

FIVE REASONS WHY BOULDERS ARE NOT THE WAY TO MANAGE OUR FISHERIES AND THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT



With Greenpeace's illegal, celebrity-tagged, boulder-dumping mission still simmering in the media, it is an important time to have a reality check. Whilst not wanting to overly engage in the headline-grabbing media campaign, the below statement sets out the facts and perspectives of the Cornish fishing industry.

Here are our five reasons why dumping boulders in the ocean is not the way to manage our fisheries and the marine environment:

1. It endangers the lives of hard-working fishermen.

Fishing is already the most dangerous job in the UK. Hard-working skippers and their crew, which are fishing legally to provide food for the nation, do not need additional hazards when working 200 miles offshore, or anywhere for that matter. The South West Deeps is exposed to huge swells and tidal movement, meaning that boulders of any size will not remain static in this environment and are now a moving hazard for all fishermen.

2. It is illegal and does not follow the evidence.

It is not right that Greenpeace can break marine licensing regulations by illegally dumping boulders, whilst fishermen and all other marine users are expected to comply. The Marine Management Organisation is currently working with all stakeholders to review management measures of fishing activity impacts within multiple Marine Protected Areas around the UK coastline. A [call for evidence](#) was recently completed, which will shape the future management of these sites. This is coupled with a consultation on the [introduction of Highly Protected Marine Areas](#), which is currently live. These two consultations provide the opportunity to engage legally and meaningfully, which the fishing industry has done and will continue to do. Working with science, policy, and the law is the way to best manage the marine environment.

3. It creates displacement and unintended consequences.

Stopping fishing activity in one area will simply transfer it into another and [increase competition for space](#). With an ever-growing demand for space in the marine environment, fishing does not need to be squeezed anymore. As well as creating spatial matters, it will also result in vessels having to burn additional fuel to move to other fishing grounds, which would be detrimental to the environment that Greenpeace claim to be protecting.

4. It creates mixed messages to the public.

Fishing provides a low-carbon source of highly nutritious protein, it also sustains many of our coastal communities. Demonising parts of the fishing fleet negatively affects the wider industry and surrounding communities, including those that Greenpeace say they are protecting.

5. It leaves no space for collaboration

As stated above, throwing boulders into the ocean is just plain ineffective. Whilst it attracts celebrities and headlines, this type of illegal activism ultimately leads to multiple negative economic, environmental and social consequences.

The most effective way to manage our fisheries and the marine environment is through good science, evidence, technology, and collaboration between all stakeholders. It is in this space that the fishing industry is firmly positioned, and will remain, to ensure there is a sustainable fishing industry, healthy marine ecosystem, and vibrant, thriving coastal communities in the future.

The Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation (CFPO) *is a membership body, representing the diverse and sustainable fishing fleet across Cornwall and further afield. Providing advice, advocacy and support for over 170 vessels, the CFPO has a proud tradition as the voice for large-and small-scale fishing in the South West.*