

Date: 12 July 2022
Our refs: 396995
Your refs: DAR-MCZ-002



Sarah Clark
Devon and Severn IFCA
Brixham Laboratory
Freshwater Quarry
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Jay Boyle
Natural England
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah,

RE: Marine Conservation Zone: Dart Estuary MCZ UKMCZ0057 – Seine Netting

Thank you for the above assessments, received by email on 14 June 2022.

In 2012, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) announced a revised approach to the management of commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites (EMS).¹ The revised approach was subsequently extended to ensure fishing activities in Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) are managed in accordance with the provisions of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The effects of the following fisheries activities in **Dart Estuary MCZ** have been reviewed:

- **Seine nets & other** - beach seine/ring, shrimp push nets, Fyke and stakenets on estuarine rocky habitats, tentacled lagoon worm, low energy intertidal rock and intertidal mud.

Natural England has considered the assessment prepared by Devon and Severn IFCA for the purposes of making an assessment consistent with the provisions of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Please accept this letter as Natural England's formal advice on the assessment and the conclusions it makes.

We are content that the best available and most up-to-date evidence has been used to carry out the assessment to determine whether management of an activity is required to ensure the protection of site features from direct and indirect impacts from the collection of marine fisheries resources.

It is Natural England's view that through their assessments, Devon and Severn IFCA appear to have appropriately assessed the proposed activities in relation to the conservation objectives of the features of the Dart Estuary MCZ.

We agree that the activities assessed, alone and in combination, pose no significant risk to the conservation objectives for the features of the Dart Estuary MCZ.

We believe that Devon and Severn IFCA's ongoing commitment to monitoring this fishery, together with the application of the current thinking on Adaptive Risk Management, provides a robust mechanism for re-assessing any risk or harm to designated sites. This view is based on current knowledge of the impact of relevant fishing activities on site features.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

J. Boyle

Jay Boyle
Marine Lead Adviser

Annex 1:

If levels of this activity were to significantly increase, Natural England would need to reassess whether this interaction is hindering the conservation objectives of the associated features of the Dart Estuary MCZ.
