

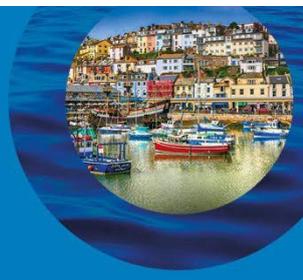


Marine
Management
Organisation

Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays Fisheries Management Plan:

Feedback from stakeholder engagement

November - December 2023



...ambitious for our seas and coasts

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Background

The southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays fisheries management plan (FMP) covers English waters of International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) divisions 4b and 4c (the 'southern North Sea'), and 7d and 7e (the 'English Channel') and includes the following 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*)

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is the delivery partner responsible for preparing the first draft of this FMP, which is due to be published by Defra by the end of 2024¹.

FMPs are developed collaboratively with interested stakeholders. As a critical step in the preparation of this FMP, MMO engaged in the southern North Sea and English Channel regions with stakeholders with an interest in skates and rays. This was done in a range of ways including in-person events, quayside conversations and online webinars to give all interested stakeholders an opportunity to contribute. Through this engagement, MMO were able to gather a range of views and feedback on possible management approaches for skates and rays. It was also an opportunity to identify any additional supporting evidence and future evidence requirements and/or gaps that will help the preparation of this FMP.

This document is a summary of those stakeholder discussions and represent the views of stakeholders and are not MMO opinion. The feedback has been summarised and is not attributable to any individual or organisation. These are the

¹ The Joint Fisheries Statement Annex A: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-fisheries-statement-ifs>

*Added into the scope of the FMP after stakeholder feedback

opinions of wider stakeholders which we would like to share for transparency and to encourage further discussion. Please note: The MMO FMP team aim to ensure that feedback is available to industry promptly post-engagement to ensure there are no unintended errors, omissions, or lack of clarity.

Summary of 7e commercial stakeholder engagement

Engagement in ICES area 7e took place on 13, 14 and 15 November 2023.

Stakeholders from the commercial fishing industry were invited to attend a series of drop-in sessions and quayside events through direct contact, social media posts, industry groups and website blogs. We held sessions in Newlyn, Brixham, Plymouth and Lyme Regis, and spoke to a range of individuals such as vessel owners and industry group representatives. We introduced the Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP and asked them questions on the species that were most important to them and the potential management measures they would like to see within the FMP. Feedback from the online sessions that commercial representatives attended has also been included in this section.

We summarised stakeholders' views into the following themes below:

Species

- The area is a mixed fishery, with thornback, undulate, and blonde rays prevalent.

FMP-specific issues

- Stakeholders highlighted that when one species is prohibited in a mixed fishery for lengthy periods, the market will have disappeared once the species is allowed.
- Stakeholders said that rules need to be dynamic rather than fixed for lengthy periods. Industry-led and science-backed real time closures and closed boxes need to be employed. Any closures need to take into account closures brought in for other species.
- Stakeholders said that Defra need to negotiate the removal of the footnote for small-eyed ray prohibition on the western skates and rays group TAC. Defra also need to negotiate more quota in the short term for 7f and 7g. More allowance for undulate ray is required if it can be negotiated.
- Stakeholders said that areas 7f and 7g should be included as north Devon would miss out on potential better management taking place in the south. It was highlighted that skates and rays very important in North Devon (60% landings).
- Seal predation was raised as a concern.
- Stakeholders said that decision-making must use science to demonstrate reasoning for any changes.
- Stakeholders said that daily quota should be considered to moderate market fluctuations.
- Stakeholders stated that they want to be involved in scientific data collection (including tagging) including scientific surveys. It was suggested that Defra/Cefas/MMO could approach fishers/Producer Organisations with what the data gaps are and work with the industry to fill those gaps.

- In terms of skates and rays, stakeholders said that market data on skate and ray sizes from Newlyn, Plymouth and Brixham should be enough to start to plug the data gaps.

Feedback on Proposed Management Measures

Harmonised Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

- Although there was general support for this measure, stakeholders said that a harmonised MCRS of 20 cm wing and 45 cm whole would be a “blunt tool” that seems to only be based upon the status quo in certain IFCA districts. Stakeholders also commented that the measurements are precautionary and not visibly evidenced by science.
- Some commercial netters said that they would prefer a large minimum size, rather than a minimum and maximum, because the minimum would be easy to manage through set gillnet mesh size adjustment.
- Some stakeholders said that a regional approach rather than national one is preferred in terms of minimum and maximum sizes based upon local observations.
- There were concerns regarding the fact that undulate ray is currently measured snout to tail and proposals for other species will be measured perpendicular to the spine to the greatest extent of each wing. This would be complicated for industry and regulators; there needs to be consistency with measurement methods.
- Some stakeholders said the MCRS would be difficult to manage, and complicated minimum and maximum landing sizes may lead to fisherman simply discarding skates and rays owing to the additional burden of checks.
- Some stakeholders said that any increase in size should be gradual over time and not introduced as a large jump.

Maximum Conservation Reference Size (MaxCRS)

- Stakeholders raised concerns regarding maximum limits. They stated that larger skates and rays are more marketable/profitable. The whole animal is used as skate and ray backs are used for pot bait as a by-product. Fishermen will not discard the backs at sea as the smell of the carcasses has the effect of repelling skates and rays.
- Some stakeholders said that upper size limit would impact on survivability as fish are unlikely to be returned swiftly by netters due to the time and effort involved in arranging gear for a fish that would be worthless.

Updated handling/ID/regulation guidelines

- This measure was generally supported. Stakeholders commented that the Shark Trust species and handling guidance is already well-developed.

A lift in the ICES area 7.e small-eyed ray prohibition

- This measure was generally supported. Stakeholders would like to see Cefas surveys and discards data used to re-open this fishery, even on a scientific basis to begin with.
- Stakeholders highlighted that any scientific common skate fishery needs to be run differently to the spurdog scientific fishery, where ten years of data collection by a

few left most fishermen frustrated with discards and the dwindling market.

- Stakeholders were concerned that there is a very low TAC set for small-eyed ray based on ICES advice. They feel that there is a possibility that it will lead small monthly allowances, since the small TAC will be spread thinly over 7e, 7f, and 7g which will still be unworkable and lead to continued discards of small-eyed ray in 7e.

Species-specific minimum and maximum CRS

- There was general support for this measure.

Species-specific TACs

- There was general support for this measure.

Spatiotemporal management

- Stakeholders said that closed boxes in north Devon have broadly been successful but are concerned regarding any other closed areas and how specific skates and rays closures will be workable. Stakeholders suggested studies should be undertaken regarding the effectiveness of existing closed areas on nursery grounds.

Other management to support enhanced commercial markets

- There was general support for this measure.

Measures to balance commercial and recreational needs

- There was general support for this measure.

Evidence requirements

- Stakeholders feel that there is already a wealth of evidence for skates and rays from landings data in terms of species landed sizes and quantities – they want to see this being analysed.
- Stakeholders said they want to be able to support evidence that will ultimately feed into TAC setting in international fora. There is a feeling is that ICES advice does not correlate with on the ground observations, and that Cefas surveys are too sporadic in order to accurately account for abundance. Fishers want to be able to fill in the gaps in order for management decisions to be dynamic as required rather than fixed for a long time, leading to closures/tight restrictions for certain species which erodes their market value.

Summary of 7d commercial stakeholder engagement

Engagement in ICES area 7d was undertaken during 15 and 16 November.

Stakeholders from the commercial fishing industry were invited to attend a series of drop-in sessions and quayside events through direct contact, social media posts, industry groups and website blogs. We held sessions in Shoreham, Rye and Dungeness, and spoke to a range of individuals such as vessel owners and industry group representatives. We introduced the Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP and asked them questions on the species that were most

Stakeholder Feedback: Nov-Dec 2023

important to them and the potential management measures they would like to see within the FMP. Feedback from the online sessions that commercial representatives attended has also been included in this section.

We summarised stakeholders' views into the following themes below:

Species

- The area is a mixed fishery, with thornback, undulate, and blonde rays prevalent.

FMP-specific issues

- Some stakeholders commented that ray is an important species and will be retained. Specifically, to satisfy the 5% bass bycatch requirement.
- Some stakeholders requested an evidence summary to be provided to enable deliberation over measures. This would then frame the discussion on how to build the FMP.
- Some stakeholders asked how the FMP has engaged with the EU, and the FMP approach to working with and managing catches across the UK-EU median.
- Some stakeholders highlighted that all rays landed are important. It is a mixed fishery, and the price is driven by the market.
- Some stakeholders commented that they never appear to catch dead rays; presumably this is due to high survivability.
- Some stakeholders stated that the unwanted carcass may be used after it is winged, but it is not generally caught explicitly for pot bait in this area. Recognition that some fishers may do this at certain times of year, i.e. Skate carcass used as crab fishers – over the winter.
- Some stakeholders stated that species stock seems quite good currently and fishers can catch their quota in a couple of days. Plenty of available skate/ray (specifically undulate) 3nm out. Quota limits need increasing.
- Some stakeholders stated that they do not use a lot of the available area to fish in.
- Issues with seal predation were raised.
- Some stakeholders highlighted that ray backs are important bait to potters.

Feedback on Proposed Management Measures

Harmonised Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

- There was general support for this measure. Some stakeholders highlighted that blonde ray (which can grow significantly bigger) may not have had a chance to spawn at the proposed reference size (which is based on the smaller thornback).
- Some stakeholders said that measuring MCRS will require training and guidance. They also suggested that there may be interpretation issues regarding different measurement methods
- Some stakeholders said that this could lead to a “winners and losers” scenario based on introducing two different measurement sizes depending on onboard processing practices.
- Some stakeholders highlighted the need to be aware of interaction between byelaws and exemptions for certain measures.

Maximum Conservation Reference Size (MaxCRS)

- Stakeholders generally disagreed with the need for this measure. Fishers wish to retain all large catch, especially those reaching end of lifecycle. Some stakeholders said that they would prefer an increase in a minimum size.
- Regarding ray boxes, it was highlighted that strong scientific evidence and buy-in from sector is needed. Some stakeholders said that voluntary measures may be play a part in this proposal.

Updated handling/ID/regulation guidelines

- Stakeholders supported guidelines on handling, ID and regulations. Some stakeholders suggested that a laminated sheet within the wheelhouse would be the best approach.

A lift in the ICES area 7.e small-eyed ray prohibition

- This proposal would be supported if backed up with scientific evidence.

Species-specific minimum and maximum CRS

- There was general support for this measure.

Species-specific TACs

- There was general support for this measure.

Spatiotemporal management

- There was mixed support for this measure, and it was suggested that any closures should be supported with scientific evidence.

Other management to support enhanced commercial markets

- This measure was supported by stakeholders. It was highlighted that processing costs remain a key barrier to good commercial value. Stakeholders highlighted that winging is a skill to and that fish shrink after processing. Transportation costs are also significant. Stakeholders commented that there is a need to make skates and rays a desirable species (e.g. TV chefs' involvement).

Measures to balance commercial and recreational needs

- There was general support for this measure.

Evidence requirements

- Stakeholders suggested that research is needed into skates and rays pot bait usage.
- Some stakeholders requested data on stock boundaries and species migration. Information is needed on the total take in the shared stock area (e.g. EU landings data), and how does this evidence to inform FMP management.
- Stakeholders said there is a need to gather evidence on undulate spawning. Undulate rays are present and spawning in 7d from March-September.
- Stakeholders said there is a need for historic landings data, going back 30-40+ years. The FMP should be based on this historic data.
- Stakeholders said that data is required on landings by size of wings.
- Stakeholders said that research is needed on the impact of large beamers impact on the whole ecosystem, including skates and rays species.
- Stakeholders said that more data is needed on the influence of market forces on

- catch and landing of skates and rays.
- Stakeholders said that to make informed decisions, the FMP requires biomass density and stock assessments to set future limits and make changes to stock.
 - Stakeholders suggested that tagging juveniles to understand movement was important.

Summary of 4c commercial stakeholder engagement

Engagement in ICES area 4c took place on 17 November and then from 5 to 7 December 2023.

Stakeholders from the commercial fishing industry attended a series of drop-in sessions and quayside events that were advertised through direct contact, industry groups and social media posts. The sessions were held in Whitstable, Harwich, West Mersea, Lowestoft, Wells and King's Lynn. A wide range of individuals such as vessel owners and industry group representatives were present. MMO introduced the Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP and asked them questions on the species that were most important to them and the potential management measures they would like to see within the FMP. Feedback from the online sessions that commercial representatives attended has also been included in this section.

Stakeholders' views have been summarised into the following themes below:

Species

- This area tends to be a mixed fishery.

FMP-specific issues

- Some stakeholders advocated engagement with MMO on the FMPs as this was an opportunity to help secure the future of the industry.
- Stakeholders commented that the species market price is low, and quota allowance is not sufficient, however, what catches fishermen do make is enough to keep them ticking over.
- Stakeholders commented that the proposed measures could make a difference, however the damage has already been done, similar to the herring issues in the 1980s.
- Stakeholders stated that skates and rays were plentiful in the past, however, the population now appears significantly less, including thornbacks. There is a general lack of species diversity. Biodiversity in the area is thought to be decreasing. Fishers feel there is nothing to catch in the area, generally only bass, which they are not allowed to catch. There is also a feeling that there is a more fundamental issue, i.e. in relation to the general stock health in the Thames Estuary area, and whether this is related to dredging in the Upper Thames.
- Seal predation is an issue. Comments were made that seals are reproducing at a high rate and the regional seal population is estimated at 75,000. Factoring in a seal's daily 7 kilogramme food intake equates to a significant number of fish.

- Stakeholders commented that the current MMO Quota management is better than it had been previously, however it needs to be quicker, i.e. more responsive. Fishermen have previously requested MMO to increase the skates and rays' quota, however it has not been increased. Subsequently, the abundance of the bottom feeding skates and rays has had an impact on other fish species, as they were effectively eating up the food source for other species. Fishers quoted the example of when they had reported a thriving seabass population, however MMO wouldn't lift the quota ban.
- Stakeholders would like to have data on EU vessel landings in the 6/12 nm zone. Fishermen commented that it would help if foreign vessels were excluded up to the 12nm line (as opposed to the current 6nm). It is felt that the EU vessels are fishing right up to the 6nm line; therefore, fish are being caught before they enter the 6nm area.
- Stakeholders stated they are feeling under pressure due to the various regulations related to the fishing sector, such as the recent requirement to inform the MCA of any vessel modifications. There is a feeling that fishers are very limited in what they are allowed to catch.
- Stakeholders felt they wished to be recognised as food producers, and the importance of that role highlighted. They felt that currently it can take too long for changes to happen, and that the fishing industry is experiencing difficulties due to the various factors.
- There were comments that spawning grounds are changing, e.g. in the Lowestoft area they have moved onto the sandbanks.
- Some stakeholders recommended that transport organisations should be included in the FMP development as transportation issues for fish around the country will impact many FMPs.
- Comments were made that any lack of fish on the ground is not due to overfishing but other factors e.g. Pulse fishing has had an impact on skate numbers.
- FMPs need to look at the socioeconomics of the fleets and the importance of FMP species on the inshore fleet.
- Stakeholders felt that there is currently a general lack of opportunity within the fisheries sector as an occupation. There are no bottom trawling opportunities, a lack of young people entering the sector, and no inshore fleet.
- It was suggested that government funding would be better used in funding a vessel decommissioning scheme.
- Some stakeholders highlighted that they are generally conservation-minded, and that they will not target small, juvenile fish.

Feedback on Proposed Management Measures

Harmonised Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

- There was broad support for this measure.

Maximum Conservation Reference Size (MaxCRS)

- This measure was not popular, it was felt that introducing a MaxCRS would have the effect of reducing the market price, as the larger rays fetch higher prices. There was a general feeling that this was not a viable measure, from a fishers' perspective.

Updated handling/ID/regulation guidelines

- There was support for this measure however fishermen highlighted that the guidance should be distributed to EU vessels, to ensure that they are abiding by UK rules.

A lift in the ICES area 7.e small-eyed ray prohibition

- No comments on this proposed measure.

Species-specific minimum and maximum CRS

- There was general support for this measure.
- Stakeholders were keen to highlight that they do in fact return juveniles when possible and that they appear to survive.

Species-specific TACs

- This measure was broadly supported. Comment was made that there needs to be incremental changes.
- Some stakeholders said it would be beneficial to have different quotas which recognise the seasonal nature of some fisheries. This would have the effect of have a better quota when certain fish are more saleable.

Spatiotemporal management

- There was mixed support for this measure.
- Close season consideration was more popular in some areas than others. Some stakeholders commented that this would not work in mixed fishery areas. It was highlighted that there are already spatial squeeze issues due to offshore windfarms, aggregate extraction and marine conservation areas. There is a feeling that the various conservation areas that had been introduced had not been beneficial to fishers and had created further squeeze on their sector.
- Stakeholders commented that differing species are targeted at different parts of the year, e.g. blonde ray is targeted June/July, and thornback is targeted throughout the year.
- Some stakeholders commented that the seasonal aspect appeared to have disappeared, and there needed to be studies into why the species was apparently no longer moving inshore.

Other management to support enhanced commercial markets

- There was general support for this measure, and stakeholders commented that there is a need for infrastructure to be put in place to support the industry.
- Some stakeholders commented that the price for skates and rays is the same, whether winged or whole.
- Stakeholders commented that wings are sent abroad, but not the remaining backs.
- Regarding any other market-related issues, summer heat is an issue and the need to transport catches to the market as soon as possible.
- It was agreed that development of a domestic market would be beneficial, the Brixham market was quoted as a good example.

Measures to balance commercial and recreational needs

- There was general support for this measure.
- Some stakeholders commented that there is a healthy recreational fishing sector in the area and no reports of conflict. However, some stakeholders commented that recreational anglers are allowed to keep their catch, such as bass. Due to the high number of recreational anglers in the region, this equates to approximately five tonnes. Conversely, commercial fishermen are only allowed a 5% bycatch allowance.

Evidence requirements

- It was raised whether MMO have any plans for commissioning consultancy-style work to address evidence gaps.
- Stakeholders enquired whether there was evidence on discards.
- The impact of windfarms on skates and rays needs to be explored.

Summary of 4b commercial stakeholder engagement

Engagement in ICES area 4b took place on 7 and 8 December 2023.

Stakeholders from the commercial fishing industry were invited to attend a series of drop-in sessions and quayside events through direct contact, social media posts, industry groups and website blogs. We held sessions in Bridlington, Hartlepool and North Shields, and spoke to a range of individuals such as vessel owners and industry group representatives. We introduced the Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP and asked them questions on the species that were most important to them and the potential management measures they would like to see within the FMP. Feedback from the online sessions that commercial representatives attended has also been included in this section.

We summarised stakeholders' views into the following themes below:

Species

- This area tends to be a mixed fishery.

FMP-specific issues

- FMP measures need to be adaptable and easy to change if they are not having the desired effect.
- Fishers want to preserve stocks for future generations.
- Fishers want to be able to use gill nets but cannot due to seal presence.
- There is a small bycatch of thornback ray in the area.
- .
- FMPs should highlight funding for organisations to gather evidence on management.

Feedback on Proposed Management Measures

Harmonised Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

- Stakeholders suggested that harmonizing MCRS outside the 6nm limit would have limited success if the reference size is different to the IFCA byelaws.

A lift in the ICES area 7.e small-eyed ray prohibition

- Stakeholders said there needs to be a careful lift, cannot just open up the fishery to everyone at once.

There were no comments made on any of the other proposed management measures.

Summary of recreational stakeholder engagement

On December 14 2023, two online webinars were held, during which stakeholders from the recreational sector were invited to share their views and ask questions regarding the proposed management measures. The first session was led by the MMO and included stakeholders from both recreational and commercial sectors, with the second session being hosted by the Angling Trust and aimed solely at recreational sea anglers.

On 18 December an in-person event was held at Poole, aimed at engagement with the recreational sector.

The views of commercial stakeholders who attended the MMO webinar have been included in the sections above.

Recreational stakeholders' views were summarised into the following themes below:

Species

- The most popular species for recreational anglers are thornback, blonde and undulate.

FMP-specific issues

- Recreational stakeholders highlighted the economic importance of match fishing and recreational sea angling more broadly.
- Concerns were raised that all species appear to be smaller in size now, and whether this is due to exploitation of the species.
- Recreational stakeholders commented that there has been a steep decline in the species generally. This has resulted in low charter boat bookings.
- Comments were made that FMPs generally have too much information and too many acronyms, and therefore not accessible.
- Comments were made that Defra appeared to be focussed on commercial value of the species, and not the recreational value. Comments were also made that FMPs are commercially focused and not enough emphasis is given to the recreational sector. Recreational anglers highlighted that by comparison, the Bass FMP appeals to the recreational sector.
- It was highlighted that rays tend to have decent survivability; therefore, consideration should be given to a measure whereby if ray landing value falls below a certain point, then landings become prohibited.
- Dymchurch in Kent was noted as an important recreational fishery for skates and rays.

Feedback on Proposed Management Measures

Harmonised Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS)

- There was support for this measure, however some recreational stakeholders highlighted that this should not be a permanent measure and should be explicit in the FMP that the harmonised cross-species MCRS would be temporary.
- Recreational stakeholders highlighted the different sizes between species, and the differing measuring method applied, e.g. wing to wing, and snout to tail.
- Recreational anglers suggested that there should be regulations to ensure that the species is landed whole.

Maximum Conservation Reference Size (MaxCRS)

- There was strong support and appreciation from recreational stakeholders for the MaxCRS. Anglers highlighted that this is an economic driver for angling economy and the measure protects the species. Recreational stakeholders felt there is a need to move away from recovery fisheries, to brood stock fisheries. Having a maximum landing size will enable the transition.

Updated handling/ID/regulation guidelines

- There was strong support for this measure, which would address concerns regarding poor fish handling, and there were comments that there should be national awareness campaigns, targeting occasional anglers.

A lift in the ICES area 7.e small-eyed ray prohibition

- Concerns were raised by the recreational sector for this measure, in particular the potential for the population to be targeted and overfished following any prohibition lift. There were also comments made that there should be a study on the impact of the closure on the species.

Species-specific minimum and maximum CRS

- This measure was generally supported by recreational stakeholders. Recreational stakeholders highlighted the different sizes between species, and the differing measuring method applied, e.g. wing to wing, and snout to tail.

Species-specific TACs

- This measure was supported by recreational stakeholders; however, comments were made that it should be clear in the FMP that this measure can only be achieved via international agreements.

Spatiotemporal management

- There was general support for this measure, however it was raised that more evidence is needed which supports spatio-fidelity for the species, as there was anecdotal evidence that the species does not exhibit this behaviour.

Other management to support enhanced commercial markets

- There was general support for this measure. It was highlighted that rays are generally absent from fish shop/restaurants.

Measures to balance commercial and recreational needs

- Recreational stakeholders are in support of this. The Angling Trust already doing work on this so FMP should align and enhance where appropriate.

Evidence requirements

- There was support for anglers to share their diary data with Cefas to help address recreational angling data gaps.
- There was broad support on measures to support and gain further data on the social/environmental aspects of recreational fishing.
- Request for evidence to indicate the current state of the stock and determine whether it is recovering/brood condition. Monitoring of recreational data is data poor, whereas commercial fishers are data rich.

Other issues raised

There were many other issues raised during the engagement that are currently outside the scope of the FMP. However, they have been passed on to the relevant MMO and Defra teams and are summarised below:

Other issues raised included:

- Issues with the Catch Recording App and the ability to record discards.
- MCA medical certificates and their impact on the industry.
- Dredging, particularly in relation to lower landings.
- Quota allocation for the inshore fleet should remain with the inshore vessels.
- Spatial squeeze.
- Lack of consultation engagement with fishermen on local marine developments.
- Individuals are sometimes reluctant to engage with RFGs due to others who attend and disrupt discussions.
- There has been a significant impact of spider crab on netting over the last year.
- Issues regarding ghost fishing.

Many of the topics above are discussed at the Regional Fishery Group meetings. This is the forum to discuss these points with government and scientists and fishers are welcome to attend these meetings in their regions.

Next steps

It is clear from engagement with stakeholders that there are concerns within the commercial and recreational fishing communities that the FMP should aim to address. The MMO will consider, and where appropriate include stakeholder feedback in the development of the draft Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP.

There will be further opportunities for stakeholders to comment on the draft FMP through an online survey that will run from December 2023 to January 2024 and the public consultation which will be launched in 2024, dates to be confirmed.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the FMP team if you have any further feedback.

Useful Information

MMO Contact Details

- Fisheries Management Plan Team: FMP@marinemanagement.org.uk
- Regional Fisheries Group Team:
regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk

Gov.uk pages

- MMO Southern North Sea and English Channel Skates and Rays FMP
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fisheries-management-plans-marine-management-organisation>
- Defra FMP website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fisheries-management-plans>