



Department  
for Environment,  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Wrasses complex Fisheries Management Plan

## Engagement Report

February 2026

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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## Summary

The following report presents an overview of stakeholder engagement carried out by Marine Management Organisation's (MMO) Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) team and of the stakeholder feedback received that supported the development of the Wrasses complex FMP.

The Wrasses complex FMP forms part of the fourth tranche of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) FMPs being developed for English waters.

Throughout 2024 and 2025, MMO used a series of engagement methods as part of both formal and informal engagement to:

- raise awareness about development of the Wrasses complex FMP for English waters amongst stakeholders
- gather stakeholder concerns regarding wrasse fisheries and record opportunities for the FMP.

## Stakeholder Identification

Prior to stakeholder engagement, interested FMP parties required identification. To do this, stakeholder analysis was carried out which involved first creating a list of all possible stakeholders relevant to the FMP and then assigning a category to each stakeholder (Collaborate, Consult, or Inform) based on various factors (see Annex 1). Those who were deemed to fall under the category of “collaborate” were approached to be part of the Working Group (WG) (see Annex 2). Detailed information on the criteria applied during stakeholder analysis can be found in Annex 1. The stakeholder list and associated assigned level of engagement was fluid and therefore changed as the FMP developed.

## Working Group

To assist in the development of the Wrasses complex FMP, MMO set up a WG. The purpose of the WG was to advise the FMP alongside MMO as the lead delivery partner. In addition, the WG had the function of a forum for engagement on the FMP, and members were encouraged to seek opportunities to engage the wider fishing industry (commercial and recreational) and other key stakeholders where appropriate to feed their views into the FMP's development.

The WG membership comprised of different fishing sector representatives (see Annex 2). These individuals were invited to attend WG meetings held online due to the large geographic spread of potential members. Members who could not attend online meetings were encouraged to provide feedback via email and one-to-one telephone conversations. Although efforts were made to ensure that there was appropriate attendance at every WG meeting, external factors such as weather, work commitments and technology meant that some WG members were unable to attend meetings.

Throughout the preparation phase of the development of the FMP, MMO sought feedback and input from the group on fishery concerns, drafted elements of the FMP and potential opportunities that could be proposed in the first iteration. Detailed information on the number of attendees and links to published meeting notes can be found below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Wrasses complex FMP Working Group meeting dates, attendance and links to meeting notes. OGDs stands for Other Government Departments. Other includes those attendees from non-governmental organisations and academia.**

Date	Purpose of Meeting	Attendees							Link to Meeting Notes
		MMO	Inshore	Offshore	Recreational	OGDs	Other*	Total	
22/10/2024	Introduction to FMP and current fishery concerns	2	1	0	2	8	4	17	<a href="#">WG1</a>
12/12/2024	WG meeting to discuss draft policies and engagement plans.	3	1	0	1	7	7	19	WG2
26/02/2024	WG meeting to provide feedback from engagement events and updates to the draft policies.	5	1	0	2	7	4	19	WG3
28/05/2025	WG meeting to provide a walk-through of key sections of the draft FMP, followed by a Q&A session.	6	0	0	1	7	3	17	WG4

The WG were given the opportunity to review the full draft FMP. During the fourth WG meeting MMO provided an on-screen walk through of the key sections of the draft FMP. The sections of the draft Wrasses complex FMP were as following: the scope and purpose; description of the fishery and stocks; fisheries managements; marine protected areas; environmental considerations; climate change; FMP vision; FMP policies; and implementation monitoring and review.

The description of the fisheries and stocks provided evidence from commissioned biological and ecological data, as well as key MMO landings data by species, gear type, vessel competency and more. Furthermore, an economic overview of the fishery and survey-based recreational data were included. The environmental considerations section included commissioned risk assessments of certain gear types associated with the FMP fishery on MPA-designated features and the impacts of achieving Good Environmental Status of UK Marine Strategy Descriptors. Draft policy goals included an associated rationale, evidence dependencies and stakeholder views.

A Q&A session with the WG members followed the walk through and two weeks were given for the WG to review the draft FMP and provide feedback.

## January 2025 in-person South Coast engagement summaries

As a critical first step in developing the Wrasses complex FMP, MMO hosted several in-person events with stakeholders across the south coast. Workshops were used to gather detailed evidence and feedback on the issues related to the fisheries and the opportunities the FMP could consider. Drop-in sessions and quayside visits were used to optimise levels of engagement with a variety of stakeholders.

Stakeholders from the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, as well as wider interested stakeholders were invited to attend engagement events through direct contact, industry groups, social media posts and website blogs. The information gathered during this engagement gave MMO a steer on what stakeholders wanted to see prioritised within the FMP.

Workshops were held at key locations on the south coast throughout January 2025, as identified by online survey participants and MMO landings data. The first sessions were held on the 13 January in Mudeford and Poole and Shoreham on 15 January (ICES area 7d). Following on from engagement in the south and southeast, workshops were also held in the southwest, in ICES area 7e. Workshops were held in Plymouth on 27 January, Falmouth on the 28 January, and Weymouth on the 30 January, respectively.

In addition to the above events, a drop-in session took place in Littlehampton on the 16 January (ICES area 7d). Following this, there were several drop-in sessions in ICES 7e, including Mevagissey on 28 January, Mylor, Newlyn and Padstow on 29 January, and Lyme Regis on 30 January. The FMP team spoke to individuals such as vessel owners, industry group representatives, recreational anglers, charter vessel skippers and academics.

Across all the in-person events held in January 2025, 56 stakeholders, from the commercial sector, the recreational sector, and academics, were engaged with and their views obtained regarding this FMP. IFCA representatives of the district were also present in multiple workshops.

Workshop Location	Number of Attendees
Mudeford	10
Poole	12
Shoreham	9
Plymouth	2
Falmouth	2

Workshop Location	Number of Attendees
Weymouth	10

Drop-in Location	Number of Attendees
Littlehampton	2
Mevagissey	5
Mylor	0
Newlyn	2
Padstow	2
Lyme Regis	6

Stakeholders were introduced to the Wrasses complex FMP and encouraged to share any issues and concerns they have regarding the fishery, before being asked what solutions and opportunities they think the FMP could look to take forward. Summarised feedback from this engagement can be found below.

### Stakeholder workshops: results

**Muddeford workshop:** A total of nine stakeholders attended this workshop, with two from the recreational sector and seven from the commercial sector. Furthermore, one representative from Southern IFCA was also in attendance.

Wrasse species abundance:

- There were mixed opinions on the abundance of wrasse in the local area. Wrasse were reportedly abundant in some areas, whereas in others, a decline was noted. A number of commercial fishers mentioned that they have had to change fishing locations in the past as the number of wrasse present can inhibit their ability to catch other species.
- Stakeholders also had mixed reports on species-specific abundance. Ballan wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*) are reportedly caught in large numbers, while very few cuckoo wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) have been caught locally. There were also reports of an increased abundance of baillon's wrasse (*Syphodus bailloni*).
- Stakeholders highlighted that there are no notable differences in the size of the wrasse caught over recent years.
- Some stakeholders reported that wrasse are present year-round, with a number of stakeholders noting a spike in abundance in the autumn.
- Commercial fishers mentioned that the wrasse caught as bycatch in crab and lobster pots are regularly used as pot bait.

## FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Of the issues discussed, habitat loss was one of the greatest concerns. There was a consensus that sand and debris from dredging and local beach replenishment activities may be smothering reef areas, an important habitat for wrasse species.
  - Suggested opportunities for the FMP included assessments to quantify the impact that beach replenishment and dredging may have on wrasse populations and the wider reef ecosystem.
  - Furthermore, there were calls to investigate potential changes to local water quality and how this may impact the fisheries.
- The lack of research conducted on wrasse was also a concern, as little is known regarding their current abundance, distribution and the potential impacts of the live wrasse fishery.
- One commercial fisher reported that if pots were left for eight to ten days, up to 100 kg of wrasse could be caught and used as pot bait.
  - Commercial fishers generally supported the use of the Catch App to record estimates for wrasse used as pot bait, with some amendments to the layout of the app suggested to optimise efficacy of recording.
- Stakeholders reported that wrasse can be susceptible to barotrauma. However, some believed that it is unlikely fishers will put in too much effort to combat this. There were reports that wrasse coming up from 60 metres are typically already dead.

## Additional FMP-related comments:

- Stakeholders mentioned that they have not witnessed any changes in the abundance of sea lice over recent years.
- A charter vessel skipper confirmed that they predominantly catch wrasse as bycatch. However, some recreational anglers may target this species specifically during species competitions.

**Poole workshop:** A total of 11 stakeholders attended this workshop, with three from the recreational sector, five from the commercial sector, two from academia and one representative from Dorset Wildlife Trust. Furthermore, there was one representative from Southern IFCA in attendance.

## Wrasse species abundance:

- There were mixed views on the status of wrasse stocks. Commercial fishers generally reported that wrasse stocks are in a good state, and recreational fishers showed concern that numbers are in decline
  - There were reports that wrasse abundance does tend to be higher in certain areas.
  - A recreational fisher mentioned that no wrasse were 'weighed in' from 2023 to 2024.

- A commercial fisher highlighted that they almost exclusively catch ballan wrasse as bycatch in pots.
  - One fisher mentioned they have noticed a decline in cuckoo wrasse, and another noted that they have not caught a rock cook wrasse (*Centrolabrus exoletus*) for many years.
- Stakeholders generally agreed that there has been no notable change in the wrasse abundance, distribution and fish size over recent years. However, they did note that very few small wrasse are caught.

#### FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Habitat loss and smothering due to dredging and beach replenishment activities was identified by several stakeholders as a substantial issue.
  - Habitat assessments and surveys were recommended to establish whether wrasse are adversely affected by local sand dredging activities.
- Many stakeholders were concerned about the lack of research conducted into the impacts that habitat loss and the live wrasse fishery may be having on wrasse populations and the wider ecosystem.
  - There were calls for increased data collection and research to quantify the impact of the live wrasse fishery and current state of wrasse populations.
- Concerns around an increase in sea-lice were also raised by some commercial fishers. However, many believed that this may be due to a change in water temperature.
- Several fishers noted an explosion in conger eel abundance, highlighting concerns that these species may be predating on other fish, including wrasse.
- Stakeholders mentioned that they often retain the dead wrasse caught as bycatch, and that between 10kg to 30kg can be used as bait.
  - Commercial fishers generally supported using the Catch App to record estimates of wrasse used as pot bait.

#### Additional FMP-related comments:

- Commercial fishers highlighted that they catch wrasse in their pots at depths of around 130 metres.
- Commercial fishers were broadly content with current IFCA wrasse size legislation and guidance.

**Shoreham workshop:** A total of seven stakeholders attended this workshop, with three from the recreational sector and four from the commercial sector. Furthermore, two representatives from Sussex IFCA were in attendance.

#### Wrasse species abundance:

- One fisher reported that they catch numerous large ballan wrasse in pots, with another fisher noting they have seen noticeably fewer cuckoo wrasse in pots over the last three years.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Overall, stakeholders had very few concerns with the wrasse fishery in their local area.
- Commercial fishers mentioned that they always catch wrasse as bycatch in their lobster pots, using them directly as bait.
  - Commercial stakeholders were open to recording wrasse use for pot bait on a voluntary basis.

**Plymouth workshop:** A total of two academic stakeholders attended this workshop.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- A corkwing wrasse (*Syphodus melops*) academic noted that generally, potters will often catch the larger and more aggressive male corkwing wrasse due to their increased curiosity in the pots. As a result of a male corkwing being caught, his progeny will most likely die. Corkwing wrasse appear to be very spatially discrete with research showing that there has been no genetic mixing of populations on either side of a Norwegian sandbank.
- Male and female corkwing wrasse can reportedly look very different.
  - It was suggested that identification guidelines would be important to ensure fishers can distinguish between the species and different sexes.
  - A priority recommendation was to implement male and female specific size limits.
- As populations are often spatially discrete, a stakeholder noted that they did not think conducting a stock assessment needs to be a priority for the FMP.
  - It was raised that the population of wrasse on a reef could be calculated and scaled up to provide an estimate for wider wrasse abundance.
  - A stakeholder noted that in Norway, fishers are often supplied with 'scientific pots' to sample wrasse caught.

**Falmouth workshop:** A total of two stakeholders from the commercial sector attended this workshop.

Wrasse species abundance:

- The commercial fishers noted that wrasse appear abundant, and that larger wrasse are typically caught in pots.
- Particularly high numbers of cuckoo wrasse were reported in the Cornwall IFCA region

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Stakeholders reported that dead wrasse caught as bycatch are often used as pot bait, but live wrasse are typically returned. The commercial fishers estimated that up to 12kg of wrasse can be caught in pots per day.

- Stakeholders were open to recording wrasse use as pot bait and suggested that the Catch App would be the most efficient and effective method of doing so.
- One stakeholder highlighted that species-specific data must be collected.
- There was a discussion around improving the market for traditionally less desirable fish to eat. It was suggested that celebrity chefs could assist in making these species a more popular table fare.

Additional FMP-related comments:

- Wrasse are reportedly caught as bycatch in bass nets.

**Weymouth workshop:** A total of eight stakeholders attended this workshop, with two from the recreational fishing sector, four from the commercial sector and two recreational divers. Furthermore, two representatives from Southern IFCA were in attendance.

Wrasse species abundance:

- There was a consensus amongst all stakeholders that wrasse are abundant in the area. Specifically, diving stakeholders reported that there are often numerous many large ballan wrasse.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Stakeholders mentioned that wrasse are caught in crab and lobster pots as bycatch and opportunistically used as bait.
  - There was general support from stakeholders to record wrasse use as pot-bait.
- Concerns were raised amongst stakeholders regarding the live wrasse fishery and whether demand for live wrasse will increase in the future. A number of commercial fishers confirmed that this fishery is supply and demand, noting that the demand for live wrasse may decrease as Scottish salmon farms look for alternative lice removal methods.
  - Stakeholders were generally content with the current IFCA management of the live wrasse fishery.
- There was a difference in opinion on whether sea lice abundance has increased due to live wrasse fishing activities. Most attendees believed that any variation in lice availability is likely due to increasing water temperatures.
- Stakeholders highlighted that the minimum conservation reference size for different wrasse species (MCRS) differ between IFCA regions.
  - It was recommended that a national MCRS is developed for each wrasse species to ensure that management is consistent throughout English waters.

Additional FMP-related comments:

- A charter vessel skipper confirmed that wrasse are not typically targeted by their guests.

### Stakeholder drop-in sessions

**Littlehampton drop-in:** A total of two stakeholders from the commercial sector attended this drop-in session.

Wrasse species abundance:

- Stakeholders reported that they often catch ballan and cuckoo wrasse as bycatch in their crab and lobster pots, highlighting that cuckoo wrasse are predominantly caught in the summer months.
- Stakeholders mentioned that, typically, more wrasse are caught as bycatch when pots are set near rocky habitats.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Wrasse caught as bycatch are often used as pot bait, with around 1kg of bait required for each pot.
  - The commercial fishers were receptive to recording wrasse used as pot bait, however, they did highlight that it may be time-consuming task.

Additional FMP-related comments:

- Stakeholders were keen to see measures suggested in FMPs implemented on a shorter timescale.

**Mevagissey drop-in:** A total of one stakeholder from the commercial sector attended this drop-in session. A further discussion was had with four commercial stakeholders on the quayside.

No specific Wrasses complex FMP concerns or opportunities were identified during this session.

**Mylor drop-in:** No stakeholders attended this drop-in session.

**Newlyn drop-in:** Two stakeholders from the commercial sector attended this drop-in session.

Wrasse species abundance:

- One commercial fisher reported that they predominantly catch ballan, corkwing, cuckoo and occasionally goldsinny wrasse (*Ctenolabrus rupestris*).
- Stakeholders confirmed that typically, fewer wrasse are caught when fishing in deeper water.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Stakeholders supported using the Catch App to record wrasse used as pot bait.

**Padstow drop-in:** Two stakeholders from the commercial sector attended this drop-in session.

Wrasse species abundance:

- Stakeholders noted that the movement of wrasse inshore seems to correlate with when spider crabs undergo their moult. One fisher queried whether wrasse feed on spider crab shells.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- Stakeholders were open to recording wrasse used as pot-bait, however, they did note that it may be complicated to calculate.

Additional FMP-related comments:

- Stakeholders mentioned that over the last two to three years, there has been significant change to the structure of a local river. A reduction in the dunes was recorded, which could be attributed to storm damage. Furthermore, it was highlighted that an additional sewage outlet is being built.

**Lyme Regis drop-in:** Six stakeholders attended this drop-in session, with five from the recreational sector and one commercial fisher, who also works with the charter fleet.

Wrasse species abundance:

- Recreational stakeholders reported that there has been no change to general wrasse abundance, however, fewer large wrasse have been caught locally.
- One angler suggested that the abundance of wrasse in Weymouth has decreased significantly, and this was believed to be due to live wrasse fishery activities.

FMP-specific concerns and suggested solutions:

- A number of stakeholders mentioned that they have noticed numerous large white parasites on rays. Concerns were raised as to whether there may be an increase in sea lice abundance due to the live wrasse fishery.
- One angler shared a concern that there may be increased demand for wrasse as pot bait if crab and lobster fisheries are relied upon during other species' stock crashes.
- Stakeholders suggested that records of recreational competition catches are analysed to identify potential trends in wrasse distribution and species abundance.

Additional FMP-related comments:

- Some recreational stakeholders reported that they typically catch wrasse as bycatch when fishing for seabream, pollack or bass, while others highlighted their importance in species hunting competitions. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of wrasse to angling businesses and local communities.

## Online engagement

### Stakeholder webinar

To supplement the in-person engagement in 2025, the FMP team hosted an online session open to all stakeholders with an interest in the FMP who could not attend the coastal sessions. A total of seven stakeholders attended the online workshop, with participants from the recreational sector and Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (eNGO). Furthermore, two representatives from Southern IFCA and one Defra colleague were in attendance. A summary of the feedback received can be found below:

- eNGO representatives recommended that remote electronic monitoring (REM) could be used to ensure that wrasse bycatch is adequately recorded and monitored.
- A stakeholder from the spearfishing sector emphasised that their members see significantly more wrasse than are caught by fishers.

### Angling Trust Forum

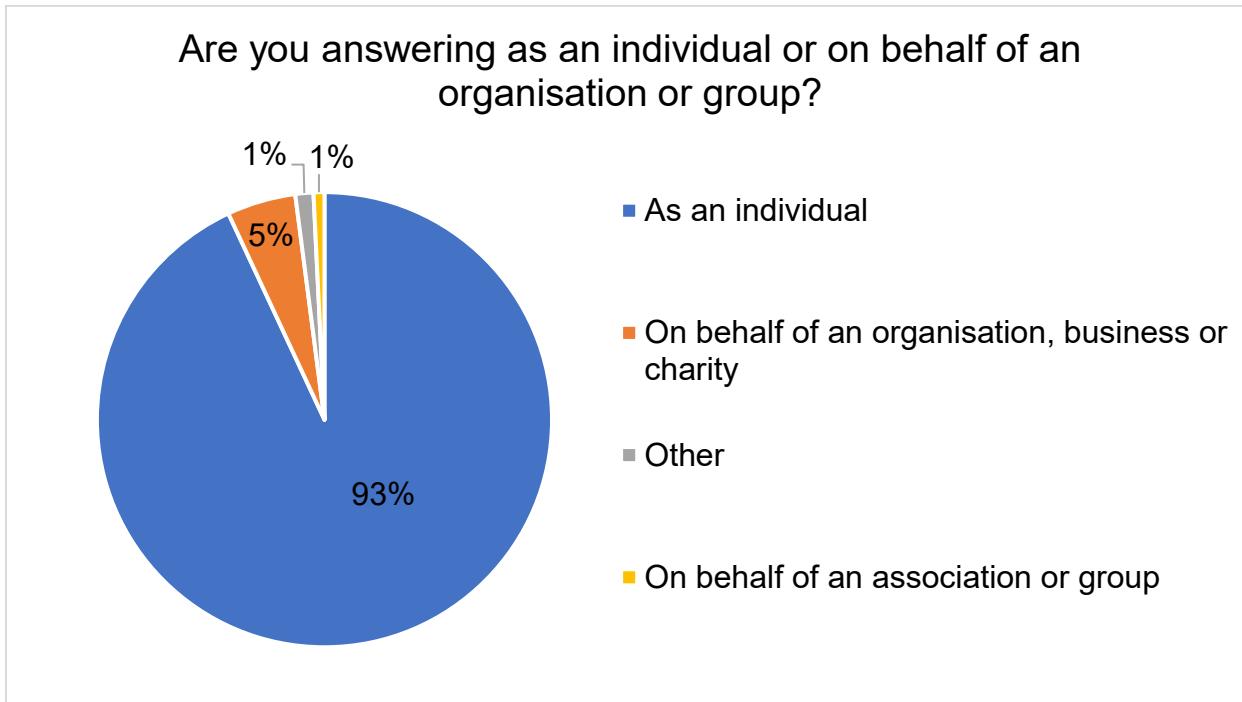
On 14 November 2024 the Angling Trust held an online forum to engage specifically with recreational anglers. The focus of the forum was to discuss the issues and concerns that recreational anglers have regarding the wrasse fishery and make suggestions that the FMP may be able to take forward. A total of 19 anglers attended this online session. A summary of the feedback from recreational sea anglers can be found below:

- Concerns regarding the harvesting of live wrasse for Scottish aquaculture were raised.

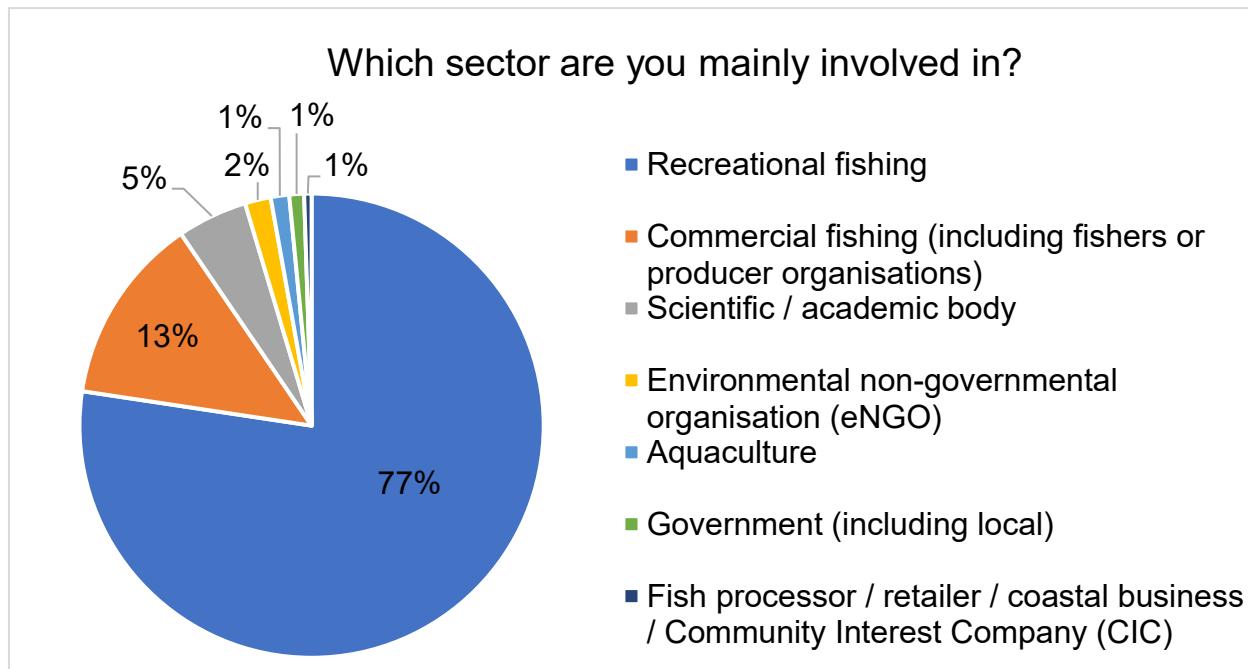
### Online survey

To obtain the views of as many interested stakeholders as possible, we launched an online survey to help us better understand the interest in the wrasse fishery and the effectiveness of current management. The survey collected views for both the Seabream FMP and the Wrasses complex FMP. Stakeholders were also invited to share any issues, concerns and positive aspects they have about the fisheries as well as suggest potential solutions or improvements for the key issues or measures. The online survey was open from 6 September 2024 until 31 January 2025, during which time a total of 398 responses were received from both commercial and recreational fishers, as well as representatives from Fish Producer Organisations, eNGOs, academics and members of the public. The online survey questions can be found in the Annex of the FMP Evidence Statement.

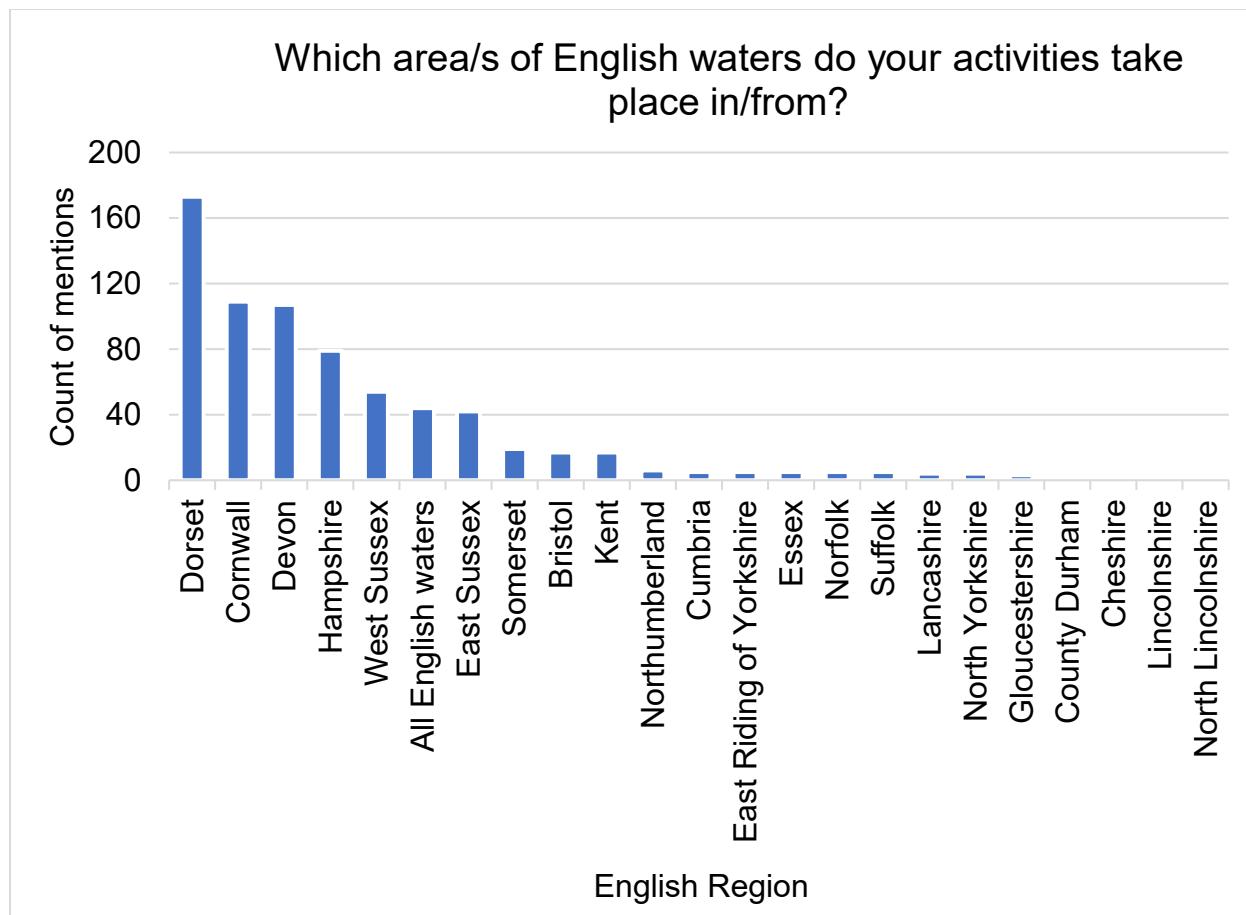
The following demographic information represents all survey respondents, with interest in both the Seabream FMP and the Wrasses complex FMP. Figure 1 shows that 398 people answered the question on their representation for the survey response. 362 of those that answered (93%) were responding as an individual, 19 (5%) on behalf of an organisation, business or charity, 5 (1%) other and 3 (1%) on behalf of an association or group. Figure 2 shows that the majority of survey respondents (301 out of 398) selected "Recreational fishing" as the main sector they are involved in. Commercial fishing was the selected by 13% of respondents (51 out of 398). The remaining five options combined were selected by 37 respondents. Figure 3 shows that the regions selected by participants were most frequently in the South of England.



**Figure 1: Survey responses to the question “Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation or group?” In total 398 responses were counted.**



**Figure 2: Survey responses to the question “Which sector are you mainly involved in?” In total 398 responses were counted.**



**Figure 3: Survey responses to the question “Which area/s of English waters do your activities take place in/from?” In total 365 responses were counted. Respondents were able to select multiple options.**

Overview of survey responses:

- There was some difference in opinion on the state of wrasse stocks, with some stakeholders reporting they are abundant, while others recorded a decline in wrasse numbers and size across various locations. Factors such as commercial fishing for wrasse to be used as cleaner fish in salmon farms were often believed to contribute to this decline.
- Wrasse were reported to be an important recreational species as they are commonly caught by new entrants to the sector, helping to foster interest in angling. These species were also important to many respondents as they contribute to the enjoyment of fishing, with inclusion in species hunting competitions.

## Wider stakeholder engagement

### FMP team presentations to wider stakeholders

**Regional Fisheries Groups (RFG):** To mitigate stakeholder fatigue and avoid the need for separate events, The FMP team joined up with RFG teams on two occasions. The team hosted a workshop in Shoreham on 16 January 2025, where the RFG team were also present to address any wider concerns. The FMP and RFG team also hosted a joint drop-in session in Newlyn on 29 January 2025.

**Finfish Industry Advisory Group:** The FMP team attended regular Finfish Industry Advisory Group (FIAG) meetings to update members on the progress of the FMP. FIAG provides a forum to discuss sustainability and management of UK finfish non-quota species fisheries. The FMP team attended a FIAG meeting on 19 September 2024 and delivered a presentation on FMP progress but received no feedback on the day.

## Recreational fishers

In addition to the event hosted by the Angling Trust outlined above, the FMP team set up a meeting with the Angling Trust representatives to gather views on the FMP and issues faced by recreational anglers.

## eNGOs meeting

A meeting was held with eNGOs alongside Defra and other FMP delivery leads. A meeting took place on 19 November 2024 with several eNGOs in attendance to discuss the FMP programme progress to date.

## Business-as-usual engagement

The FMP Team had several business-as-usual meetings with various stakeholders relevant to the development of the FMP. These discussions helped to strengthen stakeholder relationships and to provide the FMP team with other channels of communication to wider stakeholders.

## FMP mailbox

During the development of the FMP, there was a dedicated mailbox set up for stakeholders to send in any queries around the FMP or give feedback on the content. This mailbox was monitored daily, and responses were aimed to be given within 10 working days. All comments regarding FMP content have been covered by other meetings and therefore no specific comments are highlighted here.

## Communications overview

MMO's FMP team and its supporting MMO communications officer developed and maintained core material relevant to this FMP. Materials evolved as the project progressed. Where appropriate, MMO also utilised core material created and managed by the Defra FMP team for the wider FMP programme. These core documents supported the production of communications material used for the following:

- Gov.uk Wrasses complex FMP landing page

- Defra FMP blog
- Printed posters and flyers advertising the online survey, in-person workshops and drop-ins.
- Traditional media:
  - Fishing News article
  - Angling industry press
- Newsletters:
  - Mail Chimp sent out to interested stakeholders with updates on FMP progress and engagement events.
  - Fishers bulletin (fortnightly)
  - Defra stakeholders bulletin (monthly)
  - MMO stakeholder bulletin (monthly)
- Direct communications
  - Monthly marine officer FMP update.
  - Producer Organisations
  - Fisherman Associations
  - Blue Marine Foundation.
- Updates to pre-existing networks:
  - Regional Fisheries Groups
  - Finfish Industry Advisory Group
  - Future of Inshore Fisheries
  - Angling Trust Forum
- Social Media advertising:
  - Focused on Facebook as the most heavily used platform by fishers. We harnessed the Facebook algorithm to directly target anglers with a track record of interest in our FMP species to ensure as far as practicable that people with the highest interest in the FMPs were aware of their opportunities to engage via online surveys and engagement events.
  - Other MMO social media channels
  - IFCA social media platforms were used where available.

MMO aimed to ensure that the information and updates were disseminated in a clear, accessible, and timely manner and that particular attention was paid to ensure that the language used was appropriate to the audience.

## Annex 1: Stakeholder analysis scoring criteria

The scores will be given by the Fisheries Management Plan team during a workshop and checked by Principle Marine Officers for local expertise. Each stakeholder is given a score for the following:

**Influence:** (Stakeholders ability to influence the projects' ability to successfully deliver its objectives)

- 5) Ability to directly stop the FMP process e.g. FMP securing approval. Mostly this score used for government department stakeholders from whom we need sign off e.g. Defra, Arm's Length Bodies and Devolved Administrations
- 4) Ability to significantly influence or steer the development of the FMP
- 3) Moderate ability to influence the FMP (positive or negative)
- 2) Minimal ability to influence the FMP
- 1) No influence

**Impact:** (Stakeholder may be impacted/ affected both negatively and positively by project outcomes

- 5) Major impact as a consequence of FMP outcomes to stakeholder e.g. stopping incomes
- 4) Significantly impacted by the consequences of FMP outcomes
- 3) Moderately impacted by the consequences of FMP outcomes
- 2) Minimal impact from the consequences of FMP outcomes
- 1) No impact to stakeholder

**Expertise:** (May hold academic or practice-based expertise relevant to the project)

- 5) Up to date in depth knowledge relevant to the project
- 4) Good knowledge
- 3) Moderate knowledge
- 2) Minimal knowledge
- 1) No knowledge

**Interest:** (May have expressed an interest in the project/ potential outputs and whose interest we wish to encourage)

- 5) Significant interest in the FMP
- 4) Good interest in the FMP
- 3) Moderate interest in the FMP
- 2) Minimal interest for the FMP
- 1) No interest for the FMP

Note: MMO have assumed that a lack of overt interest does not necessarily equate disinterest within the commercial fishing sector as research states this is instead more likely to be linked to disempowerment, so interest has been assumed as universally high when it comes to the commercial sectors

### Target aspirations for the stakeholder groups

**Collaborate:** Primary and key stakeholder who will be directly affected both positively and negatively by the FMP outputs. MMO will work collaboratively with the group, engaging with them regularly to update them on relevant policy, and providing guidance and support through regular meetings and digital contact. Regular and direct engagement will help build a partnership based on trust and collaboration. These stakeholders will be kept fully informed on the FMP programme and project specific details.

High level of influence and impact

Target for expertise = 4 or over

Target for influence = 4 or over

Target for Impact = 4 or over

Target for interest = 4 over

**Consult:** Secondary and some key stakeholders. This includes people or groups that are indirectly affected, either positively or negatively, by the FMPs output. This includes people who have a strong interest in the effort for academic, philosophical, or political reasons, even though they and their families, friends, and associates are not directly affected by it. MMO will pursue 'semi' pro-active arrangements with them. They will also reach out to seek informal input with them when appropriate. Concerns will be considered, and feedback obtained on issues that affect stakeholders, these concerns can be fed back to the working groups.

Medium to high level of influence and impact

Target for knowledge = 3 or below

Target for influence = 3 or below

Target for impact = 3 or below

Target for interest = 3

**Inform:** Secondary stakeholder. This group includes people or groups who have shown some interest but will only be indirectly affected and hold no influence or obvious expertise. These stakeholders are privy to the most passive level of engagement.

Low level of influence and impact

Target for expertise = 2

Target for influence = 2

Target for impact = 2

Target for interest = 2

## Annex 2: Wrasses complex FMP and WG member lists

Table 2: Wrasses complex FMP working group member list. Note that multiple individuals may have represented an organisation.

Organisation	Role on Group
Marine Management Organisation	Chair, Secretariat and FMP implementation support
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Policy support
Association of IFCAAs	Representation of all IFCAAs
Kent and Essex IFCA	Representation of KEIFCA
Sussex IFCA	Representation of Sussex IFCA
Devon and Severn IFCA	Representation of D&S IFCA
Cornwall IFCA	Representation of Cornwall IFCA
Southern IFCA	Representation of Southern IFCA
Eastern IFCA	Representation of Eastern IFCA
Northumberland IFCA	Representation of Northumberland IFCA
Northwest IFCA	Representation of Northwest IFCA
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science	Representation on behalf of Cefas
Seafish	Representation on behalf of Seafish
Natural England	Representation of Natural England
Angling Trust	Representation of the Angling Trust
South Coast Fisherman's Council	Representation of the SCFC
Professional Boatman's Association	Working Group Member
District Fishermen's Association	Working Group Member
Commercial Fisher	Working Group Members
Recreational Fisher	Working Group Members
University of Plymouth	Working Group Member
University of Aberdeen	Working Group Member

## Annex 3: Overview of feedback from in-person engagement

	Concern and suggested recommendation actively raised and <b>supported in all</b> : - Workshops (6/6) - Drop ins (6/6)
	Concern and suggested recommendation actively raised and <b>supported in most</b> : - Workshops ( $\geq 4/6$ ) - Drop ins ( $\geq 4/6$ )
	Concern and suggested recommendation actively raised and <b>supported in some</b> : - Workshops ( $\leq 3/6$ ) - Drop ins ( $\leq 3/6$ )
	Concern and suggested recommendation not mentioned or neutral responses received in all workshops and drop-ins

Colour key for annex 3 table below.

Concern	Recommended solution	Workshops		Drop-ins	
		Consensus	Summary of comments	Consensus	Summary of comments
The live wrasse fishery may be negatively impacting wrasse populations and have wider ecosystem impacts	Further research and species-specific data collection to better understand wrasse population dynamics and local distribution. Understand the impact of the live wrasse fishery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments noted little is known regarding wrasse population dynamics.</li> <li>Some concerns were raised around whether the demand for live wrasse will increase in the future. Uncertainty around the potential impacts of the live wrasse fishery.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns raised around the impact of the live wrasse fishery.</li> </ul>
Habitat degradation/loss impacting nesting sites and wider ecosystem	Support assessments/surveys.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some concerns were raised around the impact of beach replenishment activities and the potential for this impacting reef habitats.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns raised around storm damage.</li> </ul>
Wrasse use as pot bait is currently unquantified	Develop a method of recording wrasse use as pot bait to inform stock assessment methods.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders generally supported voluntarily recording their use of wrasse as pot bait. The use of the Catch App to do this was suggested.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally supported, however, some stakeholders noted it may be difficult to calculate the number of wrasse caught.</li> </ul>
Barotrauma common with Wrasse species	Develop handling guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported but effectiveness/utility of the guidelines were questioned.</li> </ul>		

Increase abundance of ectoparasite (sea lice)	Uncertain if due to Wrasse removal. Further research and data collection to understand the impacts of the fishery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed reports on the prevalence of ectoparasites. Reports of any increase in abundance likely to be linked to increasing sea temperature.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some reports of increase numbers of white parasites found on rays. Queries as to whether the removal of wrasse for the live wrasse fishery is impacting sea lice abundance.</li> </ul>
	Suitable MCRS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggestion that MCRS measurements should be sex specific.</li> <li>Support received for slot size.</li> <li>Call for a standardised, national MCRS measurements for each species.</li> </ul>		
Species ID may be incorrect	Develop ID guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General support for the need for species-specific data to be collected.</li> <li>Suggestion that males and females of the same species can visually be very different.</li> </ul>		
	Help improve the market for Wrasse as table fare		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendation to work with celebrity chefs to raise the profile and market for a less desirable fish</li> </ul>		