Marine Management Organisation

Consultation on a potential seasonal closure of the crawfish fishery

Background

In 2024, MMO worked with industry to address concerns for the crawfish fishery in the southwest. Stakeholder engagement events and consultations were held regarding seasonal closures of the fishery. The first closure took place between 5 February 2024 to 30 April 2024. The second closure is currently active running from 16 December 2024 to 31 May 2025.

In December 2024 the licence condition for the increased minimum conservation reference size 'MCRS' (minimum landing size) of 110 millimetres (mm) was succeeded by a statutory instrument. Further information on previous consultation decisions and engagement is available on the dedicated **crawfish consultation** and **southwest regional fisheries group (RFG) webpage.**

2025 Consultation

MMO has opened a consultation for an annual seasonal closure for 2025/2026. The consultation will close at midnight on **20 July 2025**. The following closure periods are proposed for your consideration:

- **no closure**
- **19 December 2025 to 31 May 2026**

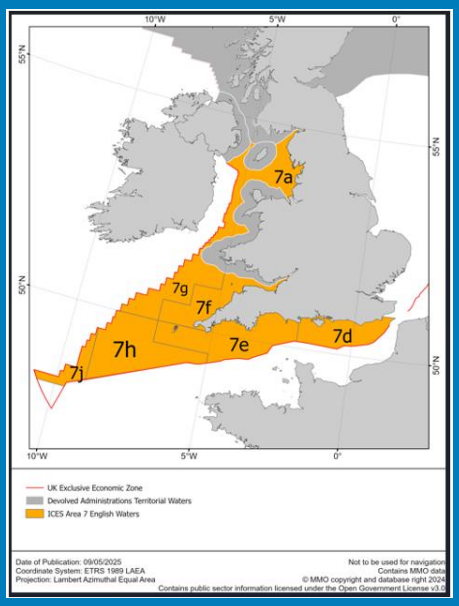
The closure would be for all UK and EU vessels with all gears working in ICES sub area 7 in English waters enacted through a licence variation.

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 left for long soak times or lost during the unpredictable winter weather.

Southwest octopus bloom

MMO is monitoring the octopus bloom occurring in the southwest and is aware of the concerns raised by industry members regarding the impacts being observed in shellfish fisheries. For updates please see the **southwest RFG webpage.**



Further information

Further information regarding the consultation and how to respond, can be found **here** or contact us at **FMP@marinemanagement.org.uk.**

…ambitious for our seas and coasts