



Crab and Lobster FMP in English Waters

The goals & why they will help

Why have an FMP for Crab and Lobster?

Crab and lobster have been prioritised because they are a **high value** fishery, some of the existing **effort management** schemes are outdated and ineffective, and CEFAS stock assessments have recorded that the species are **highly exploited** and below the **maximum sustainable yield threshold**.



1-2 years

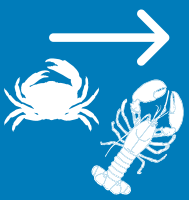
The goals

The whys



Increase MCRS for crawfish and lobster

- To offer further protection for crawfish and lobster females
- To allow more spawning events to occur before removal
- To support stock biomass
- Offers the opportunity to align and simplify compliance across administrative boundaries.



Maximise the fishery whilst aiming to achieve maximum sustainable yield

- Effective effort control will enable the fishery to continue whilst also allowing for the stock biomass to reach the maximum sustainable yield status



The **implementation** of finer scale management through trial projects

- The trial scheme will look at whether new measures are feasible and can be practicably managed by regulators and industry
- To avoid overfishing to ensure sustainable stocks



Prohibition of landing and selling soft shell crab for bait

- Improve compliance and assurance in the fishery
- Maintains the value of the fishery



Improve the information base on recreational crab and lobster fishing

- Assists the stock assessment and the regulatory bodies
- Allows for a full stock assessment and will guide future management with a fully evidenced decision-making process

3-5 years



Develop an **effort management** strategy for crab and lobster



Trial schemes to increase data

- Maintain stock levels whilst allowing for fishing activities to continue
- Opportunity to use new technologies

- Improve evidence and data to enable evidence-based management

- Trials such as pot limits will give fishing authorities the opportunity to address data gaps and inconsistent data submissions

What have we done?

- Increased MCRS for crawfish to 110mm in all English waters. This will come into force on 16th December 2024



What are we doing?

- Seafish and Defra are working on the consideration of potential regional impacts of increased lobster MCRS
- DEFRA have started work on the prohibition of soft-shell crab and are currently working on the Statutory Instruments / order.
- MMO are currently gathering data on both the crab and lobster fisheries units for a trial scheme.
- Seafish will be assisting with the finer scale management trial schemes.