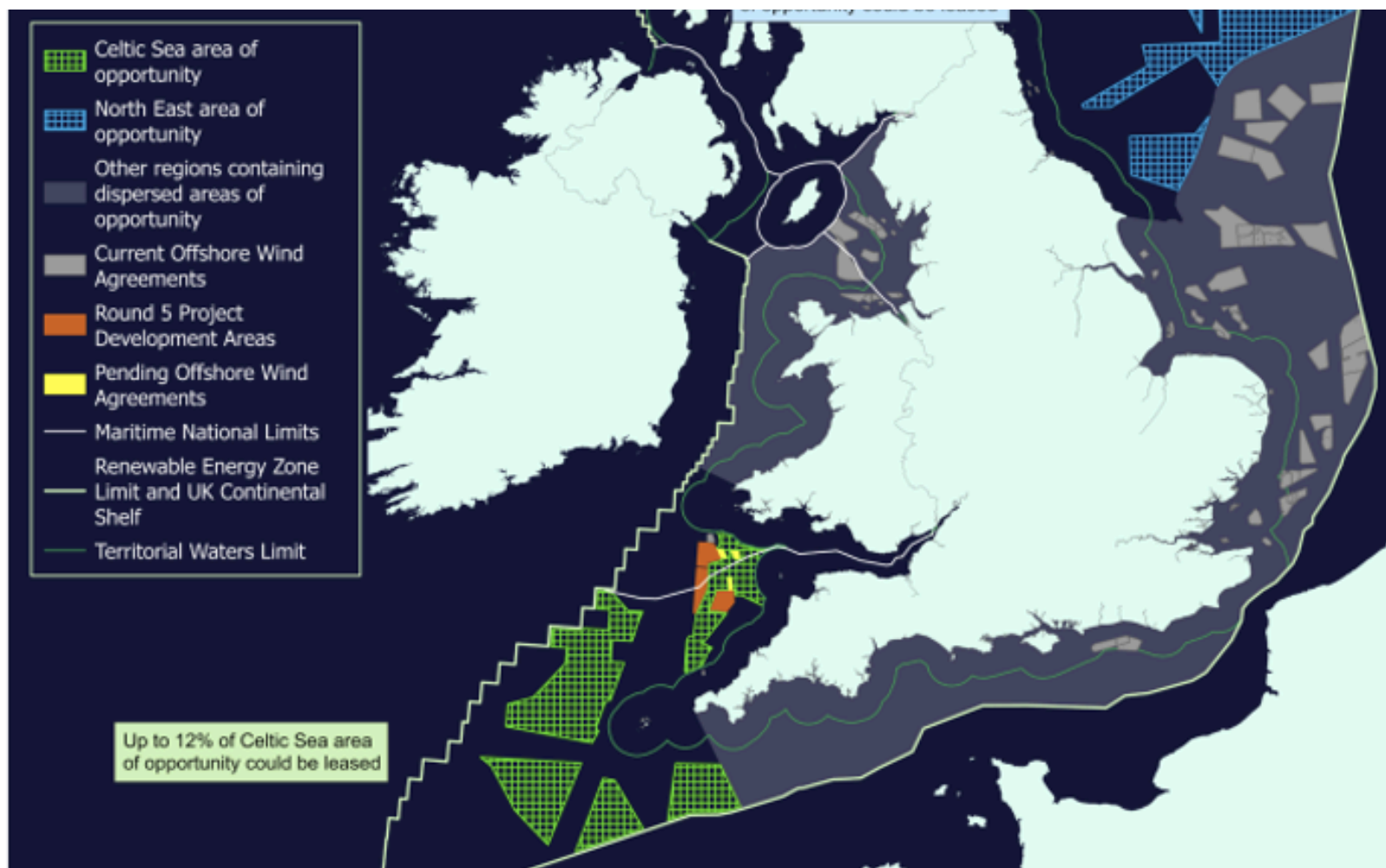


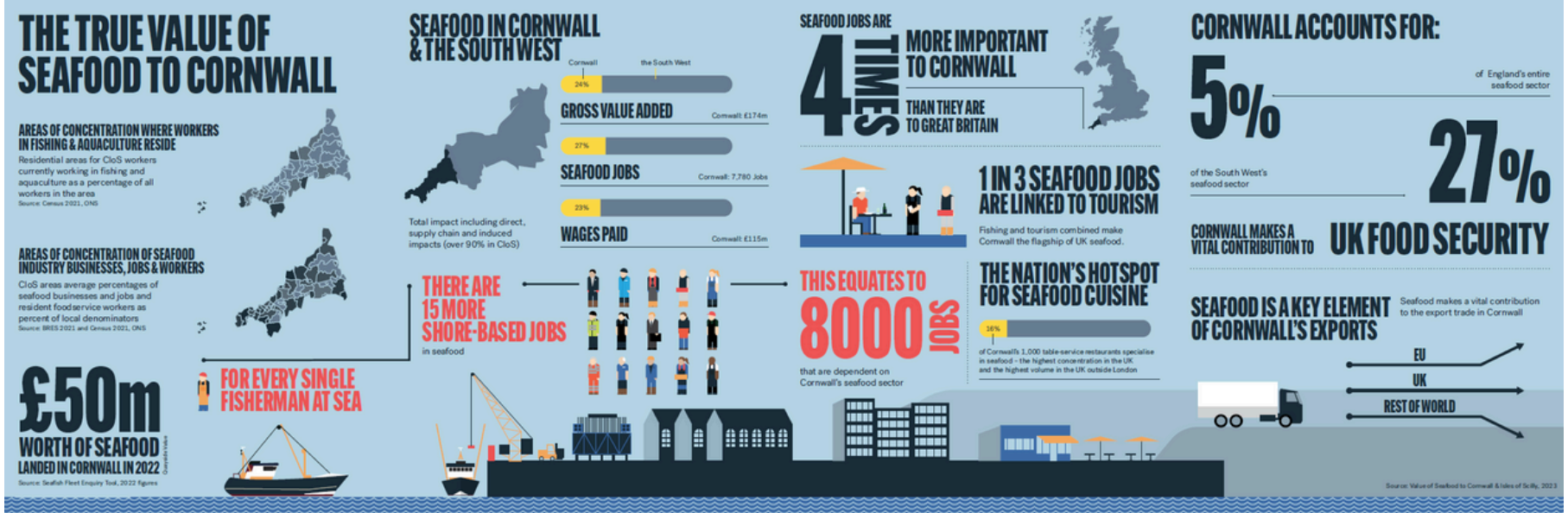
Industrialisation of the seabed. One for all, all for one, or, one to finish another?

An open letter from the Cornish Fish Producers Organisation's (CFPO) in response to the launch of The Crown Estate Future of Offshore Wind 'Considerations for development and leasing to 2030 and beyond' route map report to 16.5GW of floating offshore wind in the Celtic Sea.

Whilst the CFPO welcomed the approach from the Crown Estate to 'do things differently' in the Celtic Sea in 2022, the new Crown Estate report launched last week has revisited south west waters to continue the relentless hunt for more space for floating offshore wind energy. The simple fact of revisiting the Celtic Sea to load up on top of the already agreed 4.5GW (equivalent to 100,000 football pitches, or 75% the size of greater London) completely ignores all of the CFPO social, economic and spatial evidence submitted, which clearly demonstrated how important the Celtic Sea is not just to the Cornish fishing industry, but as a food production area, a highly mixed fishery with a diverse fishing fleet that is unique to anywhere in the world.



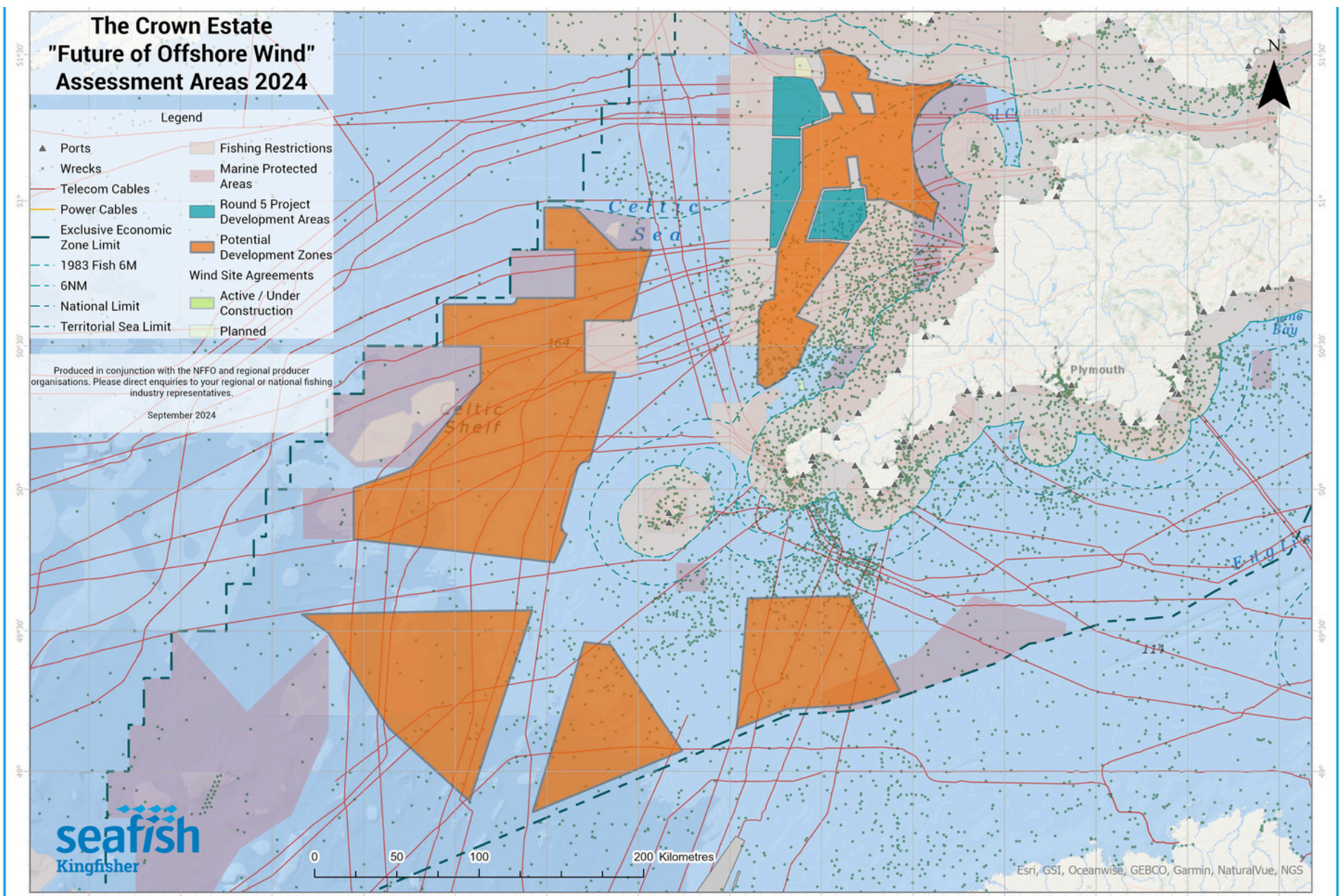
The Cornish fishing fleet produced over 40 million healthy, low-carbon protein portions from its waters in 2023. It also supported 8,000 jobs across the Cornish seafood sector supply chain; fishermen, harbour and market staff, processors, fishmongers, marine engineers, seafood chefs, waiters and waitresses; all involved in this intricate industry that boasts unique links with the tourism and hospitality sectors carefully evolved over centuries. So why are we throwing one new industry that we know very little about regarding its environmental impact; not to mention its short life span of 25 years; on top of another, that is part of our DNA and meets our current and future food security needs?



The CFPO results of *The True Value of Seafood to Cornwall report* (2024)

Designating vast areas for offshore wind energy, that overlap with some of the most fertile fishing grounds, and then allowing only eight weeks for a response raises serious concerns about the level of consideration given to the fishing industry. The potential displacement of the fishing fleet and the loss of vital fishing grounds is alarming. Wasn't the Crown Estate's promise to 'do things differently' in the Celtic Sea supposed to mean a more thoughtful approach?

The fishing industry is not simply concerned about the new Crown Estate report and plans for an additional 12GW of energy; it is looking at a much more fearful map which shows the cumulative effect of multiple government policies conflicting with the ability to go to sea and catch fish. This was well documented in the National Fisherman's Federation Organisation and Scottish Fisherman's Federation [Spatial Squeeze report in 2022](#). Still, absolutely nothing has changed from the government in managing the well evidenced challenge that lies ahead.



Above image shows TCE new areas of search (orange), TCE designated 4.5GW areas (green), MPA's (purple and pink), shipwrecks (dots) and cables (red). The cumulative effect of these restrictions are clear to see.

It's time for the new government and others deciding how to carve up the marine space to recognise the crucial role of the fishing industry in our national food security and take immediate action. If not, then there will be a long-casted turbine-shaped shadow spreading across Cornish seas and coastal communities, with boats tied up in harbours, bankrupt, and a seafood supply chain that has taken centuries to evolve simply wiped out overnight. All of the hard work put into the Fisheries Act, Joint Fisheries Statement, and fisheries management plans will be in vain as the fleet is wildly displaced and the industry undergoes a radical transformation.

If fishing really is part of national food security, then the Celtic Sea and Western Channel should be a celebrated area of unique importance of feeding the nation; rather than blindly accelerate offshore renewable energy, it should be a case of accelerating the appropriate fisheries management plans, conduct the scientific research to underpin them, investment in the fleet, harbours and people who are highly skilled at bringing this incredible healthy protein source in to feed us, which in turn keep our coastal communities sustainable, healthy, colourful, vibrant and inclusive. It's time to set some balance in the race for net zero and recognise a seafood diet is equally as important as keeping the lights on.

Sincerely,

Cornish Fish Producers Organisation