

INTRODUCTION OF I-VMS


On the 12 May 2025 the MMO confirmed the new I-VMS licence condition which requires vessels under-12m to have an I-VMS device installed and transmitting data. This data is now contributing to the monitoring of potting activities in the MCZ, including the Natural Disturbance Study open and closed areas. Eastern IFCA continue to work closely with industry to ensure trackers are available to provide positional fishing data, where I-VMS is not available.

JULY 2025


STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The next Stakeholder Group meeting has been agreed to take place this Autumn!


PHASE 2 PERMIT CONDITIONS PROGRESS



Rates of damage report



Risk review



Phase 2 permit conditions

New and existing data is being used to determine the rate of damage occurring across the site. It is intended that this information will be set out in a report that will inform a risk review and the development of phase 2 permit conditions.

On track

Scheduled

Delayed

Not started

MANAGEMENT PROGRESS

Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Byelaw 2023		
Byelaw		Comments from the MMO are being reviewed and the byelaw will be re-submitted shortly prior to submission to the Secretary of State for confirmation.
Permit conditions		The temporary <u>Interim measures</u> that require beach launched vessels potting in the MCZ to provide positional data and mandates the Natural Disturbance Study closed areas remain in effect and are being monitored. The report on rates of damage and associated risk review will inform the development of Phase 2 permit conditions, which will include consultation with stakeholders.
Voluntary Code of Best Practice		
Monitoring		Monitoring is ongoing and will be evaluated in the upcoming 2025 Interim report. Findings from the evaluation will inform future adaptations to the monitoring process.

RESEARCH PROGRESS

Natural Disturbance Study (NDS)

Whilst initially delayed, progress is now back on track. Summer ROV surveys have commenced and the next multibeam surveys are planned for September/October. Analysis of last years ROV footage has been completed and a report detailing the analysis and results is due to be published imminently. This analysis compares the frequency and severity of chalk impacts between closed and open areas. The analysis of collected multibeam data is due to commence over summer by external contractors. Potting activity is continuing to be monitored and no incursions into the control areas have been detected.

Mapping sensitive features

This workstream is complete. The final rugged chalk extent is available on our [habitat mapping webpage](#).

Mapping fishing activities

The workstream was significantly delayed because of a lack of available data sources. The workstream is now progressing as a result of the interim measures which require vessel positional data and the requirement for IVMS which is now in place. 2024 tracker data is being analysed and will inform the interim report and risk assessment.

Adaptive Gear Trials

The workstream is delayed as a consequence of difficulties in finalising an effective method for trailing modified fishing gear and a lack of funding. Alternative methods are in development and are planned for field testing this summer.

Determining value of rugged chalk

Studies looking into the social value of the fishery have been completed by Newcastle University and we are awaiting final results to be shared. Determining the value of the rugged chalk is significantly delayed as was previously on hold. A study plan is now in development for this project.