



North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Annual Report 2023/24



August 2024

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1. Introduction

North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) is the lead statutory regulator under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA) responsible for protection of the marine environment and sustainable use of sea fisheries resources within our district. The Authority's statutory duties are defined in MaCAA, which includes the requirement for us to publish an annual report detailing how we delivered against our main objectives and priorities for the previous financial year; this is that report and it should be read in conjunction with the associated Annual Plan 2023/24.

2. Governance

The Authority's full Committee has 30 members as defined in UK Statutory Instrument 2010 No. 2200. Ten members come from the Authority's nine constituent councils, with 17 appointed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) from a variety of stakeholder groups, each with skills and experience relevant to the management of inshore fisheries and marine conservation. There are three statutory members from the MMO, Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England (NE). Appendix I lists the members in 2023/24 with dates of appointments.

Standing Orders and other corporate governance documents are in the NWIFCA Constitution available on our website. The current edition of the Constitution was published in March 2022.

The Committee held quarterly meetings face-to-face in June, September and December 2023 and March 2024. Meetings of the Technical, Science and Byelaw Sub-Committee were held in May, August and November 2023 and February and March 2024. The Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee met four times within the reporting period and the General Purposes and Standards Sub-Committee did not meet at all.

An independent retained consultant working with Authority staff continued a systematic analysis of all areas of the Authority's Health & Safety (H&S) governance, reviewing policies and risk assessments by means of meetings and email communications. Meetings took place throughout the year to discuss, review and update working practices. There were seven H&S-related occurrences in 2023/24; these are set out in Appendix II. All such occurrences (accidents, incidents and near misses) are recorded and used as learning from experience events. They are discussed where necessary with relevant staff members. All recorded incidents were reviewed before each Authority full Committee quarterly meeting.

There are several national IFCA groups established to provide coordination and exchange of experience across the ten IFCAs. The Association of IFCA (AIFCA) is a policy and strategy committee attended by Chairs, Chief Officers and Defra. Members receive the ratified minutes in the CEO's quarterly reports. The Marine and Fisheries Chief Officer Group (MAFCO) is an operational-level group consisting of IFCA Chief Officers and Defra Policy colleagues and meets on a quarterly basis. The IFCAs' Chief Officers' Group (COG) is a working group to compare delivery approaches and develop new and innovative solutions. This group met quarterly online and in person during the reporting period. In addition, there are enforcement meetings of the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) which are attended by the Head of Enforcement, and scientific meetings of the IFCA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) which are attended by the Senior Scientist. Newly formed within this reporting period was the Strategic Operations Group (SOG), made up of members of COG, NIMEG and the MMO with a remit to report to both groups and assist with strategic themes in the inshore marine environment.

3. Resources

3.1 Officers and Assets

NWIFCA began 2023/24 with 20 permanent staff roles, of which there were four vacancies. These vacancies were filled during the reporting period, and in addition, Defra funding was used to employ an additional three members of staff on two-year fixed-term contracts. The Authority ended the year with a full cohort of staff with no vacancies. In addition, we underwent a job evaluation and pay review exercise which led to an organisational restructure (including new pay bands and grades) being implemented in December 2023; the Authority's new organogram can be seen in Appendix IV.

Premises, vessels and vehicles are listed in Appendix V. Within the reporting period, one vessel, Protector Bravo was disposed of by way of a private sale, with all funds returned to the Authority's reserves. A broad, three-year strategy to replace our ageing vehicular fleet (pick-up trucks, vans and ATVs) was agreed and enacted during the reporting period leading to replacement of several of our older vehicles.

Repairs of the engines of the Authority's primary patrol vessel, North Western Protector, continued from 2022/23 into 2023/24. These were completed in the summer of 2023 and the vessel was brought back into operation in late 2023 after a number of local sea trials.

3.1.1 Training

Officers' skills were updated under the Authority's training programme. Training objectives were identified in staff reviews. The training programme included:

- Defined training programmes aimed at specified roles and responsibilities provided in house or by IFCAs as a group, MMO or outside providers
- Tailored training to meet organisational and personal objectives for each officer delivered by the Head of Enforcement
- Assessment of the Authority's existing and future skills and needs by senior officers
- Consideration of external training available to bridge capacity gaps
- Monitoring and evaluation of training to achieve added value and effectiveness.

Five officers attended the IFCAs' national competent officer training course. The Head of Enforcement completed Unit 1 of the associated Internal Quality Assessor Qualification. Other mandatory and essential training was undertaken as follows:

- Sea Survival PST – 13 officers
- Commercial endorsement – three officers
- First Aid – five officers
- Fire Fighting – four officers
- Fire Warden at Work – ten officers
- QGIS – one officer
- ML5 certification – ten officers
- ATV quad bike course – six officers
- Manual Handling – nine officers

- GVC (Drone) - one officer
- Conflict Resolution & Breakaway Techniques– 15 officers
- Trailer towing training – eight officers

New IFCOS received mandatory internal and external training in:

- H&S policy
- Use of equipment
- Risk management
- Operation of the enforcement policy including the IFCO code of conduct

3.2 Financial

The budget for 2023/24 was passed by the Authority's Committee in December 2022. A below inflation increase in the levy of 3% was agreed. The Budget Review for 2023/24 is shown in Appendix VI.

Our accountants, Rushtons, brought in in 2022/23, continued to deliver our payroll and financial reporting and oversight services in 2023/24.

3.2.1 Income¹

As a result of the agreed 3% increase in local authorities' levies, 2023/24's levy increased to £1,447,000; this income remained the Authority's primary source of income. In addition, the Authority received £19,000 in shellfish sampling fees from local authorities, on whose behalf the Authority delivers this work; this was in line with what was expected. £90,000 was received in permit fees, again in line with the expected income. £107,000 of interest was earned on monies in reserve. Finally, £341,000 was received from Defra as part of the additional funding provided to IFCA's for increased responsibilities around MPA management, marine spatial prioritisation and Fisheries Management Plans. This is revenue funding and is intended to support an increase in resources for IFCA's to take on this additional work. This funding, along with a pre-existing £50,000 paid to the Authority in 2022/23 was ring-fenced and used to fund another three staff on two-year fixed-term contracts.

3.2.2 Expenditure

The Authority's biggest expenditure continued to be around staff expenses (*e.g.* salaries, expenses and National Insurance and pension contributions). For 2023/24, this totalled £1,109,000, which was slightly higher than budgeted (by £87,000), due to the implementation of the pay review and associated back pay for some staff. These increased staff costs were slightly offset by the Authority carrying some vacancies for short periods of time over the year. Expenditure on premises topped-out at £86,000, which was £11,000 more than expected for the year; an increase in energy costs and renewed leases with slight rent increases accounted for this overspend. Garaging and Moorings were under by £12,000 collectively, against a budget of £96,000 total. Transport costs were significantly under, with £108,000 spent against a budget of £151,000. £121,000 had been budgeted to be placed

¹ All figures quoted here are rounded to the nearest £1,000 for illustrative purposes; for exact figures, see Appendix VI.

into reserve for the replacement of North Western Protector in future years, as the Committee had agreed some years previous; this money was retained in reserve in 2023/24. Expenditure on supplies and services was over-budget (£75,000 incurred against a £58,000 budget) and corporate expenditure was £8,000 under-budget at £34,000.

3.2.3 Balance

The balance sheet for the Authority at year-end is shown in Appendix VII. This shows the Authority held tangible assets to the value of £729,000 along with financial assets of £4,059,000. It had total creditor amounts falling due within one year of £1,884,000 and, after taking into account the year's earnings, the total in capital and reserves was £2,904,000.

4. Fisheries

Commercial fishing north of Haverigg Point in Cumbria in 2023/24 continued to consist mainly of commercial trawling and netting for *Nephrops*, Dover sole, brill, turbot, plaice, cod and thornback ray. Some intertidal fisheries for periwinkles occurred along with sporadic commercial angling. Commercial potting for crab, lobster and whelk was also present.

Commercial fishing south of Haverigg Point was predominated by the mussel and cockle fisheries, which themselves are primarily hand-gathered fisheries. There was one commercial cockle fishery during this reporting year, the Penfold cockle fishery in the Ribble Estuary. The fishery opened under flexible conditions of NWIFCA Byelaw 3. Low numbers of permit holders accessed the fishery throughout the winter season. Commercial mussel fisheries were prosecuted within the Dee Estuary, at Foulney Island in Morecambe Bay and within the Ribble Estuary. National restrictions on fishing for bass continued to limit fishing activity for this species, both commercially and recreationally.

Records of registered and licensed fishing vessels within the district are maintained by the MMO. The latest data dated March 2023 is shown in Appendix VIII. Unlicensed and unregistered vessels include recreational fishing vessels and charter angling vessels.

Recreational fishing included nets and lines set from the shore. Recreational fishing from vessels appears to be becoming increasingly popular deploying traditional rod and line angling as well as static nets and pots, the latter targeting crab, lobster and whelk. Bait collection for peeler crab, along with lugworm, ragworm, other worm species and razor clam is increasingly common. In continuation of the emergency byelaw in place on the North Wirral foreshore to prevent the gathering of intertidal bivalve molluscs, a full byelaw is now in place.

5. Compliance and Survey Programs

Officers were tasked weekly by the Heads of Enforcement and Science to establish an effective program of tactical enforcement patrols and scientific surveys throughout the reporting period. The Authority maintained a strong presence of visible IFCOs around active fisheries and the Science Team delivered an effective survey program which provided valuable quantitative data on fishing activity to help inform fisheries management decisions. Data recorded from patrols and surveys was reported at quarterly meetings of the Authority.

The national inshore fisheries intelligence management systems for England is run by the MMO and is now well-established, and was in regular use throughout 2023/24 as in previous years. Intelligence was gathered and entered onto the Authority's internal system by IFCOs in Carnforth making an

important contribution to enforcement planning, evidence gathering and prosecutions. There was well coordinated sharing of information with other enforcement agencies with joint working. Intelligence was securely recorded in-house and submitted to the central intelligence hub at the MMO. The Head of Enforcement / Acting CEO attended the multi-agency NIMEG which met four times in the year, and the Senior Scientist attended the IFCA TAG which also met three times. TAG research conferences report the range of IFCA research, and IFCA and partner bodies' science officers present research and compare fisheries management experience.

Tasking continued to be on an intel-led and risk assessed basis, both informing the strategic direction of resources across the district, in line with the National Intelligence Model. Tasking and coordination group meetings continued with the MMO and multi- agency groups formed around strategic priority areas. Operation Quake was formed in response to the planned opening of the Penfold cockle fishery, the group was formed from partner stakeholders and worked to produce an operational plan which was compliant with the needs of the fishery, conservation objectives, landowner and local stakeholders. A feature of this site was access through a nature reserve with sensitive site features, to prevent encroachment and damage a demarked route was put in place and fishers were requested to find alternative parking arrangements. The fishery operated successfully with no issues however lower numbers of permitholders were experienced and the group will continue to develop how this will move forwards with a larger fishery.

Officers have continued to conduct shellfish sampling across the district on behalf of our local authorities' environmental health departments.

Appendix IX provides the Authority's inspection and compliance data for the year to 31st March 2024.

6. Byelaws and Regulations

MMO introduced revisions to the non-statutory byelaw making procedure in 2019 to better define the roles of IFCAs and MMO in the process of making byelaws. The new procedure has resulted in more efficient byelaw development with IFCA and MMO officers working closely and effectively to complete byelaws as quickly as possible. In 2023/24, the following byelaws were under development by the Authority:

- **Byelaw 1 Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS).** This byelaw was confirmed in January 2024. It became essential following repeal of the EU technical regulation 850/98 in 2019 and replacement with 1241/2019. Eastern IFCA have made similar MCRS byelaws.
- **Netting Byelaw.** This byelaw is needed to rationalise our inconsistent legacy byelaws across the district and create a permit scheme for all netting activity to enable the Authority to apply adaptive management to the fishery through flexible permit conditions. The final draft text was agreed by officers at the end of 2023/24 and an informal consultation with stakeholders had taken place. The Impact Assessment will be completed in early 2024/25 and the byelaw made by the Authority, before a formal consultation is conducted and the byelaw passed to MMO for quality assurance, and then to Defra to be confirmed.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the district are shown in Appendix X including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). 78% of the district is designated MPA. No new fishing activity can take place in an MPA until an impact assessment has been completed and approved by NE showing that the activity will be conducted in such a way that no damage will be caused to protected features of the sites. This high proportion of the coast is a measure of work by successive governments and the Authority to protect the marine environments of the North West coast of England.

7. Science and Survey Work

The Authority's Science Team carries out essential research activities to support on-going byelaw development, sustainable fisheries management and MPA support.

Science supports the Authority's fisheries management decisions through stock assessment, field surveys and assessments of fisheries impacts on protected features. The information is used to determine whether a fishery can be opened, and the potential flexible permit conditions required for its sustainable management.

As part of this work, the Science Team undertakes habitat regulation assessments (HRAs) to ensure fisheries do not impact the protected features of any protected areas they occur within. The data also contributes to the long-term monitoring of the stock, and identification of stock trends.

Alongside this work, the Science Team contribute to a variety of workstreams consisting of MPA management, evidence provision and data analyses, research into sustainable fisheries, partnership working and knowledge sharing with relevant organisations, stakeholder engagement, and development of new research projects. Further detail on the main work of the team in 2023/24 and progress against Defra's Success Criteria 5 is provided in Appendix XI.

This year the main focus of the team was to:

- Carry out the core stock assessments and inspections (see Appendix XII)
- Undertake the necessary HRAs in consultation with NE and members of the TSB Sub-Committee to approve proposed opening or closing of fisheries
- Assist with the development of a new Byelaw 4 returns system
- Developing the Authority's Cockerle FMP
- Undertake Mussel MLS studies to identify the need for a change in the MLS of mussel
- Establish a new schedule for whelk sampling to commence Summer 2023, dissections and analysis
- Participation and representation of NWIFCA and marine interests in major infrastructure developments within the district including Crown Estate wind leasing (see Appendices XIII and XIV)
- Ongoing work to ensure all fisheries occurring within MPAs have been assessed and management implemented if necessary to prevent risk to protected features
- Establishing a stakeholder consultation to determine if NWIFCA will trial an early open season.

7.1 Case Study – Sustainable Fisheries Assessments

Cockerle and mussel surveys are carried out annually from Spring until late Summer. The surveys collect information on the spatial distribution, abundance and biomass of cockle across the main cockle beds in the district. The information is critical to informing HRAs and ensuring sustainable management of the district's stocks. This work is high priority and resource intensive. These surveys take place from ATVs and/or by foot. For mussels, surveys are undertaken using the Dutch Wand method, and for cockles, samples are taken by quadrat on a grid system across the bed. The information is gathered and analysed and is then provided to the Committee at both the quarterly meetings of the TSB and the full Committee for approval and recommendations regarding the annual fishery openings. This workstream helps to ensure sustainable fisheries and protection of the district's MPAs' protected features.

This year, the Science Team undertook seven cockle surveys, and 25 mussel surveys across the district (Figure 1). During the survey, each cockle is counted, sized, and then their collective weights are taken for size and undersize in each of the cockle fishing areas.

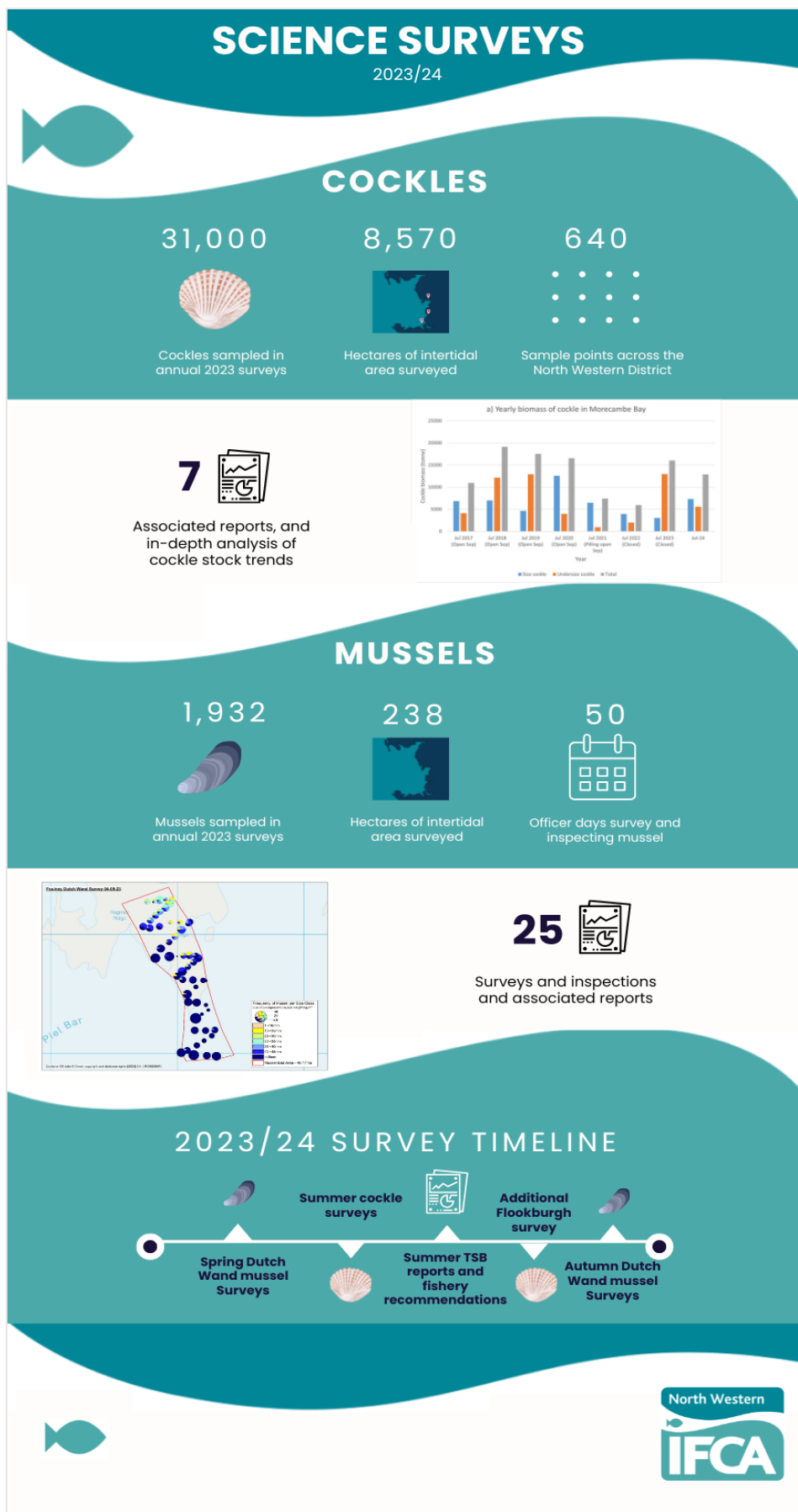


Figure 1. Infographic summary of main survey work of Science Team 2023/24

7.2 Case Study – Stakeholder engagement

Following 2023 cockle surveys undertaken in July, members of the fishing industry highlighted they would be keen to trial an earlier open season. Difficulties in live market exports have changed some fisher's approaches to the industry, and opening the cockle fishery when meat yields are highest for cooking was desirable.

To facilitate this request, Science Officers undertook extensive work identifying the feasibility of an early open season from; a HRA perspective, survey perspective and wider stakeholder agreement. One aspect we were keen to understand was the wider stakeholder view. To gain this, officers undertook a stakeholder consultation, consisting of in-person stakeholder events, online questionnaires and surveys to gather industry feedback, and present the findings to the Authority. The research was beneficial, not only for gaining feedback on the proposed management change, but also on fishers concerns regarding the fishery, and driving forces in their decision making.

7.3 Case Study – Research projects

This year, the main research focus was on determining a minimum landing size for whelks in the district. The introduction of the new Byelaw 4 potting permit in 2022 applied an annual increment to the minimum size for whelks caught within the district. However, there has been representation from industry that the increments may not be compatible with the sizes of whelk in the district.

To address this concern, Science Officers undertook a sampling regime to try and identify the size of maturity of whelks in the district. This work was completed in February 2024. Summary details of the work are provided in Figure 3.

Further representation by Authority members regarding the minimum size for mussels in the district led to the instigation of a research project looking into the size distribution, and pearl and barnacle coverage of mussels on the Foulney mussel bed. This work involved using Dutch Wand survey methodology to gather samples across the extent of the bed, laboratory dissections of mussels to identify pearl, and spatial mapping to identify the size distribution. Summary details of the work are provided in Figure 2.

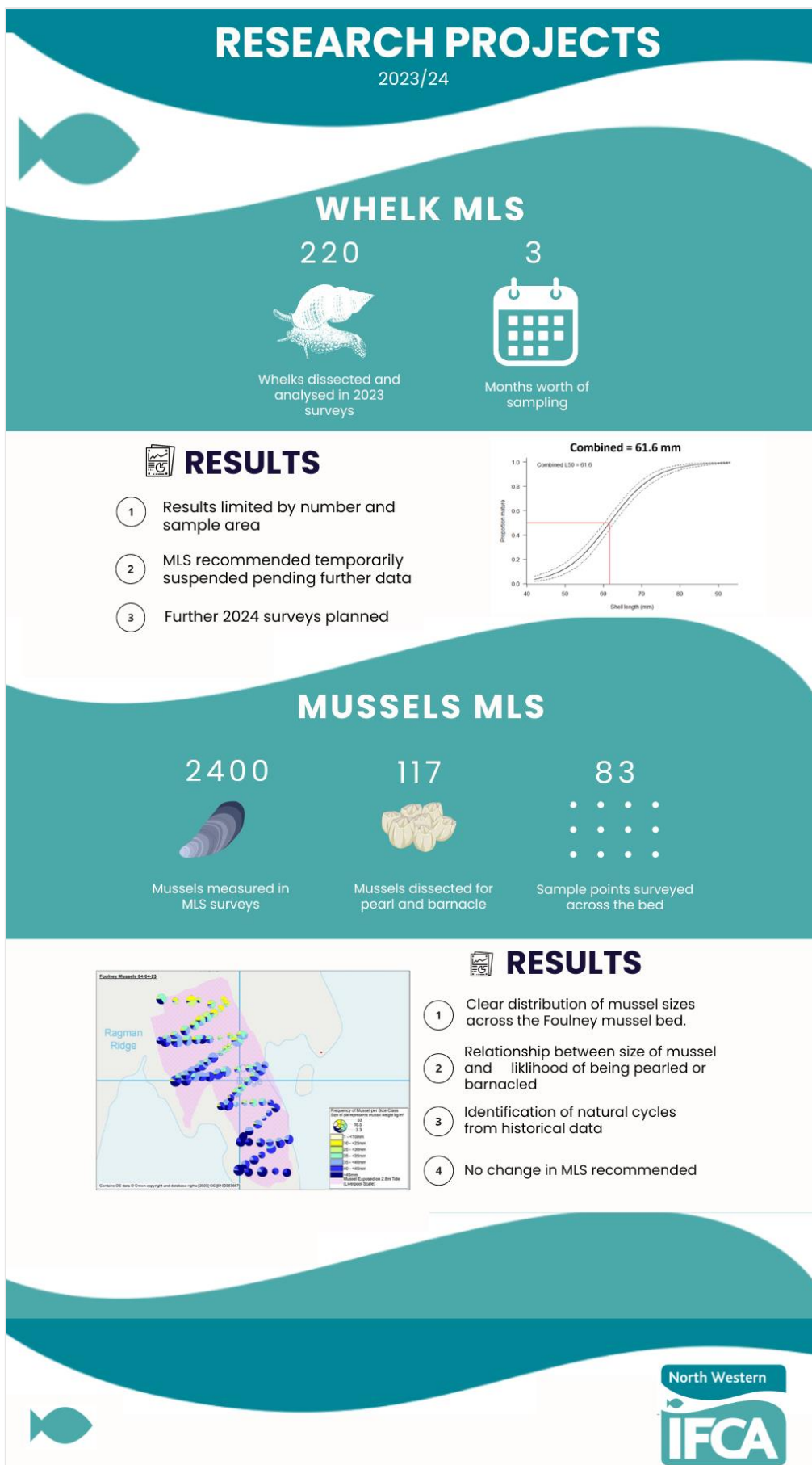


Figure 2. Infographic summary of main research work of Science team 2023/24

8. Partnership Working

Working in partnership with other agencies continued to be a high government priority. In 2023/24 the Authority worked with other IFCAs and AIFCA through attendance of, and contribution to, also COG, TAG and NIMEG. It worked locally with MMO, EA and NE, utilising their statutory members on the Committee, as well as the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), councils' environmental health departments, Food Standards Agency, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Marine Scotland.

MMO continued to be a key partner with whom the Authority shared intelligence, tasking and training. MMO is responsible for quality assurance of byelaws and appointment of members.

NE were consulted under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 on all Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) of fishing activities within MPAs. Regular liaison of the Authority's Science Team the NE's Marine Team continued.

The Authority worked with environmental health to ensure all intertidal shell fisheries complied with shellfish hygiene standards as laid down in the Water Framework Directive by collecting shellfish samples, attending the council-owned North West Shellfish Liaison Group meetings and assisting enforcement of the requirement for registration documents.

During this reporting period, the Authority and councils convened multi-agency committees as required to prepare operational plans for cockle fisheries at Penfold to manage the diverse socio-economic and environmental impacts of cockle harvesting.

GLAA use gangmaster licences to bring more effective regulation into the shellfish industry and ensure labour is not exploited. The Authority supports this policy to improve standards of financial and management practice.

EA is responsible for delivery of the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The Authority continued to stand ready to undertake duties arising from these directives and assisted NRW and EA with the management of the Dee cockle fishery, as well as attending the Dee Estuary Fisheries Liaison Group.

The Authority consulted environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOS) in the development of policies. The Authority contributes to the North West Coastal Forum, Solway Firth Partnership, Dee Estuary Sea Fisheries Liaison Group, and North West Regional Fisheries Group.

9. Appendices

Appendix I – Committee Members as of Year-End

Council Members		Date Appointed
Blackpool Council	Cllr. J. Hugo	June 2023
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Cllr. H. Deynem	August 2023
Cumberland Council	Cllr. A. Markley	October 2010
Halton Council	Cllr. B. Woolfall	May 2015
Lancashire County Council	Cllr. J. Parr Cllr. S. Clarke	May 2021 May 2021
Liverpool City Council	Vacant	-
Sefton Council	Cllr. S. McGinnity	April 2018
Westmorland and Furness Council	Cllr. J. Boak	April 2023
Wirral Council	Cllr. G. Davies	August 2023
MMO Appointees		Date Appointed
Marine Environment	Dr. J. Andrews	October 2015
Marine Environment	Mr. N. Baxter	March 2020
Commercial Fisheries	Mr. R. Benson	December 2018
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. S. Brown	October 2017
Marine Environment	Mr. P. Capper	May 2021
Commercial Fisheries	Mr. R. Donnan	May 2021
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. W. Friend	March 2020
Commercial Fisheries	Mr. T. Jones	March 2024
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. B. Leigh	March 2015
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. R. Lomax	May 2021
Commercial Fisheries	Mr. S. Manning	October 2014

Commercial Fisheries	Mr. G. Pidduck	March 2020
Marine Environment	Ms. C. Salthouse	October 2014
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. L. Stainton	March 2020
Commercial Fisheries	Mr. K. Thompson	October 2014
Recreational Fisheries	Mr. D. Williams	October 2023
Statutory Appointees		Date Appointed
MMO	Mr. S. Johnston	June 2022
EA	Mr. J. Turner	June 2022
NE	Mr. L. Browning	March 2021

Appendix II – H&S Occurrences

Date	Type	Location	Description	Outcome
05/04/23	Incident	A595	Travelling back from Wigan with boat and trailer, the bearings collapsed on the trailer wheel.	Egertons recovered the trailer and both trailer and vessel taken to Lakeland Trailers.
18/05/23	Near Miss	Ellisons Scar, Solway Firth	Three ATVs stuck in soft mud.	All ATVs recovered with no damage and no injuries to Officers.
21/11/23	Near Miss	Carnforth Lock Up	Roller shutter doors condemned as did not meet current safety standards.	Roller shutter doors replaced and all others surveyed and replaced as necessary.
21/11/23	Near Miss	Liverpool Lock Up	Roller shutter doors condemned as did not meet current safety standards.	Roller shutter doors replaced and all others surveyed and replaced as necessary.
24/01/24	Accident	Bibby Street, Liverpool	Maneuvering through parked cars, minor collision with oncoming vehicle.	Insurers informed but no claims made. No damage to vehicle or Officer.
05/01/24	Near Miss	Working from home	Utilising NWIFCA laptop charger at home, blew all the electrics. Charger had not been Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) tested.	Ensure all staff know when PATs are taking place and all equipment is in the office for PATs.
06/02/24	Near Miss	Carnforth	Identified that the Manta helmets, issued as PPE, have expiry dates.	Helmets added to the uniform inventory. Serial numbers and expiry dates collated and monitored.

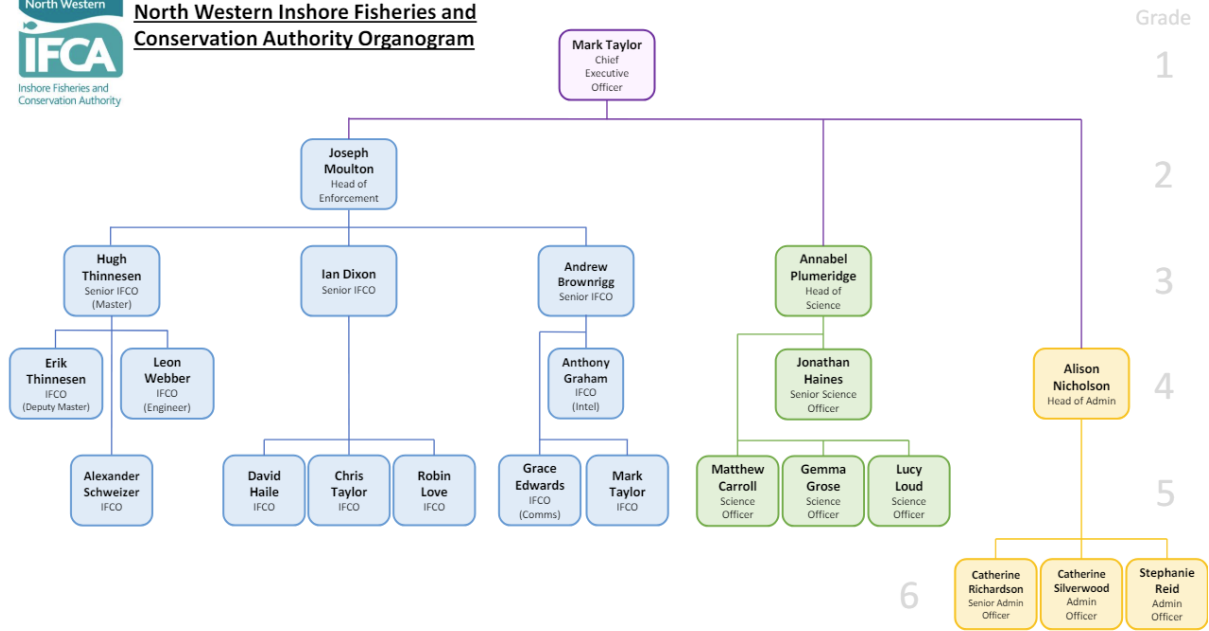
Appendix III – Map of District



Appendix IV- Organogram as of Year-End



North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Organogram



Appendix V – Assets as of Year-End

Buildings	Carnforth Office	Leased, head office, 12 staff
	Whitehaven Office	Leased, seven staff
	Barrow Office / Lock-Up	Leased, two staff and vessel, vehicle and ATV
	Liverpool Office / Lock-Up	Leased, two staff, vehicles and ATVs
	Carnforth Lock-Up	Leased, vehicles and ATVs
	Whitehaven Lock-Up	Leased, vessel, vehicles and ATVs.
Vessels	North Western Protector	2018 20m aluminium catamaran hull based in Whitehaven Harbour
	Protector Charlie	2018 5.3m daughter craft / boarding vessel for North Western Protector, constructed of aluminium alloy with rigid collared sponsons
	Protector Gamma	2011 6m Humber RIB based in Barrow Store
	Bay Protector	2013 7.5m Humber RIB based in Liverpool Marina
Vehicles	5 x 4WD Pick-Up Trucks	One in Whitehaven, one in Barrow, one Carnforth and two Liverpool
	5 x small vans	One in Whitehaven, one in Barrow and three in Carnforth
All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)	11 x ATVs	Two in Whitehaven, two in Barrow, five in Carnforth and two in Liverpool

Appendix VI – 2023/24 Budget

Budget Heading	Actual	Budget	Variance
INCOME			
Levy	£1,446,877	£1,446,877	£0
Sampling	£19,256	£19,000	£256
Permit Fees	£89,960	£90,000	(£40)
Interest	£106,635	£9,006	£97,629
<i>Gross Profit</i>	<i>£1,662,728</i>	<i>£1,564,883</i>	<i>£97,845</i>
EXPENDITURE			
Employees	£1,108,977	£1,022,103	£86,874
Buildings	£85,589	£74,139	£11,450
Garaging	£78,977	£85,000	(£6,023)
Moorings	£4,817	£11,000	(£6,183)
Transport	£107,507	£150,990	(£43,483)
Capital Asset Replacement	£121,151	£121,151	£0
Supplies / Services	£74,918	£58,000	£16,918
Corporate	£34,308	£42,500	(£8,192)
<i>Gross Expenditure</i>	<i>£1,616,244</i>	<i>£1,564,883</i>	<i>£51,361</i>
Net Profit	£46,484	£0	£46,484

Appendix VII – Balance Sheet as of Year-End

FIXED ASSETS	
Vehicles	£245,335
Vessels	£483,360
<i>Total Fixed Assets</i>	<i>£728,695</i>
CURRENT ASSETS	
CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND	
LLC Reserve Account	£1,432,000
NatWest Other	£1,332
NWSFDR / NWIFCA	£265,219
<i>Total Cash at Bank and In Hand</i>	<i>£1,698,551</i>
Debtors' Control	£1,665,091
Payments in Advance	£142,543
Accrued Income	£553,035
Suspense	£0
Total Current Assets	£4,059,220
CREDITORS²	
VAT Liability	(£34,227)
Creditors' Control	£120,078
Inland Revenue Suspense	£23,700
Employee Super	£18,896
Accruals	£4,984
Deferred Income	£1,750,274
Rounding	£0

² Amounts falling due within one year

<i>Total Creditors</i>	<i>£1,883,705</i>
<i>Net Current Assets (Liabilities)</i>	<i>£2,175,515</i>
Total Assets³	£2,904,211
Net Assets	£2,904,211
CAPITAL AND RESERVES	
Capital Asset Replacement Fund	£995,788
RDEL	£340,340
Current Year Earnings	£102,786
General Reserves	£360,933
Other Reserves	£1,104,365
Total Capital and Reserves	£2,904,212

³ Less current liabilities

Appendix VIII – Fishing Vessels Operating within District

Type	Number
<10m District Commercial	63
>10m District Commercial	19
<10m Visitor Commercial	6
>10m Visitor Commercial	8
Unregistered / Unlicensed	211

Appendix IX – Inspection and Compliance Data

Summary of quarterly reports 2023/24

Q1:

- I. Trawling – Some activity from local and visiting vessels targeting *Nephrops* and potting bait fish of plaice and dogfish from grounds southwest of St. Bees Head.
- II. Angling – Anglers were prevalent across the district from beaches and piers. A good run of Mackerel was reported along the Cumbrian coast. Bass reports improved around Morecambe Bay particularly from low water marks.
- III. Potting – Local vessels began to pioneer whelk ground inside the NWIFCA district with some choosing to fish offshore. Local vessels choose to fish crab and lobster pots in line with the season, leaving the whelk fishery for later in the year. Vessels from Barrow continued to pot for crustacea off Walney with good reports. Potting continues to be very limited South of Morecambe Bay.
- IV. Cockle and Mussels – Seasonal closures remained in place during this quarter. Normal levels of activity were observed on the Foulney mussel bed with gatherers accessing spring tides to fulfil orders for depuration.
- V. Netting – Seasonal closures under Byelaw 10 in Cumbria prohibit netting during this quarter in the old CSFC area. High numbers of jellyfish and poor weather limited the activities of vessels in the middle of the district, due to on-going intertidal bass restrictions beach netting was limited from set nets.

Q2:

- I. Trawling – During the quarter, reports of *Nephrops* being caught were 120-400kg per day on occasion. Vessels from Maryport and Whitehaven have landed their catch to the local cooperative as well as direct to the public at both ports.
- II. Potting – Whelk vessels again fished outside the district landing into Whitehaven, Maryport and Fleetwood. Lobster and brown crab were still being targeted by a few vessels, with catches decreasing towards the end of the quarter. Two vessels were observed on a regular basis off Walney Island, with Three Barrow vessels continuing to work pots with higher value lobster making up the most of landings, two of which trialled pots for *Nephrops*.
- III. Angling – Activity was seen in most areas on beaches and piers throughout the quarter, with the annual cod season beginning to take hold at the end of October. Angling in the south of the district continued with the usual numbers of inspections being carried out, and boat angling over the weekends. Two commercial vessels were observed targeting bass in an area off Foulney, with reports of good catches being received.
- IV. Netting – No netting was seen on beaches in the Cumbria area. Netting has continued in other areas of the district being prominent in Morecambe Bay for pot bait and along the North Wirral foreshore by either set nets or beach seines. Licensed vessels fished the outer Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary, with inspections and catch reports suggesting that it was a reasonable year for them with Bass the predominant species.
- V. Shrimping – Activity increased in this quarter but reports suggested shrimps were smaller than they should be. Most of the shrimp fishing continues to be in intertidal locations at low water using tractor towed beam trawls.
- VI. Bait Collection – Has continued to take place along the coastline by spade as well as hand pump was seen during the quarter.
- VII. Hand Gathering bivalves – The Penfold cockle fishery in the Ribble Estuary opened in late October with 80 permit holders initially present, limited landings were inspected of 1-2t per day resulting in numbers of attendees falling quickly. The Foulney mussel bed has continued to be the most productive and lucrative fishery with up to 30T of mussels landed each tide over peak times on spring tides by up to 30 permit holders. The enforcement of the prohibition on removal of bivalve molluscs from the North Wirral foreshore continues.

Q3:

- I. Trawling – Some activity was observed from local trawlers targeting *Nephrops* and bait fish (plaice and dogfish) from grounds southwest of St. Bees, 6-10nm. Some reports of *Nephrops* being caught between 60-100kg per day on the odd occasion, by vessels from Maryport and Whitehaven who landed to the cooperative and direct to the public at both ports.
- II. Potting – Only a small number of vessels targeting lobster and brown crab continued to fish pots, from the north and south of Whitehaven. Creel pots for shrimps have been used in the latter part of the quarter, with mixed results. Further down the coast vessels from Barrow brought their gear in for Winter.
- III. Angling – Continued throughout the district on both beaches and piers. However, once the bass left the area, reports of codling were being caught from the coast off Walney. Inspections took place on the promenades off Wallasey, with Seacombe and Magazine promenades continuing to be most popular in the South of the district. Recreational / charter boat angling continued in the south of the district.
- IV. Netting – No beach nets occurred in the district except for seven inspections on the North Wirral coastline. Netting from vessels was reduced but there were good reports of high numbers of juvenile bass which is promising for the future.
- V. Mussels – Low level of activity on Foulney on suitable tides by small numbers of permit holders. The Penfold cockle fishery continued at low levels with gatherers happy to fish for regular but small quantities. 372 inspections were logged at the fishery during the Quarter.
- VI. Occasional reports of commercial bait digging in the Duddon estuary and commercial bait pumping for Black Lug worm on the Irish coast of Walney Island

Q4:

- I. Trawling – Similar trawling activity was reported in the Cumbrian area of the district which continues to be the focal area of boats utilising bottom towed gear. The target species being *Nephrops* or other demersal species.
- II. Shrimping – Low levels of shrimping continued with the three tractors operating in Morecambe Bay reporting slightly increased landings being sold for local orders.
- III. Potting – Only a small number of vessels targeting lobster and brown crab continued to fish pots, from the North and South of Whitehaven. Creel pots for shrimps have been used in the latter part of the month, with mixed results. Further down the coast low level activity was seen inside the district from Barrow.
- IV. Angling – Continued throughout the district on both beaches and piers. There was one report of a John Dory being caught. One commercial angling vessel was observed targeting Bass during favourable weather conditions.
- V. Netting – Low levels of netting were encountered across the district during this period.
- VI. Premises inspections took place in the south of the district.
- VII. Mussels – Similar to the previous quarter low levels of mussels were fished from the Foulney bed with some disruption due to mussels spawning on lays at their destination.

Activity type noted throughout 2023/24 – key indicates the level of activity in each area

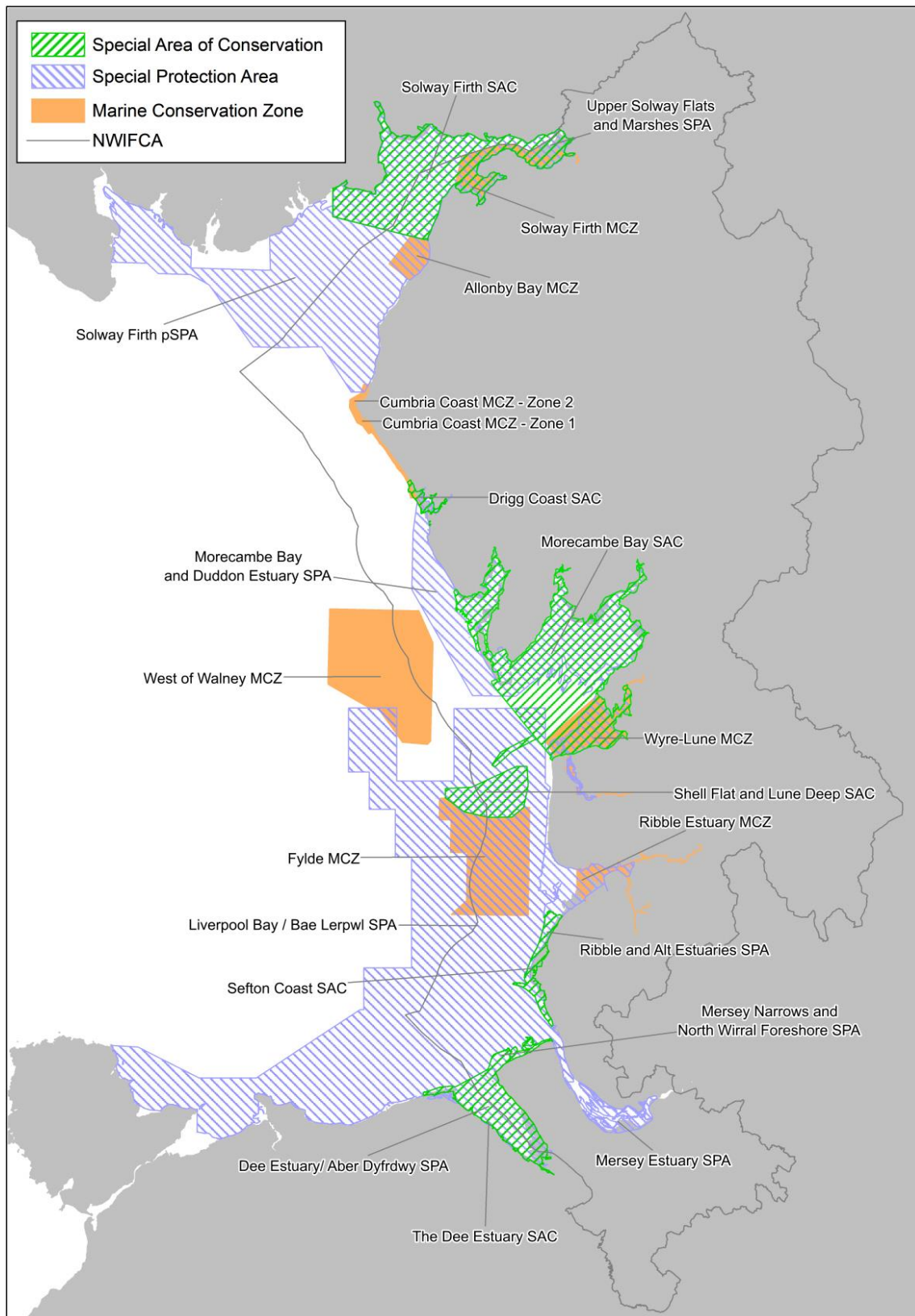
0=none, 1=low, 2=medium, 3=high

Area	Activity / Area	Species	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter
Burgh Marsh to Haverigg Point	Trawling	Wet fish	1	1	1	2
		<i>Nephrops</i>	1	1	1	2
	Potting	Lobster and crab	1	2	2	2
		Whelks	2	2	2	2
		Shrimps	0	1	1	1
	Angling		1	1	2	2
		Bass	1	1	1	1
	Netting		0	0	0	1
Bait digging		0	0	1	0	
Haverigg Point to Arnside	Bi-valves	Cockles	0	0	0	0
		Mussels	1	2	1	1
	Potting		1	0	1	1
	Netting		1	2	0	1
	Angling		2	2	1	1
	Bait digging		0	0	1	1
	Shrimping		0	1	1	1
Arnside to Knott End		Cockles	0	0	0	0
	Foulney	Mussels	0	0	0	0
	Angling	Bass	2	2	2	1
	Netting	Bass	1	2	0	1
	Bait collection		1	1	1	1
River Wyre to River Dee	Angling		2	2	2	2
	Bi-valves	Cockles	0	1	2	0
	Netting		1	2	1	1
	Bait collection		0	1	2	2
	Shrimping		0	1	0	1
	Potting		0	1	0	0
	Premises		0	0	0	1

Patrol and inspection Data 2023/24

At Sea	Vessel patrols	31
	Boardings	6
	Closings (not included as boardings)	51
	Fishing vessel sightings	91
	Gear inspections	848
On Land	Shore patrols	906
	ATV Patrols	183
	Premises inspections	0
	Inspections	1462
Outcomes	Verbal warnings	25
	Written warnings / advisory letters	120
	Formal cautions	1
	FAPs	0
	Cases pending court proceedings	1
	Individuals prosecuted in court	0

Appendix X – District MPAs



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Appendix XI – Performance Assessment of SC5

Work Stream	Outputs	Completion status	Comment
5.1) Scientific Surveys (sea-going)	Plan and carry out habitat surveys in the Solway to inform future mussel fisheries	Minimal progress	Limited sea-going survey capability for 2023/24.
	Plan and carry out Solway cockle survey		
	Process and analyse survey data		
	Prepare project report		
5.2) Scientific Surveys (shore based)	Plan and carry out shore-based surveys (cockles, mussels, bivalves etc.)	Complete	
	Process and analyse survey data		
	Prepare project report		
	Report to TSB		
5.3) Participation in TAG Meetings	Attend and contribute to TAG meetings and report on meeting	Complete	
5.4) Consultation and Engagement with Major Developments	Provide feedback on relevant marine works to developers, MMO and the Planning Inspectorate	Complete	
	Provide evidence to help with development decisions and impact assessments where required		
	Attend relevant meetings with external stakeholders regarding proposed works		
	Disseminate relevant information to industry		
5.5) Cockle Fishery Stock Assessment and Fishery Recommendations	Annual cockle survey planning	Complete	
	Annual cockle surveys		
	Analysis of survey data		
	Preparation of HRAs and delivery of recommendations for management		
	Production of survey notes / results		
	Consultation with NE re. HRA advice and conclusions		
	Update technical science and byelaw committee on progress and management decisions		
	Develop permit conditions / authorisations		
5.6) Mussel (seed and size) Fishery Stock Assessment and Fishery Recommendations	Annual mussel survey planning	Complete	
	Annual mussel surveys		
	Analysis of survey data		
	Preparation of HRAs and delivery of recommendations for management		
	Production of survey notes / results		
	Consultation with NE re. HRA advice and conclusions		
	Update technical science and byelaw committee on progress and management decisions		
	Develop permit conditions / authorisations		
5.7) Whelk SoM Study	Analyse data	Complete	Further work
	Prepare report on the research findings		

	Present work to TSB		planned for 2024/25.
5.8) Annual Research Plan	Prepare annual research plan	Ongoing	
	Assess research priorities and time planning		
5.9) Dispensations	Assess the suitability of dispensation applications and proposed activities	Complete	
	Provide dispensation for activities from byelaws in consultation with Enforcement Team		
5.10) Data Analysis and Services	Provision of GIS, data and analysis to inform evidence requirements (e.g. maps, vessel sightings and fish stocks etc.)	Ongoing	
	Maintain data sources – IFCA shore sightings and patrol vessel sightings		
	To work where possible to MEDIN standards		
5.11) Support Development and Maintenance of MPA management Measures	Develop MCZ and EMS fisheries assessments for outstanding sites	Ongoing	
	Prepare any required evidence needed for management		
5.12) Develop Species management Plans for District Fisheries	Review Fisheries Act 2020 and Statements and scope of requirements, national, regional, and priority species etc.	Ongoing	This is ongoing work.
	Assess data held and data requirement to inform species management plans		
	Prepare new and update existing FMPs		
5.13) Biosecurity Plan Updates	Finalise and implement the Authority's biosecurity plan alongside NE	Complete	
5.14) Scientific Survey Capability	Maintenance of vehicles and equipment for shore based scientific surveys	Complete	
5.15) Participate in and Contribute to Relevant Groups	Maintain attendance and involvement with national, regional and area specific groups such as , Whelk working group, B, NW Standing Environment Group, NW Shellfish Liaison Group, Solway Firth Partnership, Mersey tidal power etc.	Complete	
5.17) Annual Research Report	Prepare the Annual Research Report: Report on achievement of objectives set in Annual Research Plan and demonstrating use of evidence for decision making	Ongoing	
5.18) Monitoring and control plan	Carry out review of HRAs in line with the monitoring and control plans to ensure the HRA's previously completed are still appropriate for current activity	Complete	
	Check conservation advice hasn't changed, and activity levels not changed		

Appendix XII – Science Annual Cockle and mussel Survey Data

Year	Month	Day	Mussel surveys
2023	April	4th	Foulney stunted DW Survey
2023	April	5th	Walney Channel DW Survey
2023	April	19th	Foulney additional samples PM
2023	April	20th	South America PM
2023	April	24th	Pilling Biomass Test AM
2023	May	9th	Heysham Inspection AM
2023	May	16th	Warton Sands Inspection PM
2023	May	18th	Ellison Scar PM
2023	May	23rd	West Kirby and Thurstaston AM
2023	June	6th	Wyre End AM
2023	June	7th	Fleetwood AM
2023	June	19th	Heysham AM
2023	June	20th	Lytham AM
2023	July	7th	South America AM
2023	August	2nd	Heysham
2023	August	3rd	Fleetwood
2023	August	4th	South America
2023	August	29th	Fleetwood PM
2023	September	1st	South America
2023	September	4th	Foulney DW
2023	October	2nd	Low Bottom

2023	November	3rd	Flookburgh / Fleetwood
2024	March	13th	South America
2024	March	14th	Heysham
2024	March	23rd	Foulnaze
Year	Month	Day	Cockle surveys
2023	June	9th	Southport AM
2023	July	4th	Flookburgh PM
2023	July	5th	Flookburgh PM
2023	July	10th	Pilling AM
2023	July	11th	Aldingham & Newbiggin AM / Fleetwood
2023	July	17th	Leven PM
2023	July	20th	Middleton PM
2023	July	24th	Leasowe AM
2023	July	25th	Middleton Return
2023	November	3rd	Flookburgh

Appendix XIII – Marine Licence Consultations

Date	Marine Licence
12/04/2023	Walney Extension Offshore Windfarm: Maintenance works
02/05/2023	Mona Offshore Trials (Suction bucket foundation trials)
02/05/2023	Heysham Power Station Routine Marine Structure Maintenance
15/05/2023	Maintenance Dredging and Disposal of Garston Approach Channel and Garston Docks
24/05/2023	Deganwy Marina Maintenance Dredge and Disposal, Conwy
02/06/2023	Morecambe Offshore Wind Farm Generation Assets Consultation
02/06/2023	Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets Consultation
05/06/2023	Jetty Repair Works at Cemex Raynes Quarry
13/06/2023	Blackpool Beach Management Scheme scoping opinion request
15/06/2023	Burbo Bank Offshore Wind Farm Electricity works - screening opinion
29/06/2023	BP and EnBW Intertidal Geotechnical Survey
10/07/2023	St Annes Seawall Coast Protection Scheme
12/07/2023	Walney Extension Offshore Windfarm: Maintenance works (blade extensions)
27/07/2023	MaresConnect Interconnector Seabed Survey
31/07/2023	MOD Eskmeals Artillery Trial
08/08/2023	Derwent Viaduct
14/08/2023	Hesketh Bank Outfall Improvement Works Consultation
24/08/2023	Garston North Dock
25/08/2023	RAF Valley Tidal Valve Clearance
12/09/2023	Mostyn Energy Park Extension (September)
28/09/2023	Grange-over-Sands Lido - New pumped outfall
27/10/2023	HyNet Trenchless crossing of the River Dee

22/11/2023	Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets Consultation
11/12/2023	Jubilee Bridge Painting Works Variation
10/01/2024	Signalling Power Renewals - Acton Grange
08/02/2024	Blackpool Beach Management - Ground Investigation
22/02/2024	St Annes Seawall Coast Protection Scheme
23/03/2024	Shiplift sediment sampling for contaminant testing - Barrow
23/03/2024	West Kirby Beach Management Operations
22/03/2024	Walney Walkway Repairs
26/03/2024	Hambleton Flood Risk Management Scheme
27/03/2024	River Esk / Esk Viaduct - Maintenance of existing works

Appendix XIV – Scientific Dispensations

Date	Dispensation
19/04/2023	University of Essex - Howard Freeman
10/05/2023	Cefas <i>Nephrops</i> Catch Sampling 2023
30/05/2023	Cefas Irish Sea Beam Trawl Surveys 2023
26/06/2023	Environment Agency
01/08/2023	Environment Agency
08/08/2023	Natural England - Mandy Knott
15/09/2023	Lake District Coast Aquarium
19/09/2023	Cefas Offshore Catch Sampling Programme 2024
21/11/2023	Natural England - Camille Burton
07/02/2024	Cefas <i>Nephrops</i> Catch Sampling 2024

Appendix XVI – Performance Assessment of Success Criterion

Indicators	Tasks Completed	Performance Assessment (RAG)
<p>SC1A: The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts reviewed and updated by 31st March each year.</p>	<p>The Authority maintained an up-to-date stakeholder database from which the following permit schemes were operated in 2023/24: Byelaws 3 and 4; NWSFC 9, 26, 27, 30; Cumbria SFC 26.</p> <p>The website ‘Register as a stakeholder’ button supports development of stakeholder contacts and their interests including angling and bait collecting.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing into 2024/25</p>
<p>SC1B: The IFCA will review its communication strategy and implementation plan by 31st March each year.</p>	<p>The Authority reviewed its communications strategy by 31st March 2024. The website continued to work well and was used. The process for issuing permits was further developed and streamlined.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC1C: The IFCA will review its website by the last working day of each month.</p>	<p>Content was developed and the website continuously monitored by the Authority’s Communications Officer. A checklist continues to be used to evidence the checks.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC1D: The IFCA will ensure its website meets the objectives of its communication strategy by 31st March each year.</p>	<p>The website was assessed against the communications strategy.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC1E: The IFCA will review all Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) by 31st March each year. It will have plans in place to update MoUs to agreed timescales.</p>	<p>National MoUs are in place with NE, EA, Cefas and MMO. Review of these MoUs are national tasks led by NE, EA, Cefas and MMO beyond control of each IFCA.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC1F: The IFCA will participate proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan.</p>	<p>The Authority continued to contribute to all relevant activity as required and within available resources. Bodies active in 2023/24 were COG, AIFCA, TAG, SOG, RFG, MAFCO, Defra MPA committees and <i>ad hoc</i> policy meetings, regional coastal fora (<i>e.g.</i> Solway Firth Partnership, North West Coastal Forum, Celtic Seas Forum, Irish Sea Forum, Dee Estuary Committees, Morecambe Bay Partnership).</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>

<p>SC2A: The IFCA will ensure its enforcement risk register and strategy are published and available on its website from 1st April each year.</p>	<p>The enforcement strategy was reviewed by 31st March 2024. Risk registers were reviewed by the Authority in December 2023.</p> <p>Risk-based enforcement will continue.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC2B: The IFCA will demonstrate in Annual Reports work with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures.</p>	<p>Joint working to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures has been reported within this Annual Report.</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC2C: The IFCA will record enforcement activity in a standard format, provide to NIMEG and publish on its website.</p>	<p>Enforcement activity was reported to the Committee in quarterly reports and made public via the website. Data continued to be securely stored on the Authority's intelligence management system and with the Central Intelligence Team of the MMO.</p> <p>We do not currently publish our enforcement activity on our website.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p>SC2D: The IFCA will adopt the National Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1st April each year.</p>	<p>The Code was adopted by the Authority back in 2012. The annual review of code is a role of NIMEG</p>	<p>Completed and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC2E: The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all IFCOs.</p>	<p>As in previous years, new IFCOs were trained to comply with the code through the competent officer training course. Performance was assessed and continually monitored by the Head of Enforcement and discussed in annual appraisals. Training was kept up-to-date.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>

<p>SC2F: IFCOs attain accreditation and undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).</p>	<p>IFCOs’ work towards accreditation was paused in 2023/24 due to other operational priorities. The Authority contributed to training development in 2023/24. IFCOs mandatory training was kept up-to-date to nationally agreed standards. All IFCOs were given CPD to meet needs identified at job reviews. An internal training register was maintained. Training in-house, jointly with partner agencies or purchased from external providers was reviewed with the appointment of the national IFCA Training Coordinator. The training objectives of each officer were identified in staff reviews. Training included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory training including health and safety, use of equipment, first aid, sea survival. • Training for qualifications in specified roles such as warranted IFCO through the National Accreditation scheme and external courses such as “open source intelligence”. Head of Enforcement completed Unit 1 of an Assessors training course. • Tailored personal development training to meet organisational and personal objectives for each officer. <p>Assessment of the Authority’s existing and future skills and needs. External training was available to bridge identified capacity gaps. Monitoring and evaluation of training took place to achieve added value and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p>SC3A: The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for MPAs and report progress to the Committee.</p>	<p>Government MPA policy continued fully implemented and MPA management reviewed in collaboration with other regulators.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC3B: The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures on its website</p>	<p>Data and evidence was compiled in regulatory impact assessments (RIA) for new measures. Stakeholders were consulted before introduction. Evidence was publicly reported to the Committee. Impacts of new measures are being assessed from survey and enforcement data.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC3C: Management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to</p>	<p>Post-implementation surveys jointly with partners informed ongoing fisheries management and effectiveness of new measures. Results were reported to Committee and on website. Inspection and enforcement data informs the Committee of the effectiveness of measures.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>

demonstrate their effectiveness.	Ongoing review of the internal MPA Monitoring and Control Plan.	
SC3D: The IFCA will develop criteria-based management options, explained to stakeholders through the website and review annually by 31 st March.	New management measures were developed after assessment of options against criteria defining objectives.	Complete and Ongoing
SC3E: New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales.	The byelaw review followed agreed priorities. Byelaw development followed Defra guidance.	Complete and Ongoing
SC3F: The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from FMPs in its own Annual Plan, published by 31 st March each year.	Objectives from plans such as cockle and mussel plans were approved by bivalve working groups and reported in the Annual Plan.	Complete and Ongoing
SC3G: Progress made in relevant FMP areas, including Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report.	Cockle and mussel management and priority byelaws were further developed in 2023/24, but no formal FMPs exist. The Science Team planned the development of species-specific FMPs within available resources and began development of a priority Cockle FMP in 2023/24. This will be finalised in 2024/25, before moving onto a Mussel FMP. Further priority species FMPs will be developed over the longer-term.	Partially Met
SC4A: The IFCA will publish an Annual Plan on its website by 31 st March each year, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State (SoS).	Annual Plan for 2023/24 was published at March 2023 meeting and sent to Defra. Plans include objectives and priorities under criteria set by Defra and local priorities.	Complete and Ongoing
SC4B: After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish an Annual Report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 th November. A copy will be sent to the SoS.	An Annual Report for 2022/23 was agreed at December 2023 meeting and sent to Defra. Activity in the year and audited financial information were included.	Completed and Ongoing

<p>SC4C: IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31st May each year.</p>	<p>Job plans for 2023/24 were agreed with all officers.</p> <p>Appraisals for 2022/23 were completed by December 2023.</p> <p>A more formal performance management regime is required and will be implemented in 2024/25.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p>SC4D: An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.</p>	<p>An efficient secretariat remained in place. Documentation was produced and meetings were run in line with Standing Orders.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>
<p>SC4E: The IFCA will show, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the district have worked responsively and effectively together.</p>	<p>Targets for Marine Strategy and Water Framework Directives are delivered as directed by EA. These were not required in 2023/24.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>SC5A: The IFCA will show progress towards identifying evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.</p>	<p>No research plan has previously been published by the Authority. A strategic objective for the Authority's 2024/25 Annual Plan was set to create a five-year Research Plan.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>
<p>SC5B: The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.</p>	<p>All research work in 2023/24 was reported to the Committee at quarterly and TSB meeting, and in this report, showing how evidence is used to support decision making. However, no standalone Research Report has ever been published.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>
<p>SC5C: The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress towards a national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report.</p>	<p>The Authority continued contributions to national programmes and reported to the Committee.</p>	<p>Complete and Ongoing</p>