

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT SEA FISHERIES (MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS) (AMENDMENT No. 7) (JERSEY) REGULATIONS 201- (P.41/2019): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 13th May 2019
by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Background

1. On 4th April 2019, [P.41/2019](#) – Draft Sea Fisheries (Minimum Size Limits) (Amendment No. 7) (Jersey) Regulations 201- (“the draft Regulations”) were lodged *au Greffe* by the Minister for the Environment.
2. Prompted by research carried out by the Jersey Fishermen’s Association (“JFA”), the draft Regulations essentially seek to increase the Minimum Landing Size (“MLS”) of chancre crabs from 14 cm. to 15 cm. (140 mm. – 150 mm.), in an attempt to enable the species to recover, following a reported recent decline in numbers –

Catches of chancre crab have been in decline since 2012, when 507 tonnes were landed from Jersey waters by the local fleet. By 2018, landings had halved to 247 tonnes.¹
3. Prior to the lodging of the draft Regulations, the Panel was provided with relevant background information by the Department for Growth, Housing and Environment.
4. The Panel contacted the JFA and Jersey Marine Conservation for their views on the proposals.
5. The Panel received responses from both stakeholders and, along with the information provided by the Department, has now reviewed the proposals.

Jersey Fishermen’s Association: Comments

6. The Panel sought the views of the JFA in order to understand whether they had been sufficiently consulted prior to the draft Regulations being lodged. The JFA advised that they are in support of the draft Regulations and were adequately consulted by the Department. In their submission they commented that –

The available science points to an environmental/biological issue, and resulting poor recruitment to the stock, rather than fishing pressure.²

7. The JFA then go on to explain –

Jersey Fishermen’s Association carried out considerable consultation with the various sectors implicated, throughout 2017/18 as well as entering into dialogue with our French neighbours in order to aim for a set of common measures. In doing so, a number of potential options, such as closed seasons, were rejected.

It is important to note that while a small minority of fishermen have since voiced concerns, throughout the consultation and up to present date, the MLS rise to 150 mm has received strong support of all sectors, with the exception of the Breton committee representing Finistere region, though they have in the last 2 weeks, voted to follow suit.²

¹ [P.41/2019](#), p.3

² Extract from submission from Jersey Fishermen’s Association on 5th April 2019

Jersey Marine Conservation: Comments

8. The Panel sought the views of Jersey Marine Conservation, who were also generally in support of the draft Regulations, but also identified possible further action that could be taken –

We are seeing very few Chancre Crabs during our shallow water surveys. I was quite interested in comments being made by potters. I know of at least one big breeding site on our SW coast. Additionally many of our wreck sites are breeding sites but are targeted by potters. There are of course other factors relating to the female. In particular, disturbance to females with (roe) eggs not being returned to the water. I did warn about the damage to sites from dredging. These areas no longer have food sources on which the juvenile crabs rely. Considering sea temperatures have remained above the norm for this time of year we have seen relatively few hermit crabs and wonder why this is? I am assuming the 15 cm restriction ensures crabs are more likely of an adult size. Every little helps as they say.³

Recommendations

9. **Recommendation 1:** *The Panel recommends that the Department for Growth, Housing and Environment investigates other possible measures that could be taken, such as further protection of known breeding sites, by Q3 2019.*

10. **Recommendation 2:** *The Panel recommends that further investigation is required as to the effects of dredging on breeding sites, and that any outcome(s) of this investigation are reported back to the Panel by Q3 2019.*

Conclusion

11. The Panel is supportive of the draft Regulations and recommends that they should be adopted by the States Assembly.
12. The Panel will be requesting a response from the Minister for the Environment as to whether the above recommendations are accepted, and will publish the associated correspondence.

³ Extract from e-mail correspondence from Jersey Marine Conservation on 8th April 2019