

Agenda Item No C4
Report on the patrol vessel 'Tamesis'
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Quarterly report for the period ending September 2014

Vessel priorities

- Day grab sampling of Pegwell Bay working from Ramsgate
- Native Oyster Dredge survey within proposed MCZ
- Enforcement of static gear working from Ramsgate
- Enforce TEFCO cockle damage rates from Ken Green based in Brightlingsea
- Monitor Fishing vessels, fixed nets and static gear for compliance with Kent and Essex Byelaws, EU Legislation and Regulations.
- Input enforcement information into UK fisheries Monitoring, Control Surveillance System database (MCSS)

Risk based fisheries enforcement

Risk based Enforcement has been continued, allowing senior officers to determine species at risk within the district throughout the whole year. Tactical meetings between senior officers allowed informed decisions to be made on how to enforce and regulate, using information reports and data collected by officers on shore and vessel patrols.

Enforcement patrols have been conducted covering the Thames Estuary and coastal areas.

Forty two vessels were sighted and recorded. Eleven non boarding inspections were carried out whilst twenty vessels were boarded for inspection during this period to check for compliance with KEIFCA Byelaws, Legislation and EU regulations.

Further development to the access data base for recording vessels, fixed nets and static gear sightings has resulted in seven unspecified gear sightings (GSU allows officers to record positioning of gear that its identified), twelve gear sightings (GSU identified PLN or name and address) and ten gear inspections (handled gear checked for compliance) being recorded. As a result seven Offence Notices were attached for non-compliance of byelaws and eight seizure notices were issued for gear that was deemed non-compliant. One set of whelk pots and one set of lobster pots were hauled and seized. This gear was tangled and officers were unable to return it to the sea. One fixed net, not marked in accordance with KEIFCA byelaws, was seized at Dovercourt Bay.

Enforcement of the TEFCO using Ken Green

Ken Green was delivered to Brightlingsea prior to the start of the Cockle fishery. Essex based officers used this opportunity to use the R.I.B deployment system on the Ken Green to facilitate boarding of vessels engaged in this fishery. Damage rate checks were carried out and calculated from samples taken by officers. The data collected from these patrols has been recorded to the enforcement data base.

Enforcement of static gear

Tamesis stayed in Ramsgate to complete Pegwell Bay day grab surveys. Whilst there officers investigated previous reports of non-compliant static gear. This resulted in one set of fifteen whelk pots at Pegwell Bay, one set of fifteen whelk pots at Folkestone, ten parlour pots, one fixed net at Pegwell Bay and one fixed net at Folkestone being hauled. Subsequently five seizure notices were issued and the gear was removed. Notices were issued locally to advise the potential owners of these seizures.

Conservation/Survey Work

Day grab sampling

Day grab sampling has now been completed. This included the Pegwell Bay survey which was carried out from Tamesis using its day grab method to ascertain biomass of stocks and total allowable catch for the inside/outside cockle areas.

Oyster survey within proposed MCZ

It was identified that there was a need for a full MCZ base-line survey of native oysters. The survey also recorded invasive species such as slipper limpets, non-native species such as pacific rock oysters and predators such as starfish.

Essex based Officers conducted the three week survey in the period during August. Authority member Mr W Baker and members from Natural England including Mr J Brennan were on board to assist and advice whilst the survey was carried out. Kent based Officer B Hermitage was also on board for sled video camera footage which will be used in conjunction with the data collected.

During the survey period Tamesis attended a mayday call from a vessel grounding on the Buxey sands. Tamesis stood by until further assistance arrived from the RNLi and subsequently returned to her duties.

Public Relations

On the 26th to 27th July Tamesis took part in the Bellamy in Brightlingsea festival. During this time, officers welcomed members of the public on board `FPV TAMESIS. `Educational literature, a video and salt water tanks with live `creatures from the creek` including shellfish and crabs were on show. The highlight of the weekend was to welcome Professor David Bellamy and his wife on board.

Maintenance

Regular maintenance has been carried out for the vessel's engines and equipment, records have been stored in both hard copy and electronic format.

Statistics

During this quarter, Tamesis has undertaken 29 patrols, used 4389.76 litres of fuel and travelled 1392.87 sea miles. The engines have run a total of 140.7 hours.

Other Information

Seal observations

- 1 seal has been sighted inside the Ray sand channel

Training and Procedures

Standard operating procedures are being finalised for survey methods and equipment on board Tamesis, the procedures and policies will outline safe working practices for employees and other agencies whilst working on board.

Mark Davey
Skipper/IFC Officer