



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# **Proposed Fisheries Management Plan for Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species**

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report – Non-technical Summary**

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Version: public consultation

Proposed Channel Non-Quota Species FMP non-technical summary of  
environmental report



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## Non-technical Summary

The draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Fisheries Act 2020. It sets out the policies and proposed measures Defra will use to manage demersal non-quota species fishing activity in the Channel, so stocks are harvested within sustainable levels. Alongside these measures, the draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP also sets out management to help support wider social, economic and environmental aspects of the fishery.

This Environmental Report (ER) has been produced in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations 2004). The following issues (from Schedule 2 paragraph 6 of the SEA Regulations 2004) were scoped into the assessment: Biodiversity, Fauna, Flora, Geology and sediments (soil), Water, Climatic factors, Cultural heritage, Landscape and seascape. This report assesses the likely significant effects of the draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP on these issues.

The assessment was conducted against a baseline that primarily used existing evidence on the state of the marine environment set out in [The updated UK Marine Strategy Part 1](#) published in 2019. Additional sources of evidence were used to establish the current status of environment in relation to issues, such as climatic factors, not covered by the UK Marine Strategy (UK MS). The historical impact of fishing activity on the marine environment has been considered part of the baseline.

This report sets out those plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives, both international and domestic that Defra consider relevant to the draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP.

This report considers and acknowledges the existing environmental effects of fishing for demersal non-quota species using towed gear and nets in the Channel on those issues scoped into this assessment, in relation to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the UK MS descriptors and the wider environment. The potential positive and negative environmental effects of the draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP's policies and proposed measures alone and in-combination have also been assessed.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has concluded the beyond the direct impact on targeted stocks, the fishery has an impact on the wider marine environment primarily through seabed disturbance (from mobile demersal gears) and bycatch of unwanted / protected species (mainly from drift and fixed nets). Actions have been proposed to investigate these impacts and use this evidence to develop

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robust mitigation strategies. The contribution of demersal non-quota fishing to climate change related issues and cultural heritage through structural damage for example, was also identified as a potential impact.

The draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP has considered these impacts and sets out proposals to monitor, and where required, introduce mitigation to address these impacts.

The environmental effects of implementing the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP policies and measures will be monitored to identify unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage, ensuring appropriate remedial action can be undertaken.

This assessment recommends the draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP should consider the following additional points.

- Future iterations of the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP should consider how they can develop the cultural heritage of each fishery and how fisheries management can contribute to reducing potential negative interactions with marine heritage assets.
- Future iterations of the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP should consider how fisheries management can contribute to reducing potential negative interactions with submerged prehistoric landscapes or seascapes.
- The draft Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP would benefit from providing more specific detail on how the FMP will interact with Marine Plans. Noting how the FMP could positively or negatively interact with this programme, would improve the in-combination assessment.