

**BRIEFING NOTE TO THE MEETING OF THE
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 30 OCTOBER 2019 AT 2PM**

NIFCA CEO Mike Hardy
NIFCA Chair Les Weller
NIFCA Vice Chair Northumberland County Councillor Wendy Pattison

The National IFCA Vision

IFCAs will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.

NIFCA is one of ten IFCAs around the coast of England established by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, with a remit to manage and regulate sea fisheries in a sustainable way and ensure minimal environmental impacts, particularly within MPAs.

NIFCA has an enforcement and scientific/environmental role, to which end there are

- a) six full time equivalent enforcement officers and
- b) two environmental officers (currently recruiting a third) trained to degree/masters level.

NIFCA is member based with up to twenty one members (currently twenty) comprising six Northumberland County Councillors, one from North Tyneside Council, three statutory appointees (from partner organisations, Marine Management Organisation, Natural England and the Environment Agency) and eleven members (currently ten) appointed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO Appointees) who each have experience and knowledge of the marine environment and/or inshore fisheries and are trained particularly to bring their knowledge and expertise to bear in an impartial way and not as representatives of any particular sector.

Nifca Assets

Patrol Vessel St. Aidan, including onboard RIB



Purchased in 2014 entirely with the Authority's own resources (Patrol Vessel Fund) and including from the sale proceeds of the Authority's previous vessel.

Cabin RIB Robert Arckless MBE:



Purchased in 2019 using a grant from the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) plus the NIFCA Patrol Vessel Fund and sale of our previous RIB.

Main Fishing Activity Which is Managed in the District

Potting for shellfish – commercial and recreational (the latter including shore-based activity)

The slide is titled 'Potting' and features the IFCA logo in the top right. On the left, a map shows the IISFC district along the coast from Burnmouth to North Shields, with various locations marked. In the center, there are three images of shellfish: a lobster and two crabs. On the right, there are two photographs of fishing vessels: a small red boat labeled 'Under 10m (single handed)' and a larger white catamaran labeled 'Modern Fast Worker (Catamaran)'.

Trawling and Netting



Prawn



Cod



Sea Trout



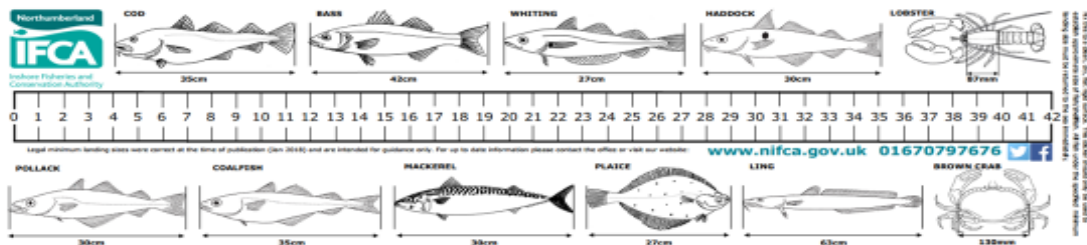
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All commercial netting for salmon on the north east coast ceased in 2019.

Sea Angling



Recreational Sea Angling (Boat & Shore)



Northumberland is an area of national and indeed international importance to the sea angling fraternity, including the hosting of a number of competitions along the coastline during the year. NIFCA proactively engages with sea anglers and is developing policy including working with partner agencies regarding the associated activity of hand gathering from the shore.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

There are 10 designated MPAs in the NIFCA district with approximately 70% of the district designated as an MPA. These designations are for the protection of a variety of important habitats and features.

The different types of MPA are: -

- **Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)** – to protect species of European interest, eg. grey seal;
- **Special Protection Areas (SPA)** – also designated under European Legislation to safeguard the habitat of migratory birds and protect nationally important bird species and NIFCA has to manage the interaction with fishing in these areas to safeguard the protected birds;
- **Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ)** – designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to protect nationally protected species and habitats and NIFCA has to ensure the conservation objectives of a site are furthered and in so doing assess all fishing activity for its impacts on protected features of the protected site. If there may be an impact then the IFCA has to put in management measures to protect the feature.

SACs in the NIFCA district:

- Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast
- Tweed Estuary

SPAs in the NIFCA district:

- Northumbria Marine SPA
- Northumberland Coast SPA
- Lindisfarne SPA
- Farne Islands SPA
- Coquet Islands SPA

MCZs in the NIFCA district:

- AIn Estuary MCZ
- Coquet to St Marys MCZ
- Berwick to St Marys MCZ



Examples of management put in place by NIFCA to protect features of MPAs: -

In the English Section of the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC, byelaw 7, prohibiting the use of mobile gear in most of the SAC and byelaw 8, Seagrass Protection byelaw.

Survey Work

This is a vital component of the work of NIFCA to gather data in the district. Further details can be found in the Authority Research Plans and Reports. Surveys are planned and undertaken by Authority officers with assistance from members and partner agencies.

NIFCA Survey Work Examples:

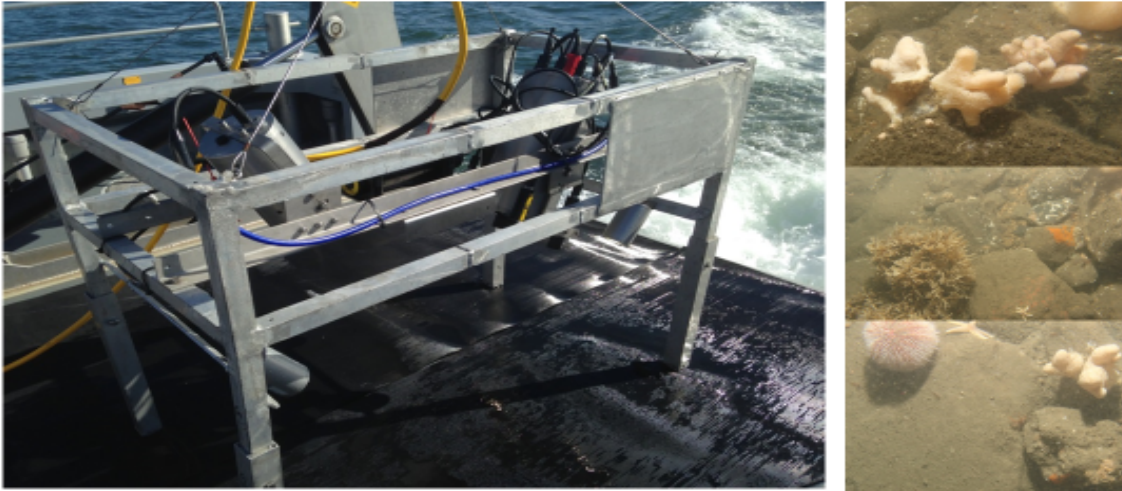


Some of the fish found during NIFCA surveys:



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Underwater Camera Work:



Further examples of survey work in practice:

With the cooperation of the local fishing industry NIFCA environmental officers have undertaken survey work on fishing vessels gathering vital data to inform management and future Authority policies. As well as the Lobster Stock Survey, NIFCA is currently undertaking a Crab Stock Survey with the assistance of funding from the European and Maritime Fisheries Fund to employ a research officer to carry out this work.

Stakeholder Engagement



Amongst the numerous examples of attending meetings and other public events, there is the annual Puffin Festival in Amble (above).

NIFCA also undertakes consultations with the local industry and other fishers to inform the development of management and related policies. Current and ongoing consultations include regarding fisheries management in the Coquet to St. Marys Marine Conservation Zone and in relation to dredging activity (fishing for scallops) in the Authority district.

BUDGET SUMMARY AND REVISED FORECAST 2019-20

Narrative

The original projected net annual deficit of £26,400 has been reduced to £5,970, a positive variance of £20,430. This can be attributed mainly to a reduction in projected staff costs. On the other side, the positive variance has been reduced due mainly to increases in base costs for the new Authority Cabin RIB.

The positive variance in total Income (£50,780) is largely due to non-budgeted income from chartering the Authority vessels (to be transferred to the Capital Replacement Fund), increases in grant income and in remitted prosecution costs. The grant and court remittance increases are largely balanced on the expenditure side by increases in environmental project expenditure, prosecutions and general enforcement costs.

	19/20 Budget (Original) £	19/20 Budget (Revised) £	Variance £
Income - Precepts			
Precept - NCC (excluding New Burdens)	568,909	568,909	0
New Burdens - NCC	128,923	128,923	0
Precept - NTC (excluding New Burdens)	113,481	113,481	0
New Burdens - NTC	25,717	25,717	0
	837,030	837,030	0
Income - Other			
Hire of vessels & equipment	0	36,200	36,200
Interest received	3,000	3,450	450
HM Court costs	3,100	6,300	3,200
Fishing permit & tag charges	22,740	23,000	260
Capital Grants - EMFF Cabin RIB	52,220	52,220	0
Other Grants - Brown Crab, NMP, Monitoring	11,740	22,360	10,620
Asset sales & Sundry income	25,550	25,600	50
	118,350	169,130	50,780
Total income	955,380	1,006,160	50,780
Expenditure			
Employee expenses	636,620	611,320	25,300
Patrol vessel, RIB & Ford Ranger expenses	66,500	70,950	(4,450)
Renewals & Capital Expenditure	75,100	79,110	(4,010)
Other Enforcement & Environmental expenses	38,240	53,540	(15,300)
8 Ennerdale running costs	46,900	48,300	(1,400)
Other management & administrative expenses	72,300	70,800	1,500
Total expenditure	935,660	934,020	1,640
Contributions to Renewals Fund	79,220	115,220	36,000
Drawings from Renewals Fund	75,100	79,110	(4,010)
Operating surplus/deficit (-) after RF Movement	15,600	36,030	20,430
Annual Revenue Contribution to Patrol Vessel Fund	42,000	42,000	0
Net surplus/deficit (-) after ARC	(26,400)	(5,970)	20,430

NIFCA Byelaws

- 1) Trawling
- 2) Dredges
- 3) Crustacea Conservation
- 4) Crustacea and Molluscs Permitting and Pot Limitation
- 5) Marking of Fishing Gear and Keep Boxes
- 6) Fixed Engines
- 7) Prohibition of the use of Mobile Fishing Gear within the English section of the Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation (B&NNC SAC)
- 8) Seagrass Protection Byelaw in the English section of the B&NNC SAC



And also NIFCA Emergency Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw 2019

Full details of the package can be found on our website at www.nifca.gov.uk

Summary

The work of NIFCA in striking a balance between a sustainable marine environment and sustainable inshore fisheries in the area from the coastline out to six miles at sea is a vital one with clear benefits and delivery over the eight years of Northumberland IFCA to date.

Outputs include:-

A proactive operations and enforcement regime, producing successful prosecutions when required;

bespoke intelligence gathering and analysis system to support and implement the work of the officers;

positive media coverage and recognition of the work of the Authority;

Proactive making and implementation of Authority byelaws to ensure protection of sustainable fisheries and the marine environment;

Premium use of data, science and technology to inform the Authority's decision making and policy setting;

An active and informed membership which is supportive of the work of the Authority and the establishment of the Authority's reputation;

Positive stakeholder relationships, manifesting in public engagement with Authority consultations and other communication, officers meeting fishers and other stakeholders in the marine environment and educating regarding the Authority remit where required, working to support and encourage improvements in the marine environment including beach cleans and by way of example in relation to Lynemouth Beach. Also undertaking a periodic cycle of meetings with all of the Members of Parliament in the NIFCA district to keep them aware of the work of the Authority.

The main beneficiaries of the work of NIFCA are our coastal communities in Northumberland, both fishers (commercial and recreational) and the businesses which support fishing activity, including in relation to tourism but also everyone with an interest in conservation and the heritage and tradition as well as the future of our local fisheries, coastline and the marine area.

Further details can be found in the NIFCA Annual Plan 2019-20 and Annual Report 2017-18 (the 2018-19 Annual Report will be published in November). Comprehensive information is also available upon the Authority website www.nifca.gov.uk and from the NIFCA CEO Mike.Hardy@nifca.gov.uk, telephone: 01670 797676, 8 Ennerdale Road, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 4RT.