



D&S IFCA's
Response to Marine Licence
Application for a seaweed farm in
Bideford Bay North Devon

MLA/2021/00328

8th October 2021

Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA) is a statutory consultee for Marine Licences submitted to the Marine Management organisation (MMO). D&S IFCA is responding to MLA/2020.00380 for a proposed seaweed farm north east of Tuckers Rock Tor Bay.

D&S IFCA statutory duties are to :

- (a) seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way,
- (b) seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation,
- (c) take any other steps which in the authority's opinion are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, and
- (d) seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.

D&S IFCA is supportive of mariculture developments as it fulfils its statutory duties in particular those of sustainable development, but D&S IFCA must also be mindful of the need to seek to balance the needs of all persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources.

Algapelago Marine Ltd has been in contact on several occasions through e-mails and virtual meetings regarding the proposal for a seaweed farm in Bideford Bay North Devon. The location was thoroughly discussed and D&S IFCA e-mailed the project proposal and introduction letter provide by Algapelago to twenty one D&S IFCA Commercial Fishing permit holders in North Devon who might be impacted by the proposal. The e-mail, dated 9th June 2021, requested that any comments should be returned by 16th June 2021. D&S IFCA received a couple of e-mails/phone calls in response and shared these with Algapelago. Further to this, meetings were held between D&S IFCA, Algapelago and John Balls of the North Devon Fishermen's Association. Suggestions were made to move the proposed farm slightly and a revised chart was shared with John Balls. John liaised with his members and a preferred site, with the least impact, was chosen. The information gained from members of the fishing industry were shared with Algapelago and they adjusted their site to reflect the industry's views on the location. Algapelago also confirmed the maximum size of the farm, which is echoed in the MLA.

Algapelago has engaged in discussions with those who may be impacted by the proposal and has had regards for comments received. Some fishers may be impacted slightly and may have to adjust their fishing activity, but they have been involved in the discussions either individually or through the NDFFA.

D&S IFCA has read the application and associated documents and has no objections to the proposal and the siting of the farm in this location. D&S IFCA would like there to be some assurance through formal documentation with the Crown Estate /MMO that if the farm ceases to operate that Algapelago removes all the infrastructure and anchors/ eco-blocks used to stabilise the headlines on the sea floor, and that nothing is left in situ on the seafloor.

Sarah Clark
Deputy Chief Officer
D&S IFCA

