



Trawling (Byelaw 1) Consultation: A summary of response from the consultation

October 2019

Contents

1. Aim of this report.....	1
2. Background.....	1
3. The consultation process	2
4. Response from Stakeholders	2
5. Results.....	3
6. Conclusion	4
Annex 1 Comments from respondents	5

1. Aim of this report

This report has been prepared for members of the Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NIFCA) Technical and Scientific Sub-Committee. It will also be made available on the NIFCA website for all stakeholders to read.

The report aims to review the proposed measures and to document the findings of the consultation. All information from the consultation will be made available to ensure openness and transparency in the process.

The report is intended to assist in the decision-making process of members regarding potential changes to Byelaw 1: Trawling.

To make use of this report:

1. Members to examine the collated response information from the consultation in section 4 of the report;
2. Members to use report to consider next steps.

2. Background

The current IFCA byelaw package was confirmed at the end of 2015, coming into operation during 2016. The Authority undertakes a review of the byelaws in place at least once every three years, and a review falls in this calendar year. Byelaw 1: Trawling is a byelaw under consideration.

Under Byelaw 1, currently all vessels fishing using a trawl (or other towed net) within the Inner Area of the Northumberland IFCA district (0 to 3 nautical miles from the coast, Figure 1) are required to have a permit issued by the Authority.

A permit is not currently required for vessels fishing using a trawl (or other towed net) within the Outer Area of the Northumberland IFCA district (3 to 6 nautical miles from the coast, Figure 1). Therefore, NIFCA do not hold detailed information for this area of its district.

Introducing an annual permit for trawling in the Outer Area will align this byelaw with the other permit byelaws in the district and ensure that NIFCA have a record of vital information such as who fishes within the Authority's district for both enforcement and environmental monitoring purposes.



Figure 1: Map of the Northumberland IFCA district showing the inner area (0-3 nautical miles) and the outer area (3-6 nautical miles).

For more information on the trawl fishery and existing management, please refer to the consultation document which can be found on the 'Consultations' section of the NIFCA website.

Following discussions at the Technical and Scientific subcommittee, the following proposals have been made:

- (i) Change the terms of the permit for Byelaw 1: Trawling to include in the outer area of the Authority's district (3 to 6 nautical miles from the coast).
- (ii) Move permit fee from being a byelaw clause to a byelaw condition.

It is important to note that this is the first stage of a consultation process to understand stakeholder views. No management measures have been agreed or taken to any further stage.

3. The consultation process

This is the first time this method of consultation has been used by NIFCA. The process involved compiling all relevant information into a detailed document, respondents could review the information and choose the most convenient methods of responding. This was either through an online questionnaire, or a postal questionnaire. Respondents also had the option to phone up to speak to officers, and/or arrange a convenient time and location to respond face-to-face.

This process was chosen because:

- it gives respondents a variety of options to submit comments;
- it means comments can either be made anonymously, and/or without having to respond face to face meaning respondents can be more open;
- it can reach a wider range of people;
- respondents do not have to take time to travel and attend events to respond;
- it is less resource intensive.

The consultation was communicated to stakeholders through various means. All permit holders were directly notified through email or letter when the consultation commenced. Information about the consultation was also published on the NIFCA website, in the news section, and through social media channels (Facebook and Twitter). The consultation was open to all stakeholders regardless of their interest or fishing sector.

4. Response from Stakeholders

A total of 4 responses were received to the Trawling (Byelaw 1) consultation which was open from 19th August - 14th October 2019. Responses were received through a variety of formats (Table 1) from the fishing industry (Table 2). All (106) NIFCA permit holders were notified, 4 responses were received representing 3.8% of those notified. The content of the responses was varied, please see below for a detailed breakdown.

Table 1 Number of responses received through the available formats.

Response format	Number of responses
Email	2
Post	2
Face to face	0

Table 2 Number of responses group into sectors.

Response group	Number of responses
Fishing industry	4

5. Results

Do you fish within the outer area (3-6nm) of the NIFCA district?

Response	Number of responses
Yes	3
No	1
Blank	0

All responses were from the fishing industry from ports within the NIFCA district.

Question 1: Would these restrictions affect you?

Response	Number of responses
Yes	1
No	3
Blank	0

The one respondent who said that it would affect them is in support of the measure.

Question 2: Would this have a financial impact on your business? If so, how much could this be annually?

Response	Number of responses
Yes	2
No	1
Blank	1

2 respondents said that the changes would have a financial impact on them. One was a positive financial impact commenting that in the future the fishing in this area would help the inshore boats survive and spread to other areas as the species grow and multiply and this a good byelaw for the future. One queried whether the fee would increase as it covers a larger area.

Question 3: Would these restrictions make you change the way you fish, for example, different fishing gear or fish in a different area?

Response	Number of responses
Yes	1
No	1
Blank	2

One person said that this would make them change the way they fished but in a positive way if they had more space to move freely. One person said it would not cause them any changes as it's just a boundary change. The other two respondents did not answer.

Question 4: Do you agree with the measures listed in the consultation statement?

Response	Number of responses
Yes	4
No	0
Blank	0

All respondents (100%) agreed with the proposed changes.

One respondent left an additional comment outlining worry about displacement if more boats fish in the 3-6 nm area it would affect static gear and there is a need for alternative fisheries.

6. Conclusion

All respondents, which is a very small percentage of permit holders, agree with the proposed changes to the byelaw. If changes are made, NIFCA should clarify whether that has any implications on the cost of the permit.

Annex 1 Comments from respondents

Q1: Would these restrictions affect you? If so, how?

“Let the area have a great needed rest”

“the added area isn't a restriction, just a boundary change”

“Not at this stage”

Q2: Would this have a financial impact on your business? If so, how much could this be annually?

“Probably in the future the fishing in this area would help the inshore boats survive and spread to other areas as the species grow and multiply it is a good bye law for the future”

“yes if the fee goes up as it's for a larger area”

“Might only apply if more boats changed how they fished and impacted other fisheries eg static fisheries/line fishing.”

Q3: Would these restrictions make you change the way you fish, for example, different fishing gear or fish in a different area?

“You would not need to worry about being in the way and could move more freely”

“it's just a boundary change”

Q4: Do you agree with the measures listed in the consultation statement?

“covering the extended area means decisions can be made local on who fishes there”

Q5: Do you have any other comments you would like to make about these measures?

“Worried about displacement if more boats fish in the 3-6nm - affects on static gear vessels. Need alternative fisheries. Boats least able to go to alternatives are small less than 10m vessels.”