

Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority  
Unit 60B, South Nelson Industrial Estate  
Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 1WF  
Tel: (01670) 731399  
Fax: (01670) 731 628  
[www.nifca.gov.uk](http://www.nifca.gov.uk)  
[nifca@nifca.gov.uk](mailto:nifca@nifca.gov.uk)



MH/pr

31 May 2013

## **INFORMATION SHEET**

### **EUROPEAN MARINE SITES - DEFRA-LED REVISED NATIONAL APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

European Marine Sites (EMS) are areas of sea that are protected by law because they support wildlife and/or habitat that are of European importance. In the Northumberland IFCA district we have the Berwickshire and North Northumberland European Marine Site which extends from Alnmouth in the south to the Scottish border (and beyond the border in Scottish waters to north of St Abbs Head). Working with partner organisations, NIFCA has a legal duty to ensure that all fisheries-related activities occurring within the boundaries of the above site in English waters is managed sustainably and does not adversely affect associated protected features.

During 2012, Defra commenced a process of revising the national approach to managing fishing activities within European Sites. This process categorised fishing activities as red, amber, green and blue depending on the level of risk they presented to certain types of habitat or species. For fishing activities designated as red, within sites, there is a requirement that regulators will develop formal management systems by December 2013.

NIFCA held a first consultation meeting regarding this subject at County Hall in Morpeth on 12 March 2013. In the meantime, NIFCA officers have been developing the approach which we must take and discussing future management options.

The main focus of our preparation for the byelaw provision which we are required to implement by the end of this year has centred on mobile gear fishing activities but other fishing sectors must also be taken into account. With this in mind, we are planning to hold two events at the Fourways Centre in Amble on 1 July 2013 and at the Old Ship Inn, Seahouses on 2 July from 6.00 pm. The aim will be to provide up to date information and feedback from fishermen and other interested parties to inform the process of preparation of the necessary byelaw provision. If you are able to attend one of these events then if you could confirm that to our office that would be extremely helpful but no appointment is necessary to attend either event and we look forward to seeing you then.