



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Our ref: IFCA-18/22
Date: February 2024

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the report to Parliament about Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities' conduct and operation (2018-2022)

Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) are Local Authority Committees formally classified as Local Government Bodies. They are statutory regulators responsible for sustainably managing inshore sea fisheries resources and protecting the marine environment within 6 nautical miles (nm) using their byelaw-making and enforcement powers. There are 10 Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities around the coast of England. IFCAs have an important inshore fisheries management function as they make sure fishing activity within their districts is sustainable. By managing the inshore marine environment, the IFCAs ensure marine ecosystems are healthy which enables inshore fishing activity, promotes the resilience of our inshore fishing industry and contributes to economic growth and job security within coastal communities.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) requires the Secretary of State to lay a report before Parliament on the 'conduct and operation' of the IFCAs as soon as reasonably practical after the end of every four-year period. The four-year periods are measured from the date the Statutory Instruments that created the IFCAs were first made; late August 2010. The third report is now due and will cover from 1st September 2018 – 31st August 2022.

Defra has started a process to collect evidence that support the development of the next Conduct and Operations report. I would like to invite you to respond to our consultation to help us understand how the individual IFCA(s) you engage with have worked to meet their duties and demonstrated the local leadership that might be expected of a statutory regulator. This is available via the following link: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/arm2019s-length-body-governance-relationship-management/callforevidence-ifca-conductandoperations2018-2022>

The following documents may be found on GOV.UK:

- Consultation document
- Consultation response form (if you wish to complete by hand)
- Privacy Notice

If you wish to obtain a copy of this consultation, please contact IFCA.Consultations@defra.gov.uk

Responses

To submit your consultation response please complete the consultation questionnaire provided through Citizen Space (Citizen Space is an online consultation tool).

If you are unable to use Citizen Space and would like to submit your views, please complete the Consultation Response Form by hand and email it to ifca.consultations@defra.gov.uk or post to:

IFCA sponsorship team – IFCA Conduct and Operations
Marine and Fisheries
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Responses should be received by 22 April 2024

The consultation hosted on Citizen Space will give all stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on the conduct and operation of the IFCAs over the past four years, but it is primarily targeted at members of the public.

In order to effectively engage with a wide range of stakeholders across different sectors we will use a range of engagement methods alongside the consultation. As well as the Citizen Space consultation, we will engage with relevant stakeholders using the following methods:

- Targeted Qualtrics surveys will be sent via email to those most knowledgeable about the IFCAs including: recreational anglers, inshore fishers, IFCA General Members, local government Councillors, Arm's Length Body employees, academics and members of Non-Governmental Organisations.

A series of quayside conversations within each IFCA's district led by regional independent contractors to seek in person feedback on the IFCAs took place between October and December 2022. These conversations predominantly targeted commercial fishers and recreational anglers but also included other inshore stakeholders such as divers.

Consultation criteria

The consultation will launch on 23 February 2024 and conclude on 22 April 2024.

Confidentiality and data protection

Please find the Consultations Privacy Notice uploaded alongside this consultation. This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes these are primarily the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). We have obligations, mainly under the EIRs, FOIA and DPA, to disclose information to particular recipients or to the public in certain circumstances.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential.

If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

This consultation is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office "Consultation Principles" and be found at:

[Consultation principles: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk.

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries, please contact us as above.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rachel Muckle', written in a cursive style.

Rachel Muckle
Deputy Director, Marine and Fisheries Business Management Team
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs