**Call for evidence – Netting in D&SIFCA’s District**

The review of Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority’s (D&SIFCA) approach to managing netting activities in the District has begun. The D&SIFCA inherited byelaws from the previous organisation (Devon Sea Fisheries Committee). These provide the current controls on netting activity and provide the mechanism to enforce these management measures. Some estuaries are currently closed to netting, but all legacy byelaws, need to be reviewed.

**Netting**

* **Takes various forms and each technique has complicated definitions**
* **Occurs in different places – estuaries and at sea**
* **Is important to the livelihood of some fishermen**
* **Legitimate netting needs to be managed properly**
* **Illegal netting needs to be stopped**

This netting review doesn’t include nets such as those used by trawlers. We class that type of netting as mobile fishing and have already managed that activity through the mobile fishing permit byelaw.

**Key Aims**

* Assess if current management supports D&SIFCA in meeting its statutory duties
* Creation of a communication plan to deliver effective engagement
* To encourage participation in the review
* Gather information and evidence from a range of sources
* Use gathered information and evidence to provide management options
* Gather information and evidence within a defined time period
* Provide background information on the D&SIFCA website
* Summarize feedback available on D&SIFCA website

Due to the significant differences between the types of nets used, the areas they are worked and the impact this can have, the first stage of the review is split into two.

* **Netting in estuaries (Phase 1)**
* **Netting in sea areas (Phase 2)**

The Authority has already identified some key areas that it believes will be the focus of the review. The estuary specific questionnaire will aim to capture this information on the key topics and provide an opportunity to express general opinions and provision of evidence relating to netting in estuaries.

**Options for Management**

1. **Do nothing**
2. **Voluntary Code of Conducts**
3. **Traditional Byelaws**
4. **Permitting Byelaws**

If byelaws are deemed necessary, D&SIFCA has chosen to use permitting style byelaws and have already introduced these for other types of fishing. They offer greater management flexibility than traditional style byelaws.

**Your View**

We want your view on netting in the D&SIFCA district. Your evidence and completed questionnaire can help inform our decisions on the future management of netting. The questionnaire can be accessed on our website [www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk](http://www.devonandsevernifca.gov.uk) or via the office on 01803 854648.

**Closing dates**

Please provide responses by:

* Estuary netting 15th October 2015.
* Netting at Sea 30th November 2015