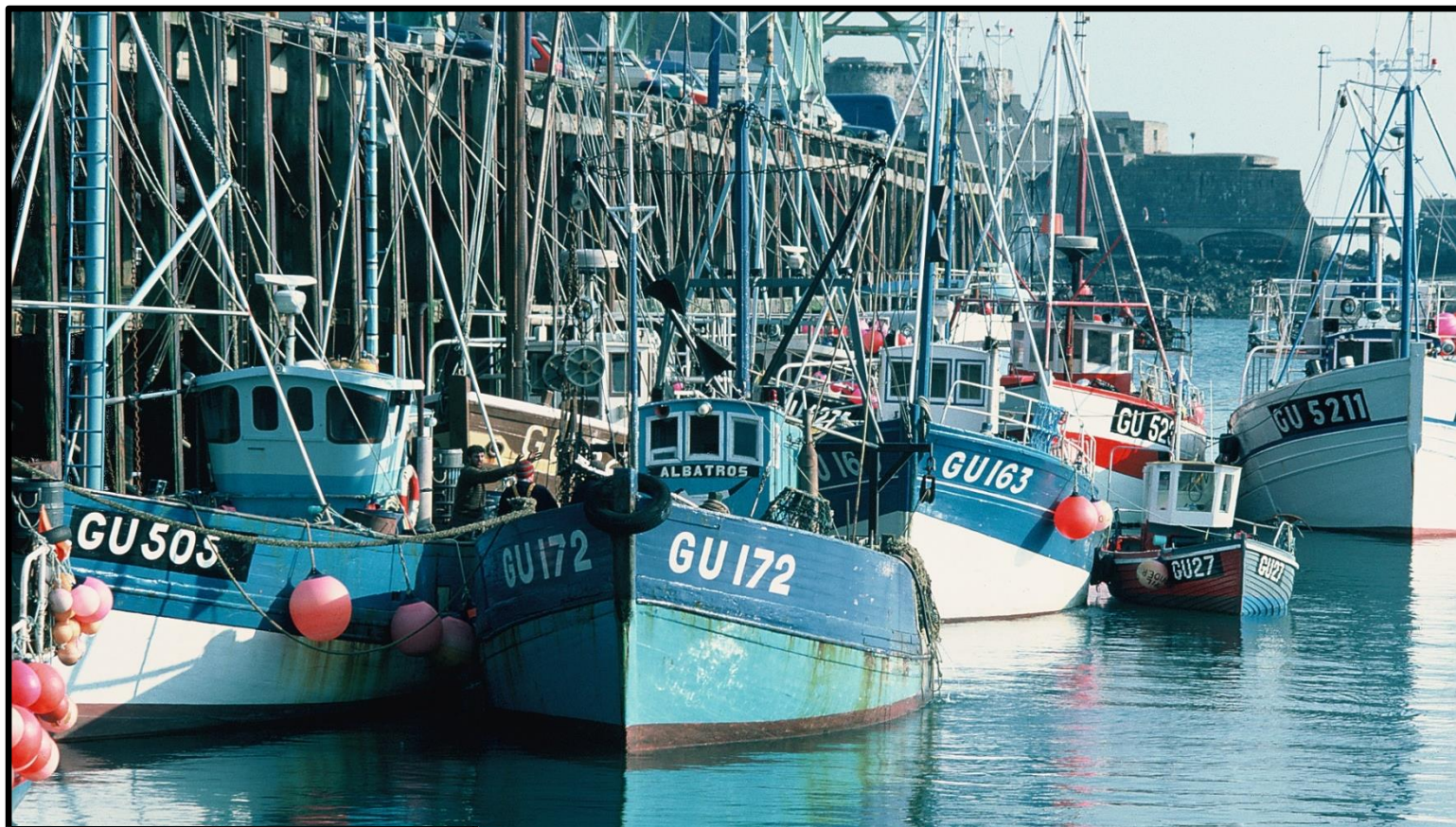




States of Guernsey Sea Fisheries



Committee for Economic
Development
Sea Fisheries Section
Raymond Falla House
PO Box 459, Longue Rue
St. Martin's, Guernsey
GY1 6AF

Tel. +44 (0) 1481 221161

seafisheries@gov.gg

www.gov.gg

Sea Fisheries Section Statistical Report 2019



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Executive Summary

Background

All landings data presented in the following report have been collated from logsheets submitted by all licensed Bailiwick fishermen. The requirement for logbook returns was introduced by the Sea Fisheries Section in 2004 and applies to all licensed fishermen irrespective of vessel size. Data submitted to the Marine Management Organization (MMO) directly, through the catch app and E-logs is included in this report; However individual pot lifts are no longer recorded and hours of Scallop Dredging are reduced to number of tows for the MMO reporting. Due to these differences in reporting methodology it is no longer possible to report effort for these vessels in combination with the locally recorded catches, therefore from 2019 onwards vessels over 10m will have their potting and dredging effort recorded separately.

2019 cover photo is a historic picture of the Guernsey fishing fleet moored alongside the New Jetty circa 1980.

David Wilkinson – Sea Fisheries Officer

David.wilkinson@gov.gg

1. The Year In Brief

1.1 Onshore and Inshore

Routine patrols were conducted in the same manner as preceding years, with shore-based patrols using the 4 x 4 patrol vehicle and inshore patrols using FPV Puma and RIB. Particular emphasis was given to Ormering tides and the summer months to coincide with the fishing season of the bay boats.

1.2 Offshore

Offshore patrols were conducted throughout the year and consisted of both targeted and routine inspections. Although licensed fishing vessels are the main target of offshore patrols, attention is also given to visiting charter vessels. Charter boats from the south coast of the UK often use Alderney as a base to fish around the islands, particularly on the Schole and Casquets banks. Regular inspections were carried out to ensure that the masters/ charterers are aware of the local ordinances regarding minimum sizes and the ban on the sale of fish caught on unlicensed boats.

Commercial vessels from Guernsey, Jersey, UK and France were routinely boarded in 2019. During these boarding operations, checks were made including; fishing vessel licence, fishing gear inspected and measured ensuring compliance with both local and EU legislation and catches are inspected to ensure that minimum landing sizes have been respected and catches in the fish hold reflect the catches recorded in the log book.

1.3 Working Relationships



The array above shows a small selection of other government departments, trading bodies and non-governmental organisations that Sea Fisheries works closely with. Relationships range from the trading of data and statistics to using the Leopardess for marine operations and personnel transfer. Sea Fisheries Officers are tasked to skipper and crew the Leopardess for other States of Guernsey departments as part of the Sea Fisheries mandate. She is available 24/7 for emergency callouts.

1.4 Ormering

The Fishing Ordinance 1997 which regulates Ormering states that ormers can only be taken between 1 January and 30 April on “permitted days”, which are the day of each new moon and of each full moon and the following two days. Permitted days in 2019 can be seen in Table 1.

| January | Predicted Height (m) | February | Predicted Height (m) | March | Predicted Height (m) | April | Predicted Height (m) |
|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 6 th | 1.9 | 4 th | 2.0 | 6 th | 1.7 | 5 th | 1.4 |
| 7 th | 1.9 | 5 th | 1.8 | 7 th | 1.5 | 6 th | 1.3 |
| 8 th | 2.0 | 6 th | 1.7 | 8 th | 1.4 | 7 th | 1.4 |
| 21 st | 1.1 | 19 th | 0.9 | 21 st | 0.3 | 19 th | 0.5 |
| 22 nd | 0.8 | 20 th | 0.4 | 22 nd | 0.1 | 20 th | 0.4 |
| 23 rd | 0.6 | 21 st | 0.2 | 23 rd | 0.3 | 21 st | 0.6 |

Table 1: Permitted Ormering dates 2019

Sea Fisheries officers were on patrol for each of the permitted Ormering tides. The first 3 sets of Ormering tides in 2019 had a minimum tide height of only 0.6m above chart datum. The best tides of the season occurred between 21st and 23rd of March, with a 0.1m predicted height. Although ormer patrols are undertaken primarily to deter people from taking undersized ormers, public interaction is vital in order to gain feedback on stock levels. Ormer gatherers spoken to by Officers were reporting average catches broadly in line with previous years.

In addition to the traditional ormer gatherers on the low tide reefs in 2019 were members of La Societe Gurnesiaise, who have undertaken a tagging programme, to try to assess the Ormer population. These tags are small with an alpha-numeric code. Should any Ormerers come across tagged Ormers they are asked to report them to the Marine Biological section of La Societe Gurnesiaise.

1.5 Sea Temperatures

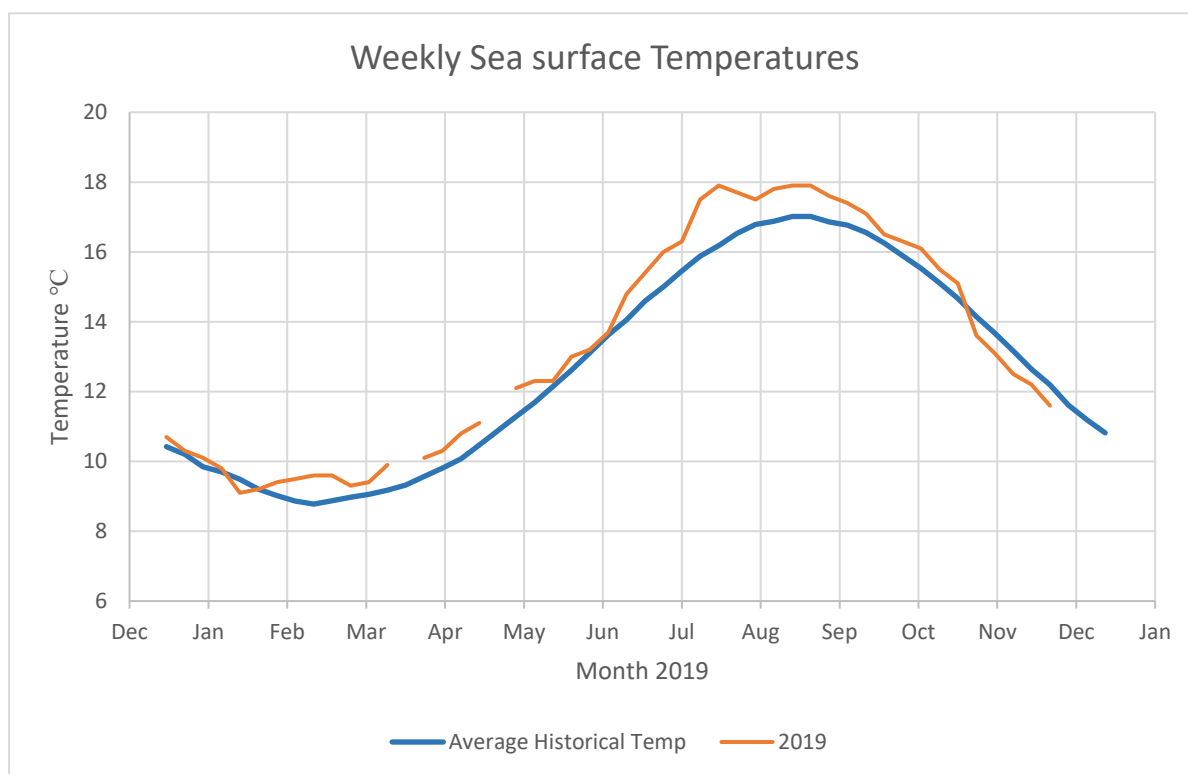


Figure 1: comparison of weekly sea temperature for 2019 against the 35-year average
2019 sea surface temperature for most of the year were seen to be above the long term average. Although some data was missing from the 2019 data set.

The weather for 2019 showed a similar pattern to the sea temperature with the average temperature slightly above the long-term average making 2019 the 9th warmest year since records began in 1843. The first half of the year was very dry with record breaking low rainfall, this gave way to a wet second half with the period October to December producing the most rainfall since the year 2000.

1.6 Disease Testing

Every year a sample of oysters and larvae is sent to the laboratories at Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) for the purpose of disease screening. This screening is designed to limit the spread of disease between aquaculture sites and a clean bill of health is necessary to enable local aquaculture farmers to export their produce to sites in the UK, Europe and further afield. The oysters and larvae are tested for ostreid herpesvirus-1 (OsHV-1) and other diseases listed by the OIE (Office International des Epizooties). All of the tests performed on the local oysters and larvae came back negative, showing that the local aquaculture sites continue to be in good health.

1.7 Bass Regulations

Since the introduction of stricter measures to control the fishing of European Seabass at the end of 2017, the regulations continued to evolve into 2019. In 2018, recreational fishing for the species was limited to a “Catch and Release” basis only, however the 2019 regulations allowed for recreational fishermen to retain not more than one specimen per fisherman per day.

For commercial fishers, the quotas were meant that those vessels fishing using a Trawl method, or vessels using set nets, an “unavoidable bycatch” weight was able to be retained. These weights increased from 2018, with Trawlers unavoidable bycatch increasing from 100kg per month to 400kg every two months. Those setting nets also received an unavoidable bycatch weight increase from 1.2 tonnes annually, to 1.4 tonnes. The Seabass fishery is open to Recreational fishers between 1st April to 31st October, and outside of these dates it is a Catch and Release basis only.

The Seabass fishery is only closed to Commercial fishers during February and March. The regulations are under constant review in order to maintain a sustainable fishery.

2. The Fleet

The fishing fleet numbers for 2019 are displayed in table 1 below and the graph Figure 2.

| Vessel Category | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| GU Registered <10 | 171 | 160 | 158 | 159 | 159 | 153 | 147 | 142 | 136 | 129 | 127 | 123 |
| GU Registered >10 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| External Vessels | | | | | | | 34 | 31 | 30 | 24 | 21 | 19 |

Table 2: Total registered GU fleet numbers 2019

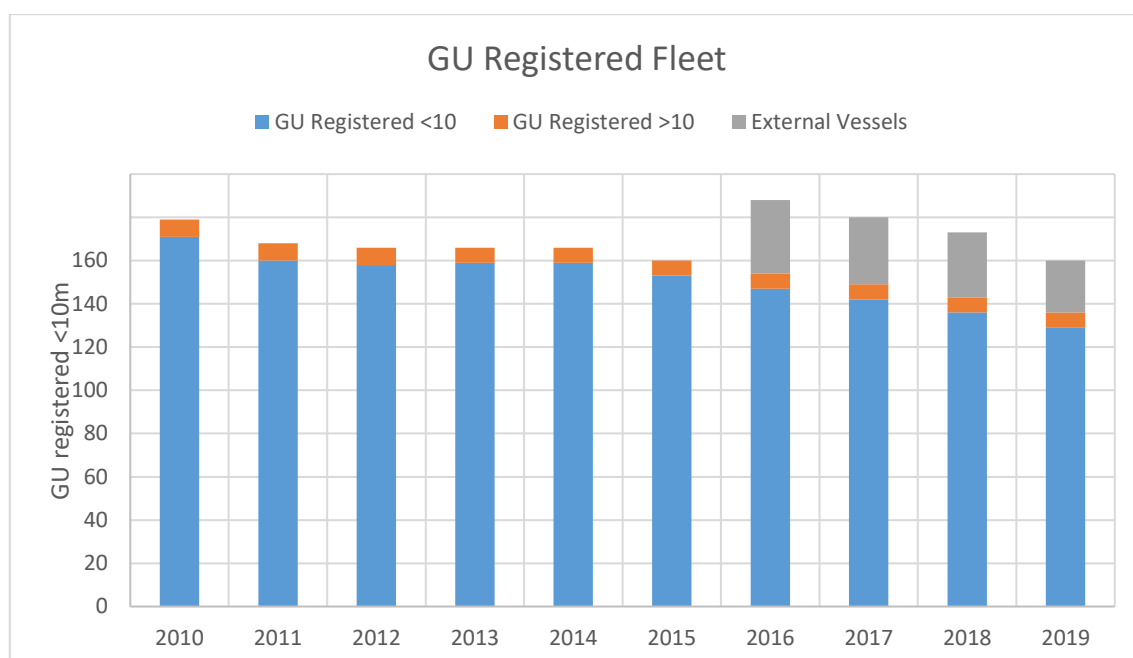


Figure 2: Graph visualising change in registered GU fleet numbers over time

2.1 Local Under 10m

The net change in 2019 was a reduction of seven Under 10 vessels; the largest reduction in the number of Under 10 vessels in a single year since 2011. The total number of vessel movements was higher than this, with as many as nine vessels changing ownership; some vessels leaving the island, and some new vessels being introduced. Changes of ownership occur both between owners locally and selling and buying vessels and licences from the UK. The Under 10 fleet is unrestricted with regard to which methods can be used for fishing (subject to adherence to the 1997 Fishing Ordinance), with all vessels being permitted to undertake fishing by any method. The advantage to this lack of restrictions means that the Under 10 fleet can be dynamic and adjust their fishing to whatever species and methods are most beneficial at that time of year. Allowing the fishery to be flexible means that our local fishermen can always obtain the greatest commercial value from their fishing licence.



2.2 Local Over 10m

The same seven vessels made up the Over 10m fleet in both 2018 and 2019. Of these seven, all but one are engaged in potting (five based in Guernsey and one in Alderney) and one vessel is a trawler (both demersal and beam trawling). Unlike the under 10 fleet, the Over 10m vessels are restricted as to what methods they are permitted to use. All of the Over 10m vessels have now switched to the electronic logbook which reports directly to the MMO in the UK in accordance with EU law.

2.3 Non GU Vessels

Non-GU vessels are granted a licence to fish based on their track record of fishing in Bailiwick waters. The permitted methods are granted based on the track record. This applies to both Under 10 and Over 10 vessels. There was a significant reduction of six Under 10 and Over 10 licensed vessels in 2019, meaning a total of 24 non-GU vessels now hold a licence to fish in Bailiwick waters. Although 24 vessels hold a licence, only approximately 1/3 fish in Bailiwick waters on a regular basis. Unlike local vessels, once a Non-GU vessel has been removed, it cannot be replaced unless it is a replacement vessel by the same owner. The track record for said vessel owner is maintained for future use, however another vessel does not take over the fishing rights and become a licenced vessel in place of one removed.

3. Landings

3.1 Landings Table

| Annual Landings (Tonnes) | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | **Price Per kg (Average Estimated 2019) |
| Anglerfish | 0.69 | 0.46 | 0.56 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 1.9 | 1.3 | £4.46 |
| Atlantic Cod | 0.15 | 0.14 | 0.434 | 4.6 | 3.9 | 3 | 1.7 | 3 | £5.01 |
| Atlantic Mackerel | 9.30 | 11.53 | 6.144 | 2.9 | 4.4 | 6.5 | 9.3 | 5.3 | £1.79 |
| Black Bream | 10.89 | 12.02 | 18.7 | 12.2 | 10.4 | 21.3 | 13.7 | 12.7 | £3.31 |
| Blonde Ray | 98.88 | 68.37 | 53.12 | 98 | 144.7 | 153.3 | 110.2 | 136.5 | £2.52 |
| Brill | 2.32 | 1.84 | 1.6 | 4 | 5.4 | 8.7 | 6.8 | 7.9 | £7.58 |
| Common Cuttlefish | 1.18 | 0.69 | 2.89 | 1.7 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 1.6 | 1.7 | £2.99 |
| Common Sole | 1.26 | 2.16 | 3.04 | 2 | 2.4 | 5.1 | 4 | 2.3 | £10.42 |
| Common Squids Nei | 0.44 | 0.29 | 0.33 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.2 | £5.06 |
| Crawfish | 0.13 | 0.19 | 0.14 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 0.2 | £35.21 |
| Edible Crab | 655.38 | 650.59 | 674.42 | 809.9 | 708.9 | 878.2 | 784.2 | 785.6 | £1.88 |
| European Conger | 5.68 | 3.93 | 4.1 | 7.6 | 6.4 | 7.7 | 8.8 | 10.1 | £1.21 |
| European Lobster | 88.33 | 105.09 | 95.02 | 101.6 | 117.2 | 128.2 | 98.6 | 102.3 | £18.18 |
| Number of Lobsters | 142557 | 156165 | 145405 | 143571 | 164143 | 168645 | 139654 | 146429 | |
| European Plaice | 0.54 | 1.06 | 0.43 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.3 | £2.29 |
| European Seabass | 10.60 | 11.11 | 11.46 | 15.8 | 18.5 | 30.5 | 27.6 | 44.4 | £13.81 |
| Great Atlantic Scallop | 100.38 | 125.16 | 103.65 | 79.8 | 105.2 | 101.2 | 102.6 | 95.7 | £3.44 |
| Grey Mullet | 0.40 | 1.18 | 0.76 | 2.7 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 2.6 | £0.90 |
| John Dory | 0.13 | 0.17 | 0.08 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.1 | £8.87 |
| Ling | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 2 | 2 | £3.32 |
| Pollack | 46.65 | 39.02 | 56.36 | 53.6 | 53.5 | 68.1 | 64.5 | 82.4 | £4.45 |
| Sand Sole | 0.00 | 0.04 | 0.02 | 0.2 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.4 | £3.95 |
| Red Mullet | 2.86 | 3.48 | 8.45 | 14.9 | 4.8 | 5 | 4.7 | 6 | £6.18 |
| Sandeels | 12.83 | 14.51 | 11.41 | 19 | 21.2 | 28.1 | 26.4 | 55.6 | £2.63 |
| Smoothound | 1.87 | 0.06 | 1.46 | 3.5 | 4.6 | 5.6 | 6.6 | 4.4 | £1.47 |
| Spider Crab | 76.64 | 105.96 | 61.19 | 55 | 57.6 | 34.2 | 34.9 | 40.7 | £1.67 |
| Spotted Dog | 4.35 | 4.71 | 7.36 | 12.8 | 9.2 | 12.5 | 16.2 | 15.3 | £0.66 |
| Tope | 0.60 | 0.55 | 0.32 | 0.7 | 0.1 | 3.3 | 5.7 | 3.2 | £2.40 |
| Turbot | 3.38 | 2.66 | 3.42 | 5.6 | 9.2 | 6 | 7.8 | 10.2 | £12.23 |
| Wrasse* | 2.35 | 4.5 | 2.98 | 3.4 | 4.7 | 5.6 | 4 | 7.9 | £1.02 |
| Total (wetfish) | 215.75 | 183.63 | 195.558 | 265.9 | 308 | 376.4 | 325.9 | 414.9 | |
| Total (shellfish) | 922.47 | 987.98 | 934.42 | 1,048.40 | 993.1 | 1145.3 | 1022.8 | 1026.4 | |
| Total (all) | 1138.22 | 1171.61 | 1129.98 | 1,314.30 | 1301.1 | 1521.7 | 1348.7 | 1441.3 | |
| Value (£000's) | £4,123 | £4,250 | £4,237 | £4,767 | £5,089 | £5,832 | £4,960 | £5,438 | |

Table 3: Recorded annual landings for GU registered vessels and estimated average market value

* Wrasse landings do not include those caught and used as pot bait.

** To reflect the fact that approximately 80% of landings are made into France the indicative 2019 price has been weighted more heavily towards the French market prices than prices paid locally.



3.2 Analysis of Landings

3.2.1 Overview

The general trend across reported species saw little change from the previous year with a general downward trend seen in 18 of the 30 reported species. The biggest decline was seen in Spider Crabs with a decrease of 29.32 Tons compared to the 2018 numbers. 2018 however was the largest landed catch of Spider Crab since 2003 and 2019 catch is still the second largest landed weight on record. Other notable reductions were seen in Lobsters with a reduction of 16.7 Tons and Great Atlantic Scallops were down by 24.7 Tons.

The total wetfish landed weight increased by 14% compared to the 2018 landings, however shellfish saw a 7% decrease. Despite the increase in wetfish landings the total value of the landed catch decreased by £127,000.00 this was reflected in the decreased shellfish landings which in turn make up the greater proportion of local exports.

3.2.2 Shellfish

Scallop landings remain stable with the 2019 data falling almost exactly on the 7 year average landings (see Figure 3).

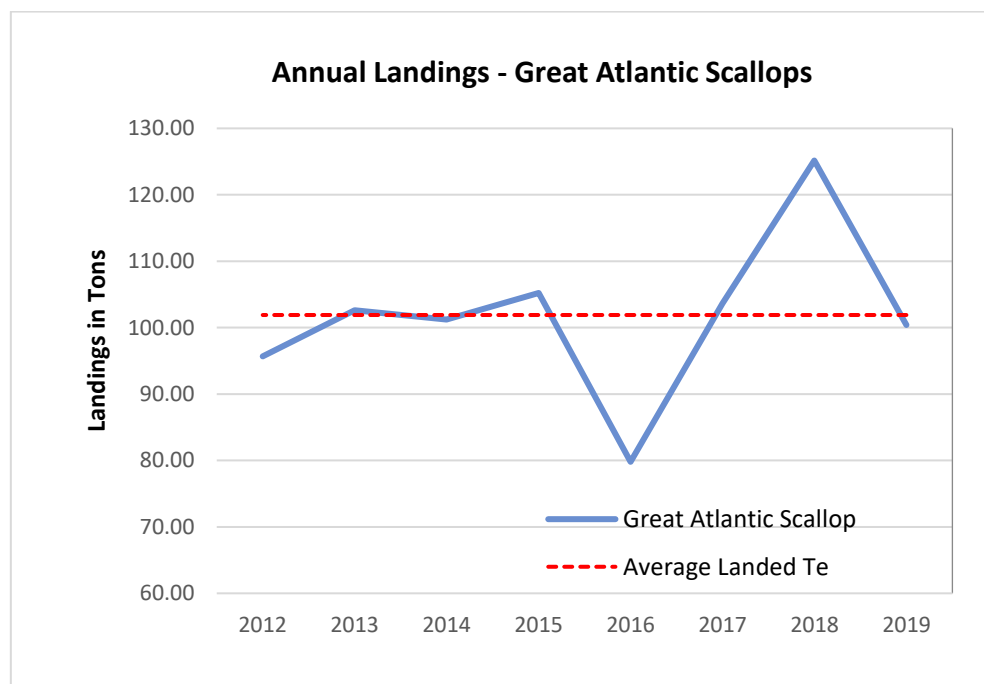


Figure 3 Plot showing annual landings of Great Atlantic Scallops 2012 – 2019, against 7 year average

2019 has seen a decrease in Spider Crab landings when compared to the high numbers in 2018, however the recorded landed weight for 2019 still makes it the second best year since 2009 (see Figure 4). There was a 0.7% increase in landings of edible crab when compared to the 2018 figures with a relatively stable trend visible in the data (see Figure 4).

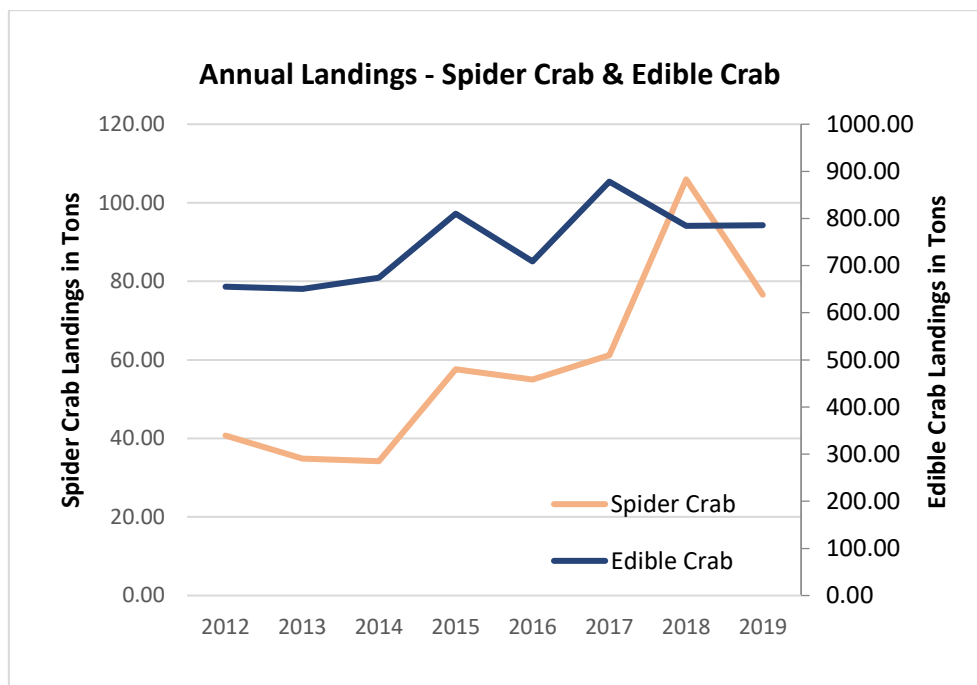


Figure 4 Plot showing annual landings of Spider Crab and Edible Crab 2012 – 2019

European lobster saw a decrease in landings of 9.5% to 88 Tons, this is the lowest since 2010 and is 18 Tons below the 7 year average landed weight (see Figure 5).

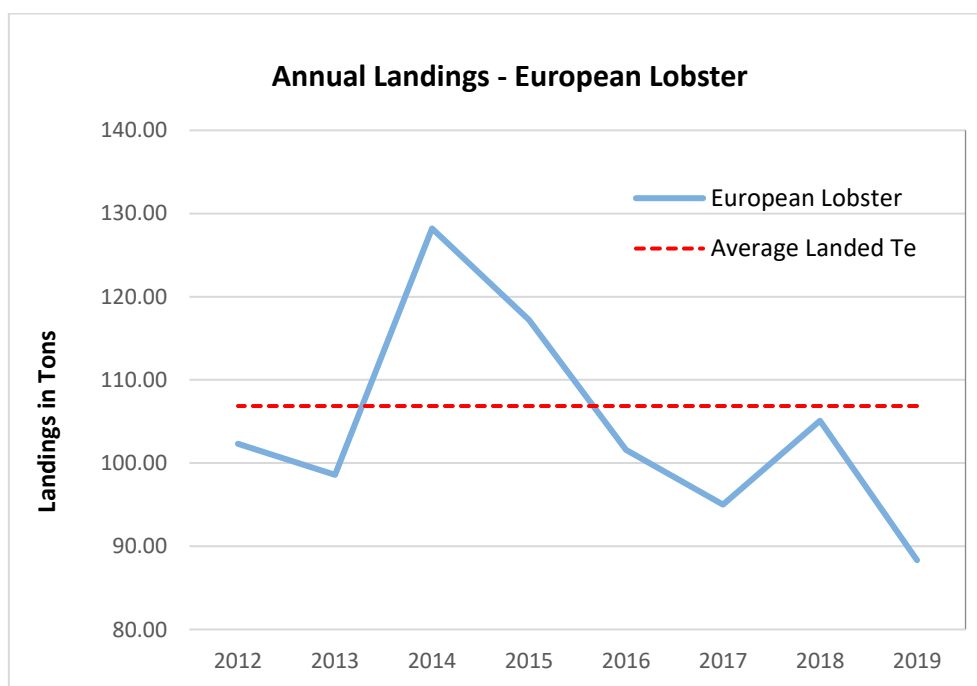


Figure 5 Plot showing annual landings of European Lobster from 2012 – 2019, against the 7 year average.

3.2.3 Wetfish

Total wetfish landed total saw an increase from the previous year of just over 32 Tons. A large part of this was due to a 30 Ton increase in Blond Ray landings and a 7.2 Ton increase in Pollock landings compared to the previous year (see Figure 12 & Figure 7 respectively).

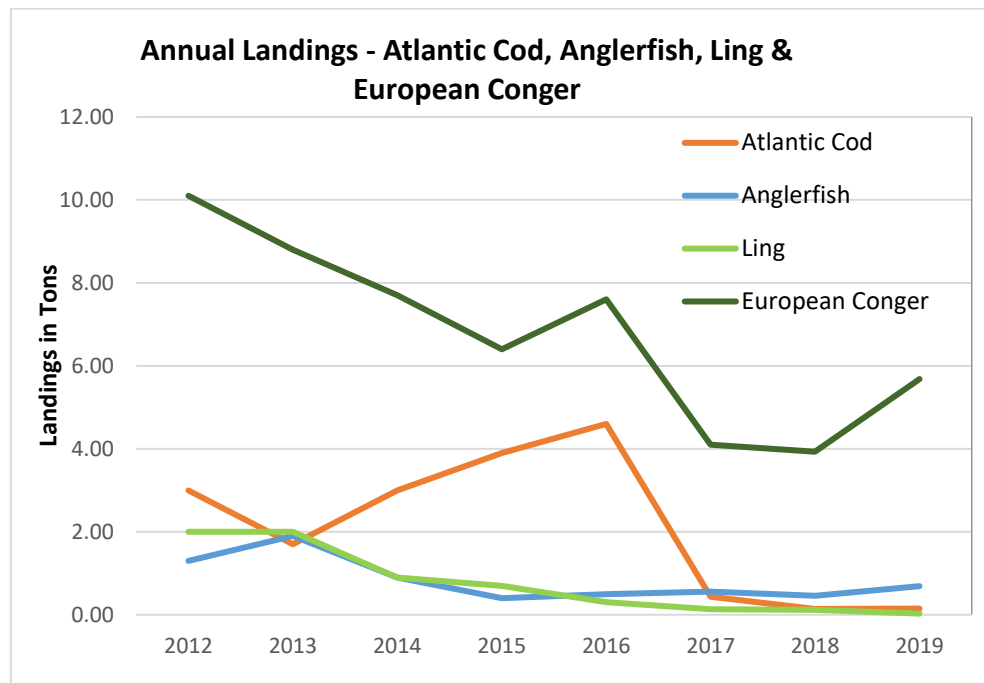


Figure 6 Plot showing annual landings for Atlantic Cod, Anglerfish, Ling and European Conger

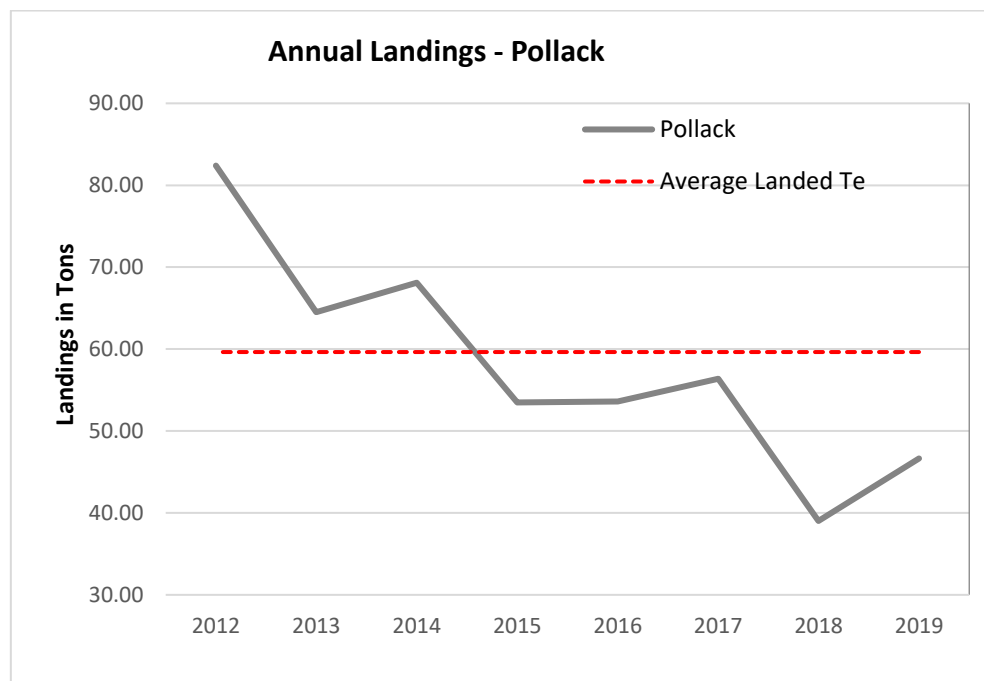


Figure 7 Plot showing annual landings for Pollack 2012 to 2019, against the 7 year average.

Mackerel landings were seen to be 24% down on the previous year's high (see Figure 8 below).

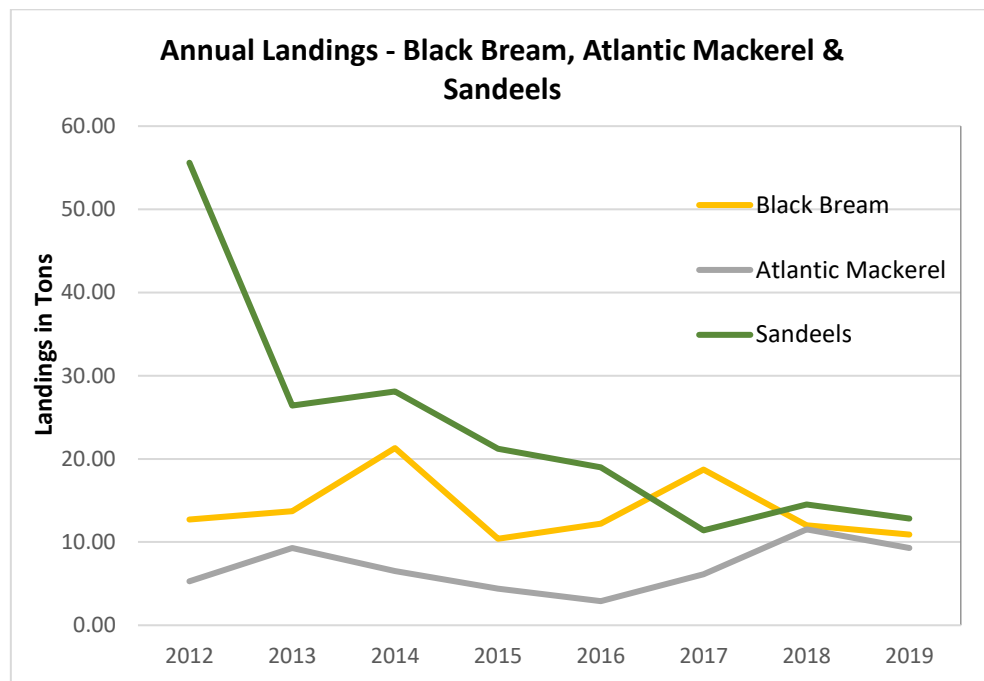


Figure 8 Plot showing annual landings of Black Bream, Atlantic Mackerel and Sandeels 2012 - 2019

Flatfish landings have remained fairly stable over the past 3 years with Turbot and Brill remaining the most prevalent species by weight (see Figure 9).

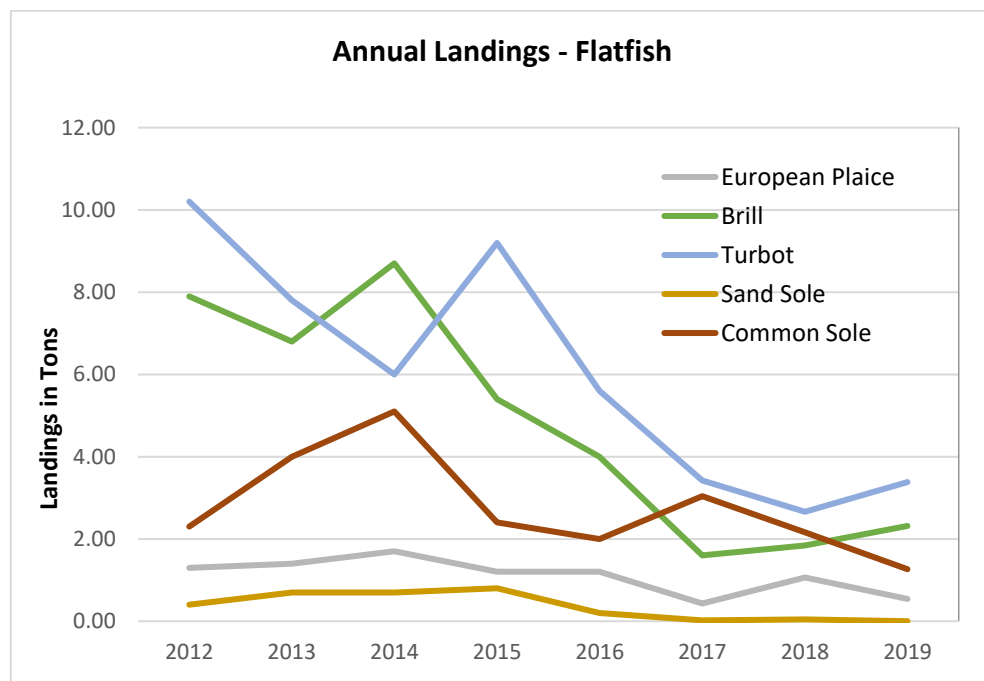


Figure 9 Plot showing annual landings of Flatfish from 2012 - 2019

Grey and Red Mullet also showed slightly decreased catches compared to the 2018 data (see Figure 10 below).

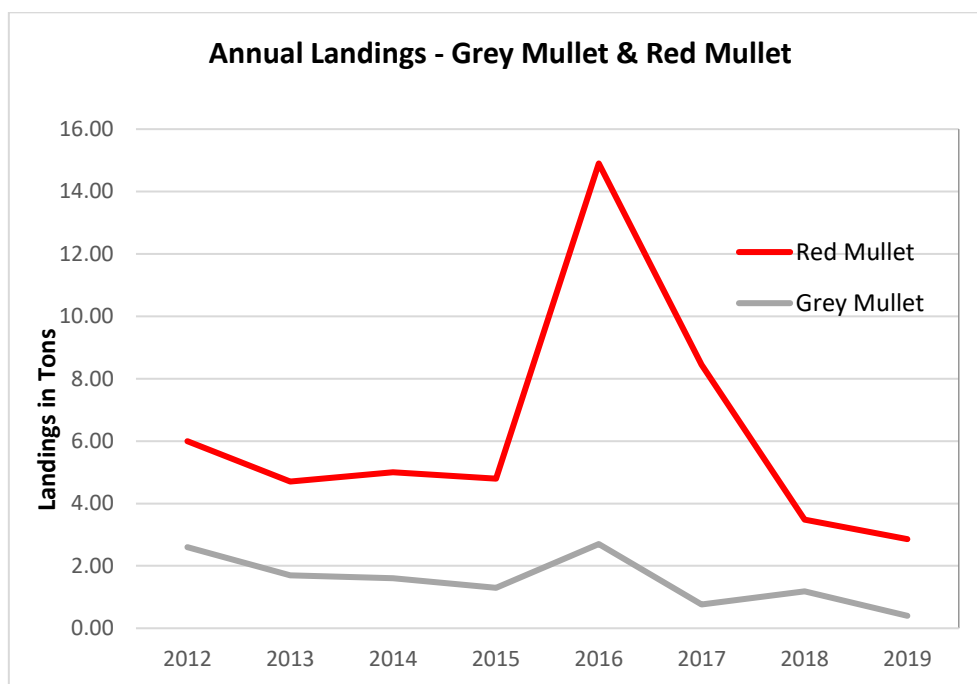


Figure 10 Plot showing annual landings of Red Mullet and Grey Mullet from 2012 – 2019.

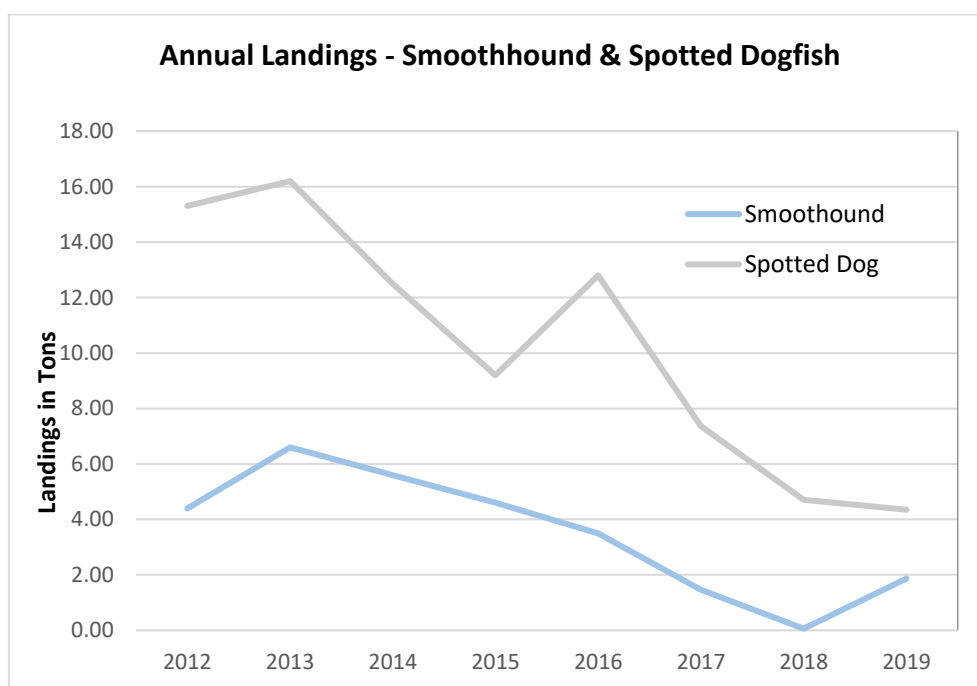


Figure 11 Plot showing annual landings of Smoothhound and Spotted Dogfish, 2012 – 2019.

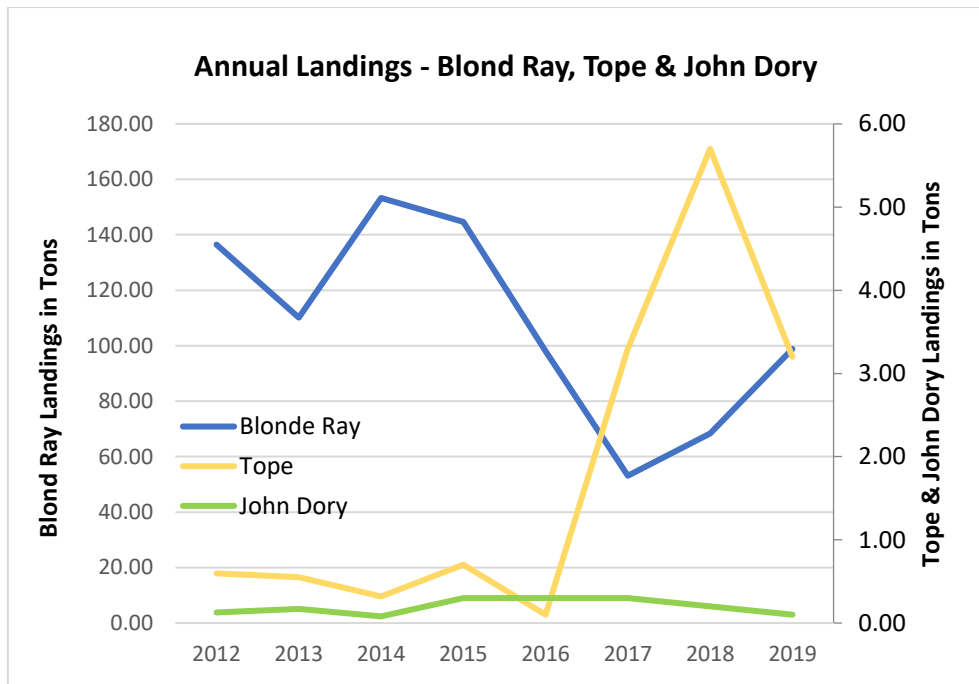


Figure 12 Plot showing the annual landings for Blond Ray, Tope and John Dory from 2012 – 2019.

European Seabass although still down from historic high levels seems to be finding a more stable level which could indicate a stabilising of the fish stock (see Figure 13) this level of landings is still well below the 7 year average for this species.

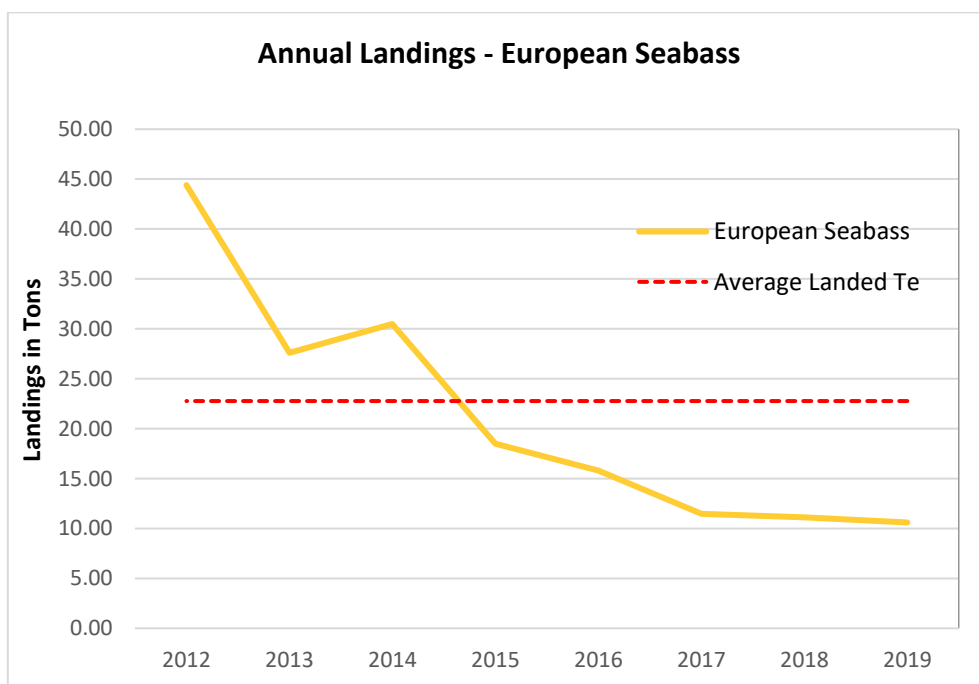


Figure 13 Plot showing the annual landings for European Seabass 2012 – 2019.

4. Effort

4.1 Potting

Potting effort in 2019 no longer includes the over 10 metre vessels, this is due to the MMO not recording individual “pot lifts” in their data sets. The over 10 metre vessels will be reported separately moving forward. Therefore no direct comparison can be made to the previous year’s potting effort.

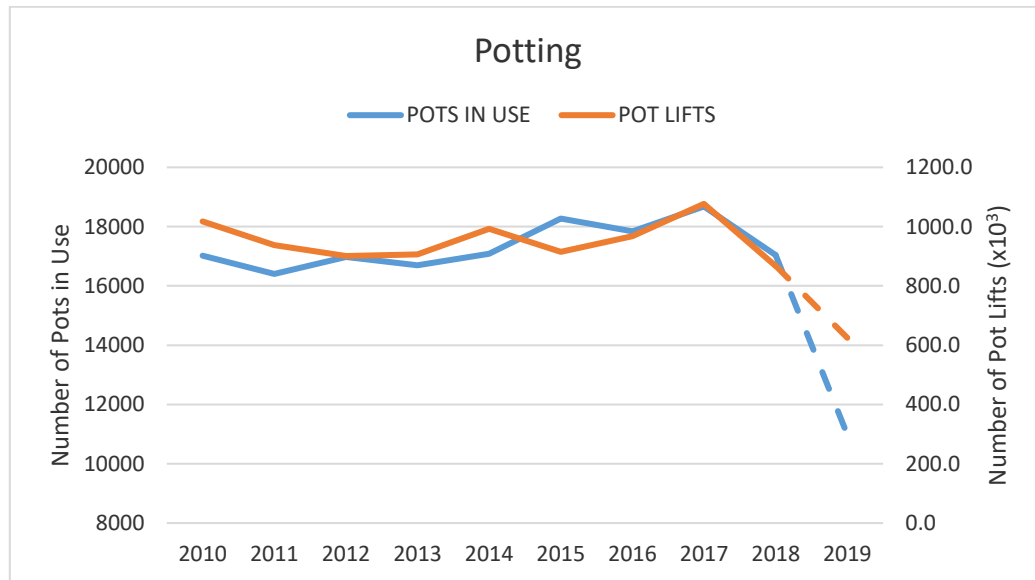


Figure 14 Graph showing annual GU registered under 10m potting effort over time from 2010 to 2019

4.2 Set Netting

Set netting was down again in 2019 which continues the general decrease seen from 2011 levels. Several vessels who historically fished using set nets, changed fishing method in 2019 to potting accounting for the decrease in effort seen in Figure 15.

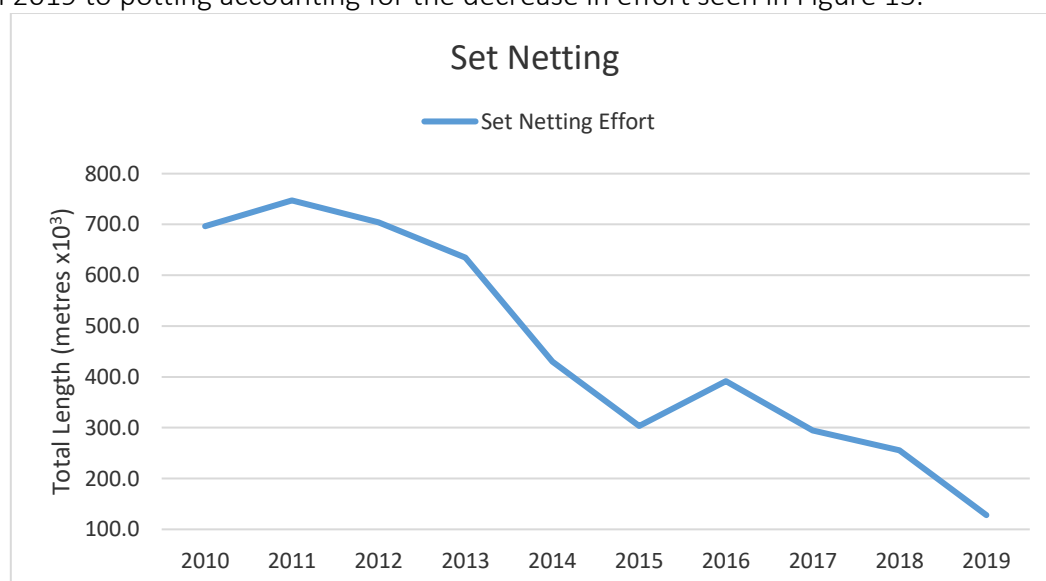


Figure 15 Graph showing the annual recorded GU registered netting effort in “thousands” of metres used.

4.3 Trawling

Demersal trawling is still the predominant trawling method used in local waters. Trawling effort in 2019 no longer includes the over 10 metre vessels, this is due to the MMO not recording hours fished in their data sets. The over 10 metre vessels will be reported separately moving forward. Therefore no direct comparison can be made to the previous year's trawling effort.

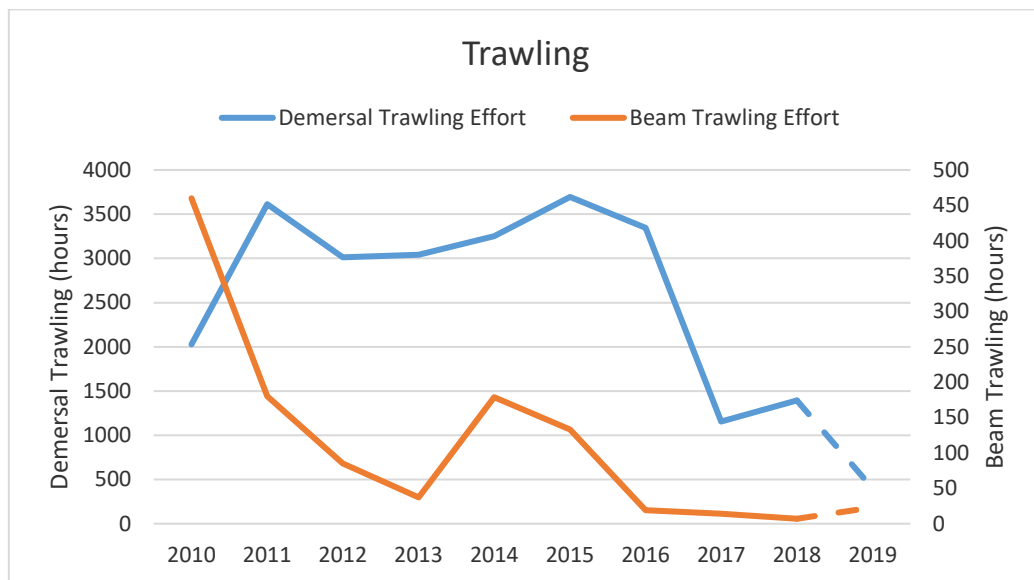


Figure 16: Graph showing the annual recorded trawling effort in hours 2010 – 2019.

4.4 Hand Diving

In 2019 a slight increase in hand diving activity. This follows the downward trend seen in the previous two years, but is still below the maximum peak of 1682 hours in 2015.



Figure 17: Graph showing the recorded annual hand diving effort for GU registered vessels in hours, from 2010 – 2019

4.5 Long Lining

Longlining saw a slight increase in 2019 with 46,818 hooks set. This increase has ended a 4 year downward trend in long lining.

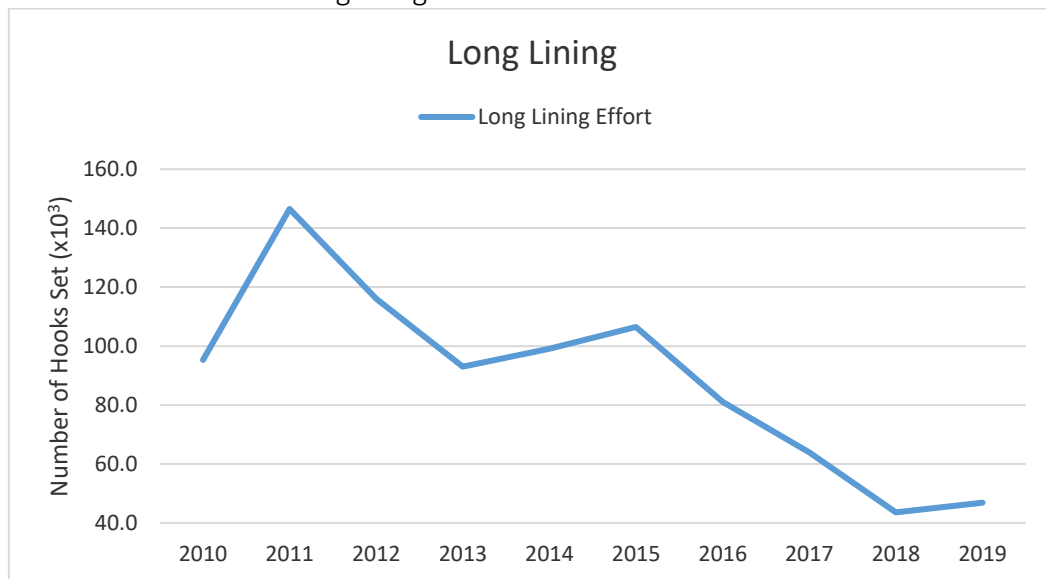


Figure 18: Graph showing the recorded annual long lining effort in “thousands” of hooks set, for years 2010 – 2019.

4.6 Angling

Angling effort in 2019 saw a slight increase to 8750 hours, which was pleasing to see following the record low level seen in 2018.

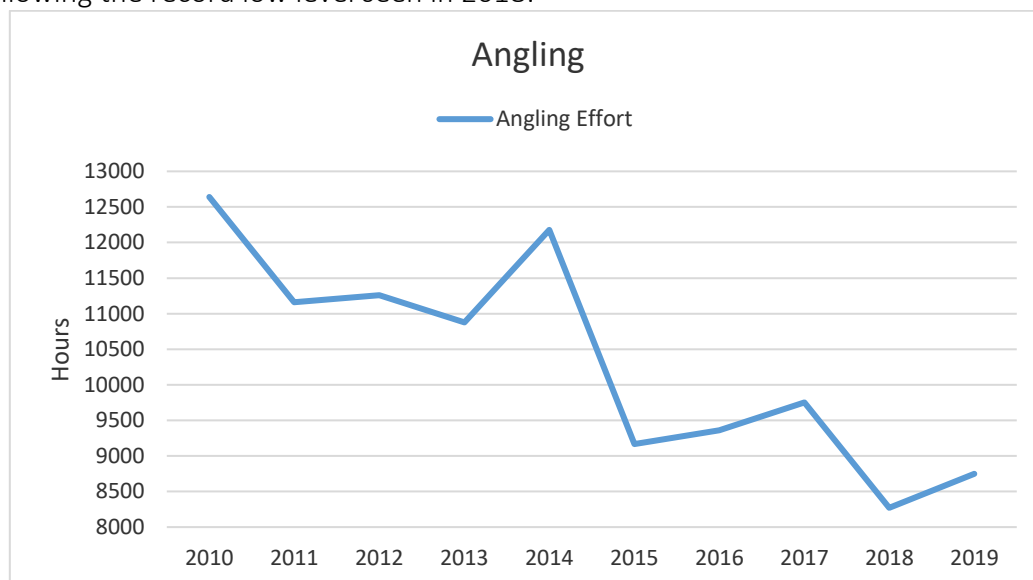


Figure 19: Graph showing recorded Angling effort in hours, annual data from 2010 – 2019.

4.7 Scallop dredging

In 2019 scallop dredging effort can no longer include the over 10 metre vessels, this is due to the MMO not recording hours fished in their data sets. The over 10 metre vessels will be reported separately moving forward. Please also note that no Scallop Dredge data was recorded for 2015 fishing.

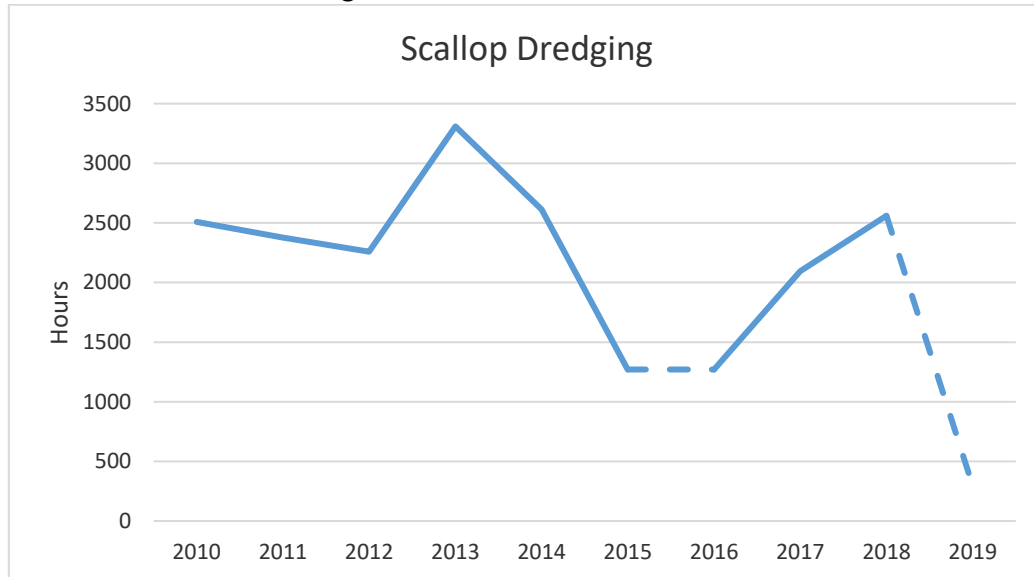


Figure 20: Graph showing the annual Scallop Dredging effort in hours of GU registered vessels from 2010 – 2019.