

Enforcement Policy: Wash Cockle Fishery 2022 – Regulation 15(2) (Dual Fishing Prohibition)

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This policy sets out how we will enforce 15(2) of the WFO Regulations within the Wash cockle fishery 2022, specifically in relation to carrying mussel dredges on board whilst operating in the hand-work cockle fishery. These policies are intended to apply to this fishery only.

Regulation 15(2)

Regulation 15(2) prohibits carriage of bottom-towed-gear on board a vessel which is operating in a hand-work fishery.

"A person must not have on board any bottom-towed-gear which could be used to fish for, take or remove from the fishery any of the prescribed species when fishing for, taking or removing from the fishery any of the prescribed species from a hand-work fishery."

The intention of this regulation is to reduce the risk of prohibited fishing gears being used in hand-work fisheries.

Policy for 2022 cockle and mussel fisheries

The current mussel dredge re-laying fishery is concurrent with a hand-work cockle fishery. Both fisheries have opened later than would ordinarily be the case and as such, some vessels intend to operate within both fisheries on the same trip to sea.

Mussel dredges are not effective at fishing cockles and so there is a limited risk that vessels engaged in the mussel dredge re-laying fishery would attempt to take cockles.

Given the low risk to the cockle fishery, and the limited time available to vessels to operate in both, it is considered appropriate to enable vessels to carry on board mussel dredges whilst employed in the hand-work cockle fishery during this season.

Policy

The following enforcement policy is therefore in effect for the duration of the 2022 dredge mussel re-laying fishery:

Eastern IFCA will not enforce regulation 15(2) where a person is in contravention of such by carrying on board a mussel dredge on the same calendar day as operating within a hand-work cockle fishery where they have notified Eastern IFCA of their intention to fish in accordance with the mussel dredge Licence Conditions.