

Review of the Marine Spatial Plan

Anonymous – 12 August 2024

I am writing as a member of the commercial fishing fleet to advise the scrutiny panel how the Marine Spatial Plan will affect me personally and my livelihood.

I started fishing as a young boy, because my father was a fisherman, and I became completely passionate about fishing. When I left school aged 15 I went straight into the industry as a commercial fisherman, where I have remained until today (age 54) and intend to stay until retirement age.

I started fishing with nets and lines for wet fish and then progressed up to a bigger boat fishing for lobster and crab. After many years I then decided to go back to wet fish (bass, bream and mackerel) so everything now is invested just into that type of fishery. I have a little local market for the fresh fish that I catch and I only fish to order, with all of my catch staying on the island. This means it has a very low carbon footprint compared to importing fish from other countries.

I am concerned that the Marine Spatial Plan will push me out of areas that I need to fish because my boat is too small to fish in deep waters and I do everything by hand without any hydraulic equipment. It is a very sustainable way of fishing and would be impossible to do any other way e.g. I couldn't pull my nets in deeper water as it would become dangerous due to the Jersey tides.

It would be very upsetting to see the fishing industry disappear or be restricted to the extent that it is no longer viable as an industry. My son has just invested in a small fishing boat with a fishing license as he also shares my passion of fishing, and it would be devastating to see the younger generation not able to continue this important traditional sector.