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The following slides were presented to the Wrasses Complex Fisheries Management Plan Working Group on the 22 October 2024.

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

22nd October 2024

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Wrasses Complex FMP

Working Group: Meeting 1

22nd October 2024

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Welcome and introductions	10 mins (13:30-13:40)
Working Group Terms of Reference	5 mins (13:40-13:45)
Overview of the Wrasses Complex FMP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species and area covered • Complexities and Key Points • Overview of FMP process • Key fisheries and evidence data • Plan for engaging with stakeholders & workshop overview 	15 mins (13:45-14:00)
Issues / Opportunities discussion	25 mins (14:00-14:25)
Next steps/AOB	5 mins (14:25-14:30)

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Working Group Terms of Reference

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Wrasses Complex FMP Overview

- FMP overview
- FMP development process
- Key fisheries data
- Key scientific evidence
- Plan for engaging with stakeholders & workshop overview
- Discussion – issues & opportunities for the FMP

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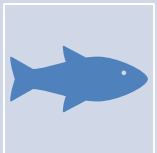
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Fisheries Management Plans are set out in the Fisheries Act 2020 and are at the centre of UK fisheries management post-Brexit.



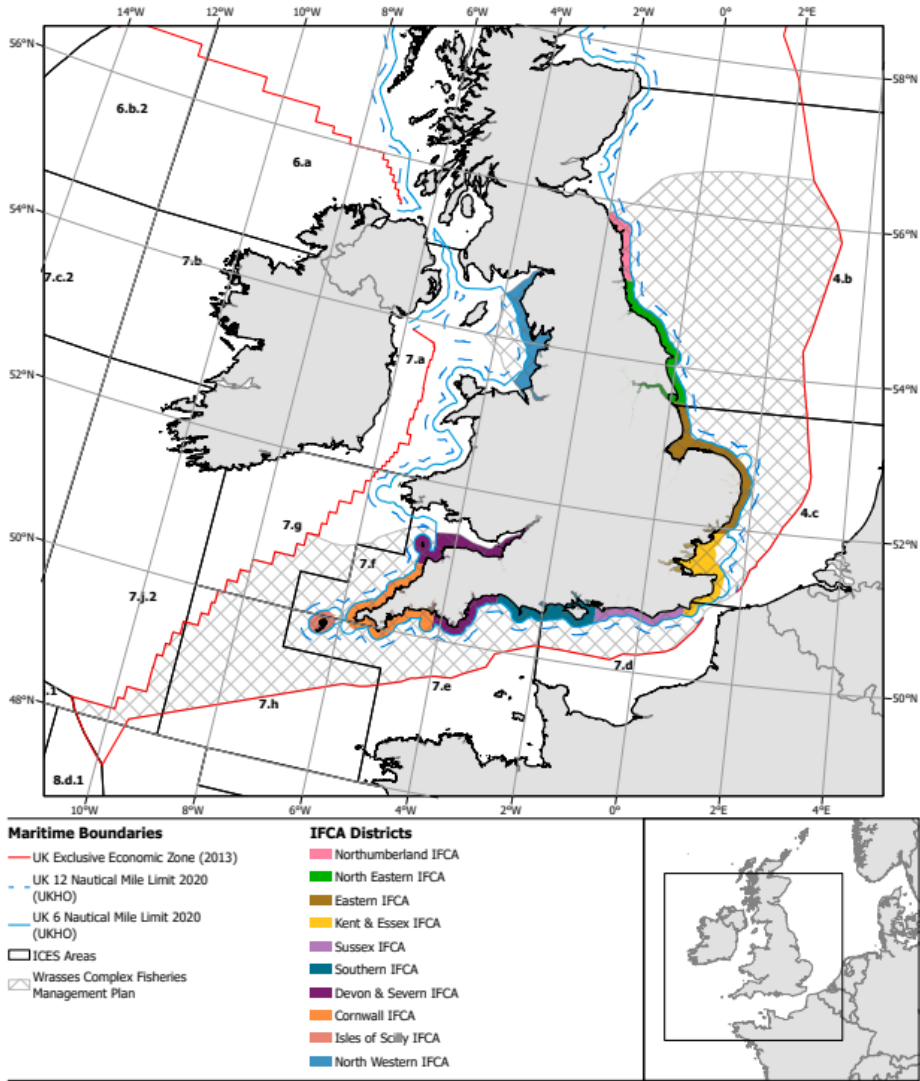
Plan-led approach to fisheries management. They set out the policies needed to maintain or restore stocks to sustainable levels.



FMPs are a different way of working and they are being developed collaboratively with stakeholders.

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Wrasses Complex FMP overview



- English waters
- ICES Divisions: **4b, 4c, 7a, 7d, 7e, 7f, 7h, 7g, 7j**

Species included in the scope:

- Ballan wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*)
- Goldsinny wrasse (*Ctenolabrus rupestris*)
- Corkwing wrasse (*Symphodus melops*)
- Cuckoo wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*)
- Rock cook wrasse (*Centrolabrus exoletus*)

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Wrasse Complex FMP Scoping: Complexities and Key Points

Wrasses Complex (*Ballan, corkwing, goldsinny, cuckoo and rock cook*)

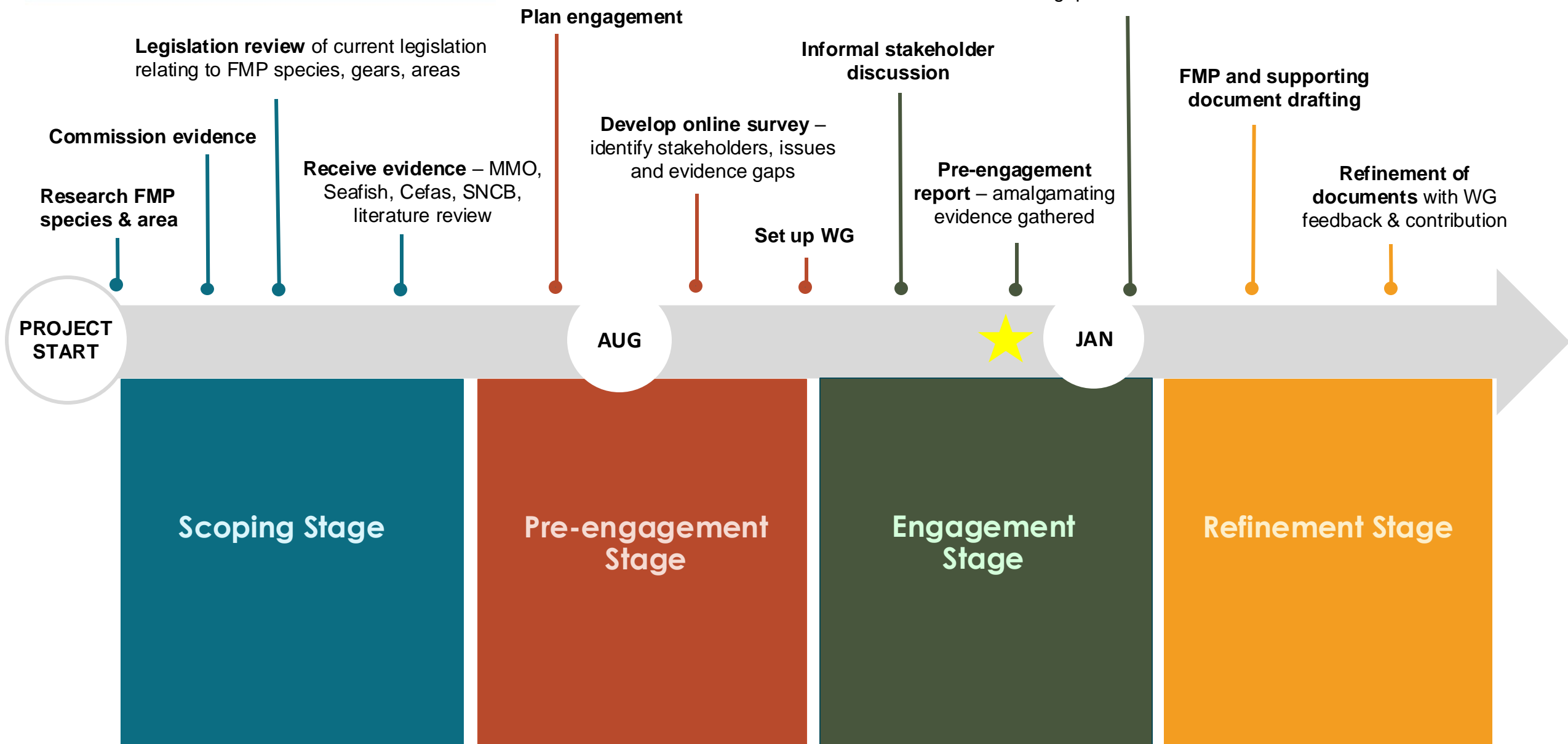
- Commercial landings dominated by live wrasse fishery, destined for usage in salmon aquaculture
- Underlying landings from bycatch/pot bait usage
- Important recreational species, particularly for shore-based anglers. Some charter interest
- Key species within reef ecosystems
- Slow growing, ballan hermaphroditic
- Widely distributed, but abundance dependent on habitat (rocky shore, reef).
- Inshore bias
- No stock assessments
- General lack of evidence on biology and ecology



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FMP Process

Regional stakeholder workshops – gather feedback on draft management opportunities, evidence gaps etc



Key fisheries data – Recreational landings

Sea Angling Diary

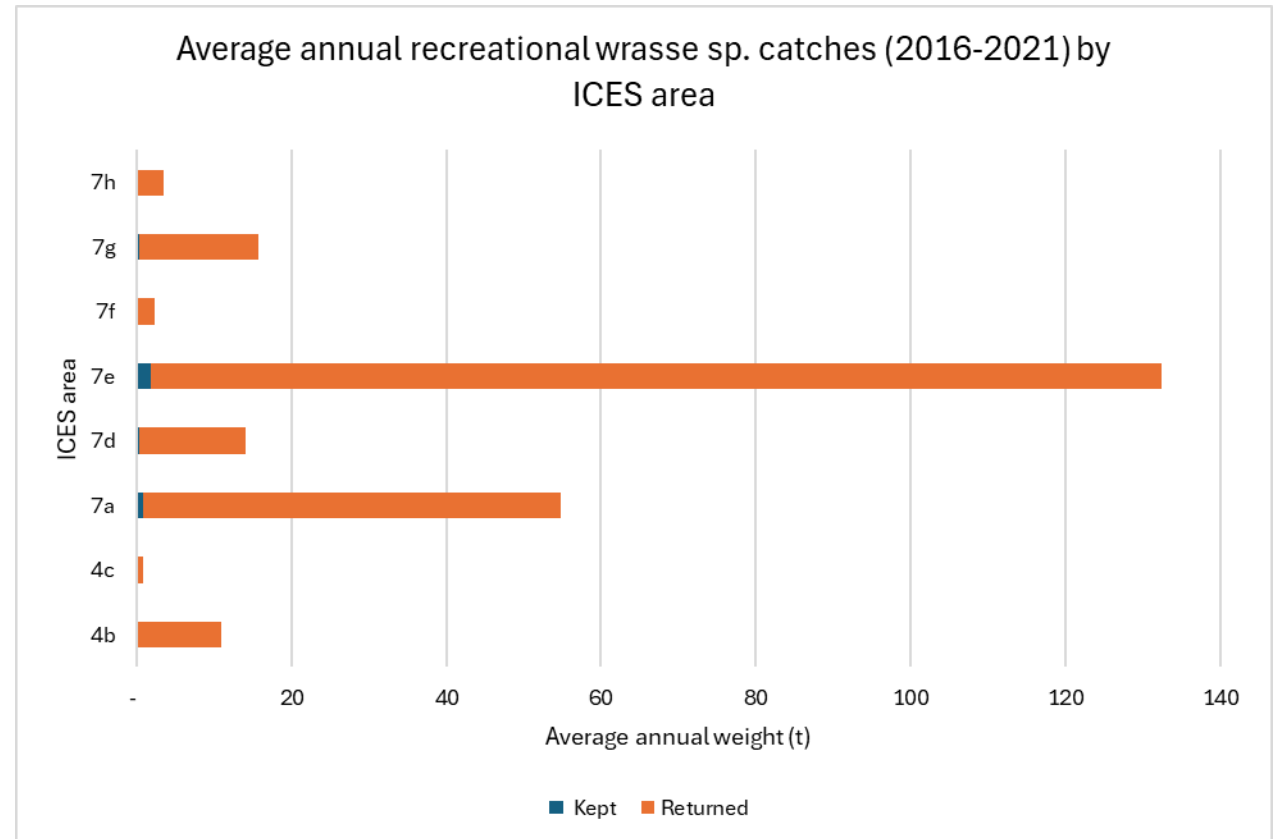
Catch estimates: (average annual weight landed

2016-2021, full FMP area)

- **Kept** ~4t* (wrasse sp. grouped)
- **Returned** ~231t (wrasse sp. grouped)

Catch by ICES area:

- **7e** ~57% of average annual landings
- **7a** ~23% of average annual landings



**Given high relative standard error associated with survey derived wrasse retention figures, we acknowledge that this figure may be higher than the actual weights of retained wrasse by anglers.*

Key fisheries data – Commercial landings

Average annual weight landed

- **EU** = 5.2t / **UK** = 12.8t

Average annual value

- **EU** = £5,800 / **UK** = £289,539

Top ICES areas

- 7f, 7e (top by weight and value), 7d

Top species by average annual weight

- Unidentified wrasse (11.64 t)

Top species by average annual value

- Ballan (£103,543)

Top months

- July to January

Top gear types

- Drift and fixed nets (45.9%)
- Demersal trawls (24.1%)
- Pots and Traps (15.5%)

MRAG (literature review) research recommendations:

- Improved understanding of wrasse population structure
- Develop stock assessments for each wrasse species of the species complex
- Further research wrasse species traits relevant to fisheries management (e.g. growth rate)
- Identify environmental conditions that affect spawning behaviours of each species
- Research survival rates of wrasse after various capture methods (e.g. pots and rod-and-line)
- Research changes in catchability of each species to various fishing gear configurations
- Conduct further research into the role of wrasse on inshore rocky reefs in English waters
- Improve understanding of important factors affecting stock health and the effects of fishing pressure on wrasse populations
- Study the potential impacts of warming sea temperatures on wrasse biology and ecology

Economic data – Seafish

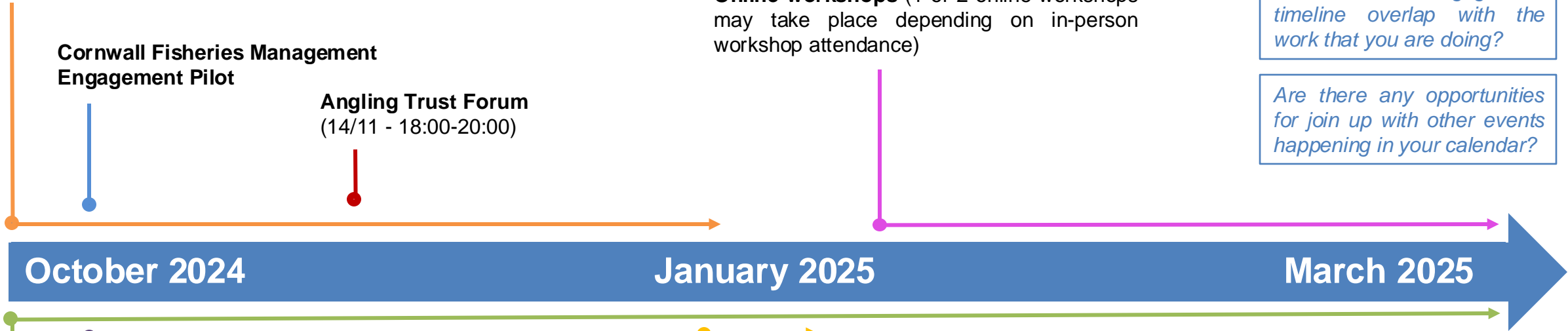
- The weight of wrasse FMP species landed peaked in 2018 at around 21 tonnes and fell to just over 6 tonnes in 2023
- Each year, between 86% and 97% of all vessels targeting wrasse are less than 5% financially dependent on the FMP species
- Landings of ballan wrasse started to be recorded in late 2018, although most landings continue to be recorded as wrasse species complex (WRA)
- The average price of wrasses has reached up to over £80,000 per tonne in some years as demand increases
- The total number of vessels involved in the FMP fishery averaged 154 per year from 2016-2019, but decreased to 77 in 2023

Findings from online survey (so far)

- 311 responses so far, ~70% recreational, ~10% commercial, remainder is 'other'
- Top 5 counties fishing activities take place in – Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, West Sussex
- Most fishing occurs on land or inshore (within 6nm) using private boats
- Reports of wrasse being caught as bycatch, predominantly ballan
- Multiple reports of decrease in abundance and size
- Average retention of wrasses: ~5%

Current plan for engaging with stakeholders

Online survey



How does this engagement timeline overlap with the work that you are doing?

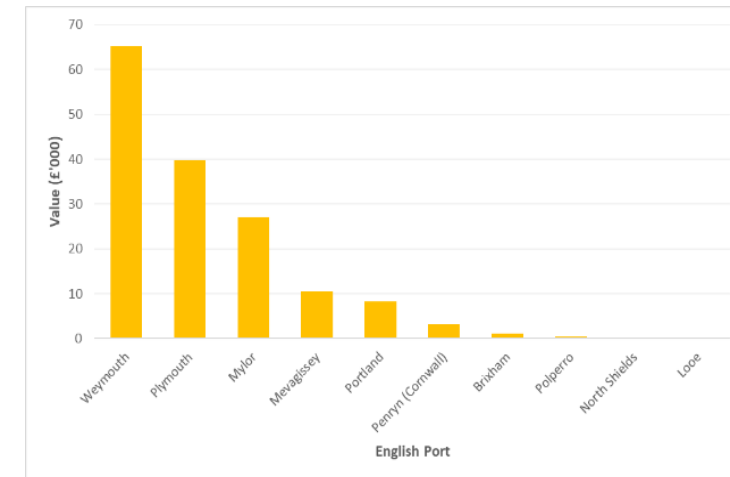
Are there any opportunities for join up with other events happening in your calendar?

Working Group meetings:

- Introduction
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- **Poole & Mudeford** (13/01)
- **Shoreham** (16/01)
- **Weymouth** (27/01)
- **Lyme Regis & Plymouth** (28/01)
- **Falmouth** (29/01 & 30/01)

Are there any locations you think we have missed?



Average annual value (£'000) across top English ports (2016-2021) for landed wrasse.

Engagement Event (Face-to-Face): External Stakeholders

Objectives:

- Discuss results of survey and gather detailed feedback on issues, solutions, evidence gaps.
- Gather additional thoughts on how fishery can be improved, issues mitigated and required evidence gathering.
- Determine options for improved management

Activities:

- **Whole event presentation:** Present key information on fishery, invite feedback on general themes. Slides with questions, using QR codes to gather virtual feedback on smart phones, but also paper options. Word Cloud activity.
- **Group ranking exercise:** Breakout groups where attendees are invited to prioritise issues, solutions and evidence gaps to improve fishery. Could be scoring, or pros/cons exercise.
- **Sticky note exercise:** Allows open answers and qualitative feedback
- **Collecting results:** Recording session and written feedback.
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Any questions?

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Discussion:

Issues and Opportunities for the FMP

What is it that we want the FMP to address in the first iteration? Some discussion points below...

- Changes in population, size or distribution of FMP species
- Data or information on current populations
- Changes in environmental conditions that may impact FMP species
- Social and/or economic concerns
- Effectiveness of current management, both positive and negative

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Thank you for attending the first Working Group meeting

- WG to circulate the Wrasses Complex FMP & Black Seabream FMP online survey to any contacts they have - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wrasses-complex-fmp-and-black-seabream-fmp-online-survey>
- FMP team to circulate minutes and presentation for WG to sign-off before being published online
- FMP team to send out doodle poll to get availability for next WG meeting

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Black Seabream FMP

Working Group: Meeting 1

22nd October 2024

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Working Group Terms of Reference	5 mins (14:55 - 15:00)
Overview of the Black Seabream FMP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species and area covered • Complexities and Key Points • Overview of FMP process • Key fisheries and evidence data • Plan for engaging with stakeholders & workshop overview 	15 mins (15:00 - 15:15)
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Working Group Terms of Reference

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Black Seabream FMP Overview

- FMP overview
- FMP development process
- Key fisheries data
- Key scientific evidence
- Plan for engaging with stakeholders & workshop overview
- Discussion – issues & opportunities for the FMP

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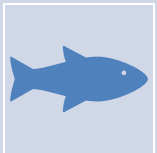
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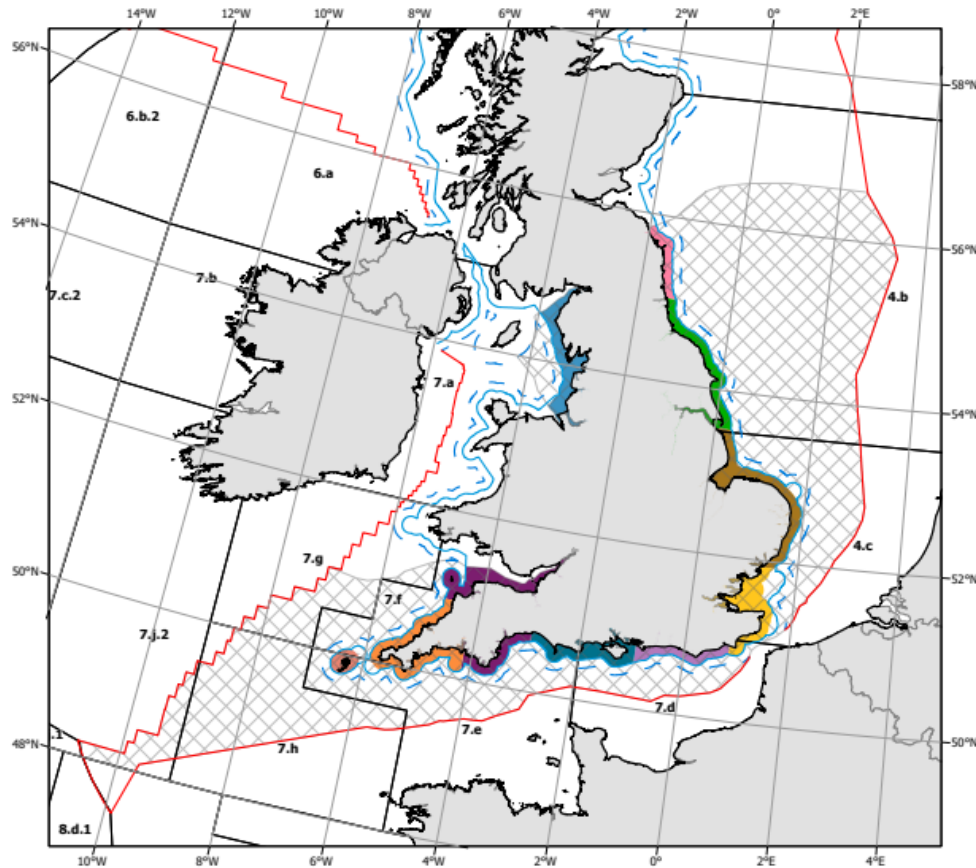
Plan-led approach to fisheries management. They set out the policies needed to maintain or restore stocks to sustainable levels.



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Black Seabream FMP overview



- English waters
- ICES Divisions: **4b, 4c, 7a, 7d, 7e, 7f, 7h, 7g, 7j**

Species included in the scope:

- Black seabream (*Spondyliosoma cantharus*)
- Gilthead bream (*Sparus aurata*)

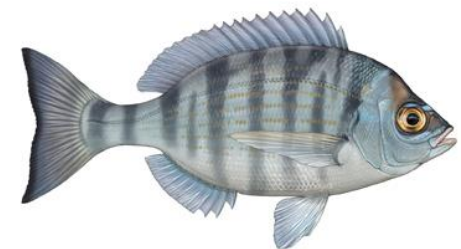
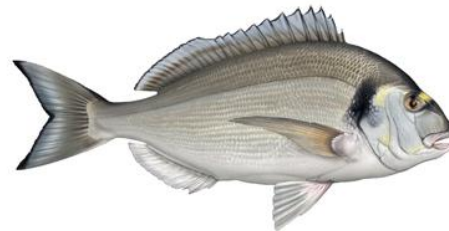
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Black seabream (*Spondylionosoma cantharus*)

- Adults migratory, juveniles recruit into estuarine and coastal environments.
- Targeting by both commercial and recreational vessels during nesting period (April-June).
- Designated feature of MCZs
- Historic pair-trawl fishery (SE)
- No stock assessment, reporting concerns
- Research on PRM essential to understand mortality of released individuals
- Hermaphroditic (female>male), concerns around specific targeting of males

Gilthead bream (*Sparus aurata*)

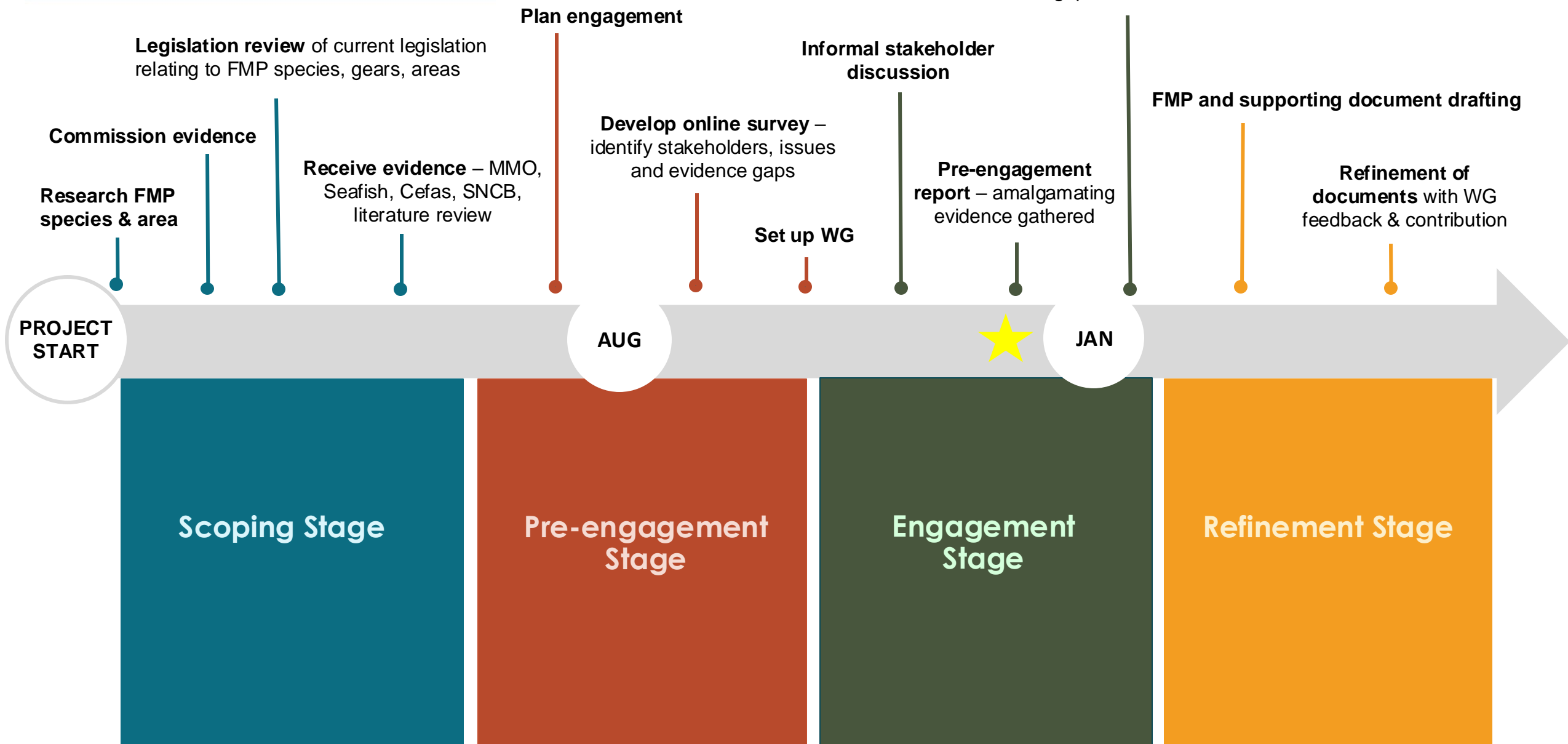
- Formally added to FMP based on stakeholder feedback and government evidence
- Distribution and abundance spreading, but SW focus
- Important recreational species, but some landings from nets
- No stock assessment, concern around reporting
- Hermaphroditic (male>female)



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FMP Process

Regional stakeholder workshops – gather feedback on draft management opportunities, evidence gaps etc



Key fisheries data – Recreational landings

Sea Angling Diary

Catch estimates: (average annual weight landed 2016-2021, full FMP area)

Black seabream:

- Kept ~100t
- Returned ~172t

Catch by ICES area:

7e

- ~64% black seabream
- ~3% gilthead bream

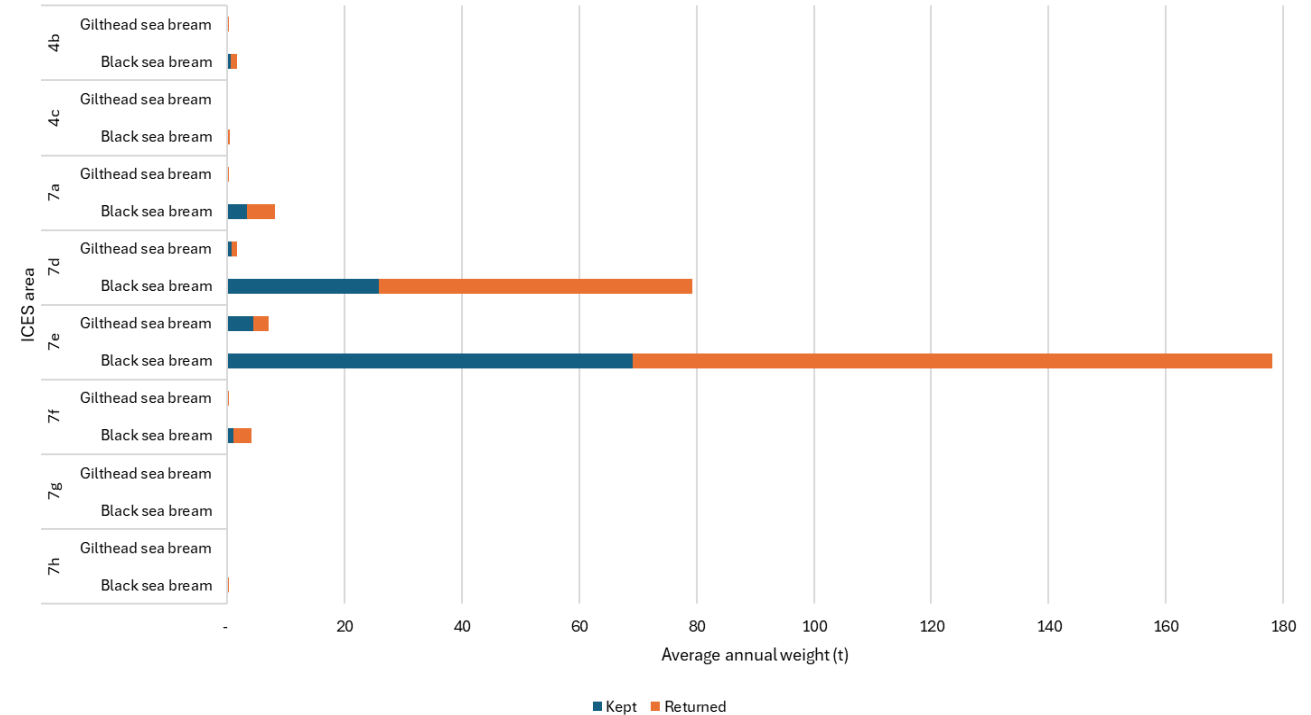
7d

- ~28% black seabream
- ~1% gilthead bream

Gilthead bream:

- Kept ~5t*
- Returned ~4t*

Average annual recreational black & gilthead seabream catches (2016-2021) by ICES area



**Given high relative standard error associated with survey derived gilthead bream figures, we acknowledge that these figures may be higher than the actual weight of gilthead bream retained and returned by anglers.*

Key fisheries data – Commercial landings

Average annual weight landed

- **EU** = 397.9 tonnes / **UK** = 99.28t

Average annual value

- **EU** = £864,819 / **UK** = £249,940

Top ICES areas

- 7d (top by weight and value), 7e

Top three ports by weight:

- Shoreham by the Sea, Newhaven and Brixham

Top three ports by value:

- Shoreham by the Sea, Weymouth, Brixham

Top gear types:

- Demersal trawls (65%)
- Pelagic trawls (15.7%)

Top months:

- April and May

MRAG (literature review) – Research recommendations:

- Develop stock assessments and evaluate impacts of current exploitation rates
- Develop an understanding of biological characteristics in English waters (length at maturity, reproduction, mortalities) and associated responses to environmental factors
- Identify species-specific habitat information, including nursery and spawning areas, and address the impact of warming sea temperatures on population distribution
- Research post-release survival rates associated with recreational fisheries to develop an understanding of the impact of capture and release upon bream populations
- Determine bream population, stock structure and dynamics in English waters

Seafish – Economic data:

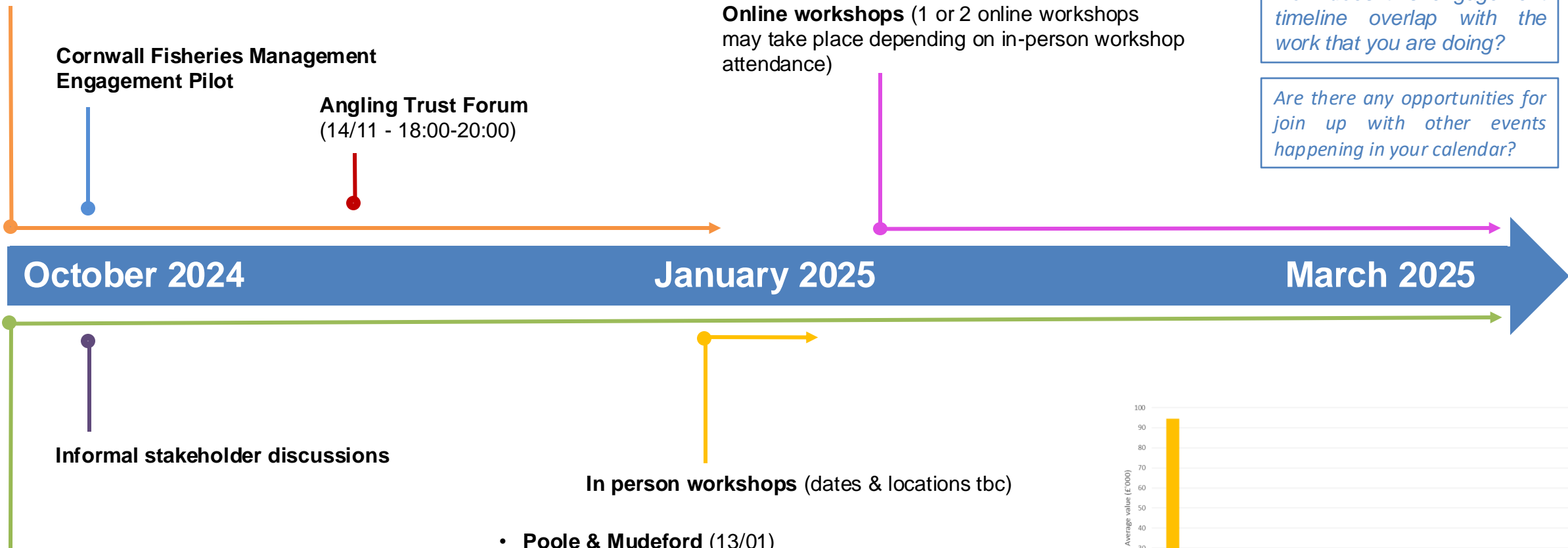
- Over 300 vessels landing FMP bream species but with a very low reliance on it for income: Each year 16-30 vessels are 5-20% dependent on FMP breams for income, and between 9-17 vessels are more than 20% dependent
- In all ports seabream species represented less than 2.5% of the total value of landings by UK vessels into that port
- In 2016 and 2017 most landings recorded were of black seabream, however from 2018 most landings are allocated to the generic seabreams (SBX) code
- Landings and average price of seabream species vary depending on the season. Landings typically peak in spring and average prices oscillate between £500 per kg and £5,000 per tonne. Weight landed decreased noticeably in 2021 and 2022. 2023 saw another peak in landings

Findings from online survey (so far):

- 311 responses so far, ~70% recreational, ~10% commercial, remainder is 'other'
- Top 5 counties that fishing activities take place in – Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, West Sussex
- Most fishing occurs on land or inshore (within 6nm) using private boats
- Reports of bream being caught as bycatch, predominantly black seabream, with some reports of gilthead bream
- Multiple reports of increase in abundance and decrease in size of FMP species. Longer seasons also reported
- Average retention: black seabream – ~22%, gilthead bream – ~17%

Current plan for engaging with stakeholders

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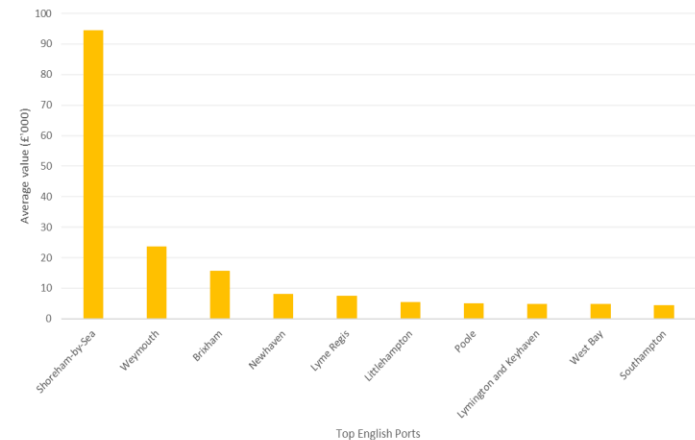
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Next Steps

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