



Increase to crawfish MCRS to 110mm in ICES area 7 from 1 January 2024

Background

The fishing industry shared concerns regarding the recent increase in crawfish (*Palinurus spp*) landings coupled with an observed increase in the size of the fishery.

MMO held a co-design workshop on 3 October 2023 with fishers to discuss the current issues with the southwest crawfish fishery, and proposed options for management in the short-term.

There was unanimous agreement in the workshop to implement a minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) increase from 95 mm to 110 mm in English waters of ICES area 7.

MCRS increase

The increase in crawfish MCRS will:

- Offer protection for breeding and spawning opportunities,
- Reduce the number of juveniles being removed from the stock,
- Support future growth in the population.
- Offer better compliance and equal opportunities for all fishers.

The decision was made after consideration of:

- Outcomes of the workshop with the fishing industry,
- Consultation outputs from the crab and lobster fisheries management plan,
- Scientific advice from Cefas and Natural England,
- Discussions with local inshore fisheries and conservation authorities, UK Fisheries Administrations, and crown dependencies.

Further information on rationale behind the decision and benefits of a MCRS increase is available on [MMO website](#).

Next steps

- The increase in MCRS will be enacted through a vessel licence condition. This will come into force from 1 January 2024.
- Any questions please contact the Fisheries Management Team at effort@marinemanagement.org.uk.

