

Agenda Item C4
Report on the patrol vessel 'Tamesis'
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Quarterly report for the period April-June 2015

Vessel priorities:

- Day grab sampling of TECFO areas
- Day grab sampling of Outside Cockle areas
- Sidescan Sonar and Day grab survey Blackwater, Crouch and Colne Estuaries MCZ
- Provide training for Eastern IFCA on the use of pot hauler
- Monitor fishing vessels for compliance and enforce Kent and Essex IFCA Byelaws, EU Legislation and Regulations

Fisheries Enforcement

Risk based enforcement has continued through this quarter with the vessel log database allowing vessel sightings, gear sightings and inspections to be recorded and transferred to the GIS package for detailed analysis of fishery activity and areas worked.

Throughout this period the vessel was primarily tasked with survey duties though enforcement duties were carried out simultaneously. Forty two vessels were sighted and recorded and six non-boarding inspections were undertaken. Private and charter vessels have been sighted and recorded with general guidance given to individuals on drift nets, pots and traps and minimum size of species.

Patrols within the district have resulted in inspections of vessels, drift/fixed nets and pots/traps. Twelve static gear sightings were recorded of which five were inspected which resulted in two Offence Notices being attached for non-compliance of byelaws and one seizure of a fixed net that was non-compliant with Kent and Essex Byelaws.

Conservation/Survey Work

Day grab sampling

Day grab sampling has been carried out at the E Barrows, Dengie, Ray Sands, St Peters Flats, Marsh End, Scrapsgate, Leysdown, Minnis bay, and Pegwell Bay to ascertain biomass of stocks and total allowable catch for both TECFO and the outside cockle areas.

Sidescan Sonar Survey

A sidescan sonar and day grab was conducted covering 12 sites in the Ray Sand Channel and the Blackwater, to establish baseline data for the native oyster restoration trials

Maintenance

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

Other Information

Statistics

During this quarter, Tamesis has undertaken seventeen patrols, used 2759 litres of fuel and travelled 800 nautical miles. The engines have run a total of 115 hours.

Marine Mammal observations

Patrols have led to one off sightings of marine mammals in various areas including:

- Seals have been sighted near the Whittaker spit and on the Buxey sands
- Porpoises were sighted on two occasions in the West Swin

Repairs and servicing

J Collins engineering carried out the annual service on the vessels engines. Gearbox couplings were also replaced in accordance with manufacturers recommendations.

M.C.A Survey

Tamesis has completed this year's M.C.A survey with minimal deficiencies and no action was required.

Training and Procedures

The Skipper and crew of Eastern IFCA survey vessel "Three Counties" were provided with training and practice on the use of the pot hauler, as a similar one is due to be fitted to their vessel shortly.

Standard operating procedures have been finalised for survey methods and equipment on board Tamesis; the procedures outline safe working practices for employees and other agencies whilst working on the boat.

Invitation to Authority Members and P.R

An open invitation is extended to Authority Members to join the crew on an enforcement patrol or survey aboard the vessel.

Colm O'Laio
Acting Skipper & IFC Officer