



Marine
Management
Organisation

The following slides were presented to the Channel and Southern North Sea Skates and Rays Fisheries Management Plan Working Group on the 10th October 2023.

The information on initial scoping findings within these slides is not government policy.

The proposed dates for engagement are subject to change based on further engagement planning discussions.

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Skates and Rays FMP: Initial Working Group Meeting 10/10/2023 1500-1600

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Principal Fisheries Manager

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1. Introduction to the FMP and process for developing management proposals
2. Engagement plans
3. Questions for the Working Group
4. Agree Terms of Reference
5. Next Meeting



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Skates and Rays FMP: Overview

- The FMP covers the English waters of the Southern North Sea (ICES areas 4.b and 4.c), and the English Channel (ICES areas 7.d and 7.e). It covers 7 species:
 - Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*)
 - Blonde ray (*Raja brachyura*)
 - Undulate ray (*Raja undulata*)
 - Small-eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*)
 - Spotted ray (*Raja montagui*)
 - Cuckoo ray (*Leucoraja naevus*)
 - Starry ray (*Amblyraja radiata*)



Vision: Develop and deliver sustainable management of skate and ray fisheries in the English Channel and Southern North Sea.

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Skates and Rays FMP: Scoping

Initial Scoping:

- Thornback prominent in landings across North Sea, with blonde ray and cuckoo important in 7.e. Localised landings of other species.
- EU and UK fleets show similar landings, although Channel/SNS split apparent.
- Landings typically by beam and otter trawls, with some netting.
- Both target and bycaught species.
- Limited commercial value (blonde ray in SW higher), relatively high recreational value, particularly for some species (i.e. undulate).

Comparison of UK (Including Crown Dependencies) and EU27 Annual Mean Skate and Ray Landings by Weight (tonnes) across FMP Area 2012-2022



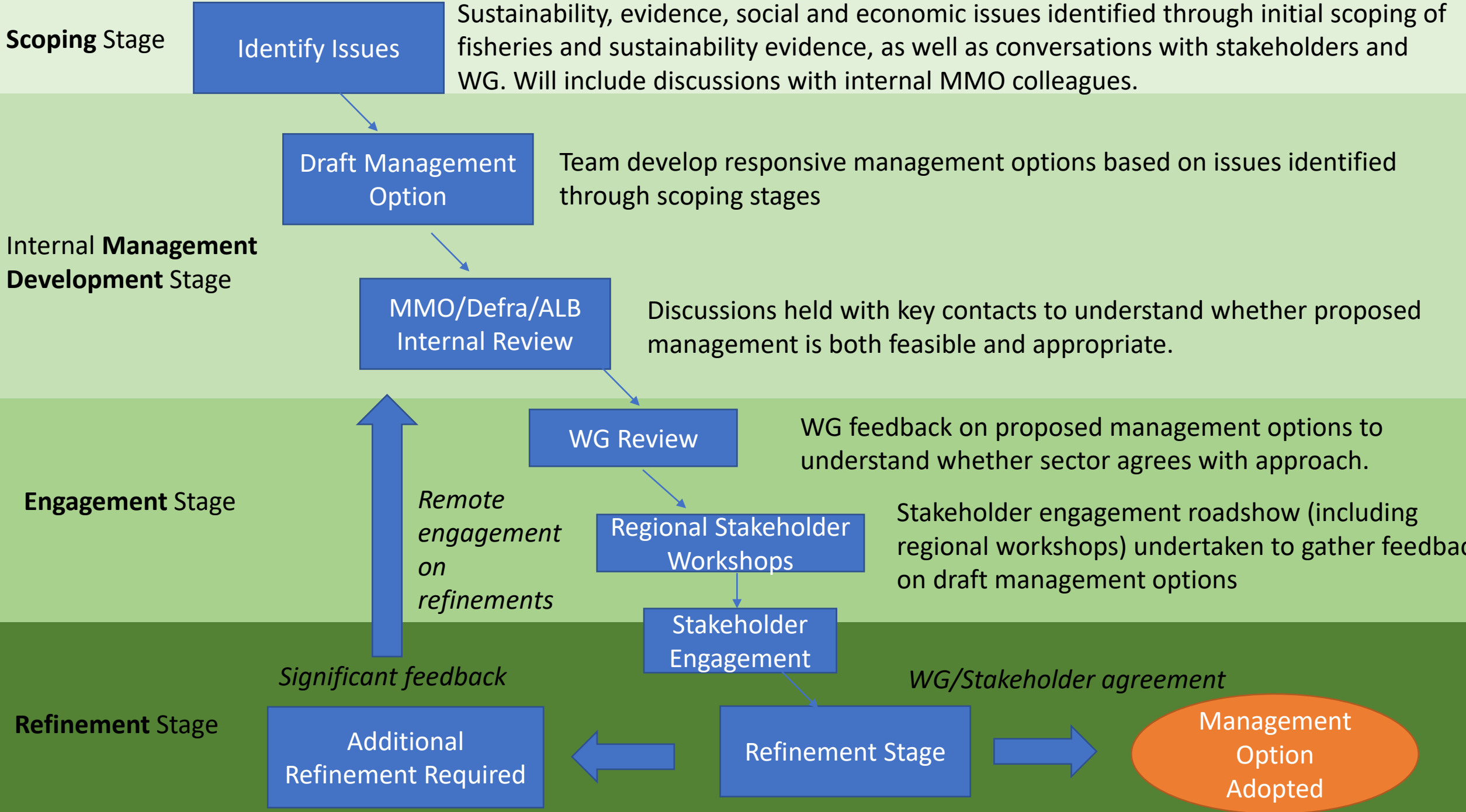
Note: Species specific landings only.

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Skates and Rays FMP: Initial Issues

- Patchy domestic management of skates and rays, although stock health is generally improving/good.
- Species vulnerable due to slow growth and low fecundity
- Targeting is limited to localised fisheries, typically inshore netters and some trawlers.
- Bycaught skate and ray landings seen as an 'added bonus' and may supplement income.
- Low commercial prices are a concern, as are reports that some landings cannot be sold
- Sustainability ratings may impact commercial value. Voluntary codes in North Devon show improvements can be made.
- Conflict between commercial and recreational sector apparent in some areas

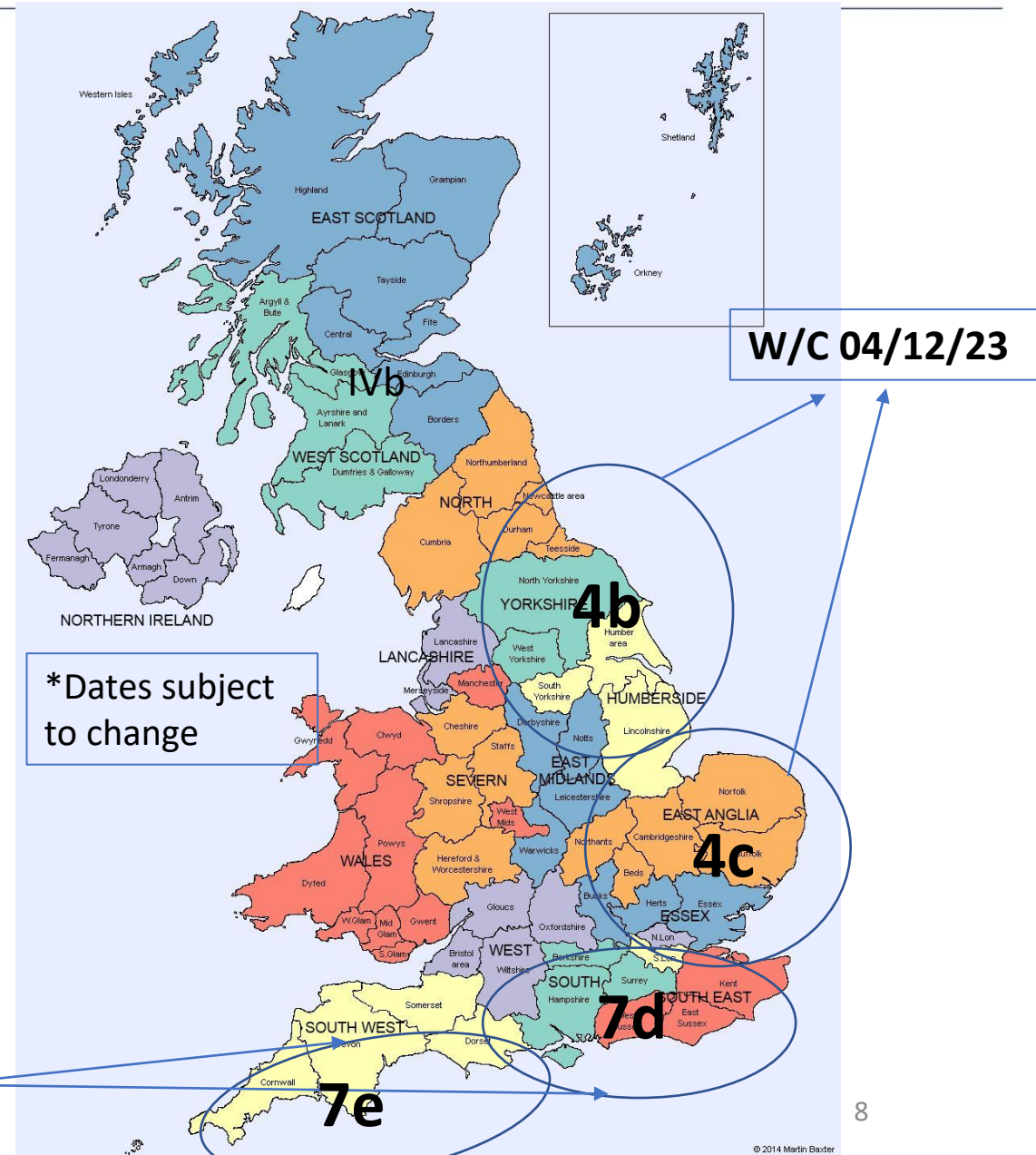
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Regional Workshops

- 4 regional workshops based around each of the 4 ICES areas
- Focus on sharing proposed management measures and goals of the FMP with stakeholders to understand trade-offs and unintended consequences before pre-consultation
- Workshops will be supported by ad hoc port visits for those who cannot attend.

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W/C 13/11/23

W/C 04/12/23

*Dates subject to change

Skates and Rays FMP: In-Person* Engagement

English Channel (13th-17th November)

- **Monday 13th:** Brixham (afternoon)
- **Tuesday 14th:** Mevagissey (morning), Plymouth workshop (evening)
- **Wednesday 15th:** Shoreham (afternoon)
- **Thursday 16th:** Rye (morning), Folkestone workshop (evening)
- **Friday 17th:** Ramsgate/Whitstable (morning)

Southern North Sea (4th – 8th December)

- **Tuesday 5th:** Harwich/West Mersea (workshop)
- **Wednesday 6th:** Lowestoft, Kings Lynn and Wells
- **Thursday 7th:** Bridlington/Scarborough (morning), North Shields workshop (evening)
- **Friday 8th:** Port visits (TBD)

****Will also use short online surveys and online meetings to gather input from those that cannot join in-person.***

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Skates and Rays FMP: Questions for WG

1. Do the initial scoping data and the issues highlighted fit with your understanding?
2. Engagement: Have we got the right engagement plans? How could these be changed/improved to maximise attendance.
3. Key contacts: Are there any people you feel we should really speak to regarding skate and ray fisheries?
4. WG membership: Are the right people at this meeting?

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Skates and Rays FMP: ToRs and Next Steps

- **Terms of Reference:** Any comments, or are WG in agreement?
- Currently working with internal colleagues to refine management proposals and identify evidence gaps.
- These will be ready to share with WG w/c 30th October
- Recommend we hold short meeting 1st-3rd November to present and ask questions.

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