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**These slides were presented to the Celtic Sea and Western Channel demersal FMP Working Group on the 18th November 2025. They contain feedback from stakeholders which is MMO opinion and will be considered where appropriate when developing the FMP.**

**The evidence contained within these slides is a snapshot of the analysis we have carried out so far and is still in draft form awaiting further stakeholder input.**

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# Celtic Sea and Western Channel Demersal FMP: Working Group Meeting 2

18 November 2024

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- 1. Actions from previous meeting**
- 2. Overview of feedback from Cornwall Event**
- 3. Overview of online survey responses**
- 4. Must Have Evidence overview**
- 5. Additional evidence requests**
- 6. Next Steps for WG and FMP development**
- 7. AOB**

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# Actions from previous meeting

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## Actions from previous meeting

Agenda item	Action	Owner
2 Working Group ToR	MMO to update ToR to give further clarity on species prioritisation role of the WG	MMO
2 Working Group ToR	Correct Latin name of red sea bream	MMO
2 Working Group ToR	Correct Latin name of sailray	MMO
2 Working Group ToR	Correct name of Anna Maclellan	MMO
2 Working Group ToR	Correct Agency of Colin Charman	MMO
3 Overview of the FMP	MMO to discuss with WG member possibility of additional in person workshops	MMO
3 Overview of the FMP	MMO to check with Welsh Government if NRW have been commissioned to provide SNCB advice	MMO
4 Issues/ Opportunities Discussion	MMO to contact WG member to discuss engagement with ROI / EU	MMO

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# Feedback from Developing Cornwall's Fisheries Pilot Event

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## Background

- Defra-led engagement in collaboration with CFPO, NFFO, UKAFPO
- FMP workshop on CSWC demersal FMP (attended by 20 stakeholders, split into 6 groups)
- Session 1: species prioritisation (monkfish/gadoids/flatfish)
- Session 2: concerns and solutions (influencing quota negotiations; allow fishers to make decisions on managing their activity)
- Session 3: priority rating re-visit
- Compiling outcomes which will feed into drafting potential options alongside other stakeholder feedback

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## Species prioritisation

Differing approach across the 6 groups, but prioritising by **economic importance** was dominant factor.

### High priority ratings for:

- **Lophius** (monkfish/anglerfish) high economic and social importance, high market demand.
- **Flatfish** (sole, megrim, plaice) economic, megrim regionally important “*Cornish sole*”
- **Gadoids** (pollack, cod, haddock) high importance, pollack - charter fleet.

### Other themes:

#### FMPs

- Acknowledge complex mixed fishery approach
- Mixed fishery quotas
- Split FMP between target and not-target species

#### Multi-year quotas

- FMP should consider longer term planning beyond the current 1-2 year ICES advice/quota cycle.

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# Cornwall pilot feedback: Session 1 species prioritisation

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## Species prioritisation – other themes

### Current management

Current fisheries management for the area is working, however certain species need more attention.

- What can be learned from other fisheries, such as the Norwegian cod fishery.

### EU/TCA/Quota

- Influencing Quota negotiations or the Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA).

### Ecosystem approach

A definition of the ecosystem approach and ecosystem management is needed.

### Needs of fishers

Less micro-management, fishers should be allowed to make their own decision on how they manage their activity.

### Climate change

Impacts of climate change on socio-economic activity.

Impact of sea surface temperature changes on Irish sea cod.

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## Concerns

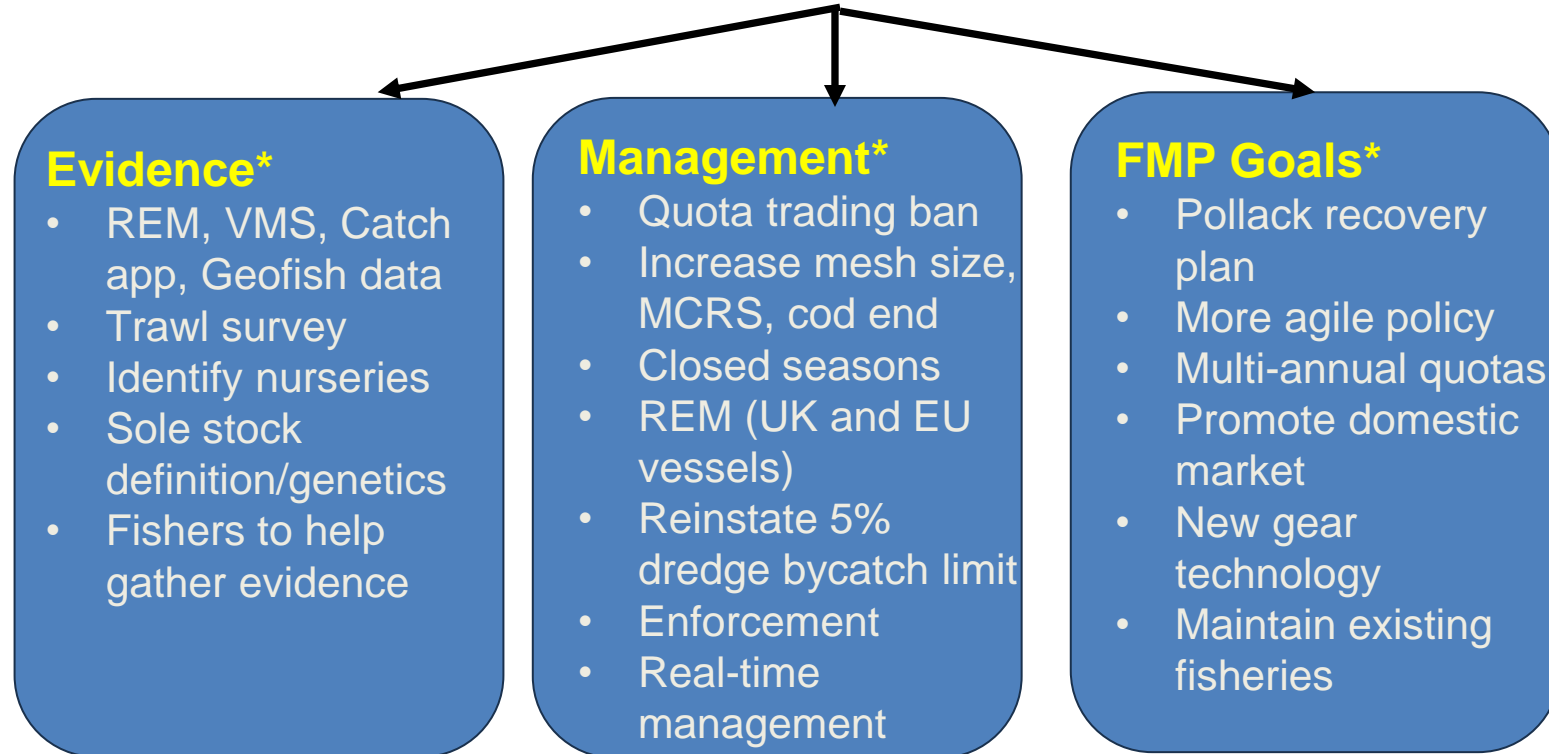
- Need for TAC realignment
- Quota trading
- Choke concerns
- Stock recovery for certain species
- Lack of stock assessments
- Removal of 5% scallop bycatch limit
- Inadequate enforcement
- Spatial squeeze
- MSC re-certification
- Seal management
- Slow decision making
- Wreck netting
- Recreational pollack catches
- Lack of influence on EU negotiations

## Opportunities

- Warming waters, species shift
- Rebrand megrim as “Cornish sole”
- Local nephrop fishery

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## Solutions\*



### Evidence\*

- REM, VMS, Catch app, Geofish data
- Trawl survey
- Identify nurseries
- Sole stock definition/genetics
- Fishers to help gather evidence

### Management\*

- Quota trading ban
- Increase mesh size, MCRS, cod end
- Closed seasons
- REM (UK and EU vessels)
- Reinstate 5% dredge bycatch limit
- Enforcement
- Real-time management

### FMP Goals\*

- Pollack recovery plan
- More agile policy
- Multi-annual quotas
- Promote domestic market
- New gear technology
- Maintain existing fisheries

*\*The solutions documented on this slide do not necessarily represent the views of the MMO*



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# Snapshot of survey responses

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# Online survey responses (so far)

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## **37 responses**

~ 70% individuals, ~30% organisations.

## **Sector breakdown:**

~55% commercial (2:1 inshore/offshore ratio), ~14% recreational, ~31% other (including ~6% producers).

**Skates and rays importance:** ~71% yes

Species highlighted included **thornback, small-eyed, blonde, spotted ray.**

**Note:** the species were flagged as environmentally and as well as economically important. (eg *“keeping prey populations in check”*).

Comment - Rays being targeted since pollack ban.

*Please note: Due to the few responses received in some cases, these averaged results may not be representative of the sector as a whole*

## Concerns:

Sole decrease?

Gill netting

## FMP priorities:

- Improved environmental sustainability ~ 64%
- Improved economic sustainability ~ 44%
- Greater social benefits ~ 40%
- Improving evidence base ~ 48%
- Addressing spatial squeeze ~ 20%

*Please note: These are just some of the most common responses received so far. This is not an exhaustive list.*



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# Overview of "Must Have" evidence recieved

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# What is "Must Have" evidence

## Advice from NE on the Celtic Sea and Westerr Channel Demersal FMP


### **SNCB Advice (and references within)**

Provides information on the risks arising from the FMP fisheries to:

- Designated features of MPAs in English waters
- UK Marine Strategy descriptors

Scoped in demersal trawls, static nets and drift nets as the most relevant gear types

### **Seafish evidence pack**

Includes information on economics of the fleet e.g. employment,, economic dependency and trade data 



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MMO Statistics team

### **MMO Landings data**

Used to understand the proportion of landings from each gear type

  
Centre for Environment  
Fisheries & Aquaculture  
Science



**Evidence collation for Fisheries  
Management Plans**

### **Cefas evidence pack**

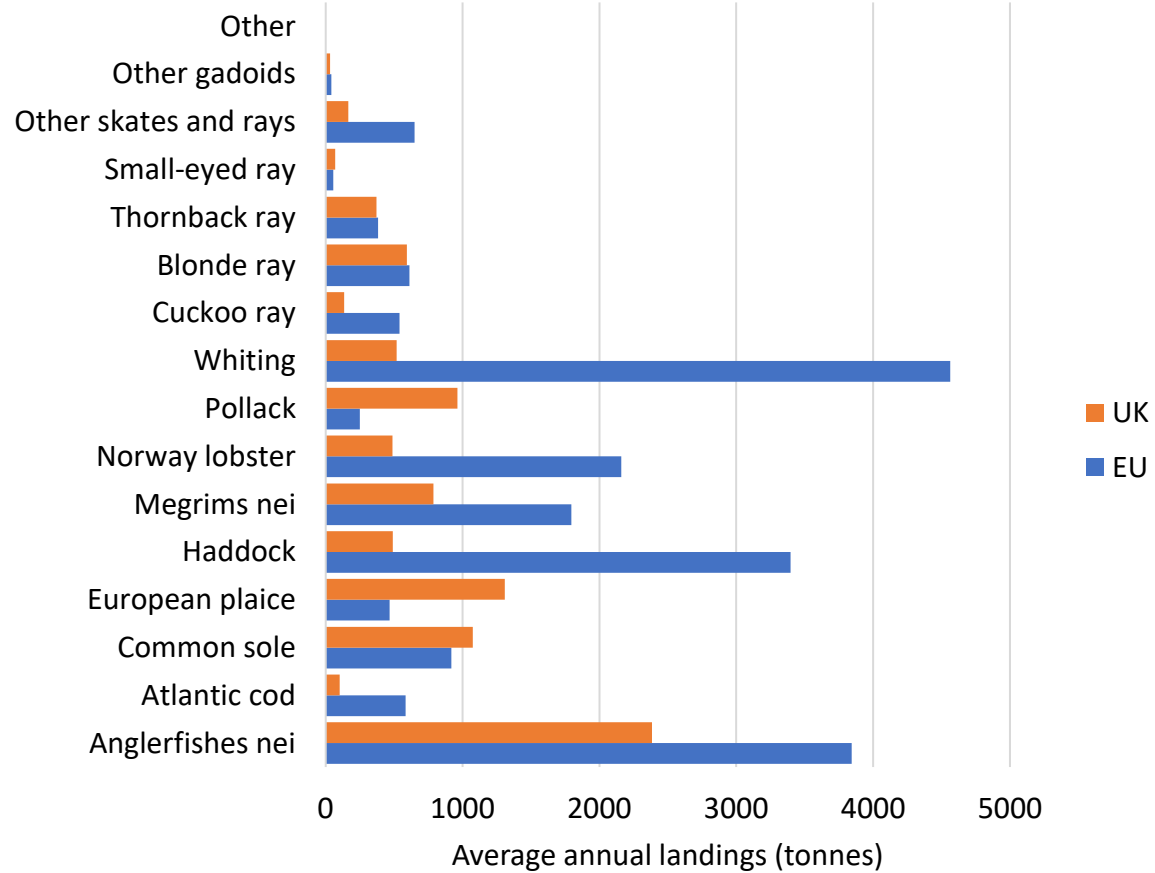
Includes biological information, ICES advice, ongoing data collection, recreational information

- Evidence that is commissioned by Defra for all FMPs to support FMP development
- Not the only sources of data we can use for the FMP
- Additional evidence can come from commissioned projects, data stakeholders hold, academic research

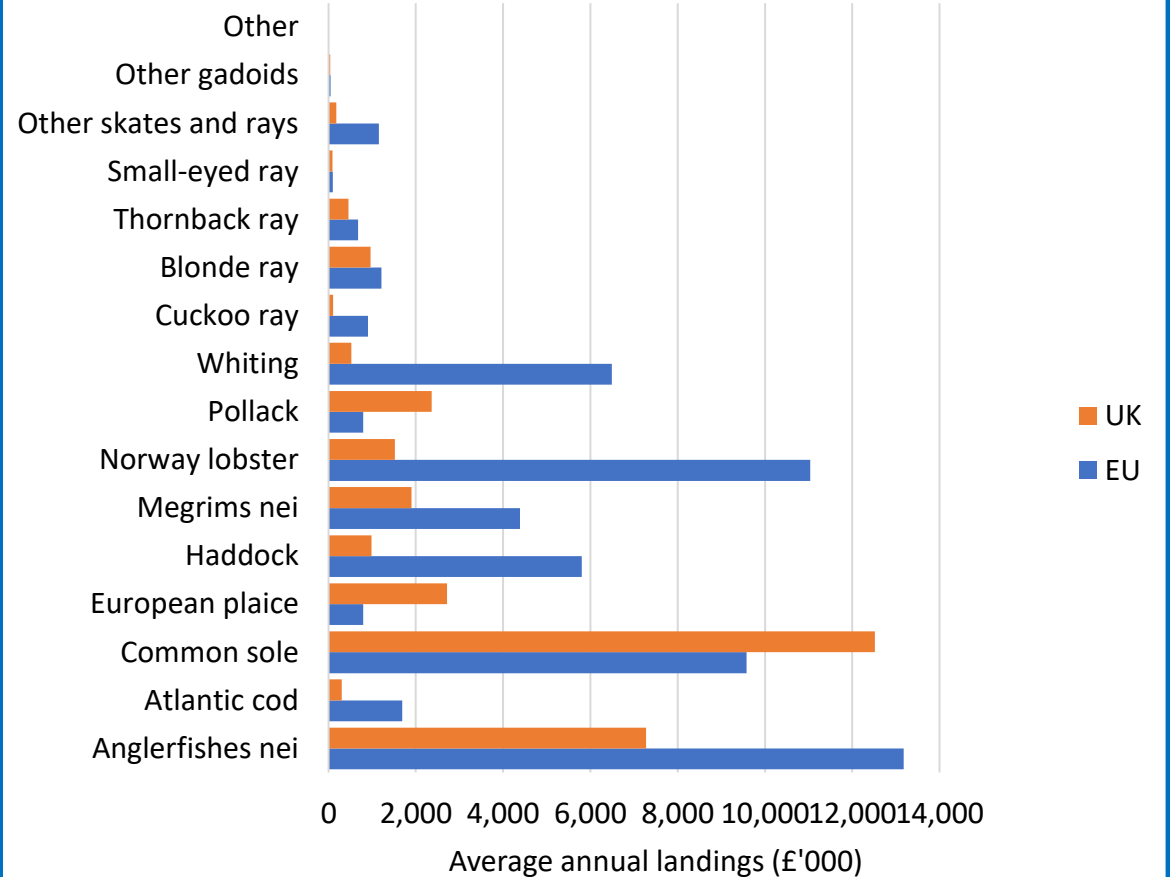
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# MMO Landings Data: 2016-2021

**Weight (tonnes) of commercial landings:**



**Value (£'000s) of commercial landings:**



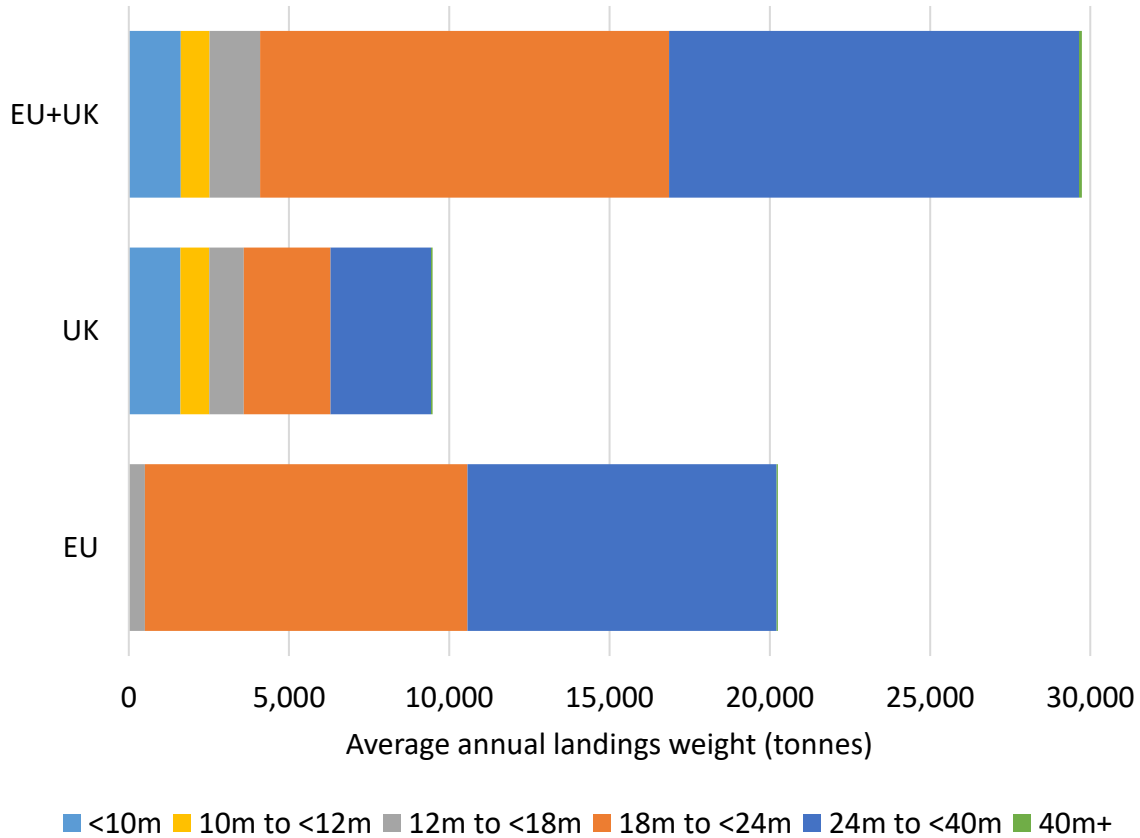
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\*Draft content – to be refined through FMP development

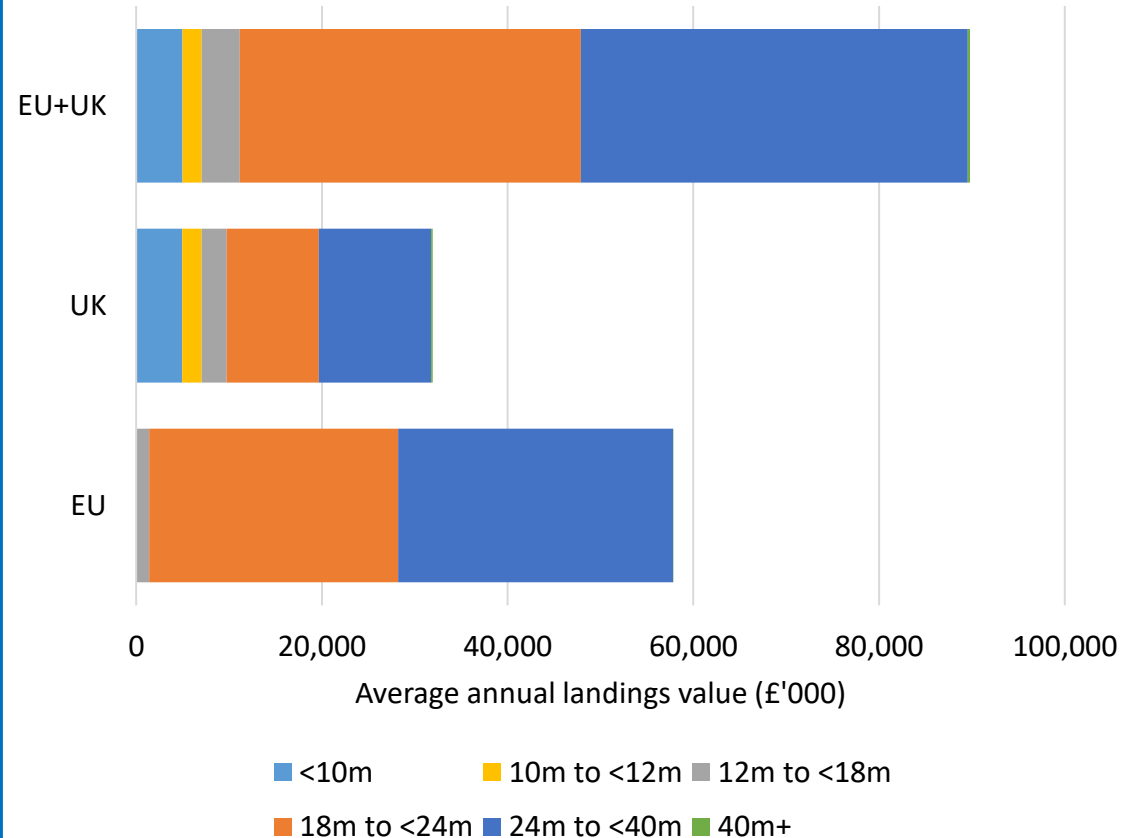


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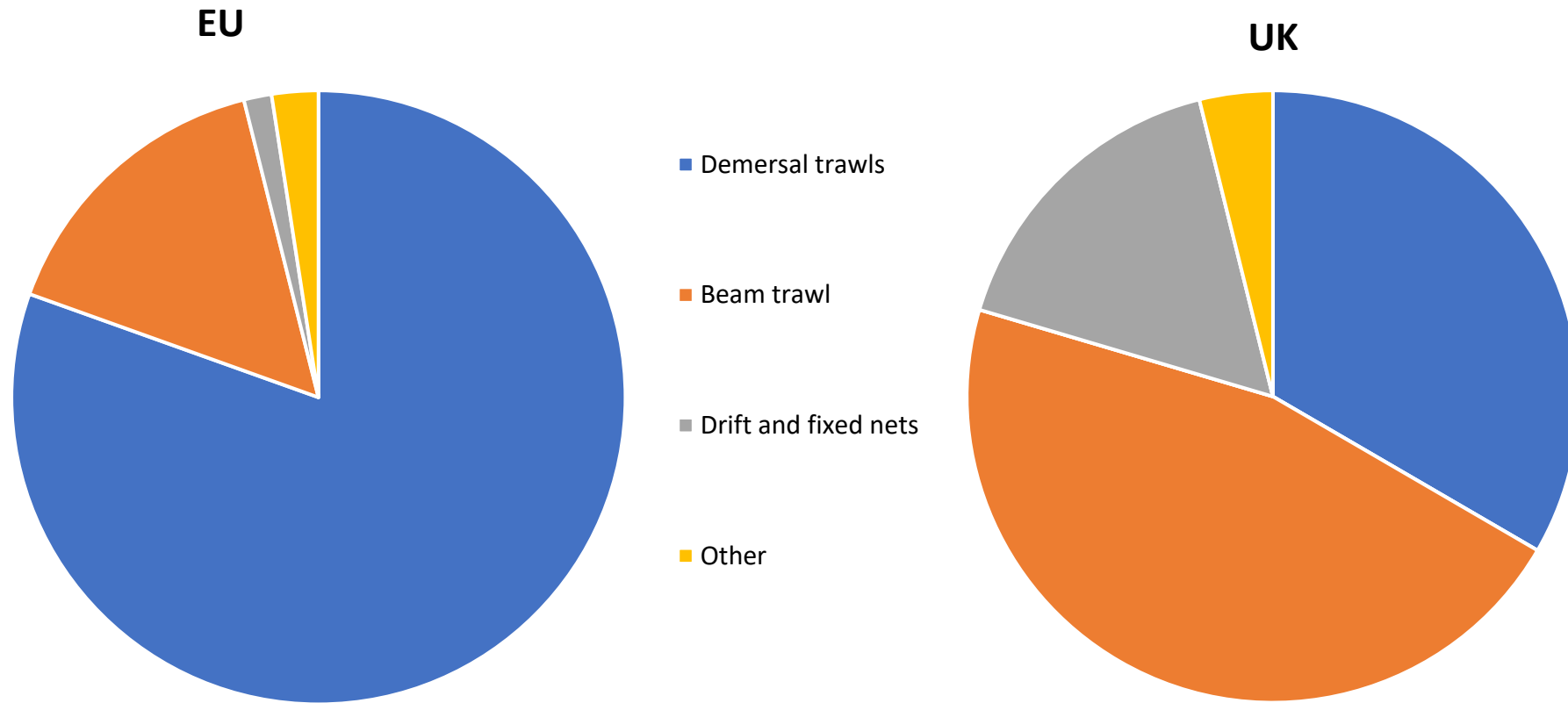
**Value (£'000s) of commercial landings:**



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\*Draft content – to be refined through FMP development

## Commercial landings:

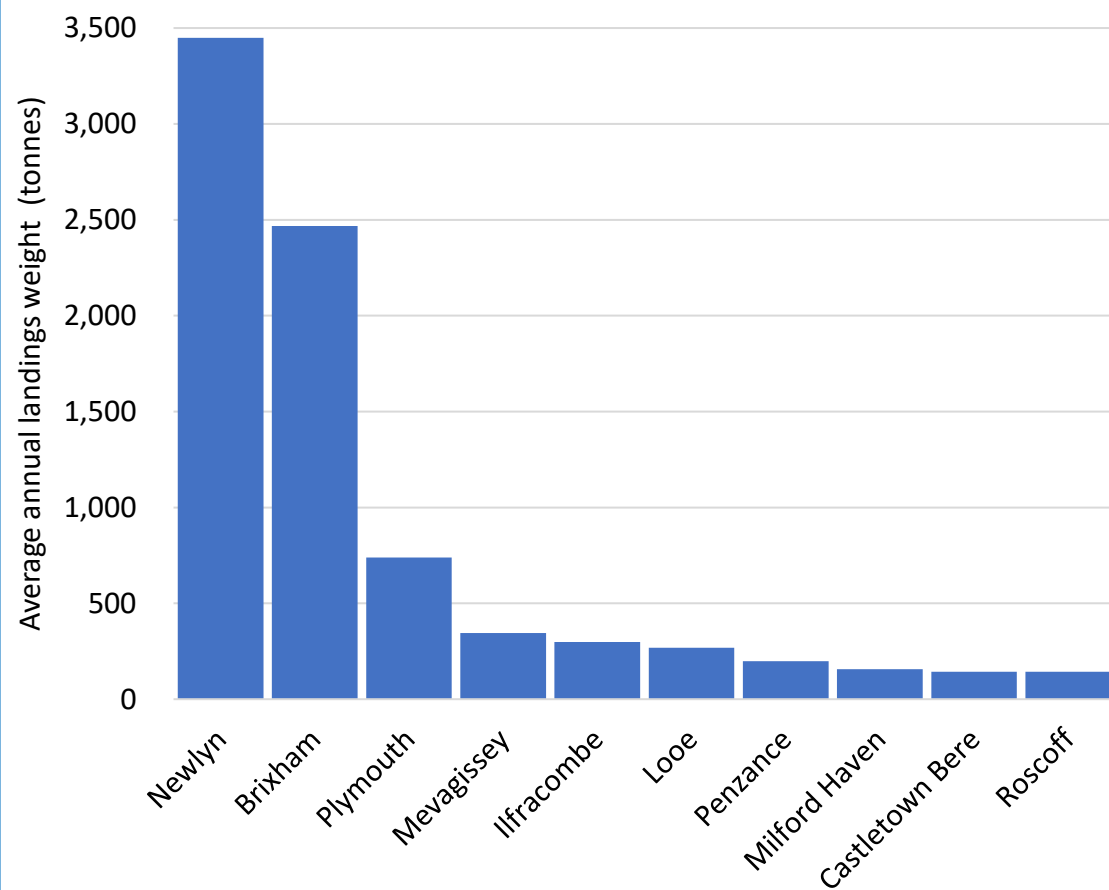


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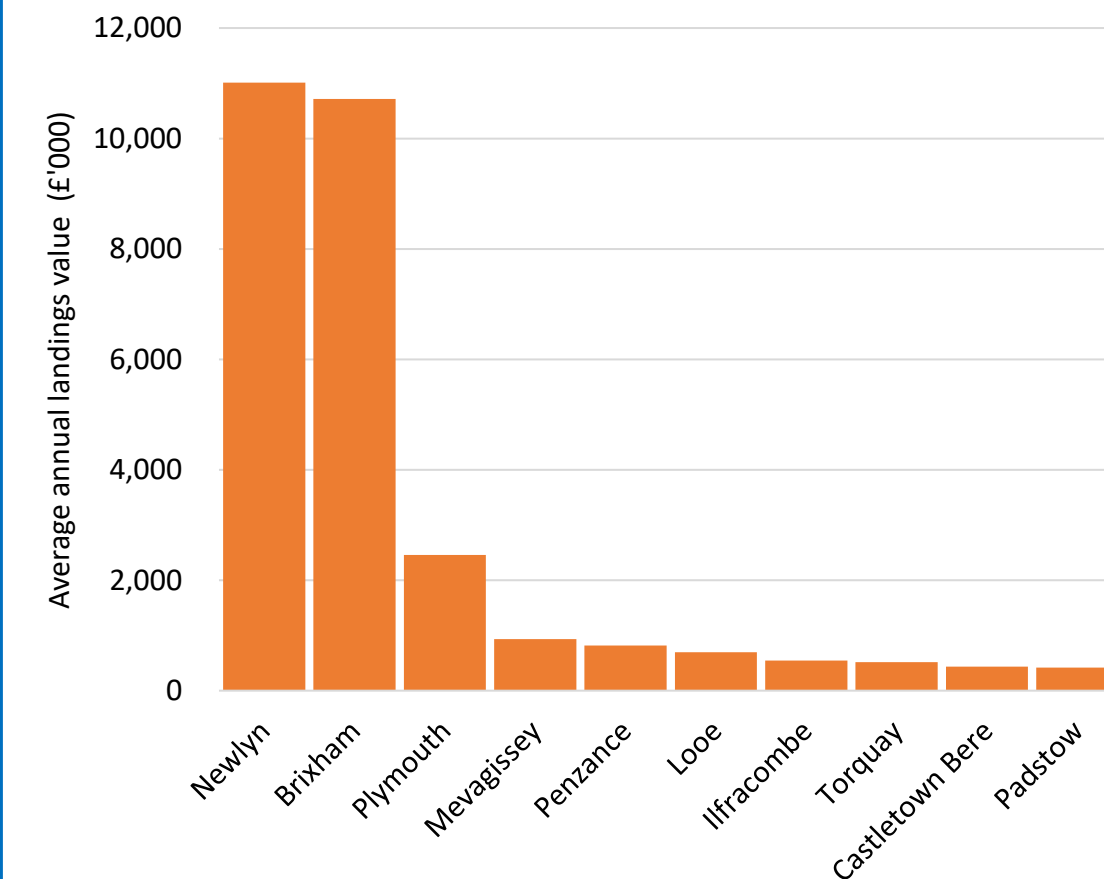
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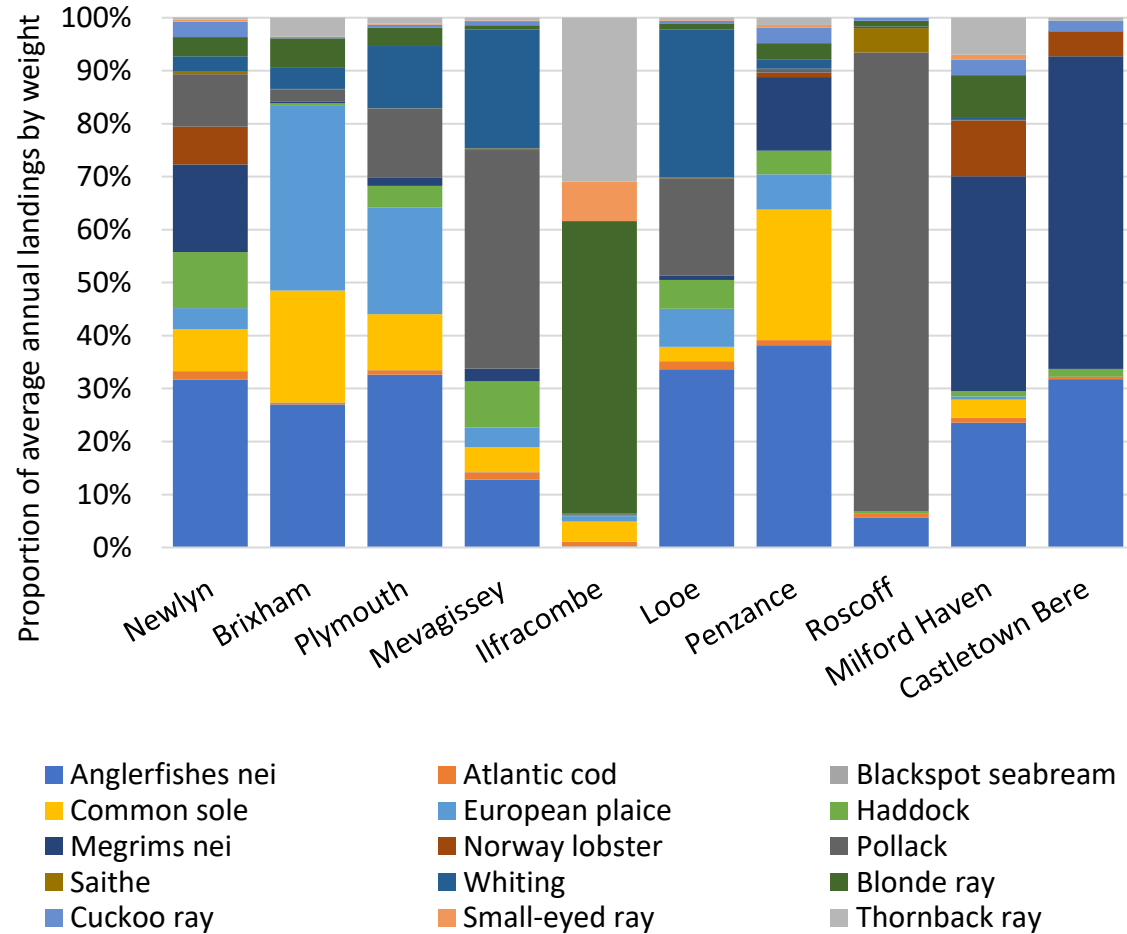
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Note: different ports on x axis

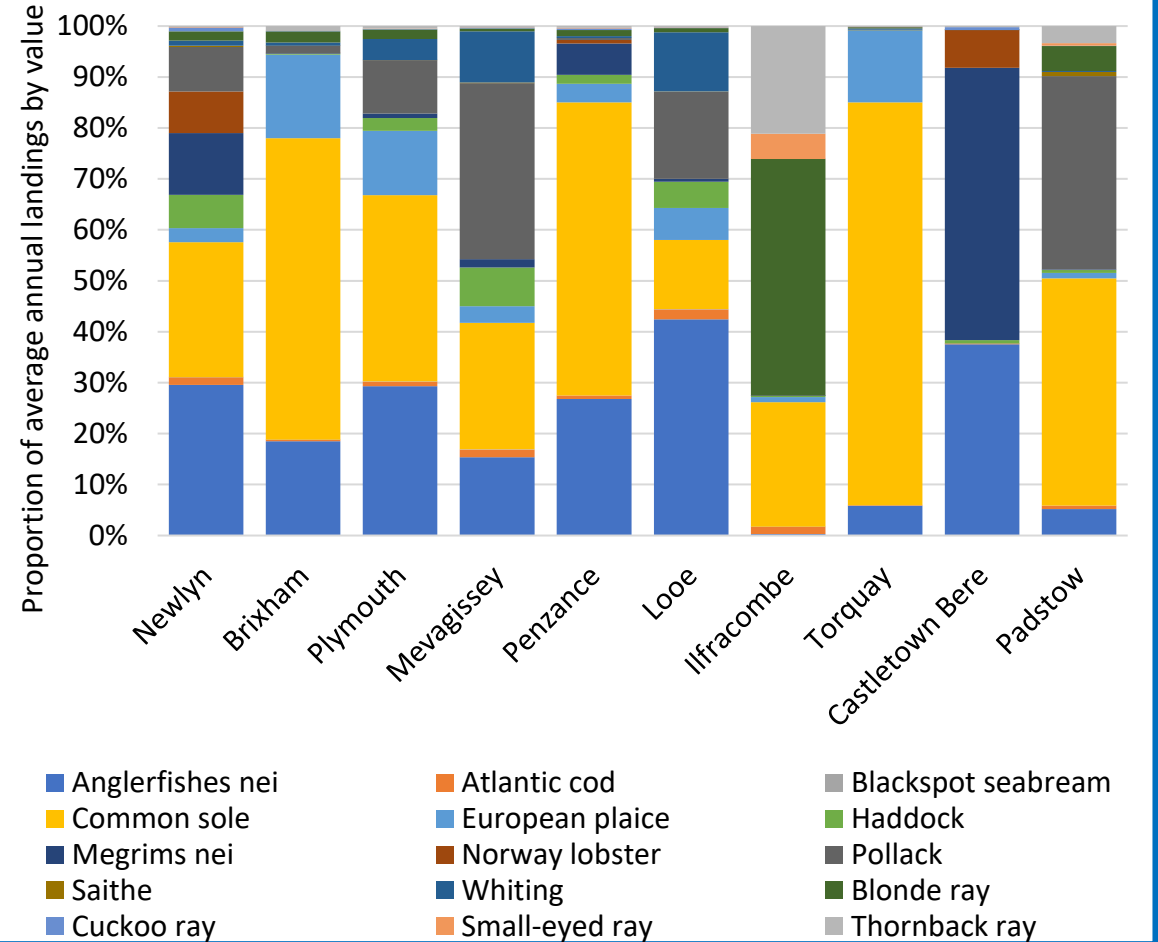
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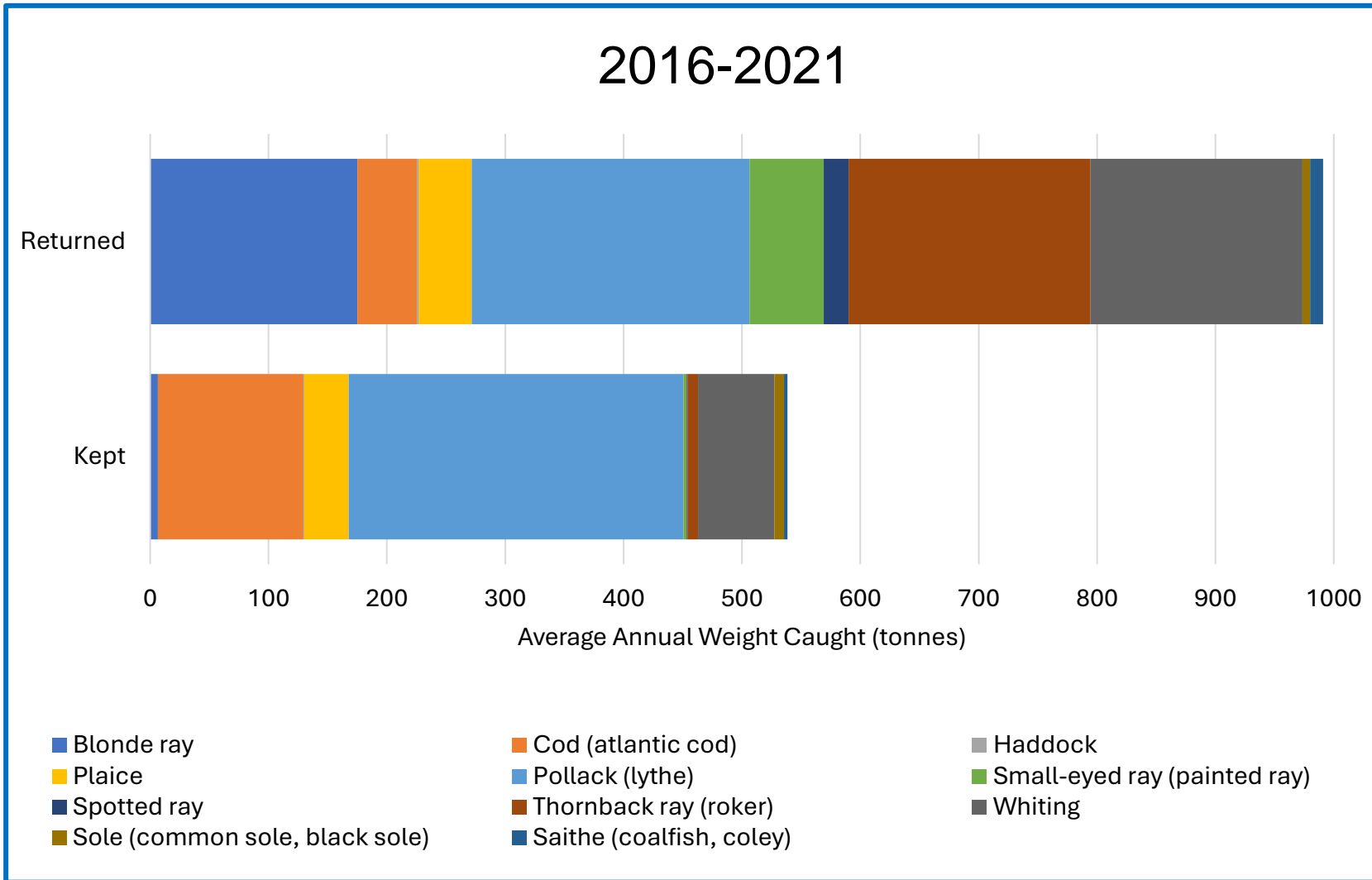


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Note: different ports on x axis

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# Recreational catches of FMP species



In 2023, **66%** of the total recreational catch of **pollack** was fished within the FMP area. The vast majority of pollack is caught in 7e and significantly more pollack is caught in 7g and 7h than any other species.

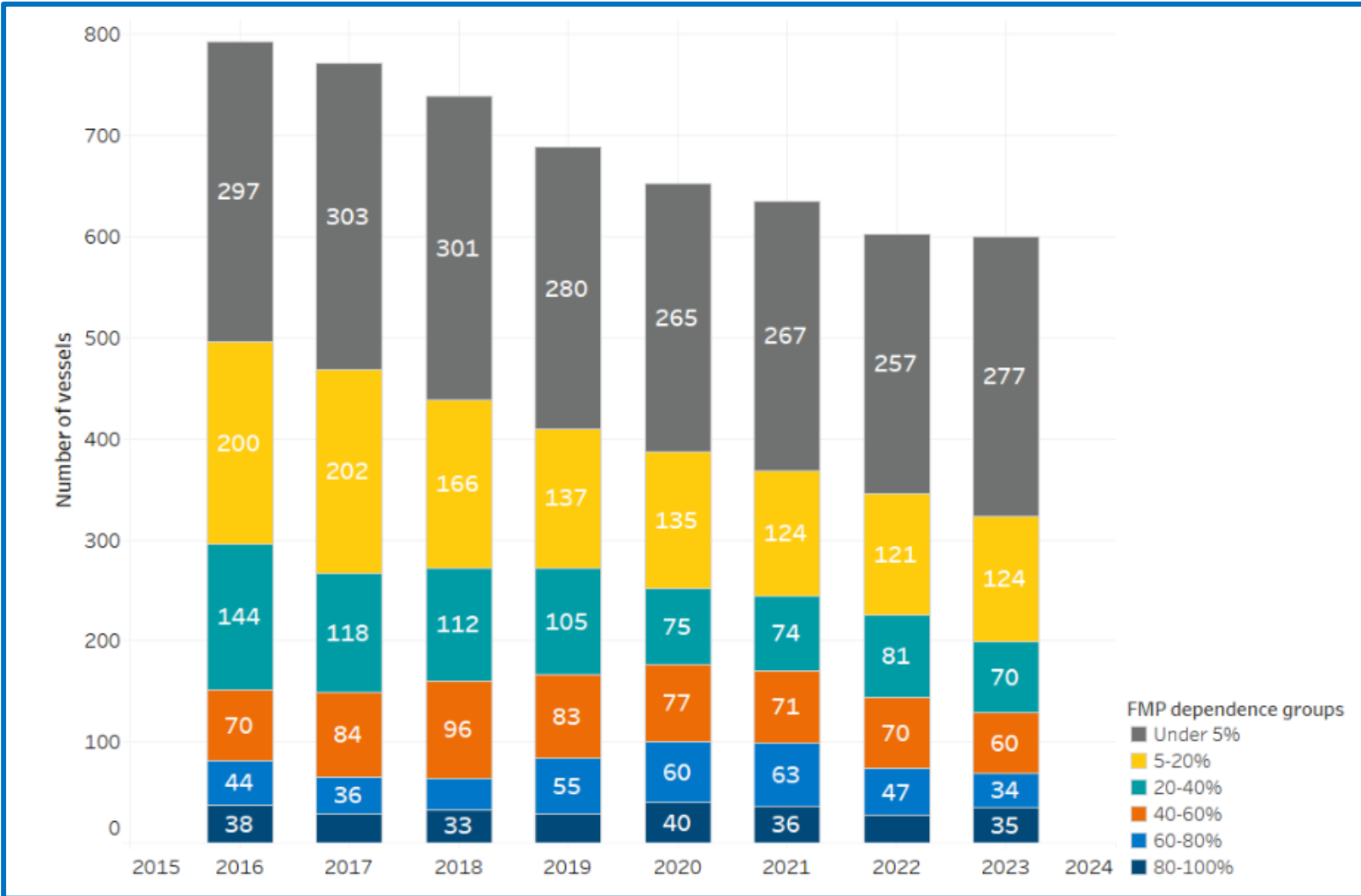
In the FMP area, **cod** accounts for **15-20%** and **10-20%** of the total kept and returned tonnage, respectively.

The FMP area accounts for **40%** of the total recreational catch of **plaice** within England and Wales, with most of this species being caught in 7e.

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# Seafish Economic Information



The number of vessels landing Celtic Sea demersal species declined from **793 in 2016** to **600 in 2023**, a total decline of 24% in the period.

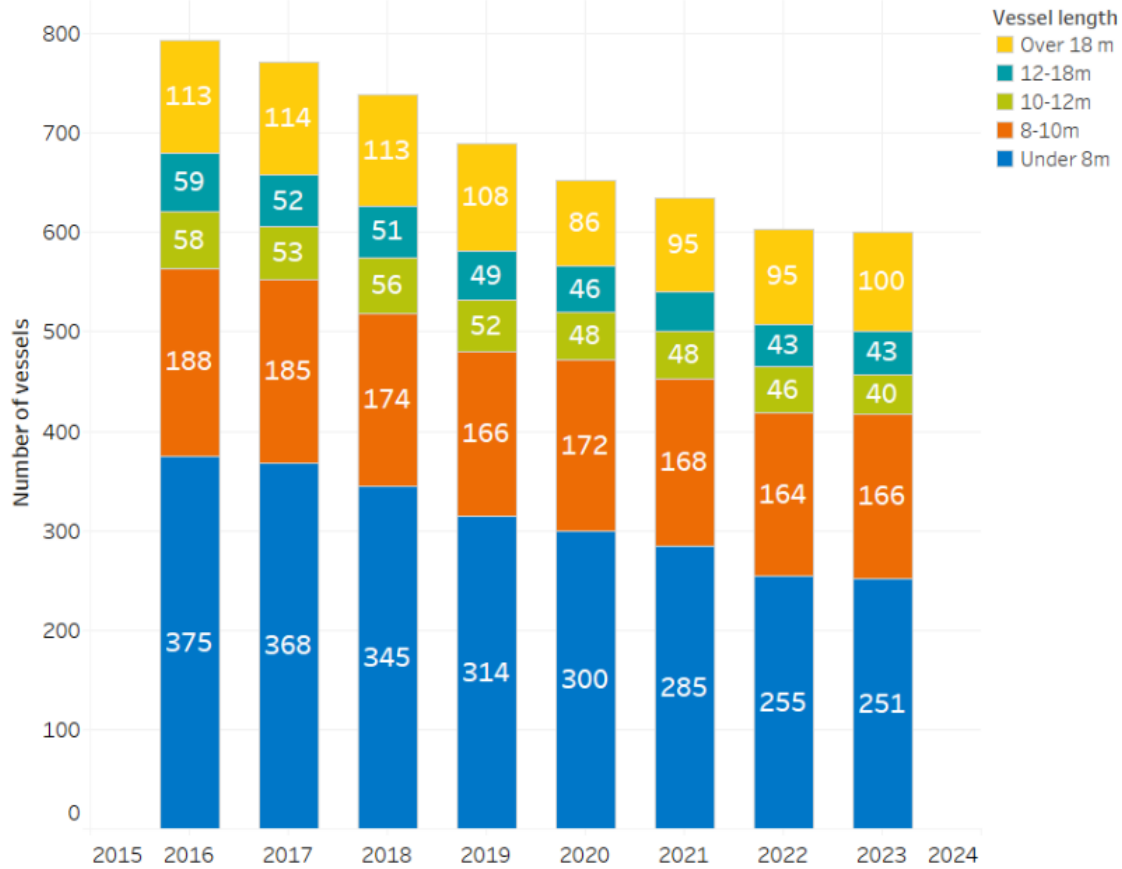
In 2023 **67%** of vessels were **less than 20%** financially dependent on Celtic Sea and Western Channel Demersal FMP species.

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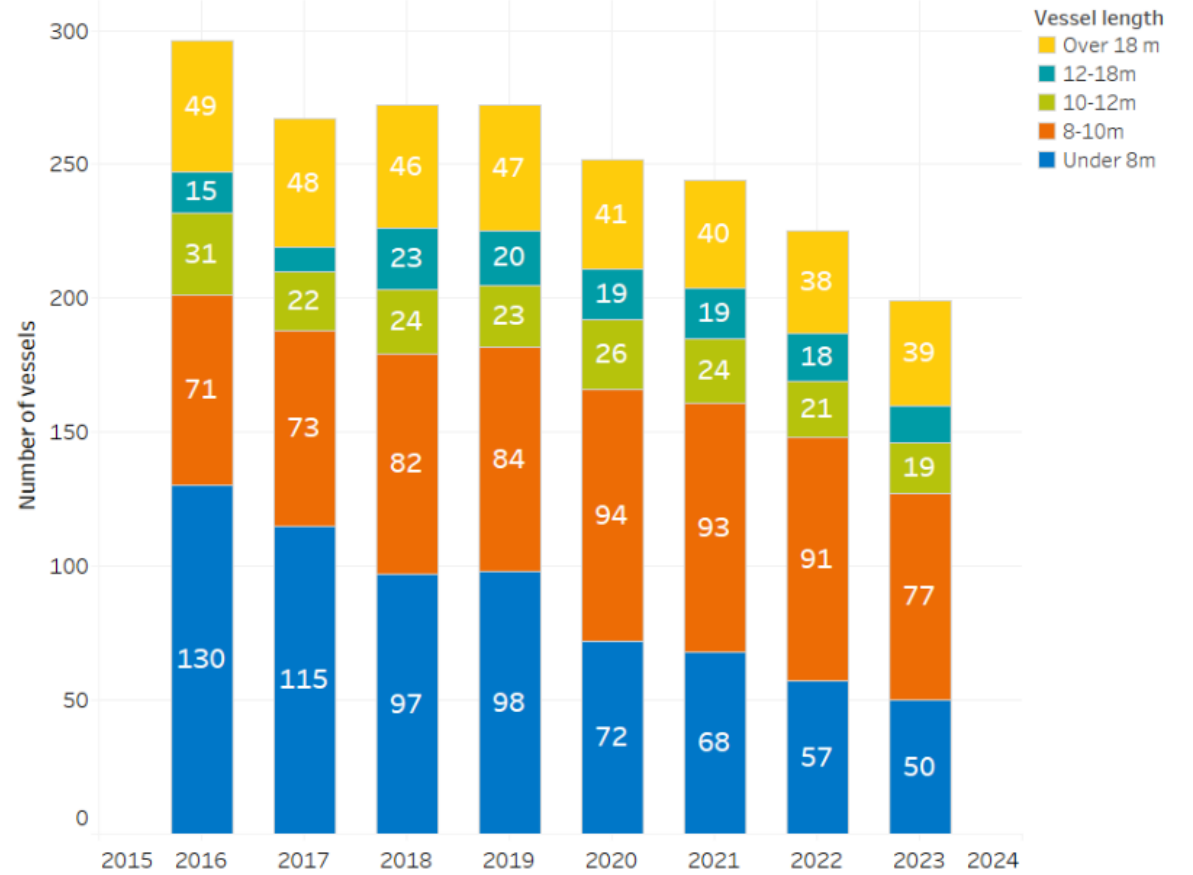
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# Seafish Economic Information

Number of UK vessels that landed **any volume** of Celtic Sea demersal species by length group (2016-2023)



Number of UK vessels **at least 20% economically dependent** on the FMP by length group (2016-2023)



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\*Draft content – to be refined through FMP development

## **ICES stock health overview**

2024 ICES advice sheets available online

Poor condition- cod, pollack, whiting, red seabream, small eyed ray

Okay/ intermediate condition- haddock, plaice, nephrops, sole, sandy ray

Good condition- Monkfish, anglerfish, megrim, blue ling, shagreen ray, cuckoo ray, thornback ray

No assessment- deep water sharks, roundnose grenadier, saithe

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## Cefas identified evidence gaps

- Stock identity and delineation and limited biological information (for example, weight, age, growth, maturity, mortality)
- Consider steps needed to implement a mixed-fishery approach for CSWCD FMP
- Biological sampling
- Recreational catches and post-release mortality
- Align with Black seabream FMP to resolve the landings uncertainty relating to seabreams, including red seabream
- Ecological impacts of offshore wind- in particular, cumulative impacts at population and stock level

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## Bycatch risks to designated features of the MPA.

- There is a **moderate risk** of bycatch of mobile species (marine mammals, birds, and fish) that are designated features of MPAs in demersal trawls.
- There is a **high risk** of bycatch of marine mammals, seabirds and fish that are designated features of MPAs in static nets.
- There is a **high risk** of bycatch of seabirds and fish that are designated features of MPAs in drift nets.
- There is a **moderate** risk of bycatch of marine mammals that are designated features of MPAs in drift nets
- There is a **moderate risk** from demersal trawls, static nets and drift nets to designated mobile species of MPAs from reductions in the availability of juvenile cod and whiting as prey, primarily in relation to harbour porpoise.

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## Risk to UK MS descriptors - D1 – Biological diversity; D4 – Food webs; D6 – Sea floor integrity, D10 – Litter

- There is a **high** risk to D1, D4 cetaceans and D1, D4 seabirds through bycatch from static nets.
- There is a **moderate** risk to D1, D4 seals through bycatch from static nets.
- There is a **high** risk to D1, D4 seabirds through bycatch from driftnets.
- There is a **moderate** risk to D1, D4 cetaceans and D1, D4 seals through bycatch from driftnets.
- There is a **moderate** risk to D1, D4 cetaceans, D1, D4 seals, D1, D4 seabirds through bycatch from demersal trawls.
- There is a **high** risk to D1, D6 seafloor integrity from demersal trawls
- There is a **moderate** risk to D1, D4 cetaceans, D1, D4 seals, D1, D4 seabirds through reductions in prey.
- There is a **moderate** risk to D10 marine litter from demersal trawls including

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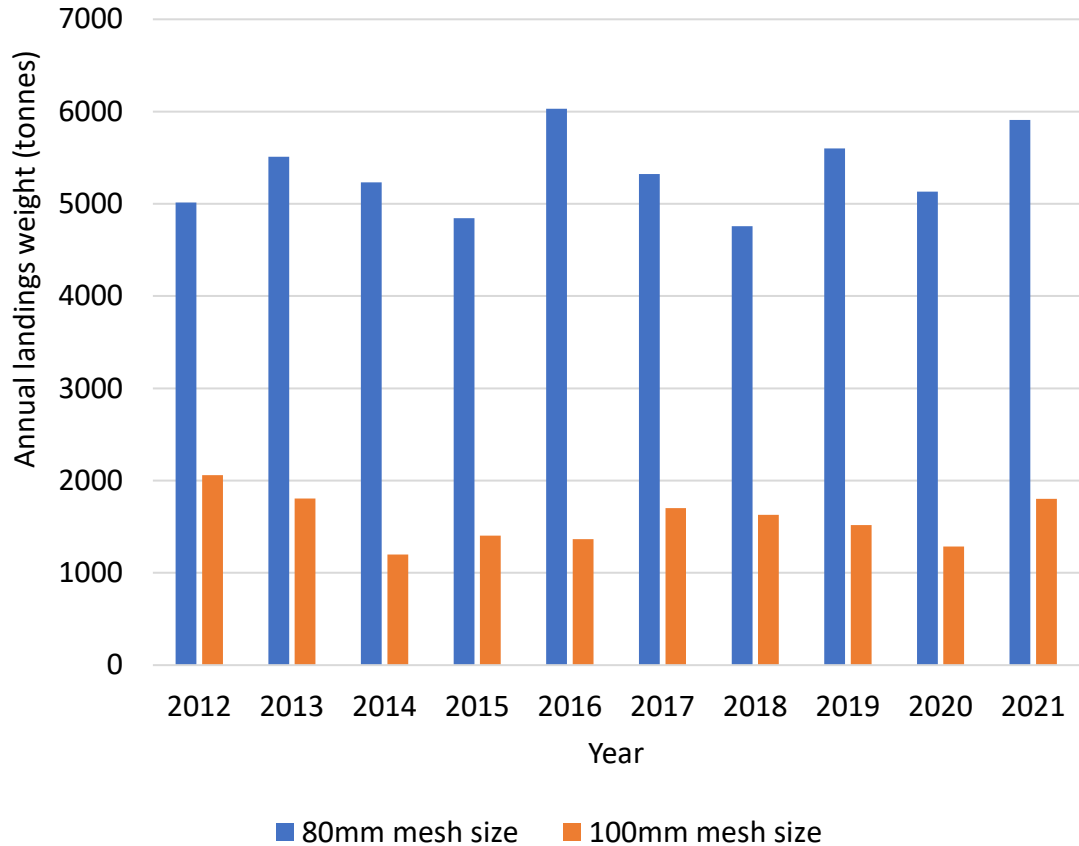
## Exploring the benefits of join up with the CSWC Pelagic FMP

Ecosystem Modelling EwE.	Ecosystem modelling approaches to identify the ecosystem roles of our FMP species (with potential to link roles to provisioning ecosystem services). Modelling effects of management options on the ecosystem and FMP species.
Ecosystem Modelling PoL.	Ecosystem modelling approach to identify the roles of our FMP species, identify effects on other species, and identify ecological tipping points. Modelling effects of management options on the ecosystem and FMP species.
Understanding the state, threats, and management of Essential Fish Habitat.	Identifies the key essential fish habitats for each of the FMP species at different life-history stages and understands the capacity of the essential fish habitats for these species to provide ecosystem services. Describes the sensitivities to these habitats for current or future pressures and describes the risk of not managing these habitats properly.
Risk register of pressures for FMP species.	A risk register of fishing and non-fishing threats to FMP species with a focused look at magnitude of impacts for key activity/pressure combinations.
MSPACE Outputs.	Models projecting long term climate change impacts on FMP species distributions.

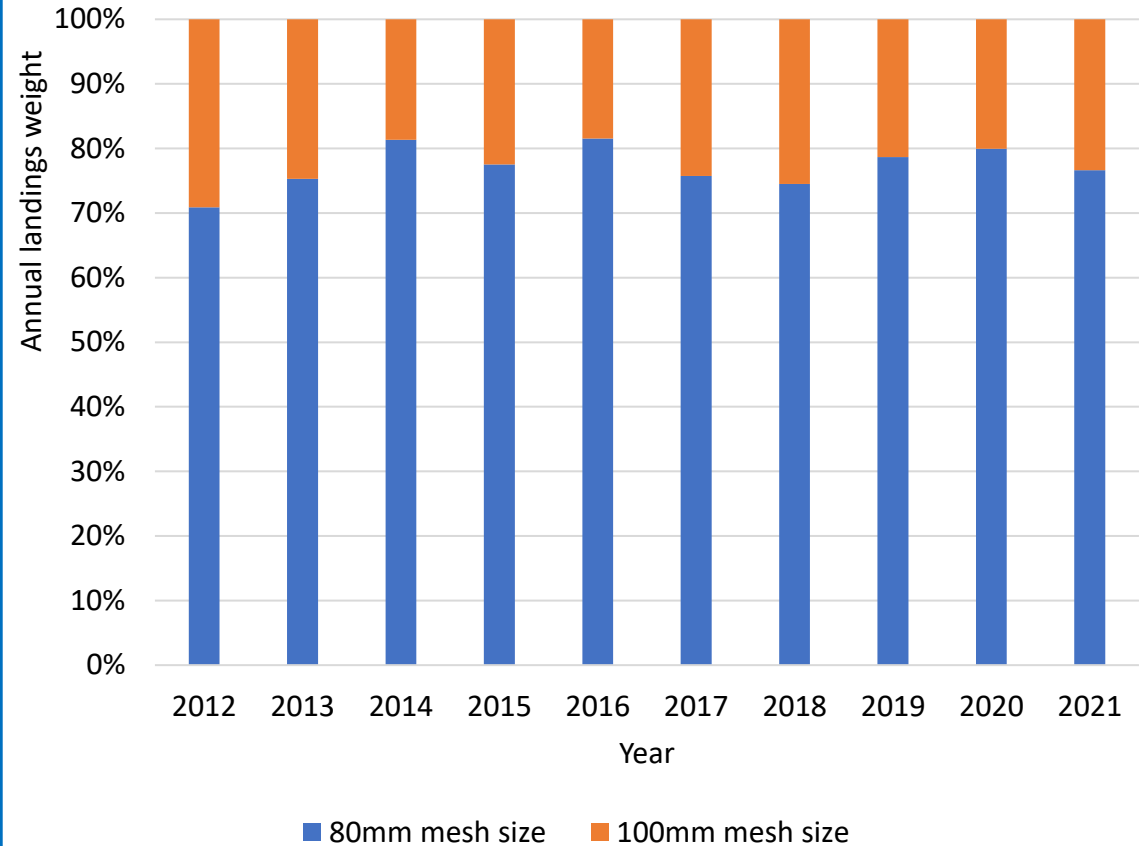
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# Additional ask from stakeholders: 80mm mesh vs 100mm mesh data

Weight (tonnes) of commercial landings:



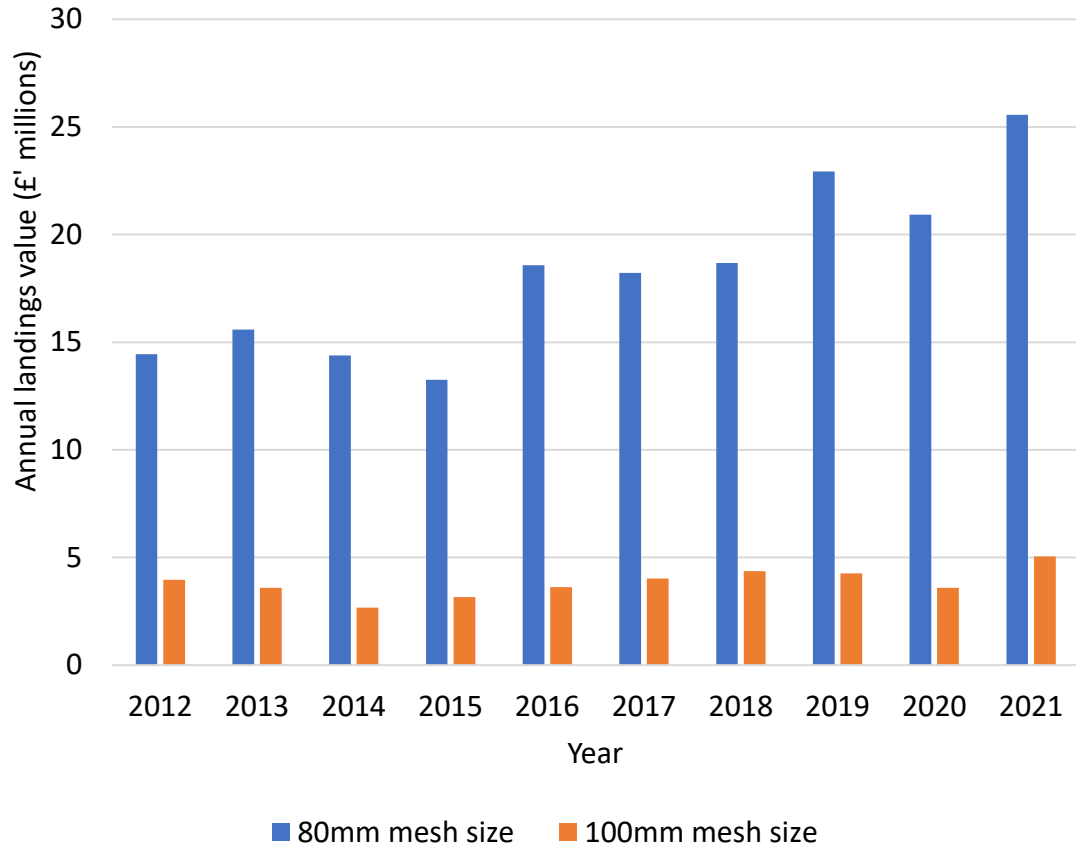
Proportion of commercial landing weight:



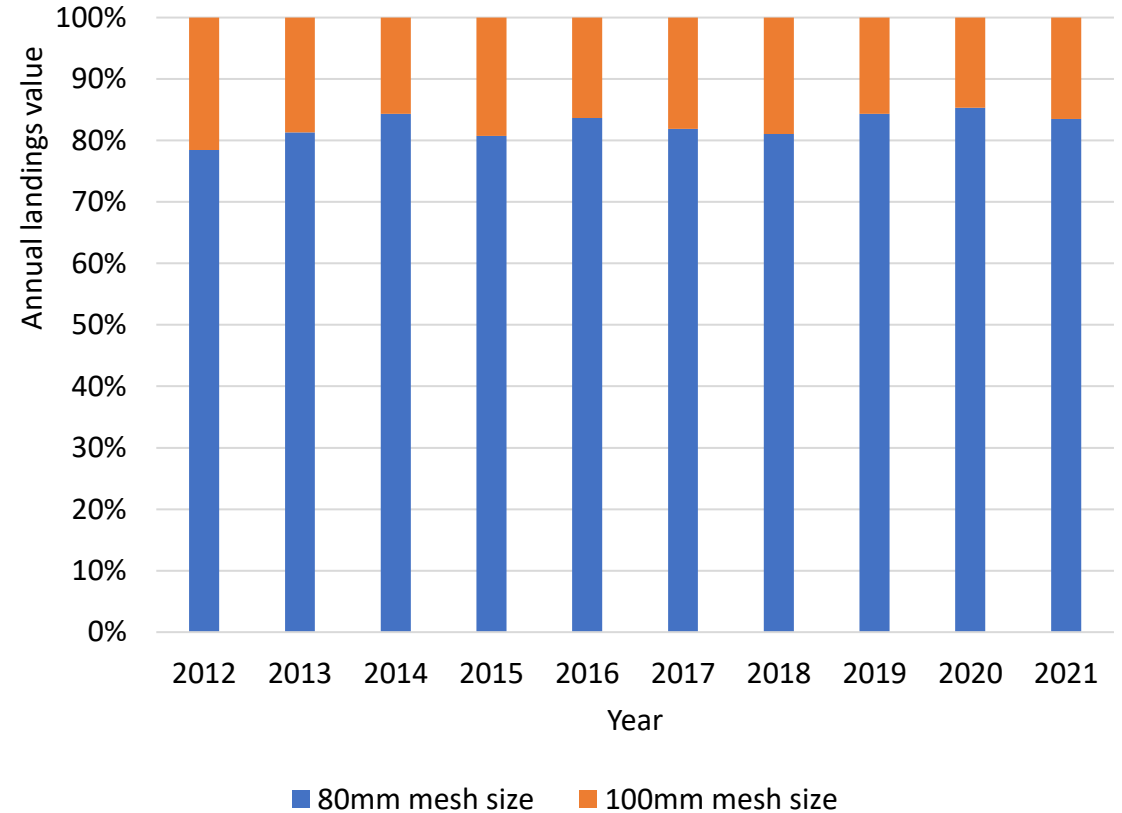
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# Additional ask from stakeholders: 80mm mesh vs 100mm mesh data

Value (£'millions) of commercial landings:



Proportion of commercial landing value:



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# Discussion on any other additional evidence for the FMP

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# Next steps for the WG and FMP development

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- Rachel going on maternity leave, Mark stepping up and will be chairing the WG going forward and carrying on leading the FMP development with Nick
- Work will now focus on finishing planned engagement, consolidating feedback received and evidence collated
- Stock take of EU-UK negotiations outcomes
- No planned WG meeting pre-xmas, next one will be post-xmas and focus on discussing potential management options and goals of the FMP that can be taken to workshops in spring 2025
- WG may be contacted before to review elements of the FMP via email
- WG invited to continue to feed in anything they think is relevant between now and the new year

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## **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November**

- Brixham Sprat session - BTA Office – 12.15pm – 2.15pm
- Brixham Skates & Rays session – BTA Office – 2.30pm – 4.30pm.

## **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November**

- Mevagissey drop in session – 09.30am – 11.30am
- Newlyn Skates & Rays session – CFPO Office – 2.30pm – 4.30pm

## **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

- Padstow drop in session – 10am – 12pm
- Ilfracombe drop in session – 3pm – 5pm

## **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

- Plymouth drop in session 12pm – 2pm

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