

Date: 19/07/2016
Our ref: 189122
Your ref: D&S IFCA Interaction IDs (Appendix 1)



Sarah Clark
Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Brixham Laboratory
Freshwater Quarry
Brixham
Devon, TQ5 8BA

Viv Roberts
Marine Adviser
Natural England
Level 10
Renslade House
Bonhay Road
Exeter, EX4 3AW

Tel. 02080267589

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah,

**Re: Fisheries in EMS Habitats Regulations Assessment for Amber Activities: Assessments for European Marine Site: Plymouth Sound & Estuaries UK0013111
Fishing Activities: Formal Notice – Beach Seine/ring nets**

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 \(EMS\)](#).¹ 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 four Habitat Regulations Assessments (HRAs) 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 those assessments including the conclusions reached in the assessments. Assessments have been made of the effects of beach seine and ring nets on the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries 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 HRAs 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.

¹ 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 the four HRAs, 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 black 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

| D&S IFCA Interaction ID | Fishing Activity | Sub-feature(s) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| HRA_UK0013111_K34 | Beach Seine/ring nets | Intertidal mud |
| HRA_UK0013111_L34 | | Intertidal sand & muddy sand |
| HRA_UK0013111_P34 | | Intertidal mixed sediments |
| HRA_UK0013111_AR34 | | Intertidal coarse sediment |
| HRA_UK0013111_W34 | Beach Seine/ring nets | Intertidal rock |
| HRA_UK0013111_Z34 | | Circalittoral rock |
| HRA_UK0013111_AC34 | | Infralittoral rock |
| HRA_UK0013111_D34 | Beach Seine/ring nets | Subtidal seagrass beds |
| HRA_UK0013111_D34 | | Intertidal seagrass beds |
| HRA_UK0013111_Q34 | Beach Seine/ring nets | Subtidal mixed sediments |
| HRA_UK0013111_AS34 | | Subtidal coarse sediment |
| HRA_UK0013111_J34 | | Subtidal mud |
| HRA_UK0013111_B34 | | Subtidal sand |