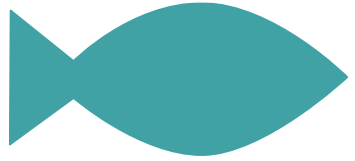


# Devon & Severn IFCA



## Audit of D&S IFCA's Marine Protected Area Work

Sarah Clark  
Deputy Chief Officer

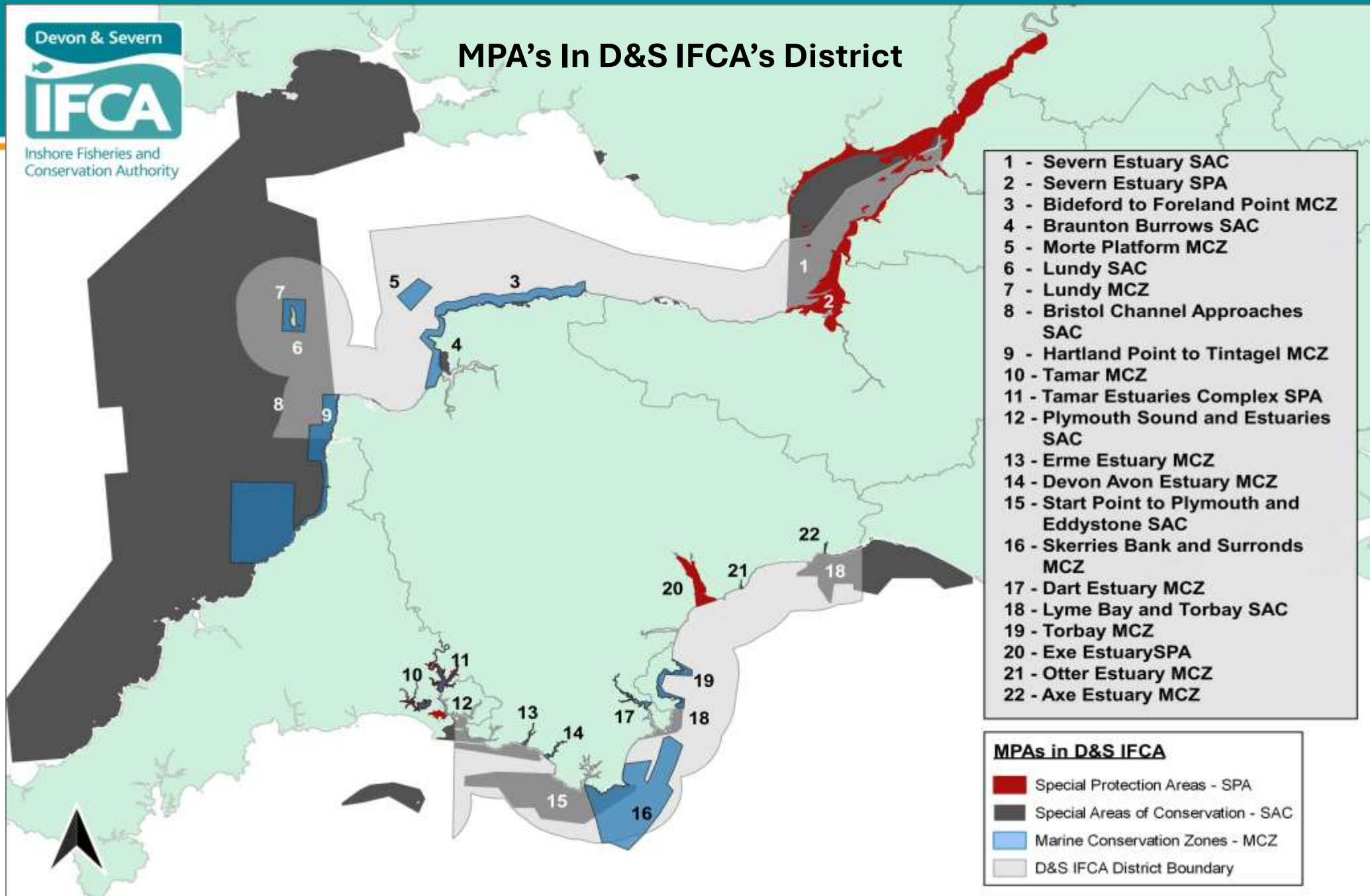
# What is a Marine Protected Area?

A protected area is defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as ‘a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.’

Marine Protected Areas are designated to protect important marine ecosystems, habitats and species (also known as ‘features’) from damage caused by human activities and have conservation objectives which state what conservation outcomes the MPA is designed to achieve.

The UK Government has a vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, and Marine Protected Areas help deliver this vision by protecting habitats, species and processes and providing healthy, functioning and resilient marine ecosystems.

## MPA's In D&S IFCA's District



- 42.39% of District is covered by MPAs (EMS & MCZ)
- North of District – 42.43% is MPA
- South of District 41.28% is MPA

# Types of Marine Protected Area

## European Marine Sites (EMSs)

- Designated under European Legislation (Birds and Habitats Directives) and transposed in UK legislation under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- They consist of
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) – designated for habitats and species. These include animals, plants and habitats that are considered special or threatened in Europe.
  - Special Protection Areas (SPA)- designated for the protection of internationally and nationally important, rare, vulnerable, or regularly occurring migratory birds and their supporting habitats.
- There are 10 EMSs in D&S IFCA's District:
  - Northern District: –
    1. *Severn Estuary SPA*
    2. *Severn Estuary SAC*
    3. *Lundy SAC*
    4. *Braunton Burrows SAC*
    5. *Bristol Channel and Approaches SAC*
  - Southern District:–
    1. *Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC*
    2. *Tamar Estuaries Complex SPA*
    3. *Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SAC*
    4. *Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC*
    5. *Exe Estuary SPA*

# Types of Marine Protected Area

## Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)

- Designated under Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
- Protect a range of nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology in English inshore waters and offshore waters off England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- They are designated to form part of an ecologically coherent network of MPAs alongside European Marine Sites (EMS) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- Three Tranches of MCZs have been designated since 2013.
- In D&S IFCA District there 12 MCZs:
  - Northern District:-
    1. *Lundy MCZ*
    2. *Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ*
    3. *Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ*
    4. *Morte Platform MCZ*
  - Southern District:-
    1. *Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ*
    2. *Torbay MCZ*
    3. *Tamar Estuary MCZ*
    4. *Dart Estuary MCZ*
    5. *Devon Avon Estuary MCZ*
    6. *Erme Estuary MCZ*
    7. *Otter Estuary MCZ*
    8. *Axe Estuary MCZ*

# Types of Marine Protected Area

## Ramsar Sites

- Ramsar sites are Wetlands of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention) 1971 and came into force in 1975.
- The Convention adopts a broad definition of wetland, namely “areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres”.
- As such, Ramsar sites that protect intertidal or subtidal habitats and species are considered MPAs.
- Many Ramsar Sites in the UK are classified as SPAs, SACs or SSSIs.

## Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

- SSSI are designated in England, Scotland and Wales to protect species, habitats and geological features of national importance.
- SSSI are notified and managed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- They are MPAs where they protect intertidal and subtidal habitats and species although they normally do not protect marine wildlife below the low water mark. In D&S IFCA’s District one site that is a marine SSSI is the Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary

# Types of Marine Protected Area

## Marine Nature Reserves (MNR)

- Marine Nature Reserves were designated under the same legislation as SSSIs.
- MNRs are limited in scope, and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced the mechanism for them to become Marine Conservation Zones
- Lundy was an MNR and became MCZ in 2013 – the UK's first MCZ

## No Take Zones

- Lundy was England's first No Take Zone – managed under D&S IFCA's Byelaws.

# Defra's Approach to Management of MPAs

## Feature Based:

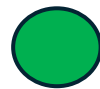
- Defra's Revised Approach to commercial fishing activities in MPAs was published in 2012.
- Defra's basis for assessing these activities is through an evidence based, risk-prioritised, matrix type approach.
- This approach showed, at a high generic level, the effect different gear types have on the conservation objectives for the relevant features for which MPAs have been designated.
- A **feature-based approach** where commercial fishing activities taking place in EMS and MCZ are assessed on their interaction with designated features (habitats and species).
- This is still the current approach to manage fishing activities in MPAs.



Activity/feature interactions identified within the matrix as **Red Risk** have the highest priority for implementation of management measures to protect the most sensitive features of the site from the fishing activity. E.g. scalloping on reef, trawling on seagrass



Activity/feature interactions identified within the matrix as **Amber Risk** require a site -level assessment to determine if the activity will impact the MPAs' integrity and conservation objectives and whether management of an activity is required to conserve site features. E.g. trawling on sediments, potting on reef



Activity/feature interactions identified within the matrix as **Green Risk** also require a site level assessment if there are 'in combination effects' with other plans or projects (e.g. fishing activities). Site level assessments are carried out in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of Article 6 (3) of the Habitat Directive.



For activities where there can be no feasible interaction between fishing activity and features of the EMS. These are classed as **Blue Risk** E.g. Bait digging on subtidal reef, and are screened out of assessments

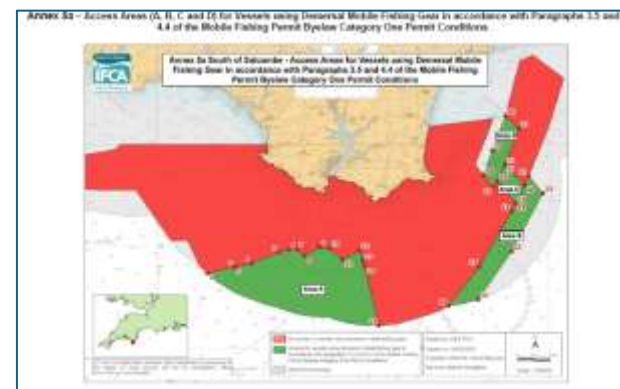
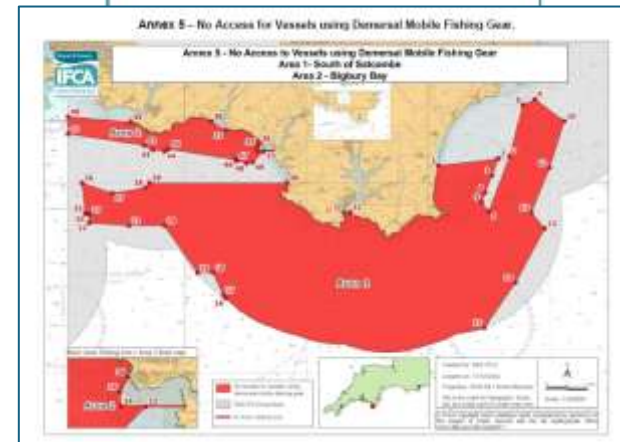
# Defra's Approach to Management of MPAs - **RED RISK**

Following Defra's Revised Approach, D&S IFCA classified all the interaction that could take place within the designated EMSs in its District. The Red and Amber and Green risk interactions were assessed. D&S IFCA undertook an audit trail and Red Risk assessments for five sites within the D&S IFCA's District were identified. These were:

- **Lundy SAC (demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat);**
- **Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC (demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat);**
- **Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC (demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef and seagrass);**
- **Severn Estuary SAC (demersal towed fishing gears interaction with sabellaria reef and seagrass);**
- **Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SAC (demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat).**

2014 - Management of these activities was bought in through prohibitions under Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw Permit Conditions.

2018 - IVMS introduction affording protection and monitoring compliance



# Evidence Gathering to inform MPA Assessments

- Site map(s) – sub-feature/feature location and extent
- General Management Approach (MCZs)
- Natural England’s risk assessment Matrix of fishing activities and habitat features and protected species
- Best available scientific and peer reviewed research
- Natural England’s conservation advice package for the site
- Condition of the features of the site including relevant attributes and targets for favourable condition
- Natural England’s monitoring reports
- Natural England’s supplementary advice on designated features
- Natural England’s advice on operations



Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
**Hartland Point to Tintagel Marine Conservation Zone**  
 This document sets out why this site is important, the features protected and general management information.  
 17 January 2016

**Overview**  
 This site becomes a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) in January 2016. This means that specific features within this area are protected and, where necessary, regulations will manage marine activities.

**Where is the site**  
 Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ is an inshore site on the north coast of Devon and Cornwall in the south west of England. The site covers 304 km<sup>2</sup> and follows the coastline along the mean high water mark from Tintagel Head to Hartland Point.

**Why it's important**  
 MCZs, together with other types of marine protected areas, will form the UK contribution to an international network of protected sites in the north east Atlantic. The network will help to deliver the government's vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. MCZs protect typical, rare or declining habitats and species found in our seas.

This site protects a wide range of features from rocky habitats to soft sediment which are important in the network both regionally and nationally. This site is crucial for connectivity of

Point No.	Lat	Long	Point No.	Lat	Long
1	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	17	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
2	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	18	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
3	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	19	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
4	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	20	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
5	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	21	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
6	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	22	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
7	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	23	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
8	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	24	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
9	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	25	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
10	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	26	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
11	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	27	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
12	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	28	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
13	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	29	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
14	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	30	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
15	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	31	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W
16	50° 12' 00" N	12° 42' 00" W	32	50° 11' 50" N	12° 41' 42" W

**Bierley Bank and Surrounds MCZ Condition Assessment - Subtidal Features**  
**Summary**  
 Please note that since assessments will be cited as a '50%' condition and others will be in 'favourable' condition, 100 numbers are used in 100 to they provide a weight to the evidence source. These in 'favourable' state are to be added to our 'favourable' evidence and will then be provided with a 100 number. A reference list has been provided at the bottom of this document including those in 100 format.

**Water Quality - Conclusions**  
 All MPAs falling naturally for comparison according to the new, more stringent standards set out in the 2015 WQI classification. These targets have been raised nationally (or in the process of being) for conservation advice and are set at 'favourable' due to the high levels of PNEC and necessary and its compliance period.

**Marine Benthic and Surrounds MCZ subtidal features**

Feature	Low confidence in assessment - using some direct evidence, but expert judgement also required to make inference on condition and trend	All of the principal attributes have passed for this feature All of the secondary attributes have passed 1 failure for supporting processes water quality - condition with 'favourable', favourable because majority of the targets have been met.
<b>Rock</b> Moderate energy intertidal rock High energy intertidal rock		
<b>Prevalent condition</b>		
<b>Soft</b> Moderate energy intertidal rock		All principal attributes failed (except 23 attributes assessed and spatial distribution of biogenic cover and 8 structure, species composition of inorganic cover/substrate)

Protected features	General management approach
Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds	Maintain in favourable condition
Low energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
High energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal coarse sediment	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal sand	Recover to favourable condition
Fragile sponge & anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats	Recover to favourable condition
Honeycomb worm ( <i>Sabellaria alveolata</i> ) reefs	Maintain in favourable condition
Pink sea-fan ( <i>Euscelia verrucosa</i> )	Recover to favourable condition

**The Severn Estuary / Môr Hafren**  
**European Marine Site**  
 comprising:  
 The Severn Estuary / Môr Hafren  
 Special Area of Conservation (SAC)  
 The Severn Estuary  
 Special Protection Area (SPA)  
 The Severn Estuary / Môr Hafren  
 Ramsar Site

Natural England & the  
 Countryside Council for Wales' advice  
 given under Regulation 33(2)(a) of the Conservations  
 (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended.

June 2009

# Evidence Needed to inform MPAs Assessments

- Type and level of fishing activity taking
  - Fisher activity surveys – online and in-person evidence surveys
  - Analysis of IVMS data for mobile gear fleet
- Production of fishing activity maps and reports for each MPA
- Research and survey work to gather evidence on the location and extent of sensitive habitats:
  - On-board survey vessels – in-house underwater filming to ground truth location of reef, chartering environmental consultants, working with CIFCA e.g. cuttlefish potting on seagrass; identifying coarse sediment habitats
  - On-board fishing vessels – e.g. assessing potential impacts of potting on reef with Dartmouth Potter; impacts of different trawls on mud
  - Working with academic institutions – PhD studies e.g. herring spawning grounds in Severn Estuary with Swansea University



# MPAs Assessments – the process

For **EMSs** a two step Habitats Regulations Assessment is undertaken

- Test of likely Significant effect
- Appropriate Assessment
- A final in-combination assessment is then undertaken
- All assessments use the information and evidence gathered
- Completed assessments sent to Natural England for Formal Advice

For **MCZs** – a similar assessment process is followed:

- An assessment is made of the risk that the activity could hinder the conservation objectives of the MCZ, and
- whether D&S IFCA can exercise its functions to further the conservation objectives.
- An in-combination assessment is also made.
- All assessments use the information and evidence gathered
- Completed assessments sent to Natural England for Formal Advice

For the 22 MPAs  
in the D&S  
IFCA's District

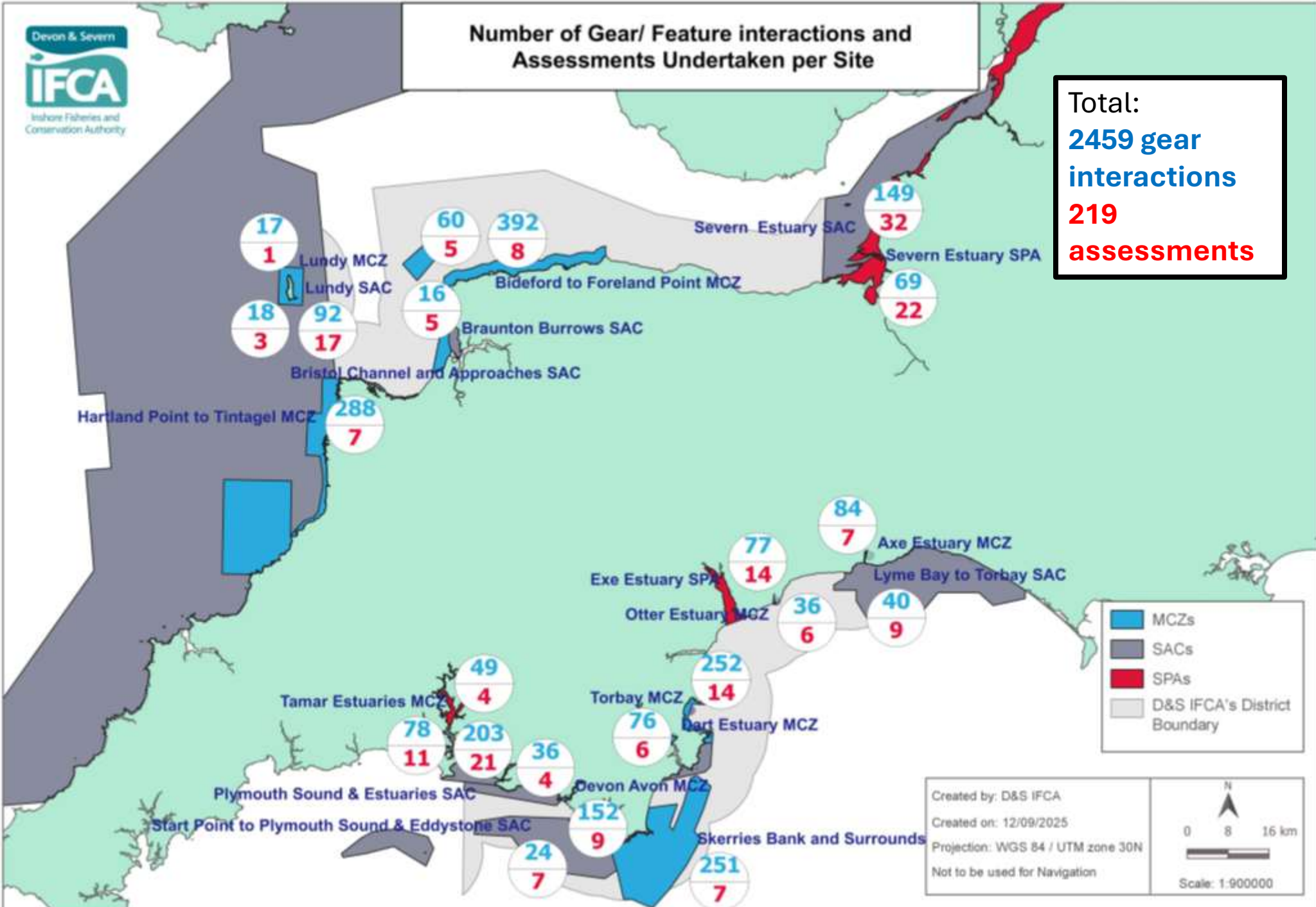
**219**

**Assessments**

**2459 gear /  
feature  
interactions**

### Number of Gear/ Feature interactions and Assessments Undertaken per Site

Total:  
**2459 gear interactions**  
**219 assessments**



- MCZs
- SACs
- SPAs
- D&S IFCA's District Boundary

Created by: D&S IFCA  
 Created on: 12/09/2025  
 Projection: WGS 84 / UTM zone 30N  
 Not to be used for Navigation

0 8 16 km

Scale: 1:900000

# Severn Estuary SPA and SAC



Thwaite Shad (copied)



Intertidal mudflats

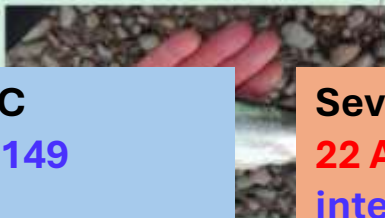
## Severn Estuary SAC

**32 Assessments – 149**

### interactions:

#### Features/ Sub-features:

- Estuaries: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
- Atlantic salt meadows
- Estuaries: Reefs ( Circalittoral rock; Infralittoral roc; Intertidal rock; Intertidal biogenic reef: *Sabellaria* spp.; Subtidal biogenic reef: *Sabellaria* spp),
- Estuaries; Sandbanks which was slightly covered by seawater all the times (subtidal mud, sand, coarse & mixed sediment
- Twaite Shad
- River Lamprey
- Sea Lamprey
- Estuaries (estuarine fish communities & bird communities)



## Severn Estuary SPA

**22 Assessments – 69**

### interactions:

#### Features:

- Non-breeding Bewick's Swan
- Non-breeding European White Fronted Goose
- Non-breeding Redshank
- Non-breeding Dunlin
- Non-breeding Shelduck
- Non-breeding Gadwall
- Internationally important Waterbird assemblage

#### Sub-features

- Intertidal mud
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- Intertidal mixed sediments
- Intertidal rock
- Saltmarsh



■ Severn Estuary SPA  
■ Severn Estuary SAC  
■ D&S IFCA District Boundary

Created on: 11/09/2025  
 Projection: WGS 84 / UTM zone 30N  
 Not to be used for Navigation  
 Scale: 1:449412

## Lundy MPA



Spiny Lobster / Crawfish

### Lundy SAC

**17 assessments – 93 interactions:**

#### Features/sub-features:

- Reefs (rocky shore communities; Kelp communities;
- Subtidal bedrock & stable boulder communities; subtidal vertical and overhang circalittoral rock communities
- Infralittoral rock
- Circalittoral rock
- Subtidal sand (high energy)
- Subtidal coarse sediment
- Subtidal gravel & sand
- Subtidal muddy sand
- Grey seal
- Sea caves



Dead Man's fingers –Knoll Pins Lundy . Photo ©Keith Hiscock

### Lundy MCZ

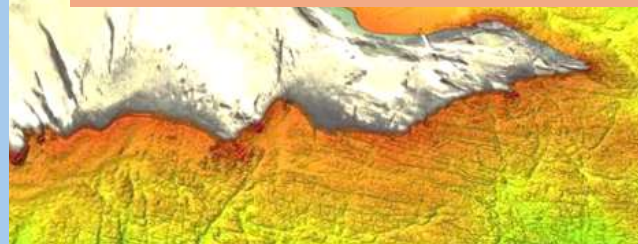
**1 Assessment – 17 interactions:**

#### Features:

- Spiny Lobster (*Palinurus elephas*)



egg Knowle Pins Lundy.



Sediment grab sampling Lundy



Seals at Lundy

**Torbay MCZ and Torbay Part of Lyme Bay to Torbay SAC**

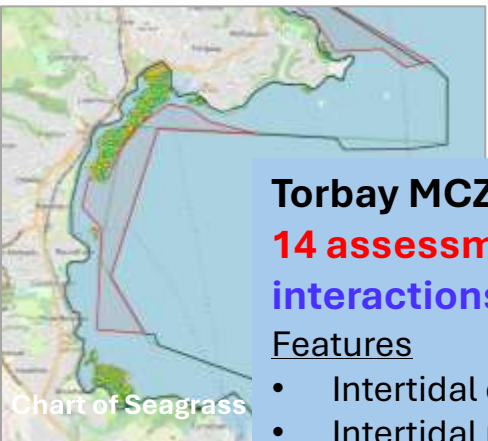
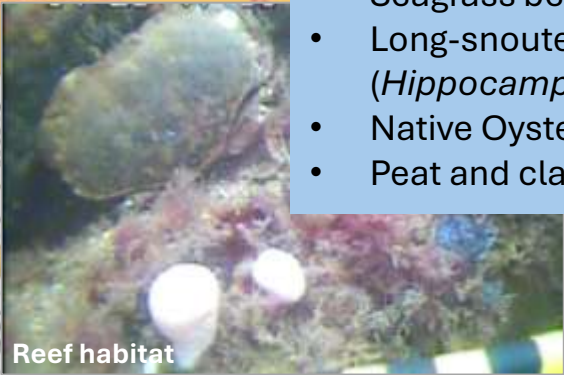


Chart of Seagrass



Seagrass bed with sea anemones © Paul K



Reef habitat

**Torbay MCZ**  
**14 assessments- 252 interactions:**

Features

- Intertidal coarse sediment
- Intertidal mixed sediments
- Intertidal mud
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- Subtidal mud
- Low energy intertidal rock
- Moderate energy intertidal rock
- Intertidal under boulder communities
- Seagrass beds
- Long-snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus guttulatus*)
- Native Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*)
- Peat and clay exposures

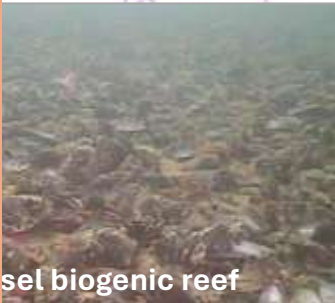
**Lyme Bay & Torbay SAC**  
**9 assessments – 40 interactions:**

Features

- Reef
- Submerged or partially submerged sea caves

Sub-features

- Infralittoral Rock
- Circalittoral Rock
- Subtidal Stony Reef
- Subtidal Biogenic reefs
- Mussel Beds



Mussel biogenic reef

Torbay MCZ  
 Torbay part of the Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC

Created by: D&S IFCA  
 Created on: 12/09/2025  
 Projection: WGS 84 / UTM zone 30N  
 Not to be used for Navigation

Scale: 1:150000  
 0 2 4 km

ENGLAND - SOUTH  
**EDDYSTON**  
**TO**  
**BERRY HEAD**  
DEPTHS  
SCALE 1:75 000

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The Keeper of the Ordnance Survey  
www.ordnancesurvey.gov.uk

# MPA Assessments informing Management of Fishing Activities

- Completion of assessments
- Sent to Natural England for Formal Advice
- If assessments suggest that the activity is impacting features or the integrity of MPAs then management options are considered
- Papers presented to B&PSC to inform the potential management measures that could be applied to the activity
- From red risk assessments - demersal mobile fishing prohibitions under Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions 2014:
  - Lundy SAC - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat;
  - Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat;
  - Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef and seagrass;
  - Severn Estuary SAC - demersal towed fishing gears interaction with *Sabellaria* reef and seagrass;
  - Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SAC - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with reef habitat.

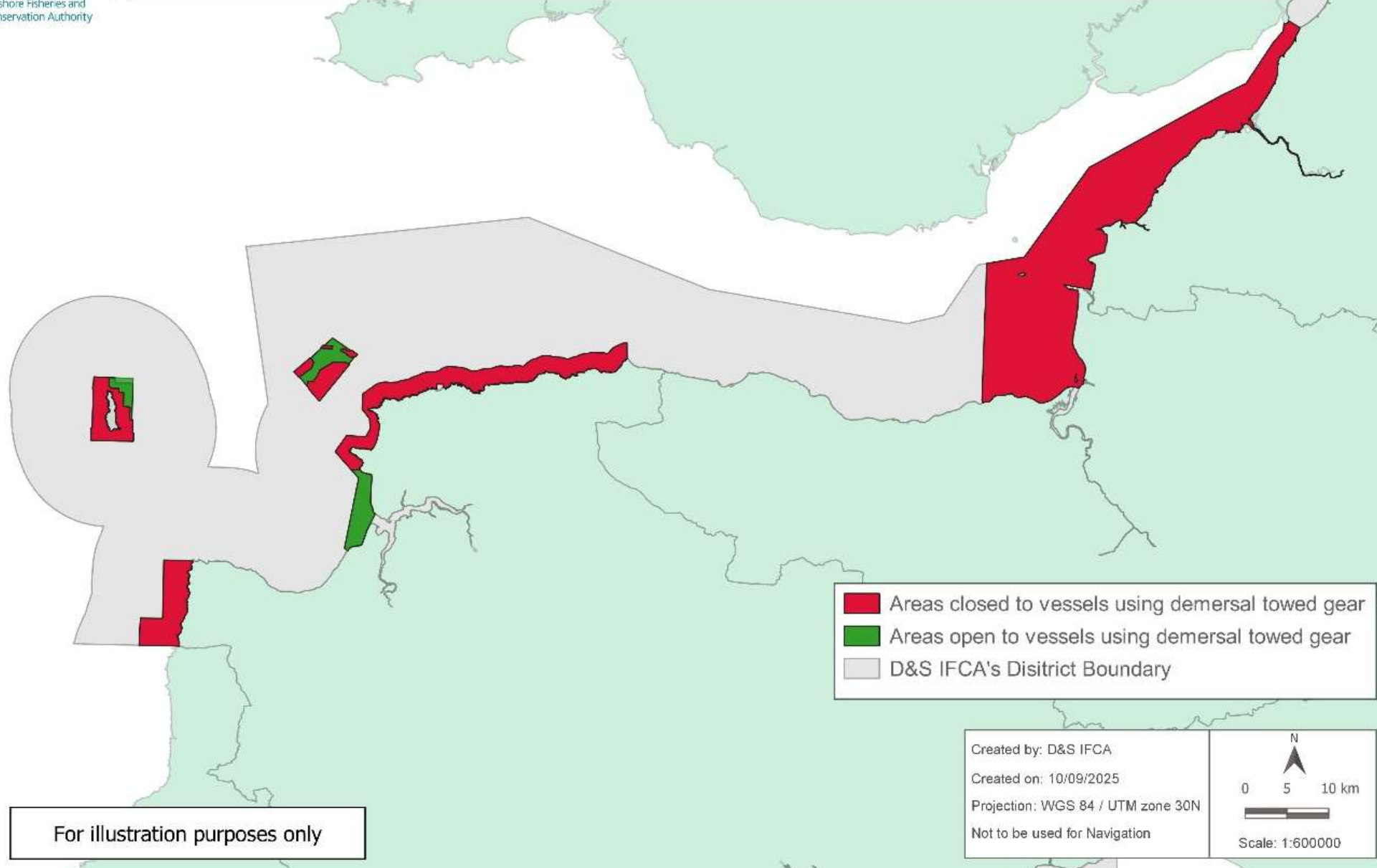
# MPA Assessments informing Management of Fishing Activities

- Further Mobile Fishing Prohibitions:
  - Estuaries: Exe Estuary SPA; Dart Estuary MCZ; Devon Avon Estuary MCZ; Erme Estuary MCZ; Axe Estuary MCZ; Otter Estuary MCZ; Tamar Estuary MCZ; Tamar Estuaries Complex SPA;
  - Morte Platform MCZ – demersal towed fishing gear interaction with rock habitat
  - Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with rock habitat
  - Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ - demersal towed fishing gear interaction with rock habitat
  - Torbay MCZ – demersal towed gear on seagrass
  - Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ - scallop dredges on rock and sediment
  - Lundy SAC - Scallop dredging on coarse sediment

**27.40% of D&S IFCA's District closed to demersal towed fishing gear**

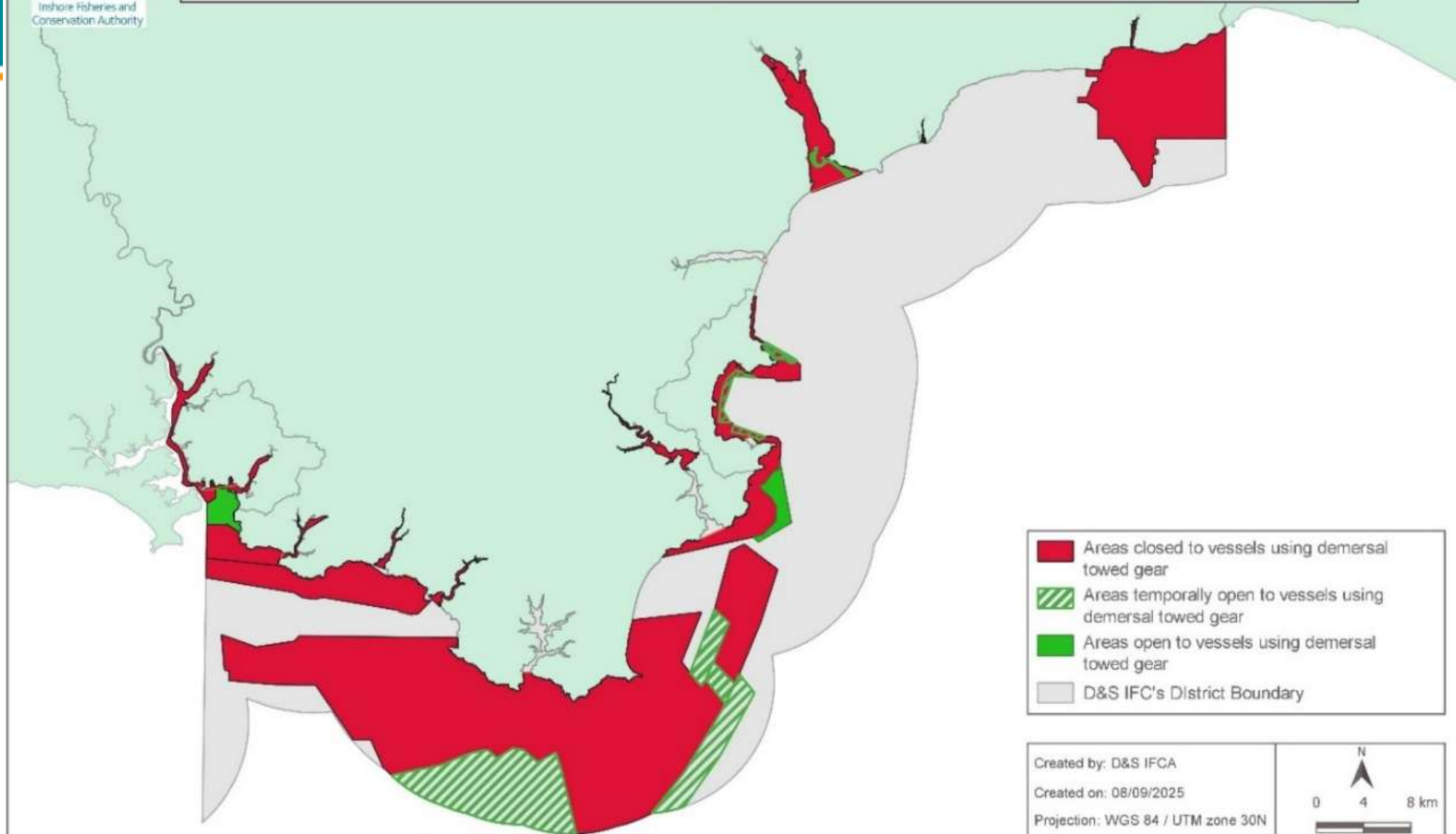
**91.38% of total area of benthic habitats within MPAs is closed to demersal towed fishing gear (excl. BCA SAC)**

## Mobile Fishing Restrictions in MPAs in the North of D&S IFCA's Disitric



For illustration purposes only

## Mobile Fishing Restrictions in MPAs in the South of D&S IFCA's District



For illustration purposes only

Created by: D&S IFCA  
Created on: 08/09/2025  
Projection: WGS 84 / UTM zone 30N  
Not to be used for Navigation

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Scale: 1:430000

# MPA Assessments informing Management of Fishing Activities

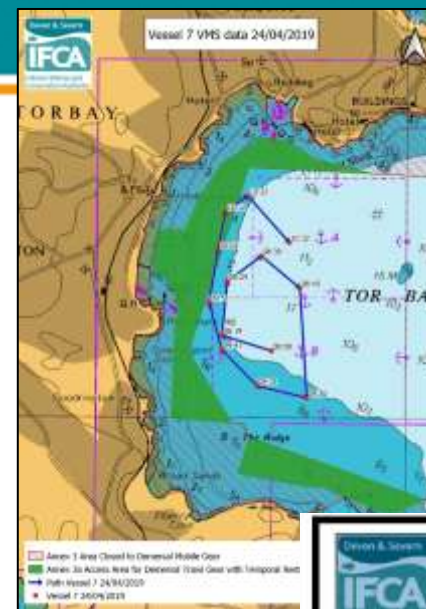
- Other management introduced from MPA assessment work:
  - Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ – areas seasonally closed to towed demersal gear on sand and coarse sediment
  - Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC – access area to ring netting (not on reef habitat)
  - Torbay MCZ – areas seasonally open to trawl gear on mud habitat
  - Lundy SAC – access area to trawl gear on coarse sediment; access area to scallop dredge gear on mobile sand
  - Bideford to Foreland Point MCZ – area open to demersal mobile gear on mobile sand
  - Lundy MCZ, Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ and Bidford to Foreland Point MCZ – prohibition on removal of spiny lobster

# MPA Assessments – Monitoring and Control Plans (M&CPs)

- M&CPs introduced where uncertainties in activity and evidence gaps identified
- Baseline Information produced
- Trigger points on activities set
- Further research undertaken on habitat location where possible
- Fishing activity monitored through engagement with fishers and IVMS data
- Information sent to fishers

## M&CPs in place:

- Severn Estuary MPA and Plymouth Sound and Estuaries MPA – shad bycatch reporting and flyers distributed to netting permit holders
- Hartland Point to Tintagel MCZ – trawling activity – IVMS
- Lundy SAC – demersal towed gear activity – IVMS
- Torbay MCZ – seasonal trawling on mud – IVMS; potting and netting on seagrass



**Bycatch of Shad**  
Returning and reporting

*Please remember: any shad must be returned to the sea as soon as possible after the catch occurs*

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended), from 0mm to 12 mm, it is illegal to:

- Kill or injure,
- Take,
- Damage or destroy the place of resting, shelter or breeding of,

any allis shad (*Alosa alosa*) or twaite shad (*Alosa fallax*).

Devon and Severn IFCA is collecting data on Shad bycatch in order to monitor their populations. Please get in contact if you see shad bycatch in your gear.

Devon & Severn IFCA: ☎ 01883 45444 ☎ 07740 125478 (out of hours)  
✉ [office@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk](mailto:office@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk) @DevonSevernIFCA

## Reviews undertaken when:

- changes in fishing activity within a site creating greater risk to the features,
- new scientific evidence on the impacts of activities;
- changes in conservation advice from Natural England;
- production of new conservation advice packages;
- Natural England’s review of the condition assessments of features in MPAs in the District;
- the designation of new habitats in MPAs or new MPAs in the D&S IFCA’s District;
- Requests for authorisations, against D&S IFCA’s byelaws, to undertake activities in MPAs;
- Review – Annual Plan workstream

## Focus on Environment Work

### Risk Assessment and Timeline on the Review of the Previously Completed MPAs

D&S IFCA has undertaken assessments of the interactions of fishing activities on designated habitats and species in the 22 MPAs in its District, which have been used to inform management measures, where appropriate. A review of previously undertaken MPA assessments relating to fishing activity is crucial to ensure that management measures are effective in protecting sensitive marine habitats and species, in line with D&S IFCA’s Statutory Duties.

A review process is particularly important where a long time has elapsed since the last assessment, where fishing patterns have changed, and/or where new evidence is available regarding feature sensitivity and exposure, or compliance. Given the large number of assessments undertaken to date, and the limited resources available, Officers will establish a risk-prioritised timeline and register for review of previously completed assessments and begin the review process for higher-risk assessments.

### Consideration of Outputs from a review of MPA Assessments

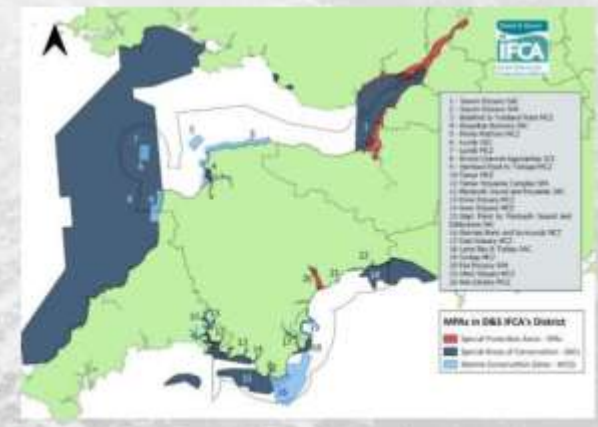
Building on the risk-based prioritisation of MPA review requirements, Officers will undertake a review of the higher-risk assessments; outputs from these assessments will be considered in terms of their relevance to management and raised for consideration by Authority Members as required.

Initial scoping has highlighted a need to consider outputs of a revised MCZ assessment for cuttlefish potting on the seagrass beds in the Torbay MCZ and consideration of a review of management will be presented to the B&PSC in FY2025/2026 ahead of the 2026 fishery.

This scoping has also highlighted other priority reviews of assessments for Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC (ring netting) and Skerries Bank and Surrounds MCZ (mobile gear). Other assessment reviews may be necessary depending on the level of risk.

### Success Criterion:

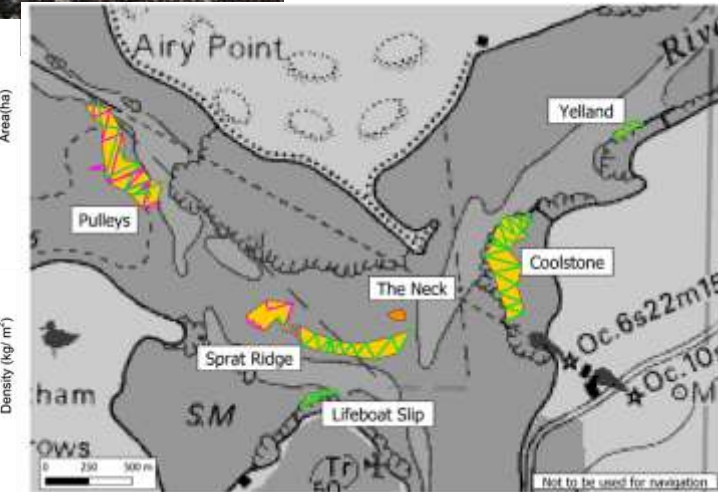
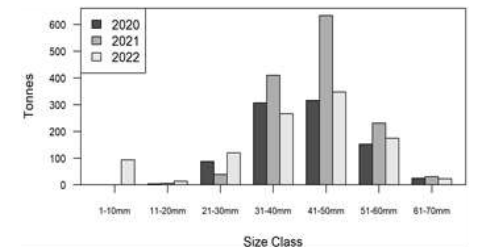
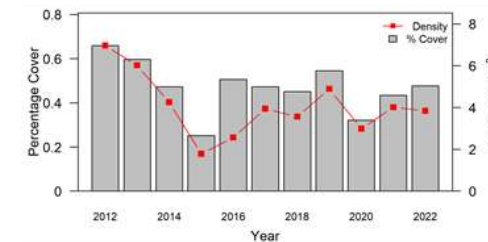
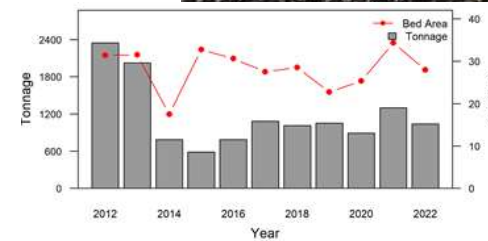
IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within its district



# Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

## Taw Torridge Estuary SSSI

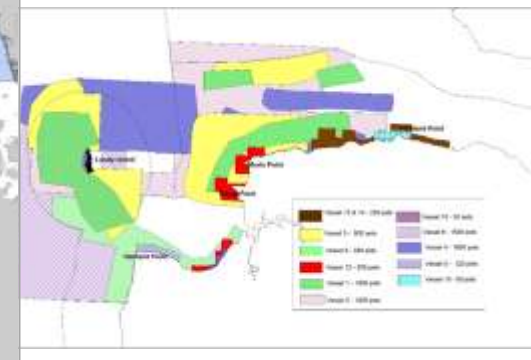
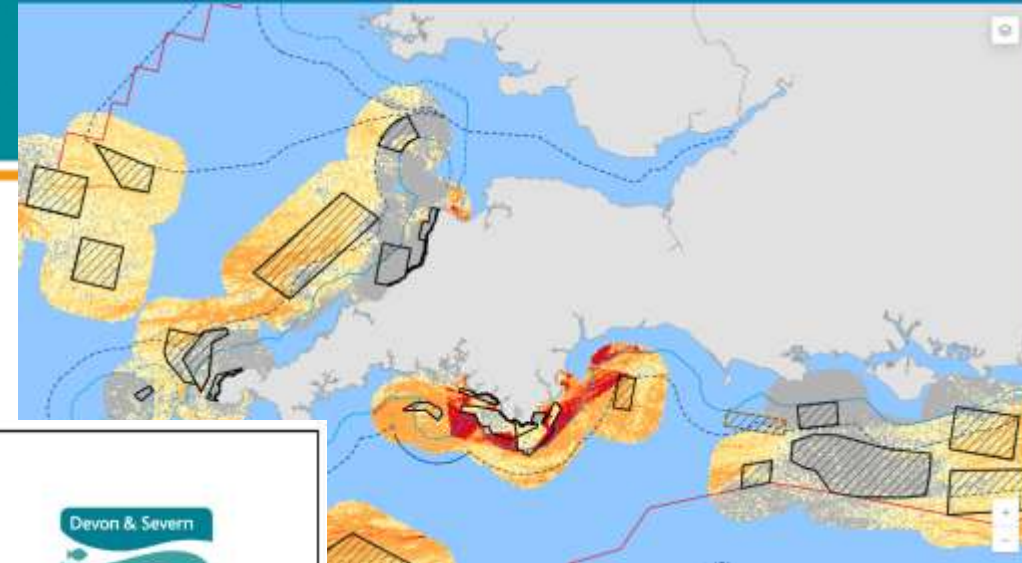
- Large area of mudflats, sandbanks and intertidal mussel beds support overwintering and nationally important bird species
- D&S IFCA monitoring of intertidal mussel bed since 2012
- D&S IFCA's stock assessments inform the bird food availability model(s) (marine Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment project with Bournemouth Uni & AIFCA)
- Outputs used to manage commercial hand gathering and set maximum amount per month for removal
- Developing further methods for assessment – different quadrat techniques and multispectral drone to identify live mussels (surface bio-film)



# Ongoing & Additional MPA Work

In addition to the work discussed, D&S IFCA Officers also respond to consultations e.g.:

- Responding to Marine Licence applications – impacts of developments in MPAs, such as Hinkley C Nuclear Power Station, Wind Farms, Aquaculture Sites, Capital Dredging;
- Responding to national MPA consultations:
  - Defra’s Offshore Wind Developments and MPA Compensatory Habitats Consultation
  - MMO Stage 3 Management of Fishing Activities in offshore MPAs
  - MMO Stage 4 consultation on Management of Fishing Activities in two MPAs designated for Mobile species – e.g. Bristol Channel and Approaches SAC



An underwater photograph of a kelp forest. The water is a deep, clear blue-green. Several large, dark brown kelp stalks rise vertically from the bottom. The kelp leaves are long, narrow, and green, some showing signs of being eaten. A single fish is visible in the middle ground, swimming towards the right. The overall scene is serene and natural.

**Thank you**  
**Any questions?**