

# Tackling bycatch: how do you engage the fishing industry?

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# What are key issues around engagement?

- Preceptions
- Working together
- Not all fishermen are the same



# Fishermen in the mainstream media





# Fishermen in the mainstream media



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All News | UK Ne

## JAW BLIMEY Mystery sharks found washed British beach

Walkers along award-winning Rf make grim find as dozens of dea are washed up

**Neal Baker**  
29 May 2018, 10:19 | Updated: 18 Jul 2018, 16:09

**MORE** than fifty dead sharks were found on Sunday amid fears they were wrongly

Environment chiefs are investigating afte spotted catsharks at Rhossili on the Gowe



INDEPENDENT


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Voices

## *The anti-plastic straw campaign is helpful – but if we want to save marine life, we need to stop eating fish*

Is the straw ban fuelled by compassion towards sea animals, or rather a desire to safeguard a food source?

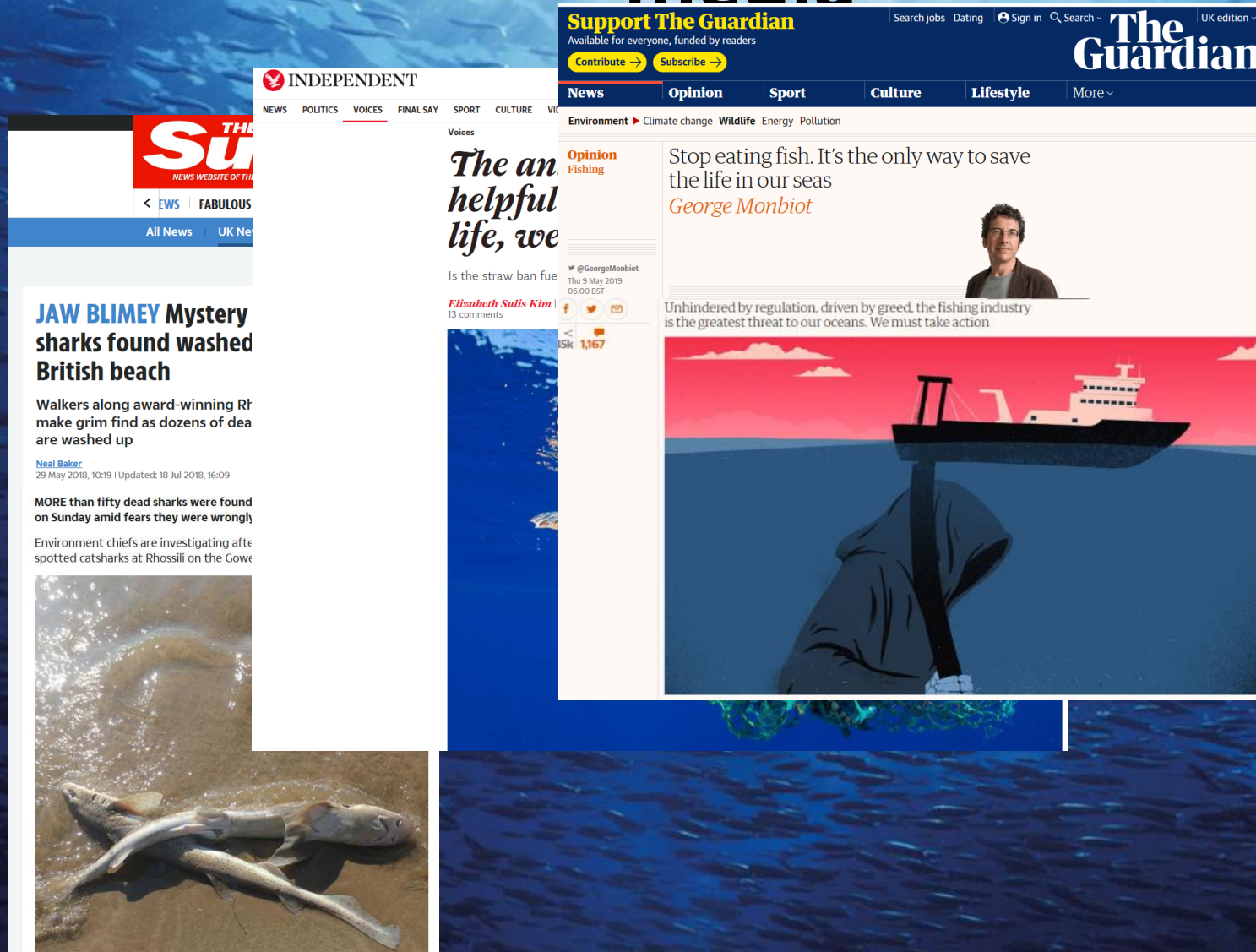
**Elisabeth Sulis Kim** | Sunday 2 September 2018 10:45 | 13 comments

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# Fishermen in the mainstream media





# Consider the narrative

Mainstream media tends to portray  
fishermen as the villains of the story

*‘unhindered by legislation’*

*‘driven by greed’*



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*'unhindered by legislation'*

*'driven by greed'*

Why not 'Guardians of the Sea'?





## FILEY NETSMEN FIGHT FOR LONG-TERM FUTURE

15th May 2017

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Salmon and sea trout fishermen in Filey on the Yorkshire coast have put forward voluntary proposals to restrict their fishery to try to preserve it, and Filey's fishing heritage, for future generations.

They put forward their proposals at a recent meeting of Yorkshire salmon licence holders with the Environment Agency. The measures aim to make this low impact, small-scale fishery of only seven boats even more sustainable. They include a voluntary quota of just 100 salmon per season and a 50m reduction in the overall length of their nets from 370m to 320m.

In past years, Filey fishermen have also voluntarily adapted their nets to reduce by-catch of seabirds, and contributed towards Environment Agency datasets to build a concrete picture of local salmon and sea trout stocks.

## Introduction of voluntary measures:

- Self imposed annual quotas and reduced net lengths and soak time
- Self reporting of all protected species bycatch





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*'The voluntary conservation measures the fishermen have come forward with prove once again that they embrace their responsibilities in protecting our local environment, while also making a living from it'*

Quote from George Eustice, UK Fisheries Minister (2017)



# Consider the narrative

- The future of the fishing industry depends on the sea being clean, healthy and productive
- Fishermen do not want to catch protected species - damage to fishing gear and lost fishing time

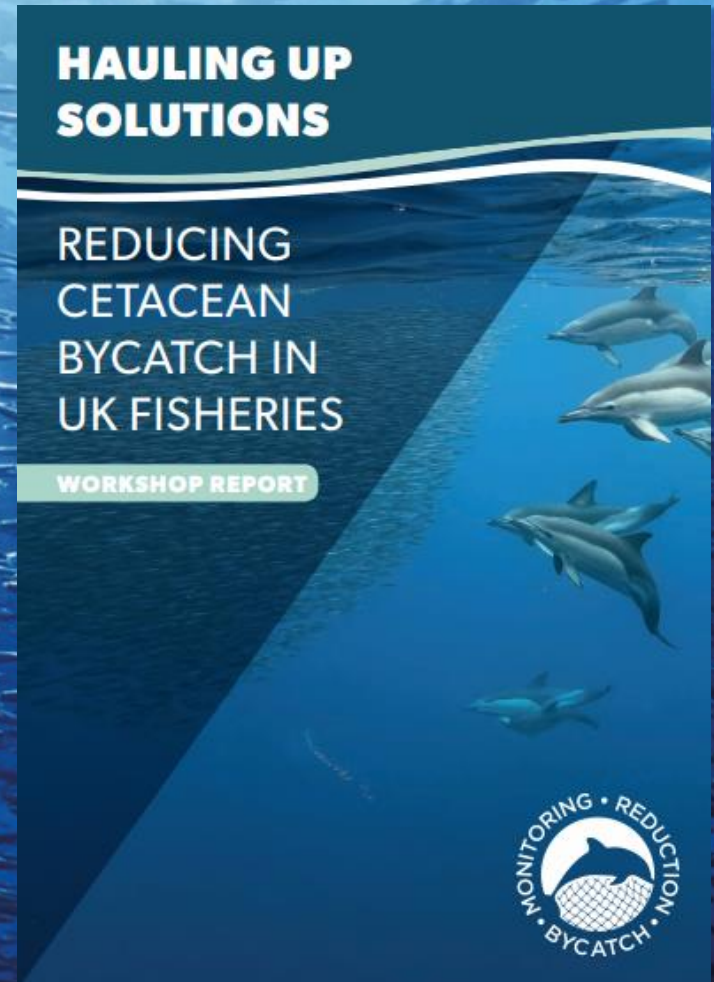


# Collaborative Working

- Build Trust
- Share the issue
- Understand different points of view

## Hauling up Solutions Workshop (March 2019):

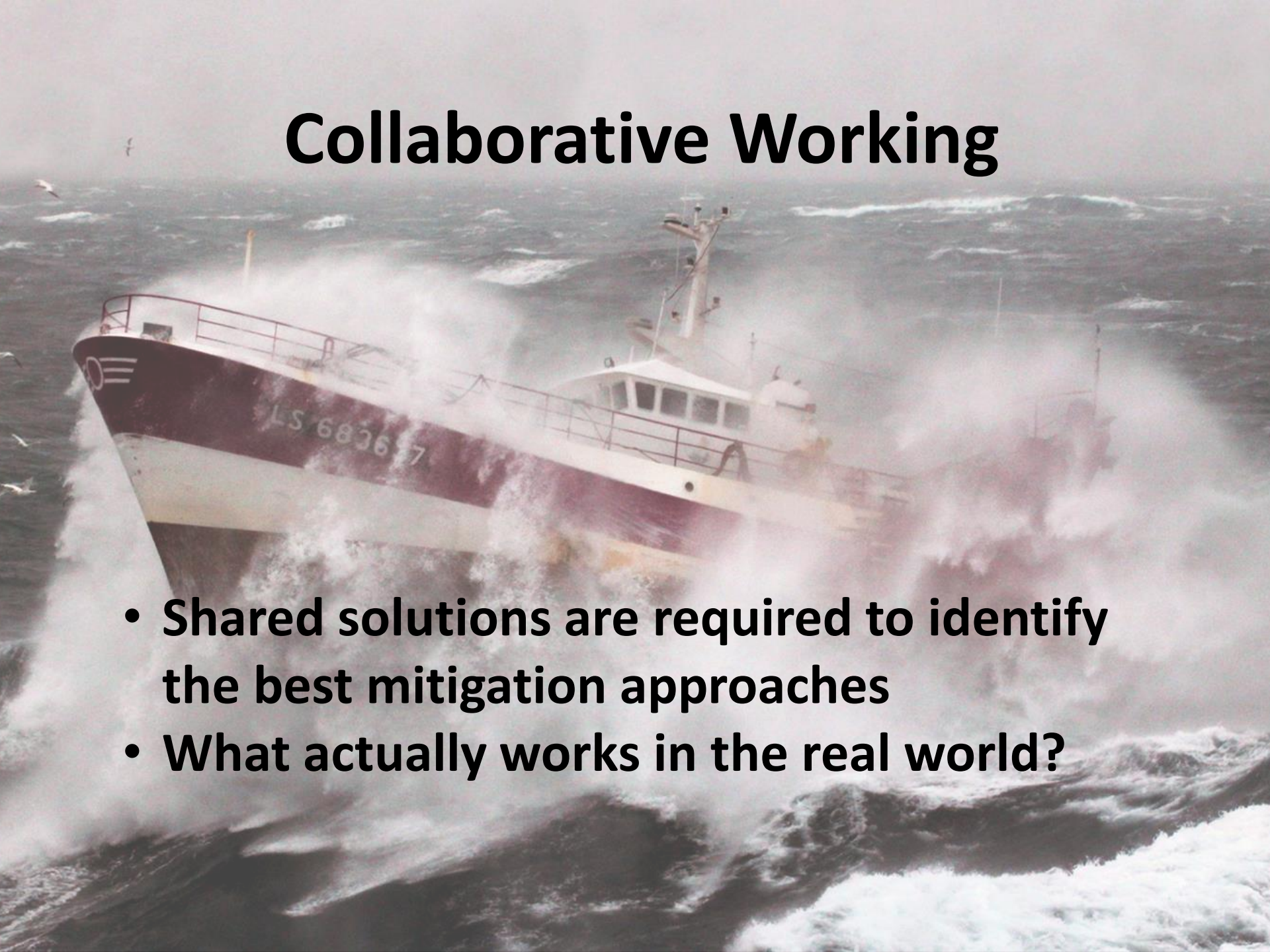
*'Across the participants, there were aspirations to work cooperatively, share and understand each other's opinions and guide solutions through a collaborative approach based on evidence'*





# Collaborative Working

- Shared solutions are required to identify the best mitigation approaches
- What actually works in the real world?





# Scottish Entanglement Alliance (SEA)



Understanding marine animal entanglement in  
Scottish waters



Hebridean  
Whale &  
Dolphin  
Trust



# Questionnaire findings



- Interviews completed: **150**
- Number entanglements reported: **130\***
- % experienced an entanglement in last 10 years: **53%**
- Economic cost: **≤ £2500/entanglement**
- **80%** interested in entanglement workshops and training
- **78%** with entanglement experience willing to test mitigation measures

***\*Only three of these incidents have previously been reported to SMASS.***

Species	Alive	Dead
Minke whale	9	34
Basking shark	13	33
Humpback whale	11	1
Leatherback turtle	5	5
Pilot whale	4	1
Risso's dolphin	0	2
Fin whale	0	1
Orca	1	0
Sei whale	1	0
Porbeagle shark	0	3
Harbour porpoise	0	4
White-sided dolphin	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>86</b>



# Beyond 2020



## Main aim for the future is to quantify and minimise risk

1. Understanding entanglement risk better – What elements of gear/fishing practises pose the greatest entanglement risk? What elements are most amenable to change/mitigation? Expand project to include other sectors?
2. Understanding fishing practise in response to current management, market forces, fishing effort - impact on entanglement risk. Can industry adapt to changes in practice without risking livelihoods of individual fishers?
3. Developing and supporting workable best practise within industry  
*‘What can be deployed in the next five years which is going to be adopted by industry?’*
  - What will the industry get behind?
  - What will the market support?
  - What will the legislation allow us to do?



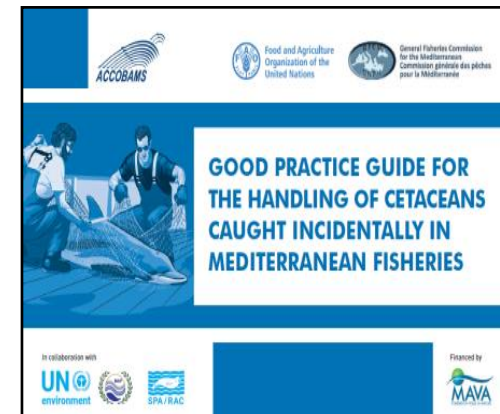
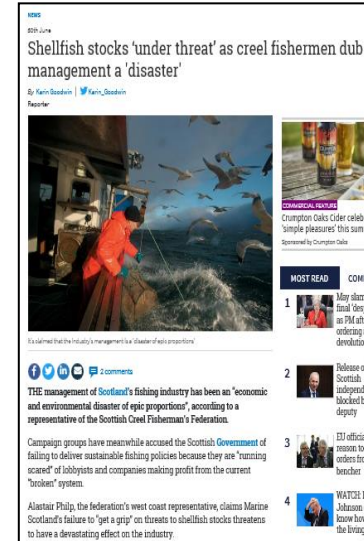
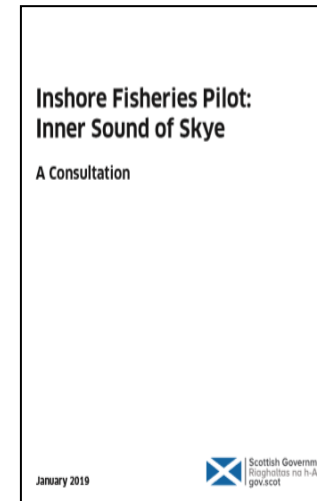
# Beyond April 2020



## Mitigation and policy suggestions from fishermen

*'If you want us to comply, make it a law'*

- Separation of sectors e.g. trawl exclusion zones
- Moratorium on expansion of creel sector
- Electronic monitoring
- Restrictions on hobby fishermen
- Free gear disposal schemes
- Compulsory use of leaded line, single ends
- Training and education
- Utilise pMPAs as 'test' areas with incentives





# Lyme Bay Reserve and fisheries management

- Statutory Instrument introduced to close the area to towed gear in 2008 to protect England's 'coral' gardens, followed by SAC designation
- Large increase in static gear
- Restricting the amount of inshore potting for crab and lobster within the SAC has generated a “win-win” for both fishermen and the marine environment





# Collaborative Working

- Needs to be more than monitoring and mitigation needs to meet legislation
- Need win-win project ideas – how will the project benefit fishermen?
- Proactive approaches that enable the industry to contribute to the evidence base



# UK Spurdog Avoidance Programme

- Spurdog (*Squalus acanthias*) is a prohibited species under the CFP: Union fishing vessels are not permitted to fish for, to retain on board, to tranship or to land the species.
- Since 2010 the TAC has been set at zero
- Accidental bycatch of spurdog can occur in mixed-fisheries, particularly in gillnets
- Programme enables self management to reduce bycatch interactions

Cornish Fish Producers Organisation (CFPO):

*'There is no real benefit for the stock, fishermen or wider society under the current regime of discarding dead spurdog'*



# UK Spurdog Avoidance Programme

- Participating vessels are permitted to land 2 tonnes spurdog per month
- Emphasis on return of live spurdog to the sea for the benefit of the stock
- Vessel skippers provided daily information on spurdog bycatch within pre-defined reporting grids
- Near real time Advisory Notice sent back identifying where spurdog aggregations had been reported



Enabled informed decision making on where to fish to reduce bycatch but would likely mean fishing less productive grounds

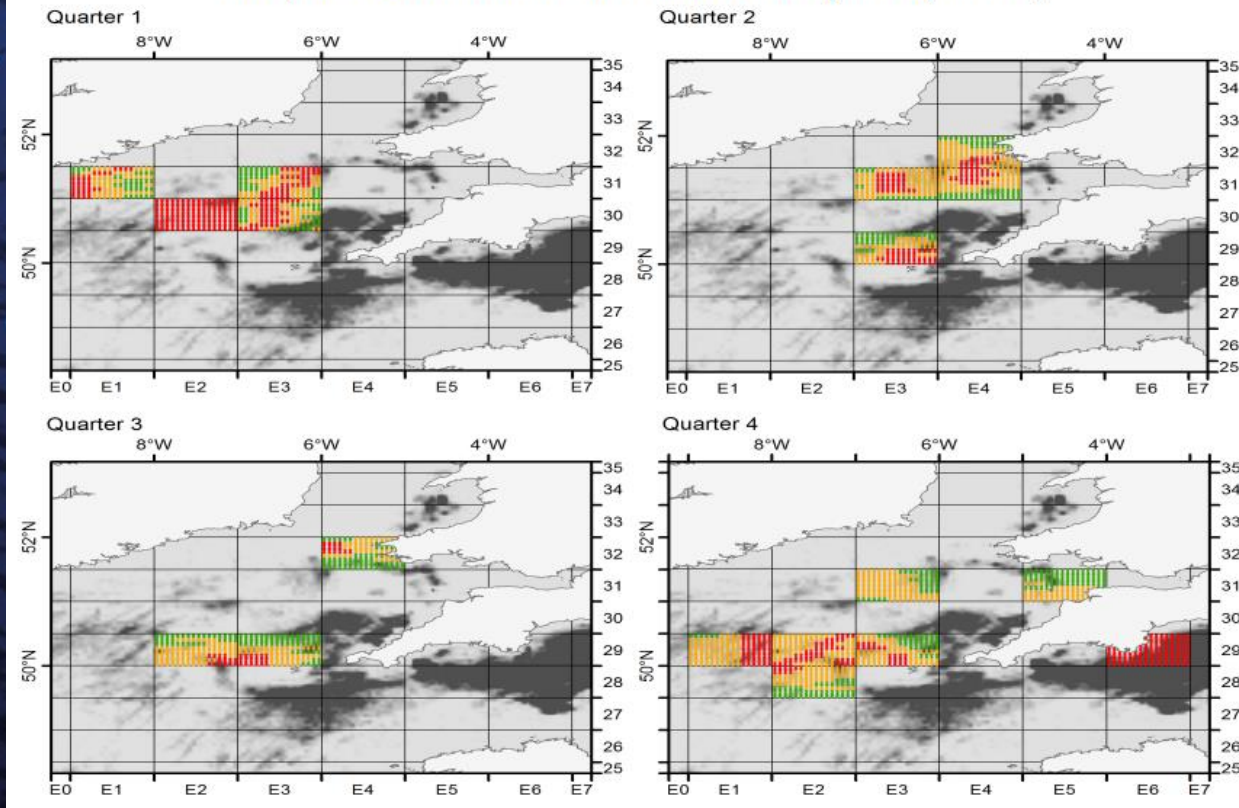




# UK Spurdog Avoidance Programme

Fishermen will more likely 'buy-in' to adapting their fishing behaviour to avoid bycatch when the evidence provided is based on their own observations.

'Hotspots' overlaid with 2013 VMS data (activity in hrs)



**Red** = high risk of significant bycatch and choking the fishery

**Amber** = medium risk of significant bycatch

**Green** = low risk of significant bycatch



# Building on the Hauling Up Solution workshop:

- CEFAS have initiated a cetacean bycatch monitoring trial in SW
- Six vessels along the south Cornish coast
- Using *cCatch* Smartphone app to self report cetacean bycatch

**NOTE OF CAUTION:** cetaceans do not aggregate like spurdog so currently unclear if this approach will be applicable



# Things to think about

- Fishing is a very competitive industry
- Data matters
- Negative impacts have financial consequences
- It really matters how a project is sold to the industry if you want to get buy-in



# Key messages

**Collectively the industry has a long memory.....  
There are unlikely to be any easy quick fixes.**

- **Consider the narrative:** are fishermen 'guardians of the sea' or the villains of the story. More needs to be made of the good examples.
- **Collaborative working:** recognise that this is a shared problem which needs shared solutions. Build on the small steps made already.
- **Consider how best to sell what it is you want to do:** Just because its a legal requirement or policy ambition is not a good enough reason that will engage fishermen.





# Thank you and any questions

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