

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



The screenshot shows a news article from The Sun website. The page features the Sun logo at the top, followed by navigation links for EWS, FABULOUS, MONEY, MOTORS, and TRAVEL. Below these are links for All News, UK News, World News, and Brexit. The main headline reads "JAW BLIMEY Mystery as FIFTY dead sharks found washed up on popular British beach". The sub-headline states "Walkers along award-winning Rhossili beach in South Wales make grim find as dozens of dead small-spotted cat sharks are washed up". The author is Neal Baker, and the article is dated 29 May 2018, 10:19, with an update on 18 Jul 2018, 16:09. A summary paragraph states: "MORE than fifty dead sharks were found washed up on a popular beach on Sunday amid fears they were wrongly netted by trawlers. Environment chiefs are investigating after beachgoers found the small-spotted catsharks at Rhossili on the Gower Peninsula, South Wales." At the bottom of the article is a photograph of two dead sharks lying on a sandy beach.

THE Sun
NEWS WEBSITE OF THE YEAR

< EWS | FABULOUS | MONEY | MOTORS | TRAVEL

All News | UK News | World News | Brexit

JAW BLIMEY Mystery as FIFTY dead sharks found washed up on popular British beach

Walkers along award-winning Rhossili beach in South Wales make grim find as dozens of dead small-spotted cat sharks are washed up

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

MORE than fifty dead sharks were found washed up on a popular beach on Sunday amid fears they were wrongly netted by trawlers.

Environment chiefs are investigating after beachgoers found the small-spotted catsharks at Rhossili on the Gower Peninsula, South Wales.



Fishermen in the mainstream media



INDEPENDENT

NEWS POLITICS VOICES FINAL SAY SPORT CULTURE VIDEO INDY/LIFE HAPPY LIST INDYBEST LONG READS INDY100 VOUCHERS MINDS

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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JAW BLIMEY Mystery sharks found washed British beach

Walkers along award-winning Rf make grim find as dozens of dead 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 after spotted catsharks at Rhossili on the Gower



Fishermen in the mainstream media

The image is a collage of news articles and social media posts. On the left, there is a snippet of a news article from 'The Sun' with the headline 'JAW BLIMEY Mystery sharks found washed British beach'. The article text reads: 'Walkers along award-winning Rf make grim find as dozens of dea are washed up'. Below the text is a photograph of two dead sharks lying on a sandy beach. In the center, there is a snippet of an article from 'The Independent' with the headline 'The an helpful life, we'. Below the headline is a social media post from '@GeorgeMonbiot' dated 'Thu 9 May 2019 06:00 BST'. The tweet text says: 'Unhindered by regulation, driven by greed, the fishing industry is the greatest threat to our oceans. We must take action'. To the right of the tweet is a large illustration of a fishing boat on the sea, with a dark, hooded figure in the foreground. At the top right, there is a snippet of 'The Guardian' website with the headline 'Support The Guardian' and a navigation menu including 'News', 'Opinion', 'Sport', 'Culture', and 'Lifestyle'. The background of the entire collage is a blue, wavy pattern representing water.

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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The logo for Seafish, featuring the word "seafish" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. Above the letters "a" and "i" are stylized white fish scales or wave patterns.

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Why not 'Guardians of the Sea'?



FILEY NETSMEN FIGHT FOR LONG-TERM FUTURE

15th May 2017

f 9 t in + 5

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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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.

'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

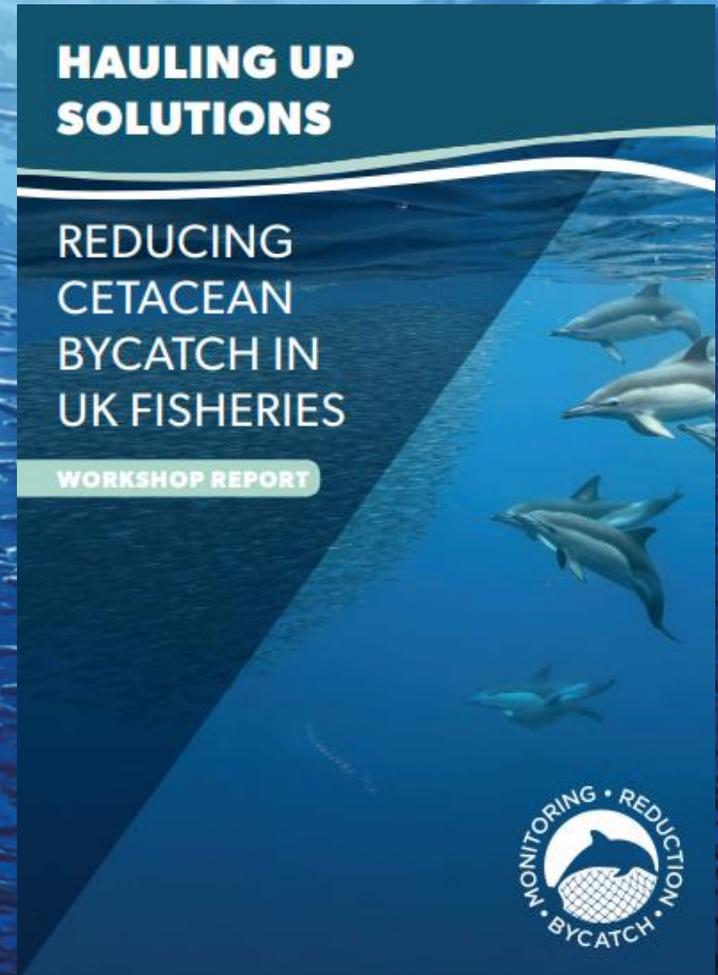
- The future of the fishing industry depends on the sea being clean, healthy and productive
- Fishermen do not want to catch protected species - damage to fishing gear and lost fishing time

Collaborative Working

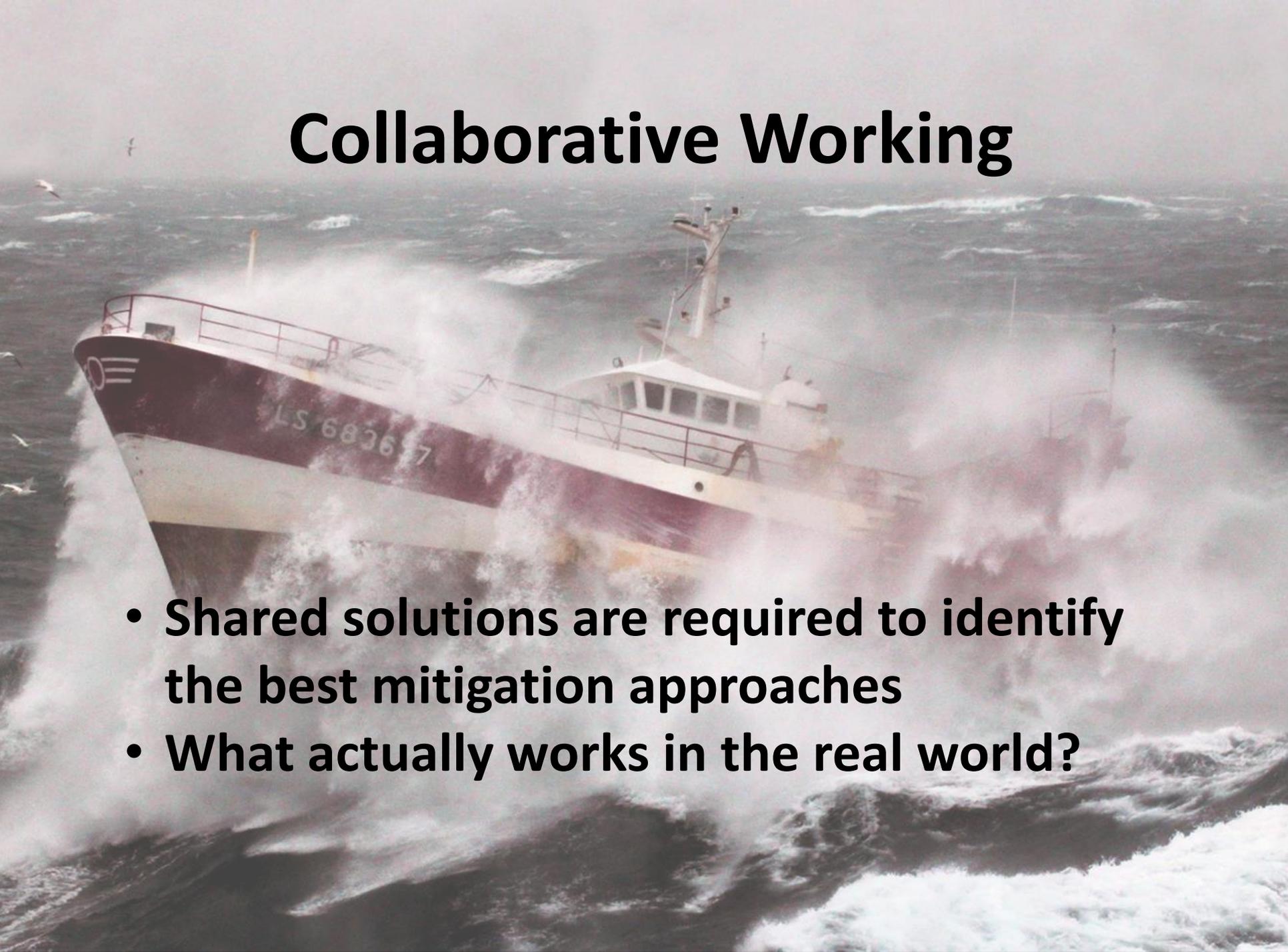
- Build Trust
- Share the issue
- Understand different points of view

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

A fishing boat with the number LS 683617 is shown navigating through rough, stormy seas. The boat is white with a dark hull and is surrounded by large, white-capped waves. The sky is overcast and grey, and several seagulls are visible in the air. The overall scene conveys a sense of challenge and resilience.

- **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
TOTAL	44	86

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?

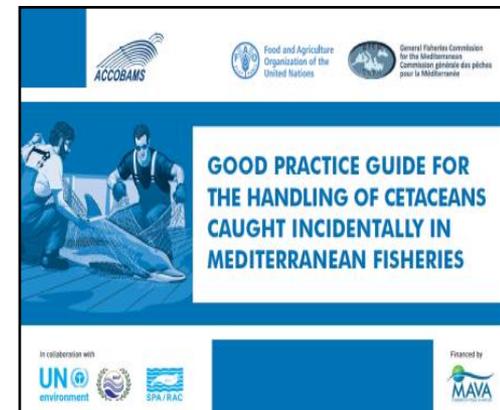
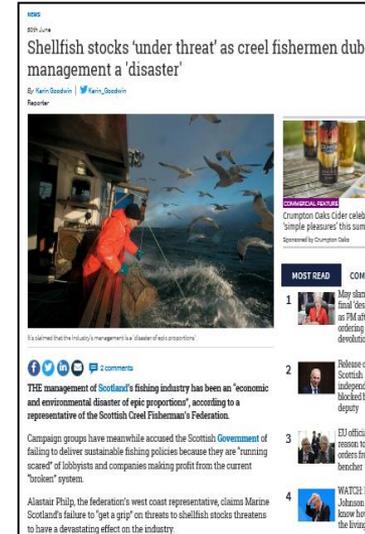
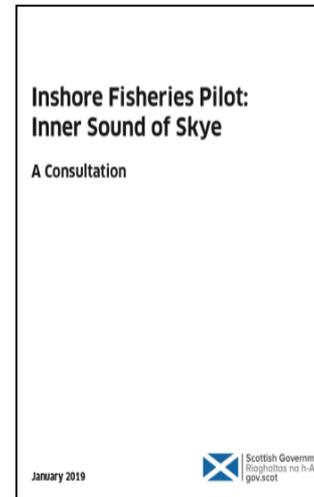
Beyond April 2020



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



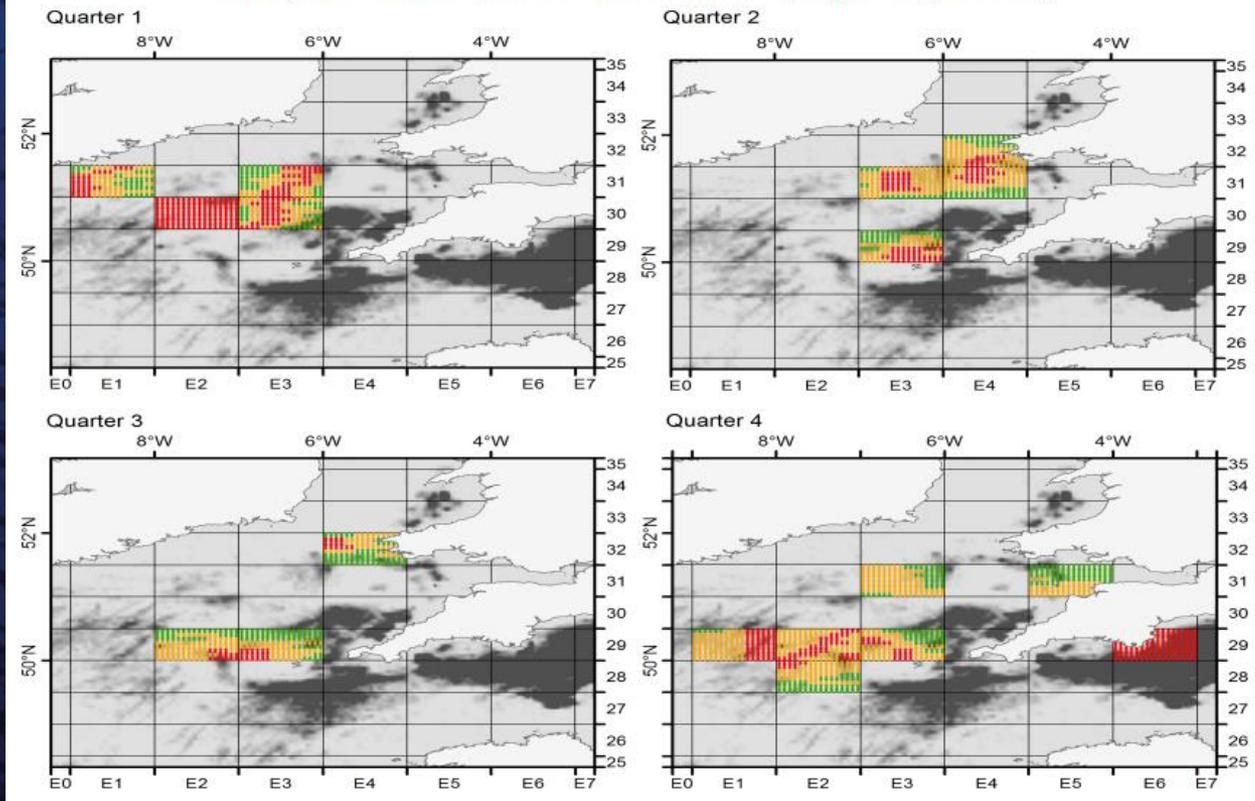
Enabled informed decision making on where to fish to reduce bycatch but would likely mean fishing less productive grounds



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

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Ellie MacLennan for the SEA slides

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