

SSMO Regulations



REGULATIONS

1. A licence will not be issued in respect of a vessel, nor may that vessel be used to dredge, fish for, or take any of the prescribed species within the area covered by the Regulating Order, if it exceeds 17 metres in overall length (as stated on the vessel's domestic fishing licence – issued by a UK Fisheries Department – and registration document), except where the vessel is used wholly to dredge for scallops, in which case, no vessel size limit applies.
2. Vessels may only be operated by the licence holder, a named deputy or those named on the licence.
3. No vessel which is used to dredge for scallops may use or carry onboard more than two tow-bars with a combined overall length, or a single tow bar with an overall length, of more than 8.80 metres, or more than a total of 10 scallop dredges.
Any vessel that was using more than 10 but not more than 14 dredges, between the 1 January 2001 and the 31 December 2001, and for which log sheets showing the number of dredges in use were submitted to the Organisation during that period, has a dispensation to this regulation to allow them to continue to using their existing tow-bar(s) and dredges. The dispensation granted will not be transferable to any other vessel or licensee and will lapse when the licence is surrendered or the vessel is sold or passed on to a crew member. [Please see Licensing Policy L5.17](#)
4. The use of any form of hydraulic or suction dredge, or any similar type of gear, to dredge, fish for, or take any of the prescribed species within the area covered by the Order is prohibited. The use of French dredges to dredge, fish for or take any of the prescribed species within the area covered by the Order is also prohibited. A French dredge means a scallop dredge of the type known as “a French Dredge” incorporating paravanes, diving plates, pressure plates, water deflecting plates or any similar device and having rigid fixed teeth.
5. Electro fishing for Razor fish (*Ensis spp*), or any other species, is prohibited.
6. No vessel may use a scallop dredge or dredges, or may dredge, fish for or take scallops (*Pecten maximus*) or queen scallops (*Chlamys opercularis*), before 0600hrs local time or after 2100hrs local time on any day.
7. There are several Closed Areas around the Coast of Shetland. [Please see SSMO Spatial Management Plan SSMO P5](#). Within these areas the use of all mobile equipment is prohibited.
8. Creel limits are in place, therefore, no vessel may fish with more than 600 creels/pots/traps/cages, of which, no more than 240 may be used to fish for Velvet Crab (*Necora puber*).
9. All creels/pots/traps/cages must have SSMO numbered tags in place and any over 240 in number must have an escape panel fitted.

- 10.** The buoys attached to any static fishing gear being used to fish for or take any of the prescribed species within the area covered by the Order must be brightly coloured and clearly marked with the vessel's name and registration number.

- 11.** The landing of berried (egg bearing) velvet crab (*Necora puber*) will be prohibited.

- 12.** The landing of soft velvet crab (*Necora puber*) will be prohibited.

- 13.** Anyone with a historic track record of fishing on the West of Shetland shall cease fishing for velvet crab (*Necora puber*) from the 17 June 2019 until the 11 August 2019. Anyone with a historic track record of fishing on the East of Shetland shall cease fishing for velvet crab (*Necora puber*) from the 12 August 2019 until the 6 October 2019. There shall be a consecutive eight week compulsory closure period for all vessels.

- 14.** Every SSMO licenced vessel must stop fishing for, or landing Buckies (Whelks – *Buccinum undatum*) during the months of September, October, November, December and January each year. There is to be no deployment of Buckie gear before 1 February each year.

- 15.** The minimum landing size for “Buckies” (Whelks – *Buccinum undatum*) will be 75mm overall shell length.

- 16.** The minimum landing size for Velvet crabs (*Necora puber*) will be 70mm carapace width; to be measured across the broadest part of the carapace, excluding the spines.

- 17.** The minimum landing size for Lobsters (*Homarus gammarus*) will be 90mm carapace length; measured parallel to the mid-line from the back of either eye socket to the distal edge of the carapace.

- 18.** The maximum landing size for female Lobsters (*Homarus gammarus*) will be 155mm.

- 19.** The minimum landing size for Brown crab (*Cancer pagurus*) is 140mm carapace width; measured across the broadest part of the carapace.

- 20.** The minimum landing size for King scallops (*Pecten maximus*) is 100mm; to be measured across the widest part of the shell.

It is the responsibility of the licensees to ensure they are familiar with, and abide by, all the regulations in force - both local and national.

ADOPTION OF REGULATIONS

The information below outlines the procedure which is currently followed by the SSMO in considering and adopting new regulations (or revising existing regulations)

- 1.** Proposals for a new regulation may come from a variety of sources. To date most proposals have been made by fishermen, generally via the Shetland Fishermen's Association.
- 2.** A proposal for a new regulation (or an amendment to an existing regulation) is first considered by the Directors of the SSMO. The Directors take into account a number of factors including whether the proposed new regulation is compatible with the SSMO's legal powers, its likely benefits and effects and its likely practicality ie how the proposed new regulation would be implemented and operated.
- 3.** If the Directors agree that the proposed new regulation is desirable and practical the detailed text of the new regulation is drafted.
- 4.** Once the Directors have agreed the detailed text of the proposed new regulation it is put on the SSMO website and sent out to every fisherman licensed by the SSMO, for consultation. A date is set, by which, any responses must be made.
- 5.** If there is significant opposition to the proposed new regulation the Directors will re-consider the proposal, including whether it should be amended to address the concerns raised. Once the Directors are satisfied with the proposed new regulation, and believe that they have done everything possible to address any concerns raised, it will be sent to the Scottish Government for approval.
- 6.** The Scottish Government will consider the proposed new regulation, including whether it is legal under the terms of the Regulating Order and decide whether or not to approve it.
- 7.** When the Scottish Government's approval is received the SSMO will agree the date on which the new regulation will be implemented. A notice of the new regulation will be circulated to all SSMO licence holders and also be put on the SSMO website.