

# Fish, Fisheries and Shellfish

Andy Richardson

Presented with thanks for contributions from Emma Claxton (EIFCA) and Kevin Wilson (Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust)

**East Marine Ecosystems**

Reporting Annual Change in the  
East Region & Building Social Capital



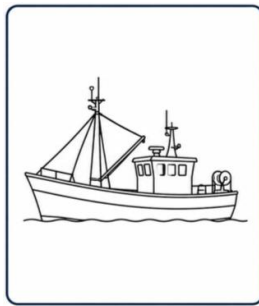
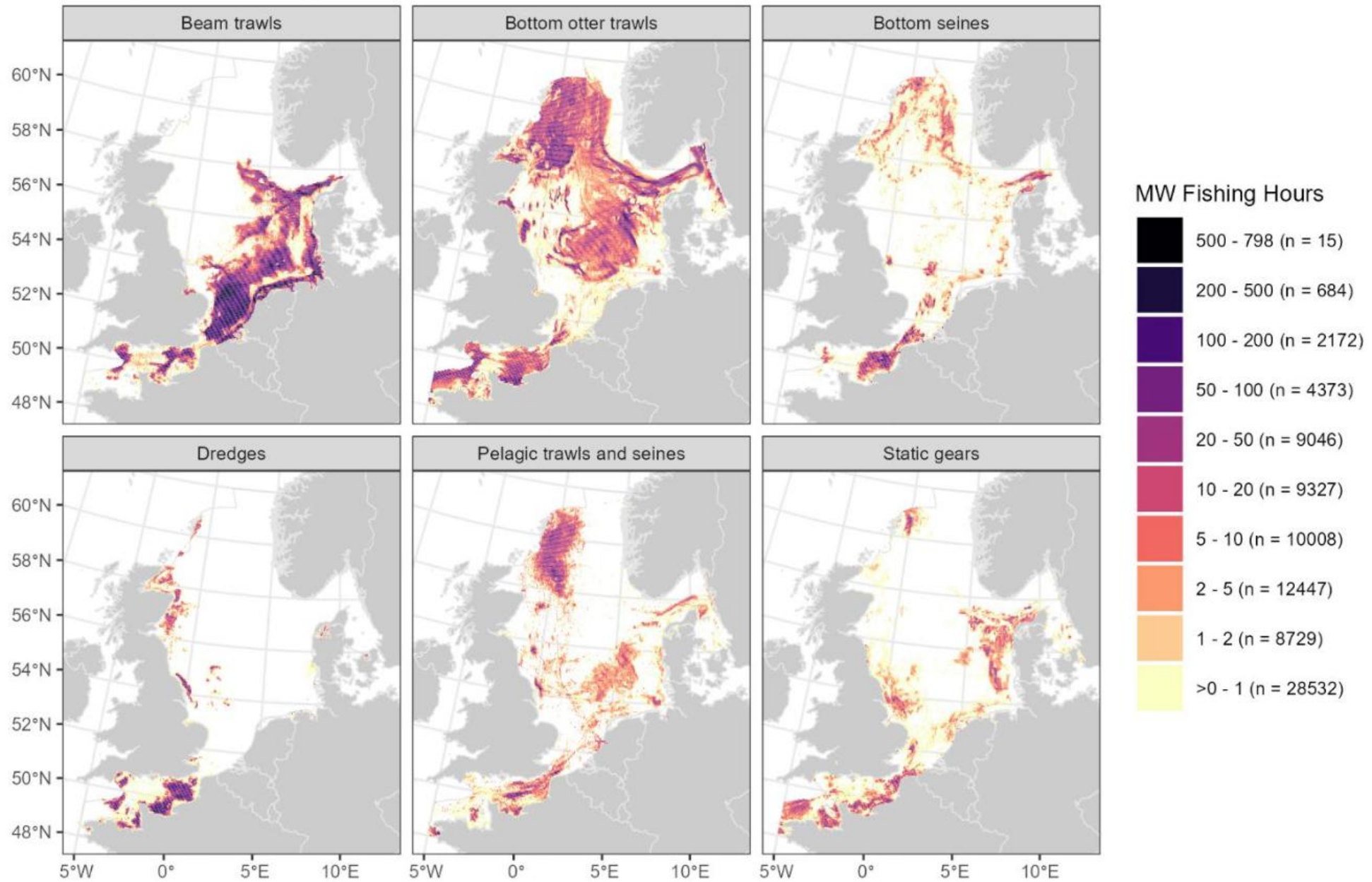
# Fish, Fisheries and Shellfish

## **EASTME** region

- Biodiversity
- Commercial
  - ICES 4b & 4c
  - Humber & Wash estuaries
  - Diversity of fleets and species
- Recreational
- Complex picture of ecology, conservation and people



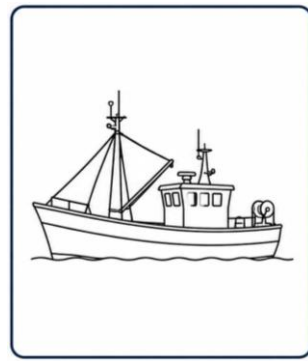
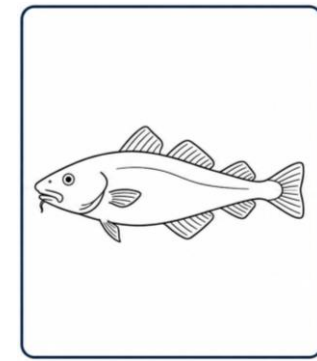
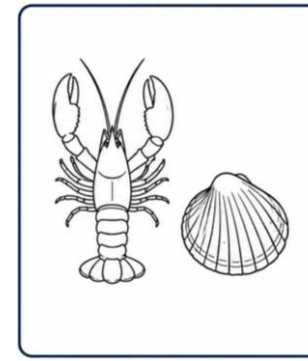
# Average MW Fishing hours 2019-2022



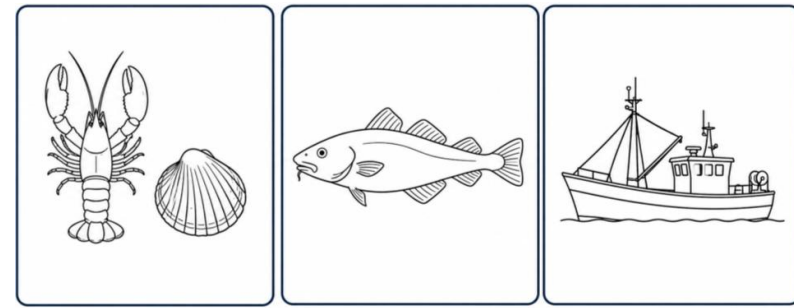
Made with Natural Earth and ICES Marine Data

# Key challenges

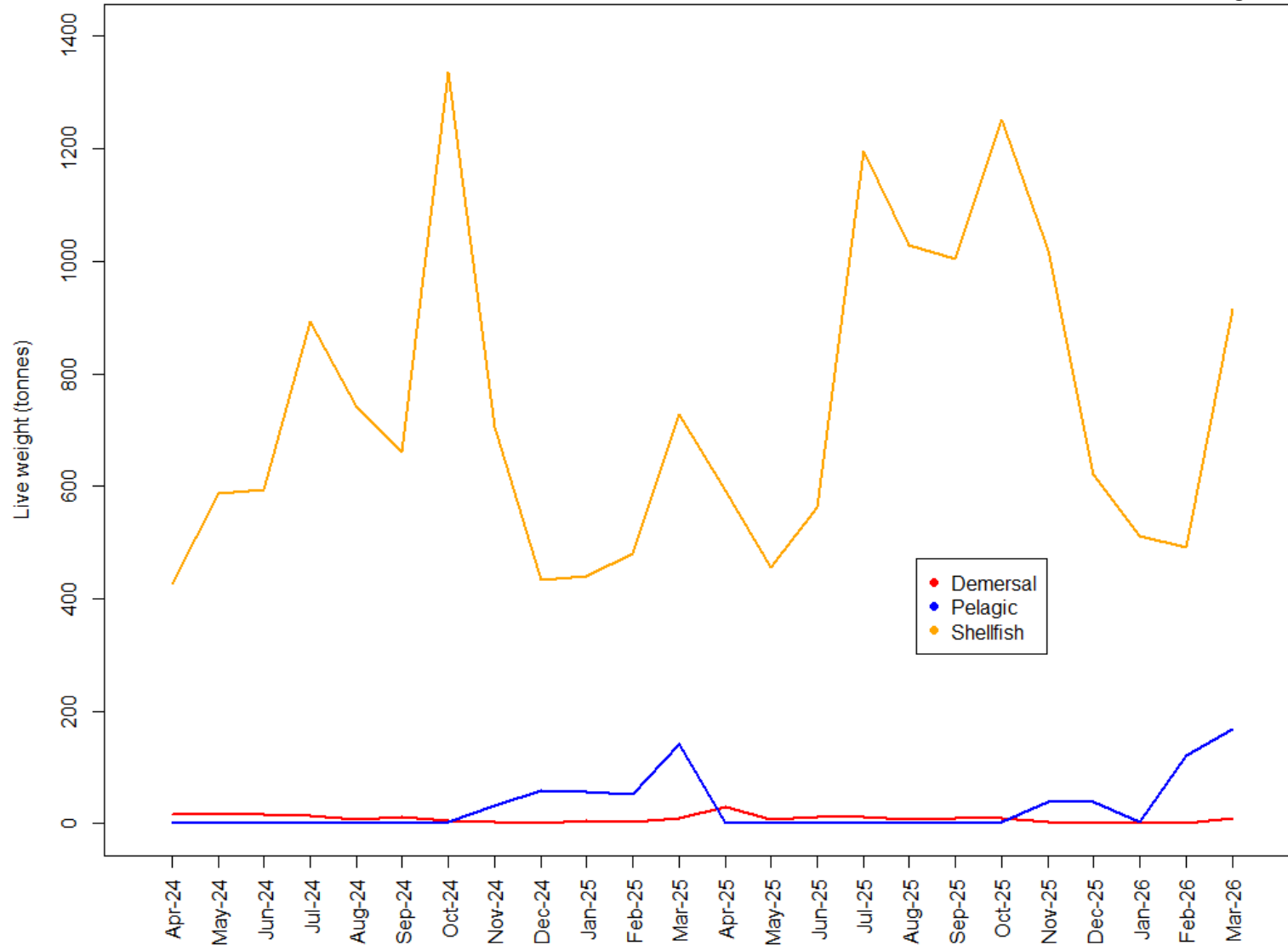
- Climate change and warming seas
- Competition for space
- Regulatory uncertainty
- Disease
- Pollution
- International events



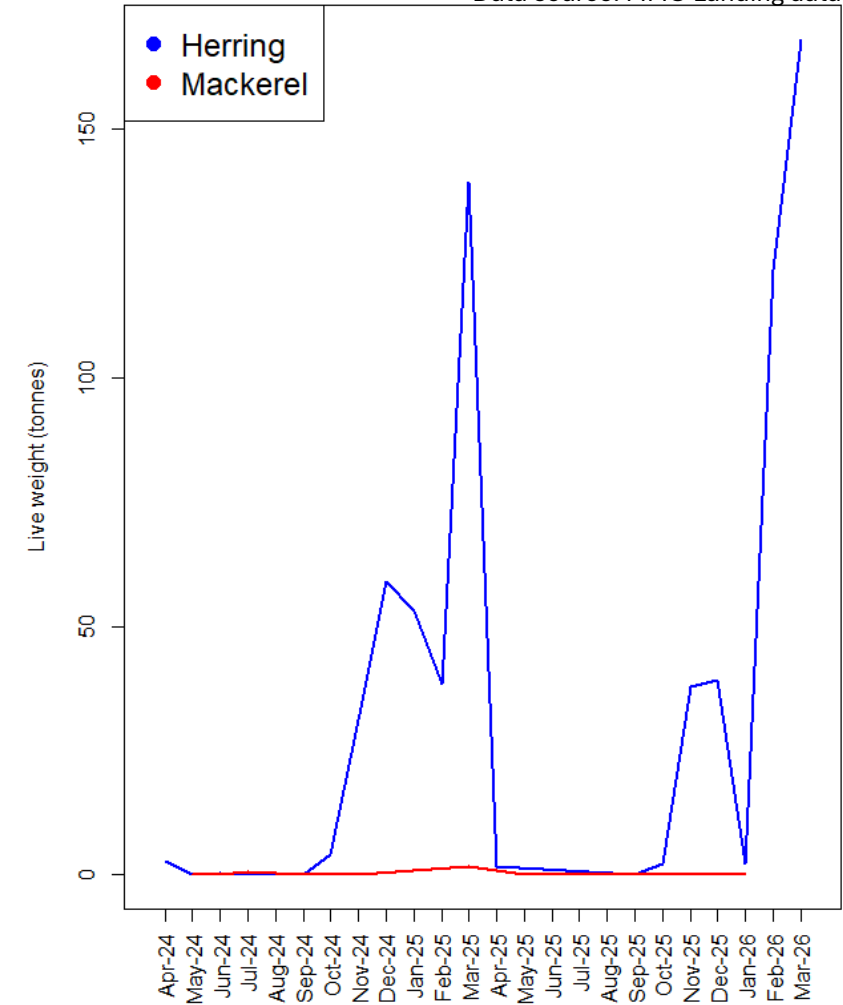
# EASTME ports (UK vessel landings)



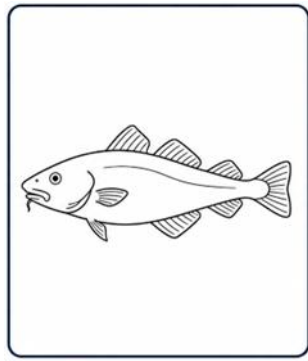
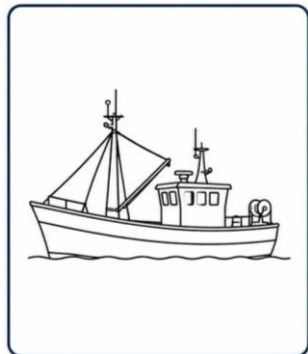
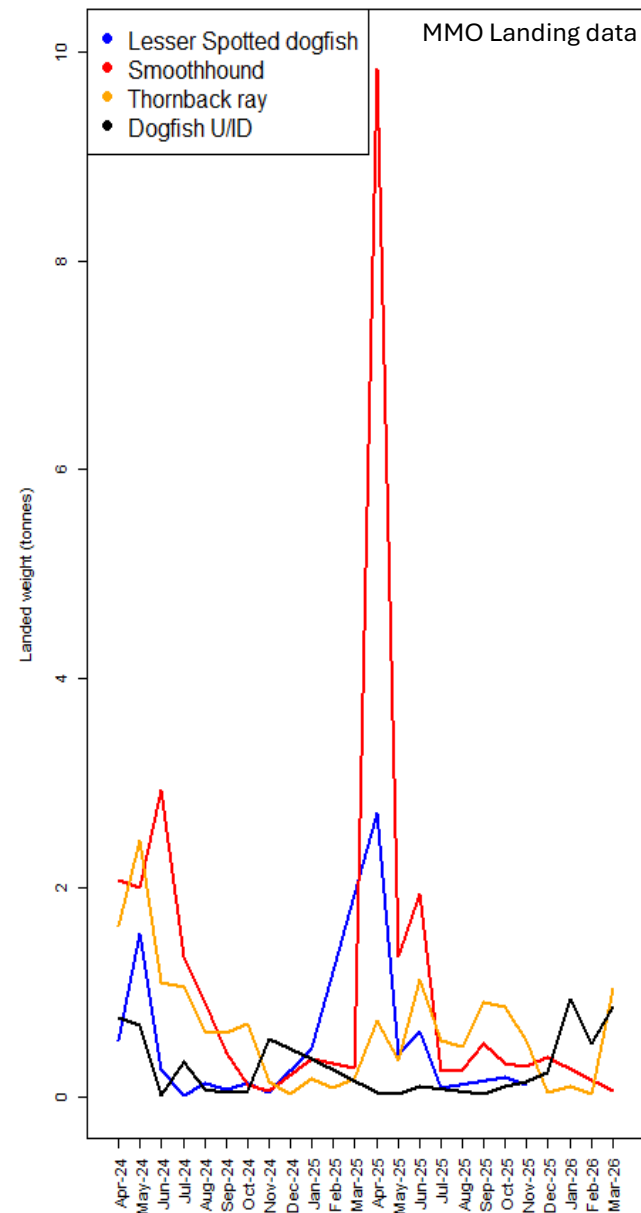
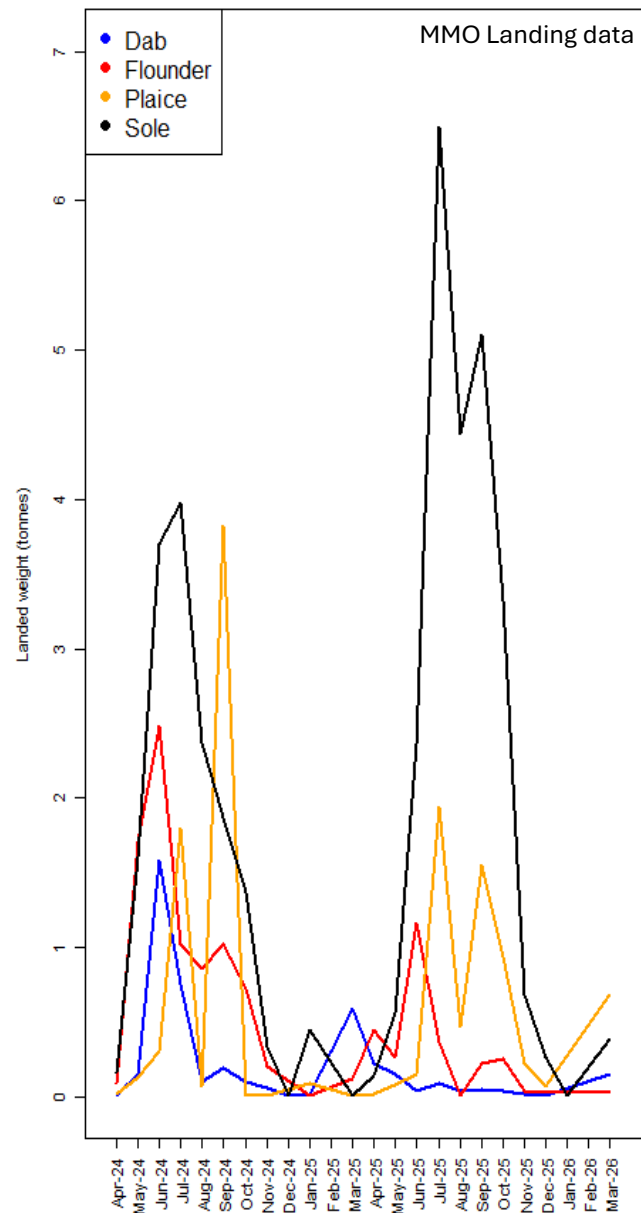
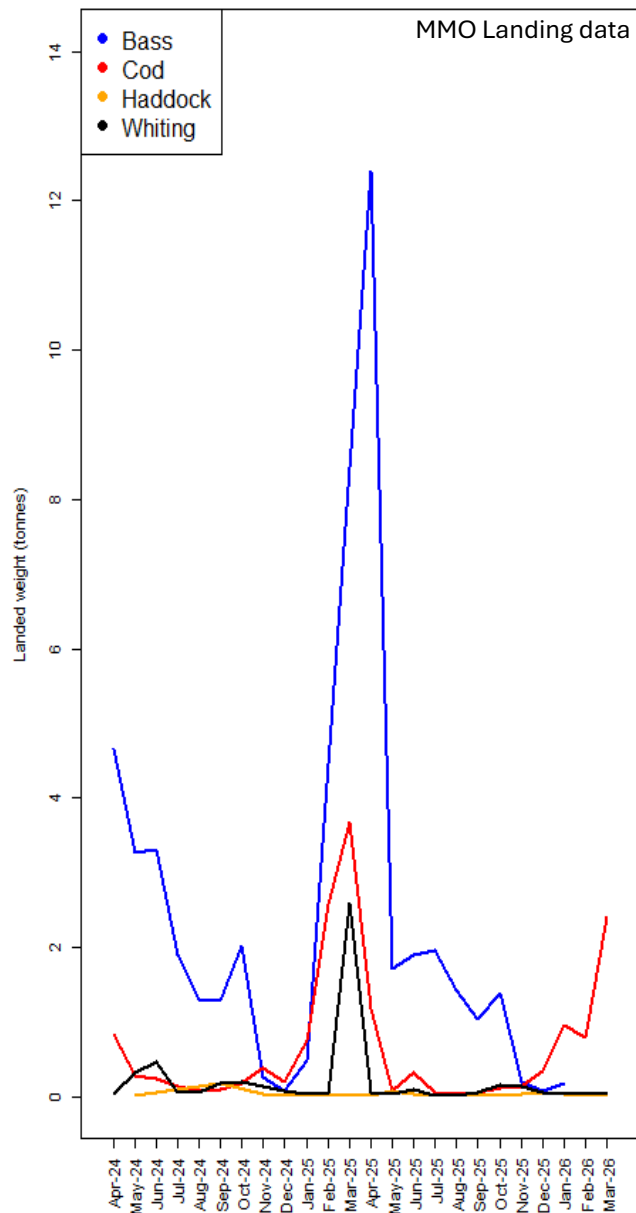
Data source: MMO Landing data



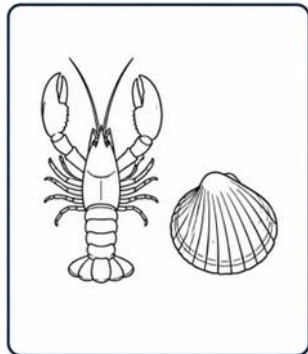
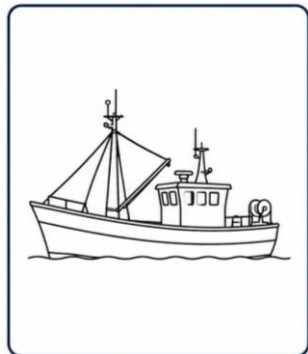
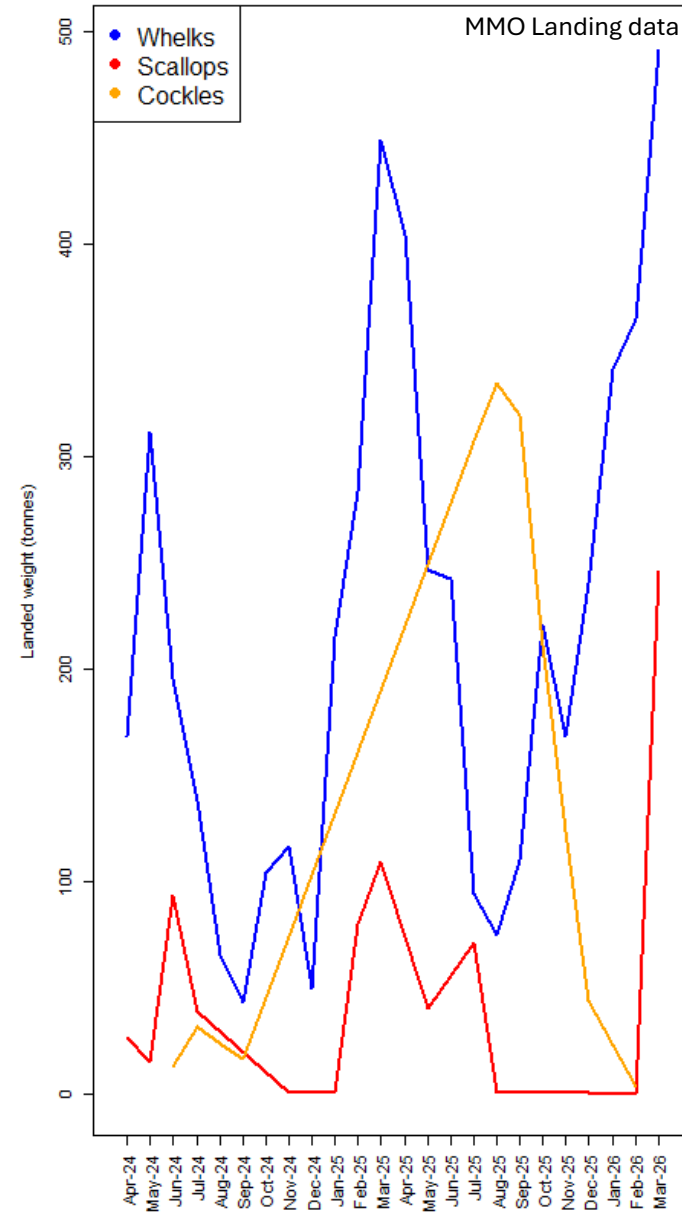
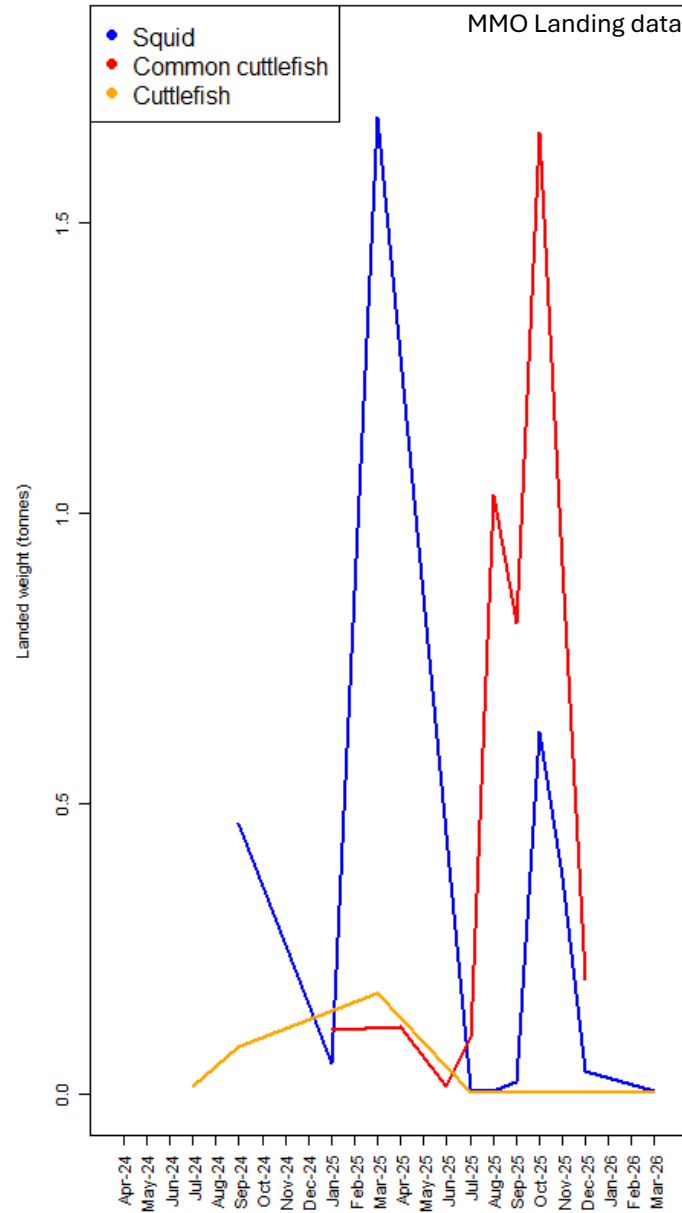
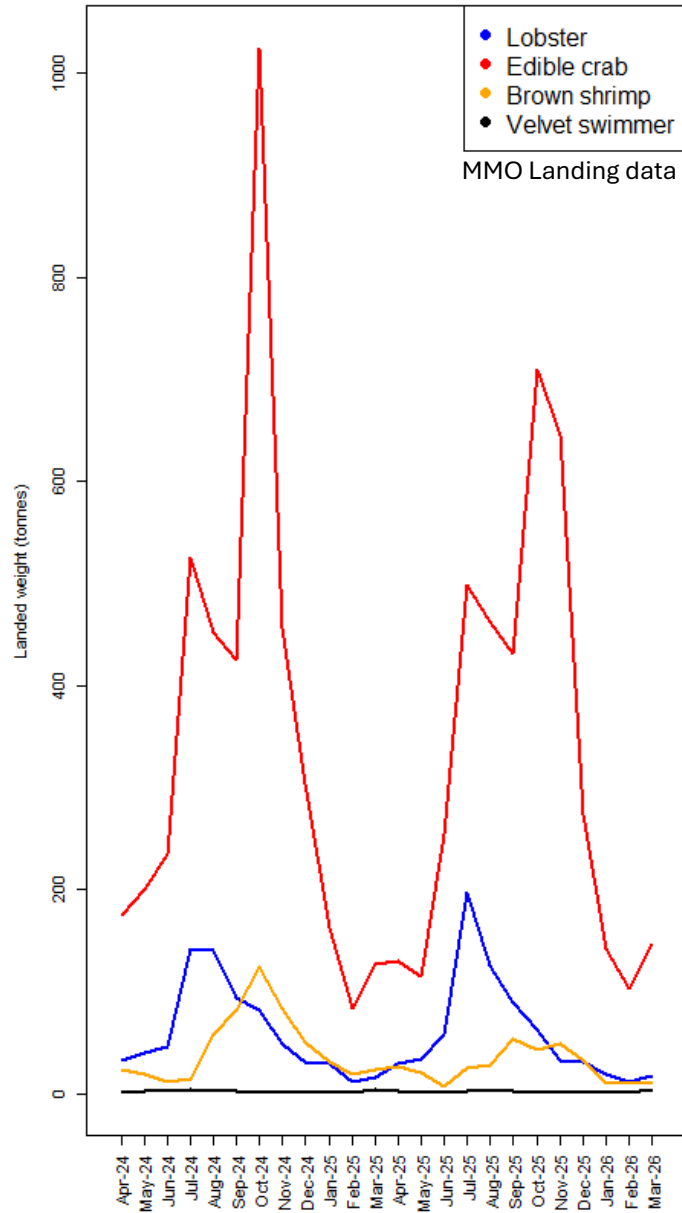
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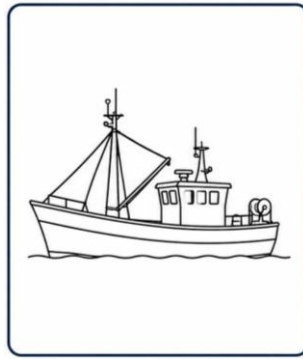
# EASTME Ports: Demersal



# EASTME Ports: Shellfish



# MPAs and gear bans



## Holderness Offshore

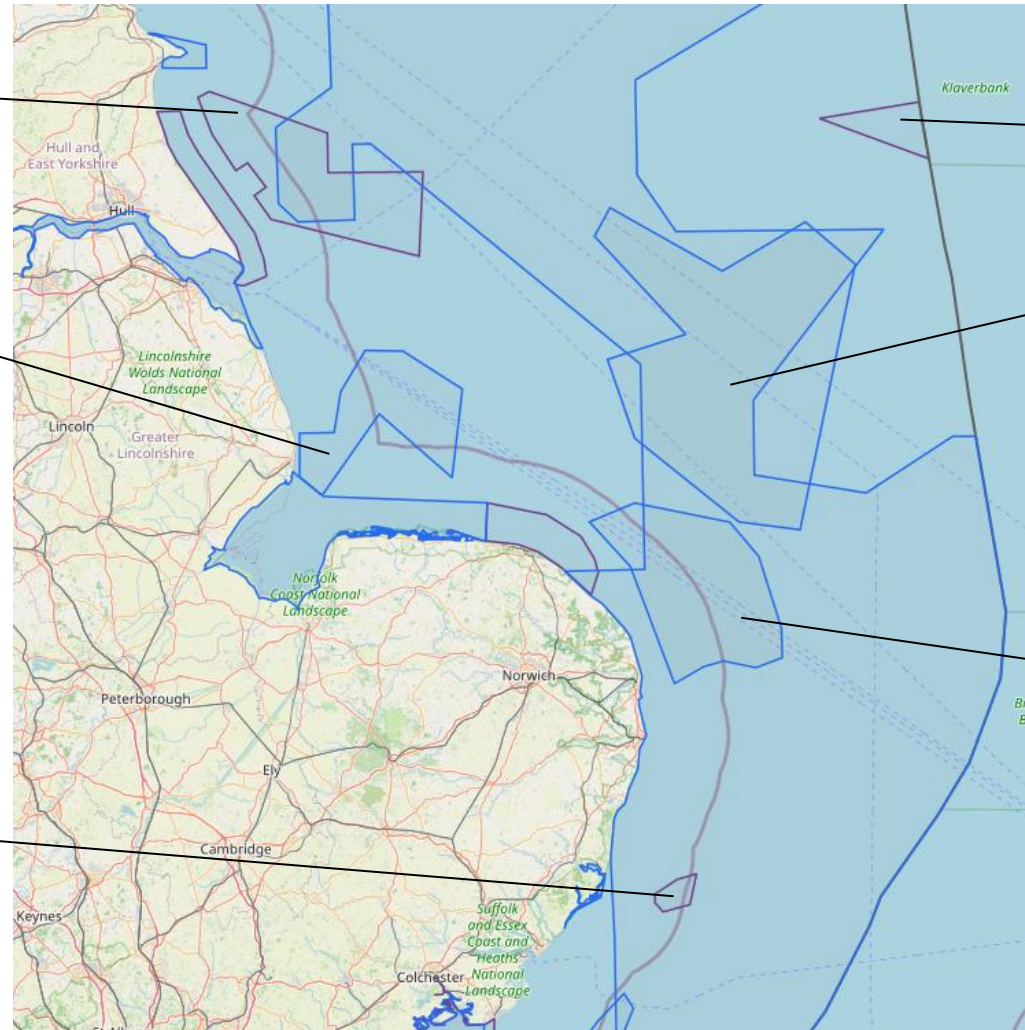
Prohibition of bottom towed gear across the whole of the MPA.

## Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge

Prohibition of bottom towed fishing gear across the sandbanks and reefs, and of bottom-set nets and lines and traps over reefs  
*(Existing measures)*

## Orford Inshore

Prohibition of bottom towed gear across the whole of the MPA.



## Markham's Triangle

Prohibition of bottom towed gear across the whole of the MPA.

## North Norfolk Sandbanks and Saturn Reef

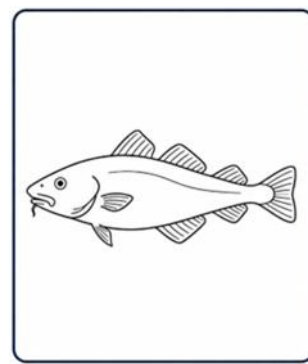
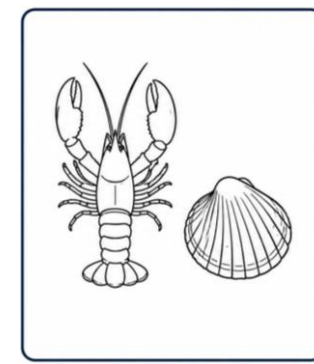
Prohibition of bottom towed gear across the whole of the MPA, prohibition of traps over Ross worm reefs

## Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton

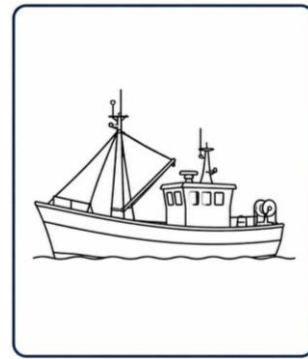
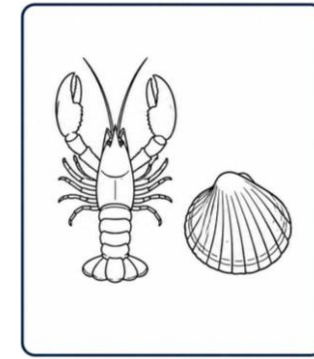
prohibition of bottom towed gear across the whole of the MMO portion of the MPA, prohibition of traps across the Ross worm reefs in the MMO portion of the MPA.

# Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

- Overseeing 106 ha managed realignment site on the Outer Humber for the EA
- Consultants contracted to survey intertidal benthos and fish
  - seine netting
  - hand trawling
  - E-DNA analysis
- Additional surveys further north through the Wilder Humber project
- Concerns over intensity of nearshore shrimp trawling off Gibraltar Point NNR/SPA and NW sector of the Wash SPA
  - Fishing grounds for the last remaining colony of Little Terns on the Lincolnshire coast
  - Internationally important numbers of Sandwich Terns



# Lobster Minimum Conservation Reference Size

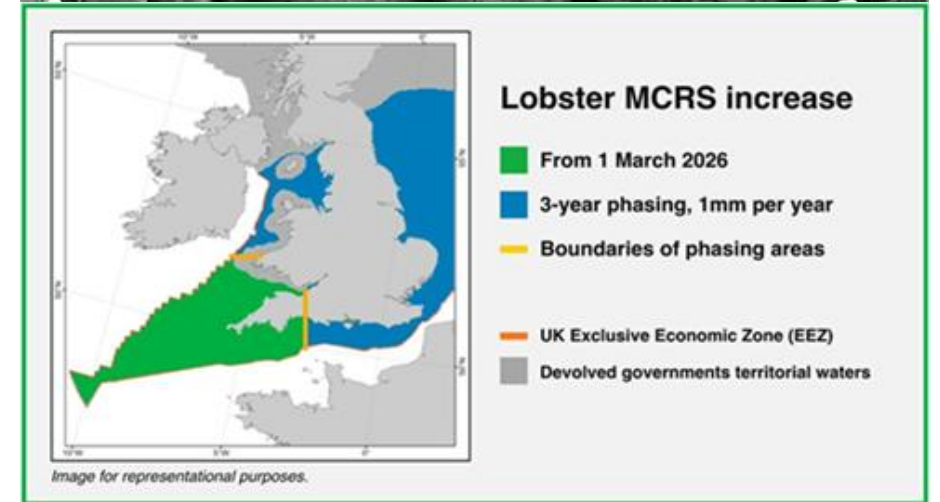
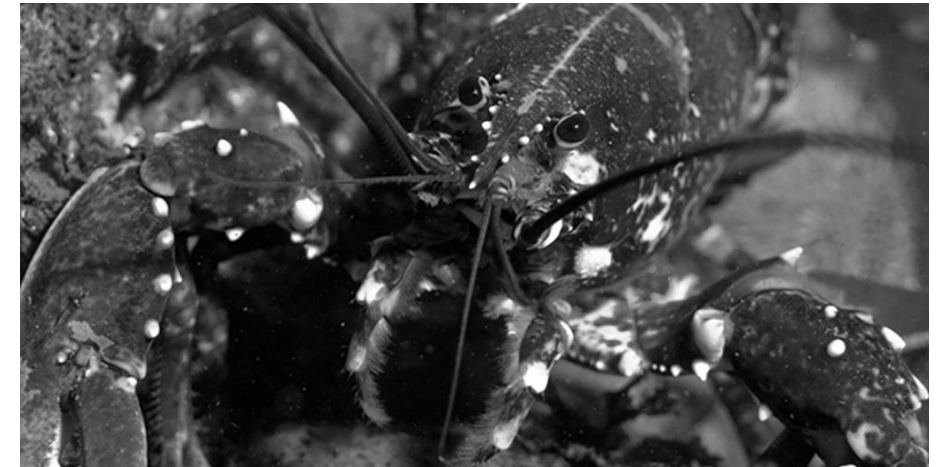


**16/12/2025** DEFRA Decision on Lobster MCRS increase to 90mm for commercial and recreational fishers

## **EASTME region:**

3mm MCRS increase from 87mm to 90mm phased in over 3 years

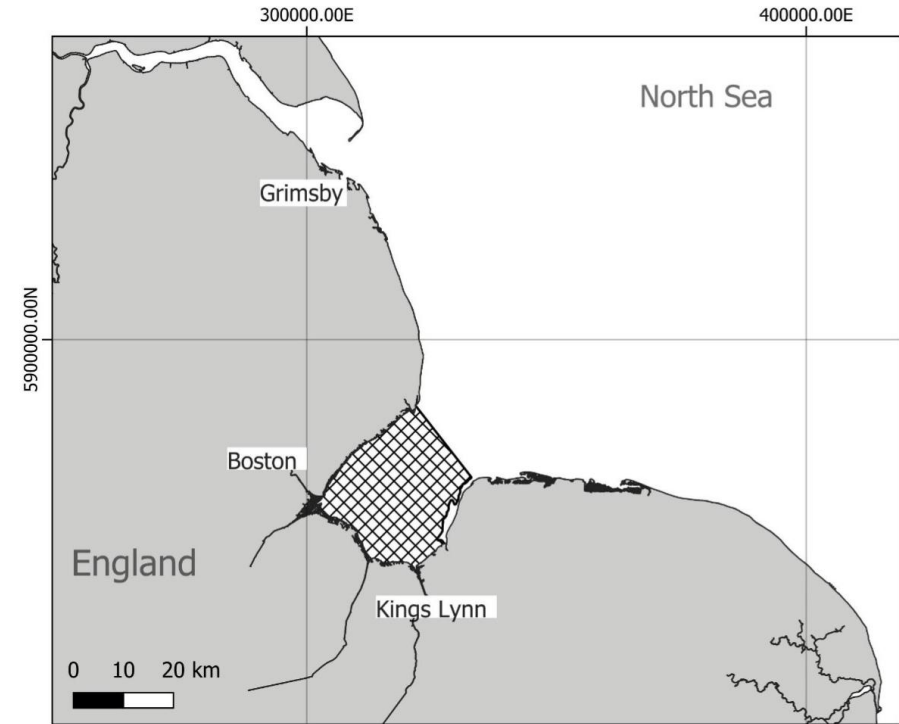
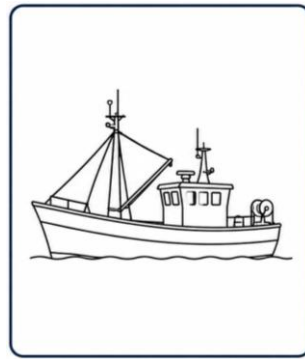
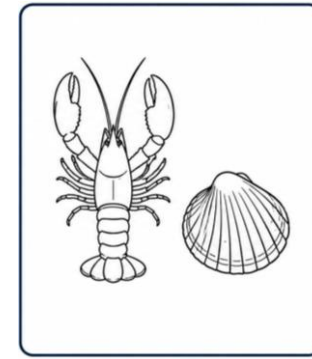
- 88mm - 01 March 2026
- 89mm - January 2027
- 90 mm - January 2029



# Fisheries Management Plans

Evidence-based action plan supporting delivery of sustainable fisheries

- reviewed at least once every 6 years
- **Cockles (*Cerastoderma edule*)**
  - published December 2025
- **Significant fishery in Eastern IFCA district**
  - WFO Order 1992 expired in January 2023
  - Transitional provision using legacy byelaw
- **EIFCA**
  - Cockle and mussel stocks doing fairly well
  - Ongoing mortalities with cockle stocks
  - Good survival of mussel stocks leading to a further increase in biomass – highest stock levels since 1940s



Management Areas

 Wash Fishery Order



Map credit: UK Gov

# Fisheries Management Plans

- Fisheries management plan for Southern North Sea demersal non-quota species

- **Southern North Sea (running Northumberland to Kent)**

Lesser spotted dogfish (*Scyliorhinus canicular*)

Smoothhound (*Mustelus asterias*)

Red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*)

Grey gurnard (*Eutrigla gurnardus*)

Red gurnard (*Chelidonichthys cuculus*)

Tub gurnard (*Chelidonichthys lucerna*)

John dory (*Zeus faber*)

Common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*)

Common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*)

Curled octopus (*Eledone cirrhosa*)

European squid (*Loligo vulgaris*)

European common squid (*Alloteuthis*)

Long-finned squid (*L. forbesii*)

Data Cat. 3

Data Cat. 3

Data Cat. 3

Data Cat. 3

Data Cat. 3

Lacking ICES assessment

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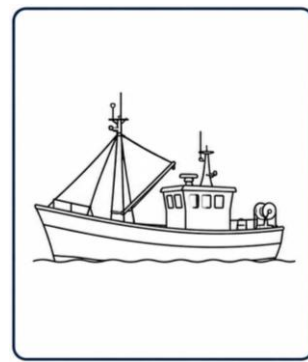
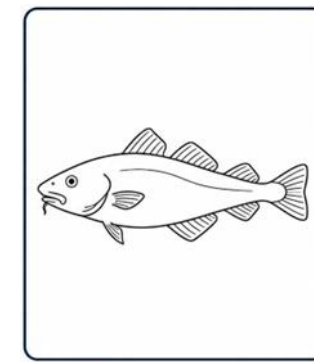
Lacking ICES assessment

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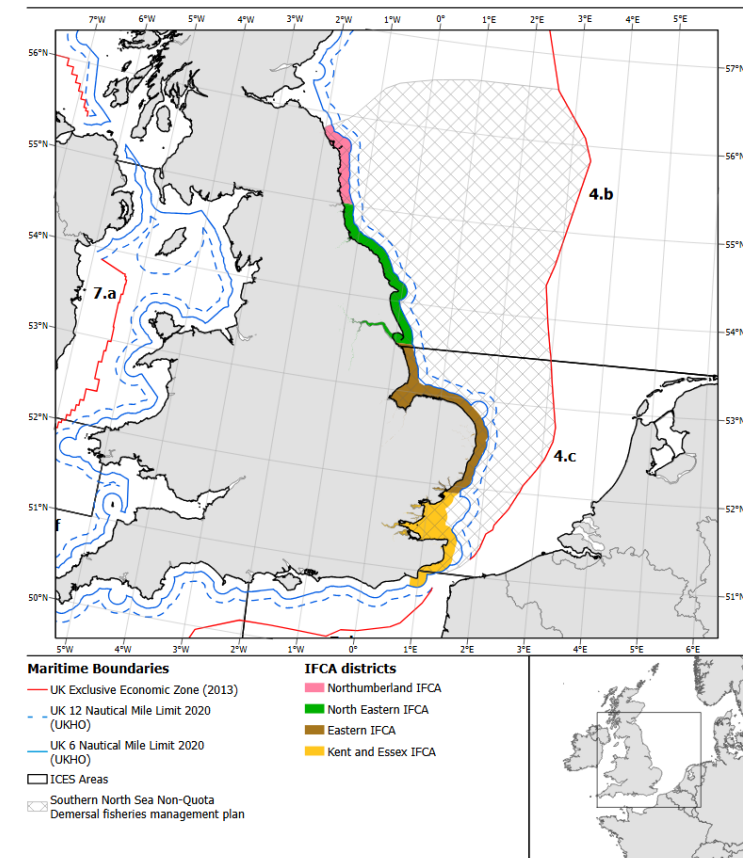
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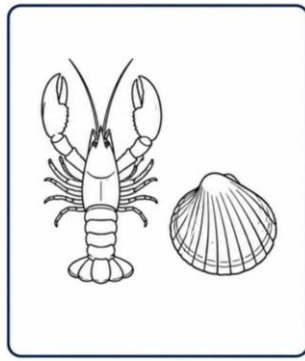
Lacking ICES assessment



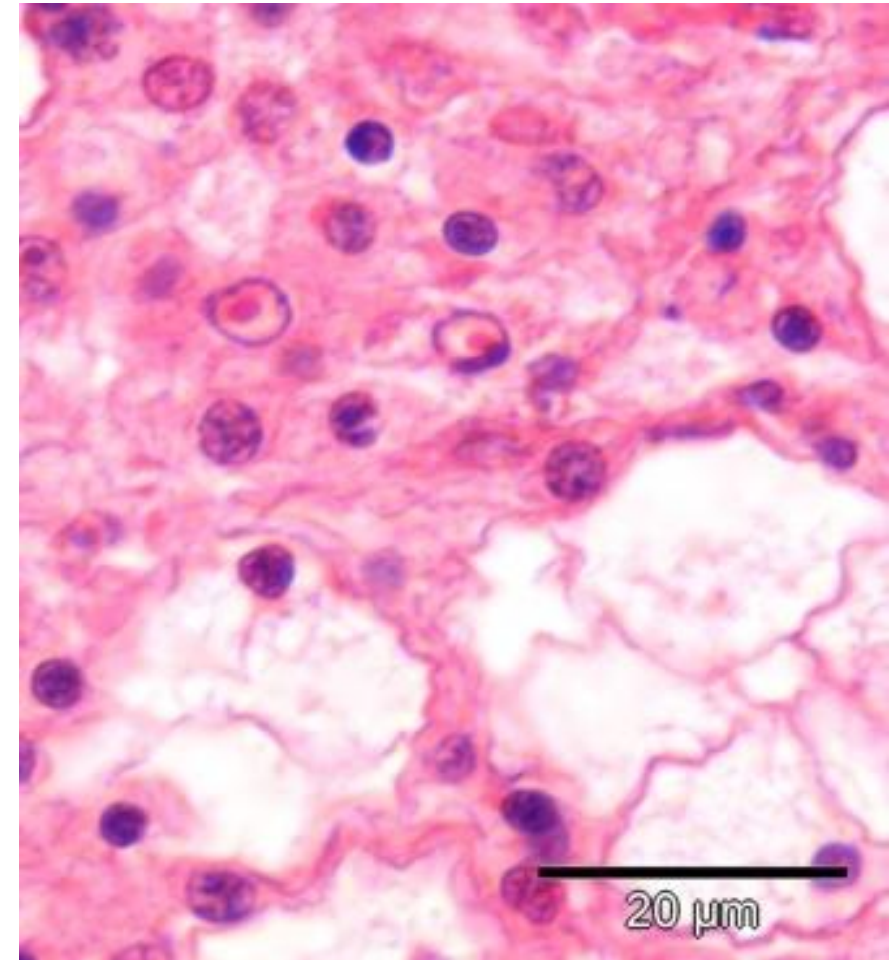
Southern North Sea demersal non-quota species  
Fisheries Management Plan: Jurisdictional Boundaries



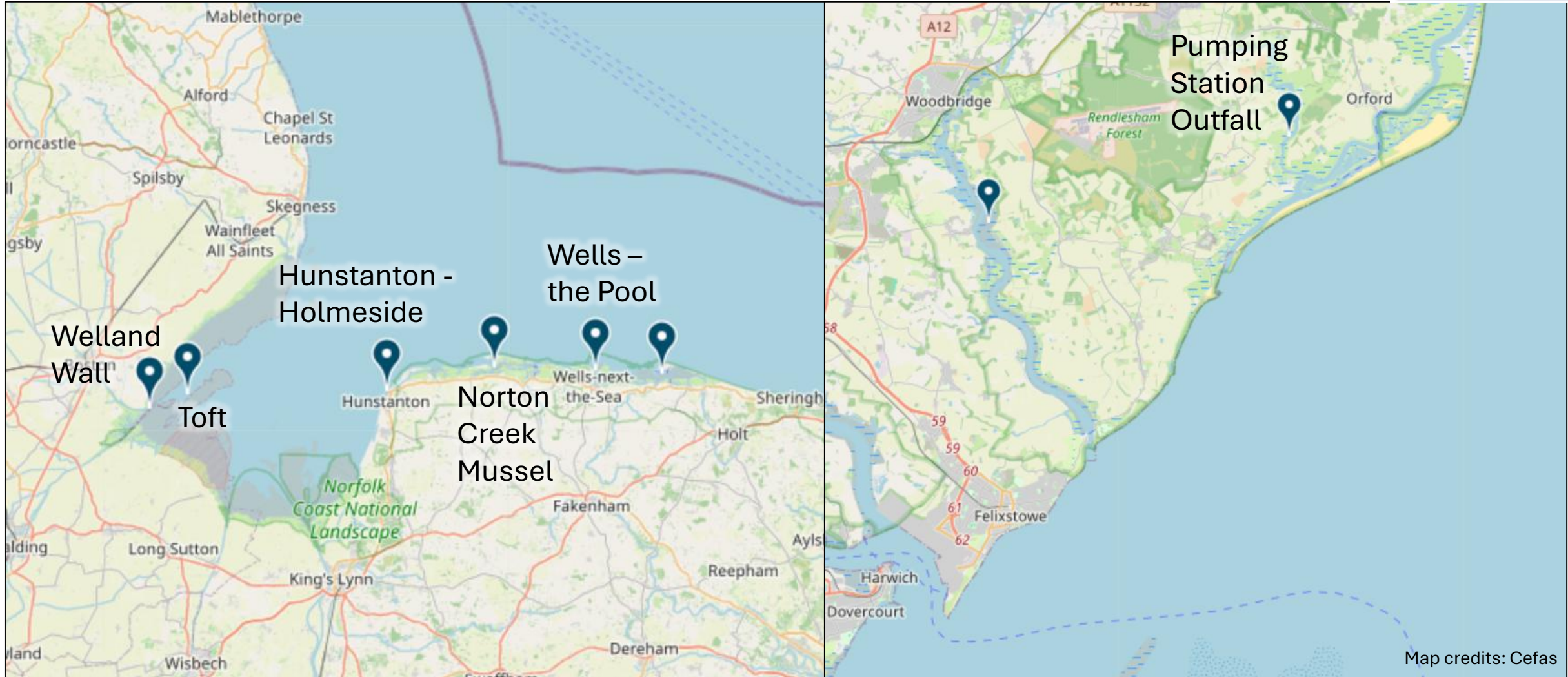
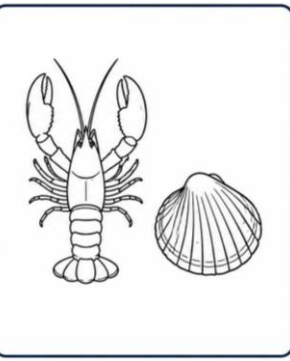
# Oyster disease in the Humber



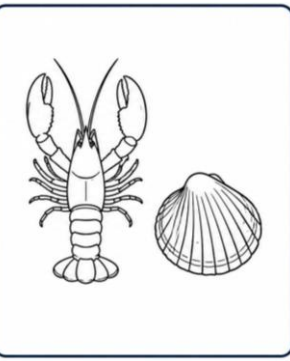
- August 2025, Port of Grimsby
- EA reports of wild population mortalities of Pacific oysters (*Magallana* [syn. *Crassostrea*] *gigas*)
- Cefas confirmed oyster herpesvirus-1 microvariant (OsHV-1  $\mu$ var) disease outbreak confirmed in Alexandra Dock
- New containment area covering the tidal waters of the Humber Estuary declared (shellfish movement restrictions).



# Cefas - Shellfish classification and microbiological monitoring – *Mytilus* spp



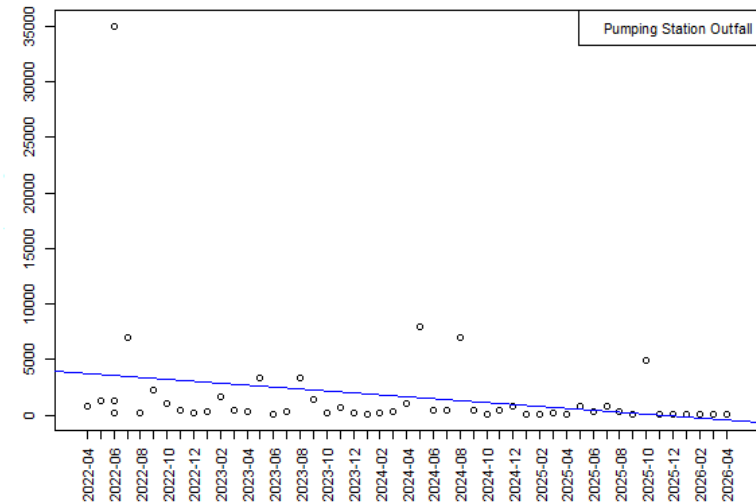
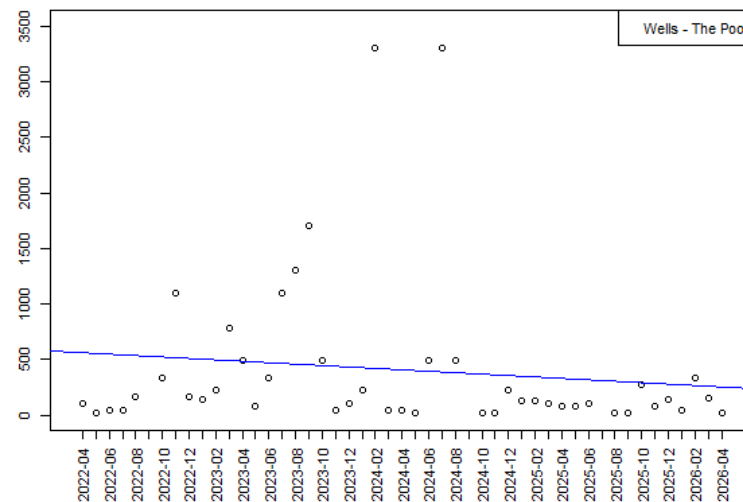
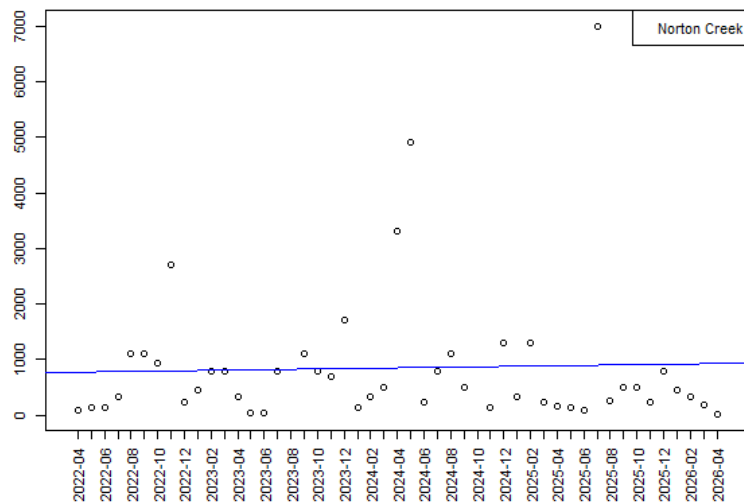
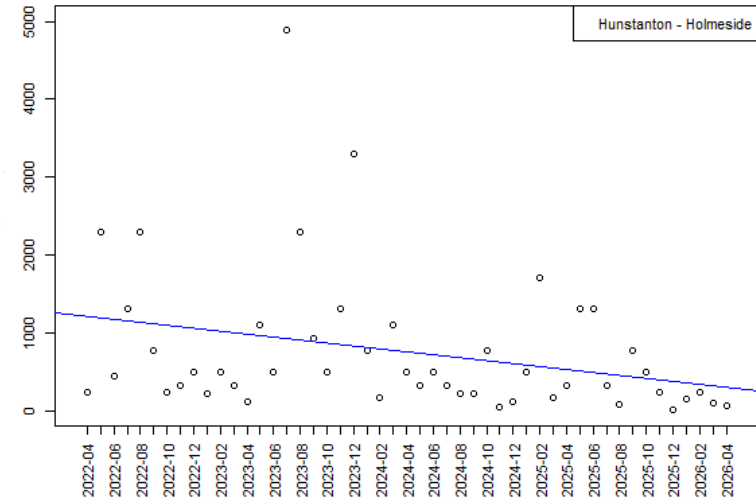
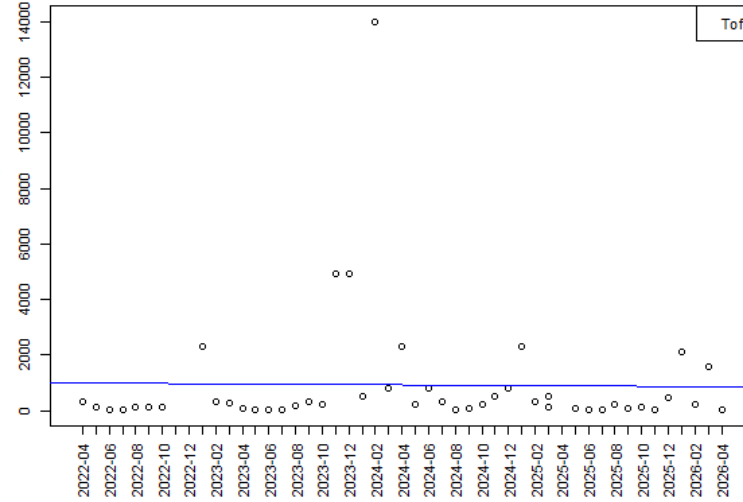
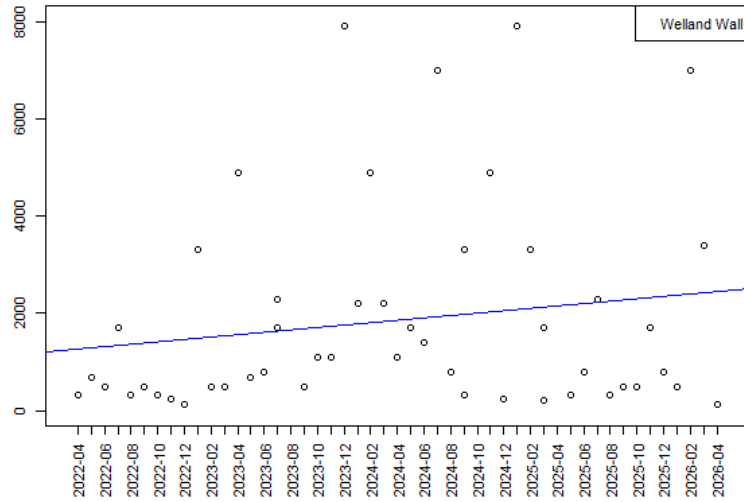
# *Mytilus* spp microbiological monitoring



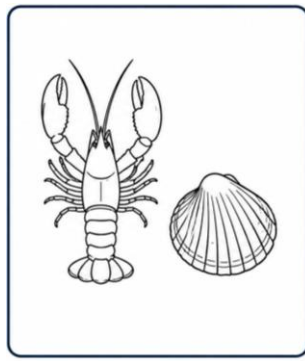
April 2022-April 2026

Data from Cefas Shellfish classification and microbiological monitoring

E.coli per 100g

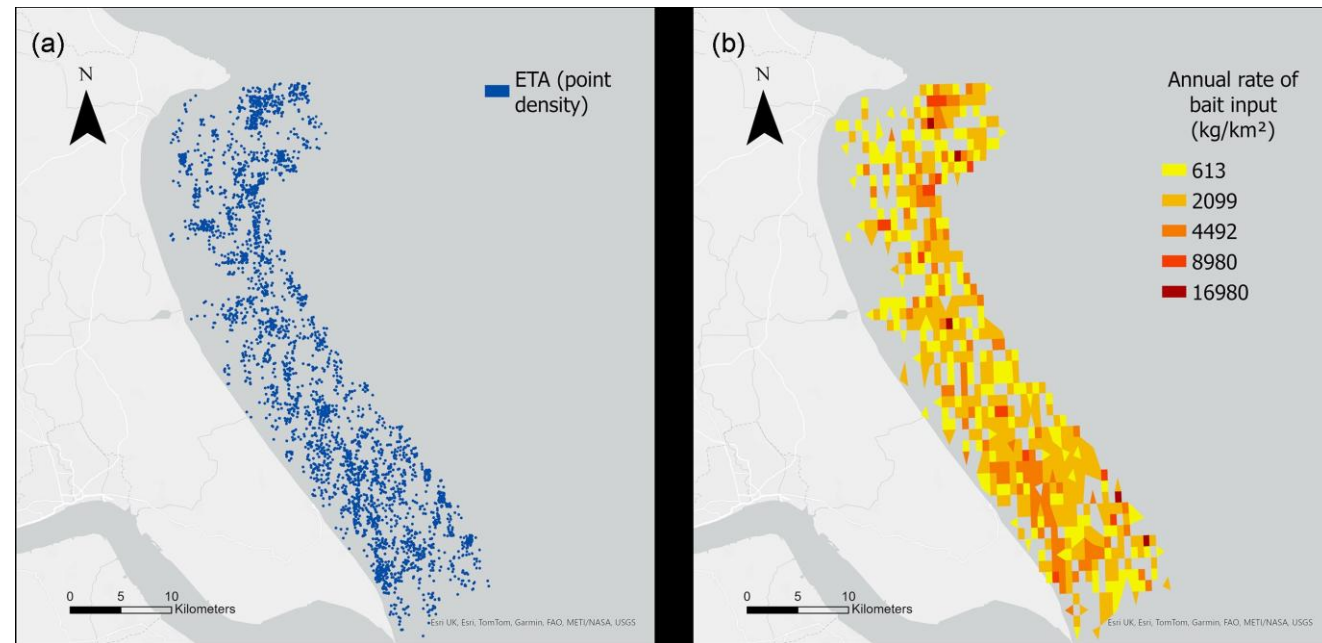


# Impact of bait use (static gear)



Data from all commercial static gear vessels at three ports in 2022 (Bridlington [41], Hornsea [8], Withernsea [6])

- 55 vessels estimated to deploy:
  - **>70,000 pots** across **~820 km<sup>2</sup>**
  - **>800 tonnes of bait per year**
- Study suggests bait inputs are likely:
  - a major artificial food subsidy
  - capable of altering local food-web dynamics
- May influence:
  - lobster and crab movement patterns
  - spatial distribution of commercial species



Rooke, N.J., Roach, M., Hull, S.L. and Johnson, M.L., 2026. Estimating the extent and impact of bait use in a UK coastal fishery. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 83(4), p.fsag049.