

Guidance for Solent Relevant Authorities for Monitoring Shore-based Fishing

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Activities within the Solent European Marine Site are monitored by the relevant authorities and reported annually in the SEMS Annual Monitoring Report. One of the activities monitored is 'Fishing (shore-based activities)' which includes crab tiling, bait digging, shellfish collection by hand (with or without digging apparatus), rod and line angling, the setting of nets or pots from the shore and access to the shore by vehicle or vessel. Basically the gathering of any intertidal sea fisheries resource for recreational or commercial purposes.

This activity can impact SPA and SAC features. There are also concerns regarding criminal activity and the human consumption of gathered shellfish. Increased monitoring and the sharing of information will help to advance understanding of the extent and magnitude of this activity. The aim of this guidance, developed by Sussex and Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) and the River Hamble Harbour Authority, is to support relevant authorities in the building of the evidence base and taking action to achieve improved management.

The following key pieces of information regarding shore-based fishing should be recorded:

- Date
- Time of day: time started/finished observing, time started/finished gathering
- Location: either a description and place name (eg: 500m north west of Chichester Marina, eg: between Chichester Marina and Copperas Point) or a latitude and longitude position or point/area drawn on a map
- Number of people engaged in the activity
- Collection method: eg: digging, raking, pumping, tiling, trapping, angling, hand gathering etc.
- Target species (if possible) eg: crabs, cockles, winkles, worms, clams, seaweed
- Amount collected (if possible): weight, number or description, eg: half a bucket, 2 sacks estimated 30kg each
- Details of any vessels or vehicles which appear to be connected to the people engaged in the fishing activity

Any other relevant information could also be recorded such as tide time/state, observations of impacts on habitats or non-target species, patterns of activity, access points, area covered by activity, etc.

If staff conduct regular patrols, then occasions of no activity should also be recorded. Eg: if a staff member walked the same stretch of coastline every morning or spent several hours on a patrol boat every day, they could record observed activity every day, recording a zero for those days they saw no activity. This would be useful for obtaining a full picture of the scale of the activity. Otherwise, ad hoc observations are also useful.

Combining information collected by all relevant authorities will help to build up a picture of activity across the Solent, highlighting the priority areas, activity types and people engaged in the activities. Once the baseline information is collated and mapped, the interaction between the activity and sensitive EMS features can be analysed and the need for management can be assessed.