

Devon and Severn IFCA News

South West IFCAs receive Seafish Authority funding for Spiny Lobster work

Devon and Severn IFCA, Cornwall IFCA and Isles of Scilly IFCA has received £5,752 from Seafish to aid research work into the movement, growth rates and larval settlement of spiny lobsters (crawfish) in the coastal waters of South West of England.



D&S IFCA prepared a project proposal to request funding for consumables to aid research into the populations of spiny lobsters in the South West. On 29th October 2019, the Seafish South West Advisory Committee met and discussed the proposal. The committee agreed that funds, from Seafish SW Budget for 2019/2020, would be granted to the SW IFCAs to purchase streamer tags and components to make up six post larvae (puerile) artificial settlement structures to be deployed in spring 2020.

The three IFCAs are working collaboratively to gather evidence on spiny lobster movements and growth rates through tagging, working with the fishing industry to achieve this. Fishers are collecting data on the sizes and sexes of spiny lobsters caught to understand the population structure and identify cohort size classes that will eventually recruit into the fishery. Members of the fishing industry have identified their concerns in relation to the possible future increases in landings and wish to avoid a boom and bust fishery. They are therefore working with the IFCAs to gather data to help determine if further management of the species is required. The spiny lobster is a feature of conservation importance in several Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Within D&S IFCA's District removal of spiny lobsters from within three of its MCZs is prohibited under permit conditions of the [Mobile Fishing](#), [Potting](#), [Netting](#) and [Diving Permit Byelaws](#).

The spiny lobster work is detailed in the D&S IFCA's [Annual Plan for 2019/2020](#) and will continue to be a major workstream in 2020/2021.

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