

Date: 16/03/2023  
Our ref: 422932  
Your ref: UKMCZ0057 Shore based activities vs saltmarsh & reedbeds



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

Sophie Hare  
Natural England  
Sterling House  
Exeter  
EX1 1PZ

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Sarah,

**Formal Advice to Devon & Severn IFCA: Marine Conservation Zone Assessments for Devon Avon Estuary MCZ – Shored base activities vs. coastal saltmarshes and reedbeds.**

Thank you for the above assessment, received by email on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023.

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).<sup>1</sup> 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 Devon Avon Estuary MCZ:

- Shore based activities on coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds.

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 shored based activities in relation to the conservation objectives of the features of Devon Avon Estuary MCZ.**

**We agree that shore-based activities outlined in this assessment, alone and in combination, pose no significant risk to the conservation objectives for of the features of the Devon Avon Estuary MCZ.**

Further to this, Natural England welcomes the introduction of the future Hand Working Permit Byelaw which includes the establishment of fixed provisions for all persons as detailed in this assessment, and will await such a time that stakeholders are consulted by Devon & Severn IFCA for input on the setting of initial bag limits.

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

Yours sincerely,

Sophie Hare  
Marine Lead Adviser.

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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>