

**NWIFCA TSB Meeting**  
**18<sup>th</sup> May 2021; 10.00 a.m.**

**AGENDA**  
**ITEM NO.**  
**5c**

**NWIFCA NETTING BYELAW**

**Purpose:** Update on progress

**Recommendations:**

- 1. Receive the report**
- 2. Approve proposed next stages**

**Background**

1. As a part of the byelaw review, netting byelaws have been identified as a priority for review.
2. Currently across the IFCA district there are byelaws in force regulating netting activity inherited from North Western Sea Fisheries Committee, Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee, National Rivers Authority and Environment Agency.
3. A review is needed develop better regulation and management and make netting regulation easier to understanding for stakeholders.
4. Currently the development of a district wide permit byelaw with potential for flexible permit conditions is thought to be an appropriate scheme of management within the remit of the Authority.

**Work completed**

5. Work is progressing on 4 byelaws as a matter of urgency. A comprehensive netting permit bylaw is considered to be the next priority to be developed as soon as possible subject to availability of resources.
6. Head of Enforcement has led efforts to assess current netting issues and measures by IFCOs. The aim has been to develop and integrate the findings into a single comprehensive district wide netting byelaw. This discussion has been very constructive and has informed the proposals presented below.

**Proposed byelaw measures and next stages**

7. A flexible permitting byelaw could be developed for regulation of netting which would cover the entire NWIFCA district. Having permits would further good management by assisting the authority with knowledge of who is fishing in the district and standardising permits for all stakeholders. Gear inspections and regulation would be supported with better gear identification.

8. Separate recreational and commercial permits would allow effective management of both sectors and assist in identifying and deterring unlicensed fishing both on the shore and at sea.
9. Flexible permit conditions would allow better more adaptive and targeted management.
10. Maintaining the existing seasonal closed areas surrounding estuaries as in the current byelaws and extending closures to estuaries not currently regulated would be important for migratory fish and juvenile sea fish such as bass.
11. The present semi-circular closures in the Cumbria area should be replaced with straight line boxed areas with appropriate fixed structures in bay and estuary areas.
12. Marking of gear in a standard manner such as with uniform tags and serial numbers would be appropriate and reduce the need for stakeholders to mark gear in different ways. This would allow effective checking of nets during routine inspections.
13. Under flexible permit conditions measures such as length of net or numbers of nets could be applied to different sectors.
14. A fee should be charged for permits in line with government cost recovery objectives.
15. The requirement for three metres of water above a headline regulation in the Cumbria area should be revoked.

HOE Joseph Moulton  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2021