

Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Quarterly Report for the Period Ending December 2011

General Situation

Chief Officer T Robbins

Work this quarter has been focused on delivering the objectives set out within the annual plan both for the current quarter and for the following year, work has also been started to look at plans for budget, enforcement and research activities up until 2015.

The priority focus for the coming year will be to initiate the setting up of management plans for the European Marine Sites (EMS) (Special Areas of Conservation, SAC, and Special Protection Areas, SPA) set up under the Habitats Directive, within the district. 51% of the district coastal waters are covered by EMS designations and it is the responsibility of the IFCA to protect these areas. If management plans are not drawn up then the IFCA, and its Authorities, could be liable to judicial review and possible infraction proceedings. Both these courses of action would prove costly and very time consuming and should be viewed as a potential risk to the IFCA. A recent letter demanding action from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) by the Marine Conservation Society and Client Earth has highlighted that organisations concerned with the marine environment are focussing on delivery of marine protected areas and are increasingly prepared to use the legislative process to force organisations to deliver their statutory duties. It is not only the larger NGOs (non-Governmental Organisations) which are beginning to pressure inshore managers but often single interest groups will use the judicial process to advance their aims.

The IFCA officers and the Chair have recognised this potential threat to the Authority and have begun work to arrange meetings with the statutory environment bodies as well as the larger NGOs. Two meetings have been held with Natural England at a regional level and with their director of the Marine Environment. The meetings explored ways that the two organisations could work together to progress management of the EMS. It has been suggested that the Devon & Severn IFCA should start work on the Lyme Bay and Torbay EMS Management Plans ahead of the national guidance being issued in order to demonstrate progress in this area. The work will involve undertaking some filming work within the sites to identify the presence or not of the notified features as well as the mapping of features using the equipment on the patrol vessel. This work will be undertaken jointly to help reduce costs to both organisations. It is hoped to look at the potential to use mathematical modelling tools to help inform decision making and also to focus research within EMS. Using current data to make a robust model it may be possible to reduce research in some areas and allow a greater focus of resources in areas where there are gaps in the modelling process.

Meetings have also been held with the Devon Wildlife Trust to identify common aims for the two organisations and help to progress future work. The new director of DWT, Harry Barton, visited the Brixham Fish Market and had talks with the CO about the local fishing industry and the possible impacts associated with restrictions in fishing activity. Following on from the meeting a joint meeting of the south west area wildlife trusts has been arranged to allow the IFCA to talk to them and discuss issues that may arise more regularly.

A meeting with the Wildlife and Countryside Link, Marine Working Group has been arranged for late January. The Link group is made up of all the major NGOs and will allow for the IFCA to talk directly to these organisations and help to explain how progress is being made on protected area management and what the issues are around what is perceived a slow implementation. It may help to improve relations between the various NGOs and the IFCA for the future.

Management work continues within the longer established EMS in the Severn, Exe, Tamar and Lundy. The management meetings for the sites are attended by officers. Presentations have been given at the Severn Estuary Management Partnership AGM and officers work closely with the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA) to draw up a new management plan for the Severn EMS. Several site visits have been undertaken to discuss local issues with some of the relevant bodies in the area.

A very successful meeting was attended by the CO, Cllr Napper and Cllr Bryant of the Bristol Channel Federation of Sea Anglers. A presentation was given to the members on the proposed work of the IFCA and questions were asked on how the IFCA could work with the local anglers in the future. The anglers were very keen to be involved in the work of the IFCA and meetings are proposed for the future to progress this important work.

Also looking at future work in the Severn Estuary and Bristol Channel a meeting was held with the Welsh Government's fisheries department to look at the possibility of more joint working and the exchange of warrants for enforcement officers. A discussion was also held on the byelaws enforced by the two organisations and the possibility of a greater harmonisation where possible. The discussions went very well and it is hoped that a closer working relationship will provide improved protection for the inshore fisheries in the area.

The review of all the byelaws currently operated by the IFCA is underway with this Authority's working group looking at the appropriateness of the current set and how management can be improved in the future. The initial thoughts of the group have been sent to the MMO for comment and at present the approach being looked at by Devon & Severn IFCA is well received. A meeting was held between the four IFCA on the south coast of England to explore the byelaw review process and to look at greater harmonisation of the byelaws along the English Channel and Bristol Channel.

To allow a more informed decision making process as part to the byelaw review and management of the marine protected areas additional information will be required with regard to the potential socio-economic impacts of any changes. A project is being considered with Plymouth University to provide some of the information building on the work undertaken by the University within the Lyme Bay Closed Area. The project will comprise the use of a questionnaire to be completed by relevant individuals to give a statistically valid set of results.

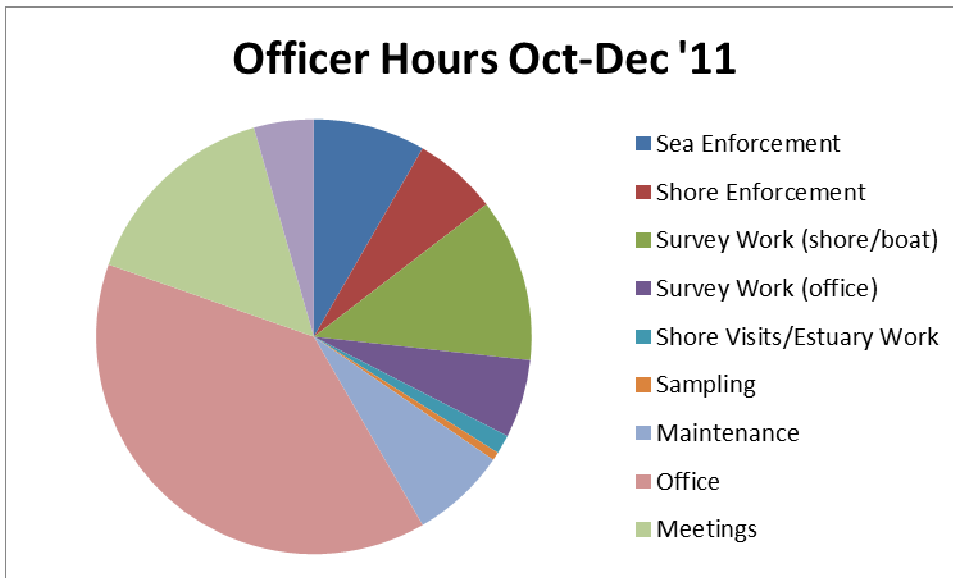
Following on from the last quarterly meeting and the discussion on a prosecution policy, meetings have been held with the MMO and the EA to look at a joint prosecution policy using the same legal team to give a consistency of approach. A meeting with the local EA fisheries manager has resulted in the IFCA looking at using the EA local enforcement panel that decides on prosecutions and as a check to the IFCA decision making process. This will allow a greater transparency in decision making. This will require some training for the panel on IFCA legislation; this work will be undertaken early in the New Year.

As part of the first year of the operation of the IFCA a survey needs to be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of engagement of the Authority. To progress this work a study has been proposed by Plymouth University to produce a questionnaire to help inform this work.

At the beginning of October, Katherine Gray was appointed to the IFCA as an Environment Officer. Katherine is based in the Brixham office but as part of the environment team she will be undertaking work throughout the entire district. Katherine has settled well and has become a valued member of the team. Following on from the attempt to appoint a Senior Environment officer for the Bristol area in September a second interview panel met in December and Tamsyn Noble has

been offered the post subject to the normal checks. Tamsyn is due to start on 30th January 2012 and will be based in Bristol.

Officer Work Areas During The Quarter



The pie chart above represents the hours worked by all officers during the last quarter and the areas of work in which they are involved.

The time spent in the office is increased by the poor weather during December and also the need at this time of year to complete reports and review work for next year.

Enforcement Overview

Deputy Chief Officer M Mander

Inshore Vessel Monitoring System

Officers continued to play a vital role in supporting the further development of the trialled Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (IVMS). Officers accompanied a wide range of guest to an event organised to demonstrate the development of the system to date. The potential uses for the system were acknowledged by representatives of the local Wildlife Trusts, Natural England, commercial catching sector and fisheries and conservation managers. During a recent visit to Lyme Bay the Environment Secretary, Caroline Spelman was quoted to say that "by embracing new technology it shows that the sector is ready and able to respond positively to the need to protect the marine environment while continuing to make a living from the sea. Fishermen have been central to the development of this solution, and we hope to see this local involvement continue".

The MMO is in the process of producing an interim report that will be available soon. The MMO has not yet completed the evaluation of the vessel monitoring system and awaits further testing with an upgraded terminal. On completion of the further trialling work the MMO will complete a final trial report.

The use of such technology in the future seems increasingly likely, providing better fishing activity data and reducing enforcement costs through the decreased deployment of patrol vessels. With the introduction of MCZs over the next few years, coupled with SACs and other spatial restrictions the need to monitor fishing activity remotely is vital. It is likely that the wider introduction of remote monitoring of fishing vessels will be at the core of the development of the Authority's long

term strategic approach to sustainable marine management – a high level objective for the Authority to demonstrate (by April 2015).

The South Devon Trawling and Crabbing Chart Committee (Inshore Potting Agreement)

Continuing the theme of spatial management, Officers attended two meetings of The South Devon Trawling and Crabbing Chart Committee (Inshore Potting Agreement (IPA)) to consider changes to the management of this key agreement. The IPA looks to reduce the conflict between the two major fishing sectors, potting and trawling by finding agreement to which areas should be fished by each sector. Significant temporal and spatial changes were agreed and would be introduced at the beginning of next year. All those present at the IPA committee meetings recognised the potential role that the IVMS could have in monitoring the agreed access.

The IPA and the IVMS trials are two key examples of adaptive co-management in which the Authority is playing a significant part. The work also highlights that the Authority is delivering outcomes required by another high level objective for the organisation - the stakeholder engagement and communication strategy (by April 2012).

Fixed Administrative Penalties

Officers attended a further meeting to discuss the drafting of IFCA guidance for the administration of Fixed Administrative Penalties (FAPs). The guidance is required under The Sea Fishing (Penalty Notices) (England) Order 2011). The FAPs are intended to provide an effective alternative to criminal sanctions sought through the courts system. The main discussion point remained the level of fines to be set for some offences. A requirement of the guidance will be for the Authority to make available its compliance and enforcement policy. This policy is attached as an information item on the agenda. Officers are currently reviewing the Environment Agency's enforcement cases evaluation process. The current work furthers the Authority's development of a transparent risk-based enforcement framework required under its high level objectives. It is hoped that the FAP guidance will be agreed and FAPs can potentially be issued by the end of the year.

Byelaw Review

Officers attended a working group meeting with their counterparts from Cornwall, Southern, and Sussex IFCA. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the approaches that each IFCA were taking to the byelaw review process. Three different strategies were identified. Cornwall IFCA were reviewing the byelaws individually, Southern were exploring the opportunity to extend the use of permitting of activities under new byelaws, similar to this authority. Sussex IFCA felt that the first stage of the review should focus on the assessment of the fisheries to identify where management was needed.

The MMO have been asked to provide comment on the Authority's proposed approach to the byelaw review. It is hoped that the MMO's response will feed into further discussions by the members of the Byelaw Review Sub-committee in January. The byelaw review represents an ideal opportunity to consider the introduction of remote monitoring technology as a requirement of future management. Under the high level objectives the review of byelaws needs to be completed by April 2015.

Warrants

Nationally, the MMO is looking to issue limited IFCO warrants to EA enforcement officers. The view of this Authority's officers is that the EA officers should be provided with as wide a range of fisheries legislation to enforce as possible in line with warrants already issued by the Authority at a local

level. Further discussions with the EA will take place prior to the issuing of national warrants to EA staff operating in the Authority's district.

Further discussions have taken place regarding the development of a national enforcement training programme. It is hoped that the programme will provide officers from the EA, MMO and IFCA with the same training opportunities. It was recognised that officers holding the Common Enforcement Powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 should undergo regular training in the application of those powers. Whilst the programme is in development, two officers from the Authority have been chosen to attend the three week Royal Navy enforcement programme run by the MMO during January. Taped interview procedure training has been undertaken with the EA for IFCA enforcement officers. This will assist in the completion of some case files in the future.

Enforcement

Details of enforcement carried out ashore and afloat can be found in the officers' reports.

Two cases were concluded with the offer and acceptance of simple cautions. Two further cases remained under consideration. Summary of offences detected in the quarter are also listed below.

Prosecutions

Offence Date	File complete	Prosecuting Authority	Decision to proceed (Simple Caution, FAP, Prosecute, Written Warning)	Fine	Offence
06/04/11	Yes	D&SIFCA	Written Warning	N/A	Vessel landing ½ tonne undersized whelks
05/05/11	Yes	D&SIFCA	Simple Caution accepted	N/A	Vessel landing crab claws in contravention of byelaw 21
03/08/11	Yes	D&SIFCA	Simple Caution accepted	N/A	Use of pots with no escape gaps fitted
14/08/11	On-going	D&SIFCA*			Netting within Exe closed area
22/08/11	On-going	D&SIFCA			Scallop fishing in closed area

* Denotes infringements detected by EA officers working under IFCA warrants

Investigations

Offence Date	Investigation - complete	Prosecuting Authority	Offence	Location
23/09/11	No	D&SIFCA*	Placement of a fixed net	Clevedon N. Somerset
08/10/11	No	D&SIFCA*	Placement of a fixed net	Hele Bay North Devon
22/11/11	Yes	MMO	Fishing inside SAC	Torbay SAC
29/11/11	No	D&SIFCA	Landing undersize bass	Brixham Fish Market
29/11/11	No	D&SIFCA	Landing undersize bass	Brixham Fish Market

Warnings

Offence Date	Prosecuting Authority	Offence	Location	Outcome
23/09/11	D&SIFCA*	Landing undersize scallops	Ilfracombe	Written warning
09/10/11	D&SIFCA	Landing undersize bass	Brixham Fish Market	Written warning
09/10/11	D&SIFCA	Landing undersize spider crab	Brixham Fish Market	Written warning
06/11/11	D&SIFCA	Landing undersize lings	Brixham Fish Market	Written warning

* Denotes infringements detected by EA officers working under IFCA warrants

Environment / Research Overview

Principal Env. Officer S Clark/Env. Officer K Gray

This quarter has seen the continuation of several research projects and the start of new ones all providing vital information and data to feed into the conservation aspects of Devon and Severn IFCA's responsibilities.

At the beginning of the quarter a survey of the mussel beds in the Taw Torridge Estuary took place over three days. IFCA officers were joined by seconded officers from the EA to undertake the survey work. An EA RIB was used to access some of the beds. The surveys are examples of effective partnership working with the EA allowing the transfer of knowledge and the collection of evidence based information to help manage the shellfish resource in the Taw Torridge. The methodology used for the survey was developed in Holland and is used by many IFCAs to assess the coverage and density of mussel across the beds and the tonnage of mussels present. The perimeter of each bed was also calculated. Officers are currently analysing the data collected and using GIS to map the extent of the beds. A significant seed resource was identified during the surveys and this will undergo detailed surveying in 2012 to inform on management decisions to potentially develop the fishery further.

Devon and Severn IFCA provided the surveying platform in the form of the PV Drumbeat of Devon to facilitate the conditional assessment of the features of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC. Officers worked in partnership with Cefas and Natural England to survey the features using underwater camera equipment. The survey was a success and demonstrated the capability of the Drumbeat as a scientific survey vessel for cross agency working.

Underwater filming of sites within the Lyme Bay and Torbay cSAC has been on going throughout October. Devon and Severn IFCA has developed the technical capability to collect underwater video footage to aid interpretation of the features of certain Annex 1 sites within the cSAC that have been identified by Cefas as having low confidence in the presence of sensitive reef features. Cefas and Natural England have quality assured the analysis of the film footage by Devon and Severn IFCA officers and a researcher from Plymouth University, who has been involved in the Lyme Bay Reef recovery project, has been working with officers to analyse the large quantity of film footage collected. The interpretation of the data will inform management decisions on fishing activities that may impact the features of the SAC ensuring protection of these features from this activity and the sustainable management of the marine environment.

October also saw the annual meeting of partners of the CRESH (Cephalopod Recruitment in English Channel Spawning Habitats) project at Lowestoft. This European Interreg IV project aims to undertake scientific research that will help to inform the management and conservation of cuttlefish stocks both in inshore and offshore waters. This meeting allowed each partner to present the findings of their work and help direct the research for the third and final year of the project. Devon and Severn IFCA Officers also worked with the Marine Biological Association to collect data on the size and weight of individual cuttlefish landed at Brixham market this quarter.

A biannual survey of the cockle beds in the Exe Estuary at Exmouth was undertaken in October. This survey is a legal requirement of Devon and Severn IFCA as the competent authority regulating fishing activities that may negatively impact the features of the Exe European Marine Site. The survey was conducted in conjunction with Natural England and MSc students from Plymouth University and will assess changes in cockle densities and distribution across the bed. Natural England gave permission for a restricted fishery to commence on 3rd August 2011 under Section 28 (E) (1) (a) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. However just prior to the opening of the fishery a significant cockle mortality was identified on this bed and samples were sent to Cefas for analysis. These cockles were analysed and no notifiable diseases were present, although Cefas identified the presence of several parasites including *Minchiniaspp*, *Gymnophallusspp* and *Bucephalus minimus*. As there have been cockle mortalities identified at various beds around the country it is important for Devon and Severn IFCA to assess the health of the cockle population, future mortalities and the impact of these on stocks as part of our management of shellfish resources in the district. Working with Natural England these assessments will help feed into the future decision making process regarding the cockle fishery in the Exe.

Devon and Severn IFCA hold the Waddeton Regulating Order on the Dart. Officers collected samples on a monthly basis to feed into the classification of the shellfish harvesting areas. Sampling has been ongoing this quarter.

The scallop fishery in the Salcombe Estuary opened on 15th December 2011. Devon and Severn IFCA issued ten permits to fishermen. Prior to the opening of the fishery officers carried out a stock assessment. A fishing boat was chartered and a survey was undertaken using two 1m hand hauled non-teethed dredges. Five tows across the area of the fishery were achieved and all scallops collected were measured. A post fishery survey will be carried out to assess changes in the scallop population. This will provide evidence to assess stocks and inform policy decisions on the future fishery in this estuary.

Devon and Severn IFCA are looking to commission Plymouth University to undertake several topics of research including modeling of the impacts of potential management measures in marine protected areas on other users of the marine resources, and on areas outside the protected zones. A gap analysis will be undertaken on data available that could feed into this model and several management scenarios will be considered and investigated. The outcomes will feed into core IFCA work on MPA management. Research will also be undertaken to investigate the impact of restricting an activity on the social and economic status of coastal communities. Plymouth University will be evaluating the stakeholder perception of the IFCA and its achievements in fulfilling its duties under the MaCCA 2009.

There have been significant training opportunities for officers this quarter to develop technical skills and knowledge to increase the capability within Devon and Severn IFCA to collect, analyse and interpret evidence to aid management of marine resources in the district. Officers attended a workshop at Cefas in Lowestoft together with officers from Kent & Essex IFCA and Southern IFCA. Andy Lawler presented his findings from research he has undertaken on the size at sexual maturity of whelks taken from the Sussex IFCA district. He has developed a standard operating procedure to identify the different stages of sexual maturity. Cefas will be collecting samples from IFCA districts around the country, where whelk fisheries have been identified, to assess the whelk size at sexual maturity from these sites. In 2012 officers from Devon and Severn IFCA will be taking additional samples from fishing vessel catches and assessing the temporal changes in sexual maturity of whelks within the district. The whelk fishery within the district is significant and it is important for the IFCA to gather data that can ensure its sustainability by evaluating the effectiveness of the current minimum landing size and whether this needs to be reviewed within the district.

GIS training was provided by Gavin Black from Natural England and Colin Trundle from Cornwall IFCA. This training has increased the knowledge of officers to use GIS to assess shellfish stocks, map seabed habitat types, present changes in landings of lobsters per unit effort and map the extent of shellfish beds. Not only are these further examples of partnership working but also they helped meet important high level objectives.

Cefas organised a training day for IFCAs to introduce the Sea Angling 2012 project. Three officers attended including one of the seconded EA officers. This provided useful information about the project, the methodology for collecting data, sampling protocol and site selection. Cefas will be providing more detailed information relating to the project in January 2012. Devon and Severn IFCA will be able to input data into the project and importantly will be able to collect additional relevant local information to provide the best evidence to inform future management decisions. Officers will be assimilating data on all the angling sites in the district and working closely with EA officers and users groups from all regions within the district to map sites and classify them in terms of high and low activity.

Officers attended the SAGB Training and Technology Committee meeting which included a one day workshop on chemical water quality. The workshop was facilitated by Cefas and the EA and communicated developments in research on the impacts of antifoulants, endocrine disrupters and nanomaterials on shellfish. Biosecurity in relation to the variant oyster herpes virus (OsHV-1) was also discussed. The SAGB Crustacea Committee was also attended and updates were given on Defra's progress on the future management of Brown crab stocks and academic research on brown crab and lobsters diseases was discussed. Devon and Severn IFCA had worked closely with Swansea University on surveys around Lundy Island and it was very useful to hear the findings of this work.

A presentation was given to ASERA to outline the work of the IFCA and highlight research being currently undertaken and planned for the Severn Estuary part of the district. Devon and Severn IFCA has commissioned Dr Nick Michael of North Somerset Council to undertake a desk based study to gather environmental and habitat data and conduct a gap analysis on available data. This should be completed in the first quarter of 2012. The technique for identifying illegally scrubbed lobsters that was presented at the last IFCA quarterly meeting was demonstrated to the South Devon and Channel Shellfishermen's Association meeting in December. This was well received by its members and its value as an enforcement technique was endorsed.

Annex 1 - District Reports

Lyme Regis to Exmouth

Senior IFCO W. Lawrence

Lyme Regis

Spanish Eyes 111, E509 skipper Paul Wason, and Sea Seeker E68, skipper Chris Wason have continued trawling throughout the period. The main species landed, both weight and value, for both vessels was thornback ray, just under 6 tonnes for Sea Seeker and just over 3 tonnes for Spanish Eyes. The vessels other species landed in order of weight were gurnard, plaice, squid, cuttle, bass, john dory and cod.

The main static gear vessel Grey Mist, E2 skipper Barry Wason has persevered with whelk and crab pots. His whelk gear consists of 14 strings of 30 pots. These have yielded on average 15 35 kg bags but on one particular day only 9 were seen. He managed to land just short of 8 tonnes of whelk for the period and just over 1.5 tonnes of crab. To support his potting effort he also worked bottom gill nets and has taken just over 1 tonne of thornback ray together with lesser amounts of other species.

Late in October saw the formation of The Blue Marine Lyme Bay Working Group. The group has been formed to devise a blueprint for the best fisheries management regime within a marine protected area in Europe. The project's aims are:

- best practice in protecting biodiversity within a European special area for conservation,
- best practice in managing fish and shellfish stocks
- creating the maximum long-term benefits for coastal communities of adopting the best practice.

Lyme Bay is already ahead of the rest of the country in having a 60 sq mile closed area. Another aim is for the area to be first in the country to have a bottom-up management scheme in which fishermen can become masters of their own destiny and take responsibility for managing the stocks and the habitat within the protected area for themselves and for the general good of everyone.

The working group agreed that since the implementation of the Lyme Bay closed area there had been a large increase in static gear from nomadic fishermen which has led to an estimated 50% catch reduction in the whelk fishery for local fishermen. There have been reports of an increase in species outside of the SAC and fishermen thought that this was due to species migration from within the SAC because the seabed was no longer 'farmed' by being trawled.

Beer

The port has been visited on a number of occasions, including joint visits with MMO officers to inspect both vessels and premises. A number of unregistered buyers and sellers of fish have been traced and the necessary permits issued. Also information has been given concerning the availability

of funds from the European Fisheries Fund. Beer fishermen are particularly interested in funding a new ice making plant and also replacing the lighting in their local shop.

Whelk potting has almost totally ceased during this quarter with ever diminishing returns and skippers are bringing their gear ashore. Skipper Dave Newton, Adbrenat, E282 has reported mixed catches of crab from his fleet of 170 pots. They have varied from 85 kg to 150 kg for a day's work. He has also reported a large number of berried and small lobsters on the ground. In addition he has indicated his interest in buying a newer vessel to replace Adbrenat. It is Retarrier, SC183 and is at present based in the Scilly Isles. She is an 8.45 metres (LOA) vessel built of GRP at Seaton in 1989.

The local fishermen have had to replace the beach tractor due to "old age". They've managed to obtain a replacement from a local farmer which is coping well.

Axmouth

Fishing effort from the port has been reduced due to onset of the winter and many skippers have brought their gear ashore. The two active vessels are Holly Jo, SU512 and My Lady, E28. Both have only managed to set and haul their gear approximately 5 or 6 times a month.

The annual dredging of the inner harbour has commenced. This is undertaken voluntarily by The Axe Yacht Club and is of benefit to all harbour users. Silt waste is deposited in a trench that is dug in the shingle bank which is well above HAT (highest astronomical tide) so does not require a Marine Licence.

During a recent joint visit with the MMO a representative from the Axe Harbour Management Team explained the problems that occur with the silting up of the harbour entrance. About 20 years ago at the entrance to the harbour the eastern harbour wall was extended by East Devon District Council (phase1). Phases 2 & 3 being further extensions, were not completed and in the current economic climate just will not happen. The purpose of the extensions was to maintain the navigability of the entrance to the Axe harbour. The result of only a partial extension has impacted on the long shore drift of the shingle in an easterly direction. This has resulted in the following:

- 1) With severe winter storms there have been occasions where the shingle bank completely blocks the harbour entrance. Normally the pressure of water building up will create its own channel. However, on one occasion 3 years ago the situation was so extreme that in order to avoid water backing up in the estuary and the flooding of Seaton town it was necessary to use a digger with a shovel to create a small trench in the shingle to release the water. The pressure of the released water then in turn naturally widened the river mouth. The buildup of this shingle has only started to occur in recent years.
- 2) The build up of the shingle over 25 years has created a fan shaped shingle bank outside the mouth of the river which has placed severe restrictions on the navigability of the Harbour entrance. This year permission has been given from the Environment Agency to plough a trench in the shingle back up to 6 times between May and September for 4 hours at a time using the Teignmouth Tug with a plough fitted to it. Unfortunately because of the shallowness of the water created by the bank it had to be abandoned after the first attempt.

They are now considering the use of a smaller plough and smaller boat. They would only move shingle and no sediment. It is hoped that by creating a ploughed channel the river would then scour the channel out and restore navigability.

BudleighSalterton

Virtually all of the pots operated by the two main vessels, Salty 1, E468 and Garn, E4 have been brought ashore for the winter period. However Roger Pym, skipper of Garn, does continue to fish 24 pots during the period. These are in 6 strings of 4 and placed from Budleigh beach to the inner range buoy. Dave Perkins, Salty 1 also reduces his potting effort to only 20 during the winter and these are placed to the east of Otterton Point. Skipper Perkins concentrates his efforts on netting during the winter months and targets sole and cod. There was welcome relief when the September closure of the cod fishery was re-opened in October with a quota of 250 kg/month. The sole quota remained at 25kg/month throughout the period.

Exmouth

Whelking from the port is still very poor with only one 35 kg bag being taken from each string. Prices have taken a slight fall as well which has only increased the problems faced by local skippers. Skipper Wreyford, Becci of Ladram, E508 has landed just over 24 tonnes for September to December together with 1.7 tonnes of crab and 0.25 tonne of lobster. He has also increased his netting effort to increase returns, his main target specie being sole. During the period between the 15th September 2011 and 31st March 2012 he has been issued with a dispensation from the provisions of Council Regulation 850/98. This will allow him to retain a size stratified sample of his whelk catch including undersize in order to conduct a study into the size of whelks at maturity in English waters. Approximately half a fishing basket will be the quantity landed from the vessel and the survey will be undertaken by using static gear in the form of baited whelk pots.

The new scallop vessel JAYC, CO333 operated by Dominic Walsh has commenced fishing from the port, her first landing being put ashore on the 30th October. Another recent addition to the Exmouth fleet is the trawler Shelley Marie, PH429. Her main target species by both weight and value has been cuttle with just over 4 tonnes being taken during September to December. The other main species are squid, thornback ray, plaice, sole, turbot, brill, bass and gurnard. The multi-purpose vessel, Sara Jayne BM249 has stopped fishing for sprat and has begun scallop dredging.

The Exmouth Mussel Company have taken delivery from Ireland of their new self-fluidising elevator. She has been named Bloodhound and carried out her first trip on Monday 28th November after completing the MCA Workboat certification the previous Friday. A few teething problems were encountered but these were soon corrected. This vessel teases the mussels from their muddy beds without impact on the stone layers beneath.

Other Activities

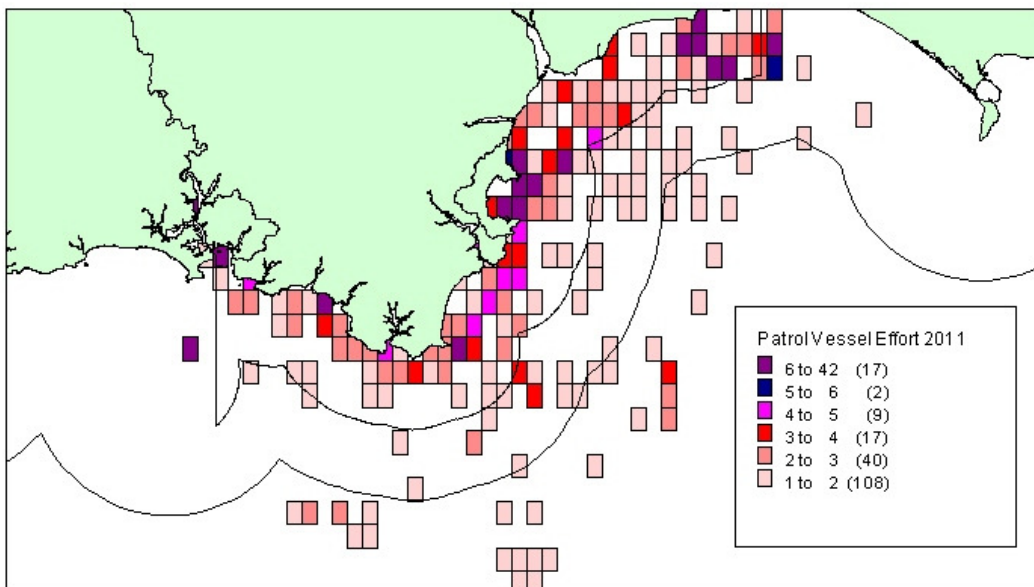
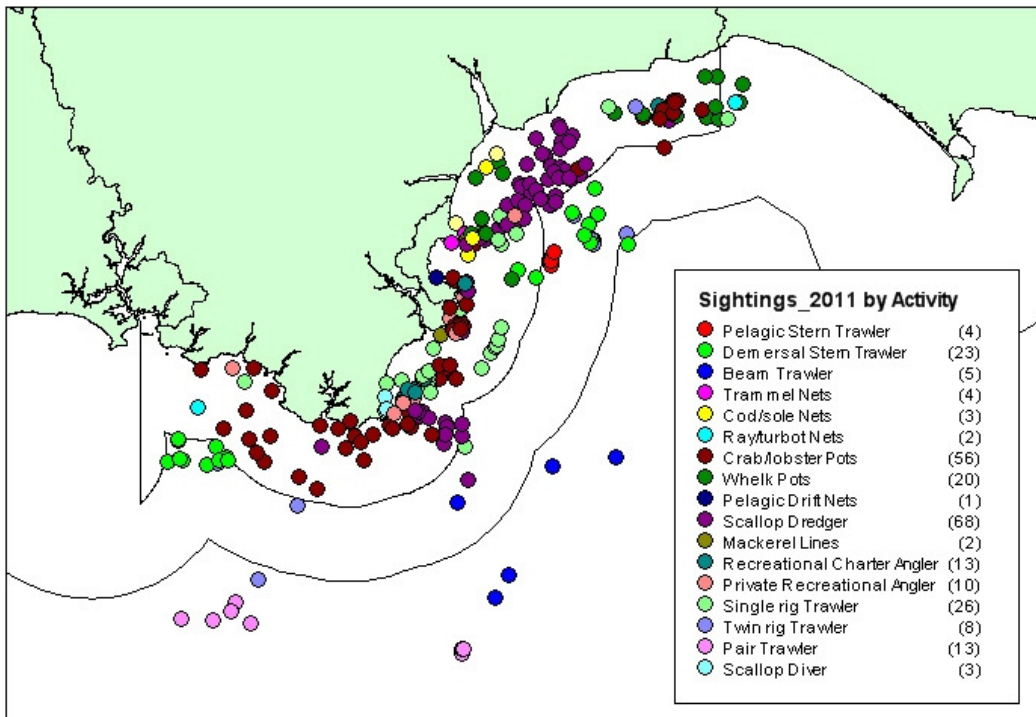
The annual meeting of The South Devon Trawling and Crabbing Chart Committee has taken place with a noticeable change being introduced. This has been accepted by all parties and will form part of the new chart and license condition for 2012. Devon and Severn IFCA have a substantial input into this agreement and have undertaken the work to redraw the chart.

Taped interview procedure training has been undertaken with the EA for IFCA enforcement officers. This will assist in the completion of some case files in the future.

PATROL VESSELS' EFFORT September to November

Date	Vessel	Objective	Result
08/09/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
09/09/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
14/09/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Lyme Bay	Successful footage collected
15/09/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Lyme Bay	Successful footage collected“
19/09/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Video survey Torbay “
21/09/11	Drumbeat	I.P.A. , Netting and Bass Nursery Area enforcement – o’night Plymouth	No offences detected
22/09/11	Drumbeat	I.P.A. , Netting and Bass Nursery Area enforcement	No offences detected “
26/09/11	Enforcer	I.P.A. , Netting and Bass Nursery Area enforcement – west of District	No offences detected
27/09/11	Enforcer	Byelaw 22	Illegal pots seized
02/10/11	Enforcer	Byelaw 4 – scallop curfew – early morning	No offences detected
06/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey of Plymouth Sound and rivers with CEFAS	Successful footage collected
07/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey of Plymouth Sound and rivers with CEFAS	Successful footage collected
08/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey of Plymouth Sound and rivers with CEFAS	Successful footage collected
09/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey of Plymouth Sound and rivers with CEFAS	Successful footage collected
11/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
11/10/11	Enforcer	Byelaw 4 – scallop curfew – evening	No offences detected
12/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
13/10/11	Drumbeat	Visit by Authority members	
17/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
20/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey Torbay	Successful footage collected
21/10/11	Drumbeat	Video survey of Start Bay	Successful footage collected
01/11/11	Enforcer	Byelaw 17 fixed net enforcement	No offences detected
			No offences detected
08/11/11	Enforcer	Byelaw 4 – scallop curfew – early morning	
10/11/11	Enforcer	I.P.A. , Netting and Bass Nursery Area enforcement	No offences detected
22/11/11	Drumbeat	Patrol Torbay SAC and sensitive areas	One vessel boarded inside SAC
23/11/10	Enforcer	Byelaw 19 enforcement	No offences detected

Thematic charts of vessel sightings and patrol vessel effort 2011



Teignmouth and Torquay

IFCO R. Barter

The start of this quarter saw the opening of the local scallop grounds as the Devon and Severn IFCA scallop close season came to an end. There has been targeted enforcement of byelaw No.3 which limits scalloping to 12 hours per day (0700hrs to 1900hrs). The Girl Rona, TH117 had a brief refit before starting to pelagic trawl for sprats.

The inshore fleet have been working nets and it has been reported that a good quantity of flat fish are showing up along the shore. The two vessels working a sand eel trawl reported that the sand eels were still showing up into the month of October. This was possibly due to the mild start to autumn. The eels are kept alive in bait boxes or curges on mooring lines on the back beach. They are then sold on by scoop to local anglers. Quantities of eels are purchased by 'Ammo' baits based in Cornwall. The sand eels get transported by road and are frozen in packs to be sold on as bait.

In Torquay, the Katrina, SE40 and Kelly Merene II, BM454 returned to scalloping on the local grounds as the season opened again. Fishing was reported to be steady. An average day would see 25-40 boxes of scallops. Mary Anne, BM482 was undertaking a survey with Cefas during the start of the quarter. This involved the charter of the vessel by Cefas to trawl for sprats in certain areas. Once the survey was finished the Mary Anne returned to demersal trawling. As the Christmas period approached more squid started to show on the trawling grounds. Prices ranged from around £4 for size 1's and £6-7 for size 2's.

As the days get shorter it is expected that the number of herring should increase along the shoreline. The fleet of inshore vessels in Torquay target the herring shoals at this most productive time of year. However this year the herring did not show up till sometime in November. It is not known why the shoals were late to show up. Some of these boats have been using hand lines for late mackerel. It was reported that there were some good mackerel showing up late into December. Prices range from £2-3/kg

Numerous visits have been conducted this quarter to engage with stake holders. This has included joint visits with officers from the Marine Management Organisation.

Brixham

The new Brixham fish market was opened in April of this year. It has proved to be a huge success and there are around some 40 species landed there. It is reported that the quality has improved and the fish grading machines are making the whole process so much easier. Although the fish auction still takes place on the market floor itself the data is wirelessly transferred to the auctions main computer system. The sales information is also passed on to the MMO but not the IFCA, which makes statistical reports more difficult for IFCOs.

Brixham Trawler Agents who run the market now operate a couple of lorries to land fish from as far away as Lowestoft. In particular this is attracting significant quantities of line caught bass from other areas for sale.

Beamers

This quarter saw the landing of cuttlefish increase. The beamers have been landing up to 200 boxes per trip. Cuttlefish are a very important and valuable species to the Brixham fleet with 2,000 tonnes of cuttlefish landed annually. Last year this brought an extra £3 million to Brixham. Cuttlefish is a non-pressure stock and eases the quota pressure on the Brixham beamers. The new market lay out has provided an additional room for the storage and handling of cuttlefish to prevent the cross contamination of the black ink to other valuable prime species. The price of cuttlefish has remained

good at around £2-3/kg. The weather has remained mild and settled and the beamers have had a good run up to the Christmas period.

There has been a new addition to the Brixham beamer fleet, 'SeaffieldEmiel Trawlers' euro cutter Angel Emiel, BM55. Built in the year 2000 at Gdynia, Poland and fitted out by Maaskant. She has an overall length of 23.99 metres, beam of 6.9 metres. She has a Mitsubishi 221kW main engine driving a 14:1 ratio gearbox turning an 8' diameter propeller.

Scallopers

This quarter saw the closure of the whole of area VII to scallopers of over 15 metres in length. Due to tightening quotas more and more skippers have been making major changes to their vessels during refit to enable them to dredge for scallops. Due to kW hours being used up a closure came into force for the above area. Many of the offshore scallop vessels went beam trawling throughout this closure while others had to remain tied up in port.

This closure saw knock on effects in the prices of cuttlefish, due to increase landings. However with fewer scallops being landed from bigger vessels the price increased - small scallop increased to £6 per dozen and £11 per dozen for large.

Brixham inshore scallop fleet have been working the local grounds and landing between 25-80 boxes. Several visiting vessels which came up to Brixham at the start of the season soon returned home as fishing was not as productive as in previous years.

Trawlers

The Brixham trawlers have been landing quantities of cuttlefish and squid. The larger trawlers are still twin rigging and landing up to a quarter of a tonne of squid a trip.

The Constant Friend, BM484 has been fishing for sprats throughout the quarter. It has been reported that quantities of anchovies have been showing up too. They are making approximately £1.40/kg (£1400 a tonne). This is proving a great bonus just before Christmas. Visiting vessels have been ring netting for anchovy and had a haul of 25 tonnes for a night's work.

Potters/netters

The potting has reported to be steady. The weather has remained settled for a long period increasing days at sea for the inshore potters. Lobsters have been making £14.50/kg on the market. The average yield is approximately 1kg/pot per haul. For one local vessel in October he landed just over 13000kgs of hen crab and 700kgs of cock crabs.

Angling

This is the time of year when local charter boats are busy taking groups of anglers out to mid channel wreck for winter cod and pollack fishing. Dartmouth based Gemini and Samuel Irvin III have been finding good catches of winter wreck fish.

Teignmouth Sea Angling Society held the 15th National flounder shore championships on 19th and 20th November 2011 on the River Teign. This competition was sponsored by Dunraven Windows, Any fish Anywhere and Plymouth Angling and county sports shop. The overall winner of the two day competition won £1000 and £198 pool money with a flounder of 2lb 13.2 Oz. There were 240 anglers competing and more than 100 flounders were taken to the scales to be weighed, most of which returned to the river alive. A donation of £250 was made to the Teignmouth RNLI.

Enforcement

Since the 1st October there have been multiple visits to the Salcombe and Dartmouth areas. Targeted enforcement as required within the IFCA annual plan, has formed the majority of shore and vessel (PV “Enforcer”) based operations. More enforcement has been dedicated to the Salcombe area rather than Dartmouth due to received intelligence and the risk based analysis, used to prioritise IFCA enforcement effort. Operations have, in the main, concentrated on reducing illegal netting activity (IFCA Byelaw 17 and MMO bass nursery area legislation). Other work has been undertaken to monitor the Inshore Potting Areas (MMO responsibility with IFCA assistance). Inspections of landings have also been completed during this quarter.

Illegal netting activity coupled with minor theft has been an on-going concern throughout 2011. The effective use of (MOU’s) was demonstrated during November with a multi-agency operation planned to attempt to combat this issue. The IFCA along with the Environment Agency, Police and Salcombe Harbour Security Team pooled resources to monitor the Salcombe/Kingsbridge estuary on several occasions. A routine shore inspection with the MMO was completed on the 9th of November, with various issues attended to.

No IFCA prosecutions relating to the Salcombe and Dartmouth areas are pending. Advice has been given to fishermen (based in Plymouth) who expressed a desire to use drift nets within the Salcombe Estuary and the River Dart.

Two officers attended the December monthly meeting of the South Devon and Channel Shellfish Association to deliver a presentation regarding the techniques used by officers for the detection of scrubbed, berried lobsters.

Fishing information, landings and prices

The returns of shellfish during this period have been good. Many local fishermen from both ports reported larger landings than those experienced during the comparable period of 2010. Several fishermen have stated that the overall landings of crab in 2011 have been the best for several years. The fishing trends and prices experienced for Dartmouth and Salcombe potting vessels are very similar. Landings have varied depending on pot placement but October and November did produce good landings of brown crab. The weather at this time of year will undoubtedly begin to impact on fishing effort, but prolonged spells of poor weather have not yet been a major factor. The vessels operating inshore have regularly achieved catch rates in excess of 2kg per pot hauled and vessels working the mid-channel potting areas have performed even better. During mid-November, one Salcombe based vessel that works in the mid-channel areas with multiple sets of pots (1000 pots per set) was landing over 20 tonnes of brown crab per week. Another Salcombe based vessel working more moderate levels of gear has reported recent catch rates around 3kg/pot/haul. This vessel also reported that the better fishing days produced around 1.5 tons of brown crab from only 6 sets of 60 pots. A common factor with inshore and offshore catches is that landings of brown cock crab during this quarter are always very low. Brown hen crab accounts for almost all the total landings, with the brown cock crab forming typically less than 5%. Brown cock crab landings are expected to increase in the early part of 2012.

The prices throughout 2011 have remained at reasonable levels relative to recent years. Along with other factors, the Chinese market has helped maintain demand. Several vessels from both ports are contracted to processors such as “Blue Sea”. The factory prices have varied over the last 12 months

and have increased throughout 2011 from a low of around £1.15/kg. Prices have also been increasing slowly this quarter and the current level is now around £1.45/kg. With many contracts now at an end the prices per kilogramme could increase by a few pence. The prices of brown cock crab have remained fairly steady recently ranging from approximately £2.20/£2.50 (medium) to £3.20 (large). Individual contracts can raise the price of cock crabs slightly higher if minimum weight expectations are achieved. The Christmas holiday period may push the overall price levels slightly higher but large spikes in prices during holiday periods are now rare.

Essential components such as fuel, gear and bait are increasing each year. Fuel is currently costing vessels around £0.72/litre, close to the higher threshold level many fishermen feel is sustainable. Bait, another major expense, is also priced around £0.70/kg. Gurnard is favoured by many of the fishermen however haddock were used by many as an alternative during the summer months. Up to 60 pots can be baited with a 35kg tray.

Salcombe scallop fishery

The permitted scallop fishery in Salcombe opened on the 15th December. The fishery will remain open until mid March 2012. It is expected that several local fishermen will use the opportunity to fish within the estuary and some permits have already been prepared. Planned monitoring for research is expected along with any necessary enforcement duties. Data supplied by active permit holders is collected each year.

Other Information

As part of the required IFCA Byelaw Review, work on a new crustacean byelaw is continuing. The review work will help both the harmonization and the simplification of current legislation. The industry is keen to limit excessive shellfish landings from non-registered fishing vessels. With this in mind, various options including a crustacean permit scheme are being considered.

It has been reported by fishermen that money from a £1.2 million European Grant will be used to rejuvenate the fish quay at Salcombe. It is expected that investment will help improve several elements including the road layout near the quay. The fishermen have commented that new fridges, ice and fuel facilities coupled with new or improved stores would be welcomed.

There has apparently been lots of recent naval activity within the inshore potting zones. The training exercises are often a major inconvenience to both the potting and mobile gear fishing vessels. There are often allegations that the naval vessels often accidentally steam over pot buffs which strips them away from the ropes. This type of damage can result in expensive replacement costs.

Plymouth

IFCO D.Cresswell

During this quarter there have been several targeted enforcement sea patrols to Plymouth Sound and the River Yealm. This was to follow up reports that there were nets being shot in both areas which would have been in contravention of Byelaws 19 (Byelaw Prohibiting Netting in Tamar, Plym and Yealm) and 17 (fixed nets). The investigations resulted in no offences being detected. Following review, plans to target the area are being drawn up for the future.

During October, IFCOs from the Devon and Severn IFCA worked with CEFAS staff to help conduct a joint survey of the Plymouth Sound and the adjoining rivers in an effort to groundtruth using the camera equipment on board. The Drumbeat was used as a working platform for all staff after the supporting posts for the R.I.B were removed which was one of the latest modification made to the

enforcement vessel during the refit. The survey was a success and the data gathered will be made available to the authority.

On the 13th November an IFCO attended a multi agency meeting at Newton Ferrers. The meeting was concerning activities taking place in and around the River Yealm and concentrated heavily on the new homes being built within close proximity to the river and how they are affecting the water quality. Although not much time was spent talking about enforcement within the river, it is known that the Yealm is a favoured spot for illegal netting and is being closely monitored by the Devon and Severn IFCA and other agencies.

Plymouth market has been visited three times this quarter and no infringements were detected. During the visits information on the quantity of cuttlefish landed has been recorded and forwarded to the Principal Environment Officer, Sarah Clark as part of an ongoing survey. Market visits have been combined with port inspections and gathering of information required in order to fill in information fields within the MCSS (Monitoring Control Surveillance System). This is one of the requirements as officers continue to work alongside the MMO.

During the visits to Plymouth several fishermen have asked about various byelaws, hard copies have been dispatched and the fishermen have been informed that the byelaws are also available on the website. The website is updated regularly.

Scallopers

The inshore scalloping fleet working from Plymouth has not increased in size and there are still only three boats operating from the port. Crystal waters, PLN FY95 was sold this quarter but has failed to go to sea as it is suffering from engine trouble. The rest of the scalloping fleet are working further to the west which has opened up the ground to the inshore potters.

Potters

Potting returns have been good lately and it has been reported that there are still a large number of lobster being caught. Elise Leigh, PLN PH8 reported that for every 400 pots work he is almost getting 4 bins of lobsters which seems rather strange for this time of year when the sea temperature is supposed to be dropping. However, the skipper predicts that the crabbing will follow the normal yearly trend soon and tail off in which case he plans to go netting.

Netters

Carly Anne, PLN WK799 reported that there is plenty of sole being caught in his nets but due to the quota restrictions he is catching his whole months quota in one day.

The Devon and Severn IFCA have been working closely with the EA and the Police this quarter in a joint operation called 'Elephant'. During the week dedicated to the operation the different authorities positioned themselves in problematic spots in an attempt to tackle marine crime and illegal netting. Devon and Severn IFCA enforcement officers stopped one vessel as he landed but he had a very small catch. They were heading back to Plymouth that evening as they mentioned there was a decent herring fishery to be had in Plymouth Sound. It was reported that for two nights work the inshore netters were capable of catching 1 tonne of herring.

It was recently reported that during a survey dive conducted by the PNMA on the wreck 'scylla' gill nets were discovered and they had to abort the dive. Devon and Severn IFCA enforcement officers have been making enquiries in an attempt to identify the owners of the nets.

Clovelly

The new fish facility and hotel accommodation block project has over run but should be completed soon. In November good catches of herring were taken including approximately 2000 one night just before the annual herring Festival on the 20th November. There are now only 2 herring fishermen active in Clovelly. In the 1800's the annual catch was approximately 3.6 million fish, most of which then needed to be transported up the hill!

A small number of fixed surface nets are still being legally operated just outside the closed area to the west of Blackchurch rock.

Appledore/Bideford

The small trawlers from Bideford /Appledore have had limited opportunities to operate due to the usual poor wind and sea conditions this quarter. When able to fish, good catches of whiting, skate and sole, have been landed at the Appledore fish quay. Good catches of crab were also landed in November.

Taw/Torridge Estuary

Small drift netting boats have continued to operate in the joint estuary targeting bass and mullet. They are causing concern with regard to the amount of game fish which are being caught at the same time, even though returned many are damaged or dead.

Very little mussel harvesting has taken place in the estuary.

The last remaining wet fish shop in Butchers row Barnstaple is doing a brisk trade and promoting local caught fish, many line caught.

Officers from the Authority and the EA have continued to work closely to develop a SLA to formalise the use of EA officers as IFCOs. Initially this arrangement would operate using the two EA officers in North Devon but could lead to other EA officers in Somerset also being seconded on a similar basis.

Fishing Audit

IFCOs are preparing to undertake an audit of the sea angling activities throughout the Authority's district. From visits already undertaken to the north coast it is the officers' opinion that the level of angling activity forms a significant part of the total fishing activity. EA officers are likely to assist in the audit of fishing activity.

Enforcement

EA officers, operating under their IFCO powers, have seized two fixed nets during the period. Investigations to identify the owners of the nets are still on going. A joint IFCO and EA sea patrol of the North Devon coast, using the EA's RIB resulted in the inspection of the new scalloper's catch operating from Ilfracombe. The skipper and owner were written to regarding the landing of undersize scallop as a result of the inspection. The use of the RIB proved extremely effective and further trips will be planned for next year.