



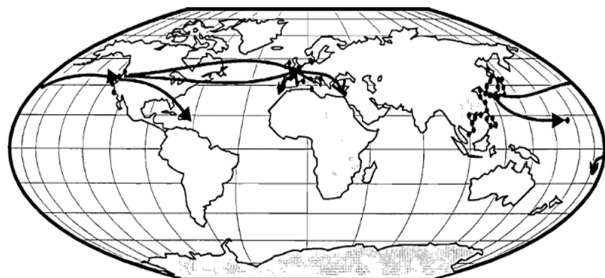
## Manila Clams in the Thames

Manila clams (*Ruditapes philippinarum*) are becoming ever more abundant in the Thames Estuary, producing the opportunity for a potential fishery. It is crucial to understand the **economic viability** and **environmental impact** of the fishery before implementing legislation. KEIFCA have set up a trial fishery to collect nine key pieces of information.

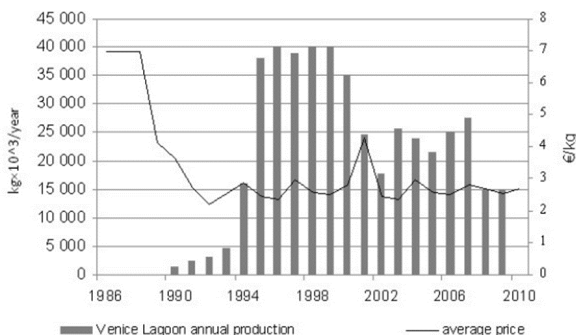
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|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impact on the seabed      | <input type="checkbox"/> Speed of fishing           | <input type="checkbox"/> Profitability of fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental assessments | <input type="checkbox"/> Sorting efficiency         | <input type="checkbox"/> Local economy            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damage rates              | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of clams harvested | <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance/enforcement   |

## Global fisheries

Manila clams are native to Asia, and were introduced to the UK and Europe in the 1970s for the purpose of aquaculture. Due to the **adaptability of the species**, established populations are now found across the globe.



The largest producer of Manila clams globally is China, **farming** millions of tonnes annually.

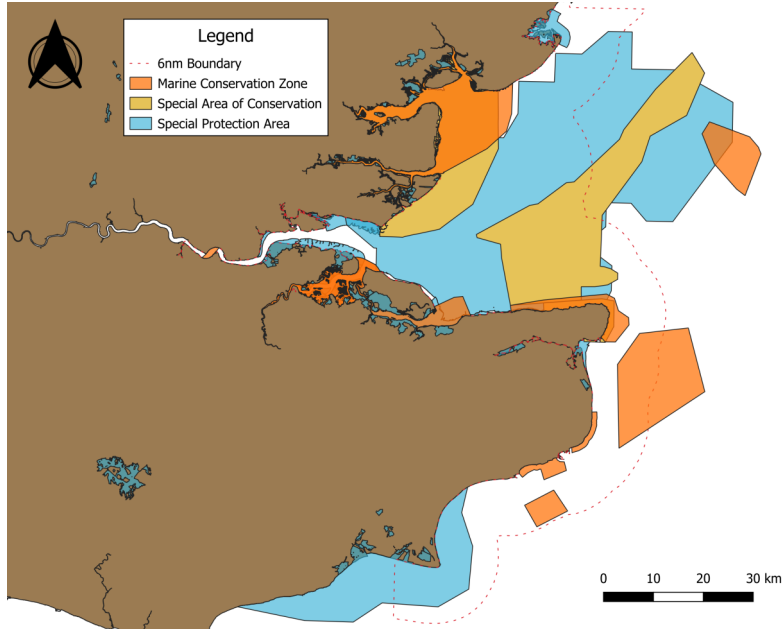


Most fisheries have transitioned from wild caught fisheries to aquaculture due to **stock collapses from overfishing**. The Venice Lagoon Manila clam fishery suffered a sharp catch decline in the early 2000s, prompting a transition to farming.

However, Manila clams have been successfully fished in the Solent and Poole Harbour in **small quantities** since the 1980s, and achieved Marine Stewardship Council status in 2018.

# Marine Protected Areas

Areas identified with sufficient Manila clam stocks for the trial fishery overlap with a **complex network** of MPAs. Extensive environmental assessments are required by Natural England before a fishery can occur. KEIFCA are currently completing these assessments, to ensure that fishing activities **do not hinder the conservation objectives** of the site.



KEIFCA have requested information from industry regarding the location of other Manila clam stocks in the district. We have received locations from several fishers, which will inform the **location of stock surveys in 2025**. This will allow KEIFCA to give consideration to opening harvesting in additional areas in the future.

## Setting up the trial

We received thirty-eight expressions of interest in participating in a Manila clam trial fishery.

From these, **fifteen fishers** submitted a formal application to participate in the trial. Due to a limited number of places on the trial, these applications were assessed and ranked.

Six vessels planning to use batch dredges have been awarded a place on the trial as well as two vessels planning to use hydraulic suction dredges.

This will give a total of **eight vessels**, providing a diverse and wide range of trialists and fishing gear.

## What's next?

The trial fishery will start on **2nd October** and run for **four weeks**. During this time, KEIFCA will be working with participants to gather evidence.

Before the trial commences, we will be providing support to trial fishers to ensure that valuable data is collected.

We will be submitting environmental assessments to Natural England in the near future to confirm permission to conduct a trial dredge fishery inside MPAs.

Updates will be provided to all fishers that submitted an expression of interest.

If you have any further questions throughout the trial fishery, please contact us.