

Regional Fisheries Groups NEWSLETTER

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

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

You wanted the medical certificate exemption consultation form in a different format to work on iPads/iPhones.

An industry member wanted a bass authorisation for another gear type.

Following the Lyme Bay sole consultation, we promised industry an opportunity to discuss gear separation in the bay.

Regional updates and ongoing actions: **WE DID**

We contacted the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to alert them and to request the form to be provided in another format that was compatible with iPads/iPhones. A form in a compatible format has been added to the consultation webpage.

We used the evidence provided, sought further evidence and escalated to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) bass team to successfully issue the authorisation.

We held a meeting on 31 January to discuss the possibility of gear separation in Lyme Bay with representatives from all gear types present.

MCA medicals consultation

The government launched a consultation on medical exemptions for fishers working on vessels 10 metres and under in length.

The potential concession is being considered by the Secretary of State for Transport after listening to the concerns of those in the fishing industry as well as MPs representing coastal communities.

Industry is being urged to have its say on the proposals, which are being published by the MCA. Consultation **closes 27 February 2024** and can be accessed here:

[Medical Exemption – Existing Fishers on Vessels of 10 Metres and Under - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Crawfish management workshop meeting

Following the introduction of the increase Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) for crawfish from 95mm – 100mm, and the seasonal closure of the fishery from 05 February – 30 April (inclusive); MMO have organised a workshop to discuss management of the crawfish fishery.

The crawfish workshop will be held in: Penlee Hall, The Centre, Newlyn, Chywoone Hill, Penzance TR18 5AR, on 13 February, 12:00 – 16:00.

The meeting can also be attended virtually, through Teams. However, if people wish to engage with the

topic it is advised to come in person. The discussion is a chance to work through measures and the consequences, both intentional and unintentional, of further management of the fishery.

The invitation to attend is open to all and if you wish to attend, please email:

effort@marinemanagement.org.uk

Port visits

Our next port visits are planned to be at the end of February where we'll be visiting the Cornish ports of Falmouth, Mevagissey and Fowey, to listen to industry concerns. More details will be sent out closer to the time.



King scallop closure consultation 7d and Lyme Bay in 7e

MMO is seeking views on proposals to close English waters in the ICES area 7d and Lyme Bay in ICES area 7e to the king scallop dredge fishery in summer of 2024.

The proposed closures in 7d and 7e are to protect the stock during spawning and limit the impact of fishing activity on juvenile settlement.

The options for proposed **7d** king scallop closures are:

- 15 May to 30 September 2024 – a closure period that aligns with the EU closure of 7d to the king scallop dredge fishery.
- 01 July and 30 September 2024 – the same closure period as 2023.

The proposed **7e** king scallop dredge fishery closure is:

- A closure of Lyme Bay (ICES rectangles, 30E6, 30E7, 29E6 and 29E7) aligning to the agreed closure length in ICES area 7d.
- No closure of Lyme Bay within any time period.

Consultation **closes 14 February 2024** and can be accessed [here](#).

Survey - Impacts of offshore wind farms on commercial fishing

The UK is committed to increasing its offshore renewable capacity significantly by 2030, and beyond. However, scientists currently have a poor understanding of the full socio-economic implications and conflicting pressures on marine space of the rapid expansion of offshore wind farms.

Scientists at [Plymouth Marine Laboratory](#) (PML) recently launched a survey to capture responses from those in the industry.

You can read about the preliminary results here:

[UK fishing community shares its views on offshore wind | Plymouth Marine Laboratory \(pml.ac.uk\)](#)



Lyme Bay gear separation meeting

One of the outcomes of the Lyme Bay sole consultation was for MMO to facilitate a meeting for representative industry members to discuss the potential for separating areas of Lyme Bay (ICES rectangles 30E6 and 30E7) out to the 12nm, for use by different fishing methods at different times of the year.

It was held face-to-face in Lyme Regis on Wednesday 31 January, facilitated by an independent facilitator and had over 30 attendees, with representatives from each commercial gear type, various fishing organisations and Producer Organisations (POs) & from the recreational sector.



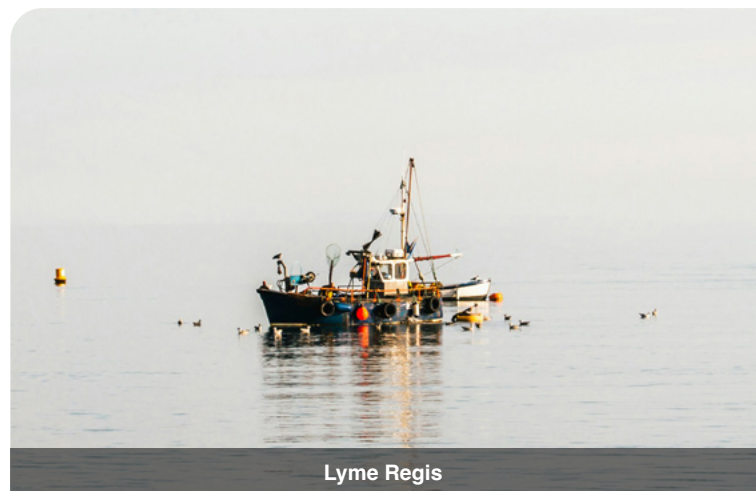
MMO RFG team in Lyme Regis

It was a productive meeting, with a variety of debates and discussions including different forms of gear marking, improved communication between fishers and enhanced protection for 7e sole.

It was clear what needed further investigation and what was not wanted in relation to the management of this issue.

Our next steps are now to look into the actions suggested by the fishers and investigate gathering the evidence committed to in the consultation.

Notes on what was discussed during the meeting will be provided soon and uploaded to the South West (SW) RFG webpage on gov.uk.



Lyme Regis

South West RFG meeting

We held the winter SW RFG meeting online on 21 December last year.

We had a really good turnout, and some important questions were answered regarding the recent quota negotiations announcement.

We had speakers from MMO on the skates and rays Southern North Sea and English Channel FMP, the scallop closure in 7e & 7d consultation and the MCA hosted a Q&A session.

The next meeting is provisionally set for March and I will be asking you for agenda suggestions closer to the time.

Fisheries Management Plans

Throughout November and December last year, MMO's Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) team held in person and online engagement events for the southern North Sea non-quota species FMP, and the southern North Sea and Channel skates and rays FMP.

Did you take part in any of these events?

If so, please use the link below to fill in a short survey on how you think the events went and what could be improved for future FMP engagement.

[Qualtrics Survey | Qualtrics Experience Management](#)