



Have Your Say Informal Consultation

Concerns relating to pot fisheries in D&S IFCA's District and how to address the issues.

What is this about?

Concerns have been raised regarding the pot fisheries in the South West of England, including those within D&S IFCA's District, with a growing expectation that action is needed to address the issues that have been raised. There are suggestions that action on a national scale to address some of the issues, for example through the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) process, is taking too long.

Information has been gathered from different sources and presented to D&S IFCA's Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee (B&PSC). These include the findings from a series of port meetings with fishers around the District and information relating to potting management in the South West of England gathered from other sources.

Most concerns have been reported by fishermen, in particular those operating commercially. Reduced catches, declining profitability, unsustainable fishing practices, excessive effort by commercial and recreational fishermen, a need to review minimum conservation sizes, insufficient management, changing environmental conditions, and more.

What can D&S IFCA Do?

D&S IFCA cannot manage or address issues beyond its District, but it can and does manage potting activity within its District. Commercial and recreational potting activity is managed by the Potting Permit Byelaw with its associated flexible Potting Permit Conditions. The Potting Permit Conditions enable spatial, gear, time, and catch restrictions to be used to manage the activity. There is also scope for the use of certain types of technology to be used; a package of conditions to manage the activity of potting in the District, or in specific parts of the District.

What Can You Do?

The Have Your Say informal consultation has the aim to gain the views of the **commercial and recreational potting sectors** on a range of topics to inform the B&PSC's discussions and identify potential management measures in the D&S IFCA's District that would be formally consulted on.

You may have already aired your views in the past, but it is important to stay involved.

Your Response

The Have Your Say informal consultation begins on **18th October 2024** and will end on **15th November 2024**. This is not a detailed questionnaire, but we have included some questions to help you set out your response to all or some of the questions. Your response can be as detailed as you wish and relate to all or any of the themes. We very much encourage you to explain the reasons for your views and provide supporting information, if you have any, so that all the information can be considered in the decision-making process.

How can you Respond?

This is a word document format of the informal consultation questionnaire which can be completed, printed if sent by post, and returned to D&S IFCA in the following ways:

1. Email to: consultation@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk
2. Post to: D&S IFCA, Brixham Laboratory, Freshwater Quarry, Brixham, TQ5 8BA.

You can call us for more information: 01803 854648 (Extension 856).

We also have this informal consultation questionnaire available on-line:

- **The On-line Consultation Questionnaire** ([Please Click here](#))
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Have Your Say Informal Consultation Questionnaire

About you

1. What is your name?

2. What is your email address (if not already on our mailing list)?

3. Are you a potting permit holder or someone operating under a potting permit (possibly the skipper of a vessel owned by someone else)

4. What is your vessel's PLN or permit number?

5. What type of vessel do you operate from e.g. mono hull or multi-hull?

6. Does your vessel have vivier tanks (integral tanks in the hull?)

7. How were you made aware of this Have Your Say informal consultation? (e.g., by this circular, D&S IFCA's website, D&S IFCA Facebook, from someone else, or other source).

Spatial Management

At recent port meetings, North Devon fishers suggested that potting should be managed differently on the North and the South coast of D&S IFCA's District. Concerns were also raised about conflict between the recreational and commercial potting sectors along the coastal strip. The Permit Conditions allow for different parts of the District to be defined, with management measures applicable to those specific areas, for example, pot limitation (capping numbers of pots) or seasonal closures in specific places.

Questions

8. Do you support applying localised management measures for potting in different parts of the District? Yes/no?

9. If you support localised management measures, what should apply, where should they apply and why?

10. What management measures do you think should **not apply** in the different parts of the District and why?

Managing Effort

Excessive effort and a need to tackle it was something raised in port meetings, along with concerns about over regulation or current restrictions not being adhered to.

Effort can be limited in a range of ways using the Potting Permit Conditions, without limiting the number of permits issued. Effort can be managed by applying restrictions throughout the whole District, or potentially in various parts of the District. Pot limitation (capping the numbers of commercial pots that can be used per vessel in the District) is one way, and further limiting recreational pots (current maximum is five pots per permit holder) is another. Officers have confidence that pot limitation is enforceable.

Effort can be managed in a variety of ways other than pot limitation. These include a days at sea allowance, seasonal closures, time at sea per day, vessel size (setting a maximum size for potting vessels lower than the current size limit of 14.99 metres), and the type of vessel authorised to operate within the District. A mixture of these is possible and other suggestions relating to managing effort may be gathered in the consultation.

Questions:

11. What are your views about applying additional management to control potting effort within the District? Please provide details to support your view.



12. What are your views about pot limitation (setting a maximum number of pots operated by a vessel)?



13. If supportive of pot limitation, what should be the maximum number of pots that can be used by a vessel in the District and why?

14. If supportive of pot limitation, should differently types of pot (e.g. parlours, creels, inkwells, whelk pots) have a maximum limit that can be used by a single vessel, and if so, why and what should the limit be?

15. What are your views about further restricting the numbers of recreational pots used per permit holder and if you support a reduction to what level and why?

16. What are your views about limiting the number of days at sea a vessel can operate, within the District, to manage effort?

17. If you support the days at sea approach how many days would be appropriate and why?

18. What are your views about applying different management measures to different types of potting vessels operating in the District e.g., mono-hull ; multi-hull; vivier, and why?

19. What are your views about further restricting the size of potting vessels within the District or in parts of the District?

Seasonal Closure

Some fishers have suggested the use of seasonal closures for potting vessels. D&S IFCA has applied seasonal closures to other fisheries in the District.

Questions:

20. What are your views about introducing a seasonal closure? Please provide details to support your view.

21. If you support the use of seasonal closures, how would they be applied and to which shellfish (crab, lobster, whelk) fisheries? Please provide details to support your view.

Catch/Gear Restrictions and Use of Bait

Minimum conservation reference sizes (Min CRS) already apply to the crab, lobster, crawfish and whelk fisheries within the District, but suggestions for change can be considered.

Questions

22. What are your views about a change in the Min CRS for these species (crab, lobster, crawfish and whelk), and what Min CRS should apply? Please provide details to support your view.

23. What are your views about introducing a Maximum CRS for any of these species? Please provide details to support your view.

24. What are your views about the existing daily restrictions of five crabs and two lobsters for recreational potters? Please provide details to support your view.

25. What are your views about applying further restrictions on the use of crab (soft or hard shelled) as bait in the whelk fishery? Please provide details to support your view.

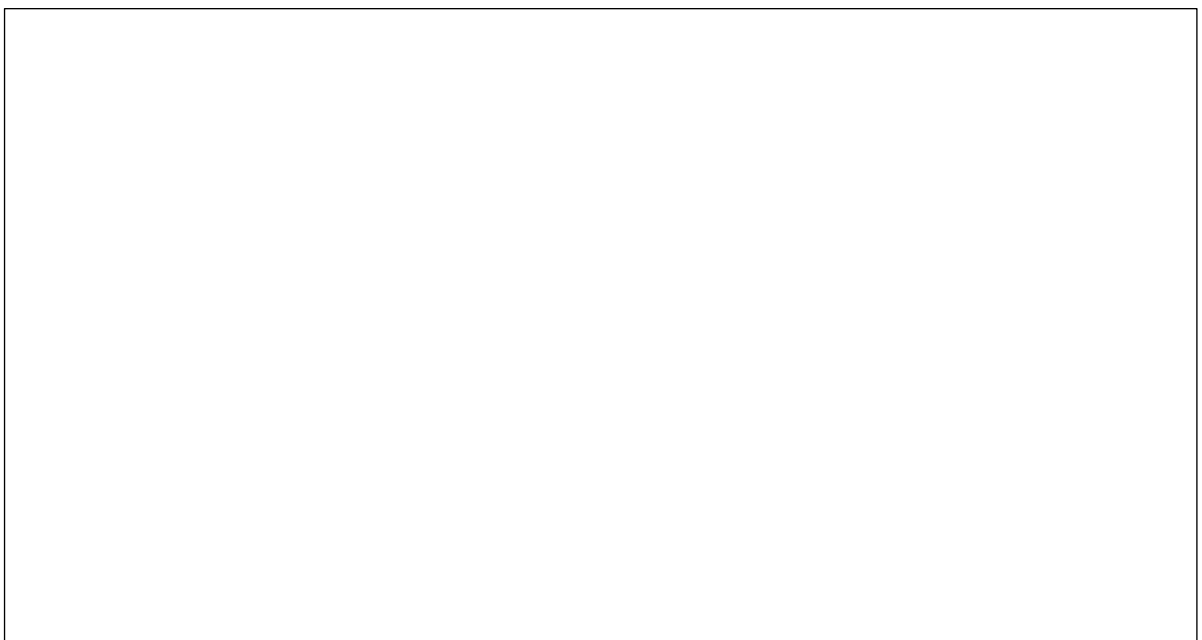


26. What are your views about escape gaps and their effectiveness? Please provide details to support your view.



What have we missed?

27. Do you have any other suggestions relating to management of the pot fisheries that have not been included in the above sections? Please provide details to support your suggestion.



What do we do with your information – Privacy Policy.

We protect any personal data that you may provide. Any personal data submitted in this information collecting process will not be shared with other organisations or placed in the public domain. The content of responses will be summarised and anonymised where appropriate for documenting in reports that will be presented to the Byelaw & Permitting Sub-Committee (B&PSC) and published on our website.

D&S IFCA has a privacy policy which can be found by visiting our website (home page) www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk

- You can change your preferences at any time.
- We have a duty to consult with D&S IFCA Permit Holders.
- You can manage your preferences by contacting D&S IFCA.

Background Reports & Papers (Links) and keeping you informed.

Reports and Officers' papers for the B&PSC are available on D&S IFCA's website:

- [The Authority Meetings Tab](#)
- [Section B of the D&S IFCA Website Resource Library](#)

We regularly post information about our work on our website/Facebook. Direct communication is often the best way to help you stay informed about our work and to highlight the opportunities for you to have your say on a range of topics or issues. If you are not already on our mailing list, then you can get yourself added by contacting D&S IFCA. You will then be directly notified of all our consultations.

End.