

# **NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw Sub-Committee**

**2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014: 10:00am**

**REPORT  
NUMBER**

**8**

## **NORTH MORECAMBE BAY SEED MUSSEL DREDGE FISHERY – TRACK RECORD**

### **Background**

Under the proposals in the Morecambe Bay Hybrid Fishery Order, the allocation procedure for hand-gathering licences is a tiered points system based on proven active and material participation in the Morecambe Bay cockle and mussel fisheries.

It is proposed to also incorporate an allocation system based on proven track record for seed mussel dredge licences under the Order when it is granted and for use under existing byelaw authorisation up to the time when the Order is granted. Due to the increased interest in this fishery there is now a necessity to have a mechanism for limiting numbers of authorisations or licences issued, or for restricting catch per vessel (setting quota) should demand outweigh stock levels or capacity of the area, in order to ensure sustainability of the fishery and no risk of damage to any conservation features within the Morecambe Bay EMS.

### **Action**

Each year the extent of the area holding seed will be mapped and an estimate of biomass made. A decision will be taken on the 'carrying capacity' of the fishery in terms of effort and the number of authorisations / licences to be issued determined. It is proposed to implement an allocation system for authorisations to harvest seed mussel by dredge based on proven track record of active and material participation in the seed mussel dredge fishery in north Morecambe Bay.

Applications for authorisations will be accepted from individuals and / or companies that can show a proven track record of fishing for seed mussel within a specified area of the South America and Falklands skears (based on the expired Morecambe Bay Mussel Fishery Order 1978), during the period 1978 – 2013. This period represents the time from the inception of the expired Morecambe Bay Mussel Fishery Order (1978) up to the point when no limit or restrictions on numbers had been set, and therefore allows all those who have fished the area up to the time when the track record is introduced to apply.

Applications must be submitted along with verifiable evidence supporting the application and fishing activity during the track record period. It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate the validity and accuracy of the aforesaid track record. Records held on the NWIFCA's system will be used to verify the evidence supplied. Examples of supporting evidence are:

- copies of Morecambe Bay Mussel Fishery Order 1978 licences issued by Lancashire and Western Sea Fisheries Joint Committee or NW&NWSFC;
- copies of authorisations issued by NW&NWSFC, NWSFC and / or NWIFCA to fish for seed mussel in the area;
- log sheets;
- CEFAS Fish Health Inspectorate records (showing amount and area from which seed fished);
- print outs from electronic charts and plotters etc.

## **Track Record**

- a) Track record is not saleable or transferable. It remains with the company / individual.
- b) Track record cannot be increased or transferred by purchase or transfer from another company / individual.

An application form will be produced stating what additional documentation is required to standardise the process.

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**10<sup>th</sup> April 2014**