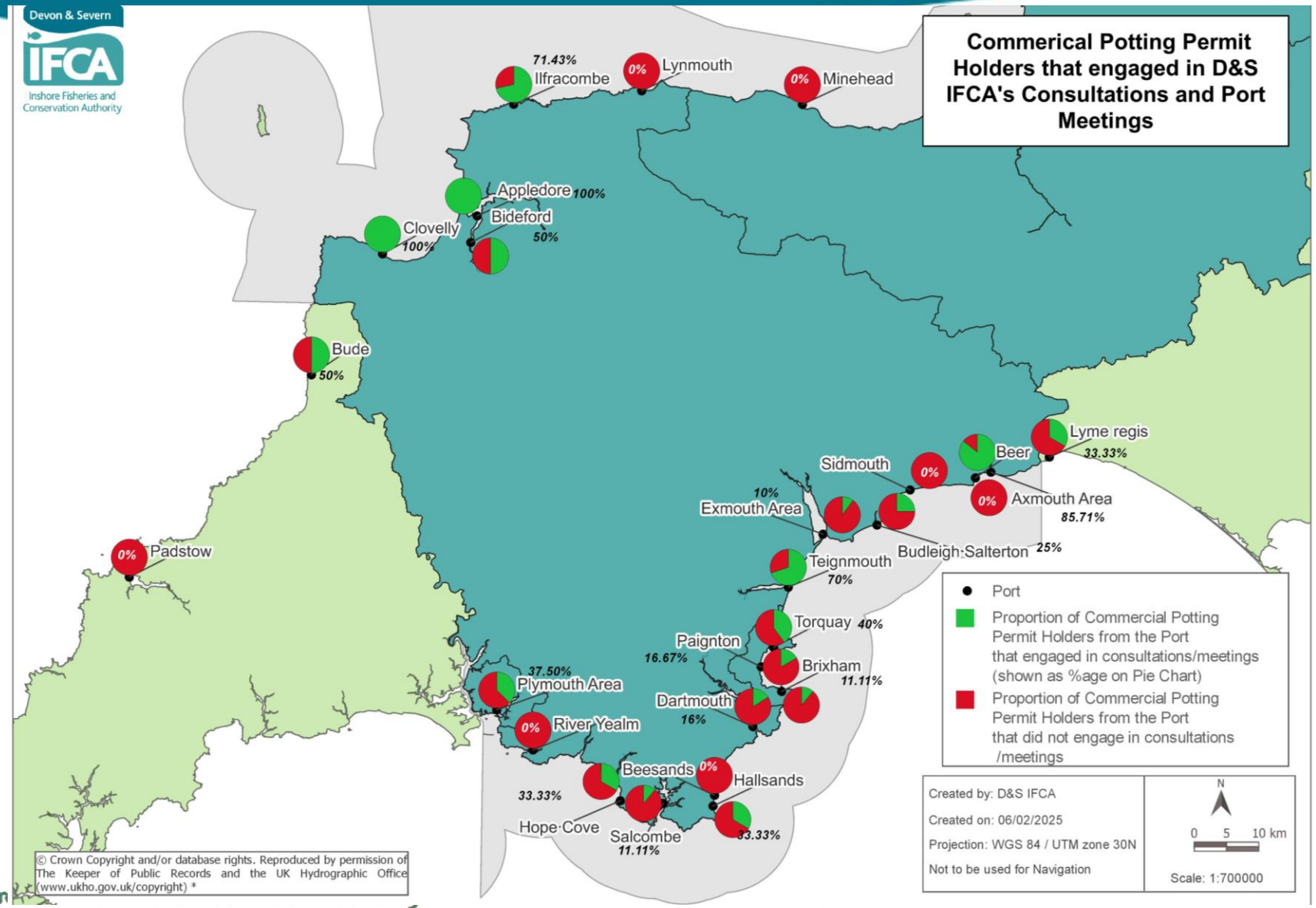
Devon & Severn IFCA

Options to introduce potting management measures

A discussion presentation for the B&PSC – February 2025

Level of Engagement with Commercial Potting Permit Holders in Consultations and Port Meetings



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Main Points

To safeguard existing operators against increased levels of effort being applied, in particular from the vivier fleet being displaced from Cornwall and offshore grounds.

There is a need to consider the current levels of effort being applied to the fishery.

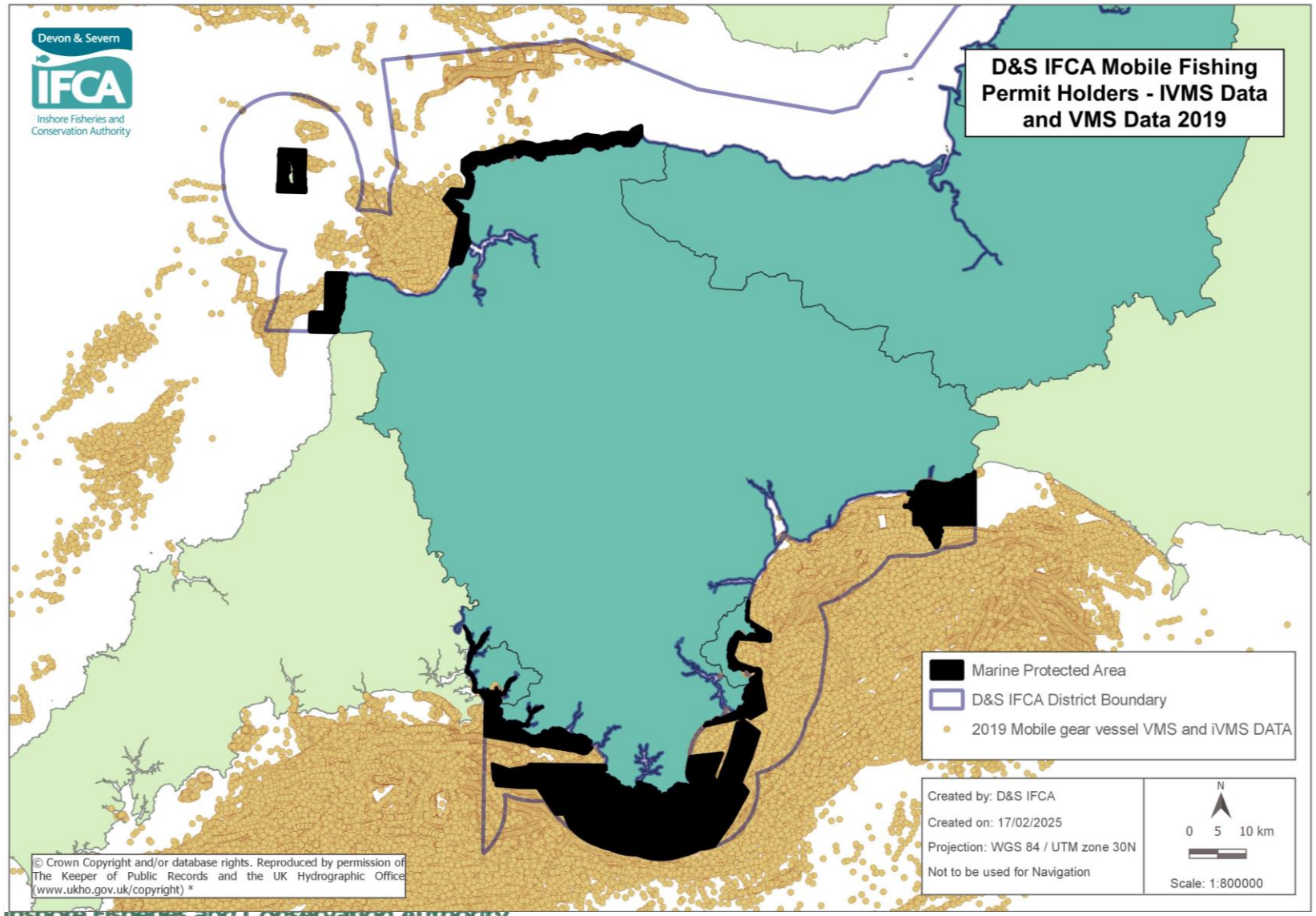
There is a desire for managing the two coasts of the District differently to reflect the different fisheries and how fleet operate.

There is an interest in localised measures being applied within the coastal belt around the District, including steps being taken to protect smaller scale fishing activity and to reduce conflict between commercial and recreational fishers.

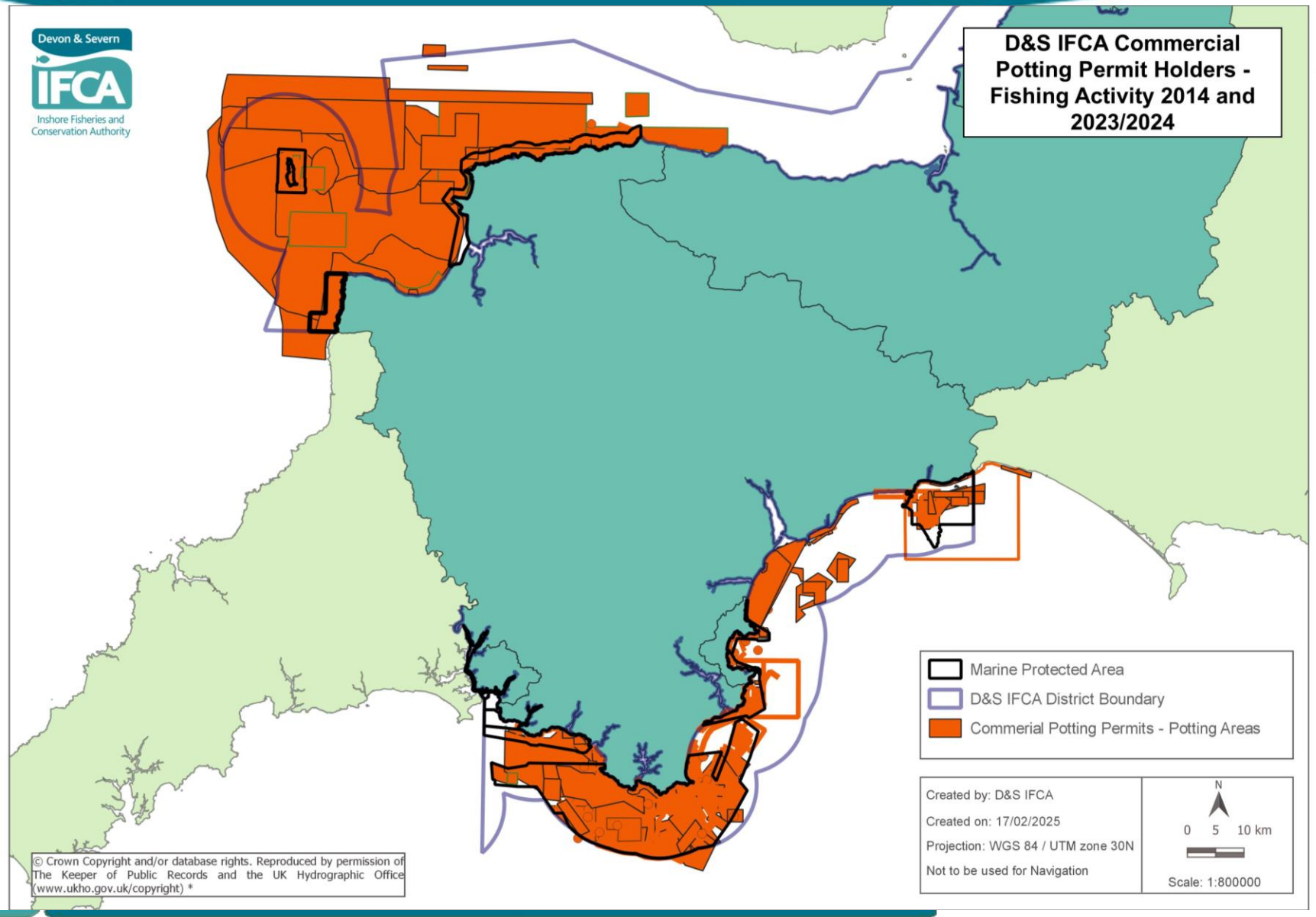
Potting activity in D&S IFCA's District

- February 2025 - there are 174 Commercial Potting Permit Holders
- 26 Commercial Permit Holders in the North of the District including 2 from Bude, 3 from Padstow and 1 from Tenby.
- 148 Commercial Permit Holders operating in the South Devon including 12 boats from Lyme Regis and 1 Portsmouth.
- In the North of the District Mobile activity fishing is low allowing for Potting activity to be widespread.
- In the South of the District Potting activity is confined to the MPAs and close inshore due to the high level of Mobile fishing activity.
- Mono-hulled vessels dominate the fleet with 156 vessels of all sizes
- 11 Catamarans are operating in the District with 3 on the north coast and 8 on the South Coast. All are under 10m in overall length.
- 7 viviers have permits to operate in our District. One vessel solely within the 6nm and has an integral tank of less than $2m^3$. The other 6 are nomadic vivier vessels with much greater integral tank capacity.

Mobile Fishing Activity in D&S IFCA's District - 2019



Potting Activity in D&S IFCA's District – 2014 & 2023/2024



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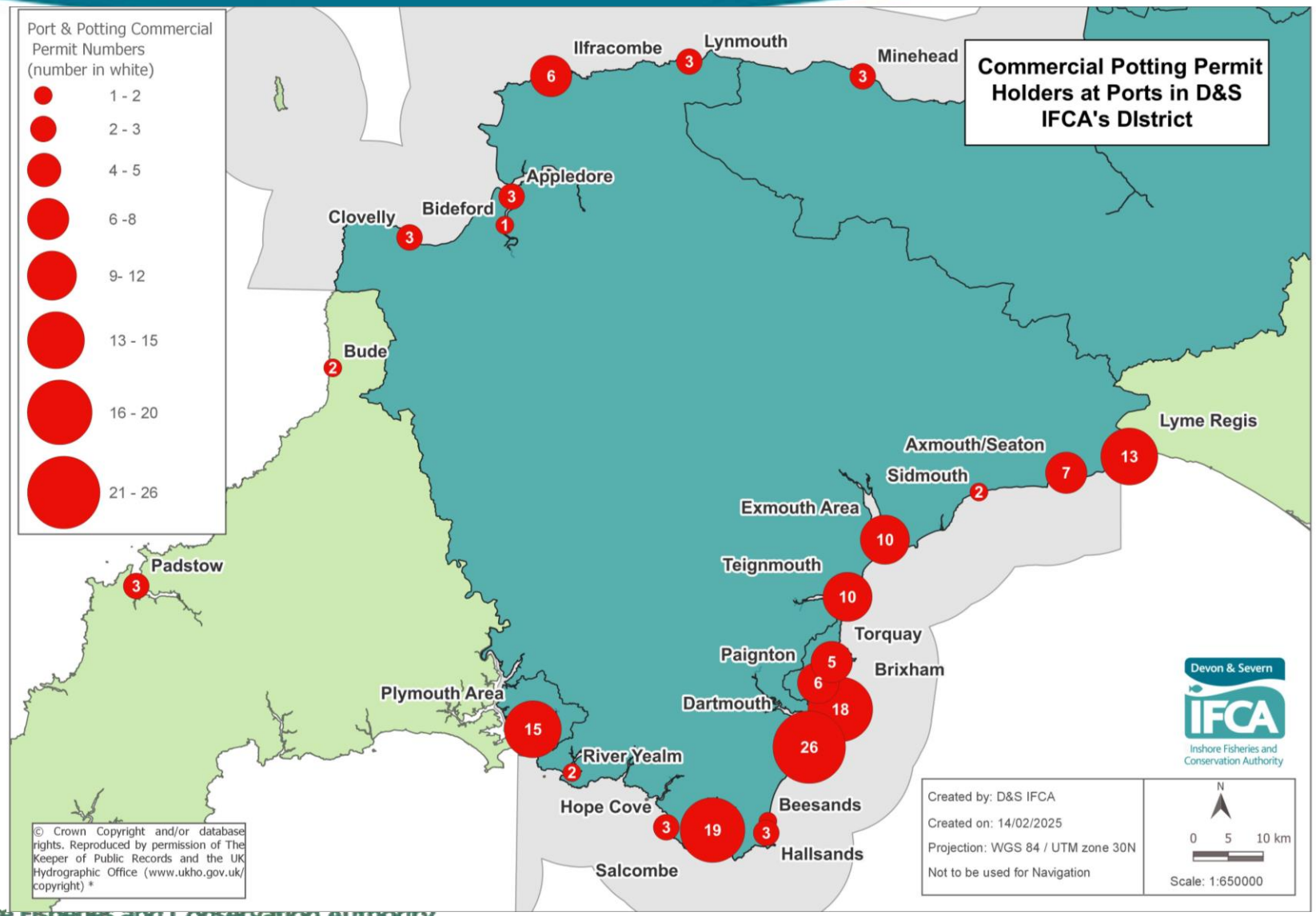
Number of D&S IFCA's Commercial Potting Permit Holders at Ports D&S ICA and CIFCA Districts



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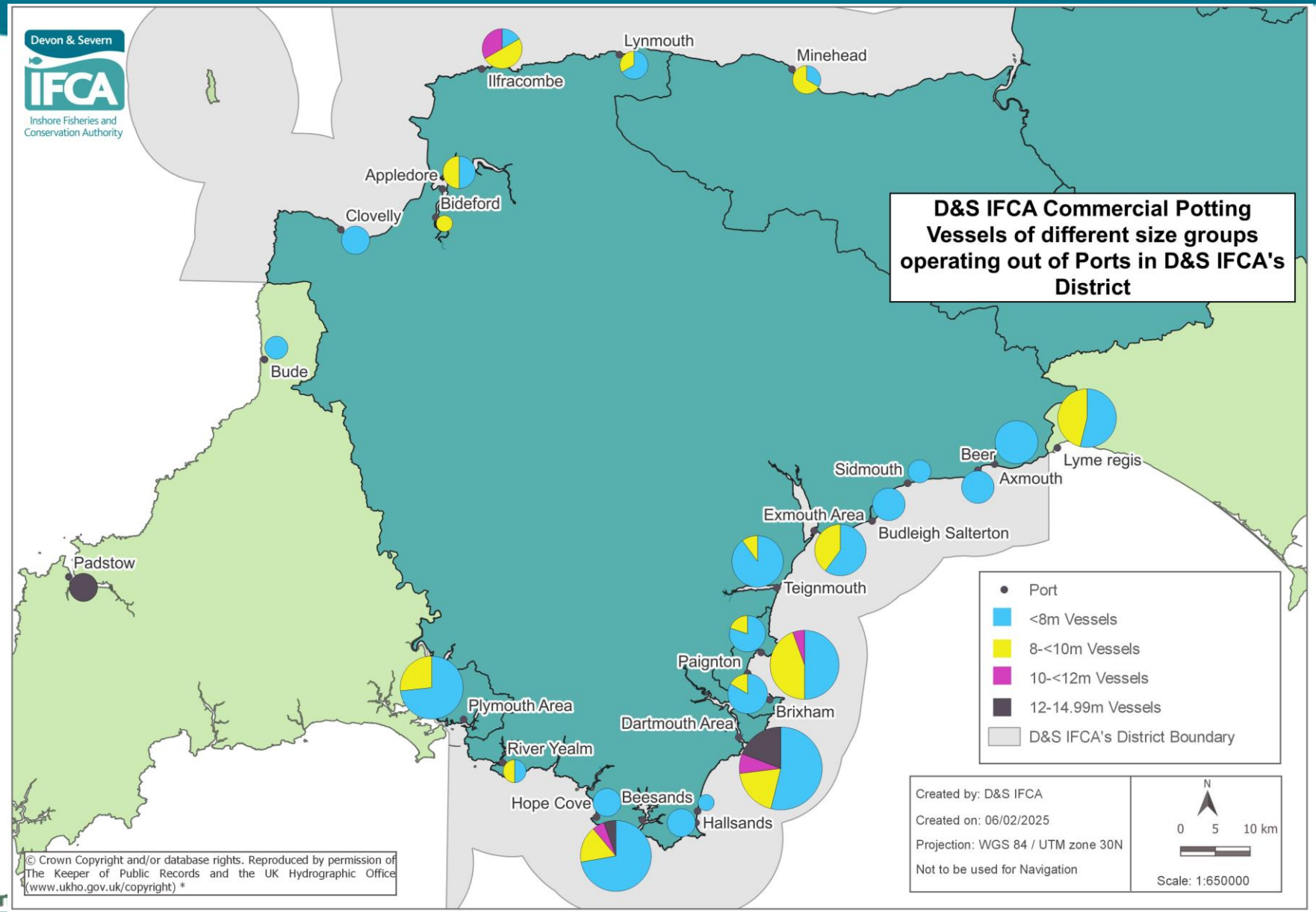
Different Sizes of Vessels operated by D&S IFCA's Commercial Potting Permit Holders out of D&S IFCA and CIFCA Ports



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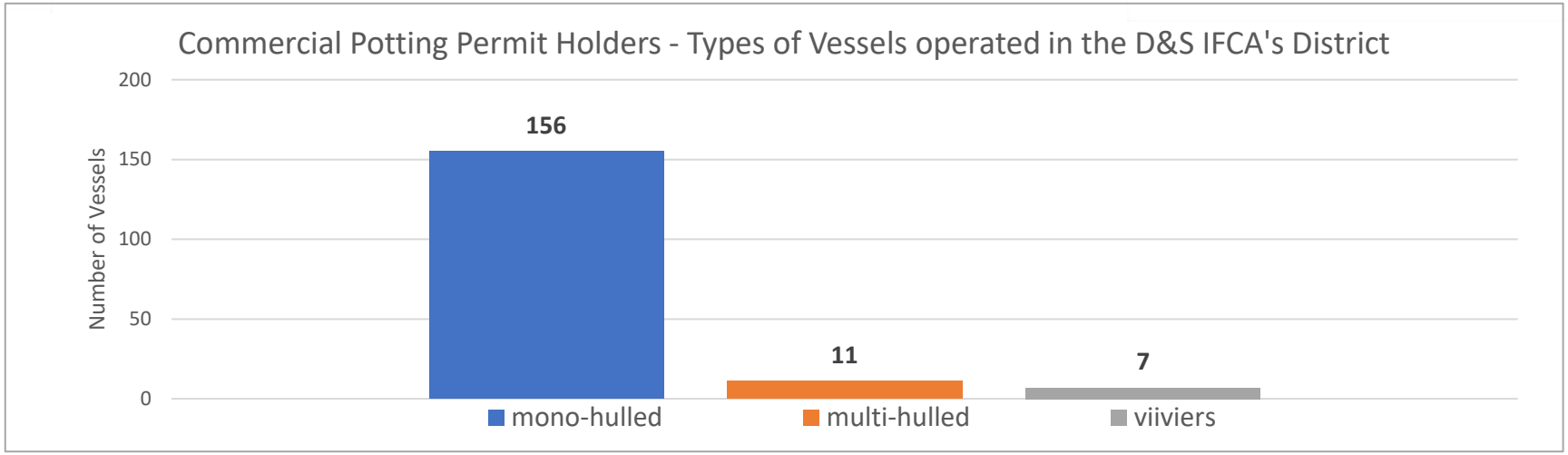
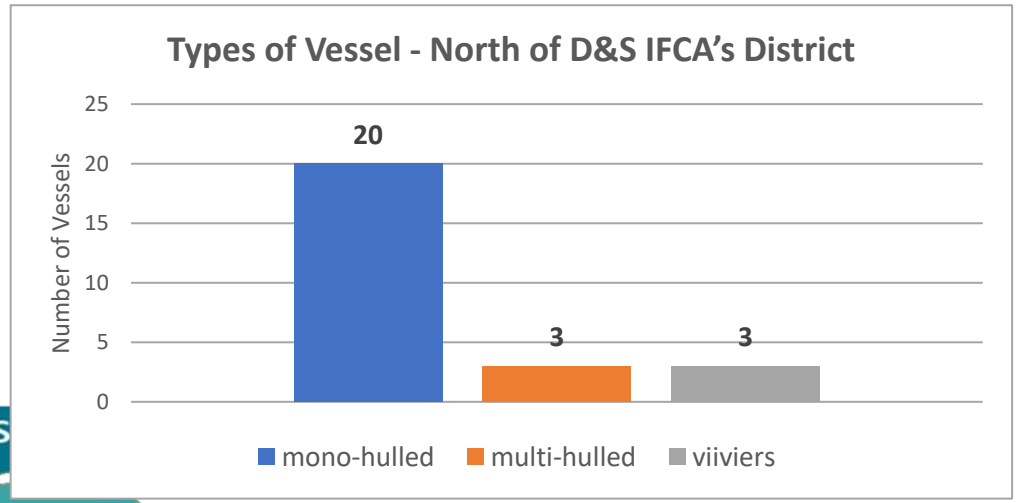
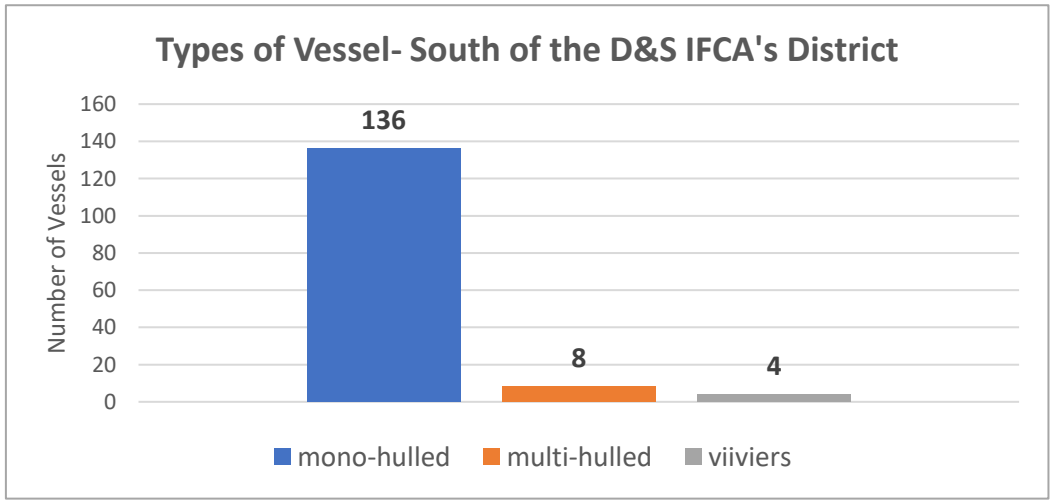
Types of Vessels operated by D&S IFCA's Commercial Potting Permit Holders in the District







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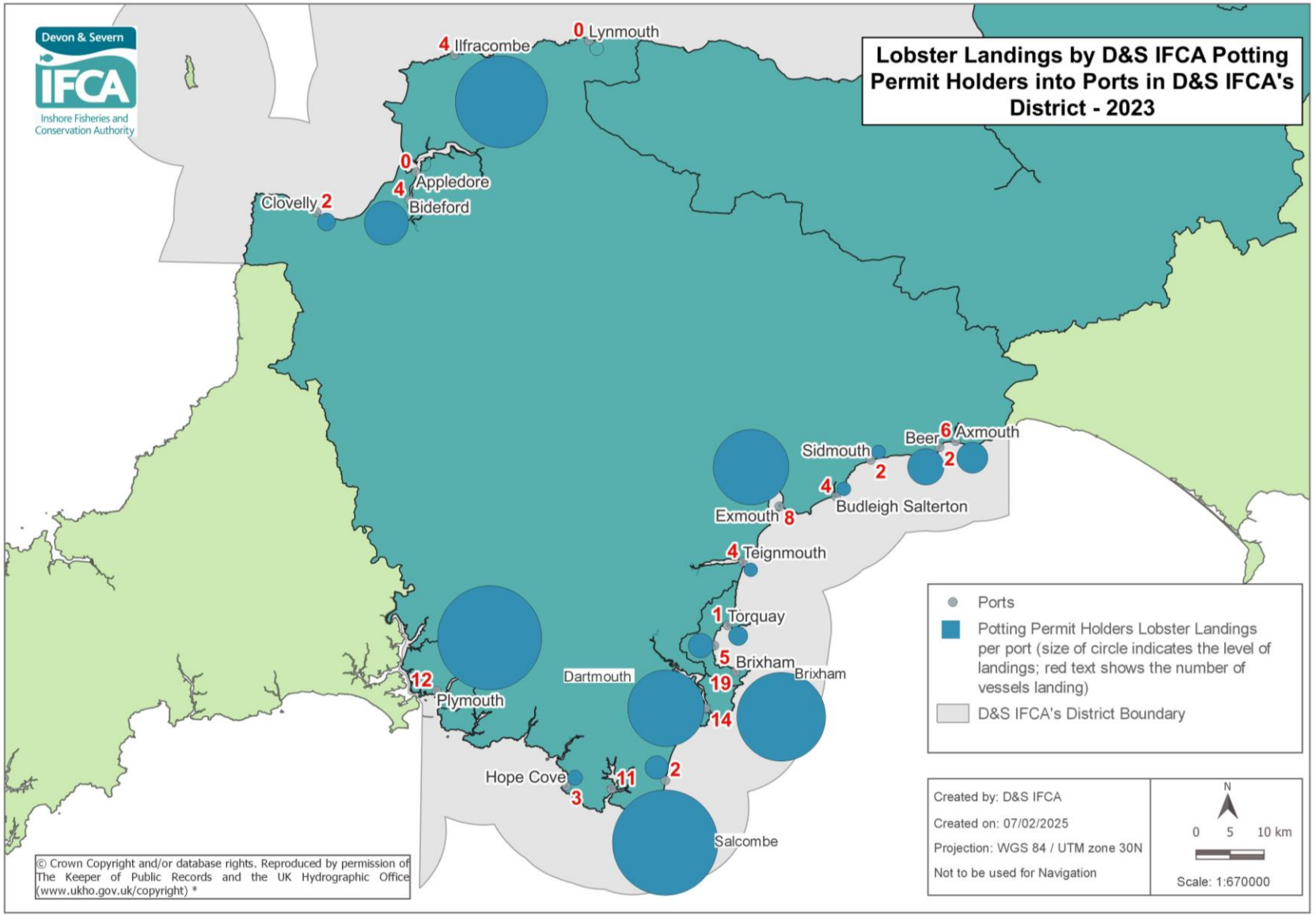
Landings of Lobster by D&S IFCA Commercial Potting Permit Holders into Ports in the D&S IFCA's District in 2023



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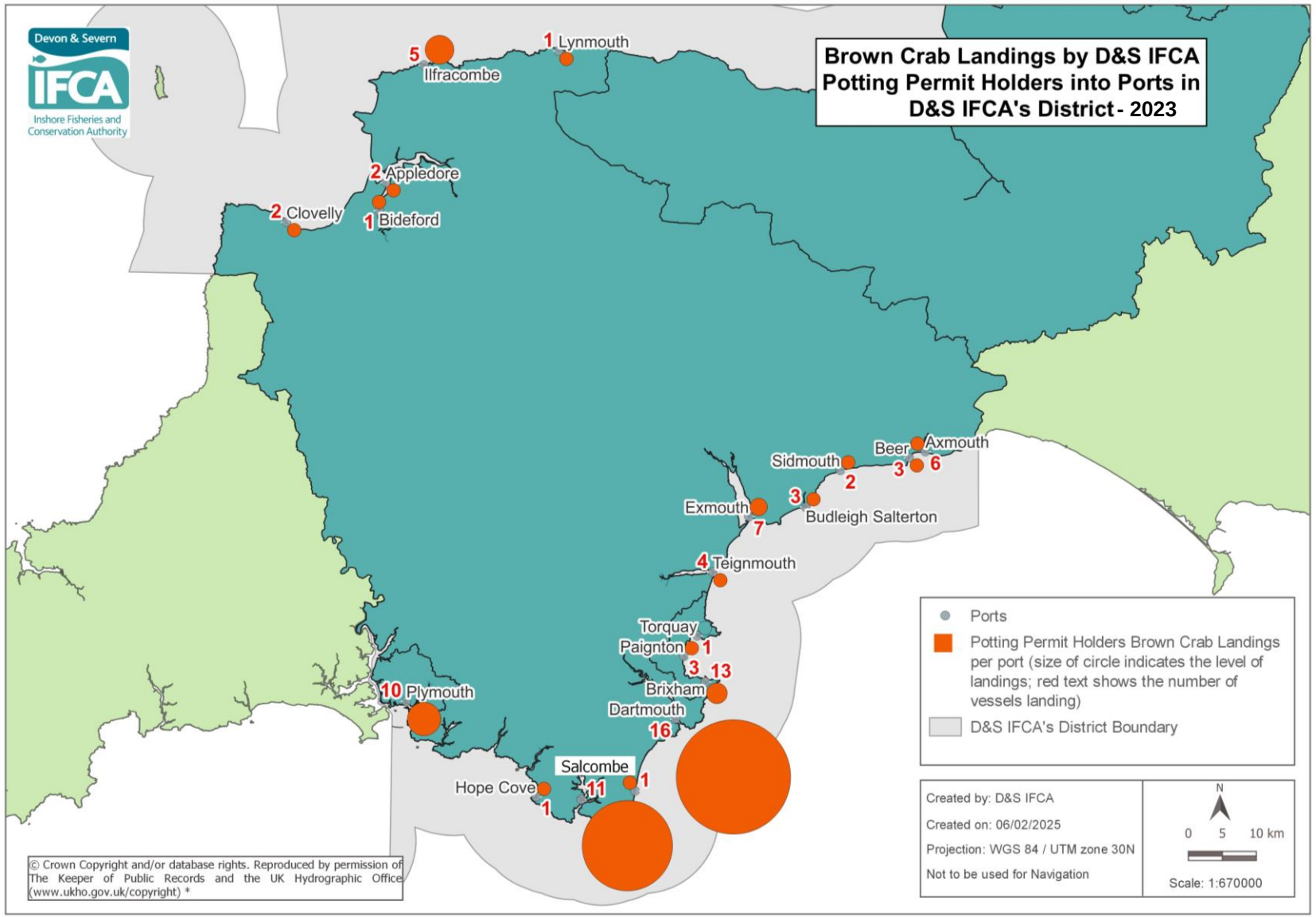
Landings of Brown Crab by D&S IFCA Commercial Potting Permit Holders into Ports in the D&S IFCA's District in 2023



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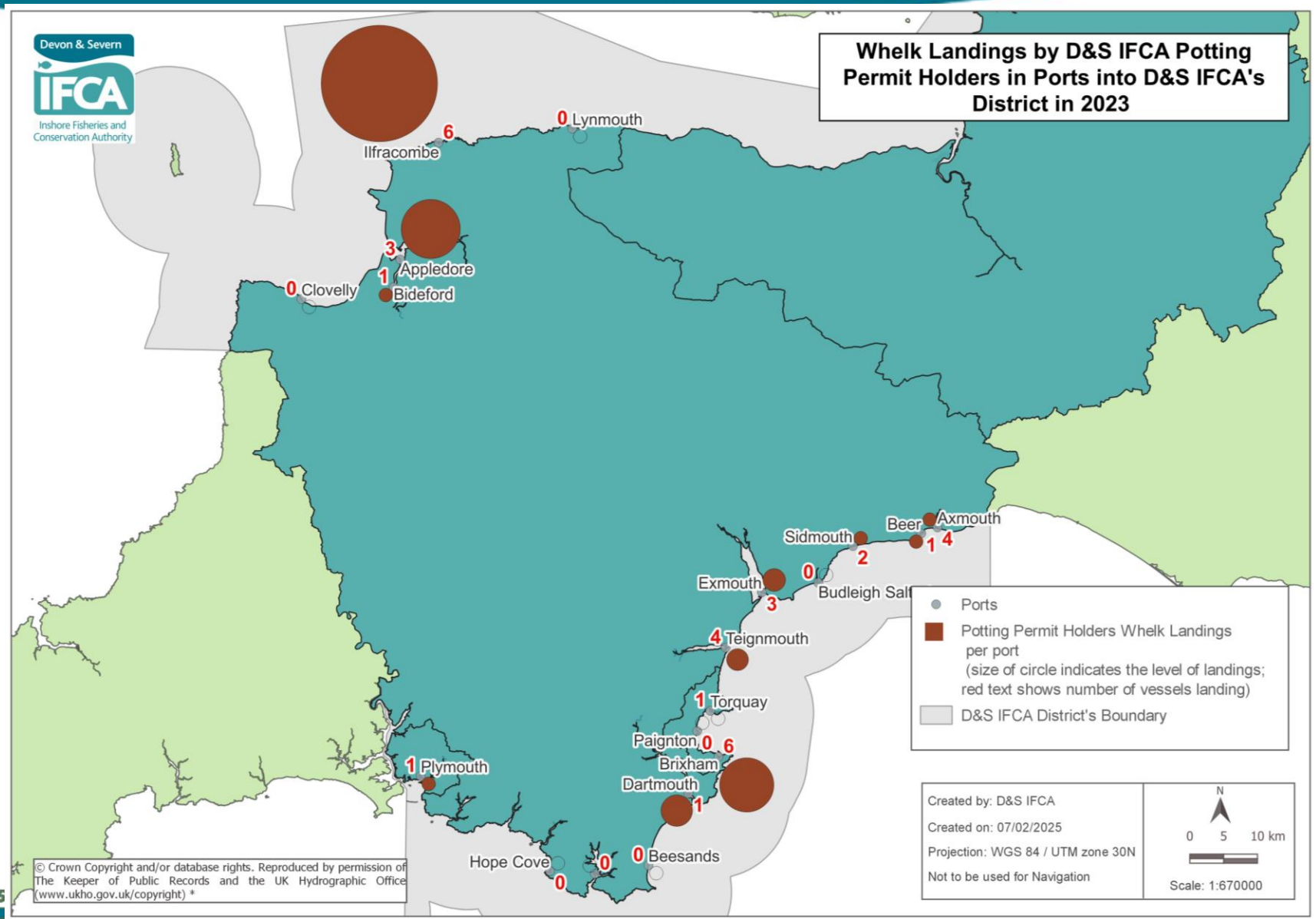
Landings of Whelk by D&S IFCA Commercial Potting Permit Holders into Ports in the D&S IFCA's District in 2023



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Principles, Considerations for Action, and Impact of Action

1. Principles:

D&S IFCA's Byelaw and Permitting Sub-committee recently reaffirmed its guiding principles when considering management measures, principles include:

- Not limiting the number of permits.
- To draft legislation to facilitate effective enforcement.
- To seek to achieve consistency in management across IFCA boundaries where appropriate.

2. Primary Drivers:

The Fisheries Act Objectives – Sustainability Objective, Precautionary Objective, Ecosystem Objective, Scientific Evidence Objective, Bycatch Objective and Equal Access Objective
Sections 153 and 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act

3. Low Impact

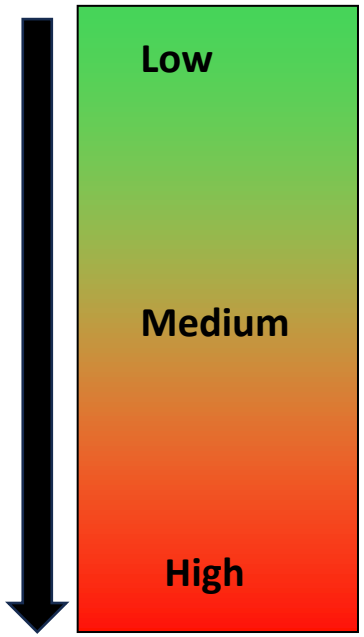
When considering what management approaches were available to the B&PSC, the officers applied an approach that **avoided impact on existing fishing activity and businesses**.

4. Increased Impact

The B&PSC can consider what management measures to formally consult on, that will produce greater known and unknown impacts on existing fishing activity and businesses.

Broad Options & Impact Indicator

Impact Scale:



Capping the number of pots that vessels can use to 2,100.
Pot Capping differentially applied to North & South Coast based on existing effort and for individual target species.

Prohibiting Vivier Vessels, including those issued with D&S IFCA Permits

Pot Reduction

Other measures including size of vessel

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Option 1 - Low Impact Option – Pot Capping

Proposal to cap the number of pots that vessels can fish for crab and lobster and whelk at any one time in the District to 2,100

South Coast: max crab and lobster pots* – 1,800
max whelk pots - 1,200

North Coast: max crab and lobster pots* – 1050
max whelk pots – 1,000

* to include baited scallop pots

Strengths

- Does not impact on any current potting activity based on the available evidence.
- No new vessel can operate more pots than current vessels.
- Can apply different effort thresholds on the North and South coasts and to different fisheries.
- Applying a maximum number of pots across the different fisheries means diversification to another fishery may require vessels to reduce effort to target another species.
- The use of permit conditions aligns to the introduction of this measure.

Weaknesses

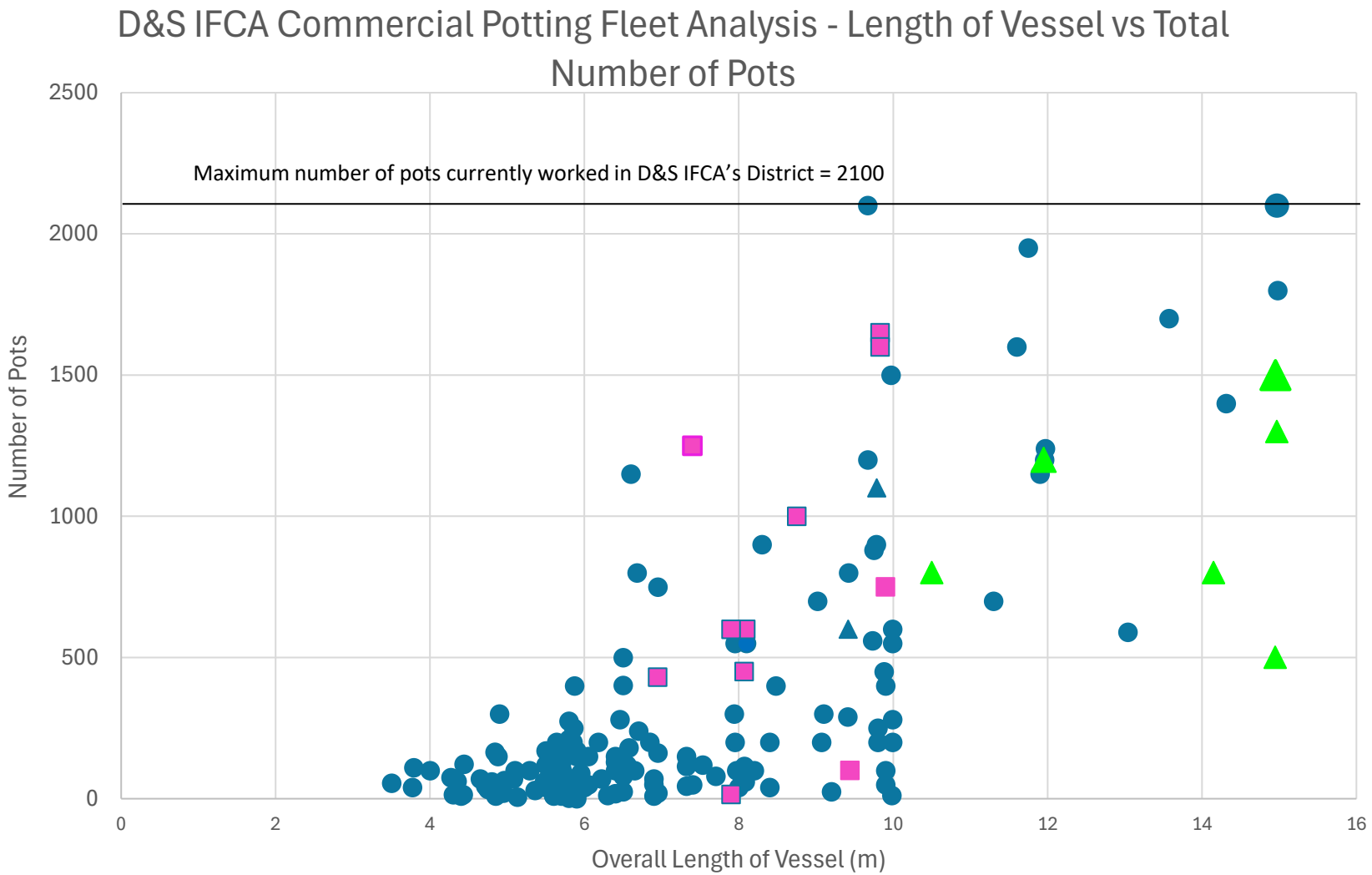
- Cost relating to purchase of tags
- Increased administration costs to manage tagging system.
- Some disruption to fishers having to tag pots and maintain tags.
- Enforcement challenge to monitor potting effort by individual vessels.
- Does not reduce effort from existing fleet or effort from new vessels below a maximum of 2,100 pots.

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis
Length of Vessels and Total Number of Pots

Viviers

Multi-hulled vessels

Mono-hulled vessels



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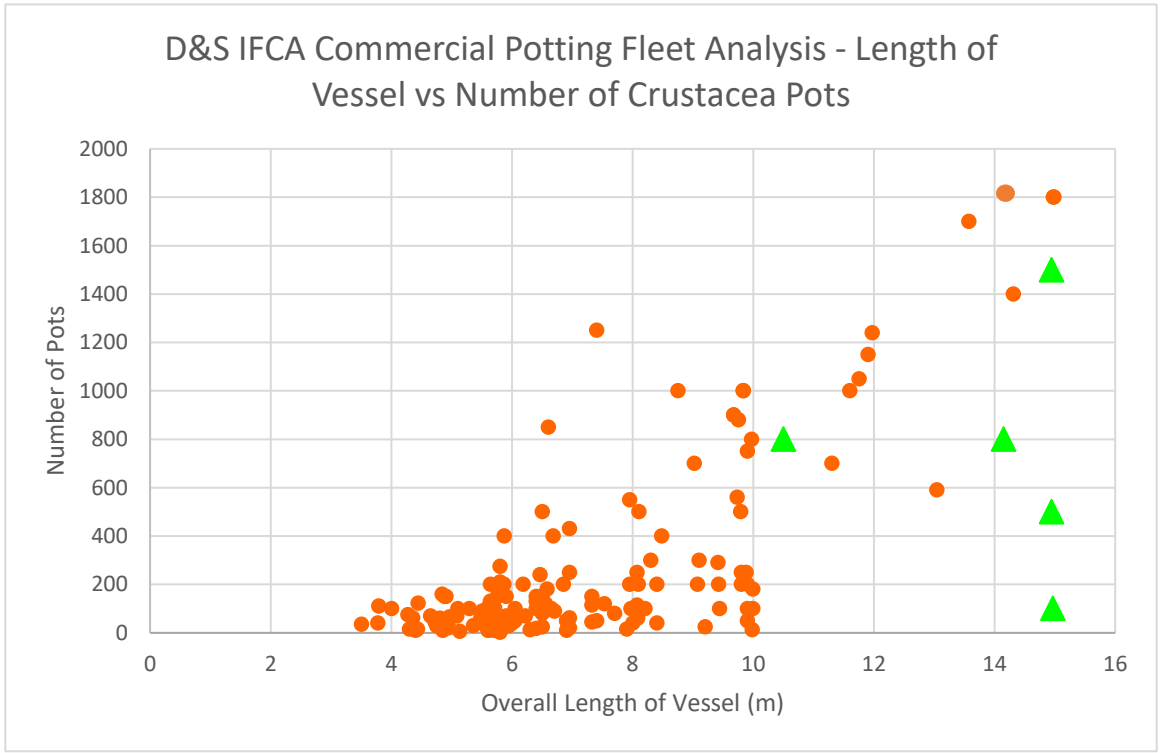
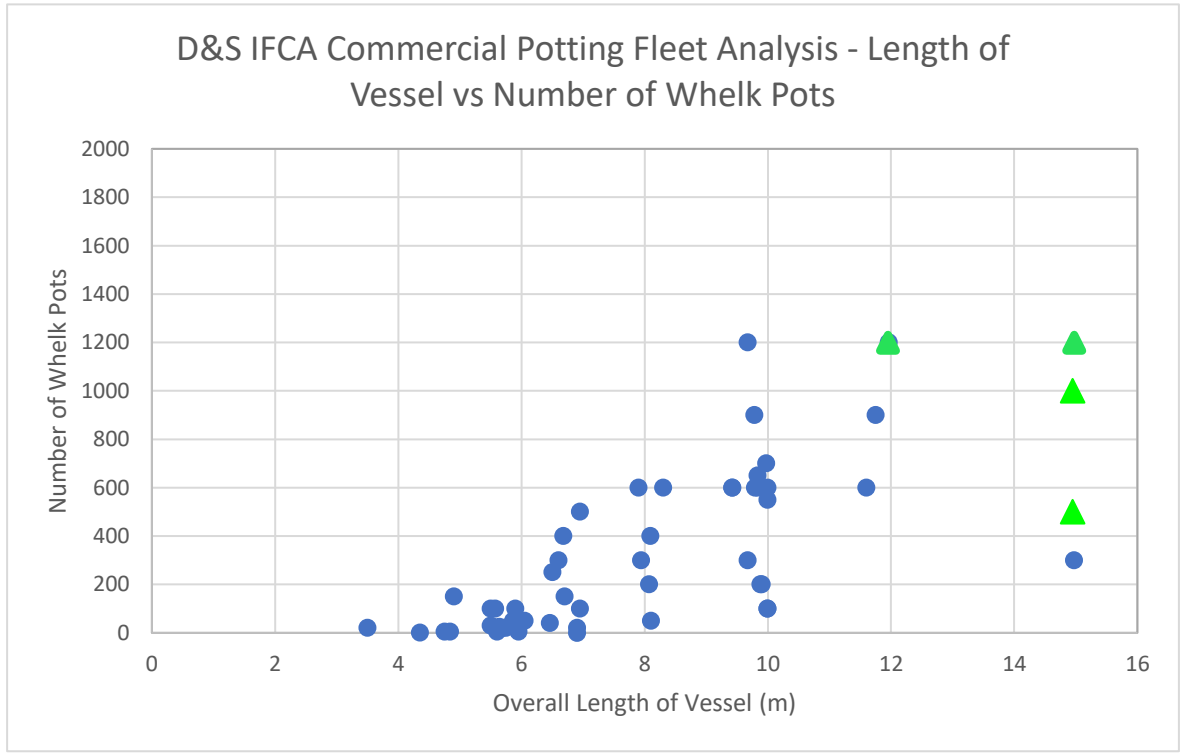
Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis – Length of Vessels and Number of Pots





Total Number of Permit Holders:
North of the District = 26
South of the District = 148

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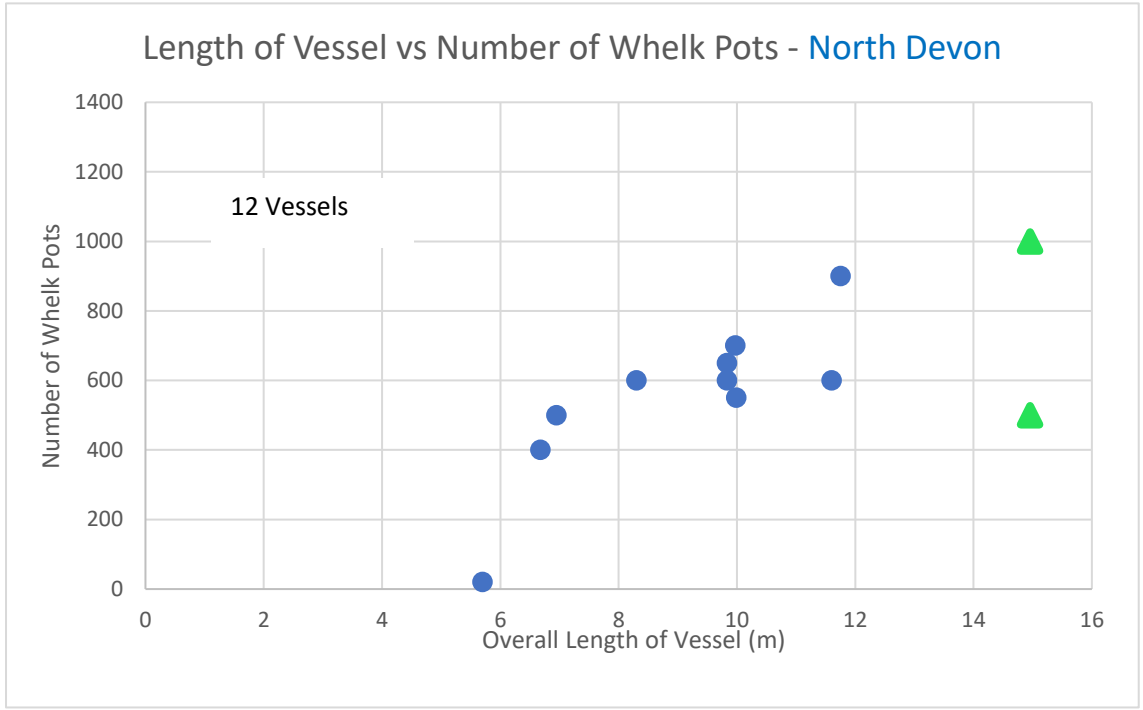
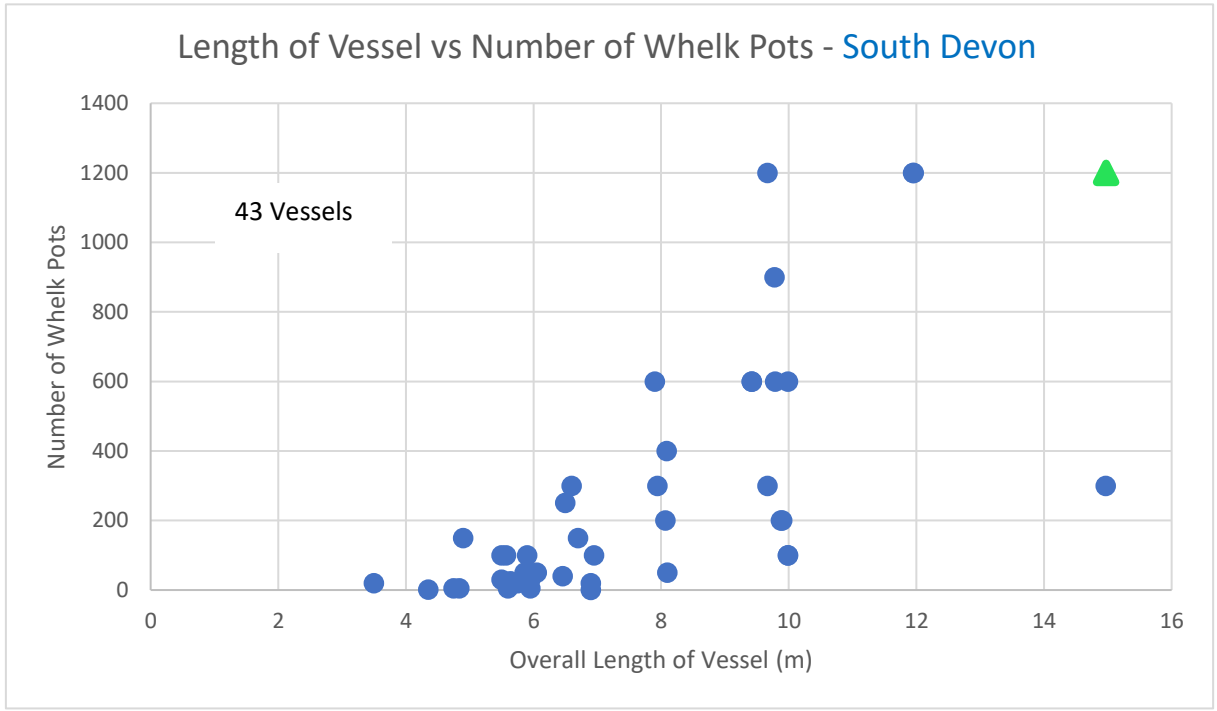
Length of Vessels and Number of Whelk Pots North and South of the D&S IFCA's District





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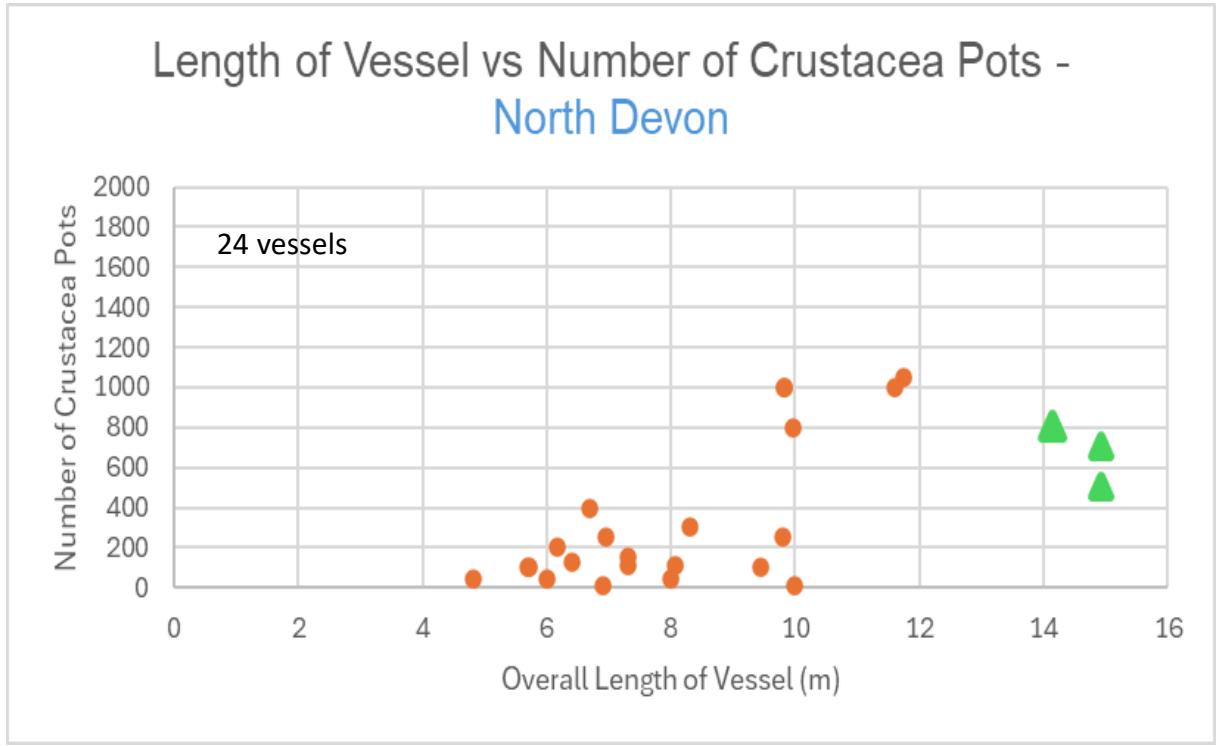
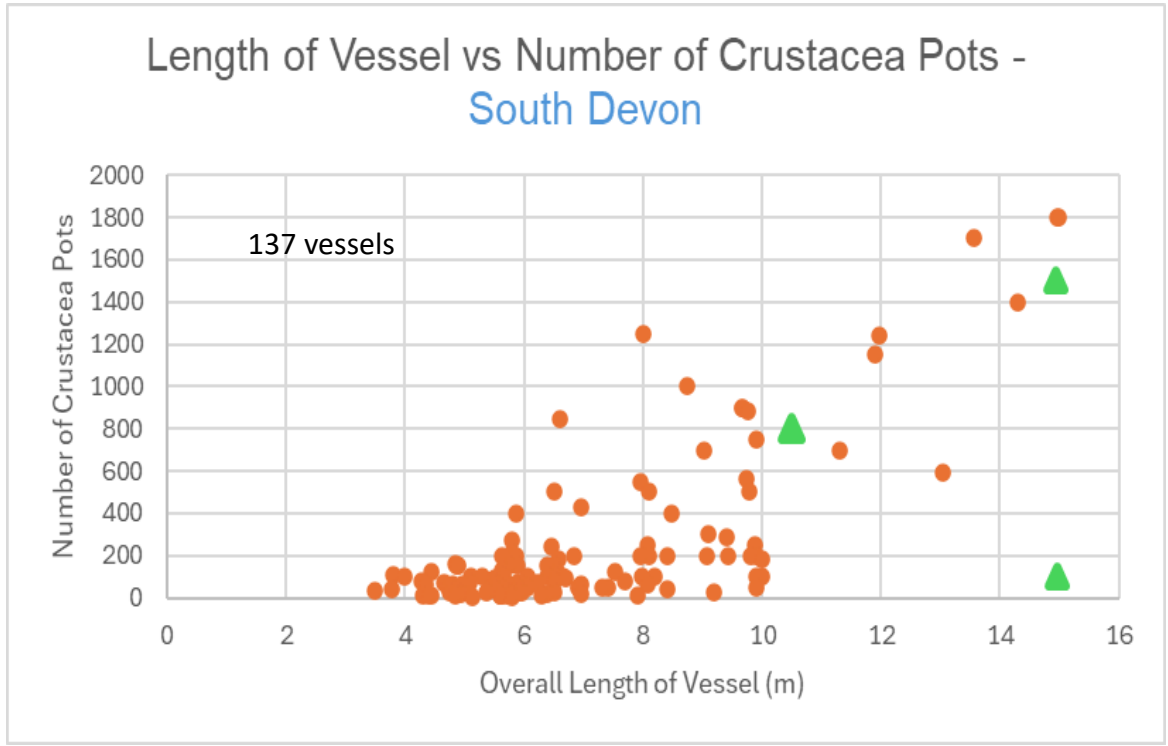
Length of Vessels and Number of Crustacea Pots North and South of the D&S IFCA's District





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Option 2 – An Impact Option – Reduction of pots

Reduce the maximum number of pots operated by individual vessels.
The number of vessels impacted depends on the level of reduction applied. Reduction can be applied to the total number of pots or separately to the crab and lobster fishery or whelk fishery

Strengths

- Reduces potting effort and restricts the level of potting that can be applied in the future.
- Reduce total pots to 1800 reduces cap by 14.3%
- Reduce total crab and lobster pots to 1600 reduces cap by 11%
- Reflects most of the main points from informal engagement

Weaknesses

- Impacts on existing potting activity and will affect some existing businesses.
- Reducing total number of pots to 1,800 only removes 750 pots or 1.21% of total effort.
- Reducing total number of crab and lobster pots to 1,600 impacts 3 of the largest inshore operators that support many jobs at sea and ashore and will only reduce the total effort by 2.75%.
- Does not impact on current vivier activity for crab and lobster unless total number of pots is reduced to 1,400 pots.
- Unless the reduction is significant, provides other vessel operators with the opportunity to increase their potting effort so no benefit to the fishery is achieved.

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis
Length of Vessels and Total Number of Pots

Viviers shown as triangles on graph. Green triangles indicate vessel working pots in the District. NB. the 10.5m vivier has a tank of <2m^3

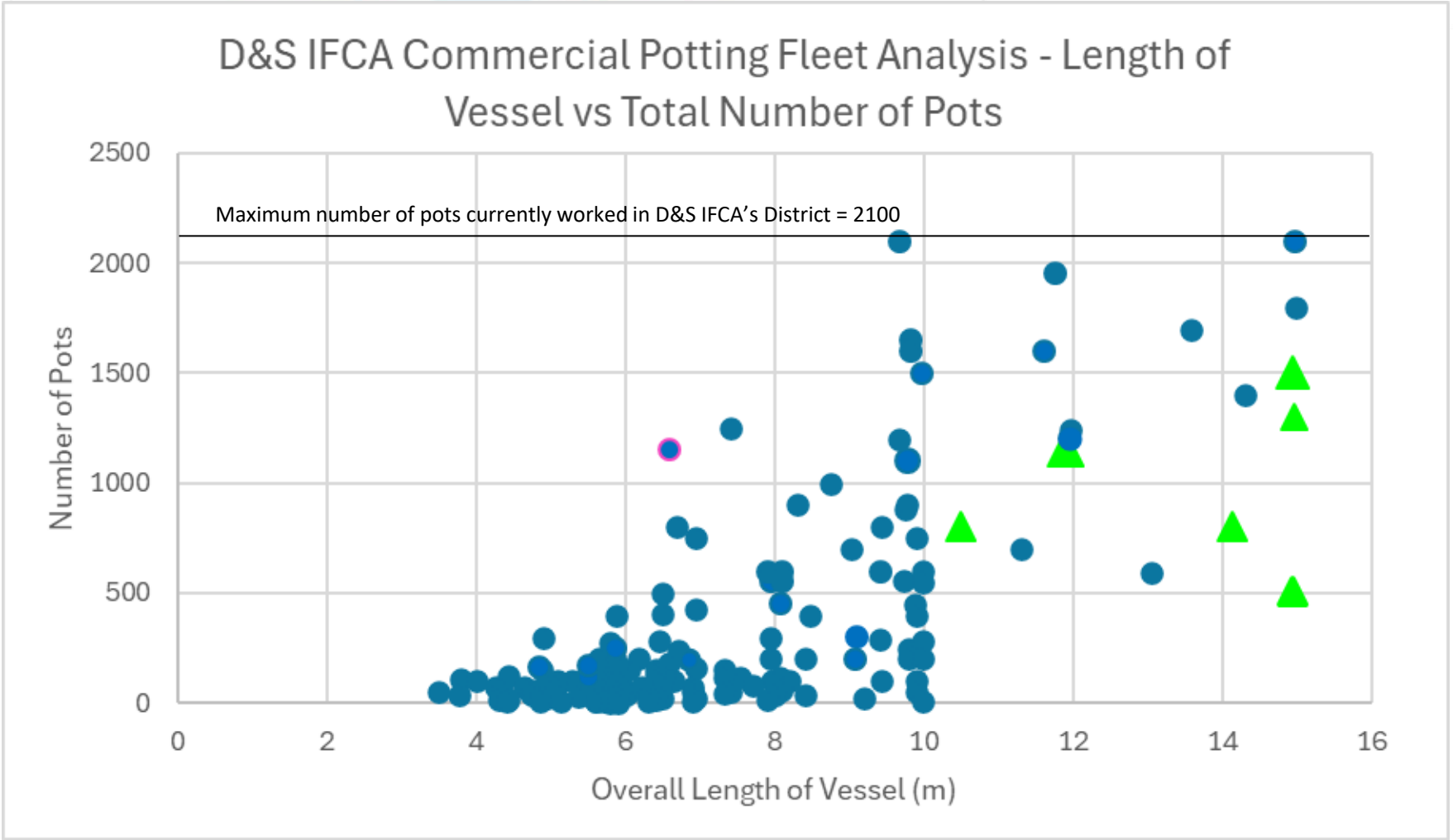

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Table of Impact of Pot Reduction

Pot Limit	Number of vessels impacted	Fishing location	Part of District	Number of pots removed	%age removed of total number of pots in district removed	Impact on business	no. crew/ families potentially impacted
2100	0				0%	none	**0**
2000	2	inshore only	South Devon	200	0.32%	Moderate - may impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**7**
1800	3	inshore only	2 South Devon 1 North Devon	750	1.21%	Would impact established businesses / crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**11**
1600	6	inshore only	4 South Devon 2 North Devon	1700	2.75%	Would impact established businesses / crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**20**
1500	8	inshore only	4 South Devon 4 North Devon	2500	4.05%	Would impact established businesses/ crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**24**
1400	11	2 viviers - rest inshore	4 South Devon 5 North Devon 2 viviers – 1 SD, 1ND	3600	5.83%	Would impact established businesses/ crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**38**
1200	15	3 viviers - rest inshore	8 South Devon 7 North Devon 3 viviers - 2 ND, 1 SD	6190	10.02%	Would impact established businesses/ crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**52**
1000	21	4 viviers - rest inshore	14 South Devon 7 North Devon 4 vivers - 2 ND, 2 SD	10190	16.49%	Would impact established businesses/ crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	**70**

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis
Length of Vessels and Total Number of Pots

Viviers shown as triangles on graph. Green triangles indicate vessel working pots in the District. NB. the 10.5m vivier has a tank of <2m^3

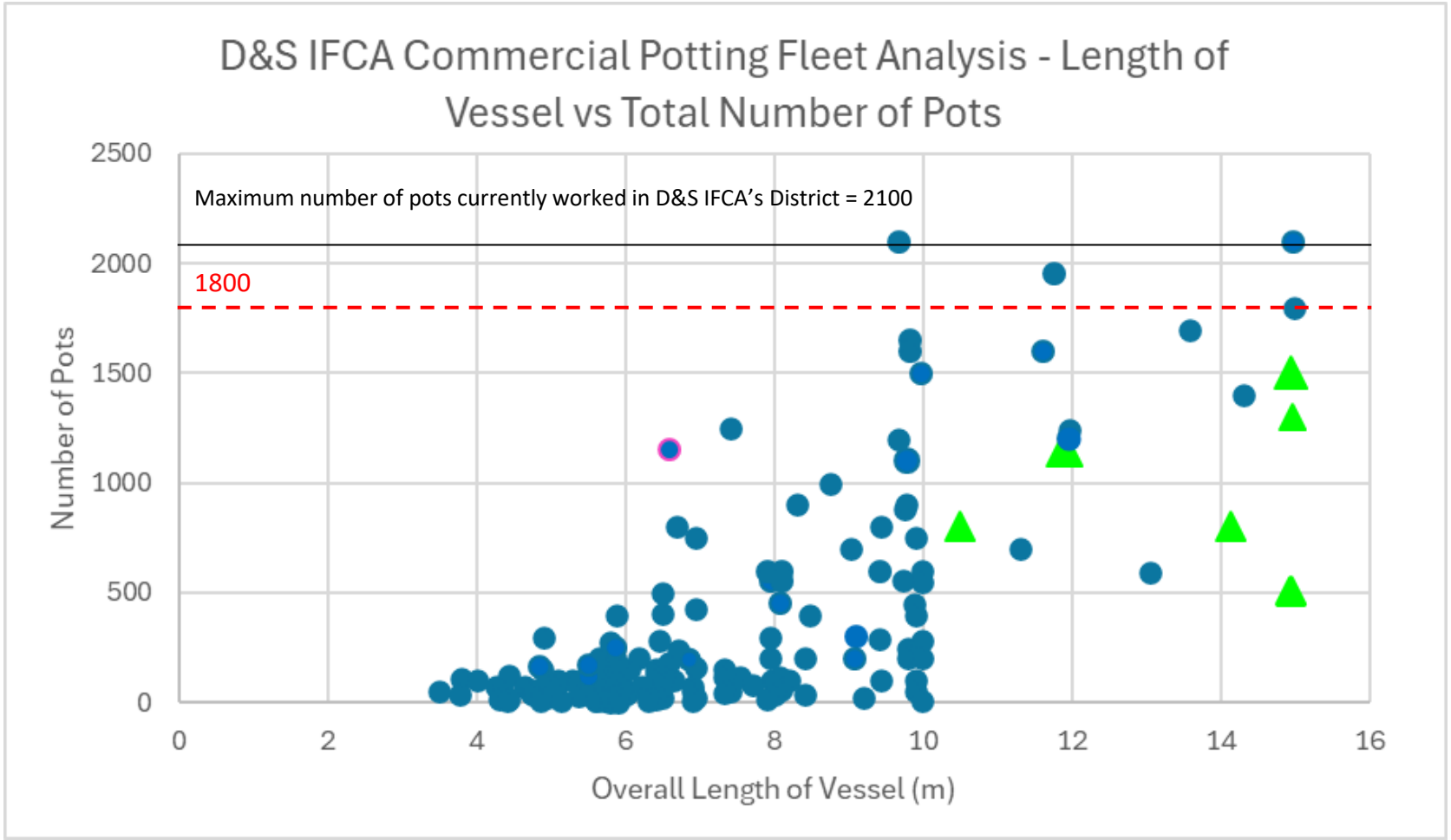

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Table of Impact of Pot Reduction – Crustacea Pots Only

Pot Limit	Number of vessels impacted	Fishing location	Part of District	Number of pots removed	%age removed of total number of pots in district removed	%age of crustacea pots removed	Impact on business	no. crew/ families potentially impacted
1800	0				0%		none	0
1600	3	3 inshore only	South Devon	500	0.08%	1.18%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	8
1500	3	3 inshore only	South Devon	800	1.29%	1.89%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	11
1400	4	1 viviers - 3 inshore	3 South Devon 1 SD vivier	1200	1.94%	2.83%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	16
1200	7	1 viviers - 6 inshore	6 South Devon 1 SD vivier	2290	3.71%	5.41%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	26
1000	9		7 South Devon 1 North Devon 1 SD vivier	3890	6.30%	9.18%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	32

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis – Length of Vessels and Number of Crustacea Pots

161 Permit Holders declared using crustacea pots
24 in the northern part of the District
137 in the Southern part of the District

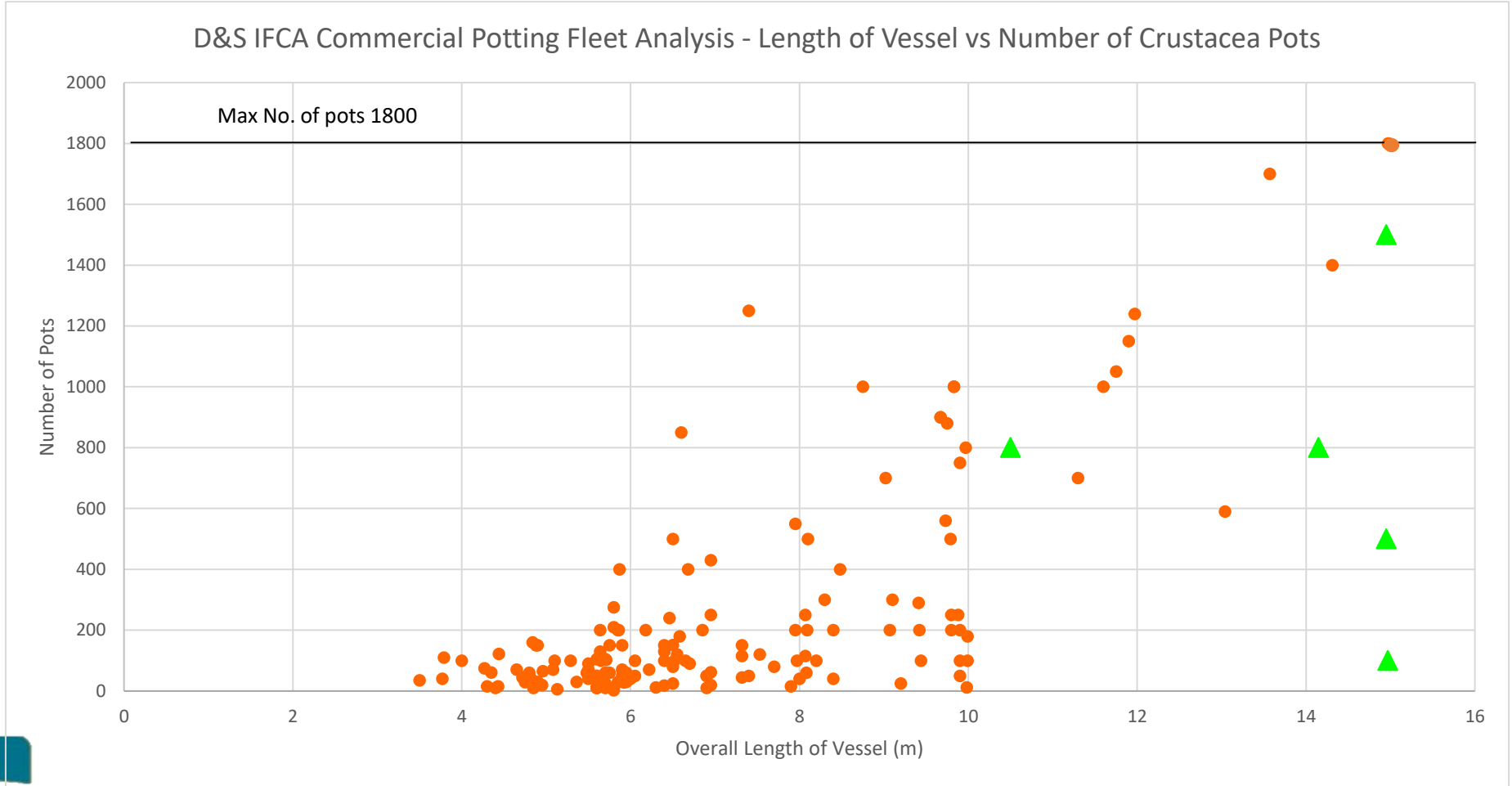

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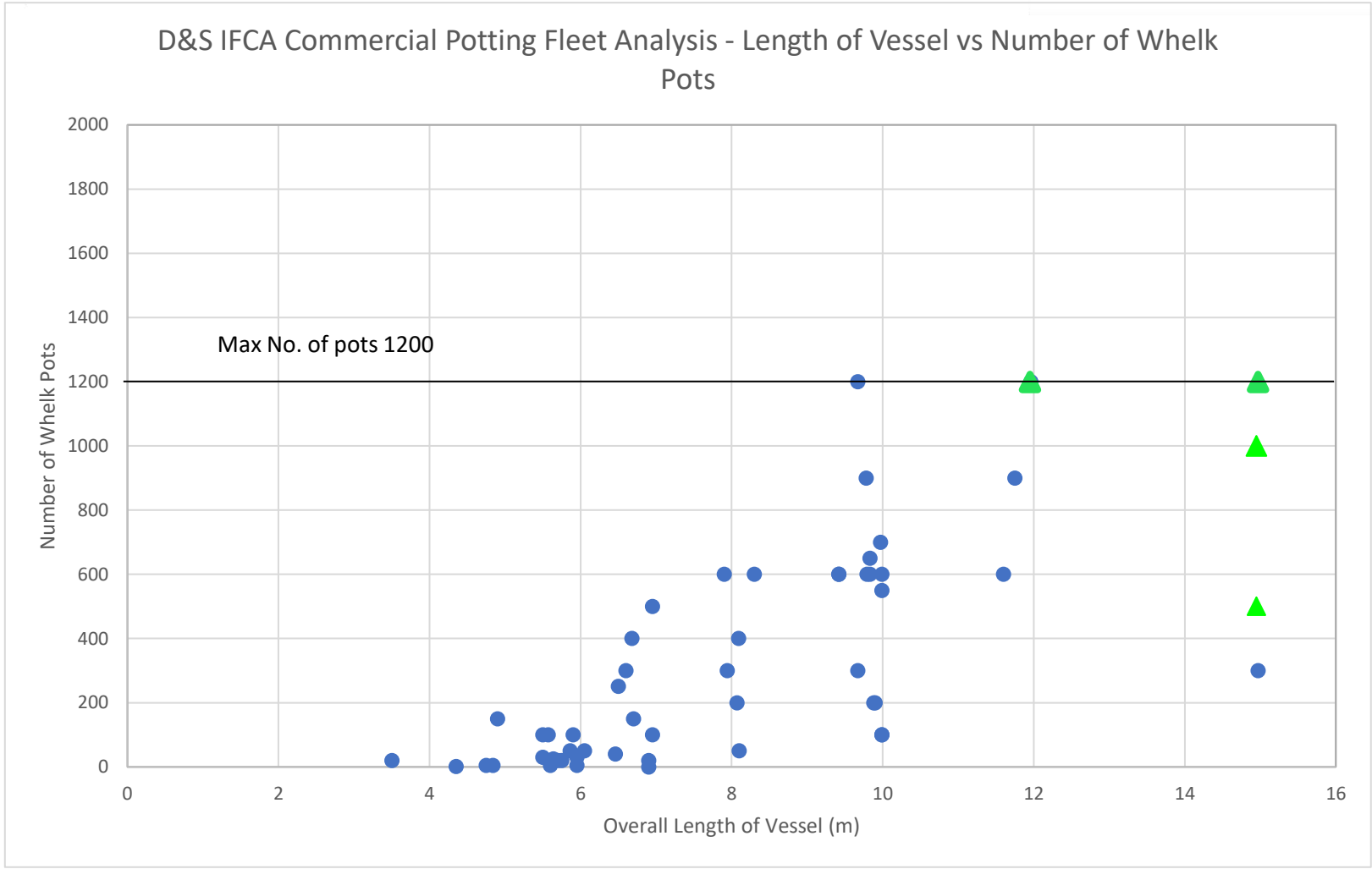
Table of Impact of Pot Reduction – Whelk Pots Only

Pot Limit	Number of vessels impacted	Fishing location	Part of District	Number of pots removed	%age removed of total number of pots in district removed	%age of whelk pots removed	Impact on business	no. crew/ families potentially impacted
1400	0				0%	0%	none	0
1200	0				0%	0%	none	0
1000	4	2 inshore, 2 viviers	2 inshore South Devon; 2 SD vivier	800	1.29%	4.12%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	13
800	7	4 inshore, 3 viviers	3 inshore South Devon, 1 inshore North Devon, 2 SD vivier 1 ND vivier	2000	3.24%	10.29%	High - Would impact established businesses and crews due to reduction in numbers of strings of pots/ reduction in landings/ further impact on onshore businesses	26

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis – Length of Vessels and Number of Whelk Pots

55 Permit Holders declared using whelk pots
12 in the Northern part of the District
43 in the Southern part of the District



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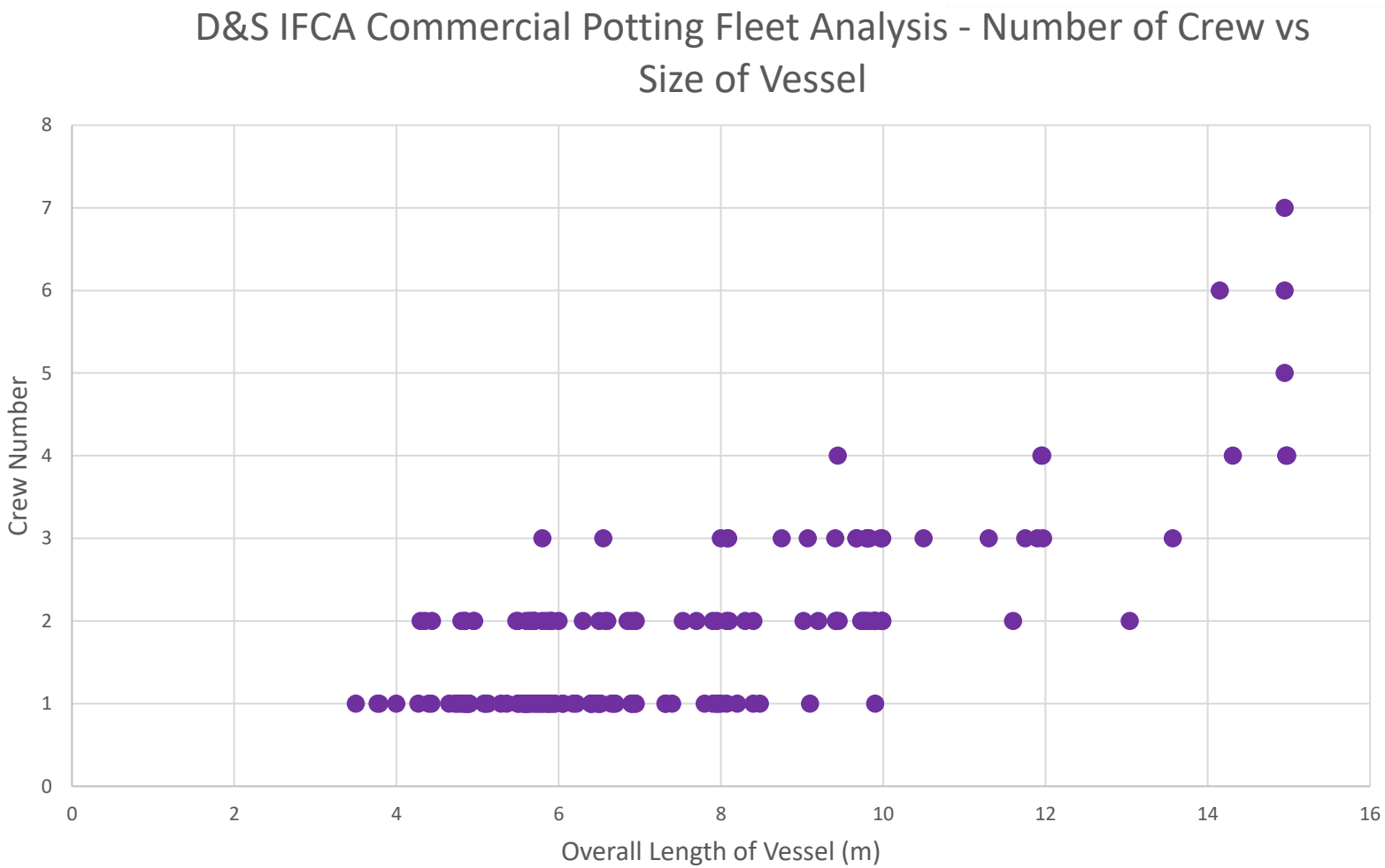
Number of Crew on Different Sizes of Vessels operating in the D&S IFCA's District

Number of crew is taken from the permit sheet. Some Permit holders may indicate the total number working on the vessel or the number of crew members only without including the skipper in that number.



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Option 2a Alternative Pot Reduction across all D&S IFCA Potting Permit Holders

Reduce the maximum number of pots operated by all vessels.
All vessels will be impacted by the same percentage reduction in their total number of pots worked
Reduction can be applied to the total number of pots or separately to the crab and lobster fishery or whelk fishery

Strengths

- Reduces potting effort across the board so that all sizes of vessels in the fleet take a reduction in effort.
- Restricts the level of potting that can be applied in the future.

Weaknesses

- Impacts on all existing potting activity and vessels
- Will have significant impact on businesses if greater percentage reduction applied.
- Would need to have a maximum number of pots allowed to be used in the District.
- May be difficult to ensure all vessels have reduced their effort.
- Maybe be difficult to monitor and enforce.
- Onshore storage of pots may be limited.
- Risk that self declaration of the number of pots worked may be increased to offset the reduction.

Alternative Pot Reduction by different Percentages

% Reduction in pots for all vessels	All Pots	Crustacea Pots all District	Whelks Pots all District
10% reduction	6178	4235	1943
15% reduction	9270	6353	2917
20% reduction	12356	8470	3886
25% reduction	15445	10588	4857

Option 3 – An Impact Option– Prohibiting Vivier Vessels

Prohibit the use of vivier vessels in the District with integral, below deck level, tanks having a volume of more than two cubic metres.
Impacts on 6 nomadic vessels operating from time to time in the District, mainly on the north coast.

Strengths

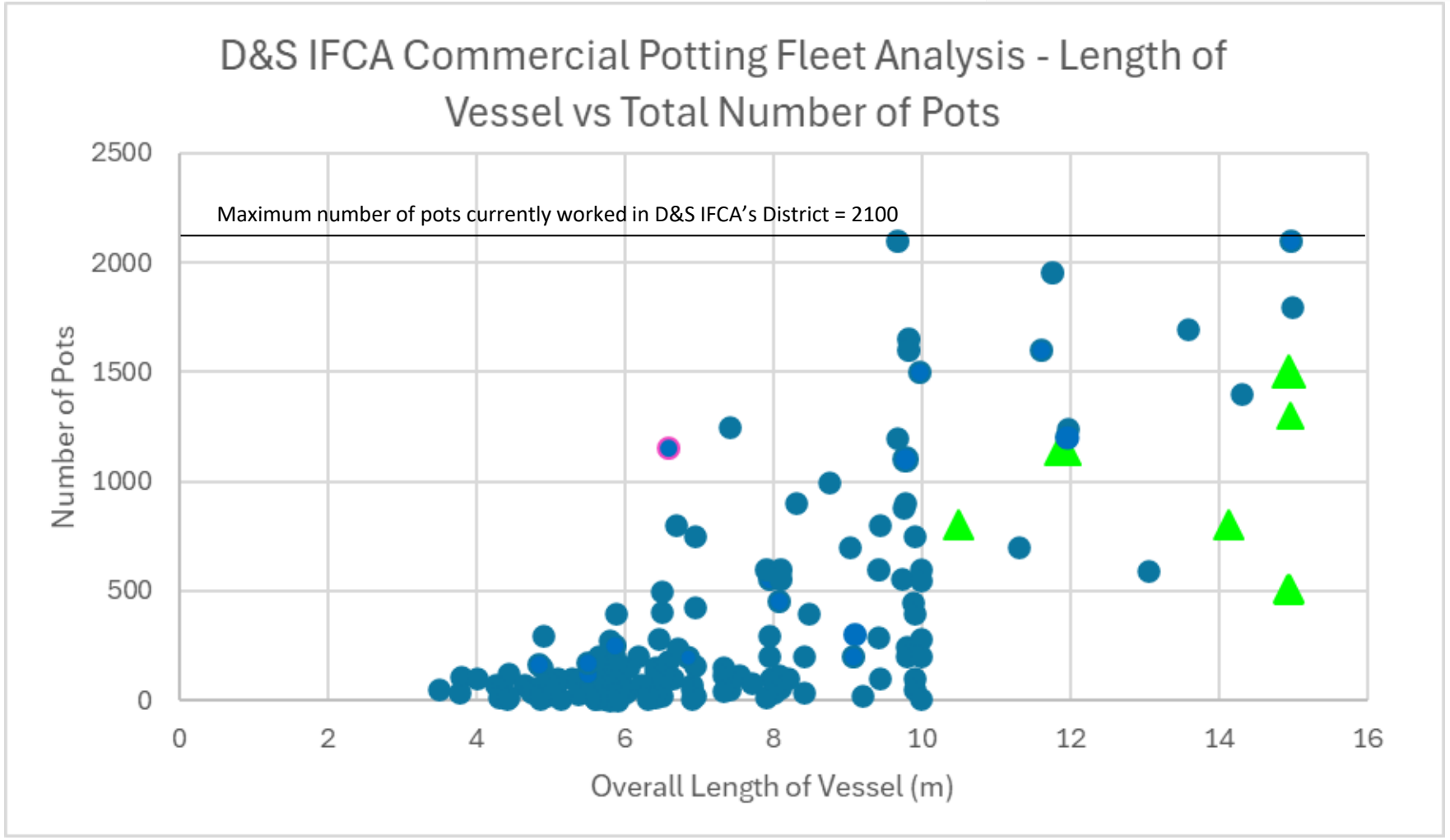
- Removes threat of the nomadic vessels increasing effort in the District (11 days at sea by 6 nomadic viviers in the District for 2024).
- Prevents new vivier vessels joining the fleet.
- The tank limit allows the existing vivier vessel that operates exclusively in the District to continue.
- Aligns with Cornwall IFCA proposals.
- Easier to enforce management than other measures including pot capping.
- Displaced viviers could continue to operate outside the D&S IFCA District.
- Addresses concerns raised by inshore vessel operators.

Weaknesses

- Removes fishing opportunity for up to 6 current permit holders, noting that 3 vivier vessels have only been issued with a permit to operate in the District since 2024.
- Vivier boats currently fish less crab and lobster pots than some monohull vessels.
- Does not prevent larger vessels (without vivier tanks) joining the fishery and fishing more pots or current vessels increasing their effort.
- Not consistent with D&S IFCA's approach to scallop dredge fishery management where the restriction is on the gear not the design of the vessel.
- Challenge to introduce a restriction through permit conditions

Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis
Length of Vessels and Total Number of Pots

Viviers shown as triangles on graph. Green triangles indicate vessel working pots in the District. NB. the 10.5m vivier has a tank of <2m^3



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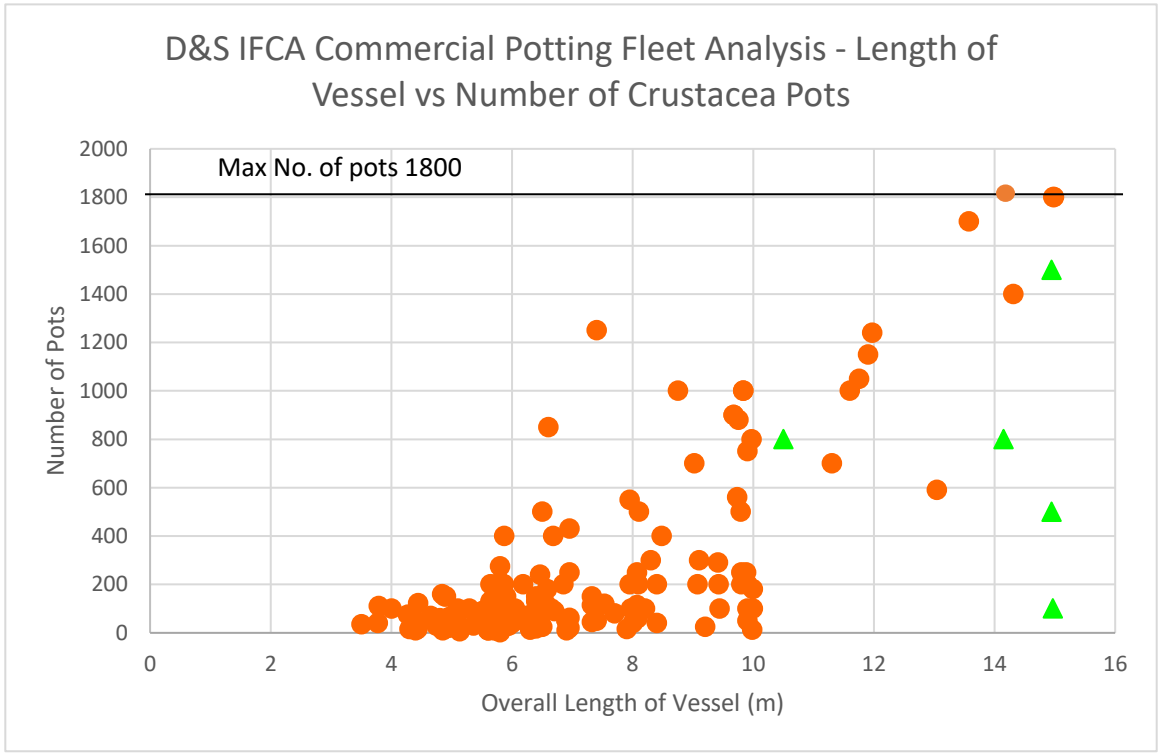
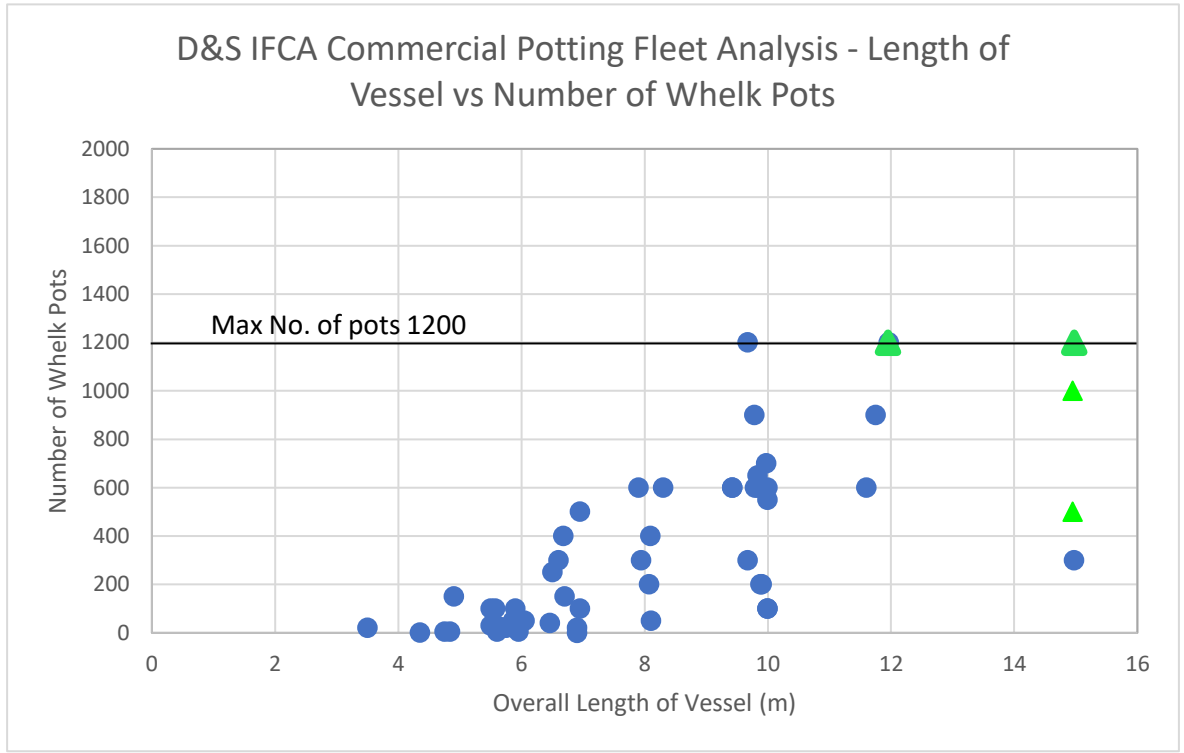
Commercial Potting Fleet Analysis – Length of Vessels and Number of Pots





Total Number of Permit Holders:
North of the District = 26
South of the District = 148

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Option 4 – An impact option - Size of Vessels

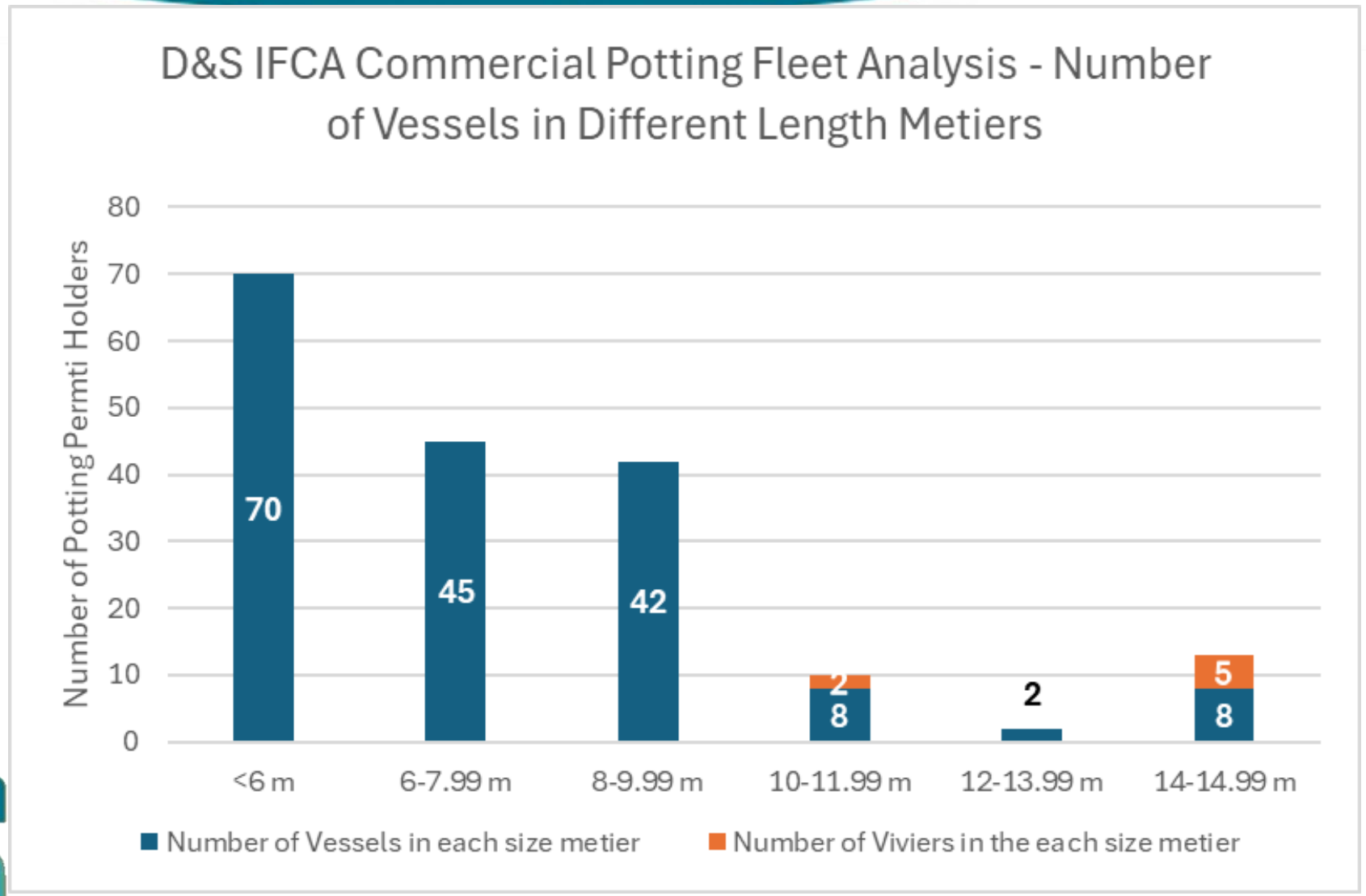
Reducing the size of the vessels
The number of vessels impacted depends on the level of reduction applied.
A different maximum size of vessel could be applied to each coast

Strengths

- May, depending on the maximum size, reduce existing effort and future effort
- Can apply different size limits on the North and South coasts and to different fisheries.
- Reducing the size to 12 metres on North coast will remove 5 out of 6 of existing nomadic vivier vessels but not affect other vessels currently operating on the north coast.

- Weaknesses
- Smaller catamaran vessels can operate greater number of pots than larger monohull vessels.
- Does not prevent an increase in number of smaller more efficient modern monohull and catamaran vessels in District
- May cause an increase in effort from remaining vessels.
- The larger older designed vessels cannot compete with offshore viviers and will lead to 3 vessels leaving the pot fisheries completely causing economic and social impacts.
- Larger vessels support more crew, shore businesses and processors.
- This could only be applied through additional zonal management

Size of vessels



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Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Table of Impact of Vessel Size

Vessel Length Limit	Number of vessels impacted/ removed from fishery	Fishing Location - inshore / vivier	Vivier location in District	Type of inshore vessel impacted	Number of pots removed	%age pots removed of the total pots in the District	Number of crew/ families impacted	Onshore Shellfish Businesses affected
14.99	0			None	0		0	0
14	**8**	5 Viviers, 3 inshore boats	3 vivier North Devon; 2 Viviers South Devon	3 inshore vessels all wooden monohull, built pre-1975	10900	17.64	**40**	**14 known processors/ exporters excluding markets, restaurants, fishmongers etc. Will impact fishing supporting businesses**
12	**10**	5 viviers, 5 inshore boats	3 vivier North Devon; 2 Viviers South Devon	5 inshore vessels all wooden monohull, builtpre-1975	13190	21.35	**45**	**14 known processor/ exporter excluding market, restaurants, fishmongers etc. Will impact fishing supporting businesses**
10	**18**	7 viviers; 11 inshore boats	3 viviers North Devon; 4 Viviers South Devon one of which has a small tank and works exclusively inshore	7 inshore vessels all wooden monohull, built between 1960 and 1987; Other inshore vessels are monohull	23030	37.28	**70**	**14 known processor/ exporter excluding market, restaurants, fishmongers etc. Will impact fishing supporting businesses and communities**
8	**60**	7 viviers; 53 inshore boats	3 viviers ND; 4 Viviers SD	53 inshore vessel cover a range of larger older wooden boats to smaller modern catamarans of 9m, 8m and under	45832	74.19	**158**	**14 known processor/ exporter excluding market, restaurants, fishmongers etc. Will impact fishing supporting businesses and communities**

Option 5 - Seasonal Closure

Seasonal closure
Can be applied across the District or zonal

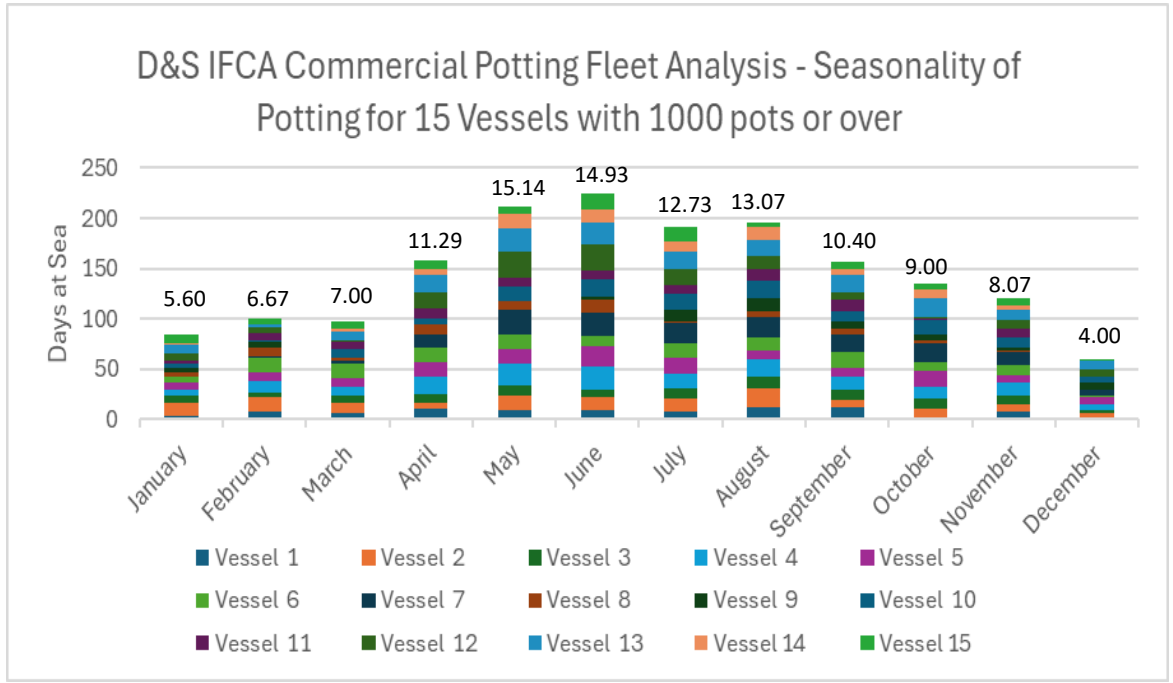
Strengths

- When and for how long the closure is in place will determine how much the overall effort is reduced.

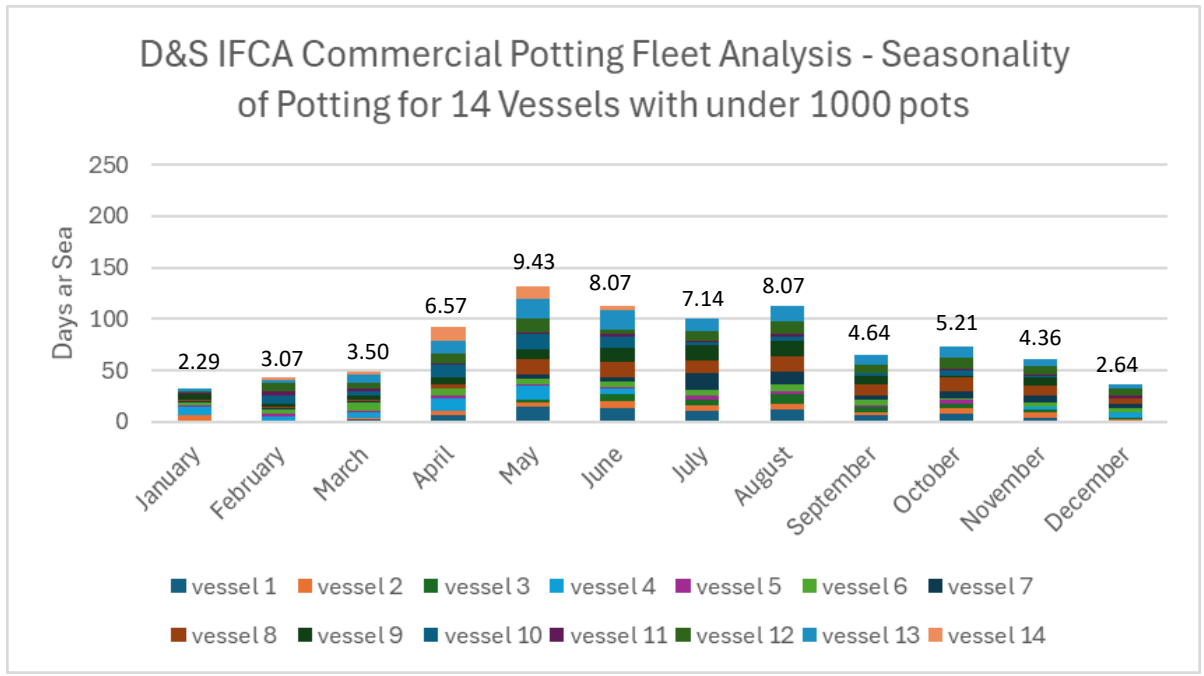
Weaknesses

- Does not reduce overall potting capacity just the length of the season
- Generally poor weather restricts how much time vessels spend at sea.
- Generally, already low activity in the winter months, gear turned over to stop being lost or hung up.
- Pots are brought ashore from the coastal strip due to fear of gear being lost in poor weather.
- Low catches of crab and lobster taken through the winter compared to the rest of the year.
- Lack of shore capacity to store all the pots.

Seasonality of Potting Activity for 15 Vessels operating with over 1000 pots



Vessels with 1000 & over pots – ranged from 1100 to 2100 pots operated with an average of 1516 pots



Vessels with under 1000 pots – ranged from 200 to -900 pots operated with an average of 641 pots

Data used were provided by MMO for 2023. Figures above the bar chart are the mean for the month for those vessels included in the analysis.

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Zonal Management

Zonal management
Can be applied differently across the two coasts. Likely to be defined as different distances from the shore

Strengths

- Manage areas according to the specific characteristics of the fishery
- Provides opportunity to refine the balance according to the needs of the recreational and commercial sectors in the near shore strip and reduce conflict.
- Could limit larger vessels to certain areas within the District.

Weaknesses

- Lack of high-resolution data to introduce zonal management.
- Difficult to monitor without IVMS.
- Does not restrict overall effort just where it can occur.
- Would remove exiting fishing opportunities, especially in areas where activity is restricted by mobile fishing activity and lack of space inshore for vessels to move away from established fishing area.
- Complicated measure to put into practice-how to define the zonal management e.g. pots numbers, size of vessel, sector.

Days at Sea/Curfew

Days at sea/Curfew

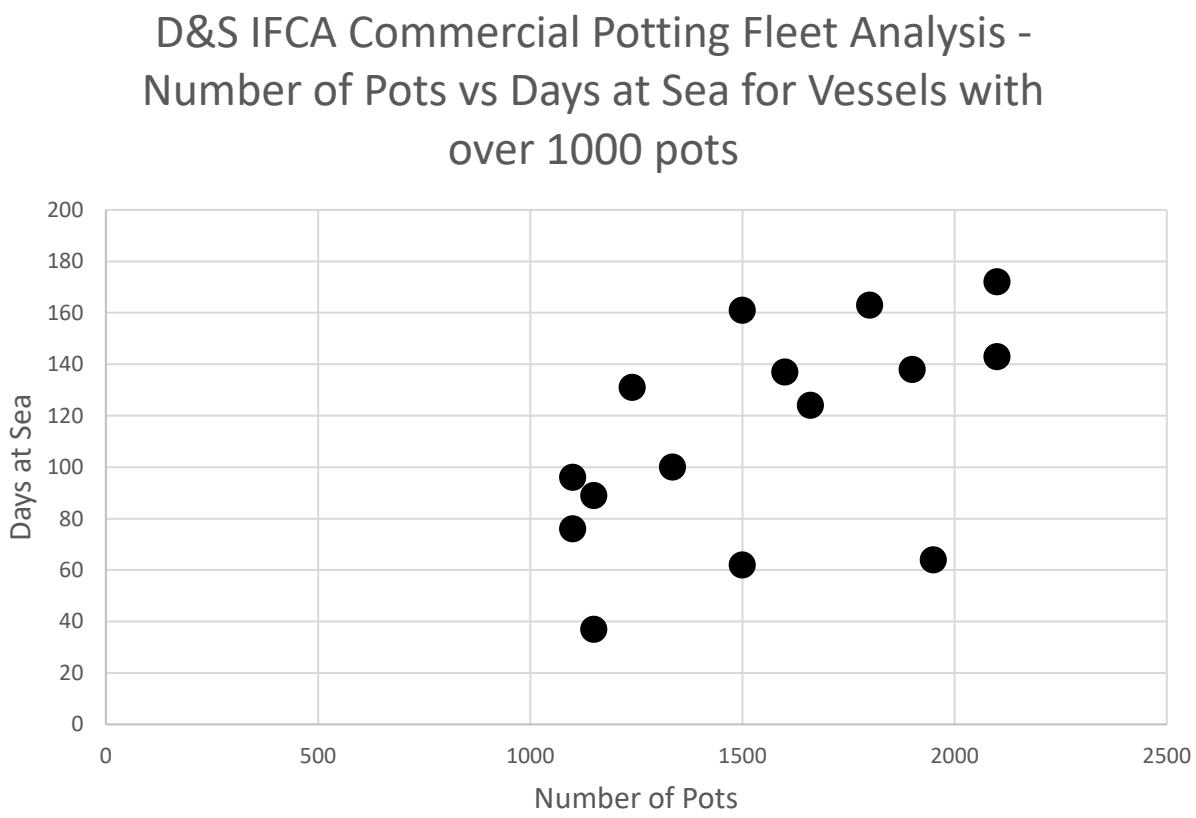
Strengths

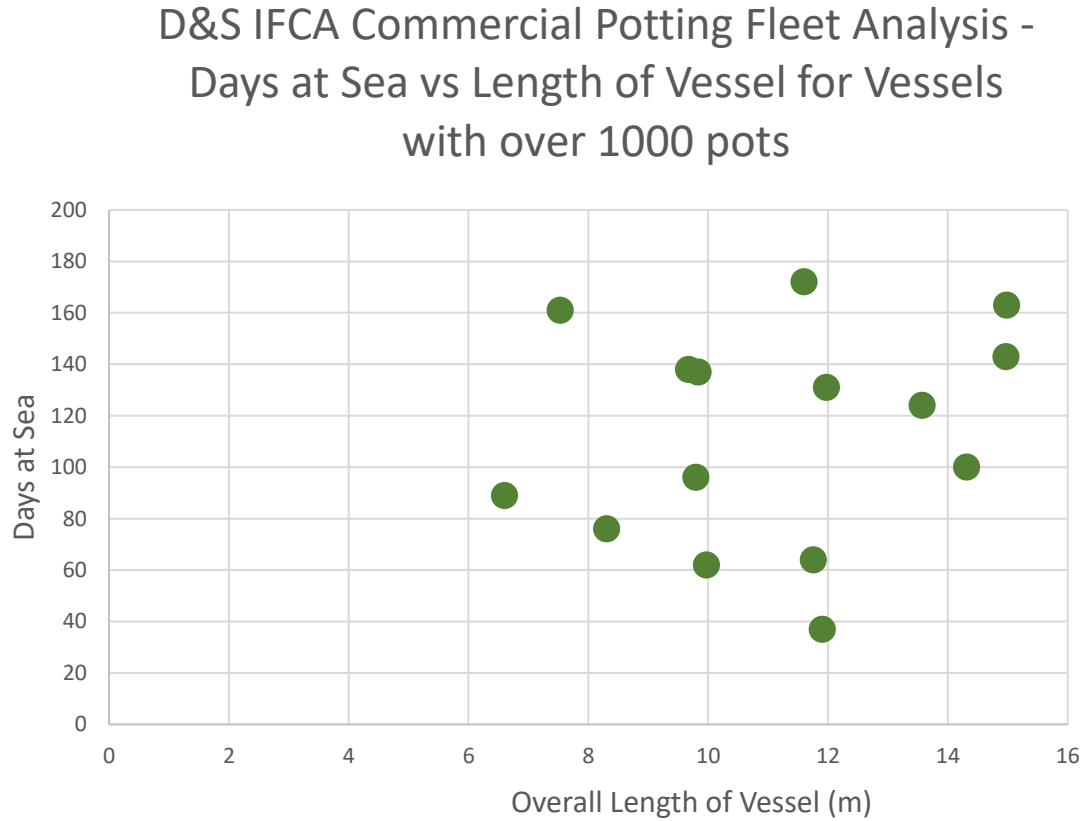
- Relatively easy if applies to the over 12m vessels as VMS data are available.
- Potentially could restrict the overall amount of time vessels operate in the District.

Weaknesses

- Difficult to monitor vessels, less than 12m without IVMS.
- Pots continue to fish (passive gear) when the vessels are in port or further offshore.
- National data collection systems currently in place do not allow accurate data for all vessels to determine days at sea.
- Most inshore vessels are restricted by weather and tides.
- Difficult to introduce a curfew due to the needs of the potting fleet to be flexible due to weather etc.

Days at Sea





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