Appendix 3: Initial screening process

Interactions between fishing type “beam trawl - shrimp” and the features/sub-features (Table 1) have been scoped as “blue”, non-occurring interactions, in the EMS Matrix Generic Fisheries Template (MMO, 2014) for the following features/sub-features:

- Coastal lagoons

Interactions between fishing type “beam trawl - shrimp” and the features/sub-features listed below have been scoped as “red”, high-risk interactions, in the EMS Matrix Generic Fisheries Template for the following features/sub-features, which are the subject of high priority assessments which have resulted in appropriate management measures (Eastern IFCA Protected Areas Byelaw) (Eastern IFCA, 2014) where these were determined as necessary:

- Intertidal seagrass beds (listed in the EMS Matrix as “seagrass”)
- Circalittoral rock
- Subtidal stony reef (above listed variously as “subtidal bedrock reef”, “subtidal boulder and cobble reef” in the EMS Matrix)
- Intertidal biogenic reef: *Sabellaria* spp. (above listed as “*Sabellaria* spp. reef” in the EMS Matrix)
- Subtidal biogenic reef: *Sabellaria* spp. (above listed as “*Sabellaria* spp. reef” in the EMS Matrix)

At an early stage in the process of preparing HRAs, Eastern IFCA conducted an exercise to prioritise fishing gear / feature interactions, so that those most needing management could be identified. Part of this process was the determination of “Non-occurring Interactions”, which produced the “NOIR Report” of actions which it was considered either could not or would not occur within our district (see Annex 1 of overall HRA (Eastern IFCA, 2015), see Appendix 4 for correspondence with Natural England which formalised this, dated 26th August 2016). Features/sub-features scoped out were:

- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)
- Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (*Sarcocornetea fruticosi*)
- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand

Removal of the features/sub-features identified above from the whole list results in the following requiring consideration[1]:

- Harbour (common) seal (*Phoca vitulina*)
- Intertidal biogenic reef: mussel beds
- Intertidal coarse sediment
- Intertidal mixed sediments

[1]This list comprises those “features” for which no “sub-features” are listed, and the sub-features of features where these are listed (*N.B*. this list is ordered alphabetically only).

- Intertidal mud
- Intertidal rock
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*)
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds
- Subtidal coarse sediment
- Subtidal mixed sediments
- Subtidal mud
- Subtidal sand

Within the Advice on Operations webpage, for the activity “fishing / demersal trawl”, all interactions between the Annex 2 species otter (*Lutra lutra*) and the pressures potentially arising from the activity were considered “not relevant”, as “*the evidence base suggests that there is no interaction of concern between the pressure and the feature OR the activity and the feature could not interact*” (Natural England, 2017). Otters were not listed as a site feature within previous versions of conservation advice for the site; had they been so listed, it is inevitable that they would have been screened out as part of the NOIR process. Therefore, otters will not be considered further within this assessment.

The total extent of “intertidal rock” within The WNNC SAC is a very small area adjacent to the shore between Hunstanton and Old Hunstanton. It is very shallow (dries to 2.3 m above chart datum), and in an area of rough ground. Shrimp returns indicate low effort for the whole of the box enclosing this feature (four returns) and expert opinion concurs that any shrimp beam trawling activity there is highly unlikely. Therefore, intertidal rock will not be considered further within this assessment.

The sub-feature “intertidal mixed sediments” is represented by small areas in Blakeney Harbour, which on examination turn out to be below low water mark. (Natural England data release, August 2017) These areas have therefore been transferred to the category “subtidal mixed sediments”. Therefore, intertidal mixed sediment will not be considered further within this assessment.

Removing otters, intertidal rock and intertidal mixed sediment leaves:

- Harbour (common) seal (*Phoca vitulina*)
- Intertidal biogenic reef: mussel beds
- Intertidal coarse sediment
- Intertidal mud
- Intertidal sand and muddy sand
- Subtidal biogenic reefs: mussel beds
- Subtidal coarse sediment
- Subtidal mixed sediments
- Subtidal mud
- Subtidal sand

In addition, there are the ‘overarching’ features (i.e. features which themselves possess sub-features):

- Large shallow inlets and bays
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide
- Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time

The combined list of these features and sub-features will be taken forwards for further consideration.

References

Eastern IFCA, 2014. Protected Areas Byelaw. Available at: <http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/protected-areas-byelaw/> [Accessed 21 November 2017].

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