

Devon and Severn IFCA News

Crawfish Management – Fishing Industry Thoughts

Calling out to D&S IFCA Commercial Fishing Permit Holders to help design management measures to future proof the crawfish fishery in the District



The crawfish or [European spiny lobster](#) is reported to be having a comeback in recent years. Divers and commercial fishermen have reported an increase in sightings of juvenile crawfish of different age classes, which may indicate a recovery of the species. In the next few years these juveniles are likely to enter the fishery and be of a landable size (110mm in D&S IFCA's District). D&S IFCA is asking the commercial fishing sector for their input and ideas on the future management of crawfish in its District. Any thoughts on what may have led to the recovery of the species would be of interest too. Monitoring of crawfish sightings is on-going and input from the commercial sector will help provide important information on the species and its management, as outlined in the [D&S IFCA's Annual Plan](#).

Many fishermen have raised concerns that an emerging fishery may be over exploited leading to a boom and bust scenario and a repeat of the decline of the fishery that was seen in the 1970s. Therefore D&S IFCA is asking commercial fishing permit holders to help design the management measures they feel are appropriate and viable to ensure the longevity of the fishery and sustainability of the stock. It is a real opportunity for industry to have their say and lead the development of management measures. Any ideas will be welcome and may include restrictions relating to the four categories of management that already exist in permit conditions – those being gear restrictions; spatial restrictions; time/seasonal restrictions and catch/landing restrictions. Other proposals outside these categories will also be considered.

D&S IFCA wants to be totally transparent and inclusive with the fishing industry on this and help drive forward management so that the future fishery can be enjoyed without overexploitation. Permit Holders can respond to this request via email, write in or phone, and D&S IFCA is also holding 'surgery sessions' at its offices in Brixham as follows:

- **Thursday 1st November 2018** - 4pm to 8pm
- **Saturday 10th November 2018** - 9am to 12pm
- **Wednesday 14th November 2018** - 4pm to 8pm
- **Monday 19th November 2018** - 4pm to 8pm

Officers will dedicate these times to taking calls and visits into our office from Commercial Permit Holders who wish to talk directly to us regarding their thoughts and proposals. All responses should be in by **30th November 2018**.

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