

The Crown Estate Fisheries Engagement

28/06/2023

The timeline of the fishing and offshore wind relationship

- A story,
 - **with many challenges,**
 - **some major successes,**
 - **and more challenges as we see:**
 - **rapid expansion of offshore wind**
 - **multiple pressures on fishing activities**
- The Crown Estate is at the core of this story, and its future, as we are working hard to improve the relationship between the sectors.
- The Crown Estate is the manager of the seabed around England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and has leased the seabed for a variety of sectors including offshore wind, aggregates extraction, other marine energy, aquaculture

History

There is a long history of fishing in UK waters, which is important for coastal communities.

Development of Offshore Renewable Energy is often seen as conflicting with fishing activities.

The UK aims to achieve coexistence between the offshore renewable energy and fisheries industries.



Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables

Aim

- To foster good relations between the fishing and offshore renewable energy sectors and to encourage co-existence between both industries

Through....

- providing a link between fisheries, offshore renewables, regulatory, planning, research and governmental bodies.
- providing a forum for members to discuss specific issues as they arise; and
- developing best practice and adopted approaches for offshore renewable energy;

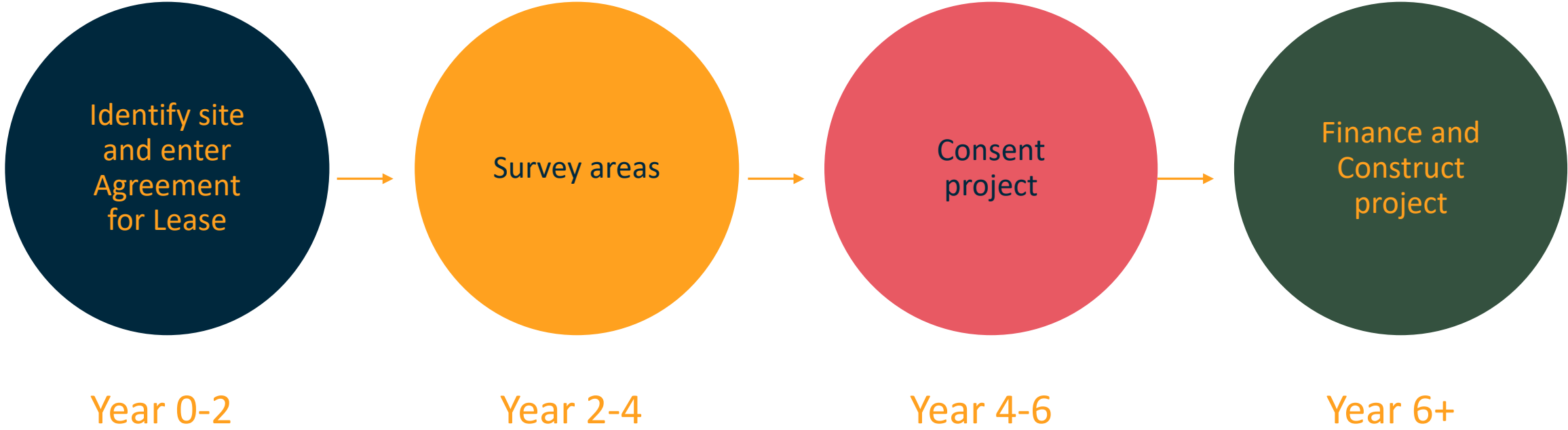


Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables

- Works to produce guidance on how to manage liaison between industries.
- Latest update available is 2014/15 but currently being updated and expected soon.
- This includes guidance on the data required and the process for agreeing disruption payments, most often applied for survey and construction.
- It sets out the use of Fisheries Industry Representatives and Fisheries Liaison Officers to bridge the gap between developer and fishers



Project Timelines



Engagement in Consenting

- In most cases to date, the fishing industry becomes aware of the project during surveys to inform consenting.
- Impacts on commercial fisheries are included in the assessments used by the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State to consent offshore wind. Project information is publicly available on the Planning Inspectorate website.
- Developers rely on consultants to identify the stakeholders to provide their data, demonstrating where they fish / overlaps with the proposed development, although the use of local fishing associations can reduce the number of fishermen that are involved.
- Developers use data provided by the fishing industry to underpin their assessments, and mitigation should be identified to reduce any impacts. The assessments have generally been based on the assumption that fishing will resume
- Data used by the developers can be scrutinised by the Marine Management Organisation who collect and review data of all fishing activities in the UK.
- Historically, this has not been a perfect system, but there are opportunities for anyone from the fishing industry (or elsewhere) to challenge assessments and present evidence in the examination process

Westernmost Rough

- A rare example of genuine co-location
- The development of an offshore wind farm, overlapping a profitable crab and lobster fishery raised significant concerns
- Out of those concerns came a research programme
- Overall, following resumption of fishing after construction, there have been no significant impacts from the offshore wind farm on the fishery
- However, this is one example and without active engagement and decision making, it may not be repeated
- Not all fishing gears can return to an offshore wind farm safely, particularly looking forwards to floating offshore wind, and therefore we recognised an opportunity to mitigate impacts before the sites were identified.

Figure 1. Location of sampling sites for the Westernmost Rough OWF. Represented are the vessel tracks from deploying the ...

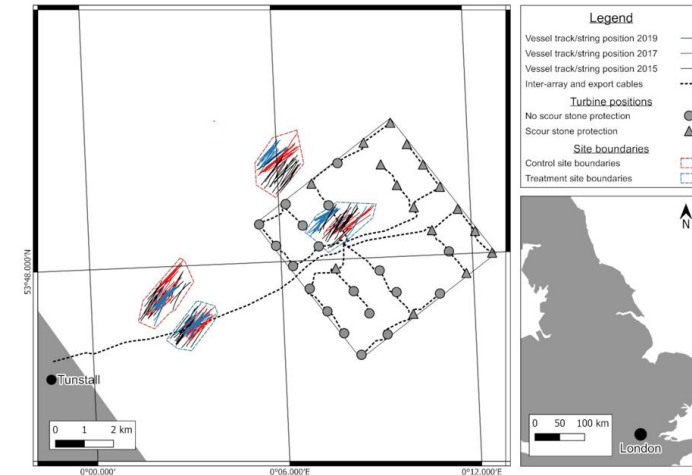
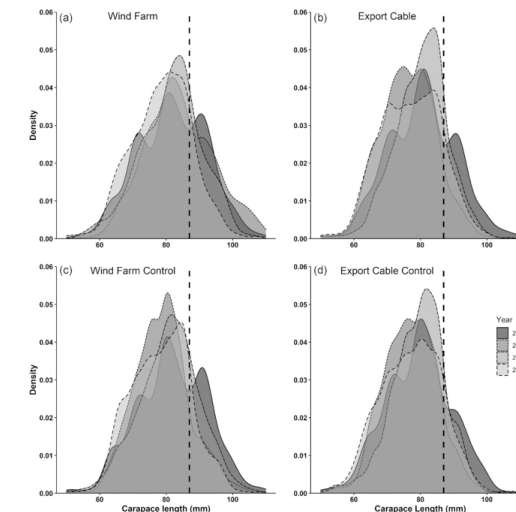


Figure 2. Density plots of the lobster size distribution for each of the survey years (2013,15,17, & 19) at the wind ...



Research project:

Virtual Windfarm Planning

Collaboration between offshore wind and
Fisheries on a virtual floating offshore
wind project

Intro

Initiated by fisheries and the OW industry

Led by the NFFO, funded by The Crown Estate's Offshore Wind Evidence and Change programme

Key objective, to facilitate knowledge transfer between industries, and learn lessons for the OWF planning and design processes

3 workshops, covering spatial design, and detailed engineering design of OWF, with direct input on fisheries activities



Key outcomes

- A report - published through the Marine Data Exchange.
 - Fisheries are not uniform – different fisheries, different scales, working differently with or across the tide
 - Based on current assumptions, resumption of significant fishing in a Floating OW farm is unlikely, particularly where catenary cabling is used.
 - Smaller, denser in areas of lower fishing activity is preferable (for Floating OW), based on the above assumption

Summary report of the Virtual Floating Offshore Wind (FOW) planning project delivered by NFFO with support from The Crown Estate (TCE)



Delivered for NFFO by:

Nathan de Rozarieux
Colin Warwick MBE
Merlin Jackson

December 2022



Key recommendations

- A series of recommendations, to
 - inform better engagement (particularly early in project development).
 - identify best available data
 - consider policy to ensure fisheries involvement
 - undertake further collaborative research to characterise displacement, identify opportunities for design mitigations

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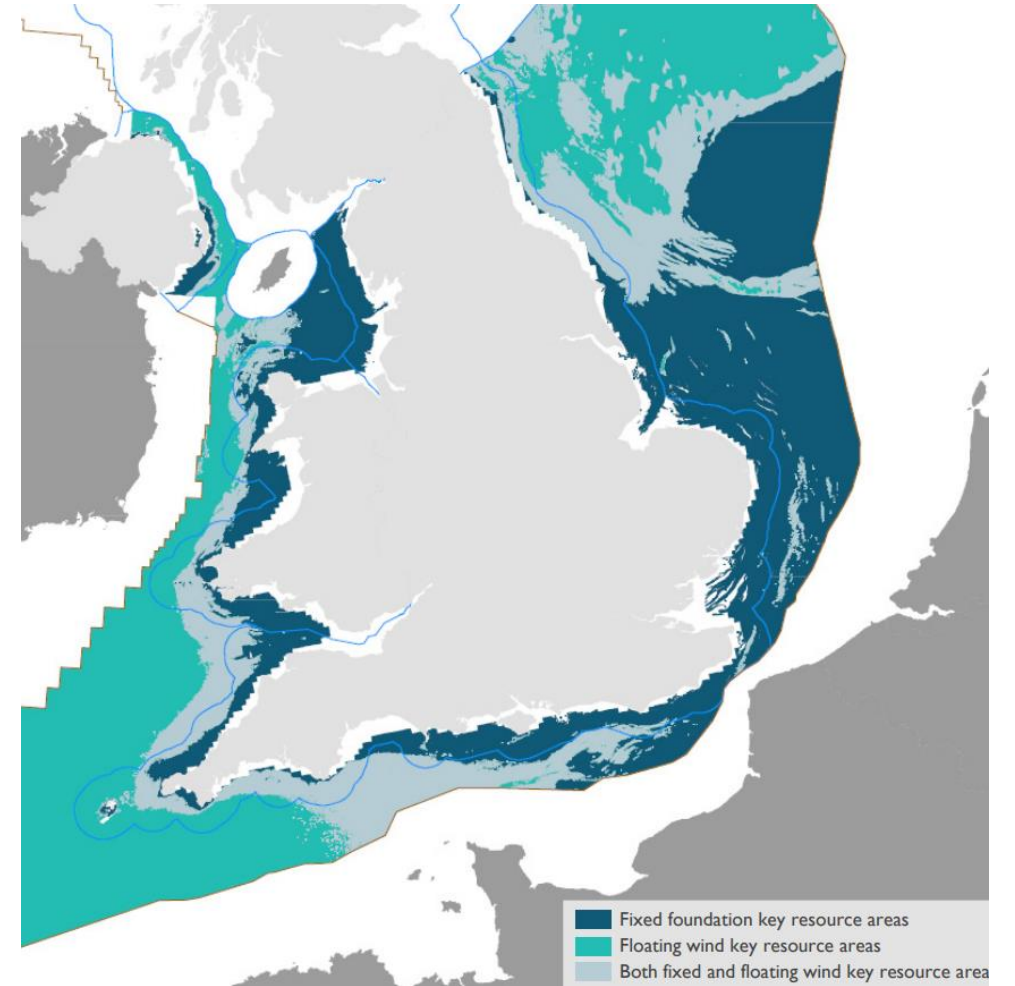
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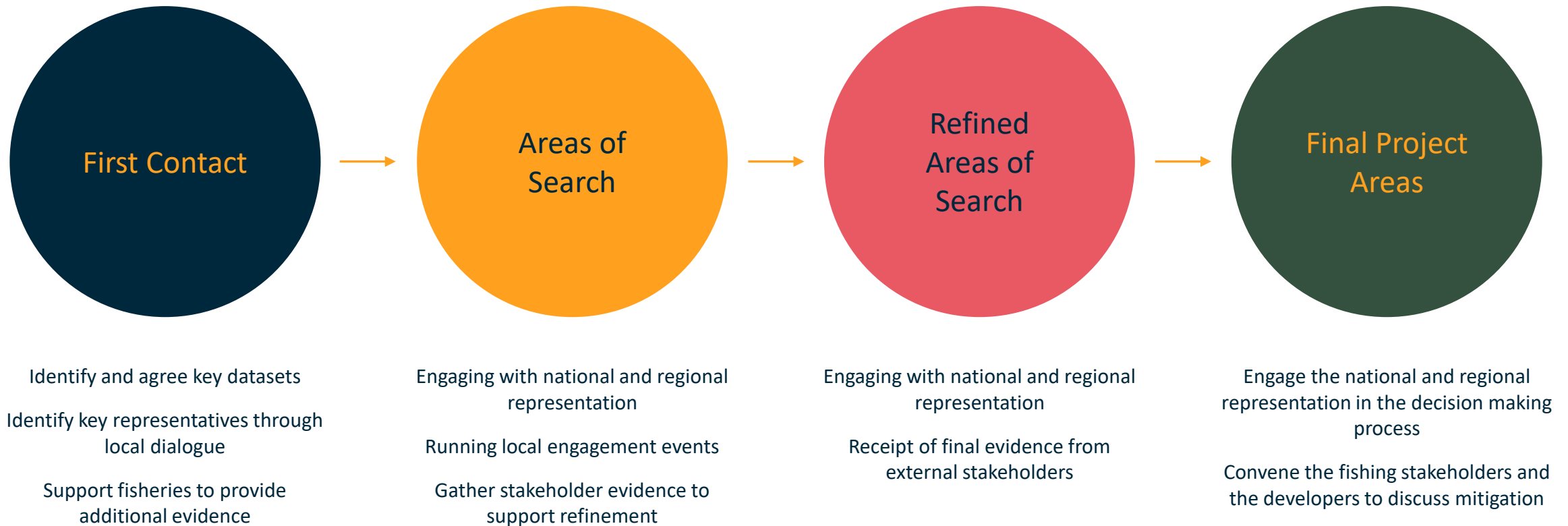
What happened next?

Engagement before site selection

- Engagement before and during site selection will hugely benefit both sectors by reducing impacts on fisheries, and therefore reducing objections.
- It relies on good, trusted data
- The fishing industry historically had limited data, but this is improving with Vessel Monitoring Systems recording the activities of every fishing vessel, as well as vessel Automatic Identification System which records the vessel tracks
- All this data is available to the fishermen but also held by the Marine Management Organisation



The Fisheries Engagement Timeline (Year 0-2)



Key Successes

- Earlier (and strategic) engagement
- Fisheries representatives are broadly engaged and supporting
- In person engagement provides an easier opportunity for fishers to engage
- Timing meetings for Fishers' availability supports engagement
- Admiralty charts translate GIS into understanding for fishers
- Better data and collaboration has (hopefully) led to a better outcome for both industry and fishers



Key Challenges

- Balancing commercial confidentiality and the need to engage
- Open dialogue, but introducing uncertainty
- Not all fishers are represented by the NFFO, or Producer Organisations, or are even UK based
- Relationships between fishers and both marine industries and regulatory authorities are strained
- Technology for OW (particularly Floating OW) is as yet undetermined, so engaging with a wide envelope

Opportunities

- Developed, centralised evidence base (on all sides) will inform clearer discourse, less reliant on assumptions at all stages of development!
- Early engagement at a strategic level can create relationships that can be built on once projects begin development
- Fisheries organisations / representatives can take a more active (or leading?!) role in driving engagement
- Coordinated and strategic approach to engagement from offshore wind industry, can reduce stakeholder burnout