

Improving how we manage our crab and lobster fisheries

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Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.

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Welcome (and thanks for joining us)

What do we want to cover..

- Provide an overview of the brown crab & lobster FMP – what is it, what will it do, what it will mean for you.
- Get your views on
 - the crab & lobster fisheries in your area and how you think they should be managed?
 - the FMP including any changes you think we need to make

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What we will cover

- What is an FMP?
- How has the crab & lobster FMP been developed?
- An overview of the management objectives?
- Talk about the issues with your crab & lobster fisheries and how you would like to see them managed.
- Overview of timeline to get the FMP finalised and implemented
- How you can stay engaged?

We want your questions and your views....



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Before we start

Any Questions?



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FMPs: The short version

Q: What is an FMP?

A: An FMP sets out policies for maintaining stocks at sustainable levels, or restoring them to these levels if needed. This includes non-quota stocks.

FMPs provide the framework to build and maintain sustainable UK fish and shellfish stocks.

Q: How did FMPs come about?

A: Following Brexit, the **UK Fisheries Act 2020** has placed FMPs at the heart of UK fisheries management. FMPs detail the practical, fishery-scale delivery of the overarching Act.

Q: Who is developing FMPs?

A: Defra is responsible for preparing and publishing FMPs. They will be based on best available science, fisher experience, and policy objectives through participation of key stakeholders (fishermen, researchers, and regulators).

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What do we mean...

- Objectives: The things we want to do. Some will be easy to implement others will require more research.
- Evidence: The information we need to make decisions. This includes:
 - Biological information (e.g. crab stock status),
 - Environmental information (how crab & lobster fisheries interact with other marine life)
 - Socio-economic information (costs, earning, welfare of fishermen)
 - Spatial information

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What does an FMP do?

- It's a Plan
- It sets out:
 - What we know about the current state of our crab & lobster fisheries
 - What we want to achieve for our crab & lobster fisheries – Our Objectives
 - What we need to do to deliver on our objectives in the FMP
 - The actions we will need to take (research and evidence gathering /management changes) and to what timeframe.
 - How we will work out if we have been successful.



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What is included in the FMP

- Brown crab & European lobster (and others...)



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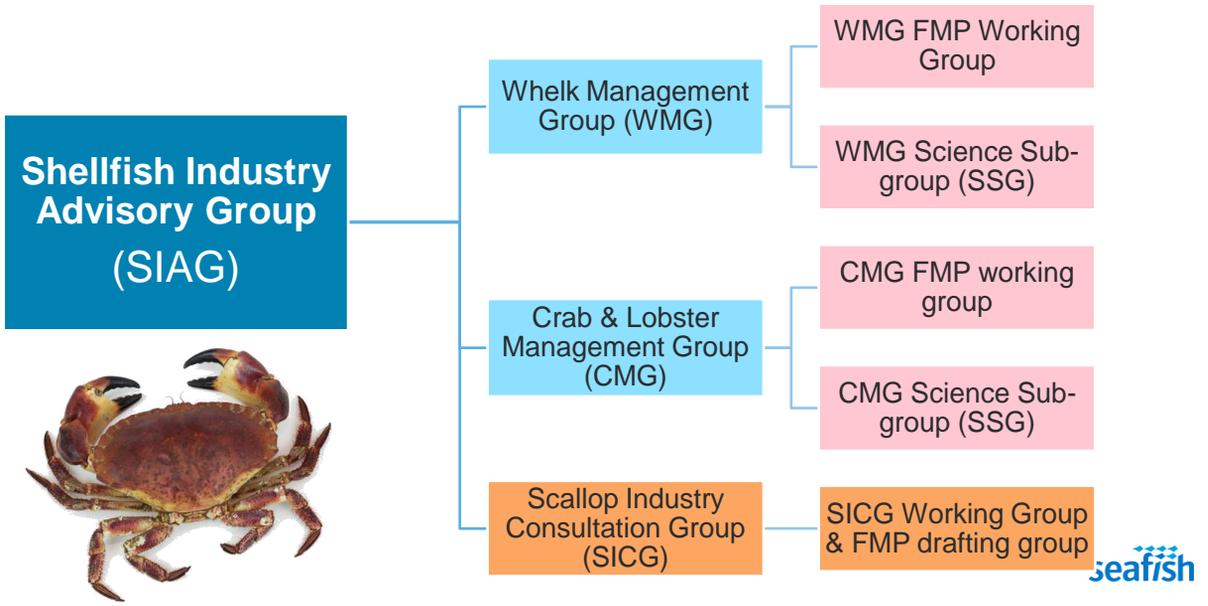
What is included in the FMP

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Shellfish Group Structure



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Crab & Lobster FMP structure

Shared Shellfish Objectives

- Developed by the SIAG FMP working group
- Relevant to all shellfish fisheries

Species specific objectives

- Developed by the CMG FMP working group
- Apply to crab and lobster fisheries only

Scientific research plans

- Developed by the CMG Science Sub-group
- Provide necessary detail on what research would be required to deliver FMP objectives



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Shared Shellfish Objectives



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Vision: “Contribute to the long-term sustainability and economic viability of the UKs shellfish fisheries.”

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Objective 1: Formalise the structure of the SIAG

Why is this included?

We want the SIAG to be the forum for industry, regulators, and the research community to work collaboratively on shellfish fisheries management.

What does this involve?

- Create the SIAG (and species sub-groups) as the key place to engage on shellfish issues across the UK
- Make sure we have the right people involved - from boat to plate (or exporter)
- Make sure we are sharing the right information in the right way so that everyone can stay up to date

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Objective 2: Assess impact of latent capacity

Why is this included? We want to:

- minimise the risk of an unsustainable increase in fishing effort,
- improve industry buy-in to future changes (jam today and tomorrow)
- implement options to address latent capacity if needed.

What does this involve? We need to better understand:

- Scale of the issue, extent of risk, and potential impact of changes.
- Likelihood and impact of effort displacement
- Case studies from where latent capacity has been addressed – what did they do, did it work, were there any unexpected impacts.



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Objective 3: Establish stakeholder engagement mechanism

Why is this included?

Although we are now outside the EU, the Trade and Cooperation Agreement can still influence:

- how are fisheries our managed
- what future fishing opportunities are available for UK fishermen.

Important that the fishing industry can share its views on the TCA and that government understands how any changes will impact industry.

What does this involve?

- Establishing an 'official' collaborative forum between industry and government to discuss TCA issues.
- Better understanding how the TCA has impacted NQS over the short, medium, and long-term.



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Objective 4: Address marine spatial conflict

Why is this included?

There is increased competition for marine space so important that the shellfish industry is equipped to engage in discussions with government and other marine users on marine spatial planning and access issues.

What does this involve?

- Better understanding the marine spatial planning process and how to deliver trade-offs and reduce conflict.
- Producing the right data and analyses (spatial and economic) and narrative about why the shellfish industry is important.
- Making sure the shellfish sector has a ‘seat at the table’ on marine spatial planning discussions.



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Objective 5: Promote consumption of UK shellfish

Why is this included?

We want more people to eat shellfish (in the UK and abroad).

What does this involve?

- Maintain a watching brief on trade issues and legislation that could impact shellfish consumption in the UK or abroad.
- Support work to build industry reputation (environmental and welfare issues) and provide businesses with information to promote shellfish consumption.
- Use the SIAG as a forum to horizon scan, identify possible issues and opportunities, and develop solutions.



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Objective 6: Facilitate & promote trade opportunities

Why is this included?

Strengthening current markets, and exploring new markets, provides greater business resilience.

What does this involve?

- Promote and facilitate UK shellfish suppliers' presence at international trade shows to promote UK shellfish and expand markets.
- Provide technical guidance for shellfish exporters to help them overcome trade barriers.



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Objective 7: Develop advice on shellfish welfare issues

Why is this included?

- New legislation means that crustacea and cephalopods are considered sentient
- Important that industry adopts best practices - for reputation reasons but also economic reasons.

What does this involve?

Produce Codes of Practice so businesses know how to take care of shellfish to minimise stress to the animal but also improve quality.



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Alternative Objective 8: Addressing welfare issues

Why is this included?

- There is a growing focus on welfare issues in the fishing industry (the treatment of crew, the payment of fair wages etc.).
- It is important that the shellfish industry understands these issues and has the means to fix such problems when they arise.
- These issues can impact crew retention and on the industry's reputation, which can influence consumers.

What does this involve?

- Maintain a watching brief on emerging issues and policy changes and produce guidance so that the UK shellfish sector can meet any social and human welfare requirements.
- Use the SIAG as a forum for stakeholders to raise issues relating to human welfare in the shellfish supply chain, work collaboratively to maintain or improve good practice, and build the shellfish sector's positive reputation.



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Objective 9: Understanding the shellfish sector's carbon footprint

Why is this included?

- Why are facing a climate emergency that will change what we catch and where we catch it. The shellfish sector needs contribute to the solution.
- Understanding our carbon footprint will help identify opportunities to decarbonise and move towards next zero. It will also support positive environmental messaging – consumers what to know that their food is not contributing to the climate change.

What does this involve?

- Assess the carbon footprint of UK shellfish using a robust metric which considers the specifics of the shellfish industry (different fleet meters, carbon sequestration in shell material, etc.)
- Identify ways to reduce emissions in the shellfish sector and encourage improvements where possible.
- Maintain a watching brief on climate change-related issues of interest to the shellfish sector and use the SIAG as a forum through which to raise awareness and stimulate collaborative working.

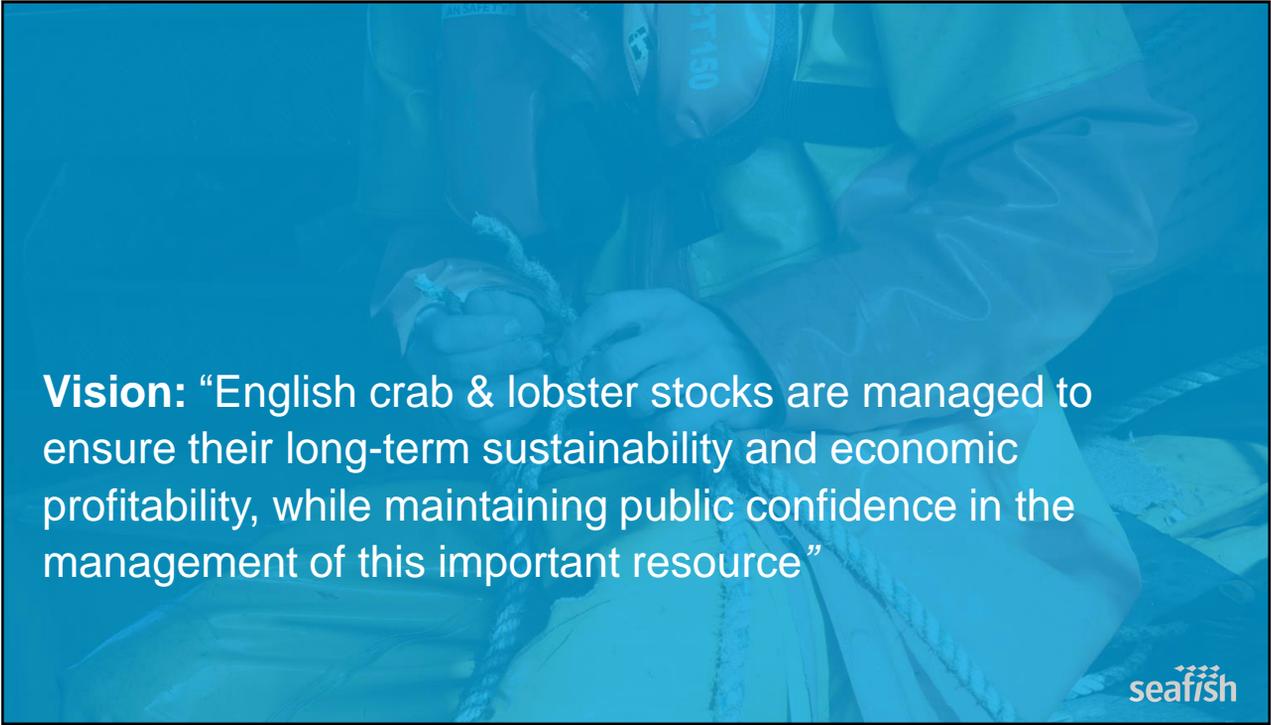


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Crab & Lobster Specific Objectives

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A background image showing fishermen in a boat, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The fishermen are wearing yellow and orange gear, and one has a yellow hat with the number "150" on it. They appear to be handling a rope or net.

Vision: “English crab & lobster stocks are managed to ensure their long-term sustainability and economic profitability, while maintaining public confidence in the management of this important resource”

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Objective 1: Improved data collection programme

Why is this included?

We need better information to:

- understand the state of our crab & lobster fisheries
- ensure we are putting the right management measures in place so that they are sustainable over the long term
- make sure we are allowing the right amount of fishing effort– if we don't have good information we need to be more cautious.

What does this involve?

- Working out what data we need to collect.
- Implementing a regular and sustained data collection programme that is cost effective and makes best use of fishing vessels to build a long-term time series



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Objective 2: Establish methods to better assess stock status

Why is this included?

Accurate information on stock status is critical to informing management decisions and protecting against overfishing

What does this involve?

- Reviewing current assessment approaches and explore other options
- Assessing current stock boundaries for crab & lobster and better aligning management and stock boundaries as appropriate
- Carry out research to start addressing uncertainties in current modelling approaches (e.g. growth and natural mortality)
- Set a suitable assessment and management cycle for each species so that assessments inform timely management decisions



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Objective 3: Impact of fishing on the marine environment

Why is this included?

- Good fisheries management is more than just about understanding the state of our crab & lobster stocks.
- We also need to understand the impact that crab & lobster fishing can have on the wider marine environment – other fish species and marine life (seabirds, seals etc.).
- Where this impact is problematic then action should be taken.

What does this involve?

- Undertake desk-based review of the environmental impacts of crab & lobster fisheries on non-target species, by-catch species, and benthic habitats.
- Map existing mitigation/avoidance measures used in static gear fisheries prevent or minimise these impacts.



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Objective 4: Addressing interactions with other fisheries

Why is this included?

Understanding interactions between crab/lobster and other fisheries is important to help solve conflict / issues and to make sure that management measures don't cause new problems.

What does this involve?

- Review interactions between crab & lobster fisheries and other fisheries to understand:
 - Where conflict is occurring and why
 - The economic and environmental impacts of these interactions and their impact on sustainability. This means both direct impacts (e.g. capture of non-target species) and indirect impacts (e.g. bait sourcing and supply)
- Improve understanding of other fishing activities as a source mortality



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Objective 5: Measures to protect stocks in the short/medium term

Why is this included?

Changes to UK fisheries management post Brexit means it will be important to implement management measures to safeguard crab & lobster fisheries in the short to medium term – until the evidence base improves and longer-term measures can be developed. Agility is key.

What does this involve?

- Explore ways to manage fishing effort when we don't have a long-term datasets on effort
- Develop an interim management approach which considers the wider current political landscape and:
 - Enables managers and industry to respond to changes in stock status
 - Ensures management is aligned with requirements set out under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement
 - Explores alternatives to the Western Waters effort regime rolled over from EU law



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Objective 6: Establish long-term management approach

Why is this included?

- In the long-term, better data will allow for better management of crab & lobster fisheries.
- Harvest Strategies and Harvest Control Rules (HCR) allow for management to respond to changes in stock status; this means that fishing pressure is reduced when stocks are under pressure and can increase when stocks are healthy.
- HCRs can be difficult to develop but once we have them, they are straightforward to use, and they make it easier for everyone to understand what is happening in the fishery.

What does this involve?

Working to develop and implement a harvest strategy for crab/lobster fisheries with appropriate control rules.



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Objective 7: Secure appropriate access arrangements

Why is this included?

Stable access to fishing opportunities will support thriving, profitable crab & lobster fisheries that are environmentally sustainable.

What does this involve?

Exploring options for:

- Fair and equitable access to the resource and equal fishing opportunities
- Community access regimes
- Addressing issues around latent capacity.



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Objective 8: Improve supply chain cohesion

Why is this included?

Improving access to markets and making it easier to trade and sell shellfish helps businesses across the shellfish supply chain.

What does this involve?

- Ensuring the FMP can support crab & lobster fisheries to secure eco-labels as required.
- Helping fishermen and processors to build a shared understanding of market requirements across the supply chain and build greater resilience
- Assisting businesses to navigate access to export markets - existing and emerging.
- Promoting crab & lobster in the UK domestic market and in overseas markets.



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Objective 9: Monitor and manage associated species

Why is this included? Other crustacean species – including crawfish, spider crab, velvet swimmers, and common prawns – make up a significant part of catches around England. We will monitor these fisheries to help us decide if management measures need to be introduced to prevent overfishing.

What does this involve?

For **Crawfish**, **Common prawn**, **Spider crab** and **Velvet crab** fisheries

- Monitor patterns of fishing activity, fleet performance, management and indicators of stock status each year in order to alert regulators to potential problems before they happen
- Consideration of these species in all other FMP objectives
- Implementing management measure required for example, possible harmonisation of the crawfish MLS nationally to 110 mm.



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Where should we focus first?

- We will need to consult on the Crab & Lobster FMP
- We also want to consult on the first suite of measures to help improve the state of our crab & lobster fisheries.
- We think we need to reduce fishing effort or at least put in place better measures to control it.
- What do you think?
- What changes would you like to see happen first?



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Scientific Research Plans



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Why does the FMP have a scientific research plan?

Each FMP will have a scientific research plan. The research plan for the Crab & Lobster FMP was developed by the Science Sub-group of the CMG.

Research plans:

- Identify knowledge gaps
- Explain what scientific research should be carried out to achieve the objectives of the FMP

Research plans will help guide research activities to ensure that science is aligned with the FMP and helps improve fisheries management



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What happens next?

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Next Steps

- Stakeholder engagement events to gather feedback on the draft FMP – **November to December 2022**
- Update the FMP to reflect what we have heard – **September to January 2023**
- Provide the first draft FMP to Defra – **January 2023**
- Formal public consultation on draft FMP by Defra – **April to June 2023**
- Crab & Lobster FMP will be finalised and published – **Autumn 2023**

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Get in touch..

Please contact us at
fisheriesmanagementplans@seafish.co.uk

We want to hear from you.

