

Date: 12/07/2022
Our ref: 396991
Your ref: UKMCZ0057 DAR-MCZ-001 Tentacled Lagoon Worm
(*Alkmaria romijni*)



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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah,

Formal Advice to Devon & Severn IFCA: Marine Conservation Zone Assessments for Dart Estuary MCZ – Handworking (from vessel and land), crab tiling, digging with forks vs. Tentacled Lagoon Worm (*Alkmaria romijni*) and intertidal mud.

Thank you for the above assessment, 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.

Assessments have been made of the effects of the following fisheries activities in Dart Estuary MCZ:

- Intertidal hardworking (access from vessel & from land) on *Alkmaria romijni* and Intertidal mud
- Crab tiling on *Alkmaria romijni* and Intertidal mud
- Bait collection (digging with forks) on *Alkmaria romijni* and Intertidal mud

Natural England has considered the assessment prepared by Devon & 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 the assessment out by Devon & Severn IFCA officers 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 & Severn IFCA officers appear to have appropriately assessed the proposed hardworking, crab tiling and bait collection activities in relation to the conservation objectives of the features of Dart Estuary MCZ.

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Nicky Allan
Marine Lead Adviser.

Annex 1: NE comments on Marine Conservation Zone Assessments for Dart Estuary MCZ – Handworking (from vessel and land), crab tiling, digging with forks vs. Tentacled Lagoon Worm (*Alkmaria romijni*) and intertidal mud.

1. We would like to recommend the addition of number of crab tiles throughout the report, but particularly in the conclusion paragraph (pg.9) – “There are a number of crab tiles in the MCZ, but the total number of tiles has decreased by more than 50% since the first survey in 2000/01”. We recommend adding more detail so this is clear – e.g. “the total number of tiles has decreased from x to x (>50% decrease)”.