

Date: 12/07/2022
Our ref: 396991
Your ref: UKMCZ0057 DAR-MCZ-004 Estuarine rocky habitats and low energy intertidal rock



Sarah Clark
Devon and Severn IFCA
Brixham Laboratory
Freshwater Quarry
Brixham
Devon
TQ5 8BA

Nicky Allan
Natural England
Sterling House
Exeter
EX1 1PZ

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. Estuarine rocky habitats and low energy intertidal rock.

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 estuarine rocky habitats and low energy intertidal rock
- Crab tiling on estuarine rocky habitats and low energy intertidal rock
- Bait collection (digging with forks) on estuarine rocky habitats and low energy intertidal rock

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

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>