



Agenda Item C1

Shore Report - Kent

Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Quarterly report for the period ending June 2015

Overview

At the end of March the proposed 3 bass bag limit come into force with mixed reactions from recreational fisherman. New quota restrictions and a proposed minimum size limit for bass has commercial fisherman worried about the impact this will make on their immediate livelihood.

The fisherman have also expressed concerns on how the no discard ban is going to work and be enforced.

Prior to the beginning of the cockle season bio security checks were carried out on the Kent cockle vessels, bags and holds measured in anticipation of the upcoming cockle season. On 14th June the cockle season opened but due to concerns from the cockle fleet, it was closed at the end of the first week and reopened on 5th July. Despite the strict quotas, fish prices across the district have remained low.

Queenborough

Commercial fishing from this port was slow to start, with vessels having to fish further afield than they traditionally would have at this time of year. Quotas again played a major role in what the fisherman could target.

Two cockle vessels moored in Queenborough passed their bio-security checks and started working in the middle of June.

Number of vessels fishing from Queenborough: 9

Faversham

Trawling for finfish and collecting oysters have been the main stay of this port. Being able to sell their catch through their own shop has led to better prices and help with a lack of quota.

Number of vessels fishing from Faversham: 2

Whitstable

There is major concerns about the new bass quotas and proposed size limits in this port, with fisherman worried about the impact of targeting for other stocks, once they have caught their quota of bass.

The Whitstable fishermen have enjoyed steady fishing, using both gill nets and trawls to target finfish, quotas as usual have been a problem.

Oysters have been fished for earlier in the quarter. Fishing for lobster and crabs with pots started during this quarter with whelks continued to be targeted through the quarter.

Number of vessels fishing from Whitstable: 15

Herne Bay

Good catches have been reported by recreational fisherman, whilst commercial effect has remained low.

Number of vessels fishing from Herne Bay: 2

Thanet Ports (Ramsgate/Broadstairs/Margate)

Concerns over the new quotas for bass and the proposed new minimum landing size have been raised numerous times, the no discard ban and already tight quotas have fisherman worried about their future. Seals are another problem with fish being reported as damaged in the nets.

Ramsgate commercial fisherman have had steady fishing throughout the quarter using both towed and fixed nets to catch their quarry. Some fisherman have reported that they have had to move away from good mixed fishing as they have not had the quota for all the species being caught.

Fisherman targeting whelks reported consistent catches with some having to move their gear more frequently than past months, whilst vessel fishing crabs and lobsters reported improvement in their catches.

Recreational anglers continue to enjoy good sport around the Thanet coastline with smoothounds and thornback ray making up much of the catches.

Number of vessels fishing from Thanet Ports: 24

Deal and Walmer

Fishermen targeting crabs and lobsters began fishing in earnest this quarter. A slow start was reported with the fishing becoming steady towards the end of the

quarter. Competition for the best ground has been fierce as both recreational and commercial fisherman have competed for space.

The recreational angler has enjoyed good sport through the quarter both on the shore and at sea.

Number of vessels fishing from Deal and Walmer: 5

Dover

Whilst the commercial fishing here continues to remain low key with vessels using mainly pots, anglers here have enjoyed success from the shore venues and off of the charter vessels.

Number of vessels fishing from Dover: 2

Folkestone and Hythe

Fishing with pots has started in earnest in this quarter with whelks, lobsters and crabs being targeted. Although quotas have limited the effort on finfish, both trawling and netting has taken place. With the new quota restrictions on bass, tight quotas and the no discard ban, the fishermen here are worried about their future.

Number of vessels fishing from Folkestone and Hythe: 13

Dungeness

Dungeness fisherman have enjoyed reasonable fishing through this quarter. The new bass quotas and proposed size limits, small cod, skate, sole quotas and the upcoming no discard ban have been subject to discussion. The ability to work two ICES areas and sell their catch through local outlets has helped the fishermen to get slightly better prices than normal

Number of vessels fishing from Dungeness: 5

David Deverson,
Kent Shore Officer