North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Challenges to managing sustainable fisheries and a healthy marine environment
Overview

• NWIFCA history and remit
• Responsibilities
• Examples of sustainability challenges
  – Ribble cockles.
  – Project Inshore
  – Bass Nursey
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)

• IFCAs came into being on April 1st 2011 under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009), replacing Sea Fisheries Committees (SFCs)

• 10 around England, Wales and Scotland marine management devolved.
IFCA National Vision

IFCAs will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.
IFCA Duties under the MACAA

• Work in Partnership with Defra, MMO, NE, EA and other agencies
• Manage marine resources sustainably
• Balance all (not just fishing) interests
• Protect and recover the marine environment using byelaws where needed
• Further the objectives of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)
• Develop fisheries
The NWIFCA

- Amalgamation of
  - North West and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee
  - Cumbria SFC
- From the Welsh to Scottish borders, out to 6 nautical miles.
- Powers extend up to local authority boundary lines
- Run by a committee
  - 30 Members including local authorities, partner organisations, members of the public (appointed by MMO)
NWIFCA Responsibilities

- Regulate NW fisheries in a sustainable manner
- Make byelaws for local management
- Enforce National and EU legislation
- Balance marine environmental and conservation needs
  - Two-thirds district has designation. Could increase with MCZs
Management Challenges

• Wide and varied stakeholder base
• Enforcement
• Balancing competing interests
  – Develop fisheries and conserve environment
• Uncertainty of future legislation – CFP, MSFD, MCZs
Sustainability Challenges

- Ribble Estuary – Foulnaze Cockle Bed
  - Public fishery opened 1 Sept 2011
  - Over 8000 ton cockles
  - Worth ~£7-8m
Ribble Cockles

- In two months, lifeboat called 26 times
- Disruption to local Lytham community – litter, noise, boats stolen
- Emergency closure from the Minister on Health and Safety ground – Nov 7
- 1700 tons left (& lots of undersize)
2012 Foulnaze Fishery

• Problem – how to develop a viable fishery, keep local community happy, ensure low environmental impact.

• Multi-agency group to work out improvements
  – Incl. local councils, MCA, Police, MMO, NE, GLA

• Many considerations
  – Ribble designations – Impact assessments
  – Daylight hours
  – Tides
• Open during August with a special conditions
  – Monday-Thursday during daylight
  – Permit required
  – One access point
  – No cockles landed at shore
  – Fishermen paid for toilets and slipway improvements

• TAC of 750t reached after 9 days – approx 120 fishermen
  – Worth over £1m at first sale
“Byelaw 3”

• ‘Permit to fish for Cockles and Mussels’
  – Improves NWIFCA ability to manage shellfish fisheries.
  – Requires fishermen to be professionals and safety trained
  – Boats to have safety standards
  – £500 annual fee
  – Came into force August 23 2012
Project Inshore

• Project in partnership with the Marine Stewardship Council to assess sustainability of UK fisheries and inform management.

• Fisheries will go through MSC Pre-Assessment process

• Sustainability reviews - unsustainable fisheries can be addressed with revised management.
Future Challenges

- **Heysham Bass Nursery**
  - Nursery area around Heysham power station established 1999 - certain baits and any fishing from boats prohibited.
  - Major enforcement challenges
  - Proposed Byelaw to prohibit all bass fishing
• Marine Conservation Zones management
  – Many competing interests
  – MCZs that go over 6 mile boundary...
  – Enforcement challenges over such a large area
Thank you!

Alasdair Lindop
a.lindop@nw-ifca.gov.uk