

Guidance: MPA Byelaw 2018

This byelaw came into force on 2nd March 2020 and is now in effect as of 4th May 2020.

The full wording of this byelaw [can be found here](#). PLEASE NOTE: This printable version is missing two charts due to an administrative error. Please **refer to this guidance** for all charts referring to the Marine Protected Areas byelaw 2018.

All the charts with coordinates for restricted areas [can be found here](#) and are linked separately in the guidance table below.

Additionally, there are shapefiles available showing the restricted areas. To obtain this data, please [contact us](#).

What is the Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018?

The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018 restricts certain types of fishing activities to protect marine habitats and species within, or adjacent to, marine protected areas.

The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018 replaces the Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2016 and introduces 19 additional restricted areas to those in place under the 2016 byelaw. The byelaw has been replaced to protect additional 'amber risk' habitats in The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018 has a total of 36 spatial closures across two Marine Protected Areas: The Wash and the North Norfolk Coast SAC and the Humber Estuary SAC.

How was this byelaw developed?

Eastern IFCA are committed to developing management measures alongside input from our stakeholders. We held an informal consultation for this byelaw in mid-2018. [We have put together a document](#) showing the responses to this consultation and how they were used to inform the development of the byelaw. The Authority subsequently made the byelaw on 18th July 2018, after which Eastern IFCA held a final formal consultation. Due to the work completed with the informal consultation, no revisions were needed after the formal consultation. The byelaw has now been signed off by the secretary of state.

How will my fishing be affected?

The Wash and the North Norfolk Coast

If you fish using bottom towed gear in the Eastern IFCA district, you are not able to so in any of the restricted areas 1-35. You are required to secure and stow your bottom towed gear when transiting through these areas unless you have been fishing up to the boundary of the area or will be fishing immediately upon leaving the area. The byelaw still allows for fishing using bottom towed gear under a Wash Fishery Order 1992 licence as applicable.

The Humber Estuary

Within restricted area 36 in the Humber Estuary you must not fish with bottom towed gear, fish by handwork, or fish by crab tiling. When transiting through this area bottom towed gear must be secured and stowed.

Where are the restricted areas?

Restricted Areas	Features Protected	Management Measures
Areas 1-13 in The Wash	Intertidal biogenic reef, (mussel beds).	Closed to bottom towed gear. Gear must be secured and stowed when transiting through these restricted areas or suspended clear of the water if you are fishing up to the boundary of the area or will resume fishing immediately upon leaving the area.
Areas 14-29 in The Wash central and northern	Subtidal biogenic reef: <i>Sabellaria</i> spp. (Ross worm), subtidal stony reef, subtidal mixed sediments, subtidal mud.	Closed to bottom towed gear. Gear must be secured and stowed when transiting through these restricted areas or suspended clear of the water if you are fishing up to the boundary of the area or will resume fishing immediately upon leaving the area.
Areas 30-35 on the North Norfolk Coast	Intertidal seagrass beds, subtidal mixed sediments, subtidal mud.	Closed to bottom towed gear. Gear must be secured and stowed when transiting through these restricted areas or suspended clear of the water if you are fishing up to the boundary of the area or will resume fishing immediately upon leaving the area.
Area 36 in the Humber Estuary	Intertidal seagrass beds: <i>Zostera</i> (eelgrass).	Closed to bottom towed gear and 'handwork' fishing activity including crab-tiling.

Are there any exceptions?

1. Management measures within The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC (areas 1-35) include restrictions in relation to fishing with bottom towed gear, and a requirement to have bottom towed gear secured and stowed when a fishing vessel is inside the restricted areas. Fishing activity is exempt from the

requirement to secure and stow bottom towed gear if the vessel is fishing using a beam trawl up to the boundary of a restricted area or if it will be fishing immediately upon leaving the restricted area. However, the gear must be suspended clear of the water.

2. The prohibition on fishing with bottom towed gears in areas 1-14 does not apply where this is being done in accordance with a Wash Fishery Order 1992 licence.
3. The byelaw does not apply to persons exercising personal "rights of common". These are specialised and defined rights held by "commoners" in respect of registered "common land". "Rights of common" relate only to registered common land and this byelaw retains full force and effect against all other persons, including those exercising their common law right of fishery and any person exercising a private or several right of fishery.

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