



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



A snapshot of Shellfish Policy...

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Aims of policy...

Marine Programme Business Plan 2013-2016

Our vision: *clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas.*

- A thriving fishing sector supporting the UK economy and local communities.
- Healthy, highly productive stocks
- Low environmental footprint

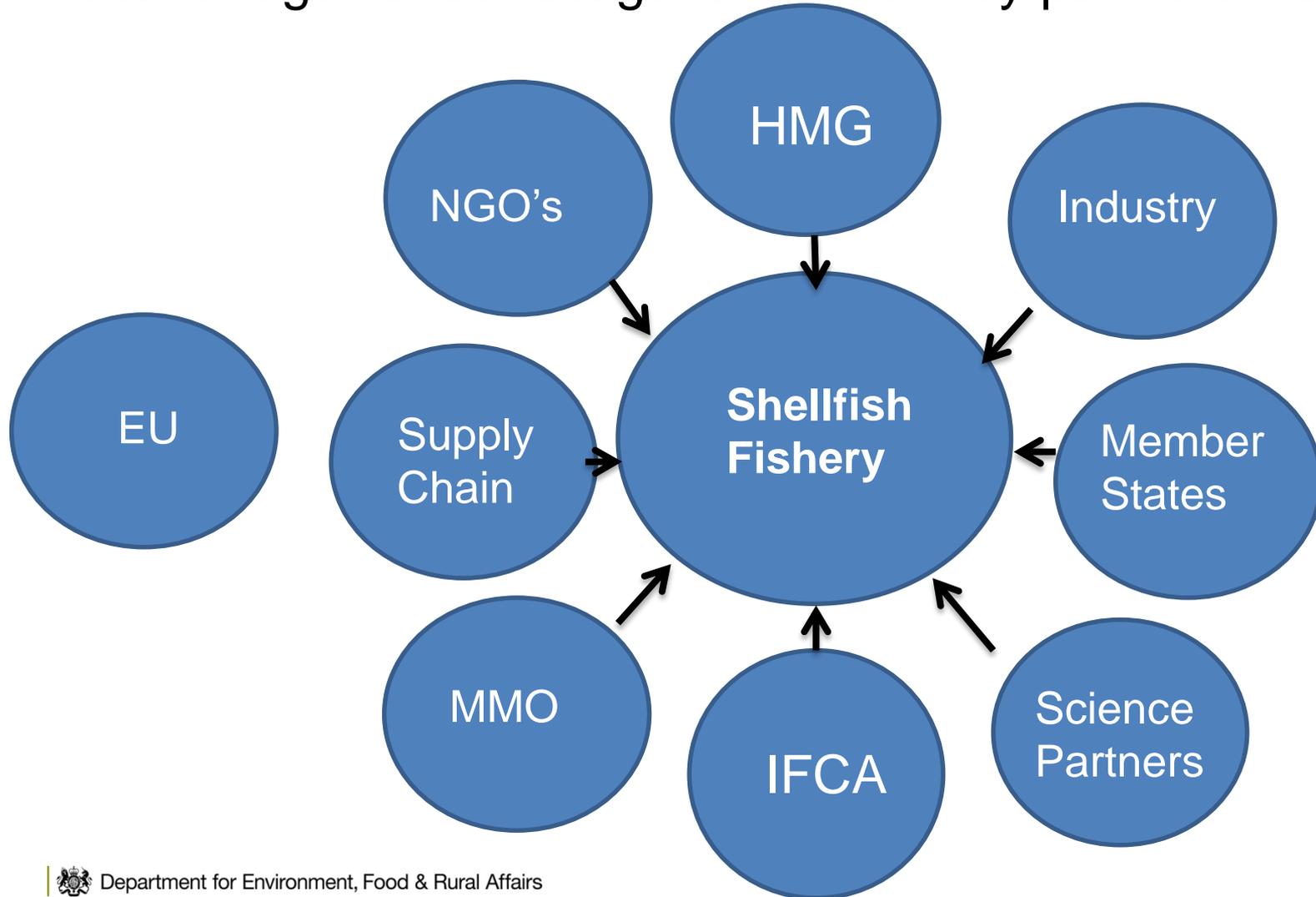
Overarching Policy Drivers



- **Marine Strategy Framework Directive: Good Environmental Status by 2020 (Descriptor 3)**
- **Common Fisheries Policy: Maximum Sustainable Yield by 2020**
- **Western Water Regime**

Partners in delivery of a sustainable fishery

- Defra works as a part of wider shellfish community to deliver against our obligations – our key partners include:



The English Shellfish industry

- English Shellfisheries are split in to Wild and Cultivated Stocks
- Wild shellfish species worth **around £95m** (landings from UK vessels in to England in 2013); employing **around 17 000**
- Commercially exploited include: scallops (King and Queen), lobsters, crabs (various sp), cockles, cuttlefish, whelks, squid, nephrops, shrimps, prawns, oysters and mussels

More Stats...

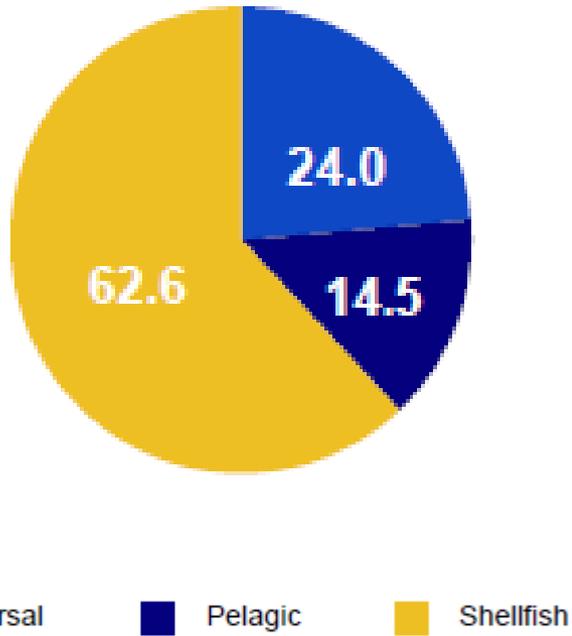


Fig 1. Landings into English Ports

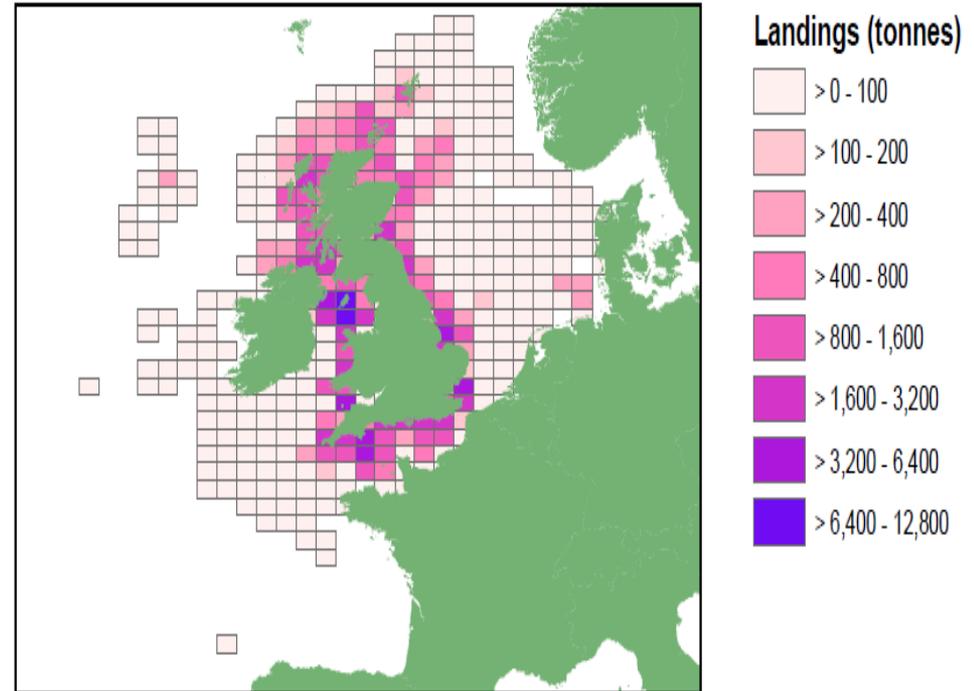


Fig 2. Spatial catch patterns

Key characteristics of the sector

- Shellfish Management in English waters is an incredibly complex picture!
 - 1) Shellfish is arguably the **most data poor commercially important fishery** in English Waters; coupled with...
 - 2) **Ambitious current drivers** – MSFD/CFP achieving a pathway for long term sustainability in the short term;
 - 3) **Multiple jurisdictions and shared stocks – Onion!**
 - 4) **It's the biggest fishery** by vessel number and catch volume – 43% of active fisherman (4596) in UK were potters

Key characteristics of the sector...

- 5)** It involves well established fisheries (crabs, scallops, nephrops) but also emerging/developing fisheries (e.g. cuttlefish, whelks)
- 6)** Most do not have quota restrictions but will be affected by CFP reform:
- directly : achieve MSY levels of fishing ,
restrictions in quota stocks they can catch,
 - indirectly: possible transfer of capacity from quota fisheries to non-quota fisheries

Our focus...

- On improving evidence –
 - Raft of evidence projects and stock assessment (Cefas)
 - Evidence Symposium – collaborative work
 - Improving data recording
 - Prepare for new measures (e.g. landing obligation)



Our focus

- On delivering key policy drivers our focus from a national perspective is on high volume, high value fishery and which comprise the majority of catchers:
 - King Scallop (14.3M tonnes; £22.3M)
 - European Lobster (1.7M tonnes; £16.4M)
 - Brown Crab (13.3M tonnes; £17.8M)
 - Other key and emerging fisheries (Whelk 13.7M tonnes £9.1M and Cuttlefish 3.6M tonnes; £6.5M)

Scallop (King) Management

- Very valuable fishery: arguable most valuable species based on value of first landings and quantity - £22 m landings into English Ports in 2013
- Sector is largely unrestricted (technical/gear restrictions)
- Very data poor, though signs are that King Scallops being fished above MSY in certain areas.
- Remains very controversial fishery given the impact of gear on environment and other gear (static)

Scallop (King) management

Key areas of focus for team

- Review 2012 Scallop Order – aspirations to align with technical measures in Scotland and work to harmonise with the French
- **Address lack of data on scallop stocks** – In discussion with researchers designing a new data collection scheme
- Western Waters Effort Regime – ensure the fishery remains within EU effort limits. Exploring issues with industry



Brown Crab and Lobster management

- Important Stock to UK fishing industry – £34m in 2013
- CEFAS undertook national stock assessments in 2012, results of which communicated to IFCA's and fishery sector in 2013
- On the whole stocks appear to be fished at or above MSY for stocks in English Water
- 2nd round stock assessments are due in 2015



Crab and Lobster Management

- **1. Stock specific Management Approach**

Prioritise policy response by:

- Stock status (related to MSY)
- Fishing pressure (sector/location specific?)
- Current Management

Work on a regional basis with key stakeholders to develop and implement measures to improve stock health where required

This will involve industry!



Multiple jurisdictions/Shared stocks...

- At National/European level we are working with other MS on shared stocks e.g. work to harmonise technical management measures
- At UK level we are working a lot closer with other countries in context of management e.g. Pan Irish Sea Queenie Work programme
- At local level we working with IFCA's to ensure management across boundaries is aligned where possible

How can the industry help respond to such challenges?

- Evidence gathering – Make it relevant, accurate, consistent, formal/official:
 - Vessels as platforms for data gathering - turn fishers knowledge into evidence
 - Help identify/explain changes in fishing activity/preferences
 - Help design evidence gathering schemes
 - Run data collection programs
- Reduce delays in using new evidence- Record in official databases asap, minimise errors in data recording, adopt electronic data submission methods, cross check records

Industry - Other considerations

A number of other factors and challenges are also considered in policy making and are important for the viability of the sector including :

- How the sector achieves best price for product?
- Opportunities to maximise access to markets.
- Balance profitability with other considerations such as
 - access to fishery / capacity
 - market driving fleet size and behaviour

Industry

- Ability of the sector to:
 - prepare for regulatory and other changes and unexpected events –gear restrictions, storm damages
 - understand and minimise habitat impact and other effects such as ghost fishing, litter, carbon footprint

How can the industry and other sectors help respond to such challenges?

- Test or help design alternative management schemes
- Deliver changes through collective action/organised groups (industry, third sector, public)
 - industry-administered ways of working for evidence, fishing practices, conservation. (code of conduct, guidelines, etc)
 - industry-led initiatives (marketing, safety, quality standards) and partnerships

How does the industry respond to such challenges?

But those are just a few examples!

