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Process evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay fisheries management measures: Final report

(MMO1406)



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**MMO1406: Process evaluation for the development of
Lyme Bay fisheries management measures: Final report
March 2024**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Following an increase in the quota and catch limits for Dover sole in Lyme Bay (ICES Area 7.e), issues were reported by commercial fishers including gear conflict, a decrease in the number and size of sole caught, and negative impacts on marine ecology. As such, the MMO took a collaborative approach to working with stakeholders to support the development of the management measures. This approach represented a new way of working for the MMO's Fisheries Management Team (FMT). Accordingly, the MMO commissioned ICF to undertake a process evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay sole fisheries management measures. The evaluation intended to capture lessons learned and support the MMO's future approach to collaborative fisheries management.

The following research questions were investigated:

- EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?
- EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?
- EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?

Methodology

Research was carried out between October 2023 and January 2024. It comprised:

- a review of documentation and data provided by the MMO and information published online relating to the Lyme Bay sole fishery
- qualitative interviews with the MMO team and external stakeholders involved in delivery of the collaboration activities, and with Lyme Bay stakeholders (including commercial fishers and a recreational angling representative)
- a survey with Lyme Bay stakeholders targeted by the collaboration activities
- an observation of a second MMO workshop on gear separation

There were two main limitations to the study:

- challenges engaging with commercial fishers who were targeted by the Lyme Bay collaboration activities, contributing to a low response rate to interview invites and the survey
- interviews being carried out before all new management measures were consulted on and released, which meant some stakeholders felt less able to pass judgment in some areas.

Findings

EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?

The engagement techniques that took place to develop the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures can be separated into three parts: pre-consultation, consultation implementation and post-consultation.

Pre-consultation activities comprised the Lyme Bay Steering Group, set up in 2021 to provide a platform for discussion with fishers, and pre-consultation interviews with commercial fishers, to gather qualitative feedback on the issues occurring in Lyme Bay.

Consultation implementation activities comprised in-person port visits to discuss online consultation questions with stakeholders, and an online consultation and activities to support its completion by stakeholders (e.g. through in-person sessions in ports and dissemination of hard copies of the consultation).

The post-consultation activity was a stakeholder workshop held in Plymouth to introduce proposed management measures, develop mutual understanding between stakeholders and allow the MMO to refine their proposed measures.

Factors helping implementation of the collaboration activities in Lyme Bay included the facilitation of offline participation (through in-person events and use of hard copies) to overcome technological barriers experienced by some fishers, holding one-to-one discussions and sessions in familiar locations which helped fishers feel more comfortable to express their opinion, and providing assistance with reading and writing to those who needed it. Additionally, use of an independent facilitator for the workshop was felt to demonstrate to fishers that the MMO were open to learning, and utilising the MMO coastal offices helped to reach fishers.

Factors hindering implementation included difficulties balancing conflicting stakeholder views during group discussions, inappropriate scheduling of some in-person sessions and arrangements made at short-notice, and issues with the framing of the consultation questions. The time commitment for stakeholders was identified as a possible deterrent to their participation, and there were considerations for the MMO around the resourcing required to implement the activities.

EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?

For the pre-consultation activities:

- No record of attendance at the Lyme Bay Steering Group meetings was available, but it was estimated by an MMO stakeholder that there were usually around 15 stakeholders (of an invite list of around 34) attending each meeting. This included commercial fishers and their representatives, internal MMO stakeholders and Defra representatives among others.
- 17 fishers were interviewed as part of the pre-consultation activities, from across five Lyme Bay ports.

For the activities undertaken as part of the consultation implementation:

- An estimated 15 stakeholders attended the in-person discussions about the consultation questions.
- 247 stakeholders (including 141 recreational anglers and 93 commercial fishers) responded to the consultation. 46 of these responses were handwritten submissions on hard copies of the consultation. 76 commercial fishers were engaged through the in-person engagement activities.

There were 30 spaces at the in-person post-consultation workshop, and ultimately 25 stakeholders attended. This included 14 commercial fishers of different gear types and their representatives.

The primary motive for participating in the collaboration activities was because stakeholders wanted to ensure their views and/or the views of their organisation was represented. The evaluation found that collaboration activities were largely effective in providing equal access to commercial fishers, given the involvement of those with different size vessels, using a variety of gear types, from different home ports. There were nevertheless some equal access considerations:

- the location of the Plymouth workshop was a deterrent to the attendance for some fishers (due to the time needed to get there and the travel cost), and not everyone felt able to fully participate due to concerns about how others might react to opposing opinions
- recreational anglers were not represented in some of the collaboration activities carried out.

There was limited data to indicate the extent to which those stakeholders participating in the collaboration activities constituted those who were harder-to-reach. However, it was noted that commercial fishers that struggled with technology were unlikely to find and complete a consultation held exclusively online. Likewise, contributing online was more challenging for those with low literacy and attainment levels and/or learning disabilities. Previous consultation activity would have been limited to the online public consultation, so it was likely the collaboration efforts in Lyme Bay helped to achieve greater representation.

EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?

Stakeholders were very positive about the MMO's engagement activities overall. They welcomed the additional routes to participation and were pleased to have an opportunity to engage with the MMO directly. However, stakeholders did not always feel they were listened to, and this sentiment was likely linked to lack of understanding about the legislative and policy constraints that the MMO operates under. Accordingly, there was mixed opinion about collaborating with the MMO again in the future.

From the perspective of the MMO delivery team, the evidence collected in the collaboration activities was useful, and had enabled them to test and refine the measures. Feedback collected from stakeholders was insightful, helping the MMO to understand the issues in Lyme Bay. Additionally, there was some positive evidence about the MMO's use of different sources of evidence to inform decision-making: by qualifying outcomes from stakeholder consultation with data from other sources, the views of fishers who were less vocal during the group collaboration activities were still accounted for. However, there were challenges in communicating this to stakeholders so they could understand the MMO's decision-making, which was felt to lack transparency. There were also challenges for the MMO in integrating the views of recreational anglers into decision-making.

The most effective consultation methods for commercial fishers were ultimately the in-person opportunities for discussion in their home ports, and the ability to provide handwritten responses to the online consultation. These activities negated the need for them to use technology, and enabled them to access support with reading and writing. In-person engagement also facilitated deeper discussion, strengthening the evidence based with which the MMO could make decisions. In the future, such events could be further improved with more even distribution of different stakeholder

types, arranging sessions for different groups (e.g. by gear type) and/ by using anonymous voting tools, to reduce animosity between stakeholders due to conflicting opinions. Holding events in accessible, familiar venues would also support the effectiveness of in-person activities.

Key learnings

There were four key learnings identified in the evaluation:

1. Alternative routes to stakeholder collaboration help to support greater participation.
2. The burden of collaboration activities on stakeholders may negatively impact participation.
3. Consideration should be given to location and structure of in-person collaboration activities.
4. Improving the transparency of decision-making will enhance the relationship between MMO and its stakeholders.

1 Introduction

This report presents the findings for the process evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay sole fisheries management measures. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) commissioned ICF to carry out the process evaluation.

1.1 Context

In 2017, the quota for Dover sole in Lyme Bay (ICES Area 7.e) roughly doubled (MMO, 2023a) and catch limits were increased (MMO, 2024b). Commercial fishers reported that this had led to an increase of vessels in the area, greater fishing activity and more competition for space. Some fishers reported gear conflict, a decrease in the number and size of sole caught, and negative impacts on marine ecology (MMO, 2023a). In response to these concerns, the MMO began collecting evidence to understand the social, economic and ecological scale of the problem. This included commissioning reports and collaborating with local stakeholders.

A collaborative approach was taken to the development of the management measures, with the MMO working with stakeholders. This approach represented a new way of working for the MMO's Fisheries Management Team (FMT). Accordingly, the process evaluation intended to capture lessons learned and support the MMO's future approach to collaborative fisheries management.

1.2 Evaluation objectives

The process evaluation investigated the following research questions:

EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?

- What engagement techniques were used and how were they delivered?
- What factors helped or hindered implementation and how could these be enhanced/addressed?

EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?

- What level of participation was achieved through each activity?
- Did the activities provide equal access to all groups and achieve a balanced participant sample?
- Why did people (not) participate?
- How effective were the activities at achieving participation by harder-to-reach stakeholders and why?

EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?

- Do stakeholders feel like they had the opportunity to voice their opinions, feel listened to and that were able to have an impact, consider the process to have been transparent, feel accountable or (more) supportive of the final management proposals, motivated to continue to participate in any future collaborative exercises on management implementation? Why, why not?

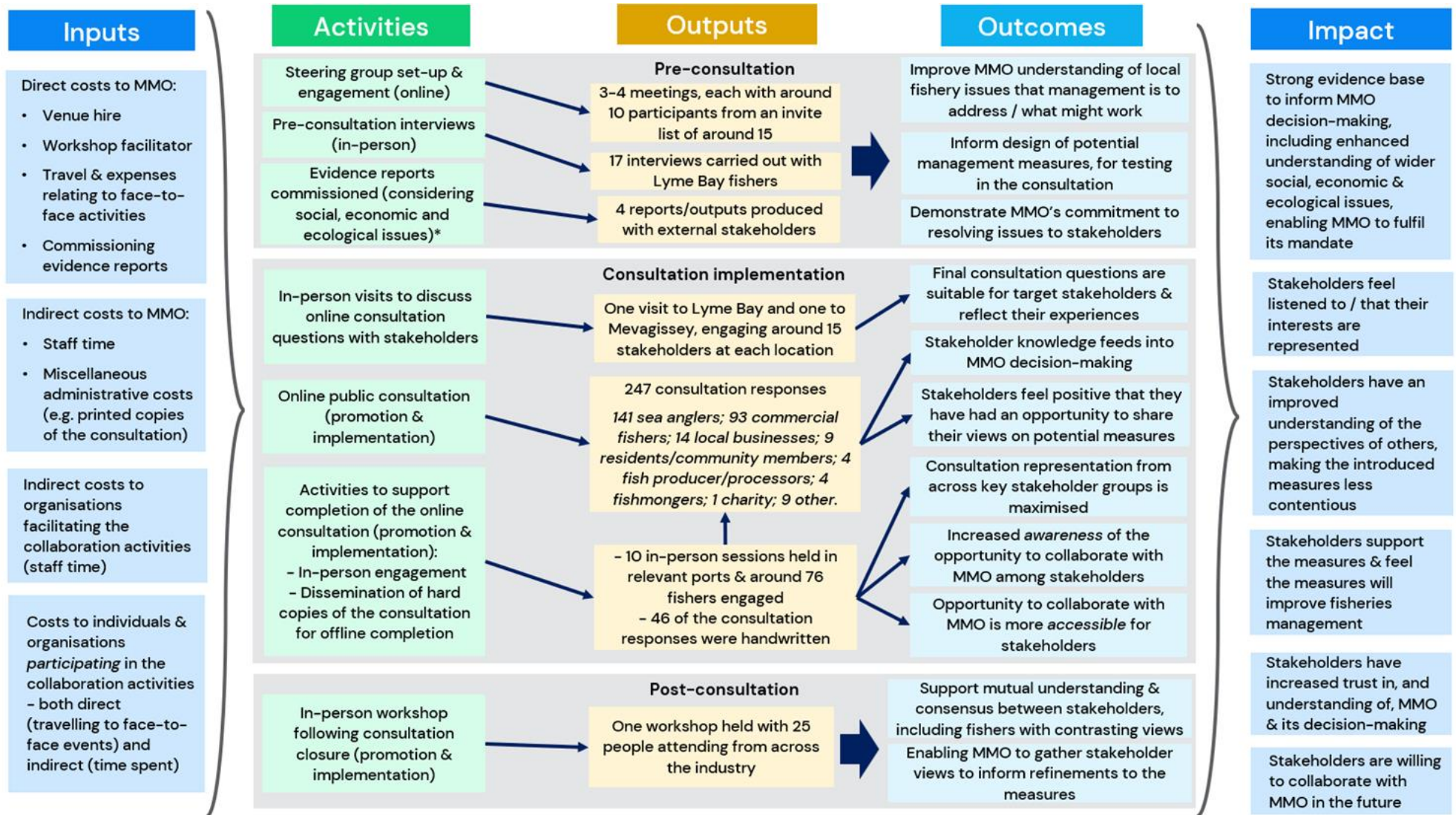
- Does the MMO think that they received useful experiential evidence and information that enabled them to develop, test and refine their understanding of the situation and the proposed management measures? Why, why not?
- Do some consultation techniques appear to have been more effective than others and why?

1.3 Theory of Change

Theories of Change set out how an intervention is expected to achieve its outcomes (HM Treasury, 2020). The Theory of Change for this process evaluation has been informed by key informant interviews with the MMO and focuses specifically on the **stakeholder collaboration** activities undertaken by them. It sets out the investment into the activities (including direct and indirect costs), the activities and stakeholders that were reached through these activities, and the expected outcomes and impacts of these activities. This informed the development of the evaluation matrix and corresponding research tools, to test the extent to which these outcomes and impacts were reached.

The Theory of Change is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



*While the evidence reports did not directly involve stakeholder collaboration, they informed the subsequent consultation

1.4 Evaluation matrix

The evaluation matrix sets out the indicators that were used to respond to each evaluation question, and the data sources informing these indicators.

Table 1: Evaluation matrix

EQ	Sub-EQ	Indicators	Desk research	Stakeholder survey	Interviews
EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?	What engagement techniques were used and how were they delivered?	Number and type of stakeholder collaboration activities undertaken by the MMO	x		Delivery team
	What factors helped or hindered implementation and how could these be enhanced/addressed?	Delivery team views on factors that helped/hindered implementation & how they could be addressed			Delivery team
EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?	What level of participation was achieved through each activity?	Number and type of stakeholders participating in each stakeholder collaboration activity	x		
	Did the activities provide equal access to all groups and achieve a balanced participant sample?	Extent to which target stakeholder groups were reflected in participation in the collaboration activities	x		
		Delivery team views on extent to which views of different target stakeholder groups were captured through the collaboration activities			Delivery team
		Stakeholder satisfaction with the collaboration activities they participated in		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Stakeholder motivations for (not) participating in each stakeholder collaboration activity		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
	How effective were the activities at achieving participation by harder-to-reach stakeholders and why?	Delivery team views on extent to which stakeholder collaboration activities facilitated participation by target stakeholder groups			Delivery team
		Views on the extent to which target stakeholder groups were aware of the collaboration activities			Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Stakeholder views on ease of participating in the collaboration activities (accessibility)		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives

EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?	Do stakeholders feel like they had the opportunity to voice their opinions, feel listened to and that were able to have an impact, consider the process to have been transparent, feel accountable or (more) supportive of the final management proposals, motivated to continue to participate in any future collaborative exercises on management implementation? Why, why not?	Extent to which stakeholders feel positive about the collaboration activities undertaken by the MMO & the opportunity to share their views		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Stakeholder views on the extent to which the collaboration activities supported mutual understanding between stakeholders		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Extent to which stakeholders felt the consultation process was transparent			Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Stakeholders feel listened to / that their interests are represented as a result of the collaboration activities		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Extent to which collaboration activities have fostered stakeholder trust and understanding in the MMO and its decision-making			Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Extent to which stakeholders support / have confidence in the proposed measures		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
		Extent to which stakeholders are willing to / feel positive about collaborating with the MMO in the future		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives
	Does the MMO think that they received useful experiential evidence and information that enabled them to develop, test and refine their understanding of the situation and the proposed management measures? Why, why not?	Delivery team insight into how information collected from each activity was used			Delivery team
		Delivery team views on the extent to which data obtained supported MMO understanding and decision-making			Delivery team

		Delivery teams views on the extent to which the collaboration activities enabled a strong evidence based to be developed, including in relation to evidence on social, economic and ecological issues			Delivery team
	Do some consultation techniques appear to have been more effective than others and why?	Stakeholder & delivery team views on individual consultation activities		x	Stakeholders/ stakeholder representatives & Delivery team
		Extent to which stakeholders were engaged through different consultation activities	x		

2 Methodology

The findings presented in this report were informed by research conducted between October 2023 and January 2024. Research comprised a document and data review, qualitative interviews with the wider delivery team and Lyme Bay stakeholders, observation of an MMO stakeholder workshop, and a survey targeting Lyme Bay stakeholders.

The initial document and data review and exploratory interviews (discussed in Section 2.1 and 2.2) informed the development of the Theory of Change, the evaluation matrix and stakeholder mapping. The stakeholder mapping identified stakeholders targeted by the collaboration activities and their participation in the activities - these findings are set out in Section 4 in relation to EQ2 on participation. The mapping also fed into an interview targeting strategy (provided in Annex 4).

2.1 Document and data review

The evaluation team reviewed relevant documentation and data provided by the MMO, alongside information published online in relation to the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures and collaboration activities. This included:

- evidence reports commissioned by the MMO from Cefas, Natural England, Southern IFCA and Seafish
- materials relating to delivery of the collaboration activities (for example, the communications plan and the poster advertising port visits)
- outputs relating to the collaboration activities undertaken by the MMO (for example, the consultation results and summaries of interview findings)
- outputs relating to the MMO's decision-making on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures.

2.2 Interviews

Exploratory interviews were carried out with **three** key members of the MMO team involved in delivery of the collaboration activities in October 2023. The purpose of these interviews was to understand the collaboration activities that were delivered and the stakeholders involved.

A further **eight** interviews were carried out with members of the delivery team and external stakeholders supporting delivery, to gather their views on the effectiveness and implementation of the collaboration activities. These were:

- two Principal Fisheries Managers (PMOs), including the PMO for quota management who led on the collaboration activities who had also been interviewed during the exploratory phase
- a staff member in the MMO Regional Fisheries Group (RFG) team.
- a Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO) for Lyme Bay
- a Senior Marine Officer and a Marine Officer based in a port within Lyme Bay.
- the workshop facilitator (external to the MMO) who led the post-consultation workshop in Plymouth
- a senior leader at the MMO

- academic experts who supported the MMO to use a tool that helped to assess the acceptability of trade-offs in marine management.

Four telephone interviews were carried out with Lyme Bay stakeholders:

- a representative body for fishers in Lyme Bay (Lyme Bay Fisherman's CIC)
- a representative body for recreational angler
- one commercial fisher (static gear) based in a port within Lyme Bay
- one commercial fisher (mixed gear) based in a port within Lyme Bay

One representative body for fishers that was invited to interview declined to participate, but their explanation for their decision was incorporated in the analysis for this report.

The topic guides used for interviews are provided in Annex 2.

2.3 Survey

A survey was carried out targeting stakeholders in Lyme Bay. The survey intended to gather views on the collaboration activities they had participated in and the effect of these activities on their opinions.

The survey was hosted on ICF's survey platform, Qualtrics, and disseminated by the MMO to:

- members of the Lyme Bay Steering Group
- stakeholders who completed the consultation and,
- stakeholders who attended the post-consultation workshop in Plymouth
- commercial fishers who had caught 7e sole from Catch App data
- the MMO's weekly fishing newsletter.

Additionally, the MMO promoted the survey in their weekly fishing newsletter.

In total, 17 Lyme Bay stakeholders completed the survey. Of these, seven were commercial fishers (and their representatives), and 10 were recreational sea anglers. The survey took an average of seven minutes to complete.

The survey questions are provided in Annex 2 and the summary of survey results is provided in Annex 3.

2.4 Observation

An observation visit of a second workshop on gear separation, held on 31 January 2024 in Lyme Regis (MMO, 2024a) was carried out. There were 32 stakeholders in attendance, including commercial fishers and their representatives, and a recreational angling representative. There was representation from all gear types fishing in Lyme Bay.

The purpose of the observation was to gather information about how stakeholders collaborated with the MMO. While the focus of the workshop was on addressing gear conflict, it included a discussion about how the MMO communicates with stakeholders. At the end of the workshop, ICF held short discussions with the independent workshop facilitator and two commercial fishers to gather additional insight.

2.5 Limitations

There were two main limitations to the study.

Firstly, there were challenges engaging with commercial fishers targeted by the collaboration activities in Lyme Bay to obtain their views. Efforts made to reach them included:

- invitation emails sent by the MMO¹ to everyone that participated in the online public consultation, inviting them to take part in the survey and/or an interview
- offering stakeholders the opportunity to be interviewed over the phone or in-person in invitation emails
- use of a snowball sampling approach, whereby the MMO and ICF requested assistance from representative bodies and from interviewees during interviews to identify other relevant stakeholders
- follow-up emails sent by ICF and the MMO in cases of non-response
- attending the workshop event in Lyme Bay held by the MMO with printed copies of the survey

While these efforts did facilitate data collection to some extent, there were additional barriers that likely contributed to the low response rate:

- the significant consultation activity relating to other areas of fisheries policy which was ongoing during the fieldwork period of the study, which meant stakeholders may have felt fatigued by requests for engagement
- the focus of the study – one fisher was critical about the request to share their views on previous consultation activities, given the burden of other consultations they were expected to participate in.

Given the low response rate from commercial fishers, the findings in this report may disproportionately reflect the experiences of the delivery team and external stakeholders that supported delivery of the collaboration activities. As such, the interviewee type is specified in relation to findings from interviews.

The second limitation was that interviews were conducted before all of the new management measures were consulted on and released. This meant some stakeholders felt less able to pass judgment in some areas, as they wanted confirmation on the actions the MMO were taking as a result.

¹ Due to data protection restrictions, the MMO were unable to share any personal data with ICF unless stakeholders provided explicit permission for them to do so.

3 EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?

This section sets out the activities that took place to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and stakeholder views on the factors that helped or hindered delivery.

3.1 What engagement techniques were used and how were they delivered?

The engagement techniques that took place to develop the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures can be separated into three parts: pre-consultation, consultation implementation and post-consultation. This is illustrated in the Theory of Change (Figure 1: Theory of Change), alongside the intended outcomes of each activity.

3.1.1 Pre-consultation

The pre-consultation engagement techniques comprised the Lyme Bay Steering Group and pre-consultation interviews. Evidence reports were also commissioned. Together, the expected outcomes of the pre-consultation activities were to:

- improve the MMO's understanding of local fishery issues that management measures were to address, including what measures could work;
- inform the design of potential management measures, so they could be tested during the consultation phase; and,
- demonstrate the MMO's commitment to understanding and acting on these issues to stakeholders.

Lyme Bay Steering Group

The Steering Group was originally set up in 2021, before a decision had been made to introduce fisheries management measures for sole in Lyme Bay. The original purpose of the Steering Group was to provide a platform for discussion with fishers, including on potential voluntary measures that could be implemented in Lyme Bay to address the issues that were being raised (see Section 1). However, it became clear that it was not going to be possible to obtain agreement on such voluntary measures given the differences in opinion and frustration expressed by those that were part of the group. This led to the subsequent steps to collaborate with stakeholders in the design of regulatory measures.

The Steering Group met online. A record of each Steering Group session was not available, but a delivery team member estimated that the Group met between three and four times over the course of developing the Lyme Bay management measures.

Pre-consultation interviews

The in-person interviews with Lyme Bay commercial fishers were carried out by the MMO staff members in Axmouth, Lyme Regis, West Bay, Brixham and Mevagissey in 2022. The interviews gathered qualitative feedback on the issues occurring in Lyme Bay from fishers and incorporated a short survey element. They were intended

to improve the MMO's understanding of the challenges in Lyme Bay raised by the Steering Group.

3.1.2 Consultation implementation

The consultation implementation activities comprised: in-person visits to discuss online consultation questions with stakeholders, the online consultation itself, and in-person visits to encourage stakeholders to complete the online public consultation when it launched.

In-person visits to discuss online consultation questions

The purpose of the in-person visits to discuss the consultation questions was to ensure the content of the consultation was suitable for target stakeholders and reflected their experiences.

There were two in-person visits to discuss the online consultation questions with stakeholders. One of these took place in Lyme Bay, and the other in Mevagissey. The MMO also shared the consultation questions with the Steering Group to gather their feedback. This contributed to finalising the online consultation.

Online consultation and activities to support its completion

The intention of the online consultation and supporting activities was primarily to ensure stakeholder knowledge and opinions informed the MMO decision-making on management measures in Lyme Bay. It was expected that stakeholders would feel positive about having had an opportunity to share their views on future measures. Additionally, the activities to support its completion were intended to:

- maximise representation from key stakeholder groups in the consultation
- increase stakeholder awareness of the opportunity to collaborate with the MMO
- make the opportunity to collaborate with the MMO more accessible for stakeholders.

The online consultation took place between March and May 2023. It contained questions covering: (i) the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the sole fishery; (ii) characteristics of commercial fishers; and, (iii) opinions on potential management measures, their area of implementation and any other suggestions for management (MMO, 2023a).

To support completion of the online consultation, the MMO carried out ten in-person sessions in ports where Lyme Bay sole was landed. During these in-person sessions:

- fishers were encouraged to complete the online consultation (with assistance from an MMO staff member where appropriate)
- hard copies of the consultation were disseminated for fishers to complete offline if they wished
- fishers had an opportunity to verbally share their views with the MMO

In addition, the MMO's coastal offices were engaged to facilitate the dissemination of hard copies of the consultation to fishers in their locality. Some coastal offices were also used for hosting the in-person sessions with stakeholders.

3.1.3 Post-consultation

After the online consultation was complete, a workshop was carried out.

Post-consultation workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Introduce the proposed management measures and develop mutual understanding between stakeholders where there were contradictory opinions (to help foster consensus where possible, the workshop began by illustrating commonalities across stakeholder groups).
- Enable the MMO to gather stakeholder views to inform refinements to the measures.

The workshop was held in-person in Plymouth. The location was chosen for being central and accessible by public transport, to facilitate attendance from both fishers for whom Lyme Bay was their home port and from visitors (those with home ports outside of Lyme Bay). The workshop was delivered by an independent facilitator.

At the time of reporting, MMO's work with stakeholders in respect of the Lyme Bay sole fishery was continuing. Although not within scope of the collaboration activities subject to evaluation, this had included a second workshop held in Lyme Regis in January 2024.

3.2 What factors helped or hindered implementation and how could these be enhanced/addressed?

Factors identified as either helping or hindering implementation were primarily based on the perspectives of the delivery team, due to the limited feedback received from Lyme Bay stakeholders.

3.2.1 Factors helping implementation

The following factors were identified as helping implementation:

Facilitating 'offline' participation in the collaboration process

Both the delivery team and interviewed Lyme Bay stakeholders recognised that some commercial fishers struggled with technology, creating a barrier to their participation in online meetings or completing online consultations. Offering in-person opportunities to provide feedback and the ability to provide a handwritten response to the consultation was therefore seen as essential to gathering the perspectives of this group.

Offering one-to-one opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback

It was noted by the delivery team and one stakeholder, and in the Lyme Bay Port Visits document (MMO, 2023b), that some stakeholders felt uncomfortable about sharing their views in larger groups – online or offline. Offering the option to speak with an MMO representative one-to-one helped to address this and ensure their views were still captured (for example, in the pre-consultation interviews and in the activities to encourage consultation participation).

Providing assistance with reading and writing

Some fishers struggled with their reading and writing skills, making participating in consultations difficult. One delivery team member who supported an in-person session described supporting a fisher with dyslexia by reading out the consultation questions to them and writing down their answers. Without this assistance, it was unlikely the fisher would have participated.

Collaborating with stakeholders in settings familiar to them

The delivery team felt commercial fishers were more open and willing to share their views in-person, and in settings where they were comfortable. It enabled the team undertaking the activities with fishers to build rapport, and therefore gather more detailed information. One delivery team member felt fishers were better able to express themselves fully, which they may feel less confident about in unfamiliar settings, or when speaking to someone over the phone or online.

Use of an independent facilitator

Some members of the delivery team noted that use of an independent facilitator had demonstrated to fishers that the MMO were open to learning and were not there to promote a particular agenda, helping to put them at ease. One stakeholder commented that the facilitator's expertise was important in ensuring the workshop was well-run and achieved its objectives, particularly when it came to managing those attendees who were more vocal and ensuring everyone had an opportunity to contribute.

Working with the MMO coastal offices

One delivery team member commented that use of the coastal offices was valuable: local Marine Enforcement Officers (MEOs) were familiar with local fishers and could therefore assist with the dissemination of hard copies of the consultation and inviting fishers to in-person events.

Group discussion

While group events did not suit all stakeholders, they did expose stakeholders to the opinions of others. Some of those in the delivery team felt this had led to interesting discussions between stakeholders, including those who may not typically interact, which may have helped them to better understand one another's perspectives. Group discussions were also thought to be a cost-effective approach, as they enabled the MMO to gather a range of views in a relatively short space of time. However, there was an associated risk of group discussion whereby some stakeholders were more vocal than others – despite efforts made by facilitators. One stakeholder felt providing an opportunity at the end of a group discussion for stakeholders to share their opinions with the MMO privately would help to ensure everyone had equal opportunity to share their point of view.

3.2.2 Factors hindering implementation

Balancing conflicting views during group sessions

Stakeholders and a few members of the delivery team that attended the workshop noted that some attendees were more vocal than others and were disparaging of alternative opinions. They felt this was intimidating to some stakeholders, with one stakeholder saying that some of their peers did not necessarily want to answer honestly. One stakeholder felt non-sector fishermen were not as well represented as the over-10s, while another felt more representation from recreational anglers was needed. A few stakeholders using static gear felt they were at greater risk of retaliation as a result of publicly stating their views than those with mobile gear, as their equipment was not permanently attached to their vessel and was therefore vulnerable to damage.

Scheduling of in-person sessions

Stakeholders stressed that the MMO needed to be considerate about when in-person events or sessions were held. If fishers had an opportunity to be at sea, they would take it. This would mean they were unable to participate. One stakeholder stated that it was disrespectful to hold events during the day unless fishermen were paid to attend. Another said that *“the MMO [staff] are getting paid to be at meetings, but a fisherman has lost his money”*. A delivery team member suggested the MMO should be flexible and engage with coastal offices about the best times to visit.

Time required for stakeholders to contribute

Contributing to the various collaboration activities required time from stakeholders that took part. This time commitment was particularly notable for those contributing to multiple collaboration activities as part of the Lyme Bay work. In addition, there have been further demands on stakeholder time from other consultations on other areas work. One stakeholder expressed frustration about the volume of consultations from the MMO on various issues, which they felt had not achieved anything and had deterred them from taking part in future consultations. Steps to minimise the burden of collaboration activities on respondents may help to avoid such negative reactions from stakeholders.

Resourcing the implementation of collaboration activities

A few delivery team members noted the additional time commitment required from the MMO staff to carry out some of the collaboration activities. In particular, undertaking port visits was time consuming as it required staff to travel to different locations. There were also the associated costs of staff travel. This was not perceived to be cost-effective where attendance from fishers was low. Additionally, handwritten responses to the consultation had to be manually added to the final consultation data, which was also time consuming. The MMO therefore need to weigh up the benefits of undertaking such activities with the corresponding costs.

Challenges with the consultation questions

A few stakeholders felt there had been issues with the consultation questions, despite the work undertaken to design them in collaboration with stakeholders. One stakeholder stated that the consultation questions were too leading and did not allow a full breadth of opinion to be expressed. A delivery team member reported having to explain the questions to fishers and felt they could have been more straightforward.

Arrangements being made at short notice

In some cases, arrangements for in-person port visits were made at short notice. This was challenging for the relevant MMO coastal office tasked with promoting the sessions, as fishers would not necessarily be available or they struggled to reach them in time.

Raising awareness about the activities among fishers in smaller ports

One delivery team member noted that it was challenging to engage fishers of smaller vessels in smaller ports, and felt some may have been missed during the in-person visits. They suggested work was still needed to identify the best routes to reaching this group.

4 EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?

This section sets out the participation achieved through each of the collaboration activities that took place in Lyme Bay, as well as stakeholder views on whether the activities provided equal access to different stakeholder groups. It also explores reasons for participation, and assess the effectiveness of the activities in achieving participation of harder to reach stakeholders.

4.1 What level of participation was achieved through each activity?

4.1.1 Pre-consultation

Lyme Bay Steering Group

The Steering Group was adjacent to the South West Regional Fisheries Group (RFG), in that members of the RFG were invited to participate. The Steering Group had an invite list of around 34 stakeholders. These included:

- 14 fishers, with representation from both fixed and mobile gear, and from fishers with home ports within and outside of Lyme Bay
- nine internal MMO stakeholders, including the South and South West Principal Operations Officers (PMOs), the South West RFG Lead, and representation from the Fisheries Management, Sustainable Fishing, Coastal Operations, and Evidence and Evaluation teams
- four Defra representatives, including those focused on fisheries management plans (FMPs)
- two Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) representatives
- four scientific experts (two from the University of Plymouth and two from Cefas)
- a representative from the Lyme Bay Fisherman's Community Interest Company (CIC)
- a representative from Blue Marine Foundation

No record of attendance at the Steering Group meetings was available, but it was estimated by an MMO stakeholder that there were usually around 15 stakeholders attending each meeting.

Pre-consultation interviews

Fishers were identified to take part in the pre-consultation interviews through sole landings data via the CatchApp. All those that had caught sole in Lyme Bay were invited to participate. In total, 17 fishers were interviewed across the ports of Axmouth, Lyme Regis, West Bay, Brixham and Mevagissey. Most of these used fixed nets (88%, while 12% used mobile gear) and there was a mixture of those registered to a home port in Lyme Bay (65%, while 35% were registered to a home port outside of Lyme Bay) (MMO, 2022).

4.1.2 Consultation implementation

The consultation implementation activities comprised in-person visits to discuss online consultation questions with stakeholders, alongside the online public consultation itself and activities to encourage stakeholders to complete it.

In-person visits to discuss online consultation questions

The MMO engaged local stakeholder organisations with knowledge of the Lyme Bay and Mevagissey ports where the visits were carried out to identify the best time of day to visit, and to assist in promoting the visit to fishers. Data on stakeholder participation in the visits was not available. However, a delivery team member estimated 15 stakeholders attended each session.

Online consultation and activities to support its completion

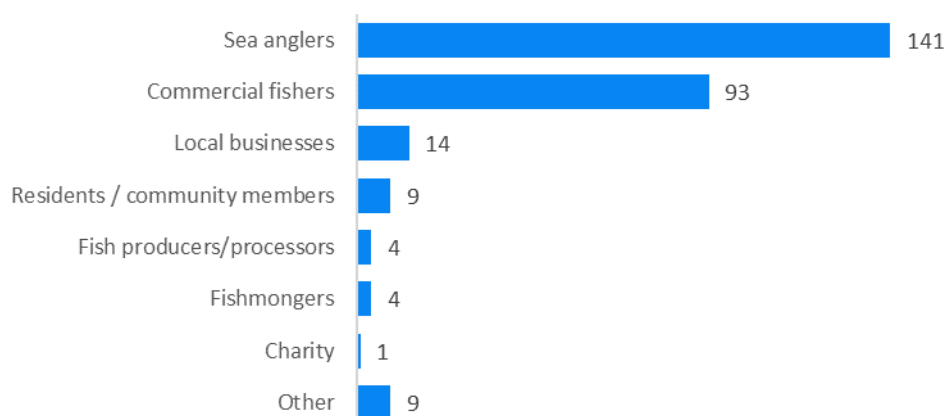
The consultation and corresponding in-person activities were promoted through:

- the Steering Group, the South West 7efg RFG, MMO’s coastal offices, IFCAs and the Lyme Bay Fisherman’s CIC, who were encouraged to disseminate the consultation to their networks/ mailing lists
- social media posts
- the MMO’s weekly fishing newsletter
- fishing News magazine
- a poster containing a QR code for fishers to scan to complete the consultation online, and dates and locations of the in-person sessions. The poster was sent to MMO’s coastal offices with a request that they put them up in a location visible to fishers.

In total, there were 247 responses to the consultation. Of these, 46 responses were handwritten submissions on hard copies of the consultation (MMO, 2023c). While the types of stakeholders that provided these handwritten submissions was not recorded available, it is highly probable that they were from commercial fishers (as this is who the hard copies were disseminated to).

The distribution of stakeholders that took part in the consultation is shown in Figure 2.²

Figure 2: Consultation responses by stakeholder type



Source: MMO (2023c).

Among the 93 commercial fishers taking part in the consultation:

- 67% used fixed nets, 53% used hooks and lines, 37% used pots / traps, 26% used otter trawls, 11% used beam trawls and 5% carried out hand diving

² This question was multichoice, therefore there is some double-counting.

- 80% fished for sole in Lyme Bay, 10% fished for species in Lyme Bay other than sole, and the remaining 10% did not fish in Lyme Bay

The number of stakeholders attending the in-person engagement sessions held by the MMO to encourage consultation participation is set out below, in Table 2.

Table 2: In-person engagement sessions

Session location	Stakeholders engaged & consultations completed
Axmouth	6 fishers (consultation completes unknown)
Beer	3 fishers (2 consultations completed)
Brixham (visit 1)	12-15 fishers (7 consultations completed)
Brixham (visit 2)	3 fishers (consultation completes unknown)
Exmouth	4 fishers (no consultations completed on the day, verbal confirmation from 2 fishers that they planned to complete in future)
Lyme Regis	None
Mevagissey	40 fishers across two drop-in sessions (consultation completes unknown)
Plymouth	None
Poole	2 fishers / vessel owners (both had already completed the consultation online)
West Bay	6 fishers (2 consultations completed)
Weymouth	None
Total	76 stakeholders engaged

4.1.3 Post-consultation

Post-consultation workshop

All stakeholders that responded to the consultation were invited to attend the workshop. Steering Group members were also invited. As the initial response was low, targeted emails were subsequently sent to key stakeholders to ensure there was representation from across the industry.

There were 30 spaces in the workshop available. It was ultimately attended by 25 stakeholders. Attendees comprised (3KQ, 2023):

- seven netters (three local, three visitors, one representing both local and visitor vessels)
- five trawlers (two local, three visitors)
- one net and trawl visitor
- one beam trawl / dredge representative – offshore fleet
- two anglers
- Lyme Bay Fishermen’s CIC representative
- Blue Marine representative

- Devon and Severn IFCA representative
- four MMO stakeholders
- two scientific experts.

4.2 Did the activities provide equal access to all groups and achieve a balanced participant sample?

Findings from qualitative interviews suggest the collaboration activities were largely effective in providing equal access to commercial fishers, who were the primary focus of the collaboration activities. Inputs were gathered from fishers of different size vessels (under 10m and over 10m), using a variety of gear types, and from various home ports (including those with home ports within Lyme Bay, as well as visitors). Members of the delivery team felt satisfied that the views of all key types of commercial fishers landing Dover sole from Lyme Bay were captured through the collaboration efforts.

Precise data to enable a direct comparison of consultation responses with landings data - for example, PLNs (port letters and numbers) to identify vessels, the home ports of commercial fishers or their associated Producer Organisation (PO) - was not captured in the collaboration activities. Nevertheless, a high-level comparison of 2022 landings data with data from the consultation shows:

- A total of 349 vessels landed Dover sole from Lyme Bay (Area 7.e) in 2022.
- Assuming the 78 commercial fishers reporting fishing for sole in Lyme Bay in the online consultation represent separate vessels, it would represent an estimated response rate to the consultation of 22%.
- However, these figures do not account for responses received from representative organisations of commercial fishers (as this distinction was not made in the online consultation). As it is known to the MMO that representative organisations did participate in the consultation, it is likely that a greater number of vessels are represented in the consultation results than is possible to calculate.

There were some additional equal access considerations in respect of the Plymouth workshop. Firstly, the location was a deterrent to attending among some fishers based in ports within Lyme Bay, due to the time it would take to get there and having to travel at their own cost. Secondly, while there was a variety of different commercial fisher types in attendance, it did not necessarily mean everyone felt able to participate fully due to concerns about how others in the room may react to opposing opinions (as discussed in Section 3.2).

Wider stakeholder groups were also encouraged to contribute through the online consultation, including recreational anglers, local businesses and businesses in the fishing sector. However, a stakeholder suggested recreational anglers had not been adequately consulted given the contribution they made to the local economy in Lyme Bay through tourism. They were not represented on the Steering Group, and had not been invited to shape the consultation questions. While a representative for recreational anglers did attend the workshop, it was felt that the opinions of commercial fishers were prioritised. It was suggested that the MMO would benefit from working with recreational anglers more closely in future collaboration activities,

noting that recreational fishing was listed alongside commercial fishing in the 2020 Fisheries Act.

Due to GDPR restrictions, it was not possible for the MMO to share identifying information of those participating in the collaboration activities with ICF. This meant it was not possible to distinguish the level of duplication across different collaboration activities (i.e. the number of stakeholders participating in multiple activities).

4.3 Why did people (not) participate?

Interviewed stakeholders reported having learned about engagement opportunities through word of mouth, from representatives on RFGs and fishers associations. One stakeholder thought they *“might have seen some posters”*.

The primary motive given for participating in the collaboration activities was because stakeholders wanted to ensure their views and/or the views of their organisation were represented (as indicated by 10 of the 12 survey respondents). In interviews, stakeholders emphasised that changes to fisheries management in Lyme Bay could directly impact themselves, their business or those they represented. Their willingness in taking part was therefore driven by their desire to protect their interests.

“[There was] a lot of fear on both sides that [fishers] were going to lose 50% of their livelihood; it would be useful to track motivation over time as collaboration becomes more embedded.”

Five survey respondents had not taken part in any of the collaboration activities (two commercial fishers and three recreational anglers). For four of these, it was because they did not know about the consultation. This was also reflected in some qualitative feedback, where stakeholders queried why they had not heard about some of the in-person collaboration activities despite believing they were on the MMO mailing lists. Similarly, when survey respondents were asked how they would like to hear about consultations that the MMO carry out in the future, they all stated that they would like to receive an email.

4.4 How effective were the activities at achieving participation by harder-to-reach stakeholders and why?

There was limited data to indicate the extent to which those stakeholders participating in the collaboration activities constituted those who were harder-to-reach. However, there were some positive examples suggesting the activities had achieved substantive participation from affected stakeholders in Lyme Bay.

As noted in Section 3.2, providing opportunities for stakeholders to participate offline, undertaking collaboration efforts in settings that were familiar to stakeholders, and providing assistance with reading and writing, were seen as instrumental to reaching those who would otherwise be less likely to contribute. These features were part of a new approach to consultation by the MMO - delivery stakeholders noted that, in the past, consultation activity would have been limited to the online public consultation. Had this been the case, it was unlikely the same representation would have been achieved, given the following barriers identified by the delivery team and echoed by two stakeholders:

- Commercial fishers who struggle with technology were unlikely to find and complete a consultation if it was held exclusively online.
- Those with low literacy and attainment levels and/or learning disabilities (such as dyslexia) were more limited in their ability to read and write, making it more challenging for them to express their views in an online consultation.

Some examples of successful efforts to increase stakeholder participation in the Lyme Bay collaboration activities were:

- Almost half (49%) of the public consultation responses obtained from commercial fishers were handwritten (from the hard copies of the consultation disseminated by the MMO to commercial fishers).
- Participation by a stakeholder with dyslexia who struggled with reading and writing. The individual was provided with assistance to complete the consultation by an MMO team member who read each question to them and wrote down their responses on their behalf.

5 EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?

This section assesses the effectiveness of the collaboration activities in Lyme Bay. It looks at the views of those stakeholders targeted to take part in the collaboration activities, as well as those stakeholders involved in delivering those activities. It also explores the extent to which the MMO felt they had received useful evidence, and assesses the usefulness of different activities that were undertaken.

5.1 Do stakeholders feel like they had the opportunity to voice their opinions, feel listened to and that were able to have an impact, consider the process to have been transparent, feel accountable or (more) supportive of the final management proposals, motivated to continue to participate in any future collaborative exercises on management implementation? Why, why not?

The expected impacts of the approach taken to stakeholder collaboration on stakeholders themselves were as follows:

- stakeholders feeling listened to, and that their interests were represented
- an improved understanding among stakeholders of the perspectives of others, making the introduced measures less contentious
- stakeholders supporting the measures and feeling they will improve fisheries management
- stakeholders having increased trust in, and understanding of, the MMO and its decision-making
- increased willingness among stakeholders to collaborate with the MMO in the future.

Overall, interviewed stakeholders were very positive about the MMO's engagement activities. They welcomed the additional routes to participation in the consultation offered by the MMO, particularly the quayside consultations. This gave them an opportunity to fully express their opinions, which were sometimes difficult for them to articulate in writing. This may have contributed to improving perceptions of the MMO among some fishers:

"[It's a] big shift in the MMO, [there is a] lot more people willing to engage and listen".

"It's about working with people. Love the quayside visits."

The willingness of senior MMO staff members to visit ports in-person was appreciated, as it demonstrated the MMO's commitment to engaging with fishers and meant fishers could talk directly to decision-makers. A few members of the delivery team described the positive feedback they received from fishers following the consultation, feeling that relationships between the MMO and fishers were strengthened as a result. A fisher from the small port of Axmouth stated that in the past they would not have had the opportunity to engage with the MMO directly, and that it was important that the MMO understand local perspectives. They also

reflected that with greater engagement came the need to change their own behaviour:

“If [MMO] are willing to come here, and we talk in the right way, we will get our feelings heard... we need to be more engaging too. We can’t rant and rave any more. We might not be able to stop a decision, but we could make it less harmful [to us]”.

“All these senior people coming to ports now... [I do] believe we are being heard.”

Views on the extent to which stakeholders felt listened to were mixed. In the survey, one fisher agreed their views were listened to, but two disagreed and one was neutral. Recreational anglers were slightly more likely to agree (four agreed, two were neutral). In interviews, some stakeholders felt listened to, but others were more critical: one stakeholder stated that the MMO had taken the easiest management issues to address, rather than tackling those which were the main problem. They felt some of the trust gained during the consultation phase was lost due to a lack of transparency at the decision-making stage. This was somewhat reflected during the Lyme Regis workshop, where stakeholders wanted to better understand how the MMO were deciding upon management measures. Another stakeholder questioned why the socio-economic survey³ results were not published and had not made available on request:

“Do they think fishermen don’t understand, or are they trying to hide something?”

“Fishermen won’t believe that evidence has been used fairly unless there is transparency of results with people who took place as a bare minimum.”

This sentiment may be linked to a lack of understanding among stakeholders about the legislative and policy constraints which the MMO operates under and how evidence is used in decision making. One delivery team member reflected that, at a Fishing into the Future event, an explanation of the political and economic constraints was provided by a speaker. As this was something fishers did not usually hear, they felt it was *“really helpful.”* They speculated that the fishing industry may be less hostile with a better understanding of the decision-making context. Another delivery team member noted that, while the MMO’s decision document (MMO, 2023d) did set out how evidence was used, this was not necessarily well-advertised or accessible for fishers. Although some delivery team members and a stakeholder acknowledged that trust between fishers and the MMO could be improved through the collaboration efforts, it was also recognised that the MMO would need to demonstrate how these collaboration efforts fed into their decisions if trust was to be sustained into the future.

The extent to which the collaboration activities had impacted fishers support for the final management proposals was unclear. A few stakeholders felt the MMO had prioritised the views of some sectors over others. One delivery team member also felt there was a belief among some fishers that consultation efforts had no impact on the MMO’s final decisions. This too was linked to the perceived lack of transparency and communication to fishers around decision-making. One commercial fisher stated:

³ This feedback was likely referring to the trade-off analysis produced by University of Exeter (Phan et al., 2023).

“Those with biggest boats tend to win. The MMO need to have some courage to say enough is enough – they are not going to please everyone all the time.”

A delivery team member similar stated that:

“I’ve heard some fishers saying that ‘it’s well and good us telling them our opinions, but [the MMO] don’t listen in the end’.”

Interviewed stakeholders were ultimately still interested in collaborating with the MMO in the future, but views in the survey were more mixed: two fishers and three recreational anglers agreed that they felt positive about the prospect of collaborating with the MMO on fisheries management again in the future, but one fisher and one recreational angler disagreed. Three recreational anglers and one fisher were neutral on the subject.

5.2 Does the MMO think that they received useful experiential evidence and information that enabled them to develop, test and refine their understanding of the situation and the proposed management measures? Why, why not?

The expected impacts of the approach taken to stakeholder collaboration for the MMO were as follows:

- providing the MMO with a strong evidence base to inform their decision-making, including an enhanced understanding of wider social, economic and ecological issues
- enabling the MMO to fulfil their mandate as the national fisheries authority.⁴

As noted in Section 1, the collaborative approach taken in Lyme Bay represented a new way of working for the MMO’s FMT. Traditional approaches would have taken environmental factors into account (for example, from stock assessments and catch per unit of effort (CPUE)) as well as some economic data, but in Lyme Bay the MMO set out to take an ecosystems approach – a *“specific emphasis on balancing social, environmental, and economic parameters together”*, as defined by a delivery team member. This was important, as they did not necessarily all point towards the same solution. Another delivery team member stated that:

“The [management measures] are quite obvious on their own from an environmental point of view, but less obvious on the social and economic side of things.”

Accordingly, as part of the process to develop the management measures for the Lyme Bay sole fishery, the MMO commissioned evidence reports (as shown in the Theory of Change in Figure 1):

- Cefas were commissioned to evaluate the impact of increased fishing effort on common sole in Lyme Bay (Cefas, 2023)

⁴ The 2020 Fisheries Act set out a requirement for fisheries policy authorities to ‘take such steps as they consider appropriate to secure that the consultation draft is brought to the attention of interested persons’, with interested persons defined as ‘(a) any persons appearing to the fisheries policy authorities to be likely to be interested in, or affected by, the policies contained in the consultation draft, and (b) members of the general public’.

- the MMO worked with Southern IFCA to assess the amount of gear deployed and how it is marked, to understand gear conflict in Lyme Bay (MMO, 2023a)
- the MMO worked with Natural England to further develop an understanding of environmental impacts for consideration in the decision-making process (MMO, 2023e)
- the MMO worked with Seafish to produce an economic analysis of costs and profit for vessels catching Dover sole in Lyme Bay (MMO, 2023f).

The MMO subsequently worked with the University of Exeter to use their Marine Planning and Trade-off Analysis (MaPTA) tool (Fortnam et al., 2022), which assesses the acceptability of trade-offs in marine management. This enabled the MMO to triangulate the various sources of evidence gathered through the collaboration activities and evidence reports. Findings from use of MaPTA were compiled into a report analysing the impacts of different possible interventions (Phan et al., 2023).

Overall, the delivery team felt the evidence collected in the collaboration activities was useful, and had enabled them to test and refine the measures. Feedback collected from stakeholders was insightful and discussions had been fruitful in helping the MMO to understand the issues in Lyme Bay. They felt the right representation from across the Lyme Bay fishery was achieved. One delivery team member stated that it was unlikely the outcome would have changed, even if a greater number of people were consulted, as they had reached saturation point (i.e. by the time the collaboration activities were complete, the MMO had a comprehensive understanding of the views that of each stakeholder groups in Lyme Bay). This was echoed by another delivery team member:

“We got all the viewpoints we needed.”

The importance of using different sources of evidence to inform decision-making was demonstrated in respect of a proposed management measure to increase the mesh size of nets. This was widely accepted as an “easy win” for the MMO, as there was consensus among many stakeholders during the collaboration activities that this measure was needed. However, the MaPTA analysis showed that this would have the greatest negative economic impact on those fleets who were already struggling the most – particularly because other fleets were using nets with larger mesh sizes already. As such, the MMO did not take the measure forward. This was criticised by some commercial fishers: during the Lyme Regis workshop, for example, they questioned why the measure had not been taken forward given the perceived unanimous agreement from attendees at the prior Plymouth workshop. In a short discussion with one fisher afterwards though, they described how the measure would have negatively impacted them as the only net they used would have been prohibited. They did not feel comfortable pointing this out during the group discussion as they believed they would be criticised by others in the room. This demonstrated how, by qualifying the outcome of group discussions with data from other sources (through the MaPTA analysis), fishers who were less vocal during the group collaboration activities were still accounted for in the decision-making process.

However, the use of different evidence sources in decision-making also revealed some issues which may need future consideration. Firstly, there was a challenge for the MMO in communicating this approach to weighing up evidence effectively to stakeholders. This was clear from the questions from fishers during the Lyme Regis workshop regarding the proposed measure on mesh sizes, as well as other

questions and comments about the MMO's use of evidence: where to find the evidence that was used, why it was necessary, and the length of time it took for a decision to ultimately be made. One stakeholder was dubious about how social information from the online consultation was used and the extent to which it was accurate, stating *"I didn't take those questions seriously and for one answer I put in that 'it is in my heart and sole [sic]'"*. Addressing the perceived lack of transparency and communication to fishers around decision-making discussed in Section 5.1 may help improve fisher understanding of the MMO's rationale for this decision. One delivery team member suggested that the MMO could explore using the MaPTA tool directly with stakeholders, to create a more participatory decision-making process and giving them an increased understanding about how the MMO weighs up evidence. However, it was also acknowledged that it was yet to be tested in this way, so there was a risk that it could result in greater conflict and division between groups.

Another future consideration for the MMO is how to integrate the views of recreational anglers in their decision-making. There was a strong response from the sector to the consultation (57% of all responses were from recreational anglers), but this group have not been significantly represented in a policy context to date. However, as mentioned in Section 4.1, recreational fishing was listed alongside commercial fishing in the 2020 Fisheries Act, and the economic value of anglers to Lyme Bay was estimated at over £3.9 million a year (Phan, et al., 2023). Accordingly, an ecosystems approach to developing management measures may lead to an increase in the importance of recreational anglers as a stakeholder group. An approach to incorporating their views in MMO decision-making may therefore need to be considered when shaping future collaboration activities in Lyme Bay, as well as nationally.

5.3 Do some consultation techniques appear to have been more effective than others and why?

The most effective consultation methods for fishers were the in-person opportunities for discussion in their home port, and the ability to provide a handwritten response to the online consultation.

As noted in Section 3.2, engaging in-person and providing a handwritten response to the consultation negated the need to use technology. Fishers were more comfortable in settings they were familiar with, they could get support with reading and writing in-person if they required it, and they felt more able to express their opinions. While it was not possible to establish the number of fishers that went on to complete the consultation as a result of the in-person activities, some indication is provided by the number of handwritten contributions (as fishers were encouraged to complete these during the in-person sessions): of the 93 fishers ultimately taking part in the consultation, almost half (49%) of these responses were handwritten.

One delivery team member similarly noted the benefits of in-person engagement for the MMO. Where those involved in compiling evidence directly engaged with fishers, it improved their understanding by enabling deeper discussion. They felt this helped to strengthen the evidence base upon which the MMO made their decisions.

Despite these positives of in-person engagement, there were challenges. As is set out in Section 3.2, sometimes it was difficult to balance conflicting opinions in group

discussions. In turn, this could increase animosity rather than help stakeholders to understand one another's perspectives (as was an intended outcome of the collaboration activities – see the Theory of Change in Figure 1).

Two fixed gear fishers described being fearful of repercussions for voicing their opinions during workshops. Their nets contained identifying information to enable other boats to contact them, as a measure to avoid gear conflict. Nevertheless, they had experienced loss of their nets on several occasions, and they felt this was sometimes done intentionally by other vessels. As such, they felt being vocal in group settings could result in their nets being targeted maliciously by others in the room with opposing views. They stated that they would prefer to provide feedback to the MMO in a one-to-one setting, or in a group session with others using the same gear type, to minimise the perceived risk.

Stakeholders suggested this could be addressed with a more even distribution of different stakeholder types, to avoid discussion being dominated by a particular group. Alternatively, arranging initial sessions for each group (e.g. static gear, mobile gear) to understand their views could help the MMO understand the different perspectives and consider possible solutions before bringing everyone together. Use of electronic voting tools (such as Slido, or SurveyMonkey in advance of the session) would also be beneficial, to allow attendees to share their views anonymously. Two delivery team members felt the MMO would benefit from identifying stakeholders who could act as representatives for a specific group rather than having an open invite to everyone, to reduce the level of disruption caused by those unwilling to listen to others.

“[The MMO] needs to acknowledge there are bullies, people intimidating [others].”

Additionally, there was some discontent expressed with the location and venue of the post-consultation workshop. The workshop was held in a hotel in Plymouth, but fishers in Lyme Bay were critical of this, feeling that fishers visiting Lyme Bay from other ports should be willing to attend a workshop there too. The MMO also recognised that the formal hotel setting was not ideal for engagement with fishers, but there was a lack of alternative options. One stakeholder similarly noted that fishers preferred engaging in a more casual and conversational way, rather than being presented to. These challenges may have limited the effectiveness of the workshop, by limiting attendance from some fishers and impacting the type of feedback that was provided.

There was insufficient evidence to indicate the effectiveness of the Lyme Bay Steering Group. However, a delivery team member involved in setting up the Group stated that it proved difficult to reach any resolution to the issues through this route and that *“[fishers] were getting frustrated”*. In addition, the meetings were held online which can be a barrier to fishers (as noted in Section 3.2).

6 Conclusions and key learnings

6.1 Conclusions

Overall, the collaboration activities in Lyme Bay were implemented effectively and viewed positively by many stakeholders. There was evidence to suggest the activities were contributing to some of the desired impacts, but there were some challenges and considerations for future collaboration activities undertaken by the MMO.

The evaluation findings were also subject to some limitations. There were challenges engaging with commercial fishers, resulting in a low response to the survey and a smaller number interviews than originally intended. As such, the evaluation findings may disproportionately reflect the experiences of the delivery team. The interviews were also carried out before the new management measures were consulted on and released, which meant some stakeholders felt less able to pass judgment in some areas.

EQ1: Implementation: What activities occurred to inform the development of fisheries management measures in Lyme Bay, and how feasible were they to deliver?

A variety of stakeholder collaboration activities were delivered in Lyme Bay, including a Steering Group, in-person interviews and port visits, an online consultation and efforts to encourage fishers to respond to it, and a post-consultation workshop.

Allowing fishers in-person opportunities to share their views and provide handwritten responses to the online consultation helped those who struggled with technology. Offering one-to-one discussions and sessions in familiar locations helped fishers to feel comfortable to express their opinion, and providing assistance with reading and writing to those who needed it ensured they were able to take part. Use of an independent facilitator for the workshop was felt to demonstrate to fishers that the MMO were open to learning, and utilising the MMO coastal offices helped to reach fishers.

However, challenges in implementation included difficulties balancing conflicting stakeholder views during group discussions, inappropriate scheduling of some in-person sessions and arrangements made at short-notice, and issues with the framing of the consultation questions. The time commitment for stakeholders may be a deterrent to their participation, and there were considerations for the MMO around the resourcing required to implement the activities.

EQ2: Participation: What level of participation was achieved and why?

Overall, the collaboration activities appear to have supported greater stakeholder involvement in the design of management measures.

Findings suggested the primary motive for participating in the collaboration activities among stakeholders was to ensure their views were represented and their interests protected. The activities were effective in providing more equal access to commercial fishers than traditional (primarily online) consultation, with representation from different size vessels, in various home ports, using a variety of gear types. However, one stakeholder felt recreational anglers could have been more involved.

The activities did appear to have been successful in reaching hard-to-reach stakeholders – particularly those who were less confident in using technology, and those who struggled to read and write, who were unlikely to take part in the online consultation without the in-person activities and ability to provide a handwritten response.

Among the small number surveyed that did not participate, this was generally because they did not know about the consultation, and they hoped it would be circulated to them by email in the future.

EQ3: Effectiveness: How effective were the activities at fostering a collaborative, participatory process and why?

Lyme Bay stakeholders were also broadly positive about the effectiveness of the activities. The additional routes to participation, willingness of senior MMO staff members to visit ports, and the ability for stakeholders to express their opinions were praised. This may yield a possible reputational benefit for the MMO. Overall, the in-person activities were deemed most effective in maximising participation and strengthening the MMO's evidence base.

From the perspective of the MMO, the collaboration activities were highly effective in enabling them to gather useful evidence. Representation from across the Lyme Bay fishery was achieved and the MMO felt they understood the views of different groups in relation to the issues in Lyme Bay. By triangulating evidence from the collaboration activities with evidence reports, fishers who were less vocal during the group collaboration activities were still accounted for in the decision-making process.

However, there was uncertainty among stakeholders about the extent to which the MMO had listened to their views. Notably, the need to consider evidence from different sources meant that consensus reached in collaboration activities did not necessarily translate into the final management measures. This contributed to discontent among fishers. Ultimately, trust between fishers and the MMO may be improved through the collaboration efforts, but there was a perceived lack of transparency around MMO decision-making. If trust is to be sustained, the MMO would benefit from clearly communicating the process they have followed to reach their decisions to stakeholders.

6.2 Key learnings

There were four key learnings identified in the evaluation:

1. Alternative routes to stakeholder collaboration help to support greater participation.

In-person opportunities to provide feedback and dissemination of hard copies of the consultation helped to overcome technological and literacy barriers that may otherwise discourage stakeholders from participating in a strictly online public consultation exercise.

2. However, the burden of collaboration activities on stakeholders may negatively impact participation.

Taking part in collaboration activities takes time. Stakeholders may also have competing demands for their views in relation to other fisheries issues (for example,

central government research and consultation activity). Design and implementation of collaboration activities should consider how the burden on stakeholders can be minimised, to reduce the risk of stakeholder fatigue and ensure continued willingness among stakeholders to collaborate with the MMO.

3. Consideration should be given to location and structure of in-person collaboration activities.

Holding in-person collaboration activities in locations easily accessible and familiar to the target stakeholder group will increase their willingness to contribute. However, group settings can be intimidating, and some may feel less able to express their opinions. In-person events favour attendance by those living and working close to the location where they are held. These challenges could be addressed by:

- Offering opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback anonymously during a session (e.g. using electronic voting tools), on a one-to-one basis and/or in smaller groups of stakeholders with similar characteristics.
- Supporting attendance at in-person events – for example, by holding events in (several) key locations for target groups to maximise accessibility and using informal settings that stakeholders are familiar with (e.g. quayside venues).

4. Improving the transparency of decision-making will enhance the relationship between the MMO and its stakeholders.

Stakeholders want the opportunity to share their views with the MMO, but they were uncertain about how the information they shared was subsequently being used. Providing accessible information to stakeholders to help them understand how the MMO makes decisions, and how their feedback has fed into these, will help to build and sustain a trusting and collaborative relationship into the future. This could include:

- Ensuring any detailed decision documentation has a corresponding simplified summary that it is accessible and easy to understand for stakeholders.
- Ensuring information relating to new measures and decision-making is disseminated effectively, in particular to those participating in collaboration efforts.
- Holding events to disseminate new measures, where the MMO can outline and justify their decision-making and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions.
- Holding events and/or producing information to help stakeholders understand the wider political and economic environment in which the MMO operates, and how decisions are made.

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Annex 1 List of consultation activities

The consultation activities within the scope of the evaluation are set out in the Theory of Change (Section 1.3). They are listed below with the corresponding dates of implementation:

- Lyme Bay Steering Group – set up in 2021, with 3-4 online meetings held between 2021 and 2023
- In-person interviews – August & September 2022
- In-person visits to discuss the proposed consultation questions – February 2023
- Public consultation – live between 29 March and 28 May 2023
- Post-consultation workshop in Plymouth – 19 June 2023

A second workshop was held in Lyme Regis on 31 January 2024. This workshop did not fall within the scope of the evaluation, but ICF attended this workshop as an observer to gather more general insight into the MMO's collaboration activities with stakeholders.

Annex 2 Research tools

A2.1 Stakeholder survey

The stakeholder survey was carried out to gather stakeholder views on the collaboration activities that were carried out by the MMO.

Introduction

Thank you for completing this short feedback form about the consultation activities carried out by MMO to support the development of Lyme Bay fisheries management measures.

The findings will feed into an evaluation carried out by ICF, on behalf of MMO. For more information about the evaluation and how your data is processed, please see the [<privacy statement> \[LINK\]](#).

The form will take about five minutes to complete. If you have any questions about the survey or experience any technical difficulties, please email XXX.

Consent

Do you agree that:

- You consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study;
- You understand that personal information collected about you (if you choose to share it), such as your name, will not be shared beyond the study team over the duration of the assignment and beyond;
- You understand that the information you provide will be used in reports and other deliverables (unless stated otherwise) to MMO to help inform the evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay fisheries management measures. I understand that no specific attribution will be made to me or my organisation in reporting.

Demographics

Q1. Which of the following best reflects your job / your sector, in relation to the Lyme Bay sole fishery? Please select the most relevant option. The survey should be answered from your viewpoints as part of the chosen sector.

- a. Commercial fisher
- b. Commercial fishing representative organisation / association
- c. Other commercial fishing sector (e.g. processor, fishmonger)
- d. Sea angler
- e. Sea angler representative organisation / association
- f. Local business
- g. Charity
- h. Community member / resident
- i. Other (please specify)

Q2. [\[If Q1 = a\]](#) What is the length of the main fishing vessel that you work on or own

- a. 10 metres and under
- b. Over 10 metres
- c. Do not fish from a vessel

- d. Prefer not to disclose

Q3. [If Q1 = a] What is your primary fishing gear?

- a. Mobile gear (i.e. trawls, dredges)
- b. Static gear (i.e. pots & traps, lines, fixed nets)
- c. Hand collection
- d. Other (please specify)
- e. NA / Prefer not to say

Participation

Q4. What activities did you take part in, as part of the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures? Please select all that apply.

[Multi choice]

- a. Member of the Lyme Bay Steering Group (chaired by Ed Baker)
- b. Took part in an in-person interview in August/September 2022 with Eleanor or Emily, before the consultation was launched
- c. Provided feedback on the consultation questions during an in-person session with the MMO Fisheries Management Team (in Lyme Bay or Mevagissy) in February 2023
- d. Completed the consultation which ran between 29 March and 28 May 2023 (online, on paper or in-person with MMO)
- e. Took part in the workshop in Plymouth (Crowne Plaza Hotel) on 19 June 2023, after the consultation finished
- f. None of the above

Q5. [If Q4 = d] How did you complete the consultation?

- a. Online, using a computer, phone or tablet
- b. During a one-to-one with an MMO staff member
- c. As part of a group session with an MMO staff member
- d. Offline, by writing your answers on to a printed version of the consultation

Q6a. [If Q4 = a, b, c, d, e] What was the **main reason** you decided to take part in the consultation activity or activities? Please select the option that is **most** applicable to you.

- a. I wanted to make sure my views / my organisation's views were represented
- b. I was asked to take part by MMO, so I did
- c. I was advised to take part by someone else (e.g., by a business associate, friend, family member or colleague)
- d. Other (please explain)

Q6b. [If Q4 = f] What was the **main reason** you decided *not* to participate in any of the consultation activities? Please select the option that is most applicable to you.

- a. I did not know about the consultation
- b. The introduction of sole fishery management measures in Lyme Bay would not affect me or my organisation
- c. I was too busy to take part
- d. I thought my views would be ignored
- e. Other (please specify)

Q6c. [If Q6b = a] How would you like to hear about consultations that MMO carry out in the future?

[Open text – non-mandatory]

[If Q4 = f, skip to Q11]

Q7. [If Q4 = a, b, c, d, e OR If Q6b = b, c, d, e] How did you find out about the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures?

- a. Correspondence from MMO (e.g. email, telephone call, approached me in-person)
- b. Correspondence from another organisation (e.g. email, telephone call) - please specify who
- c. On a poster advertising it locally
- d. On social media
- e. Through Fishing News (or another news source)
- f. It was recommended to me (e.g. by a business associate, colleague, friend or family member)
- g. Other (please specify)

Experience

Q8. [If Q4 = a, b, c, d, e] Overall, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The way the consultation was promoted					
[If Q4=a] Being part of the Steering Group					
[If Q4=b] Taking part in the interview before the consultation launched					

[If Q4=c] The experience of providing feedback on the consultation questions					
[If Q4=d] The experience of completing the consultation					
[If Q4=e] Taking part in the workshop after the consultation finished					
[If Q5=b, c] The assistance provided by the MMO staff member with completing the consultation					
[If Q5=d] The printed copy of the consultation					
[If Q4 = a, b, c, d, e] The overall consultation process undertaken by MMO in relation to the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures					

Q9. [If Q4 = a, b, c, d, e] To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about **your participation in the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I found it easy to take part in the consultation process						
I felt that my views were listened to						
Mutual understanding between those fishing in Lyme Bay has improved as a result of the consultation process						
I was able to influence the development of the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures						
I feel positive about the prospect of collaborating with MMO on fisheries management again in the future						
The measures that are being introduced as a result of the consultation will improve fisheries management in Lyme Bay						

Q10. Do you have any further comments you would like to make, about your experience of participating in the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures (including any areas for improvement)?

[Open text – non-mandatory]

Thank & close

A2.2 Topic guide: Delivery team

This topic guide set out the general areas of discussion that were covered during interviews with the delivery team to inform the evaluation.

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview to inform the evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay fisheries management measures. We at ICF are carrying out the evaluation on behalf of MMO.

The purpose of this interview is to understand your experience of delivering the stakeholder collaboration activities that underpinned the development of the management measures, your views on how these activities were implemented and their effectiveness.

Your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to. All data collected during interviews will be aggregated and anonymised, and compiled into reports and other deliverables for the MMO. You will not be personally identified in these outputs. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of completing this evaluation. Any personal data provided will be deleted following the completion of the evaluation.

With your permission I will now start recording the interview. The recording will not be shared with the MMO and is only used to ensure we have an accurate record of your responses to support the analysis. The recording will be stored in line with our privacy policy and deleted on completion of the evaluation.

Background

1. Please confirm your role and responsibilities in relation to the development of the Lyme Bay fisheries management measures?
2. Can you confirm the stakeholder collaboration activities you are familiar with / were involved in delivering?

Prompt for:

- *Steering Group*
- *Pre-consultation interviews*
- *In-person visits to discuss consultation questions*
- *Online public consultation*
- *Activities to support completion of the online consultation (in-person engagement; disseminating hard copies)*
- *In-person workshop following consultation closure*

Experience of implementation

3. What did you think of the approach taken by MMO to collaborate with stakeholders as part of the development of the Lyme Bay fisheries management measures when you first heard about it?
 - Did your opinion evolve as the collaboration activities progressed? How do you feel about the approach now the measures have been published?
 - How did the collaboration approach differ from the way MMO usually consult with stakeholders?
4. What do you think **worked well** about the way the collaboration activities you were involved in were delivered?

Prompt for: working relationships within MMO / relationships with partner organisations / MMO senior buy-in to collaboration efforts / process of designing the collaboration

activities / iterative way of working / promotion of the activities / stakeholder engagement in the activities.

5. Was there anything that worked **less well**?

Prompt for: working relationships within MMO / relationships with partner organisations / MMO senior buy-in to collaboration efforts / process of designing the collaboration activities / iterative way of working / promotion of the activities / stakeholder engagement in the activities

6. Are there any improvements would you suggest to the implementation process, if MMO were to undertake similar stakeholder collaboration activities again in the future?

Outcomes and impacts

7. How effective do you think the collaboration activities were in reaching key stakeholder groups in Lyme Bay?

Prompt for each activity & why/why not.

- Are there any stakeholder groups that were particularly hard to reach? What action was taken to engage them in the collaboration activities?
- Overall, do you feel the collaboration efforts were successful in capturing the views of all stakeholder groups?

Prompt for: fishers, fish processing / fishmongers, recreational anglers, the local businesses / tourism sector etc.

8. How was the information collected through each collaboration activity used by MMO?

- How did the process of analysing and using the data differ from the approach usually taken by MMO (if at all)?

9. How did the information collected through the collaboration activities feed into MMO's understanding of the issues at play, and subsequent decision-making on the management measures to introduce?

*Prompt for understanding of **social, economic and ecological** issues respectively – ask for specific examples.*

- How was the information collected in the commissioned evidence reports (e.g. from Cefas, Natural England, Southern IFCA and Seafish) triangulated with the information collected through the collaboration activities?

10. Was there data obtained from certain collaboration activities which was especially useful (or less useful)? Why?

11. Overall, would you say the evidence base used by MMO to inform the final set of management measures was strengthened as a result of the collaboration activities that took place? Why / why not?

Final comments

12. Are there any other comments you would like to add?

A2.3 Topic guide: Stakeholders targeted by the consultation

This topic guide set out the general areas of discussion that were covered during interviews with stakeholders that were targeted by the collaboration activities to inform the evaluation.

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview to inform the evaluation of the development of Lyme Bay fisheries management measures. We at ICF are carrying out the evaluation on behalf of MMO.

The purpose of this interview is to understand your experience of taking part in the stakeholder collaboration activities that underpinned the development of the management measures and your opinion on these activities.

Your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to. All data collected during interviews will be aggregated and anonymised, and compiled into reports and other deliverables for the MMO. You will not be personally identified in these outputs. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of completing this evaluation. Any personal data provided will be deleted following the completion of the evaluation.

With your permission I will now start recording the interview. The recording will not be shared with the MMO and is only used to ensure we have an accurate record of your responses to support the analysis. The recording will be stored in line with our privacy policy and deleted on completion of the evaluation.

Background

1. Please introduce yourself, your organisation and your connection to Lyme Bay.

*If **commercial fisher**, confirm:*

- Vessel size (under or over 10m)
- Gear type (fixed or static)

2. Can you confirm the activities you took part in, as part of the Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures consultation process?

Prompt for each:

- *Steering Group*
- *Pre-consultation interview*
- *In-person discussion about the consultation questions*
- *Public consultation [confirm how it was completed it - online or offline? with MMO staff during a session or by themselves/with someone else?]*
- *In-person workshop following consultation closure*

If they did not take part in any activity, discuss why not and what might motivate them to take part in the future.

Experience of the collaboration activities

General questions for each activity:

3. How did you hear about the opportunity to take part?

- Was this the right way to promote this activity? Could it have been promoted differently?

4. Why did you decide to take part?
5. How easy or difficult was it to take part?
6. Can you talk me through your experience of participating in the activity?
 - What did you like about it?
 - Was there anything you didn't like about it?
 - Are there any improvements you would suggest?

For SG members, those attending an in-person session and/or the workshop:

- What did you think about the way the session(s) were run? *E.g. attendance, the MMO staff member(s)/facilitator, the location, support provided to complete consultation etc (as applicable).*
- Did you feel able to share your views during the session(s)?

Outcomes and impacts

7. How do you feel about MMO's decision to develop the management measures in collaboration with stakeholders (through the different consultation activities)?
Prompt to understand whether sentiment is positive/negative/neutral and why.
 - Do you feel MMO listened to your views?
8. Do you think the consultation process was transparent?
 - To what extent would you say you understand the views of other stakeholders involved in the consultation process?
9. And how do you feel about the measures that are being introduced?
Prompt to understand extent to which they support the measures / feel the measures have or will improve fisheries management in Lyme Bay.
 - To what extent are your interests reflected in the measures that are being introduced?
 - Do you feel you understand / have in trust MMO's decision-making?
10. Based on your experience, how would you feel about collaborating with MMO in the future on fisheries management measures?
Prompt to understand whether sentiment is positive/negative/neutral and why.
 - Has being involved in the consultation impacted how you feel about MMO?

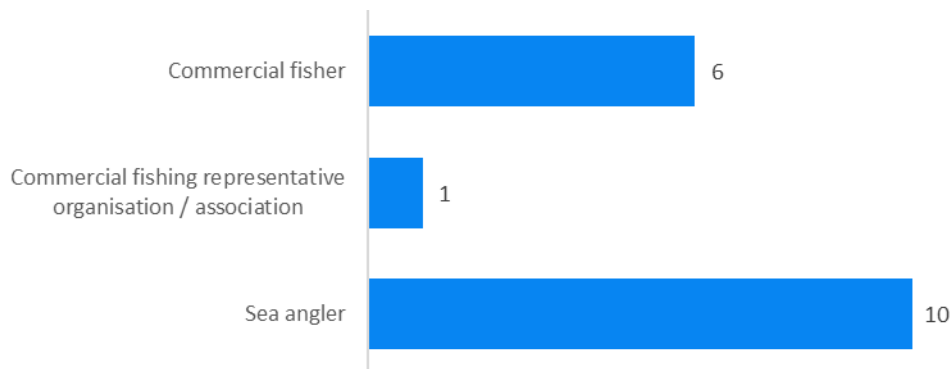
Final comments

11. Are there any improvements that MMO could make, in the way they collaborate with stakeholders in future?
14. Are there any other comments you would like to add?

Annex 3 Stakeholder survey – Summary of results

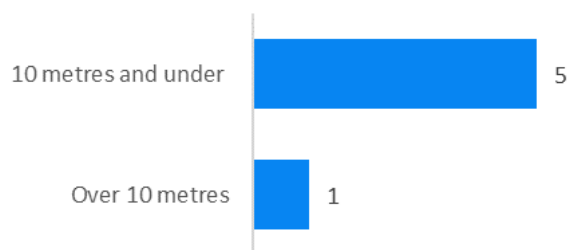
Demographics

Figure A3.1: Which of the following best reflects your job / your sector, in relation to the Lyme Bay sole fishery? (n)



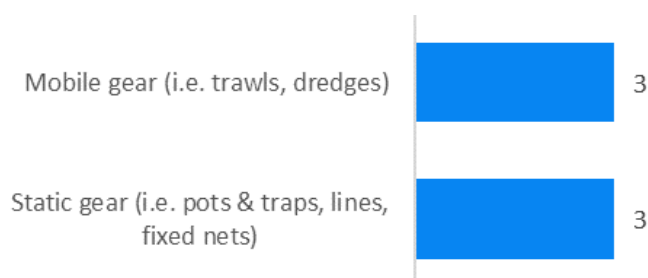
Base size: All survey respondents (n=17)

Figure A3.2: What is the length of the main fishing vessel that you work on or own? (n)



Base size: Commercial fishers (n=6)

Figure A3.3: What is your primary fishing gear? (n)



Base size: Commercial fishers (n=6)

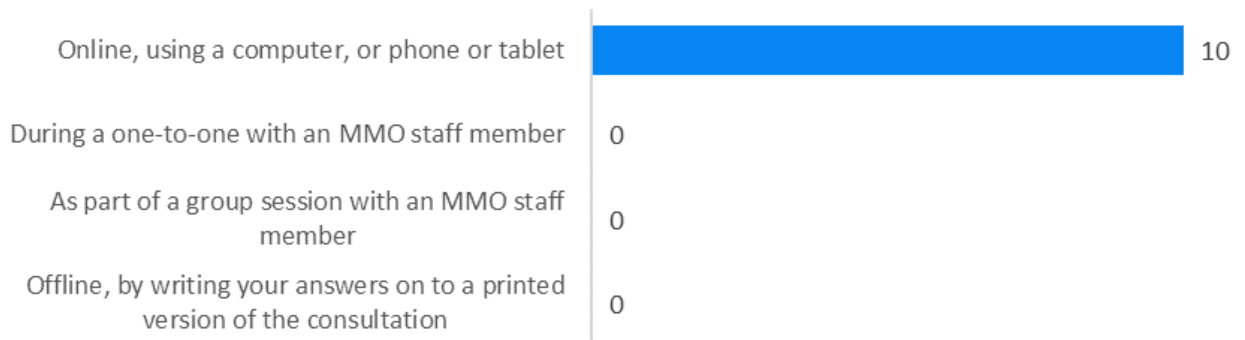
Participation in the MMO Lyme Bay stakeholder consultation activities

Figure A3.4: What activities did you take part in, as part of the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures? Please select all that apply. (n)



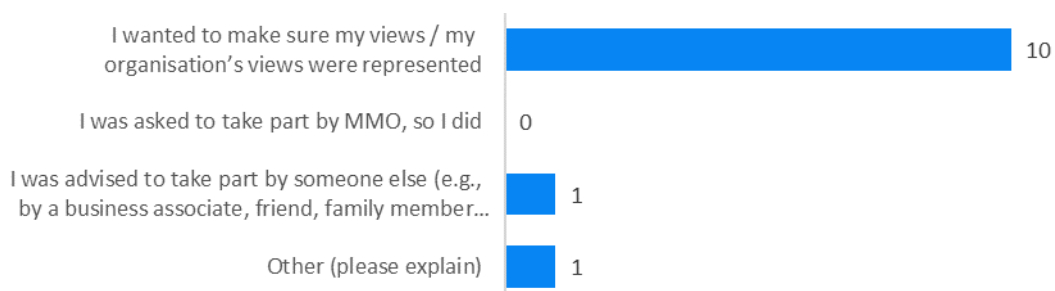
Base size: All survey respondents (n=17)

Figure A3.5: How did you complete the consultation? (n)



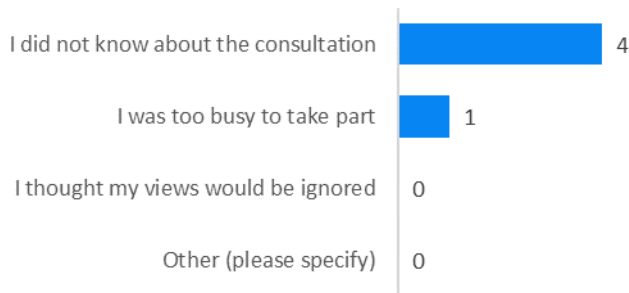
Base size: Survey respondents completing the public consultation (n=10)

Figure A3.6: What was the main reason you decided to take part in the consultation activity or activities? (n)



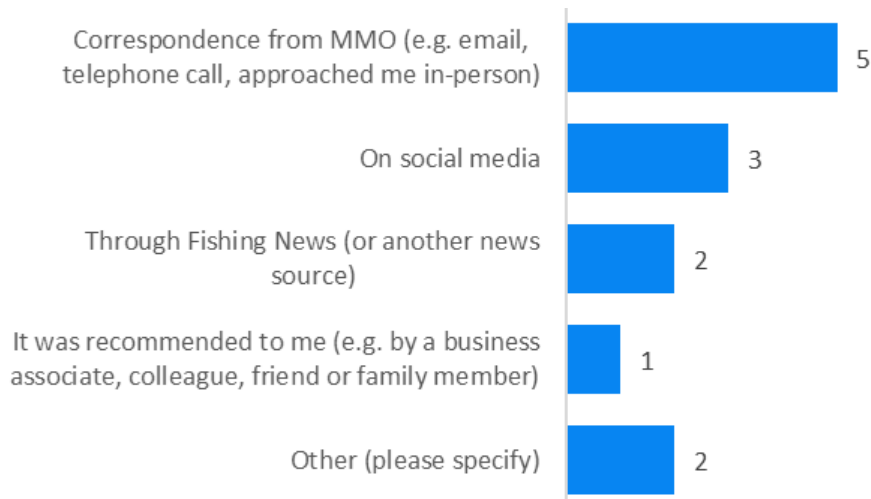
Base size: Survey respondents taking part in any Lyme Bay consultation activity (n=12)

Figure A3.7: What was the main reason you decided *not* to participate in any of the consultation activities? (n)



Base size: Survey respondents not taking part in any of the Lyme Bay consultation activities (n=5)

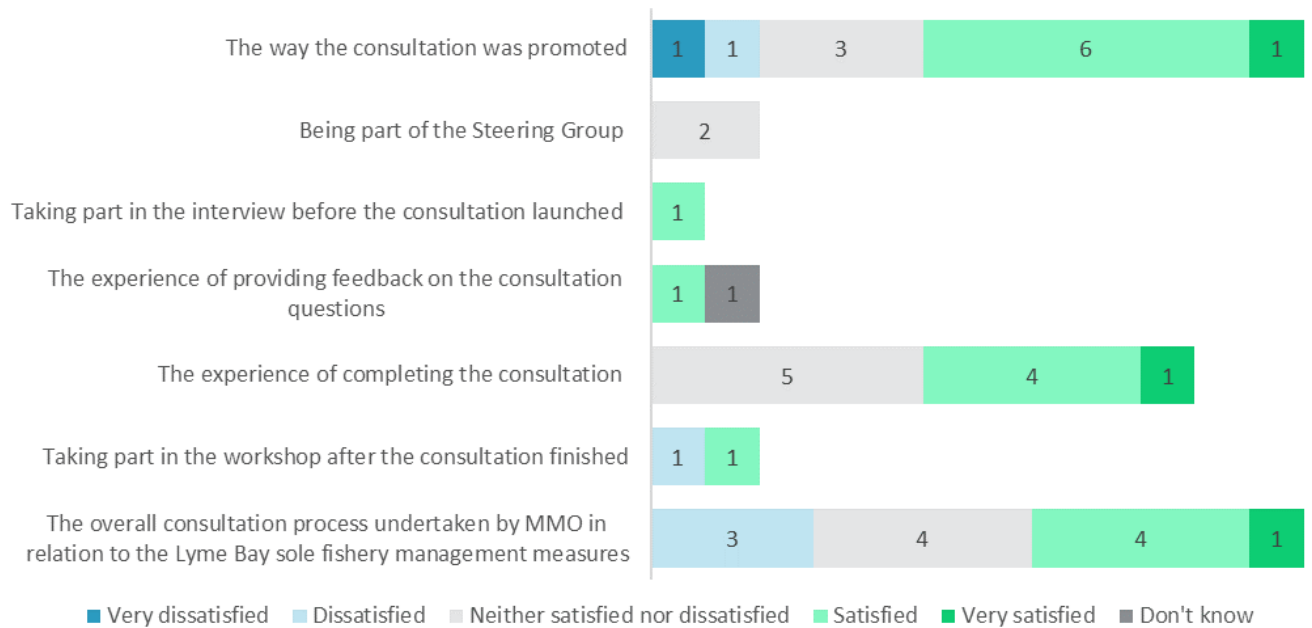
Figure A3.8: How did you find out about the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures? (n)



Base size: Survey respondents who were aware of the Lyme Bay consultation (n=13)

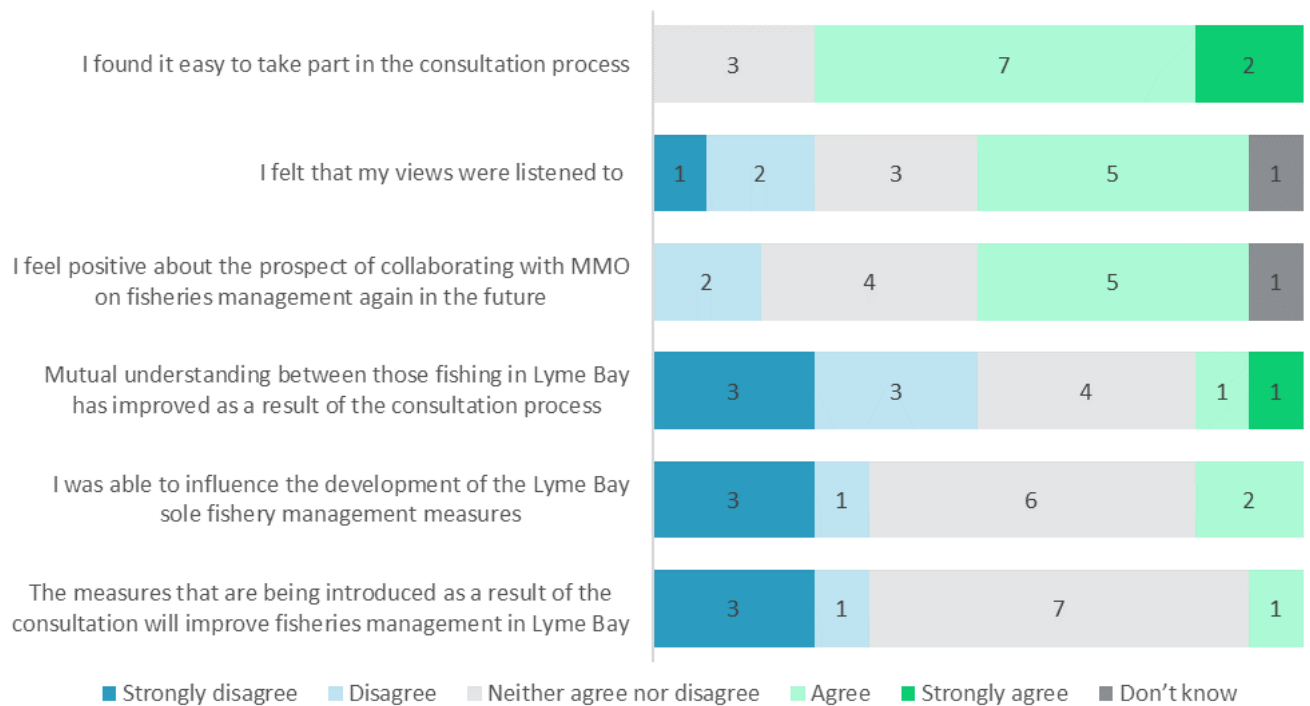
Experience of the Lyme Bay consultation activities

Figure A3.9: Overall, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures? (n)



Base size: Survey respondents taking part in any Lyme Bay consultation activity and to whom statement is relevant (n=between 1 and 12)

Figure A3.10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your participation in the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures? (n)



Base size: Survey respondents taking part in any Lyme Bay consultation activity (n=12)

Do you have any further comments you would like to make, about your experience of participating in the consultation on Lyme Bay sole fishery management measures (including any areas for improvement)?

There were 12 survey responses who provided additional comments to the survey. These primarily related to the issues present in the Lyme Bay fishery as opposed to the consultation activities. Comments included:

- Vessels being too close to shore (4 mentions)
- Sole fish stocks being in decline in Lyme Bay (4 mentions)
- The need for a maximum net length (3 mentions)
- The sole quota being too high (2 mentions)
- More communication from the MMO being desirable, including through in-person meetings (2 mentions)
- Recreational anglers views not being sufficiently considered by the MMO (2 mentions)
- The need for more or better enforcement (2 mentions).

Annex 4 Interview targeting strategy

During the initial stage of the evaluation, a stakeholder mapping exercise was carried out to establish the stakeholders targeted by the collaboration activities and their participation. This fed into an interview targeting strategy, which set out the desired number of interviews of different types and locations of stakeholders. However, due to the challenges reaching stakeholders (described in Section 2.5), it was not possible to follow this strategy. The anonymised strategy is provided below.

Table A4.1: Anonymised interview targeting strategy

Target number of interviewees	Type	Location
2	Representative organisations of commercial fishers in Lyme Bay	
1-2		Weymouth or Poole
1-2		Beer
1-2		Plymouth
1-2		West Bay
1-2		Lyme Regis
1-2		Axmouth
1-2		Brixham
1-2		Mevagissy
1	Scallop dredger	
4	Netter	
2	Mixed netter/potter	
1	Angler	
3	Trawler	