



States of Guernsey Sea Fisheries



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Sea Fisheries Section Statistical Report 2018



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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. Where data is submitted to the Marine Management Organization (MMO) directly, the Section obtains those catch records from the MMO and they are included within this report.

Overview

Looking at all sectors of the Bailiwick industry, there still remains the challenge of maintaining profitable operations against the background of a finite local market and increasing cost base. You will see from the data contained in this report that 2018 brought with it the usual fluctuations in stocks targeted by Bailiwick fishermen. These changes in abundance of stocks on local grounds have always been experienced and are why the flexibility to target available fisheries is crucial to the success of the Bailiwick industry.

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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 2018. 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

Sea Fisheries were once again on patrol for each of the permitted Ormering tides. As has become traditional in recent years. The first and second Ormering tides of the year had a notably poor tide height of only 0.7m above chart datum. The best tides of the season occurred at the beginning of March, with a 0.4m 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 catches broadly in line with previous years. Questions were also raised to the officers regarding Ormering during hours of darkness. 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. During this period it is lawful to take ormers at any time between midnight 00.00 on the first day and 23.59 on the third or last day. Traditionally, due to the nature of the activity, Ormering has taken place during daylight hours and when the tide is out (not least because it is illegal to dive for Ormers).

1.5 Sea Temperatures

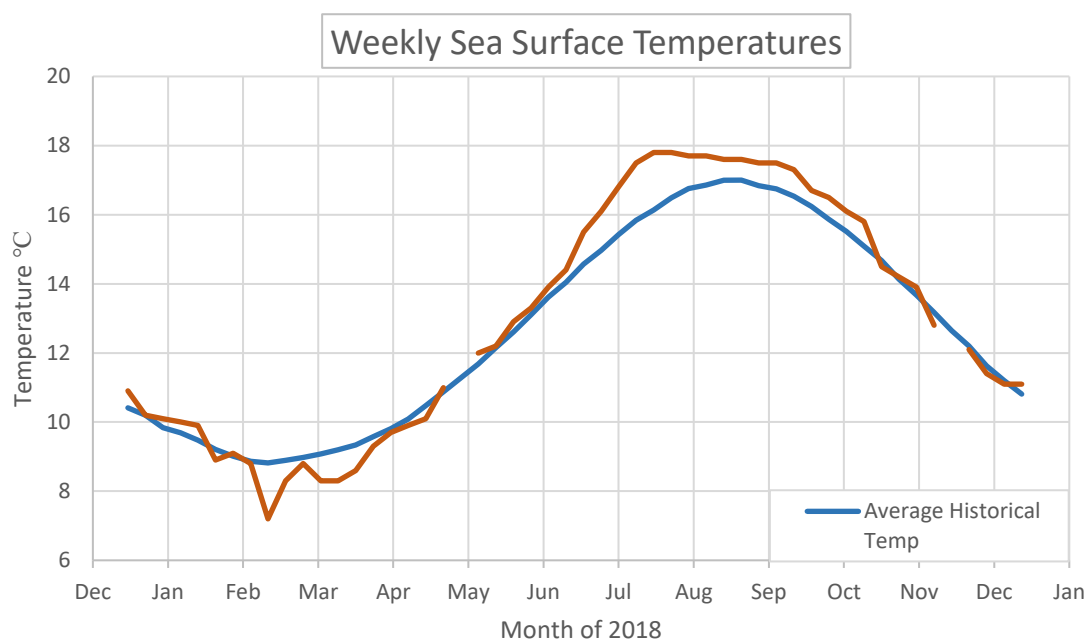


Figure 1: comparison of weekly sea temperature for 2018 against the 35-year average
2018 will best be remembered for a long warm summer and a brief period of snow in February. The snow events were brief and a cold North Easterly in late February produced up to a foot of snow in Alderney, closing the airport for a few days, whilst further south in Guernsey only a dusting of snow was recorded at the airport. This led on to the coldest March since 2010. This brief cold spell can be seen reflected by a low spike in sea surface temperature producing the below mean annual low of 7.2 °C. The summer months proved to become the warmest since 2006 and the 4th warmest on record (as recorded at the Guernsey Airport). The rest of the year remained in average or slightly above average temperatures with no significant events.

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

The end of 2017 saw the introduction of stricter controls over European Seabass following a steady decline in the Bass population in the surrounding waters, extending high up into the North and Celtic seas. Some areas saw a total prohibition on the commercial catching and retention of Seabass. This control affected both Commercial and Recreational fishers alike. Closed seasons were imposed, along with restrictions on the permitted fishing gear allowed to be used. Commercial fishers were required to demonstrate fishing for European Seabass during the “track record” period, which would allow authorisation to continue to fish for the species using only the permitted gear shown to be used during said period. Quotas, issued by the MMO, control the catch limits of European Seabass, and this is monitored using fisher’s logsheet returns.

2. The Fleet

The fishing fleet numbers for 2018 are displayed in table 1 below and the graph Figure 2.

Vessel Category	Number of vessels 2010	Number of vessels 2011	Number of vessels 2012	Number of vessels 2013	Number of vessels 2014	Number of vessels 2015	Number of vessels 2016	Number of vessels 2017	Number of vessels 2018
GU registered <10m	171	160	158	159	159	153	147	142	136
GU registered >10m	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	7	7

Table 1: Total registered GU fleet numbers 2018

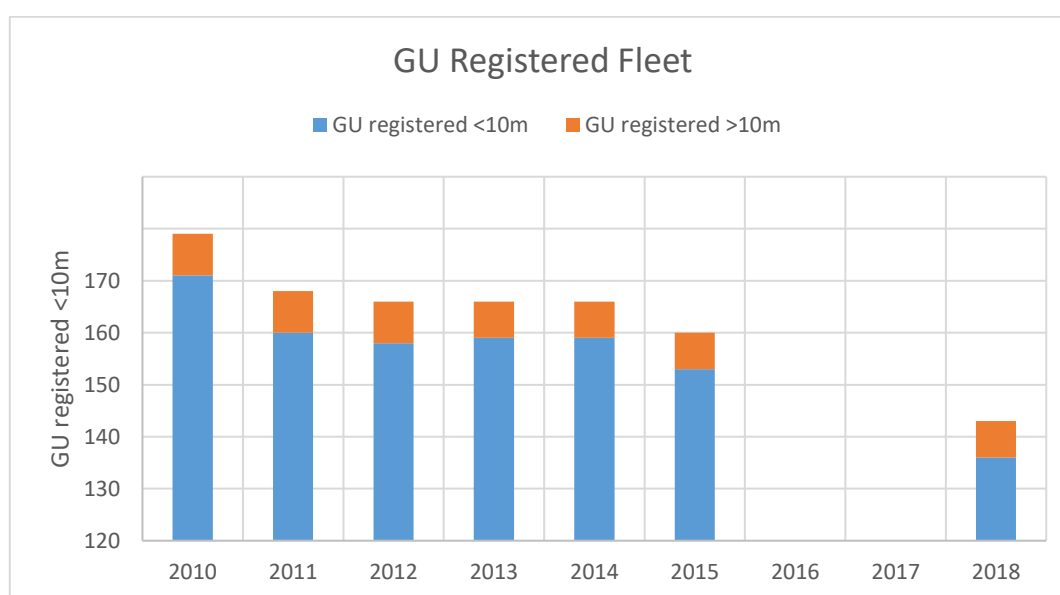


Figure 2: Graph visualising change in registered GU fleet numbers over time

2.1 Local Under 10m

The net change in 2018 was a reduction of six 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 significantly higher than this, with as many as eleven 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.

2.2 Local Over 10m

The same seven vessels made up the Over 10m fleet in both 2017 and 2018. 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 scalloping). Unlike the under 10 fleet, the Over 10m vessels are restricted as to what methods they are permitted to use. All of the Over 12m 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 reduction of one Under 10 and Over 10 licensed vessel in 2018, meaning a total of 30 non-GU vessels now hold a licence to fish in Bailiwick waters. Although 30 vessels hold a licence, only approximately 1/3 fish in Bailiwick waters on a regular basis.

3. Landings

3.1 Landings Table

Annual Landings (Tons)								
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	**Price Per kg (Average Estimated 2018)
Anglerfish	0.46	0.56	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.9	1.3	£4.25
Atlantic Cod	0.14	0.434	4.6	3.9	3	1.7	3	£4.77
Atlantic Mackerel	11.53	6.144	2.9	4.4	6.5	9.3	5.3	£1.70
Black Bream	12.02	18.7	12.2	10.4	21.3	13.7	12.7	£3.15
Blonde Ray	68.37	53.12	98	144.7	153.3	110.2	136.5	£2.40
Brill	1.84	1.6	4	5.4	8.7	6.8	7.9	£7.22
Common Cuttlefish	0.69	2.89	1.7	3.4	2.6	1.6	1.7	£2.85
Common Sole	2.16	3.04	2	2.4	5.1	4	2.3	£9.92
Common Squids Nei	0.29	0.33	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.2	£4.82
Crawfish	0.19	0.14	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.2	£33.53
Edible Crab	650.59	674.42	809.9	708.9	878.2	784.2	785.6	£1.79
European Conger	3.93	4.1	7.6	6.4	7.7	8.8	10.1	£1.15
European Lobster	105.09	95.02	101.6	117.2	128.2	98.6	102.3	£17.31
Number of Lobsters	156165	145405	143571	164143	168645	139654	146429	
European Plaice	1.06	0.43	1.2	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.3	£2.18
European Seabass	11.11	11.46	15.8	18.5	30.5	27.6	44.4	£13.15
Great Atlantic Scallop	125.16	103.65	79.8	105.2	101.2	102.6	95.7	£3.28
Grey Mullet	1.18	0.76	2.7	1.3	1.6	1.7	2.6	£0.86
John Dory	0.17	0.08	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	£8.45
Ling	0.12	0.13	0.3	0.7	0.9	2	2	£3.16
Pollack	39.02	56.36	53.6	53.5	68.1	64.5	82.4	£4.24
Sand Sole	0.04	0.02	0.2	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.4	£3.76
Red Mullet	3.48	8.45	14.9	4.8	5	4.7	6	£5.89
Sandeels	14.51	11.41	19	21.2	28.1	26.4	55.6	£2.50
Smoothound	0.06	1.46	3.5	4.6	5.6	6.6	4.4	£1.40
Spider Crab	105.96	61.19	55	57.6	34.2	34.9	40.7	£1.59
Spotted Dog	4.71	7.36	12.8	9.2	12.5	16.2	15.3	£0.63
Tope	0.55	0.32	0.7	0.1	3.3	5.7	3.2	£2.29
Turbot	2.66	3.42	5.6	9.2	6	7.8	10.2	£11.65
Wrasse*	4.50	2.98	3.4	4.7	5.6	4	7.9	£0.97
Total (wetfish)	183.63	195.558	265.9	308	376.4	325.9	414.9	
Total (shellfish)	987.98	934.42	1,048.40	993.1	1145.3	1022.8	1026.4	
Total (all)	1171.61	1129.98	1,314.30	1301.1	1521.7	1348.7	1441.3	
Value (£000's)	£4,250	£4,237	£4,767	£5,089	£5,832	£4,960	£5,438	

Table 2: 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 2018 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 15 species increasing landed weight and 15 species seeing a decrease. There were some exceptions which saw a significant increase; most notably Spider Crab and Atlantic Mackerel. Spider Crab in particular saw an increase of more than 44 Tons on the previous year's catch. Total landings increased by over 41 Tons compared to 2017 landings. However it must also be noted that the 2017 landing were the lowest since accurate records began in 2003.

The total value landed however was seen to be lower than the previous year due in part to the higher weight of low value species, such as the aforementioned Spider Crab. Almost 80% of landings are now made in to France, with the larger boats using Cherbourg and smaller vessels landing to Dielette. Although the prices paid are higher than those achievable locally, it means that fishermen are vulnerable to fluctuations in the Euro exchange rate.

3.2.2 Shellfish

The pleasing story of 2018 was the substantial increase in Spider Crab landings compared to the decline experienced in recent years. 2018 saw an increase on the 2017 landings of 44.77 Tons, although it must be noted that this is still significantly lower than the landings experienced historically with the maximum recorded in 2003 of 146 Tons. European lobster saw a slight increase in landings and stocks look to be fairly stable when considering the CPUE figures. There was a 3.6% decrease in landings of edible crab when compared to the 2017 figures continuing a downward trend although far less than the decrease seen 2016 – 2017. The decrease in edible crab landings could in part be explained by a decrease in potting effort and pots in use both of which were seen to be slightly down in 2018. The resurgence of the spider crab fishery could also have played a role, with fishermen choosing to target grounds for spider crab rather than edible crab. Scallop landings were also significantly increased, with 2018 numbers being the highest since accurate records began in 2003. Landings in 2018 were 21.5 Tons more compared with 2017 numbers.

3.2.3 Wetfish

Wetfish landed total saw a decrease from the previous year of nearly 12 Tons. A large part of this decrease was due to a 30% reduction in Pollock landings when compared to the previous year. Encouragingly Mackerel landings were the highest recorded since 2003 at 11.5 Tons, and Sandeel, Grey Mullet and Rays also showing increased catches compared to the 2017 data. However the general trend within the other recorded wet fish species is downwards.

4. Effort

4.1 Potting

Potting effort saw a sharp decline in 2018 with both pots in use and number of lifts declining. This followed the trend already seen in 2017 and could be associated with the decline in the GU fleet. This data reinforces that the year of 2018 was a record one for Spider Crab catches as even with the lower effort record Spider Crab was landed.

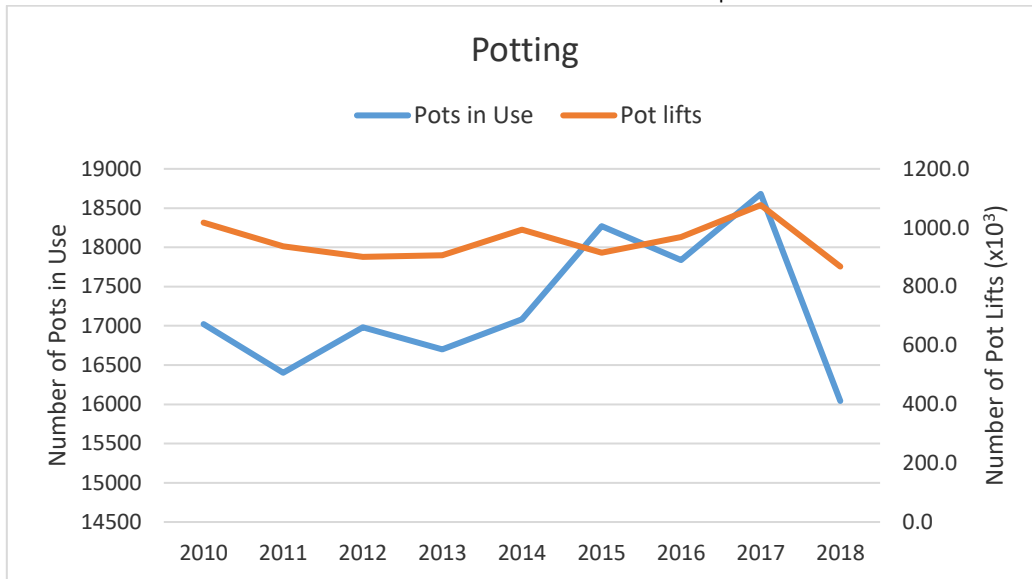


Figure 3: Graph showing annual GU registered potting effort over time from 2010 to 2018

4.2 Set Netting

Set netting was down 39,000 metres in 2018 which continues the general decrease seen from 2011 levels. Again this can be partially put down to a reduction in the fleet size.

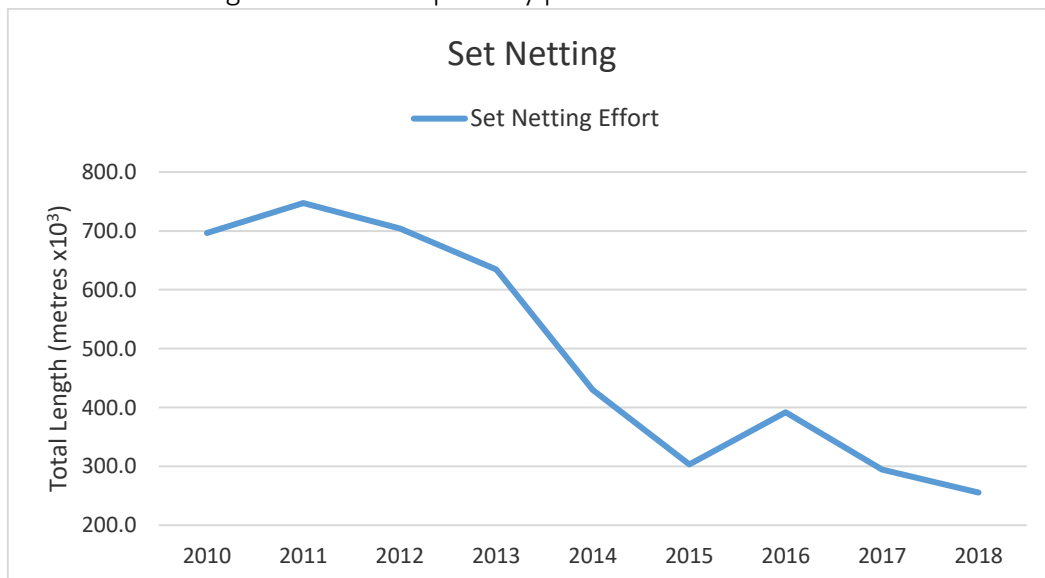


Figure 4: Graph showing the annual recorded GU registered netting effort in “thousands” of metres used.

4.3 Trawling

Demersal trawling is still the predominant trawling method used in local waters with an effort of 1393 hours in 2018, an increase of 18% from the previous year but still down from a maximum of 3695 hours in 2015. Beam trawling saw its lowest recorded effort of only 7 hours, which continues the downward trend from 2014.

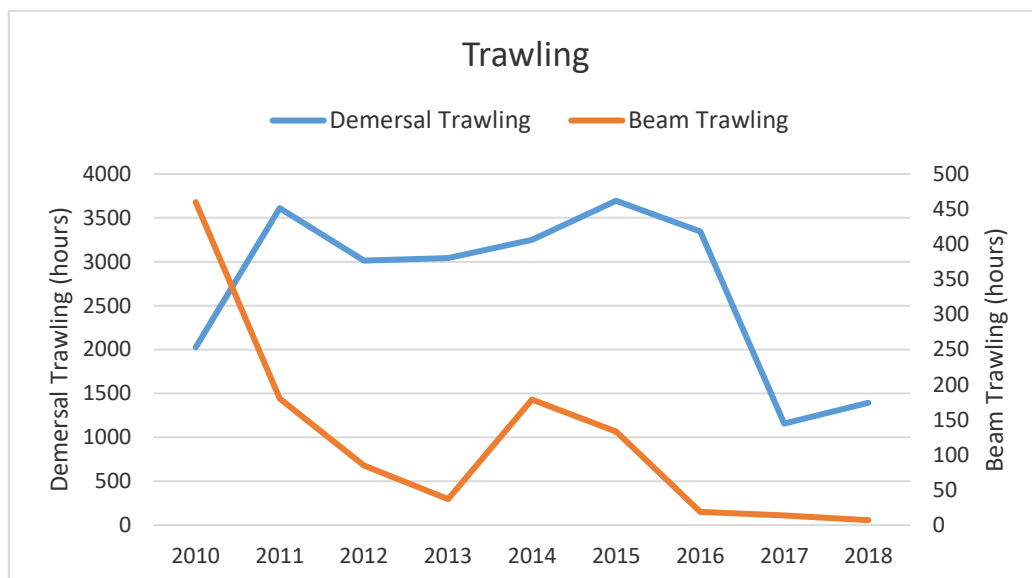


Figure 5: Graph showing the annual recorded trawling effort in hours 2010 – 2018.

4.4 Hand Diving

In 2018 only 586 hours of effort were recorded as hand diving. This follows the downward trend seen in the previous two years, a decline from a maximum peak of 1682 hours in 2015.



Figure 6: Graph showing the recorded annual hand diving effort for GU registered vessels in hours, from 2010 – 2018.

4.5 Long Lining

Longlining also saw a continued decline in 2018 with 43,585 hooks set. The trend follows that of the previous two years records.

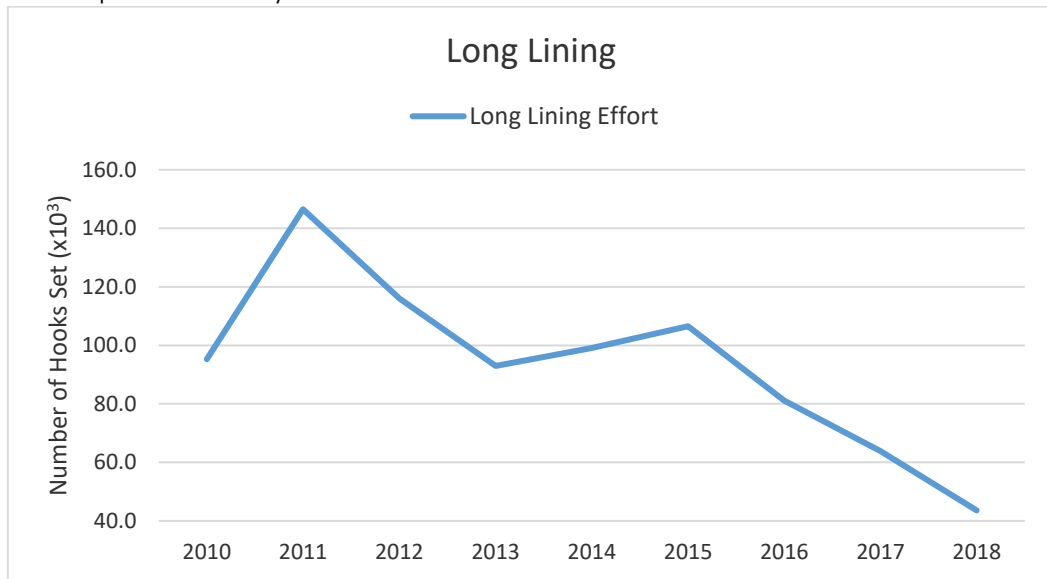


Figure 7: Graph showing the recorded annual long lining effort in “thousands” of hooks set, for years 2010 – 2018.

4.6 Angling

Angling effort in 2018 saw a reduction down to 8271 hours, the lowest recorded since accurate records began in 2003. This can be partly attributed to the reduction in fishing fleet.

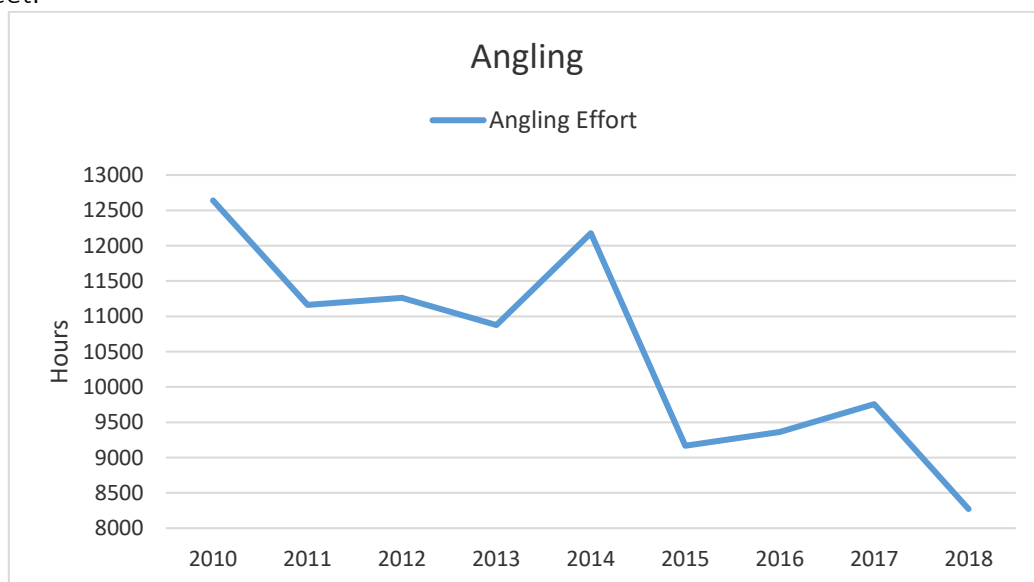


Figure 8: Graph showing recorded Angling effort in hours, annual data from 2010 – 2018.

4.7 Scallop dredging

In 2018 scallop dredging effort increased to 2560 hours, this follows the trend of increasing effort from a low of 1271 hours in 2016. (Note there was no data available for the year 2015).

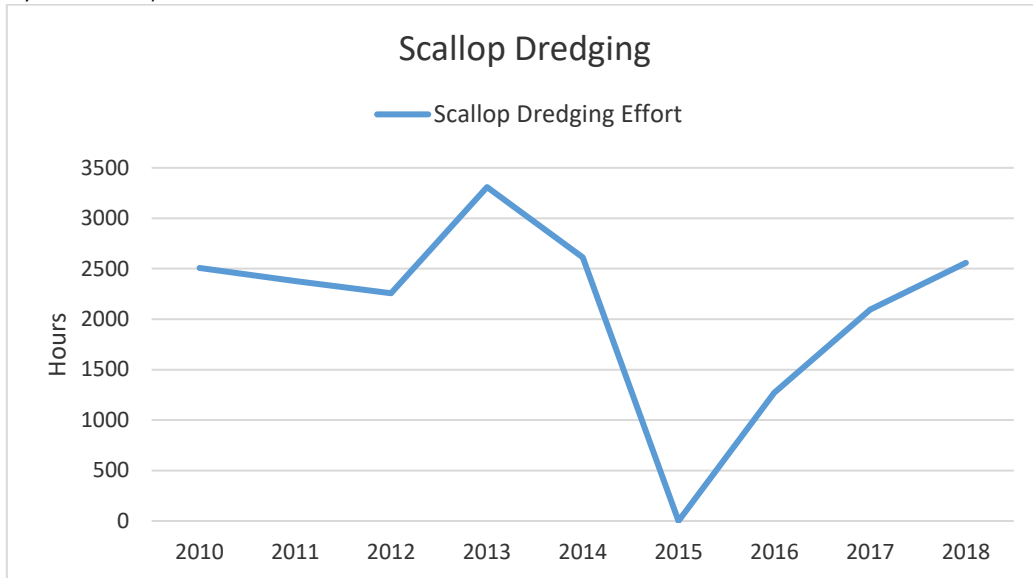


Figure 9: Graph showing the annual Scallop Dredging effort in hours of GU registered vessels from 2010 – 2018.