

Summary Proposals for Management of Potting Effort

Following extensive dialogue with stakeholders and several rounds of previous consultation, officers have finalised their recommendations for an effort limitation scheme within NEIFCA jurisdiction. The proposed scheme has been considered at length, over several years, accounting for the varying views of stakeholders and different fisheries across the Tyne, Tees, Yorkshire and Humber regions.

The complexities within the fishery are such that no single scheme can be developed which resolves all the current issues with immediate effect. The proposed scheme is therefore intended to cap and reduce effort over the medium term and will be subject to a formal review within five years of implementation.

Officer Recommendations

A pot limitation scheme, linked to vessel length, where the (registered) overall length of a vessel will determine the maximum number of pots that can be fished as detailed in Table I.

Table I: Proposed Pot Allocation

Category	Overall Vessel Length (m)	Maximum Pot No.
1	2.0	100
2	4.0	200
3	6.0	400
4	8.0	500
5	10.0	600
6	12.0	700
7	14.0	800
8	16.0	900
9	Legacy	1000
10	Legacy	1250
11	Legacy	1500
12	Legacy	1750
13	Legacy	2000

Legacy (Existing) Permit Holders

Officers acknowledge that some operators have invested significantly in their businesses and work considerably more pots than the proposed category allocation. In consideration of this officers are recommending that existing permit holders are supported by a mechanism to gradually reduce their potting effort through an immediate reduction of 10% followed by a drop in category each subsequent year until that vessel reaches its maximum pot allocation for its size category. Vessel operators would also have the opportunity to immediately take their category allocation or a lower allocation without penalty. Officers anticipate that track records will be evidenced by DEFRA monthly shellfish activity returns and NEIFCA databases from 2014 and 2015. Officers are also proposing a cap on legacy track records to a maximum starting point of 2000 pots within the NEIFCA district.

Example 1: A 10m vessel has a legacy permit, with a track record of working 1000 pots in the district. The maximum pot allocation for a category 5, 10m vessel is 600 pots. If that vessel chooses to keep its legacy track record of 1000 pots it would have to accept an immediate 10% cut of 100 pots, meaning that it would start at 900 pots in year one, reducing to 800 pots in year 2, 700 in year 3 and finally 600 in year 4 of the new scheme.

Examples 2: A 12m vessel has a legacy permit, with a track record of working 2000 pots in the district. The new effort limitation scheme allows a 12m vessel to work a maximum of 700 pots. If that vessel chooses to keep its legacy track record of 2000 pots it would have to accept an immediate 10% cut of 200 pots, meaning that it would start at 1800 pots in year one, reducing to 1500 pots in year 2, 1250 in year 3, 1000 in year 4, 900 in year 5, 800 in year 6 and finally 700 in year 8 of the new scheme.

Permit Capping

Officers are recommending that the number of permits made available to fish within the NEIFCA district is capped at current levels, with the pool of permits managed by the Authority and reviewed annually.

New Entrant

Any new entrant wishing to enter the fishery would need to apply for a permit. New entrants would then receive a maximum pot allocation relative to their respective vessel category (1 to 8).

Permit Charge

There will be an annual charge for permits in consideration of the additional costs associated with pot tagging, enforcement, monitoring and administrative burdens associated with this regime, officers are proposing a charging regime which will be index linked to the total number of pots fished. The more pots fished the larger the charge up to a maximum charge.

Legacy Permit Transfer

- i. If a vessel is sold or transferred within a family to a son or daughter, then a vessel would retain its permit and any legacy track record.
- ii. Any other sale of a vessel either within or outside the Authority's district would require the surrender of the permit and loss of any legacy track record.
- iii. A mechanism will be included allowing operators to retain their permit and upgrade their vessel with a 'like for like' replacement. However any change in overall vessel length would

result in the loss of any legacy track record and they would default to a pot allocation as per Table I.

Summary proposals for Automatic Identification System (AIS) Byelaw

Officers have also identified specific issues where a lack of information on the spatial extent of stocks, the distributions of fishing effort and the intensity of fishing activity is hampering the effective management of stocks within our jurisdiction. Officers are therefore recommending the implementation of an AIS byelaw in 2016, making it mandatory for all commercial vessels or vessels fishing for commercial gain, to operate an AIS system (either Class A or Class B) at all times whilst fishing or transiting within NEIFCA jurisdiction.

Summary proposals for Mandatory Catch Return Byelaw

Currently there is a significant lack of fishing catch and effort data relating to exploited stocks throughout the NEIFCA district. Exceptions to that include the seasonal exploitation of sea bass through fixed net fisheries, the exploitation of lobster, crab and whelk via pots, the sporadic exploitation of cockles and new requirements for scallop dredging. To significantly improve this position officers are proposing the introduction of a general byelaw regulation which will require the weekly recording and monthly submission of mandatory catch and effort returns to the Authority.