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Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Co-Designing the Sea Bass FMP

March 2022 – Jan 2023

Project Team

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Policy Lab is a multidisciplinary team working openly and collaboratively across government, bringing expertise in policy, ethnography, systems thinking, futures and design.

Our mission is to radically improve policy making through design, innovation and people-centred approaches.

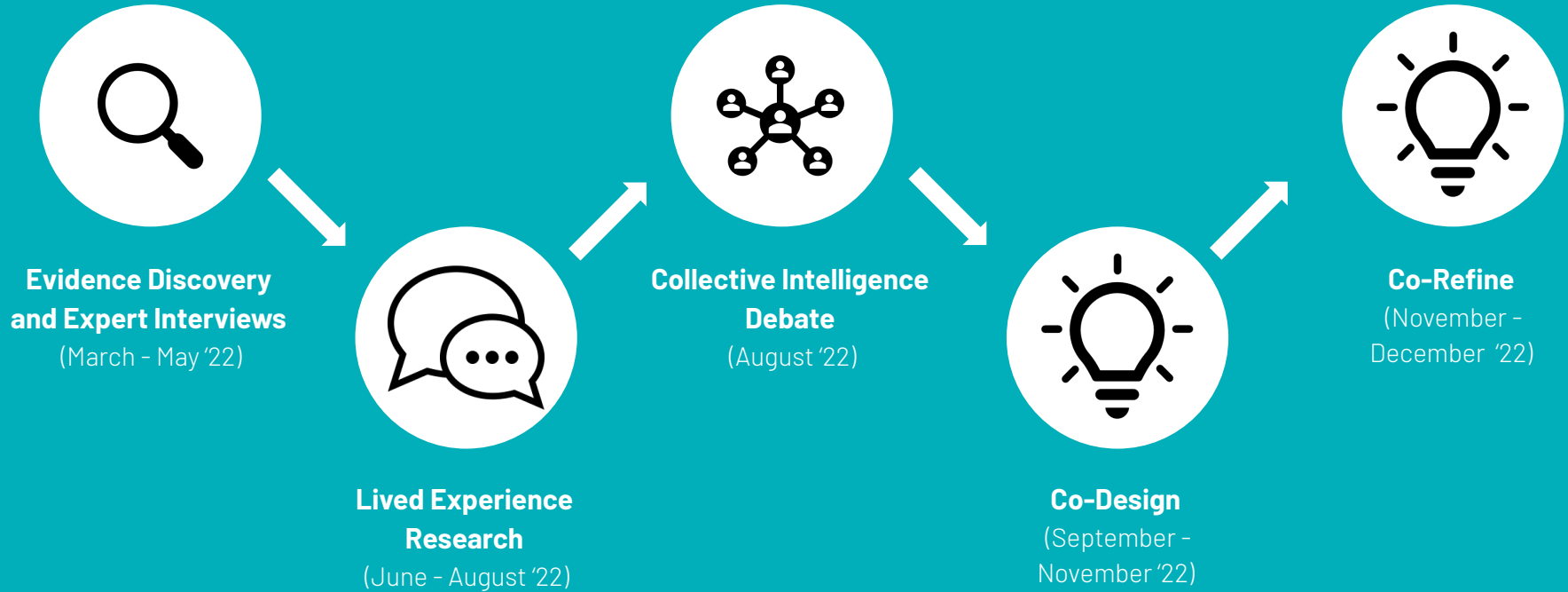
Since 2014, we have partnered with policy teams on over 200 projects, working with 7,000 public servants across central and local government departments and agencies, as well as internationally.

Challenge

Policy Lab was tasked to facilitate a co-design process for a national plan for sea bass management, working with key stakeholder groups to build trust, address fatigue and create both a user-centred and nature-centred policy.

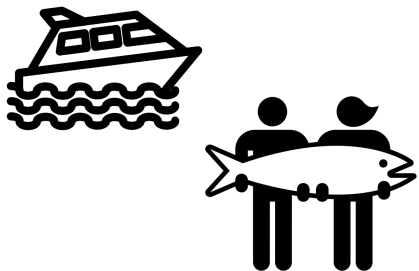
"How can we co-design a new national plan for sea bass management in order to ensure this valuable natural resource can benefit a diverse range of commercial, personal and political interests whilst ensuring stocks remain sustainable and in the process foster empathy and trust between those involved? "

Project Timeline



Policy Lab conducted interviews with **13 key stakeholders**, identified through our engagement with Defra, desk research and initial stakeholder mapping.

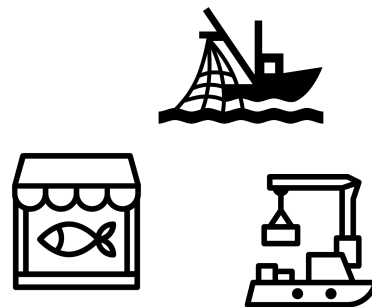
Expert interviews



We spoke to **recreational fishers** to understand the role of bass fishing for people's lives and their communities, as well as its impact on tourism and conservation.



We spoke to **government representatives and regulators** about the current rules and regulations, their enforcement and monitoring as well as their interactions with the EU.



We spoke to **commercial fishers** about the importance of bass fishing for their livelihood, and about how the existing regulation has been impacting their fishing activities.

Lived Experience Research

We engaged with around **90 stakeholders** across England and Wales including:

- recreational fishers
- commercial fishers
- sellers of bass
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (IFCA)
- charter boat skippers
- tackle shop owner



Lived experience entailed two different methodological approaches:

Ethnographic research

- In-depth social research method to illuminate the perspectives and experiences of fishers and other bass stakeholders

Pop-up research

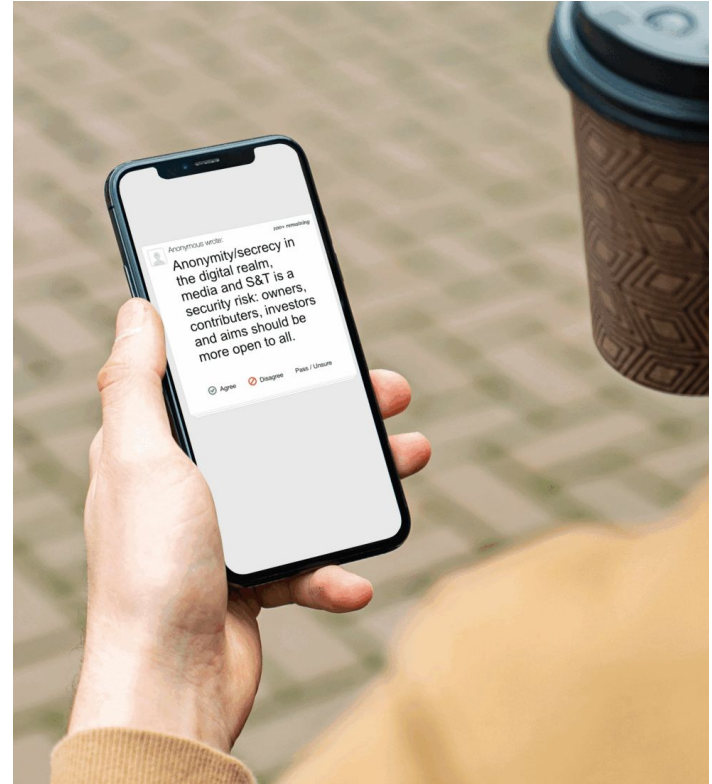
- Gathering a range of insights from diverse stakeholders in order to understand the big picture;



Collective Intelligence

The Collective Intelligence online debate provided Stakeholders with:

- **the opportunity to put forward their own ideas for the new FMP**, and have those tested by others in the system
- **Exposure to individuals and ideas they might not otherwise have encountered**, as well as an understanding of where and to what extent different groups agree and disagree



Example of the Collective Intelligence platform

The debate, at a glance

276

total participants

137 recreational
and
110 commercial

267

in England

43

in Wales

Approximately 53% of
all votes agreed with
statements, 27%
disagreed

**Almost 140,000
votes on 711
statements**

Over half
of all participants
voted on all 711
statements

Statements
covered **10**
categories and **102**
subcategories

213

rod/line users

72

Netters

15

Trawlers

14

Spears

15

Other gear users

Participants could identify with more than one stakeholder type, region and/or gear type

Co-Design

Using the **Lived Experience Research and Collective Intelligence debate outcomes**, the purpose of the co-design workshops was to form a sensible set of FMP solutions by working through identified 'Challenges' and potential 'Solutions' in the form of interactive in-person and online workshops, and a survey.



Photograph from one of the co-design workshops



Co-Design workshops

- Policy Lab conducted **five in-person workshops** in three locations:
 - Plymouth, Devon
 - Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire
 - Lowestoft, Suffolk
 - We also carried out **four online workshops**.
 - In total, **72 external stakeholders** attended the workshops
-



A participant in one of the co-design workshops

Workshop format

- The co-design workshops were deliberately held with small groups to encourage in-depth discussions around the future FMP.
- Each session included representatives from a diverse range of bass stakeholders: recreational fishers, commercial fishers, charter boat skipper/s, buyers/sellers, MMO, IFCA, eNGOs, scientists.
- The in-person format was then replicated to work online with the same challenge questions.

The **nine co-design workshops** brought together different stakeholders to discuss and prioritise potential solutions for the FMP.

Policy Lab worked closely with Cefas and Defra to develop key challenges and solutions on the basis of the insights from the lived experience research and collective intelligence debate.



Photograph from one of the co-design workshops.



Regional/National Management

Should sea bass be managed at a national or regional level?



Prioritise a **fully national plan** - all bass rules should apply throughout England and Wales.



Prioritise a **mostly national plan, somewhat regional** - all bass rules should apply throughout England and Wales, however authorities could make relevant regional byelaws (similar to the current system).



Prioritise a **mostly regional plan, somewhat national** - regions could set their own bass regulations and catch limits (while remaining within an agreed national limit).



The co-design method provided challenge and solutions cards on the following:

- Regional / national management
- Stock objectives
- Monitoring and assessment
- Control and enforcement
- Commercial licensing
- Recreational fishing opportunities
- Discards
- Catch limit approach
- Environmental impacts
- Spatio-temporal closures
- Socio-economic benefit
- Collaboration
- Access (online survey only)

Examples of challenge and solution cards from the workshop



A participant in one of the co-design workshops reading solution cards to an FMP challenge.



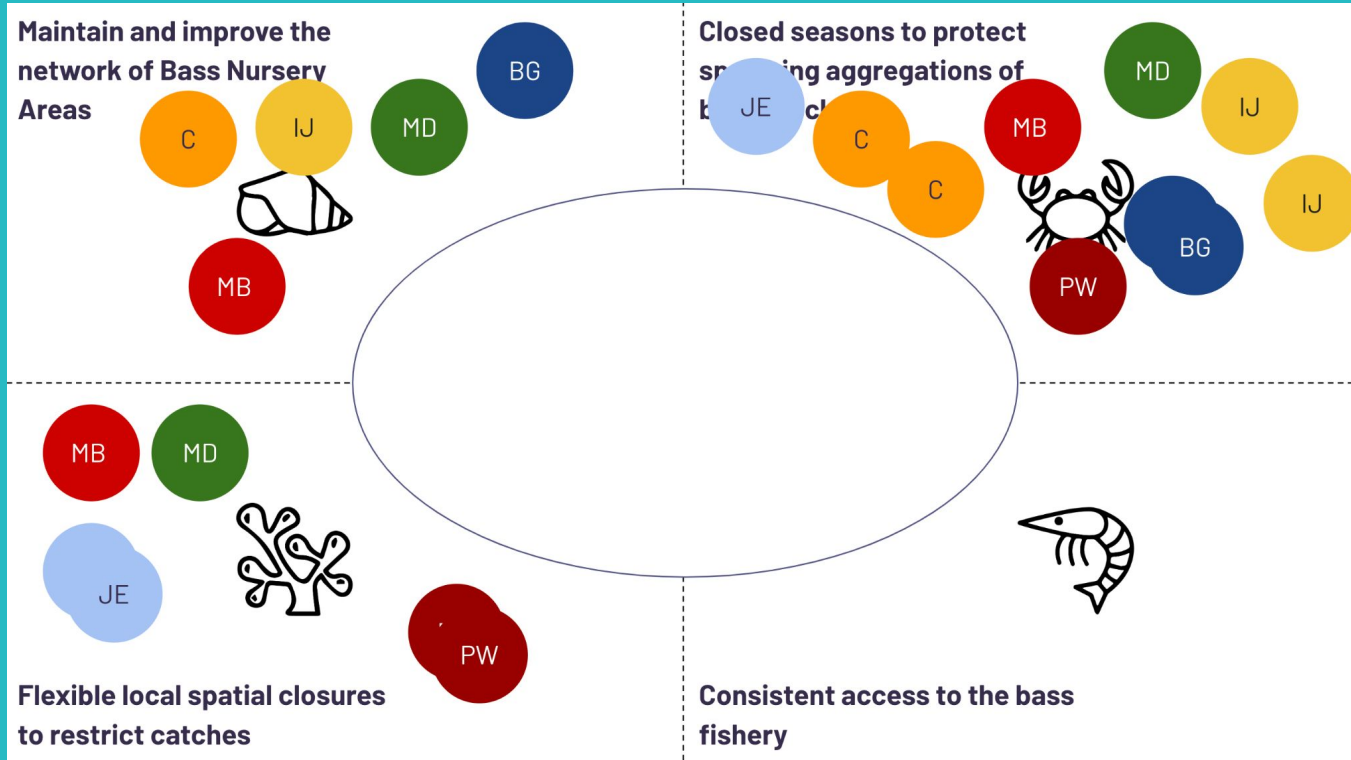
Participants in one of the co-design workshops discussing potential ideas for the future FMP



Participants in one of the co-design workshops
prioritising potential solutions for the future FMP

Participants in one of the co-design workshops voting for their preferred solution to an FMP challenge.





An example of the voting board from out of the online workshops



Bass FMP: Survey

About this survey

Policy Lab has created this survey for everyone with an interest and stake in bass fishing in England and Wales. The purpose of the survey is to find out more about **stakeholders' preferences for addressing some of the main challenges of the new Sea Bass Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)**, which will be published in 2023.

This survey complements face-to-face and online 'co-design' workshops, which took place in Plymouth, Milford Haven and Lowestoft in October 2022.

About the structure of this survey

You will be presented with **13 questions**, each supported by **2-4 potential solutions** as to how the questions could be addressed/managed in the future FMP. The questions and potential solutions are the same as those presented in the co-design workshops; however, the structure has been simplified to suit the survey format. Policy Lab has worked closely with Defra and Cefas in drafting the potential solutions, to ensure they are linked to overarching areas of the FMP.

You will be asked to choose one potential solution that you would like to prioritise for addressing each of the 13 challenges. Any extra information provided in the notes enables you to provide further insights regarding your selection.

You will have an option to comment on your preference and you can also abstain if you are unable or unwilling to decide on your preference. You are welcome to comment on your decision in the comment box.

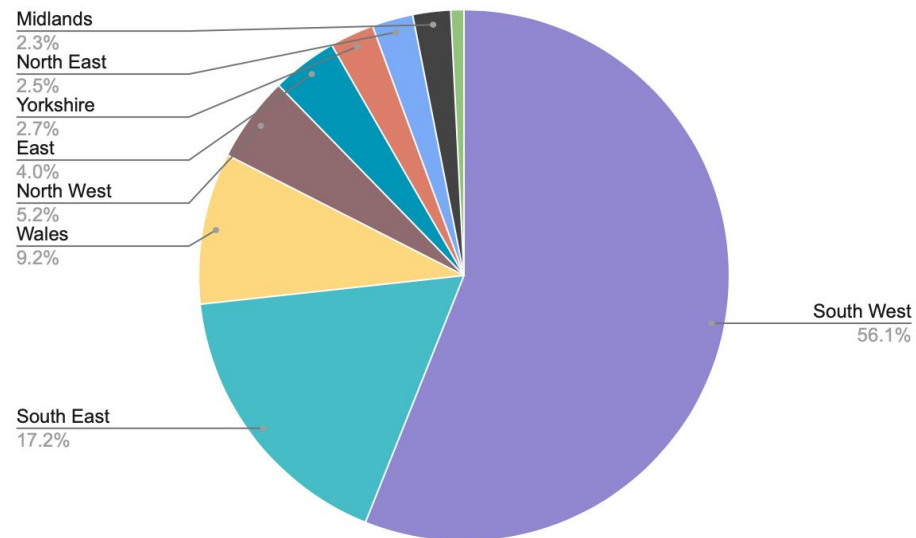
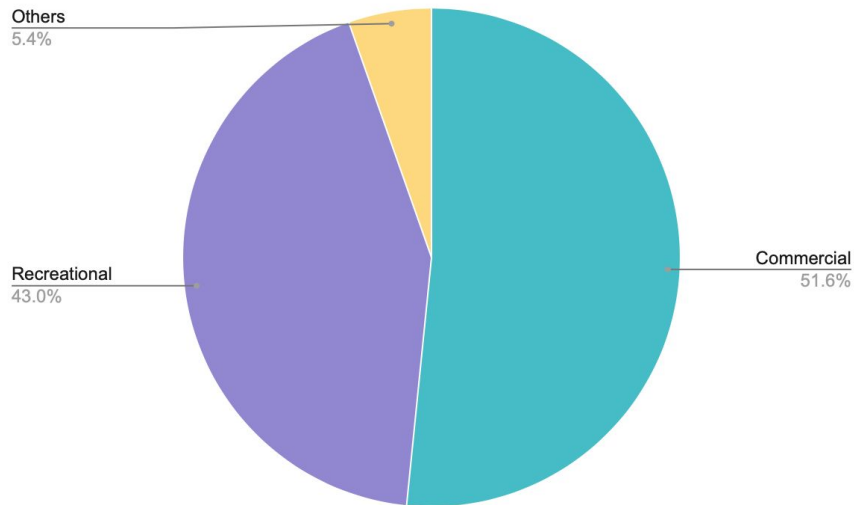
The survey should take around **10 minutes** to complete.

About this project

Co-design survey

- All bass stakeholders on Policy Lab's mailing list (bass licence holders, regional IFCA's, MMOs, environmental organisations and other key stakeholders) were invited to take part in an online co-design survey.
- The survey was based on the same scenarios that were played out in co-design workshops.
- We received **477 responses**.

Co-design survey: participation

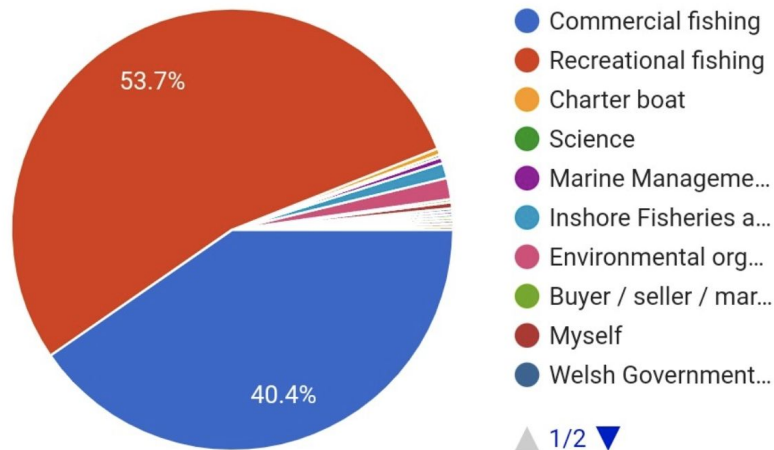


Co-Refine survey

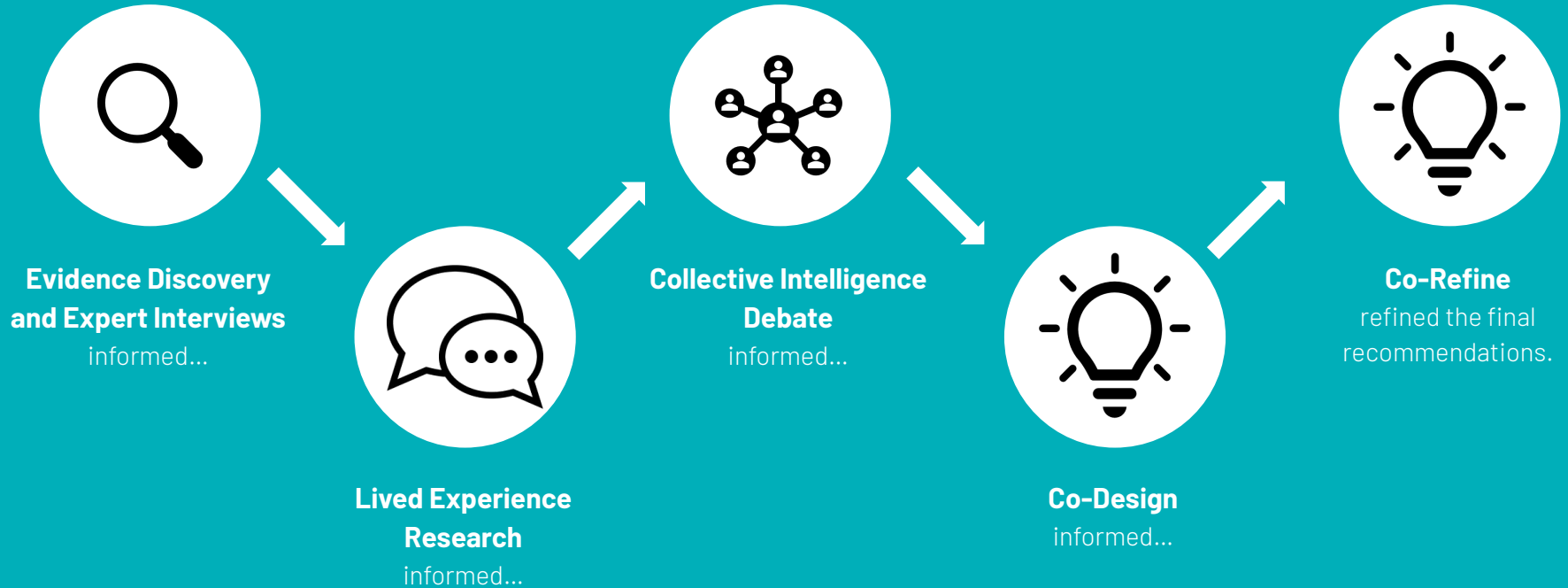
The priorities from co-design helped us understand the areas of agreement and disagreement on the key challenge areas.

Working with Defra, Cefas and relevant bodies we discussed which solutions would be feasible and implementable in the short-term, and which required a more long-term approach.

Via an online survey, **449 stakeholders** replied to specific questions about how these solutions could work for them. Their suggestions informed our final recommendations.



The iterative project process



Total Stakeholder Engagement

Interviewed

13

business experts

More than 90

stakeholders engaged in the lived experience research - where we visited eight locations

477

responses to the online co-design survey

280

Participants joined the collective intelligence debate

70+

participants joined the co-design workshops

Co-refine survey response

449

Total Engagement

1400+

Final Report.



Policy Lab's final report has been submitted to Defra and Welsh Government,

The report with a supporting executive summary will be published in due course (the date will be confirmed by Defra and Welsh Government),

Defra and Welsh Government will take Policy Lab's work forward into a draft final sea bass FMP which will go out for public consultation in summer 2023. ahead of final publication of the new sea bass FMP in December 2023.

Final reflections.



Throughout the project, Policy Lab used a number of methodologies to engage stakeholders and invite participation in varying formats to make the process as accessible and collaborative as possible,

Adopting a mixed methods approach meant that each phase of the project informed the next phase in an iterative and engaging co-design process,

Qualitative and quantitative insights complemented each other towards the production of a solid evidence base.

Final reflections.



The collaborative nature of the co-design process invited negotiation and provided participants with the opportunity to share views, listen to others and understand the bigger picture,

The recommendations put forward by Policy Lab are the result of extensive research, bringing together varying voices from across the bass landscape,

Maintaining a close working relationship across an often fragmented and divided bass landscape is essential for the continued progress and success in designing the new bass FMP.

Thank you.

All stakeholder correspondence for the bass FMP should be addressed to: BassFMP@defra.gov.uk