are replied to.

“This is an important role as it provides stakeholders with another channel of communication outside of meetings and engagement events we might be holding.”

QUESTION**What do you find most exciting about your job?**

“As someone who is always up for a challenge, I find that this new area of work offers me and the team a way to trial new ways of working with both other government departments and stakeholders.

“I have really enjoyed being able to build relationships with fishers who work in the Channel and learn more about how much what they do means to them and their communities.”

QUESTION**How can industry add their suggestions to improve management?**

“The FMP team held a series of in person events across the south coast in February and March. These sessions are an opportunity for the team to take drafted parts of the FMP, such as vision and goals, to stakeholders so that they can provide feedback before the FMP goes out to public consultation. We will be holding a mixture of in person and online events to ensure that as many people are able to provide feedback as possible.”

We also have a dedicated mailbox for our team where people can email in any questions or comments at any time: FMP@marinemanagement.org.uk.

Positive response to catch recording

MMO has welcomed the response to use of the catch recording service by fishers in vessels 10 metres and under over the last year.

On average, 96% of trips covered by the catch recording licence condition are now being recorded, providing valuable data to support better fisheries management, sustainable fishing and traceability of produce. The response follows a focus by MMO officers on supporting fishers with face-to-face and written advice, and improvements to call centre and online guidance.

MMO now plans to continue its work with fishers to improve timeliness and accuracy of information submitted via the catch recording app, especially entries for date of catch, species recorded and weight.

As a reminder, you can find guidance on how to correctly submit Catch Records on our website [here](#);

[Record your catch - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

