

2018.09.11

7 Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary of the Minister for the Environment regarding the catching of crawfish in Jersey waters: [OQ.116/2018]

Will the Minister inform the Assembly if he considered the introduction of a complete ban on capturing crawfish in Jersey waters, rather than increasing the minimum size limits, given the findings in the addendum to P.93/2018 that there is a near complete collapse in the species around the Channel Islands?

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade (The Minister for the Environment):

Could I ask that this question be answered by a rapporteur for a later item by Deputy Guida, my Assistant Minister, please, Sir?

The Bailiff:

Yes.

Deputy G.C. Guida of St. Lawrence (Assistant Minister for the Environment - rapporteur):

Yes, we did consider that, but the complete ban on catching crawfish in Jersey would need to be agreed through the Granville Bay Agreement. This would involve working with France reaching accord, followed by changes to local legislation. It was agreed with the Marine Resources Panel that a quicker and simpler measure to conserve crawfish was to increase the minimum size limits, which would come in line with current French measures.

4.7.1 Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

How will the Minister's department monitor the crawfish population and what level of population criteria has been set before the Minister will consider a complete ban if the minimum catching standard fails to address the near complete collapse?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

We measure the population by recording catches. All the fishermen tell us how many crawfish they have caught and following that that figure tells us whether the population is increasing or decreasing.

4.7.2 Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

How does the department get information from other areas like France and the like to understand what they are catching in our territories if the boat is registered in Jersey but owned by an overseas fisherman?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

I am not sure I can answer that question, but I do not believe that we have boats registered in Jersey but owned by overseas fisherman. I think all our fishermen are local.

4.7.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Is the Assistant Minister telling us that the Bay of Granville Agreement does not permit a discrepancy between Jersey regulations with regard to crayfish and the Granville French ones or is it simply the question of political expediency in this case?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

As I understand it, yes, we can modify the regulations inside our waters, but up to a certain level. We cannot forbid fishing completely, but we can have a different limit.