

## **DSIFCA 18\_25 – Retention of Undersized Spiny Lobsters**

At approximately 17:58 on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025, D&S IFCA officers conducted an inspection at the Brixham Fish Market. During the inspection, two fish boxes bearing the name of a fishing vessel were observed. The boxes contained a variety of shellfish and were subject to measurement and compliance checks.

The first box contained nine female edible brown crabs (*Cancer pagurus*), all of which were above the Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) for ICES division VIIIe (140mm). The second box contained five male edible crabs also exceeding MCRS, one lobster (*Homarus gammarus*) in compliance with national MCRS, and two spiny lobsters (*Palinurus spp.*).

The two spiny lobsters measured at 105mm and 88mm respectively, below the minimum size requirement of 110mm as specified for ICES sea area VII. Photographic documentation of the specimens and measurements was obtained.

Given that the spiny lobsters were alive at the time of inspection, the decision was made to seize and release them. Each lobster was weighed and recorded before officers departed, both undersized spiny lobsters were released into the sea.

### **Relevant Conditions and Legislation**

#### **Category A (10 metre and under) Licence: Schedule (91) Non-Sector – Section 5.3:**

“In ICES sea area 7 (of English waters), the minimum conservation reference size for crawfish (*Palinurus spp.*) shall be 110mm and shall be measured, as the length of the carapace, parallel to the midline, from the tip of the rostrum to the midpoint of the distal dorsal edge of the carapace.”

#### **Offences to Consider**

- Retention of two spiny lobsters below the Minimum Conservation Reference Size for ICES sea area VII, contrary to Section 5.3 of the Category A (10 metre and under) Licence: Schedule (91) Non-Sector 2025 Variation 3. Contrary to paragraphs 14(1), 14(6) and 19 of the Fisheries Act 2020.

#### **Outcome**

The Authority reviewed the case and was satisfied that the evidential test has been met. The Authority considered the public interest in this case and, in line with the Authority’s Compliance and Enforcement Strategy, an Official Written Warning was issued for the offence.