

Russ Cheshire submission of 23 August 2022

PE1951/M: Reinstate inshore coastal limit on the use of dredge and trawl fishing gears

I write to express my support for the SCFF's petition.

In my view, the reinstatement of an inshore limit for trawling, dredging and other mobile fishing methods, which have been shown to have detrimental effects on the coastal marine environment will, in a few years, allow the recovery of this zone to be much healthier, more biodiverse and productive than is currently the case.

The Scottish Government's claim to be protecting 37% of our seas is disingenuous to say the least; only around 5% is currently protected in any meaningful way.

The introduction of a limit - be it 3 miles, 5 kilometres or more – will, in my view, gain far more, much faster, for the marine environment and Scotland's communities and economy than has been achieved in the decades (and millions of pounds) wasted in nit-picking discussions.

The benefits of decreasing the disturbance of a zone shown to be immensely beneficial in terms of natural carbon capture cannot be ignored if we are to meet our targets for achieving "Net Zero" in the next few years.

The public are ever more aware of the benefits of having a healthy environment, be it marine or terrestrial; I believe dismissing this petition will show that our Government lags behind public knowledge.