

Management of the Removal of Spiny Lobster, *Palinurus elephas*, from Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 MCZ by Demersal Towed Gear.

Devon & Severn IFCA officers have undertaken assessments in order to document and determine whether management measures are required to achieve the conservation objectives of all the Marine Conservation Zones in its district. The IFCA's responsibilities in relation to management of MCZs are laid out in Sections 124 to 126, & 154 to 157 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

This reports focusses on the protection of Spiny Lobster, also known as crawfish and *Palinurus elephas*. The spiny lobster is a feature of two Tranche 1 and two Tranche 2 MCZs designated in the D&S IFCA district and at each of these sites, this species has a recover to favourable condition conservation objective. Favourable condition with respect to spiny lobster means that the quality and quantity of its habitat and the composition of its population in terms of number, age and sex ratio are such as to ensure that the population is maintained in numbers, which enable it to thrive.

It is the IFCA's responsibility to seek to further the conservation objectives of the sites. Copies of the assessments are attached below along with the formal advice received by NE in response to the MCZ assessments. There is no evidence or reports of spiny lobsters being caught by demersal gear fishing vessels that have access to the Tranche 1 sites of Lundy MCZ and Skerries Bank MCZ. Demersal fishing gear is restricted under the D&S IFCA Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw. In order to ensure that the spiny lobster feature is protected from this gear type, the conditions of the Mobile Fishing Permit will need to be adapted to prohibit the removal of spiny lobster from Lundy MCZ and Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ.



SBS-MCZ-001 Spiny Lobster.pdf



NE Formal Advice for Skerries Bank and Sur



LUN-MCZ-001 Spiny Lobster.pdf



NE Formal Advice for Lundy MCZ-001.pdf

For the Tranche 2 MCZ sites, Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ and Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ, spiny lobster is a feature of conservation importance with a recover to favourable conservation objective and therefore will need protecting from the gear types operating in the site. The three year review of permit conditions for the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw provides the opportunity to bring in a prohibition on the removal of spiny lobsters in these sites by demersal towed gear. MCZ assessments for these sites are currently being prepared and changes to the permit conditions to afford protection to the spiny lobster in the designated MCZ can be highlighted within the assessments, to show that the IFCA has introduced management to protect the feature, prevent deterioration of spiny lobster populations and ensure the conservation objective is furthered.

Recommendations:

The Byelaw and Permitting sub-committee considers that a consultation is undertaken to review the conditions of the Mobile Fishing Permit, to introduce further management of the demersal towed gear in Lundy MCZ, Skerries Bank & Surrounds MCZ, Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ and Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ to prohibit the removal of spiny lobsters. The consultation would aim to gather information on the impact of the management proposals to the fishing industry, as part of an impact assessment