



Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Annual Report 2019-20



July 2020

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Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report 2019-2020.

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V1	01/07/2020	Created Document	GB
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V3	09/09/2020	Confirmed by Authority	JG

Abbreviations	
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science	Cefas
Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	DEFRA
Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	Eastern IFCA
Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee	ESFJC
Environment Agency	EA
European Marine Site	EMS
Fishery Patrol Vessel	FPV
Habitats Regulations Assessment	HRA
High Level Objective	HLO
Information Communication and Technology	ICT
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	IFCA
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer	IFCO
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	MaCAA 09
Marine Conservation Zone	MCZ
Marine Management Organisation	MMO
Marine Protected Area	MPA
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	MSFD
Maximum Sustainable Yield	MSY
Memorandum of Understanding	MoU
Natural England	NE
Royal yachting Association	RYA
Recreational Sea Angling	RSA
Service Level Agreement	SLA
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI
Special Protection Area	SPA
Special Area of Conservation	SAC
Environment and Productivity	SWEEP
Tactical Co-ordination Group	TCG
Wash Fishery Order 1992	WFO

Foreword

We are pleased to present the ninth annual report for the Authority. The report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Authority during the 2019-20 financial year to meet its statutory duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA 09) and to address the priorities identified in the Business Plan 2019-2024.

Membership of the Authority has remained stable, with six commercial fishermen from The Wash and North Norfolk and another member with strong links with the fishing industry in Suffolk. The balance of the MMO appointed membership included representation from the marine conservation sector as well as others appointed for their wider marine management experience, with the RSA sector being represented by a commercial fisherman with dual interests. Cllr Skinner (Lincolnshire County Council) held the position of Chairman of the Authority with Cllr Fitzpatrick (Norfolk County Council) holding the position of Vice-Chairman.

The maximum tenure for MMO appointed members is 10 years in ordinary circumstances and five of the eleven MMO appointees are due to reach this point during the 2020-21. This is a significant issue for the Authority, given the loss of knowledge and experience involved. We will work with the MMO to address this in order to maintain relative stability on the Authority.

The ninth year of operation of Eastern IFCA has seen a continuation of a significant workload across the breadth of the Authority's remit. In particular work has continued to focus upon delivering protection of the most vulnerable features in Marine Protected Areas, managing and regulating the valuable cockle fishery in the Wash and starting work on the replacement of the Wash Fishery Order 1992, which expires in early 2023.

The Authority is majority funded through a levy on the County Councils of Suffolk, Norfolk, and Lincolnshire, which is supplemented by New Burdens Funding (NBF) provided by Defra via a grant in aid to the constituent councils. NBF represents approximately 25% of the Authority's core funding and is central to the delivery of its mandated outputs. Noting that continued provision of NBF remains the central strategic risk to the Authority's ability to service its remit, the continuation of this vital funding until 2021 is highly valued.

As the year drew to a close the country saw the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of 'lockdown' for the UK population. We are pleased to report that the Authority was able to transition to a home working model with relative ease and as the year ended officers were contingency planning for the annual cockle surveys as well as engaging constructively with other IFCAs, the MMO and Defra in developing our response to significantly altered circumstances. The safety of our officers, industry members and the public were key drivers whilst seeking to maintain business continuity as we embarked upon what will be a very different year.



Julian Gregory
Chief Executive Officer



Cllr Paul Skinner
Chair

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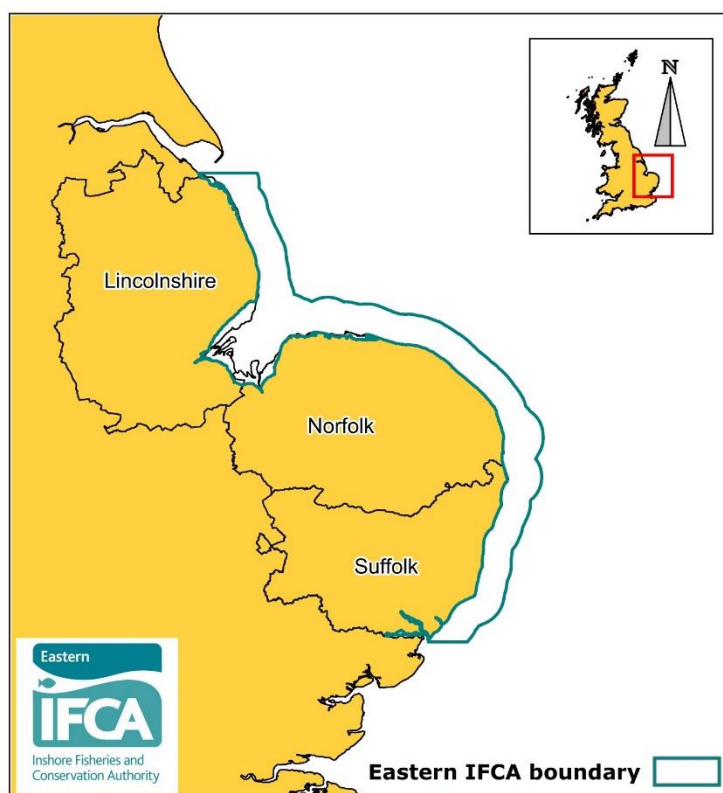


Introduction

The purpose of this Annual Report is to inform funding authorities (County Councils and Defra), local communities, local bodies and key delivery partners of the progress made to fulfil the statutory duties of Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (Eastern IFCA).

Eastern IFCA was created under Section 150 of MaCAA 2009 as a successor to the Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee (ESFJC) and was fully vested on 1st April 2011 via Statutory Instrument [2010 No 2189](#). The IFCA District was created under Section 149 of the Act and Section 178 requires every IFCA to publish an annual report. This is the ninth annual report of the Authority.

The Authority district extends seawards six nautical miles from the Haile Sand Fort off the coast of Lincolnshire to Felixstowe in Suffolk and encompasses the counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The area includes The Wash embayment and various river estuaries including the Stour and Orwell in Suffolk. The district encompasses the full breadth of UK and EU forms of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Special Protected Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, as well as Ramsar sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Marine Conservation Zones. Around 96% of the District is covered by at least one MPA designation.



Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009)

Eastern IFCA's primary duties are set out within [MaCAA 2009](#) and are:

- 1) to manage the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in its district, in doing so it must:
 - a) seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way;
 - b) seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation;
 - c) take any other steps which in the Authority's opinion, are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development; and
 - d) seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.
- 2) seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any Marine Conservation Zone in the district are furthered.

As a key delivery body in the marine area, the Authority is also guided by a number of drivers including HM Government's Marine Policy Statement, the 25 Year Environment Plan, Defra's Policy Objectives, East Inshore Marine Plan and the IFCA High Level Objectives.

The Authority

Eastern IFCA is funded by its three constituent County Councils: Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. It also receives 'New Burden' funding from Defra.

The Authority is a statutory committee which meets quarterly to receive reports from the Authority's officers and to direct officers to conduct work on its behalf to discharge its duties. The Authority's 21 members comprise of 7 County Councillors, 3 representatives from the MMO, Natural England and the Environment Agency respectively and 11 individuals appointed by the MMO for their expertise and knowledge of various marine related sectors.

The Authority's members and their attendance at Authority Meetings and Sub-Committee meetings are detailed on the following page. A total of seven Authority and sub-committee meetings were held and members are expected to attend a minimum of 50% of meetings.

Member attendance at Authority Meetings and Sub-Committee Meetings 2019-2020

Name	% of meetings attended	Authority (4 meetings held)	Sub-Committee Finance & HR Sub-Committee (3 meetings held)
Cllr P Coupland	72	3	2
Cllr P Skinner	86	*3	*3
Cllr D Collis	86	3	3
Cllr M Chenery of Horsbrugh	100	4	3
Cllr T FitzPatrick	86	#4	#2
Cllr T Goldson	86	4	2
Cllr M Vigo di Gallidoro	57	3	1
Ms C Moffatt	75	3	
Dr I Hirst	25	1	
Mr P Tyack	100	4	
Mr S Bagley	100	4	
Dr S Bolt	72	4	1
Mr R Brewster	75	3	
T Davey	75	3	
Mr J Davies	100	4	
Mr P Garnett	100	4	
Mr K Shaul	50	2	
Mr R Spray	75	3	
Mr M Warner	25	1	
Mr S Williamson	67	4	0 of 2
Mr S Worrall	43	1	2

*	Chair	Suffolk County Council	
~	Did not Complete full term	Lincolnshire County Council	MMO/EA/NE Representative
#	Vice Chair	Norfolk County Council	MMO Appointee

During the year, the structure of Authority meetings, including sub-committee meetings was reviewed, and revised. The full Authority continues to meet on a quarterly basis and whilst the Finance and Personnel sub-committee continues to meet at the same frequency it has been re-named as the Finance and Human Resources sub-committee. The Planning and Communication, Regulation and Compliance and Marine Protected Areas sub-committees were all disbanded. This was in recognition of the fact that most of the business and decisions at these meetings are the core business of the Authority and as such it is more appropriate that they are considered by the full membership. A Fisheries and Conservation Management working group was established to enable members to engage with workstreams prior to reaching the point of decision. These changes are described in more detail in the Case Study for Success Criterion 1 on page 24 of this report.

The Authority is committed to operating in a transparent manner and as such all

Authority and sub-committee meetings are open to the public. Agendas are published ten working days ahead of any meeting, with all papers distributed five working days ahead of any meeting. Agendas, papers and agreed minutes of all Authority meetings are published on the Authority's website at www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk.

Delivery of Authority business is undertaken by Eastern IFCA's Officers, operating in four teams - Marine Science (8 Officers), Marine Protection (11 Officers), Support (3 Officers) and the Executive Team (3 Officers).

The Authority is currently located at its primary base in King's Lynn with offices to accommodate staff and a local storage unit for its portable and transportable assets. A satellite office, co-located with MMO offices in the Cefas building in Lowestoft, was opened during 2016. Vessels (RV Three Counties, FPV John Allen, *FPV Sebastian Terelinck*, FPV Sea Spray) are based at moorings at Sutton Bridge and Lowestoft, being deployed according to operational requirements.

DELIVERY OF EASTERN IFCA DUTIES

Eastern IFCA's duties, as set out in MaCAA 09, are enshrined in the IFCA mission which is to:

'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'

'Annual Priorities' and 'critical workstreams' are the 'what' Eastern IFCA do pursuant of this mission. Eastern IFCA undertakes an annual Strategic Assessment of fisheries within the District to identify environmental and sustainability issues and to prioritise such based on the risk of not meeting the mission statement. These form the focus of work each year.

During 2019/20, priorities were dominated by work relating to the management of fisheries in marine protected areas. Progress against the 2019/20 priorities is set out in the next section.

In undertaking annual priorities, Eastern IFCA is guided by the Success Criteria and their Indicators, which set out the 'how' we will achieve the mission. The Success Criteria and Indicators were refreshed by the Association of IFCAs and Defra in 2015 to reflect the developing programme of work delivered by IFCAs and to demonstrate our contribution to the delivery of the UK Marine Policy Statement.

Five case studies are provided to illustrate how each Success Criteria was delivered through 2019/20 and delivery against the Success Indicators is set out in Appendix 1.

Focus and priorities for 2019/20

The priorities for Eastern IFCA 2019-20 were identified by the Strategic Assessment 2019, which assessed the risk of environmental damage and sustainability issues associated with each fishery within the District. Due to the complexities involved, particularly where regulation is required, it is anticipated that some priorities will roll into the following financial years. The Strategic Assessment and 5-year Business Plan reflect that priorities will span multiple years and therefore enable more effective long-term planning.

Category	Work	Priority	Progress	Comment
To ensure that the conservation objectives of Marine Protected Areas in the district are furthered.	Development of management measures for 'red-risk' gear/feature interactions in the Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SCI, and the Haisborough, Hammond & Winterton SCI.	High	Ongoing	<p>Fisheries management measures for "red risk" interactions in Haisborough, Hammond & Winterton SAC were agreed by the Authority in May 2019 and will be implemented when the Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2019 achieves Ministerial confirmation.</p> <p>A detailed review of evidence for "red risk" interactions within Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC has continued. This work has included working closely with Natural England and is intended to ensure fisheries measures are applied to the right areas of this site. This scrutiny has led to queries about feature extent and has led to delays in delivery of management measures whilst these are addressed. Management proposals will be taken to the September 2020 Authority meeting.</p>
	Assessing the impact of fishing activities on the Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds (MCZ) and delivering management measures (if required).	High	Ongoing	<p>Following assessment in 2018, management of towed demersal fishing within the MCZ was agreed by the Authority in May 2019. The measures (spatial closures over the most sensitive features) will be implemented under the Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2019 when it achieves Ministerial confirmation.</p> <p>It was identified that a better understanding of the potting fishery within the MCZ and of the chalk features was</p>

				<p>needed, following receipt of additional evidence on the MCZ chalk feature in Autumn 2018. A consultation was launched in summer 2019 but, after disappointing levels of feedback, officers launched a revised engagement plan with potting fisheries in early 2020 to help improve understanding about the fishery, the MCZ, and management drivers. Initial workshops in February and March 2020 were well-received and it is intended to continue engagement as the potting assessment is progressed and any required management identified. The assessment will use additional evidence from a survey of chalk condition undertaken by Natural England with University of Essex in summer 2019.</p> <p>Eastern IFCA remains committed to working with fishery stakeholders, Natural England and Agents of Change (Marine Conservation Society project) to complete an accurate assessment of potting fisheries and develop effective and supported management measures, if required.</p>
	Developing monitoring and control plans for highest risk MPAs as identified in the Strategic Assessment 2019;	Medium	Ongoing	An approach to Monitoring and Control Plans has been agreed and a draft plan has been developed, with the highest risk fisheries being prioritised for the first plans. No progress was made during 2019-20 with resource allocated instead to developing the 'red risk' management measures and those relating to shrimp fishing in The Wash and North Norfolk Coast.
	Completion of amber/green gear/feature interactions. Development of management measures where required.	High	Ongoing	The Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2018, which introduced spatial closures to protect "amber and green" features in the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, received Ministerial confirmation in March 2020. Work is

				ongoing to finalise the permit conditions associated with the Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018, which is at the final stages of the formal quality assurance process. This will provide the mechanism to limit effort in the shrimp fishery to levels that are within environmental limits of the SAC. No further “Amber and Green” interactions have been identified as requiring management, but review of the assessments remains ongoing.
To ensure that sea fisheries resources are exploited sustainably and in accordance with MSFD requirements	Development of management measures in relation to shrimp fisheries sustainability.	Medium	Ongoing	To achieve MSC accreditation, fisheries must demonstrate they are being harvested sustainably. Part of the accreditation process for the brown shrimp fishery has been the development of a stock assessment model and Harvest Control Rules. Though the stock assessment model and control measures have been commissioned and developed by the industry, they have been reviewed by both the Authority and the MSC accredited assessment board. There are further actions stipulating that the stock assessment model must be scientifically peer reviewed within the first two years following certification. In addition to these measures, further voluntary measures have been listed within the industry-led Shrimp Management Plan that should facilitate sustainability. These include capping the overall size of the fleet, increasing the minimum cod-end mesh size to 22mm and reducing the proportion of small shrimp that may be landed. An MoU has been developed and agreed between the Authority and the industry to help collect the required information to manage the fishery sustainably. Additional measures are also being developed by the Authority to cap effort at current levels. While these are being introduced primarily to protect conservation features, they will also help to maintain sustainability of the fishery.

	Development of management measures in relation to crab and lobster fisheries sustainability.	High	Ongoing	Outputs during 2019-20 focussed on developing a relationship with industry to inform new measures. There was some initial reluctance to engage, with low attendance at a workshop co-hosted by the Agents of Change project ¹ . This set development of sustainability measures back against the original timeline. Subsequent revision of the engagement plan proved successful and a working group was established which met twice and provided feedback for officers to use in assessments. Development of the sustainability measures themselves was given new impetus given the Marine Conservation Society's 'good fish guide' scoring (of a 4 – 'required improvement') has impacted the fishery's attractiveness to buyers, particularly supermarkets, who have a preference for scores of 3 or below. Development of sustainability measures was hampered however by the emerging complexities of the potting assessment on the Cromer Shoal Chalk Bed MCZ, which took priority.
To ensure that the marine environment is protected from the effect of exploitation by reviewing district wide bio-security measures	Development of district wide biosecurity measures	High	Complete	An overview of biosecurity risks throughout the District has been developed, which will underpin ongoing monitoring. This is supported by a biosecurity risk log and educational material for officers and fishers, which is issued in relation to identified risks. The workstream is now established as 'business as usual' and as such is considered 'complete' as a priority workstream.
	Implementation of WFO Shellfish Lay lease conditions	Medium	Ongoing	No progress was made during 2019-2020 with resource focussed instead on other priority workstreams. There is only a low level of activity on WFO lays at present and new measures are in place to monitor activity and prevent

¹ <https://marinecolab.org/agents-of-change/>

including management of invasive, non-native species				biosecurity issues and as such the actual risk posed is limited.
To develop management of the fisheries regulated under the WFO 1992 by:	Continued development of WFO policies.	High	Ongoing	Officers intended to consult with industry during 2019-20 in relation to WFO policies (specifically the issuing of licences and lays) but this work was postponed in the context of a significant level of consultation during the year. However, informal dialogue on the matter has been ongoing and will inform proposals on the subject.
	Replacement of WFO 1992	Medium	Ongoing	Officers undertook an assessment of the most appropriate mechanism to replace the WFO on its expiry in 2023. The assessment informed a recommendation which was agreed by members in March of 2020 to the effect that a byelaw is the most effective mechanism to replace the WFO, with a key conclusion of the assessment being that byelaws under MaCAA can replicate all the provisions of an Order under the Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967.
	Implementation of proposed licence fees, fisheries management plan and Regulations.	High	Ongoing	The revised licence fee structure was consented by the Minister and the revised cockle fisheries management plan reviewed and implemented. The revised WFO regulations are, however, still under consideration by Defra who have now been significantly delayed in finalising the Regulations. Despite dialogue with Defra throughout 2019-20, some issues are yet to be resolved pending Defra legal consideration. In particular, the revised regulations refer to the use of vessels as tenders, the advice in relation to which has changed on several occasions.

Obtaining better fisheries data	Implementation of Inshore-Vessel Monitoring Systems (I-VMS) for all fisheries	High	Ongoing	Eastern IFCA continued to actively support the national approach to implementing I-VMS in partnership with the MMO and Defra. The project has been delayed for various reasons and whilst support for the national approach continues, there is a high priority for I-VMS to be introduced into the Wash cockle and brown shrimp fisheries. In the event that delays continue, the Authority will consider local regulation as an interim measure pending national legislation.
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‘Business as usual’ – Critical Work-streams

In addition to identifying emerging risks, the Strategic Assessment also sets out which fishery or species-related risks are mitigated by established work streams. The cessation of such work streams has the potential to increase risk associated with that fishery or species. These include, for example, the annual cockle stock surveys without which, the cockle fishery would represent a much greater risk. This work is categorised as critical ‘business-as-usual’. An outline of the work that the Authority undertook as a necessity during 2019-2020 is given below.

Study of the Wash Embayment, Environment and Productivity (SWEEP)

Following high levels of unexplained cockle mortalities in The Wash in 2008, there were concerns that the mussels present on the Several fishery lays could be having an adverse impact on the food availability for wild stocks. The SWEEP project was instigated in 2010 to monitor the level of Chlorophyll in the water and meat yields of mussels as two proxies for food availability. This ongoing project has continued to monitor these two metrics, using an *in situ* sonde deployed on a buoy to collect data continuously and a mobile sonde to take monthly samples from various other sites. Should chlorophyll and meat yields fall below minimum thresholds described in the associated Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the mussel lays, indicating available food levels were too low to support the wild and farmed shellfish populations, mussels may need to be removed from the lays. To date, results have remained above target thresholds, so such management on the lays has not been required. This year a second buoy was purchased to be used in rotation with the original, enabling either to be serviced without causing downtime in the data collection (as well as reducing redeployment costs associated with the servicing).

Wash Fishery Order Surveys and management.

Annual surveys of cockle and mussel stocks within The Wash are a significant undertaking. The annual cockle surveys showed a total allowable catch of 4004 tonnes in the WFO area and a TAC of 323 tonnes in the Wash Restricted Area². The 2018-19 mussel survey enabled a re-laying fishery of 482 tonnes during 2019-20. The 2019-20 mussel surveys were impacted by poor weather and vessel breakdowns and concluded later than scheduled as a result. The results of the survey indicated significant declines in the mussel stocks throughout The Wash.

These surveys provide a level of fisheries evidence which is not reflected in any other fishery within the district. The associated fisheries and their impact upon a heavily designated MPA are considered a low risk primarily because of our understanding of

² The Wash Restricted Area is the name given to the part of The Wash which, as a consequence of a Supreme Court ruling, was determined not to form part of the le Strange Estate (a private fishery) and is not within the boundaries of the WFO. The Authority implemented management measures via an emergency byelaw in 2018 to ensure that the area, which is situated within a Marine Protected Area, is fished sustainably and without impacted the protected features of the site.

stock dynamics but also because of the mechanism in place for managing the fisheries (i.e. the WFO).

An industry meeting and consultation was held at the beginning of the year in order to help determine management measures. The Wash restricted area was included in the Wash fishery Order TAC and both fisheries were managed together, albeit with fishers requiring an additional permit to fish the Wash restricted Area. Throughout the year approximately 3847 tonnes of cockles were landed, from 55 licenced vessels.

The 2019 cockle fishery closed prior to the exhaustion of the TAC. The key factor that supported this action was the initial results from the 2019 mussel surveys indicating a significant decline in mussel stocks. In order to enable a cockle (or mussel) fishery, the Authority must ensure that sufficient bird food resources remain after a fishery. Mussels contribute more to bird food resources because they provide proportionally more energy per kilo compared to cockles. Where mussel stocks are low, there is a greater reliance on cockles to make up the required amount of bird food resource. Essentially, every 1 kilogram of mussel which is removed must be made up by 2 kilograms of cockle within the bird food availability model. As such, there was a risk that the TAC for the 2020 cockle fishery may have been impacted by the decline in mussel stocks because the minimum threshold for bird food resources would not have to be met.

The Authority also acts as the 'operator' under the Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 in relation to the WFO 1992. Several Fisheries also referred to as the 'Wash Production Area' to facilitate ease of data collection and reporting to CEFAS. During the year, the several fishery was audited by CEFAS who, as a result, issued further certification to continue operations.

Habitats Regulations Assessment of WFO fisheries

The stock data collected from surveys forms part of the evidence used in each annual assessment undertaken by Eastern IFCA to identify the impacts of proposed WFO cockle and mussel fisheries in relation to the conservation designations afforded to this area. These Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) consider the impact of the fishery on protected habitats and species and considers the overall integrity of the designated site. In consultation with Natural England (statutory nature conservation adviser) and with fishery stakeholder input, the Authority agrees updated management measures prior to these fisheries being opened each year, to ensure that the fishing activities do not prevent the conservation targets from being achieved.

This work is dependent on evidence relating to fishing activity, site condition (e.g. population status of protected species and extent of protected habitats), and fishing impacts. Within designated sites, regulators are required to apply precautionary management where evidence of fishery impact is poor or inconclusive. The continuation of commercial cockle and mussel fisheries in a conservation site as highly-protected as The Wash reflects the availability of data and the shared

understanding of activities and impacts in the site achieved through continual monitoring and dialogue.

During 2019/20, Eastern IFCA undertook HRA for the WFO cockle fishery, and for the WFO mussel fishery. It was concluded that with the agreed management in place, including alignment with the fisheries management policies and bespoke measures such as closed areas to protect harbour seals during their most sensitive period (pupping and moulting), the fisheries would not adversely affect site integrity. Natural England supported these conclusions and provided conservation advice in a timely manner that enabled the fisheries to open at optimum times.

Whelk Fisheries Management and Research

The risk associated with the Whelk fisheries was identified as being high by the 2015 Strategic Assessment. Subsequent development of management measures has significantly reduced the risk associated with the fishery. Management measures include the establishment of a permit system and new data collection regime which has required a significant resource to administer.

Minimum Landing Sizes (MLS) are introduced to ensure species can reach maturity and have a chance to spawn prior to being harvested. Nationwide, whelks are known to mature at different sizes around the country, and these can differ between fairly localised stocklets. As a consequence, a project was instigated to study the Size of Maturity (SoM) of whelks from our district to ensure the newly introduced 55mm MLS was appropriate for the district. This has involved measuring and dissecting thousands of whelks, voluntarily provided by fishers from four areas within the district. The study was due to conclude within the 2019-20 financial year but was delayed and delivery is now planned for 2020-21.

In addition to studying the size of maturity, the project has also investigated whether the fishery is being targeted sustainably. This has been done by analysing the landings returns data to look at trends in landings, effort and Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE). For stocks that are difficult to physically survey, LPUE can be used as a proxy for stock density. Trends showing declining LPUE values indicate a fishery is being fished unsustainably. As with the study regarding SoM, delivery was delayed and is now planned for 2020-21.

Engagement with industry regarding the review of the Whelk Permit Byelaw began. Engagement was intended to be undertaken alongside the consideration of crab and lobster sustainability measures as often, the same fishermen will be active within both fisheries. However, after an initially unsuccessful attempt to engage on these matters, engagement was focussed on crab and lobster measures (including in relation to the MCZ).

Crab and Lobster Research

Monthly Shellfish Activity Reports (MSAR) detailing the effort and landings from the under 10m sector of the fleet have been analysed to track trends in LPUE for the crab and lobster fisheries. These have provided district-wide details and more focused information by ICES rectangles. These trends showed there had been a drop in LPUE in 2018, which recovered in 2019. It is possible this decline could have been caused by the 'Beast from the East' storm, which resulted in tonnes of crabs and lobsters being washed up on east coast beaches. Irrespective of the recovery in 2019, the LPUE values in the more heavily fished areas peaked in 2016 and have been declining slowly since. In addition to monitoring LPUE, the Authority has also been conducting bio-sampling of catches at the ports and a local processor to obtain biometric data that can be used to inform various fishery models. Although these models were developed primarily for fin-fish stocks, they are commonly used to inform crustacea management, too. For the past five years, the Authority has been trialling one of these models, to determine if its use would be appropriate for informing management in our district, or if local conditions influence the results too much, making them meaningless. A review of this data is ongoing.

The industry was engaged on potential management measures for a sustainable fishery during 2019-20. Such measures will not be developed in isolation, but holistically following the Cromer Shoal MCZ assessment (which is further reported on in the 'Annual Priorities' section above).

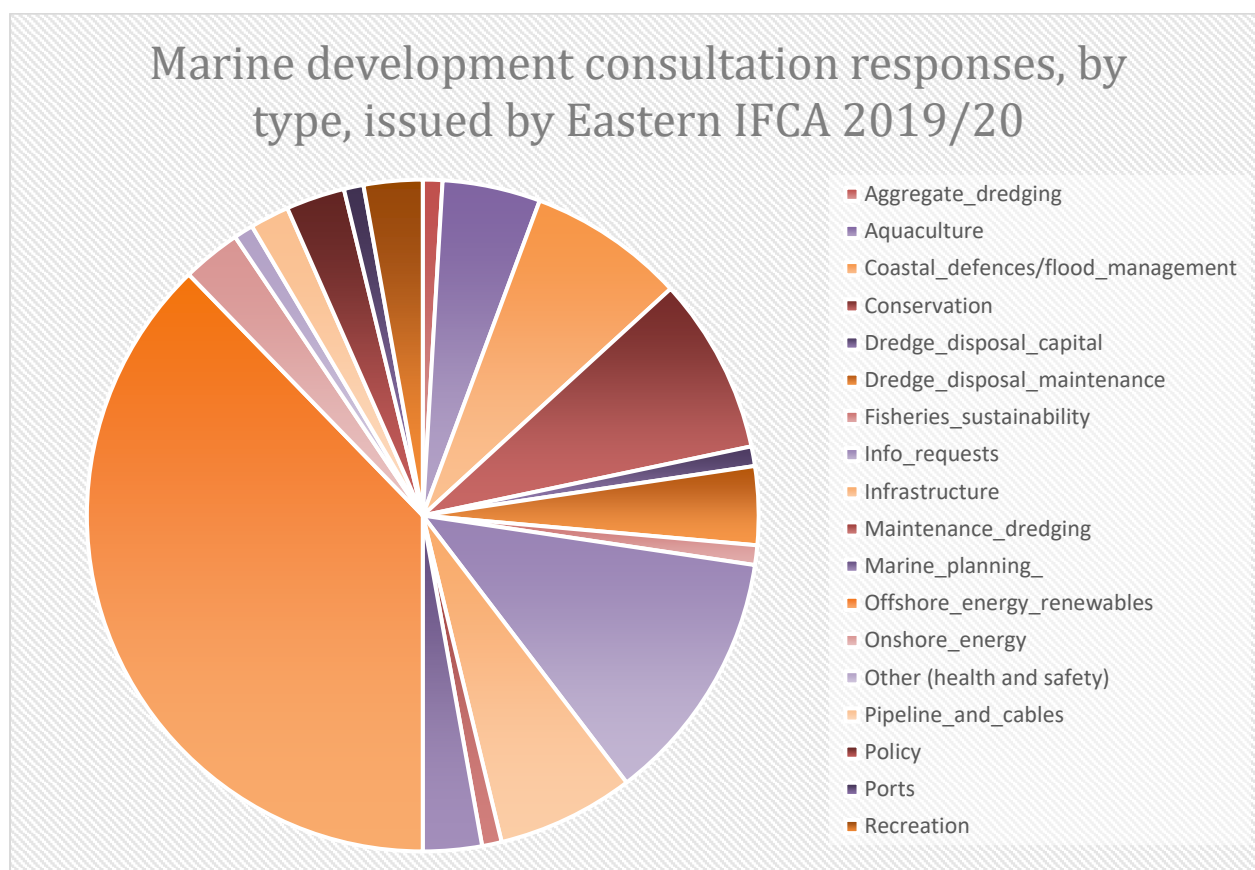
Engagement in Marine Planning

The East Marine Plans were published in 2014 and set out objectives and policies for sustainable development in the southern North Sea. The Marine Management Organisation is the main regulator responsible for licensed activity at sea. Large (infrastructure-scale) developments, such as offshore energy projects, are permitted through the Planning Inspectorate. Eastern IFCA plays a role in influencing development decisions by providing expert advice on inshore fishery and conservation relevant to an application. This includes consideration of potential impacts on fish stocks, fishery habitats (e.g. spawning or nursery grounds), access to fishing grounds, fisheries liaison, impacts on protected habitats and species, wider biodiversity and ensuring awareness of relevant IFCA byelaws. This is usually undertaken via the marine case management system operated by MMO, or the via the Planning Inspectorate's national infrastructure planning process.

Eastern IFCA made representations to the Planning Inspectorate in early 2020 in relation to compensatory measures for two planned offshore wind farms, *Hornsea Three* and *Norfolk Vanguard*. Eastern IFCA supported in principle, initiatives from *Hornsea Three* developers for a mussel regeneration project in The Wash (to compensate for potential damage to sandbanks from the project's cable works) and a fishing litter reduction scheme. The developers of *Norfolk Vanguard* had proposed an extensive expansion of the Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton SAC within inshore waters, to compensate for damage to sandbanks. Eastern IFCA opposed this proposal

on the grounds that it could result in further restrictions on inshore fishing activities. Although decisions on both wind farm projects were due in 2019, the decisions were delayed by Secretary of State until July 2020.

During 201/20, Eastern IFCA responded to a total of 106 consultations on marine plans or projects. Input to these consultations is led by the Marine Science team, drawing on expertise of Marine Protection officers for fishing activity or regulatory considerations.



Enforcement

Enforcement activity is primarily driven through the Compliance Risk Register (an annual assessment of risk of non-compliance) and Tasking and Coordination Group meetings (which also considers intelligence and emerging issues). It is also influenced by the outputs of the Strategic Assessment as this identifies the fisheries most at risk of sustainability issues (and by extension, those potentially most vulnerable to negative impacts through non-compliance). Full reporting on Enforcement activity and outcomes is reported on in Appendix 3.

Landing obligation

Eastern IFCA play a supporting role in relation to the implementation of this regulation, however, there has been a high amount of education and engagement by IFCO with fishers. This has been successful, and officers have been able to answer queries and support the MMO with the implementation of this regulation.

Shrimp Fishery Accreditation

For several years the local industry has been working towards getting a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) accreditation for the brown shrimp fishery in order to maintain European markets. A pre-assessment exercise had been undertaken in 2011 that had identified significant changes in practice and management would be required before accreditation could be achieved. Since then, Authority officers have supported the shrimp industry in working towards accreditation, by working with the Shrimp Fishery Advisory Working Group. This has led to the development by the group of a Brown Shrimp Fishery Management Plan, a stock assessment model and a set of Harvest Control Rules. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has also been developed between the industry and the Authority, that will add strength to many of the voluntary measures that have been listed within the plan that aim to support a sustainable fishery. The Authority has recognised the benefits of this industry-led fishery management plan, which has also enabled us to align accreditation goals and management with marine protected area management aims and measures. In January 2020 the fishery was successful in gaining MSC accreditation. This certification is subject to nine conditions being met over the next four years. The Authority will continue supporting the industry in this process, initially assisting with the development of a series of Action Plans aimed at satisfying the conditions.

Administrative Metrics

Administrative metrics 2019-2020	
Byelaw derogations (and extensions) issued to facilitate research purposes	24
Freedom of Information/ Environmental Information Regulation requests	4
Wash Fishery Order 1992 licences issued	57
Whelk Permits issued	39
Wash Restricted Area permits issued	24



Future priorities 2019-20

Given the finite resources available to the organisation it is necessary to prioritise work-streams. As such items that might be worthy of action but are of a lower priority will not be identified for action during a financial year. They may, though, receive attention if resources permit and may receive a higher priority in subsequent years, subject to the annual Strategic Assessment. These are referred to as secondary priorities and those identified by the Strategic Assessment 2019 are listed below.

1. Obtaining better fisheries data
 - a) Continue dialogue with MMO in relation to development of under 10m vessel reporting
 - b) Development of relationship with RSA to obtain more fisheries data
 - c) Further develop the mechanism to obtain voluntary data from commercial fishers
 - d) Continue dialogue with MMO and other partner organisations to develop 'joined-up' approach to gathering fisheries data from fishers in light of possible changes to important commercial species (reduced ability to depend on Bass and Cod).

Progress

No developments were made in relation to data collection from RSAs. No developments in relation to collecting voluntary data from commercial fishers, due to the anticipated changes implemented by the MMO for under 10m catch reporting. Eastern IFCA continued to work with the MMO on the national project to implement I-VMS on all vessels under 12m in length, covered in the high priority workstreams.

2. Delivering fisheries management in relation to fisheries in MPAs
 - a) Re-assess need to deliver 'unregulated netting' in the context of bass nursery areas
 - b) Review the Humber estuary cockle byelaw (inherited from North Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee)

Progress

No progress made in relation to these items.

Delivery against success criteria and success indicators

Five Success Criteria and twenty-seven success indicators have been developed for all ten Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) within England. Eastern IFCA seeks to deliver its annual priorities in the context of the Success Criteria and this is illustrated in five case studies, which provide a flavour of the work undertaken which meets the success criteria. Appendix 1 provides illustrations of Eastern IFCA's progress against each Success Criterion and associated Indicators.

Case Study - Success Criterion 1: *IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders*

As part of the annual review of the Eastern IFCA Constitution and Standing Orders, which embody the requirements of the Authority to ensure sound governance, the structure of the Authority and its sub-committees were reviewed.

Typically, most Authority business was carried out by sub-committees, each with its own focus, for example, the Marine Protected Areas sub-committee and the Regulation and Compliance sub-committee. However, members agreed that, whilst this structure has merit in larger organisations, it was perhaps less appropriate for an organisation such as Eastern IFCA where the contribution of the range of all member's skills, experience and perspectives is at the core of its purpose.

As a consequence, the Regulation and Compliance, Marine Protected Areas and Planning and Communications sub-committees were discontinued, and the Finance and Personnel sub-committee was re-named as the Finance & HR sub-committee. Alongside this, the scheme of delegations was revised to put environmental and fisheries management matters as the primary business for the full Authority, thereby exploiting the full range of skills and knowledge of all members. More organisational business was delegated to the Finance & HR sub-committee, with membership of that group comprising all County Council appointed members and three MMO appointed members.

To better enable the knowledge and experience of MMO appointed members in particular to be available to officers before presenting proposals to management measures, a Fisheries and Conservation Management Working Group was established. The purpose of the Working Group is to enable greater participation of members in the development of management measures, thereby enabling issues to be identified and discussed before formal proposals are prepared for consideration by the full Authority.

The inaugural Working Group meeting was held at the Eastern IFCA offices on the 9th July 2019 and included in its agenda discussion on shrimp permit allocation, a review of dredge fisheries in The Wash and the engagement plan for developing management measures for potting fisheries. Points raised at the meeting directly influenced all three of these workstreams including, by way of example, the development of an effective engagement plan which was better informed having been discussed.

Following the success of the first Meeting, the Working Group is now an established quarterly meeting, with three meetings being held during 2019-20.

Case Study: Success Criterion 2: IFCA's implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime

Shore patrols form the backbone of Eastern IFCA's enforcement regime. They require minimal resources but allow enforcement of much of the relevant bylaws, national and EU legislation. Patrols are carried out either single crewed, or double crewed dependent on the operational requirement.



During the course of 2019-20 a total of 938 port visits were made (visit to distinct port location) with a total of 345 patrols completed. This meets the requirement set out in the business plan, where Eastern IFCA, aims to both complete 2 port visits to each port every month. Additional targeted visits will be made on a risk based and intelligence driven approach.

To ensure patrols are effective, IFCO's are required to submit patrol planning 24 hours in advance to carrying out the patrol to a Senior IFCO, with a clear plan of where they are attending and the patrol objectives. Outputs are then reported in a patrol report which is fed back into monthly reporting.

By regularly visiting all ports within the district, the Authority maintains an awareness of the key issues on the ground, gathers intel to enable a targeted approach to enforcement and furthers our relationship with the industry. In addition, when new vessels or skippers arrive in the district IFCO's engage within two weeks of arrival to build a rapport and ensure awareness of local byelaws, usually providing informative material.

Shore patrols offer an opportunity for officers to engage with fisheries stakeholders on their own ground. Officers are routinely briefed on engagement priorities through the TCG, and are provided with 'lines to take' to ensure that they are well versed in topical issues and that there is consistency in communicating key messages, including in relation to priorities of partner organisations, to fishers as well as gathering information to help inform the work of the Authority.

This approach can be likened to a 'community policing model' where officers seek to engage and educate fishers to establish compliance through a shared understanding of the reasons for, and importance of, management for ensuring environmentally sound and sustainable fisheries. This is combined with a proportionate approach to enforcement, with education and engagement being the key tools but with other interventions being available for serious cases or where education and warning has proved unsuccessful.

Case study - Success Criterion 3:

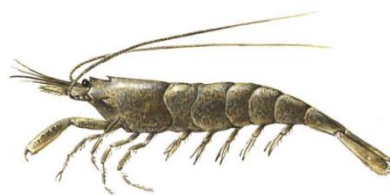
Use of evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of the brown shrimp fishery



The Wash brown shrimp fishery achieved Marine Stewardship Council certification in January 2020. This highly regarded and globally recognised accolade was the result of years of collaborative efforts between fishers, processors, scientists, conservation advisors, and Eastern IFCA. Importantly, the initiative was industry led and whilst Eastern IFCA was an active participant, the 'bottom up' approach was undoubtedly a key factor in achieving accreditation.

Marine Stewardship Council certification involves an independent review of a fishery's impacts on fish populations and their ecosystems. To gain certification, the fishery must operate within appropriate limits that the stocks and the local environment can support. Local shrimp processors commissioned an independent fishery assessment, from which a harvest control strategy was developed. Eastern IFCA's work to manage the brown shrimp fishery in line with stringent conservation objectives for marine protected areas underpinned the environmental aspects of the certification assessment.

Through participation in the Shrimp Fishery Advisory Working Group, Eastern IFCA ensured the mitigation it developed to deliver protection for The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC was embedded in the certification management plan. Mitigation measures include spatial restrictions on the shrimp fishery, to protect the most sensitive seabed habitats from damage by shrimp trawls, and technical measures, to limit the impact of fishing gear on the area that is fished.



In addition to stock sustainability and environmental protection, the certification process also requires sufficient monitoring and governance of the fishery is in place. Eastern IFCA have worked closely with local processors to develop a management plan for the fishery that includes measures for the reporting of fishing activity and landings. The application of remote monitoring via an inshore vessel monitoring system – in development at a national scale – will greatly assist in the ongoing monitoring of the fishery.

The certification process aligns perfectly with the IFCA remit for healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and viable industry. As well as specifying measures to prevent over-fishing, the certification management plan dovetails with Eastern IFCA measures to ensure the shrimp fishery is compatible with conservation targets for our marine protected areas.

Case study - Success Criterion 4: *IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.*

Eastern IFCA operate multiple vessels for different purposes. The sea is a challenging and at times unpredictable environment and therefore it is important that we invest in training for our sea going staff. All officers undergo training consistent with the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 95), radio (VHF) and Powerboat level 2 training, which is then commercially endorsed.

Officers within the Marine Protection team undertake training to a higher level through Royal Yachting Association (RYA) recognised training centres including Day Skipper and Yachtmaster Theory, Advanced Powerboat and Yachtmaster Offshore for those officers required to skipper our vessels. This year has seen some of our officers complete Powerboat Level 2, RYA Yachtmaster Theory and Offshore qualifications.

Officers are subject to ongoing professional development. During October 2019 and March 2020 all sea-going officers undertook vessel training. This training allowed officers to spend time crewing and helming all vessels, refreshing skills required to operate them in a safe manner. Skippers and helms were also able to exercise with different team members to ensure everyone has a firm grasp of what is expected of them when they come aboard. Special attention was paid to briefings and safety drills.



An Environment in which to Thrive

Eastern IFCA depends on its' team of engaged, committed individuals to deliver on the challenging targets set for the organisation. In recognition of and to support the team the management adopt a holistic approach to advancing individual technical skills and experience within a safe supportive environment. Staff are encouraged to contribute their ideas and input to the projects and workstreams supported by a mix of internal and external training. Participation and attendance at conferences and symposia is welcomed and supported as an effective means of bringing new skills to the organisation. Staff are regularly updated on health and safety, briefed at regular staff meetings and hold one to one supervisions with their manager every 6 weeks.

Governance

The Authority operates within the parameters of a comprehensive Constitution and Standing Orders to fulfil its obligations and duties. They are clear, understandable and reflective of what is reasonable, practical and lawful. The Standing Orders are overseen and where necessary amended by the appointed committee members of the Authority by agreement and consensus. The committee are ultimately responsible for the conduct and performance of the Authority with the Chief Executive acting as Head of paid service.

Case study - Success Criterion 5: IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives

Although the Authority has a science team capable of conducting much of our required research in-house, where specialised knowledge or specific equipment is required, we work in collaboration with other organisations. This provides us with greater resources, expertise and opportunities than we could manage alone. Investigating the cause of the deterioration of the inter-tidal mussel beds in The Wash has been one instance of recent collaboration.

The inter-tidal mussel beds within The Wash are an important resource both for the local fishermen and the birds that rely on them for food. The Authority manages this fishery, using evidence gathered during annual surveys to inform comprehensive Habitats Regulations Assessments that are submitted to Natural England, to ensure the proposed measures won't have an adverse impact on the site's conservation features. Since 2010, these surveys have shown the inter-tidal mussel beds are deteriorating due to a combination of unusually high mortalities and poor recruitment. The cause of the mortalities is unknown, but since 2010 the Authority has conducted research both in-house and in collaboration with other organisations, to try to gain a better understanding of what might be causing the die-offs.



One on-going project, that was initially conducted in collaboration with Cefas, measures chlorophyll levels and mussel meat yields in The Wash to determine if food availability could be a causal factor in the decline. Other projects have looked closer at the pathology of the mussels to determine if disease might be an issue. An initial analysis of mussel samples by Cefas in 2010 revealed an intestinal

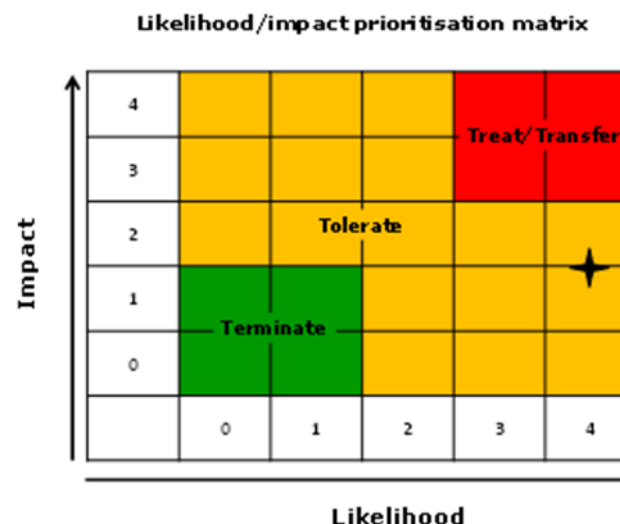
parasite, *Mytilicola intestinalis*, was present in a high proportion of the mussels. Initially the presence of this parasite was believed to be the cause of the die-offs. More recent studies conducted over the past two years, both in-house and in collaboration with the University of Kingston upon Hull, have changed that conclusion, however. While the parasite has still been found within hundreds of the dissected mussels during these recent studies, there has been no correlation between their presence and where mortalities have occurred. Convincingly, mussels that had been relayed from a bed in The Wash to a private lay at Brancaster, grew exceptionally well with little evidence of die-offs, irrespective of the parasite being present in them. This suggests other environmental factors were having an impact. The results from these recent studies have prompted plans for further collaboration with Cefas on a larger project, combining their specialist skills with our local knowledge, to study the issue holistically.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Pages 31-37 of the 2019 to 2024 Business plan outline the Risk Management Strategy of Eastern IFCA. The risk matrix sets out the magnitude of the risk to Eastern IFCA from an organisational viewpoint incorporating amongst other reputational and financial risks. The matrix also sets out the likelihood of an identified risk occurring. Mitigation which is in place or to be introduced is identified. Risk is ranked on an arbitrary scale from 0 (low risk - coloured green) to 4 (high risk - coloured red). The average of the combined financial and reputational risk is taken and plotted on to the matrix below, the likelihood of that risk occurring is also plotted. Mitigation action is noted. In most cases there are already many actions being undertaken as part of routine working practices to reduce the risks to the Eastern IFCA.

The four actions that can be applied are:

Treat	Take positive action to mitigate risk.
Tolerate	Acknowledge and actively monitor risk.
Terminate	Risk no longer considered to be material to Eastern IFCA business.
Transfer	Risk is out with Eastern IFCA's ability to treat and is transferred to higher level.



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During the year risks were managed in line with the Risk Management Strategy, as summarised in the table below. During the latter part of the year it was agreed that an update on managing risk would be a standing agenda item at full Authority meetings to ensure that members are fully sighted on progress and any developments.

Risk Description	Risk	Action	Mitigation	Residual risk
Eastern IFCA funding substantially reduced		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered 25% savings mandated in CSR 10 provision Assure financial propriety and operate within financial regulations Seek efficiencies and promote cost effectiveness. Demonstrate value for money. Advertise/promote Eastern IFCA output and effectiveness to funding authorities through regular engagement with Council leaders and Financial Directors. Engage with Defra through AIFCA to assure continued provision of New Burden funding post 2020. Identify mechanisms to recover costs for outputs judged to be over and above the core IFCA role. 	Policy driven removal of funding directly threatens ability to meet remit and deliver mandated outputs.
Loss of suitably qualified and experienced personnel		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate leadership and management Investment in professional and personal development Embed staff appraisal system Provide safe and professional working environment Enable flexible working arrangements Conduct regular internal communications events Empower line management Delegate functions and outputs to the lowest level. 	<p>Eastern IFCA sometimes perceived as an intermediate step in a career progression.</p> <p>Private sector can tend to prey on graduates with experience gained in IFCA type roles.</p>
Eastern IFCA fails to secure funding to replace assets		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current level of reserves provides a short-term buffer to cover replacement of RV Three Counties EMFF funding for a new open RHIB was secured Seek efficiencies and promote cost effectiveness. Demonstrate value for money. Advertise/promote Eastern IFCA output and effectiveness to funding authorities through regular engagement with Council leaders and Financial Directors. 	Potential for any future changes in the funding of County Councils to have an impact upon Eastern IFCA funding.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with partner agencies to identify alternative funding sources Explore asset sharing initiatives 	
Impact of EU exit on Eastern IFCA duties and the wider economic environment		Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor EU exit developments – Defra lead on development of the post-EU exit landscape Engage in national fora to help inform and influence developments (e.g. IFCA Chief Officers Group, Association of IFCAs) Continue “business as usual” Prepare for change Ensure Eastern IFCA is “match fit” Maintain communication with partners 	<p>Uncertainty on the arrangements for EU Exit i.e. with a deal or ‘no deal’.</p> <p>Uncertainty on future arrangements for fisheries and conservation management post EU Exit.</p>
Eastern IFCA fails to maintain relevance amongst partners		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a leadership function. Be proactive and identify issues early. Engage with all partners routinely. Use Business Plan to prioritise and communicate outputs Measure progress/deliver outputs Represent community issues to higher authorities 	<p>Disparate stakeholder aspirations introduce complexities which may drive perceptions of disengagement or inefficiency.</p> <p>Focus on delivery of MPA protective effect introduces perceptions of bias towards conservation remit from stakeholders.</p> <p>Work-load to service MPA protective effect diverts resources from fisheries management tasks.</p> <p>Perceptions of Authority powerlessness in the face of CFP reforms affecting the</p>

				inshore fishing sector.
Negative media comment		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively and regularly engage with all partners including media outlets. • Utilise full potential of social media and web-based information. • Embed professional standards and practices. • Deliver change efficiently and effectively. • Promote activity • Assure recognition and understanding through community events 	<p>Disenfranchised stakeholders seek to use the media to introduce doubt as to Eastern IFCA professionalism, utility and effectiveness.</p> <p>One off event prompts disproportionate media spotlight.</p>
Degradation of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) due to fishing activity		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed fishing activities authorised by Eastern IFCA are assessed per Habitats Regulations • Eastern IFCA is fully engaged in national fisheries/MPA project, prioritising management of highest risk fisheries in MPAs and implementing new management measures • Effective monitoring of fishing activity and enforcement of measures • Adaptive co-management approach to fisheries management – i.e. engagement with fishing and conservation interests in the development of management measures, and appropriate review of measures to respond to changing environmental and socio-economic factors • Ongoing, close liaison with Natural England regarding all conservation matters • Review agreed Wash Cackle & Mussel Policies • Develop the use of IVMS as a management tool by the Authority • Continue to progress research into the impact of fishing activities on MPA features to ensure the Authority has an up-to-date evidence base to inform its management decisions. 	<p>Attempts to broker balanced solution to provide protective effect whilst mitigating impact on local fishing activity are ignored by fishing community.</p> <p>Fishing vessels fail to adhere to management measures including closed areas introduced through new byelaws.</p>

Shellfish and fish stocks collapse		Treat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual stock assessments of bivalve stocks in Wash • Annual review of the level of threat via the Strategic Assessment • Ability to allocate sufficient resources to monitoring of landings and effective enforcement • Consultation with industry on possible management measures • Use Project Inshore Phase 4 output to inform MSC pre-assessment review of fisheries and validate management measures • Develop stock conservation measures for crab and lobster fisheries through engagement with Cefas and fishing industry • SWEEP research into primary productivity levels within the Wash • Regular engagement with the industry to discuss specific matters • Continued research into the cockle mortality events • Maintain whelk management measures • Introduce shrimp management measures • Consider bass management measures if necessary in light of EU/UK measures 	<p>Failure of biosecurity controls introduces disease in the Wash fishery.</p> <p>Unregulated fishing behaviour threatens stock status.</p> <p>Current management measures fall short of required protective effect.</p>
Failure to secure data		Tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All computers are password protected. Individuals only have access to the server through their own computer. • Secure wireless internet • Remote back up of electronic files • Access to electronic files is restricted • Up to date virus software installed on all computers • Important documents secured in safes • ICT equipment and policies provided by public sector provider – including encrypted laptops/secure governmental email system • All Eastern IFCA personnel undergo DPA training • Electronic backup of all Eastern IFCA documents held by ICT provider offsite 	<p>Malicious release of privileged information.</p> <p>Negligent release of privileged information.</p> <p>Invasive techniques constantly evolving</p>

RESOURCES³

Vessel name	MCA Work Boat Code	Length	Commissioned	Replacement cost
<i>FPV Sebastian Terelinck</i>	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	11.5m	2015	£420,000
<i>FPV John Allen</i>	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	11m	2013	£420,000
<i>RV Three Counties</i>	Cat. 2 (60 nm offshore)	18m	2002	£1,400,000
<i>FPV Sea Spray</i>	Cat. 4 (up to 20 miles to sea)	6m	2018	£51,000

Vehicle details	Entered service	Replacement date	Replacement cost
Ford Tourneo bus	2016	2022	£18,000
Skoda Yeti 1.6	2014	2021	£15,000
Skoda Yeti 1.6	2014	2021	£15,000
Skoda Yeti 4x4	2014	2021	£18,000
Skoda Yeti 2.0 TDi	2017	2024	£18,000
Skoda Yeti 2.0 TDi	2017	2024	£16,000
Skoda Fabia	2017	2024	£11,000
Skoda Karoq	2020	2027	£23,000
Isuzu DMax Eiger	2015	2022	£20,000

Description	Purchased	Replacement cost
Side scan sonar	2013	£60,000
Underwater camera	2013	£30,000
Videoray	2013	£15,000
Sonar software	2013	£15,000

In addition to the assets identified above the Authority leases an office in King's Lynn, a new short term lease has been renegotiated to afford time for alternative accommodation to be found, moorings at Sutton Bridge for its vessels and a storage facility (close to the offices) in King's Lynn.



³ The following resources belonged to Eastern IFCA on the 31st March 2020.

EXPENDITURE

The Authority had a budget of £1,460,962 for 2019-20. This figure includes £394,145 in New Burdens funding from Defra, to enable the Authority to meet the additional duties proscribed under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, £1,037,200 from levies and £70,878 from other sources. Use of New Burden money is not accounted for separately by the Authority due to the accounting and allocation complexities that this would cause.

Following a 25% levy reduction, delivered by 2012-13 and a standstill levy in the intervening years, 2019-20 saw a further 2% inflationary increase to the County Councils portion of the Authority's income. The final outturn for 2019-20 showed a surplus of £23,907 over budget (2.7%). Key budget variances were:

- 1) Savings in salaries due to vacancy management with Eastern IFCA operating below full complement over for part of the year amounted to £40,357.
- 2) General expenditure (operational overheads) were fractionally underspent as a result of minor savings in various areas £2,819.
- 3) Communication and Development, Marine Science and Marine Protection combined overspend amounted to (£4,052) due mostly to unbudgeted sonde repairs for Marine Science.
- 4) Savings on cost of vessel & vehicle operations resulting from lower cost of operating Patrol Vessels and vehicles offset partly by overspend on Three Counties maintenance total saving £10,337.
- 5) Costs associated with "Operation Blake" (£65,322)
- 6) Budgeted surplus (£41,261)
- 7) Extra Income £81,029

Reserve name	Amount held within reserve @ 31 March 2020
Research	£78,169
IVMS	£30,000
Operational	£150,000
Legal and enforcement	£75,000
ICT	£10,000
Vessel replacement	£1,809,526
Vehicle renewals	£60,000
Fixed Penalty Fine Fund	£21,750
Office Improvements Fund	£10,000
Defra grant	£18,292
Total "IFCA" reserves	£2,262,737

Remuneration of the Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Executive Officer 2019-2020

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority were not remunerated directly by the Authority for their work conducted on behalf of the Authority during 2019-2020. Remuneration of the Chief Executive for the year 2019/20 was in the band £70 – £75,000. Travel, accommodation and subsistence were reimbursed in accordance with the Authority's policies. (see table)

Travel	Accommodation	Subsistence	Total
£2,850	£1,900	£95	£4,845

Staffing

During the year the following changes took place:

- 1 Grade 6 IFCO left their post.
- 1 Grade 5 IFCO left their post
- 1 Project Officer was recruited on a temporary 2 year fixed term contract

Outstanding vacancies as at 31/3/2020

- 1 IFCO post



Organisational carbon footprint

As a local government organisation with environmental protection and promotion as a core function, the Authority is committed to providing information on its environmental performance. In 2008-2009 the Authority's predecessor conducted a baseline environmental audit and identified its carbon footprint. The results of that baseline assessment are compared to the Authority's subsequent years of operation below.

	Estimated carbon footprint for the Authority in 2019-2020 compared against a baseline of 2008-2009					
Source	2008-2009	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Owned road vehicles	24.40 tCO ₂ e	23.54 tCO ₂ e	19.83 tCO ₂ e	22.58 tCO ₂ e	17.07 tCO ₂ e	18.00 tCO ₂ e
Owned ships	197.07 tCO ₂ e	119.78 tCO ₂ e*	88.37 tCO ₂ e*	52.26 tCO ₂ e*	31.16 tCO ₂ e	34.00 tCO ₂ e
Electricity	22.59 tCO ₂ e	16.83 tCO ₂ e	15.08 tCO ₂ e	16.39 tCO ₂ e	13.82 tCO ₂ e	14.00 tCO ₂ e
Train travel	-	1.14 tCO ₂ e	0.57 tCO ₂ e	0.13 tCO ₂ e	0.17 tCO ₂ e	0.50 tCO ₂ e
Flights	-	-	0.24 tCO ₂ e	- tCO ₂ e	- tCO ₂ e	- tCO ₂ e
Total tonnesCO₂e	244.71 tCO₂e	162.19 tCO₂e	124.09 tCO₂e	91.36 tCO₂e	62.22 tCO₂e	66.50 tCO₂e

Developed using the Carbon Trust online carbon footprint calculator

REFERENCES

This report has been developed considering and with reference to the following documents:

Anon. (2009) Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. HMSO. London.

Anon. (2010a) Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010. HMSO. London.

Defra. (2010b) Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities: Vision, Success Criteria and High Level Objectives. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011a) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on Annual Planning and Reporting Requirements under s.177 and s.178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011b) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on the establishment of a common enforcement framework. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011c) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on evidence-based marine management. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011d) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on monitoring and evaluation and measuring performance. Defra. London.

Defra. (2011e) Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on their contribution to the achievement of sustainable development

Eastern IFCA Business plan 2018-23



APPENDIX 1 – SUCCESS INDICATORS

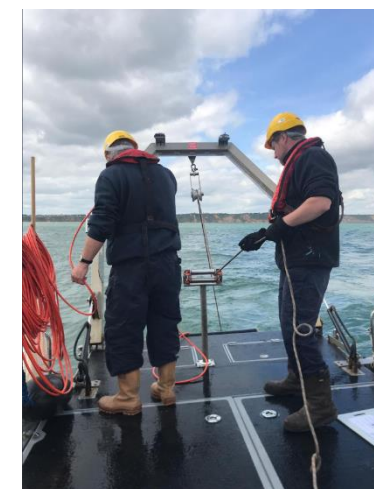
Success Indicator	Progress	
Success Criterion 1: IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders		
SC1A: The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year.	Ongoing	Eastern IFCA holds stakeholder databases which are reviewed on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis throughout the year. Eastern IFCA has completed a review of contacts and has implemented privacy policies in order to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations. This took significant resource throughout the year and is ongoing.
SC1B: The IFCA will have completed a review of its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year.	Complete	Communication and Engagement report appended to this report (Appendix 4).
SC1C: The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month.	Complete	‘News’ Section of the website is regularly updated. Eastern IFCA news and information from partner organisations posted in the news area by request.
SC1D: The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.	Complete	The website is under continual review and development
SC1E: The IFCA will have reviewed all of its Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale.	Not Complete	Established MoUs have not been reviewed this financial year but collaborative working arrangements are working well. With this in mind, annual reviews are considered to be unnecessary and they are reviewed on an ‘as required’ basis.
SC1F: By 31 March each year, the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan.	Complete	Head of operations attended NIMEG meetings during 2019-20. Marine Science officers attended TAG. CEO part of the I-VMS stakeholder group. Officers participated in a range of other regional and national groups.

Success Criterion 2: IFCA's implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime		
SC2A: The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from the 1 st April each year.	Complete	Enforcement Strategy is published on Eastern IFCA website which encompasses the use of the Risk Register through the TCG process.
SC2B: The IFCA will demonstrate in its Annual Report how it has worked with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.	Complete	Eastern IFCA coordinates activities in collaboration with partner agencies and the MMO in particular through joint TCGs. Eastern IFCA has also sought to strengthen collaboration with Border Force, Environment agency and the Police force through joint meetings. An example of which is the 'Broads Beat' operational meeting which is attended by a Senior IFCO on a quarterly basis and is attended by all the relevant enforcement organisations in the area.
SC2C: The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and publish them on its website.	Complete	Shore-based and seaborne patrol reporting is established and reported to NIMEG in agreed format.
SC2D: The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 st April.	Complete	IFCOs adopted national code of conducts and policies published by NIMEG.
SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for <u>all</u> Warranted Officers.	Complete	Annual IFCO Objectives and personal development plans incorporate national code of conducts and NIMEG derived policies.
SC2F: Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development.	Ongoing	Accreditation scheme not fully established. New employees (IFCOs) attended accredited training courses.

Success Criterion 3: IFCA's use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts		
SC3A: The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority	Complete	Site-specific Marine Protected Area fisheries assessments and management considerations are reported at all full Authority meetings.
SC3B: The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website.	Complete	Scientific reports detailing Eastern IFCA research activities are published on the website. These include stock assessment reports from the annual WFO cockle and mussel surveys, crab and lobster stock assessments and results from habitat mapping surveys.
SC3C: Management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention.	Ongoing	In addition to supporting forthcoming management decisions, the annual cockle and mussel surveys demonstrate the effectiveness of previous management. Additionally, where sensitive seabed features (e.g. <i>Sabellaria</i> reef) has been closed, a review of the regulations is conducted periodically after closure. Habitat mapping surveys have been conducted over the past four years to assess the impact of these closures.
SC3D: The IFCA will have developed a range of criteria-based management options that are explained to stakeholders through the IFCA website and reviewed by 31 March each year.	Complete	Eastern IFCA undertakes an annual assessment of fisheries within the district to determine where management measures may be required. The Annual Strategic Assessment is published on the website each year in conjunction with the Business Plan.
SC3E: New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales.	Ongoing	Significant setbacks in implementation of management measures have occurred due to unforeseen complexities and revised legal advice provided by MMO and Defra.
SC3F: The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.	Complete	Eastern IFCA undertakes an annual assessment of fisheries within the district to determine where management measures may be required. The Annual Strategic Assessment is published on the website each year in conjunction with the Business Plan.
SC3G: Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including Maximum Sustainable Yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report.	Complete	This work is covered in the business as usual section of the annual report for key species such as mussels, whelks, crab and lobster.

Success Criterion 4: IFCA's have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional.		
SC4A: The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	Complete	All previous annual plans/business plans have been published on the Eastern IFCA website within the agreed timescales.
SC4B: After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a Report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	Complete	This information is provided in the annual report. All previous annual reports are available on the Eastern IFCA website.
SC4C: IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for <u>all</u> staff will have been completed by 31 May.	Complete	All IFCA staff are set Annual objectives and personal development plans with mid-year reviews.
SC4D: An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.	Complete	Eastern IFCA Meetings and Sub-Committee meetings effectively recorded in minutes. All meetings in 2019/20 have been quorate and minutes are published online once confirmed as per Standing Orders.
SC4E: The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.	Complete	Eastern IFCA's have worked collaboratively with Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Natural England and aquatic consultants to gather information, share expertise and maximise training opportunities.

Success Criterion 5: IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives		
SC5A: The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.	Complete	In addition to publishing a 5-year Strategic Research plan, Eastern-IFCA also produce an annual Marine Science Plan each year that details the projects and timelines for the coming year's research projects. This plan is informed by the Eastern-IFCA 5-Year Business Plan and an annual Strategic Assessment, which prioritises the highest risk elements of all the fisheries in the district, including fisheries sustainability, viability and environmental impacts.
SC5B: The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.	Complete	Scientific reports that support our decision making are published on the website.
SC5C: The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress that has made towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report.	Complete	The Eastern-IFCA TAG representative chaired the group between July 2016 and November 2017 and has remained an active member thereafter. The group is active in promoting IFCA's at the national level by liaising and working with scientists from other DEFRA-family organisations, enabling IFCA's to contribute towards national evidence gathering projects and to use recognised standards and procedures.



APPENDIX 2 – WAYS OF WORKING

During the year work to progress the following Memorandum of Agreements (MoAs), Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Partnership Agreement (PA), Informal Agreements (IA), Agreement in Principle (AIP), Service level Agreements (SLA), Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs), contracts (C) and directorships (D) was undertaken.

These documents set out agreed ways of working for the Authority and attempt to provide clarity for individuals and organisations on their respective roles and responsibilities.

Document	Signatory organisations	Document purpose
MoU	Natural England and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Marine Management Organisation and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Environment Agency and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Kent and Essex IFCA	Defines roles and responsibilities in relation to the Stour and Orwell European Marine Site and the Outer Thames Estuaries Special Protected Area
MoU	North Eastern IFCA	Defines roles and responsibilities in relation to the Humber European Marine Site
MoU	CEFAS and IFCAs	Defines roles and responsibilities and ways of working
MoU	Lincolnshire County Council	Transfer of Defra New Burden money to Eastern IFCA
AIP	Norfolk County Council	Transfer of Defra New Burden money to Eastern IFCA
PA	North Norfolk Commercial Fisheries Liaison Group	Formally a FLAG, the group enable engagement between the District Council, Eastern IFCA and fishing industry representatives
PA	CEFAS, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council Environmental Health Office	Defines working relationship between regarding the collection of water, cockle, mussel samples for shellfish waters classification within the Wash
MoA	Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership	Employment of The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership Project coordinator by Eastern IFCA
MoA	John Lake Shellfish, Lynn Shellfish, Marine	Delivery of a Brown and Pink Shrimp MSC Pre-Assessment project

	Ecological Services	
MoA	Natural England	Delivery of baseline monitoring survey data relating to <i>Sabellaria spinulosa</i> within the Wash embayment
D	Chief Officers of all IFCAs	Directorship responsibilities of Eastern IFCA Chief Officer acting as a Director of the Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities
C	Norfolk County Council	Provision of Internal Audit services
C	Norfolk County Council	Provision of Health and Safety support
C	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council	Provision of ICT infrastructure and support
C	Andrew Jackson Solicitors	Provision of specialist legal advice (call off contract)
C	Sidekick Digital	Hosting Eastern IFCA Website
IA	IFCA Technical Advisory Group	Provision of technical advice to IFCA COG
IA	National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group	Development of good practice, partnership working and advice to COG
C	CEFAS and Natural England	Charter agreement for the study of Cobble and Boulder Communities



Marine
Management
Organisation



Environment
Agency



Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL



Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



APPENDIX 3 - ENFORCEMENT REPORTING

Overview

On the ground, enforcement resource was focussed on EU bass regulations, cockle fishery management measures and Eastern IFCA byelaws. Reporting against the targets for 2019/20 is set out in the tables below.

Seaborne Compliance Activity			
Objective	Target Quantity	Quantity achieved	Comment
Sea Patrol Days	90	109	
Monitor EMS closed areas	120	42	Monitoring below target which reflects higher reliance on land based monitoring through the year
Board all vessels which have recently entered the district	100%	100%	

Shore Based Compliance Activity			
Objective	Target Quantity	Quantity achieved	Comment
Port visits	1 per month per port (min)	1.95 port visits per month (average)	45 recognised ports in the district resulting in an average of just over 2 visits per month. There is an uneven spread across ports as visits were as directed in TCG and informed by Intelligence, the risk profile and fishing trends
Monitoring EMS closed areas	1 per month (min)	1.75 average per month	Monitoring above target which reflects higher reliance on land based monitoring through the year (reduced number of seaborne monitoring)
IFCO's to engage with the owner/skipper of all vessels which have recently entered the district	100%	100%	All 'new' vessels inspected, and skippers / owners engaged to ensure an understanding of Eastern IFCA byelaws.

Partnership Working			
Objective	Target Quantity	Quantity achieved	Comment
Attendance at MMO Area TCG meeting	100%	100%	
Joint patrols/inspections/ operations with the Marine Management Organisation	24 (min)	60	Joint working is now embedded in IFCA ways of working facilitated by office sharing and attendance of partner TCG's.

APPENDIX 4 – REPORTING ON THE COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN.

Overview of activity

Eastern IFCA utilises strong ties with stakeholders in all facets of its work. From the development of management measures to the assessment of fishing activities in Marine Protected Areas, the local knowledge and expertise of the community is sought wherever possible.

As per the business plan the focus for the year was to carry out direct engagement with stakeholders based upon business critical workstreams, primarily in relation to developing regulation, as such the following consultations were undertaken:

- Formal Consultation of the Marine Protected area Byelaw 2019
- Formal Consultation of the Wash Restricted area Byelaw 2019
- Informal Consultation of the Closed Areas Byelaw 2020
- Formal Consultation on the Shrimp Permit Scheme
- Formal Consultation on the MCRS byelaw
- Information Gathering regarding Cromer Shoal MPA
- Crab and Lobster Informal Engagement

To ensure that these consultations were effective, officers specifically engaged with stakeholders about each of these, with internal briefings to ensure consistency of messages and engagement materials produced to aid education and engagement.

For all of these byelaws and regulations, impacted stakeholders were written to or emailed about the byelaws. News Items were uploaded to the website and Fisheries Associations were contacted. Eastern IFCA also facilitated further engagement and discussion by holding meetings, phoning directly impacted stakeholders, discussions on the quay, and one to one meetings.

Social Media

As per the business plan, the Community Voice project had identified that stakeholders would value more feedback and information on Eastern IFCA's work, as such throughout the year Eastern IFCA uploaded 42 news articles onto the website, in addition to specific pages and updates. Social media was identified as a useful tool for driving this communication and as such was used extensively throughout the year. Below is a summary of the key statistics, with a comparison to the figures from previous years.

	Twitter Impressions* (thousands)	Facebook impressions (thousands)	Facebook engagements (%)	Overall impressions (thousands)
2017-18	69.9	33.4	2.68	103.3
2018-19	155.2	92	6.32	247.2
2019-20	151.1	79	4.21	230.2

**Impressions: Number of times users saw a social media post.*

**Engagement Rate: The number of engagements (clicks, retweets/shares, replies, follows and likes) divided by the total number of impressions.*

In addition to these figures, the overall following of Eastern IFCA pages increased throughout the year, both on Facebook and Twitter. The figures show that Eastern IFCA has maintained the high levels of impressions established in 2018-19 throughout the following year. Engagement rate is no longer easily obtained from Twitter's reporting figures so is not included here.

It is important to note, particularly in regard to Facebook posts that 'organic' (not paid for) growth can be difficult to achieve, but Eastern IFCA has accomplished this. Eastern IFCA do not pay to promote any social media posts, so all figures represent organic growth.

Community Events

As per the business plan 2019-24 the long term shift from attending community type shows was confirmed, supported by data from the Community Voice project, and the relative success in previous years of redirecting the resource usually used on these to other engagement workstreams. Therefore, Eastern IFCA did not attend any large community events, resources were redirected and contributed to the success of the engagement around byelaws, and social media and website updates.

Business plan Action	Update
Partnership working	IFCO's carried out 60 joint patrols with partner agencies including the MMO, Environment Agency, Border Force and Police. Marine Science Officers frequently work with other government bodies including the MMO and Natural England, as well as various coastal management boards (Wash and North Norfolk Marine partnership and Suffolk Coastal Forum).
More even spread of IFCO's across the district	There has been a satellite office in Lowestoft since 2016. During the year, further work has been carried out to make this a more permanent base, particularly in regard to vessel facilities, and as such there were more frequent vessel deployments in the south of the district.

Talk to people on their own ground	This area was focused on during engagement about byelaws and regulations, with IFCO's briefed on how to engage with stakeholders speaking to them on vessels, and on the quayside as appropriate.
Maintain and improve a professional and up-to-date website. With regularly updated content (2 new news items or other updates per month)	A total of 42 news items were uploaded during the year.
Social media sites to be regularly updated; use social media posts in conjunction with website updates, to deliver key updates to the community	Regular updates were posted on social media, ensuring a good overall reach to Eastern IFCA stakeholders. A total number of 311 posts were made.
Engagement with key stakeholders around consultations	<p>This year a high number of consultations are planned. Both with groups that are regularly consulted with and those that are not. Therefore, additional work (on top of resource that is usually invested on getting meaningful engagement) was undertaken to identify the preferences of these new groups.</p> <p>Specific improvements were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate feedback/dialogue with disparate stakeholders so that views/opinions can be included in a meaningful way. • Follow up calls/visits to individuals who may have not involved themselves with initial consultation but may have a view/opinion they want to express. • During consultation periods deploy properly briefed and equipped staff (through the TCG process) to gather information and views.
Maintain the stakeholder database	Eastern IFCA continually improved and maintained its stakeholder database throughout the year to ensure GDPR compliance, in addition new privacy notice were provided to stakeholders where relevant.
Key engagement messages reflected in officer duties	Engagement priorities were established through the tactical and coordination group meetings. Guidance documents were produced for IFCO's for each engagement priority, following engagement officers routinely logged comments in 'message forms' of which 135 were written and logged during the year.

Review outputs of the Community Voice project to inform and develop how the organisation engages and communicates with stakeholders	A formal review was not carried out during the year, however stakeholder preferences were used to inform engagement at all levels.

Examples of other meetings and workshops attended

Eastern IFCA attended a plethora of events throughout the year, encompassing the full breadth of the authority's remit, below is a list that gives a flavour of the events attended:

- Norfolk Coastal Forum
- North Norfolk Commercial fishing forum
- Holbeach conservation group meeting
- Advisory groups associated with the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership
- Suffolk Coastal Forum
- Suffolk Marine Pioneer
- Southern North Sea managers meeting
- Suffolk Saltmarsh Group
- Introduction to Sustainable fishing (fishers conference)
- Humber nature forum
- East of England Plastics coalition
- Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership

