

Consultation on the seasonal closure of the crawfish fishery in ICES area 7

Background

In 2023 MMO worked with industry to address concerns regarding the southwest crawfish fishery. Following a [workshop](#) and [consultation](#) the minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) was increased from 95 millimetres (mm) to 110mm on 1 January 2024 and a fishery closure was introduced from 5 February 2024 to 30 April 2024.

A further [workshop](#) took place on 13 February 2024 where a further seasonal closure was discussed, with support for a repeat to the annual closure.

Further information is available on the Southwest Regional Fisheries Group [webpage](#).

Consultation

MMO has opened a consultation for an annual seasonal closure. The consultation will run from **23 July 2024 to 18 August 2024**.

The following closure periods are proposed for your consideration:

- **no closure**
- **1 November 2024 to 31 May 2025**
- **1 December 2024 to 31 May 2025**

The closure would be for all UK and EU vessels with all gears working in ICES sub area 7 in English waters enacted through a licence variation.

The purpose of the proposed closure is to:

- provide additional protection to spawning potential through decreasing the number of removals and interactions with fishing activities and allow settlement of juvenile stock.
- reduce the risk of nets being left for long soak times or lost during the unpredictable winter weather.

Further information regarding the consultation and how to respond, can be found [here](#) or contact us at sustainablefisheries@marinemanagement.org.uk.