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CHOSAINT
IASCAIGH MHARA

SEA-FISHERIES
PROTECTION
AUTHORITY

Press Release

Issued by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's Press Office

23rd October 2025

SFPA Inshore Patrols on the East Coast

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is continuing its inshore fisheries patrol programme, to support conservation measures and to protect Ireland's valuable shellfish and crustacean fisheries including crab, lobster, crayfish, whelk and razor clams. The North Irish Sea Razor Clam fishery is an important fishery for many East Coast based fishing vessels, and on this occasion, the patrols focussed on the razor clam fishing fleet. Several vessels were inspected on the 22nd of October 2025 by Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers (SFPOs) operating from a RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) which also has the capacity to winch lift and inspect lobster pots and keeps (used for holding live crustaceans prior to sale) to facilitate detailed inspections.

The inshore monitoring programme also includes vehicle patrols to small local ports and landing places so Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers can identify and monitor unlicensed, unregistered vessels and other potential non-compliances with relevant regulations.

The SFPA also monitors compliance by recreational fishers to ensure their fishing activities are within limits for lobster and crab fishing. The SFPA is advising that anyone found to be non-compliant with sea-fisheries or seafood safety regulations can expect to face prosecution. Regulations are in place for all commercial and casual/recreational fishers, regarding the minimum size that can be caught to ensure shellfish and crustacean species such as lobster and crab can reach maturity and reproduce to safeguard the future of stocks.

Paschal Hayes, Executive Chairperson of the SFPA commented:

“Our targeted inshore compliance strategy aims to support the sustainable management of inshore fisheries, including the razor clam fishery. Our RIB patrols are an important tool in ensuring the long-term viability of inshore fisheries which many coastal communities rely on for a living. In addition to undermining sustainability, those who breach the regulations and engage in illegal fishing also pose a risk to public health, and the excellent reputation Irish seafood enjoys both at

home and abroad, as the seafood may not be stored or handled in accordance with food safety regulations.”

If you have any concerns regarding fisheries control, seafood fraud and/ or seafood safety please contact the SFPA through our [Confidential Line channels](#). Call our Confidential Line on 1800 76 76 76. Alternatively, complete our [Confidential Report form](#).

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Note to Editor

Photo Caption

SFPO's of the SFPA embarking on RIB patrols along the east coast.

Further Information

About the SFPA

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the sea-fisheries and the sea-food production sectors. It promotes compliance with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, sea-fisheries law and food safety law relating to fish and fish products, verifies compliance and, where necessary, enforces it. Its mandate covers all fishing vessels operating within Ireland's 200-mile limit, over 2,000 Irish registered fishing vessels wherever they operate, and all seafood produced in Ireland's seafood processing companies. The SFPA operates through a network of regional port offices situated at Ireland's main fishery harbours. For further information visit: www.sfpa.ie