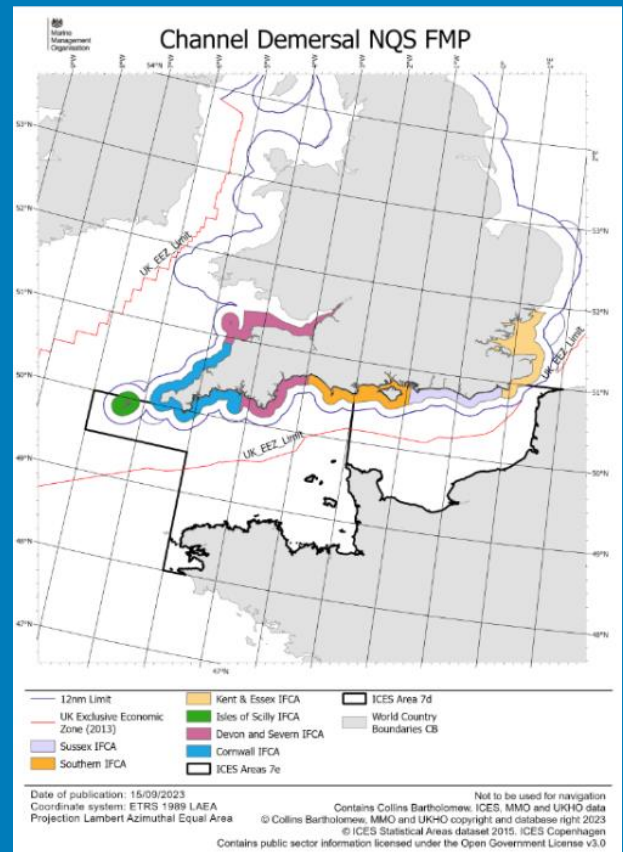




Marine Management Organisation

Cuttlefish Action Plan Workshop Channel Demersal NQS FMP 15 February 2024



Rationale and Purpose of Workshop:

- Cuttlefish critical targeted fishery at risk of over exploitation.
- Data poor species, no formal stock assessment to establish MSY or harvest proxy.
- No specific management measures for offshore (12-200nm).
- Few measures within some IFCA districts (0-6nm) – pot limits and codes of conduct.
- In the absence of robust evidence, a precautionary approach to management is required as doing nothing is not an option – high political profile.
- Cuttlefish proposals from the FMP:
 - Improve science and evidence.
 - Establish a stakeholder group to help develop an action plan.
 - Consider measures to protect stocks and promote recruitment.
- MCRS removed following FMP consultation – strong opposition, large socio-economic impacts, and uncertain environmental benefits.

Aims of the workshop:

- Develop mutual understanding of issues in the cuttlefish fishery.
- Identify wider stakeholders best placed to help develop options for potential management.
- Set expectations for working in partnership in developing the action plan and supporting engagement.
- Identify potential options for developing the action plan.
- Confirm next steps for developing the action plan.

Presentation and Workshop Summary:

- Defra presented the key cuttlefish proposals in the FMP, reflections following consultation and the key points raised.
- Cefas presented current knowledge of the cuttlefish fishery based on scientific evidence.
- Breakout sessions:
 - Current issues of cuttlefish fishery and their prioritisation.
 - Potential management options and their pros and cons.
 - Action planning – evidence gaps, questions to answer, collaboration and co-management identification.

Key Outputs of breakout Sessions:

Current Issues	Main issue stated by several stakeholders was a lack of knowledge, evidence and data to determine what effective management should be.
	Cefas working on model for robust stock assessment for short lived species.
	EU data access and gaining a greater understanding of their approach to management of the stock as they have large share of catch in EU waters.
	Identifying the difference between <i>Sepia officinalis</i> common cuttlefish (CTC) and <i>Sepia elegans</i> elegant cuttlefish (EJE) to improve understanding of landings data, much of which is currently recorded as generalised code for cuttlefish (CTL).
	Need to understand potential impact of environmental variables and what influence they have on cuttlefish recruitment. These need to be considered alongside fishing impact.
	Impacts of windfarms (Rampion) - potential for aggregating stock and the impact of electromagnetic frequencies may deter them.
	What are the potential impacts of flyseiners on cuttlefish populations.
Potential management	Potential extension of current IFCA management measures in IFCAs relating to pot limits, egg management and codes of practice, what already exists. E.g. could harmonisation between inshore and offshore occur such as seasonal closures, pots limits to control effort.
	Precautionary approach vs evidence gaps. Need to explore benefit of other potential management measures e.g. a seasonal closure and develop these so that they can be implemented quickly should they be required in the short or medium term (toolbox).
	Explore current EU legislation on cuttlefish management, literature review and case study of French cuttlefish management.
	Identify other potential management options.
	Needs to be framed around the need to gain more evidence, knowledge and data whilst recognising the precautionary approach.
	Several data and evidence gaps were identified key outputs were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock assessment and recruitment, key spawning areas, cuttlefish survivability. • Spatial and temporal extent of cuttlefish by all gears, exploration of technical measures. • Effectiveness and environmental impacts of management measures implemented in other countries, literature review of best practice and its viability to the UK. • Impacts of windfarms and electromagnetic fields. • Socio-economic value of cuttlefish to fleets currently targeting cuttlefish and potential socio-economic impacts of potential management measures. • Need to undertake analysis to determine common and elegant cuttlefish composition of landings.
Action Planning	Determine resource implications for all aspects of the action plan (both development and implementation) as well as who should lead on each element, to implement action plan.
	Consider who will be involved future action planning and data collection.

Actions:

- MMO to create an action plan in collaboration with relevant stakeholders by June.
- Distribute actions from workshop to stakeholders to establish sign up to collaboration of its delivery and provide timeframes and ownership for completion within the FMP delivery timescales.
- Evaluate, prioritise, and action evidence gaps identified during workshop while still considering the precautionary principle and any measures that should potentially be implemented under this objective.
- Establish what resource is available to deliver action plan.
- To integrate Defra FMP evidence workshop outputs and priorities to feed into action plan development.
- Investigate landings data for flyseining.
- Overlay CPUE and fisheries drivers on the FMP landings data.
- Further stakeholder engagement, with more involvement from non-sector in the discussion. Working group, Academia, Industry, will become evident as we get a greater understanding of data gaps and what the collaborative approach looks like.