

Habitats Regulations Assessment document: CSPA – tLSE 029

European Marine Site:	Coquet Island SPA
Generic sub-feature(s):	Water Column
Gear type(s):	Pots/ creels
NIFCA tLSE type:	Detailed
Gear/feature interaction reference(s):¹	CSPA – 235

Revision history		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Revision</i>	<i>Editor</i>
23/12/2015	Document created	VR
08/02/2016	Document revised following consultation with Natural England (05/02/16)	SM
13/06/2016	Document revised following consultation with Natural England (10/06/16)	VR

Has Natural England been formally consulted on this tLSE (and do they agree)?	Yes
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Date of document completion/'sign-off':	13/06/2016
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Test for Likely Significant Effect (LSE)

CSPA – 235: Water Column

<p>1. Is the activity/activities directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site for nature conservation?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2. What pressures (such as abrasion, disturbance) are potentially exerted by the gear type(s)?</p> <p><i>*Sensitivities as listed are based on DRAFT Interim conservation advice. No Regulation 33 or 35 Advice is available for Coquet Island SPA and best judgement has been used to determine which of these pressures are truly exerted by the gear type(s).</i></p>	<p>Barrier to species movement (Sensitive)</p> <p>Genetic modification & translocation of indigenous species (Sensitive)¹</p> <p>Hydrocarbon & PAH contamination. Includes those priority substances listed in Annex II of Directive 2008/105/EC. (Sensitive)²</p> <p>Introduction of light. (Sensitive)³</p> <p>Introduction of other substances (solid, liquid or gas). (Sensitive)⁴</p> <p>Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species. (Sensitive)⁵</p> <p>Litter i.e. ghostfishing. (Sensitive)⁶</p> <p>Removal of non-target species. (Sensitive)⁷</p> <p>Synthetic compound contamination (incl. pesticides, antifoulants, pharmaceuticals). Includes those priority substances listed in Annex II of Directive 2008/105/EC. (Sensitive)⁸</p> <p>Transition elements & organo-metal (e.g. TBT) contamination. Includes those priority substances listed in Annex II of Directive 2008/105/EC. (Sensitive)⁸</p> <p>Underwater noise changes. (Sensitive)⁹</p> <p>Visual disturbance. (Sensitive)¹⁰</p>
<p>3. Is the feature potentially exposed to the pressure(s)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>4. What are the conservation objectives for the feature?</p> <p><i>*DRAFT interim conservation advice does not give definitive conservation objectives. However, completing an HRA without COs is difficult. The CO as listed in this document is based on current knowledge of the status, and the pressures, affecting designated features (see sections 4 &5).</i></p> <p><i>Expert judgement has been used to determine which features may be exposed to the pressure(s) resulting in inferred COs. These COs are assigned a degree of uncertainty i.e. a subjective confidence level based on evidence 'High', 'Medium,' 'Low', and 'Unknown'</i></p>	<p>Conservation objectives for supporting habitat 'Coastal and offshore waters' for <u>all</u> designated SPA bird features are to Maintain*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>availability of preferred prey species (e.g. sandeel and sprat) at preferred prey sizes (Arctic tern, Sandwich tern, Roseate tern)</u> <p><i>*Confidence level for interim, inferred Conservation Objective: LOW (see section 6 for detail).</i></p>	
<p>5. What are the potential effects/impacts of the pressure(s) on the feature, taking into account the exposure level?</p>	<p>Potting for European lobster <i>Homarus gammarus</i> and brown crab <i>Cancer pagurus</i> is the principle fishery within the Northumberland IFCA district, with 115 active commercial shellfish permit holders in 2015 and approximately 38,000 [commercial] pots fished within the district (2014).</p> <p>Observations from RSPB staff working on site during the SPA summer breeding months have witnessed only two or three potters working within the vicinity of the site (Paul Morrison RSPB site warden, pers. comms. 24/04/2014). The mesh sizes of lobster pots used in the district are too large to entrap prey species such as sandeel and sprat and therefore potting is not deemed to have a significant adverse impact on the conservation objectives for this feature.</p>	
<p>6. Condition and Conservation Objective Inferences</p>	<p>No evidence is available on the current condition of the 'water column' within the Coquet Island SPA. In lieu of a definitive conservation objective for this feature, a CO of 'Maintain' has been inferred, based on a low level of confidence.</p>	
<p>7. Is the potential scale or magnitude of any effect likely to be significant?</p>	<p>Alone:</p> <p>No</p>	<p>OR In-combination</p> <p>No</p>

8. Have NE been consulted on this LSE test? If yes, what was NE's advice?	Yes Synthesis of evidence and local knowledge informing this decision occurred between January 2014 and the date of this document's creation with stakeholders (where appropriate) and other statutory authorities. Natural England (CS) was involved with this formal process.
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Conclusion

Is the proposal likely to have a significant effect 'alone or in combination' on the Coquet Island SPA?

No

References

1. Gubbay and Knapman, 1999; Kaiser et al., 2001; Sewell et al., 2007; Sewell and Hiscock, 2005. 'Fishing can lead to genetic selection for different body and reproductive traits, result in changes in the genetic makeup of populations and can extirpate distinct local stocks.' **256 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
2. Ware, 2009. 'Fishing vessels could result in hydrocarbon contamination but considered unlikely to generally occur at level that would cause concern (with exception of large scale pollution event).' **258 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
3. BirdLife International, 2012b 'Lighted vessels pose a collision risk to many species of birds. Birds drawn to light often become disoriented and collide with these structures, resulting in injury and death.' **323 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
4. Ware, 2009. 'Vessels used during these activities could result in e.g. oil slicks but considered unlikely to generally occur at level that would cause concern (with exception of large scale pollution event).' **684 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
5. ICES (International Council for Exploration of the Sea), 2009. 'The introduction and movement of invasive non-indigenous species may occur as a result of vessel movements, hull fouling and fishing activities.' **619 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
6. Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) Consulting, 2012 'Discarded/lost lines, hooks and nets which could be problematic for mobile species. Other types of litter generated by activity generally not considered to occur at level that would cause concern.' **190 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
7. Gubbay and Knapman, 1999; ICES (International Council for Exploration of the Sea), 2013; Kaiser et al., 2001; Sewell et al., 2007; Sewell and Hiscock, 2005; Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) Consulting, 2012. 'Pressure may be exerted by, for example, by-catch associated with fish traps. However, vulnerability of feature to pressure will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis.' **548 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
8. OSPAR Commission, 2011. 'Could occur as a result of vessels associated with this activity. Generally considered unlikely to occur at level that would cause concern (with exception of large scale pollution event).' **166 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
9. Thomsen and Intersessional correspondence group on underwater noise (2007 - 2009), 2009. 'Pressure (e.g. increase in noise above ambient level) would be exerted via vessel movement and gear deployment/towing/hauling. Whether pressure was exerted at benchmark level would depend on nature and scale/intensity of the activity.' **535 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**
10. Stillman et al., 2007; Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) Consulting, 2012. 'May result from the presence/movement of the vessel and potentially also the presence/movement of the gear. Magnitude of pressure would depend on nature and scale/intensity of activity.' **362 (UK9006031_Coquet_Island_SPA_Advice_on_Operations)**