

Date: 18/07/2016  
Our ref: 189860  
Your ref: D&S IFCA Interaction IDs (Appendix 1)



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## BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah,

**Re: Fisheries in EMS Habitats Regulations Assessment for Amber Activities: Assessments for European Marine Site: Braunton Burrows SAC UK0012570  
Fishing Activities: Formal Notice – Handworking**

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

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 \(EMS\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-approach-to-the-management-of-commercial-fisheries-in-european-marine-sites-overarching-policy-and-delivery).<sup>1</sup> The objective of this revised approach is to ensure that all existing and potential commercial fishing activities are managed in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This document states that for 'amber/green' risk activities a site level assessment will be required to assess whether management of an activity is required to conserve site features. The Department's strong preference is that site level assessments be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Appropriate management measures should be put in place to ensure that the fishing activity or activities either 1) have no likely significant effect on a site in view of its conservation objectives or b) following assessment, can be concluded to have no adverse effect on the integrity of the site.

Natural England has considered the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) prepared by D&S IFCA for the purposes of making an assessment consistent with the provisions of Article 6(3). Please accept this letter as Natural England's formal advice on the assessment including the conclusions reached in the assessment. An assessment has been made of the effects of Handworking on the Braunton Burrows European Marine Site (EMS) qualifying features (see **Appendix 1: gear-feature interactions**).

We are content that the best available and most up to date evidence has been used to carry out the HRA by D&S IFCA officers, to determine whether management of an activity is required to conserve site features, and thus to ensure the protection of the features, from direct and indirect impacts from the collection of marine fisheries resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Defra revised approach: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-approach-to-the-management-of-commercial-fisheries-in-european-marine-sites-overarching-policy-and-delivery>

**It is Natural England's view that through their HRA, D&S IFCA officers appear to have appropriately identified those activities that are not likely to have a significant effect in view of the site's conservation objectives and whether management measures are required in order to ensure that the assessed fishing activity or activities will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the EMS.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. Roberts', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Viv Roberts

Marine Adviser  
Natural England

Tel. 02080267589

**Appendix 1: List of gear feature interaction for which TLSE have been undertaken**

<b>D&amp;S IFCA Interaction ID</b>	<b>Fishing Activity</b>	<b>Sub-feature(s)</b>
HRA_UK0012570_L19	Handworking (access from vessel)	Intertidal mudflats and sandflats
HRA_UK0012570_L20	Handworking (access from land)	Intertidal mudflats and sandflats