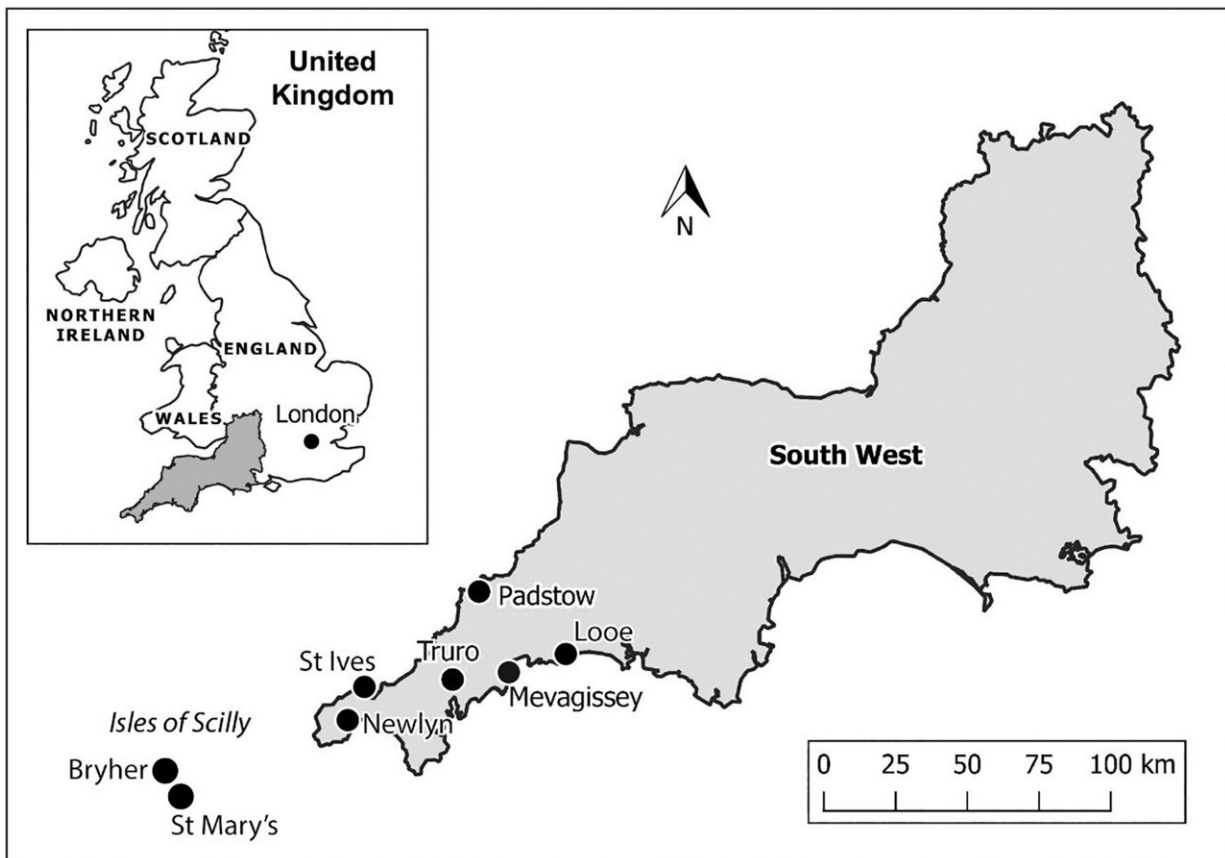


# Embracing tourism could be the blueprint for Cornish fishers' sustainable success

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Map of the UK and Cornwall indicating study areas (source: the author). Credit: *Annals of Tourism Research* (2022). DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2022.103441

The voyage of Cornish fishers into tourism provides a potential model for the promotion of the "Blue Economy" elsewhere, according to new

research from the University of Surrey.

Researchers found that Cornish [fishers](#)' decision to transition to a model incorporating marine [tourism](#)—for example, taking customers on fishing trips—is helping to keep its fishing culture and tradition alive while preserving local finishing stocks.

Dr. Anke Winchenbach, lecturer in tourism and transport at the University of Surrey, said: "Our study details how Cornish fishers have experienced the transition into tourism—and hopefully shows how fishing and the [tourism industry](#) can work together to help maintain the region's traditions while reaping the benefits of positive marine tourism.

"It's not a question of ditching tradition but showing how valuing tradition while embracing new opportunities delivers real economic and social benefit to the fishers and the region."

In the U.K., the number of fishing operators has declined by 45% since 1994 and 75% between 1938 and 2020. The decline in fishing, as well as a lack of tourism promotion, partly contributes to a situation where 90% of the U.K.'s most deprived communities are at the coast.

Coastal and marine tourism is the second largest contributor to the Blue Economy and is the fastest growing area of contemporary tourism.

Surrey's study shows that fishers who transition into marine tourism in Cornwall are not only experiencing a change in fortunes financially but report an improvement in their mental and [physical health](#), thanks to a safer working environment and a sense of pride associated with using their fishing skills and knowledge. The diversification is seen as a win-win, with less pressure on fishing stocks, leading to a more sustainable industry.

The Surrey team also found that the fishers' new strategy has received support from [local communities](#) throughout Cornwall. The new endeavor allows traditions to remain alive and keeps fishers turned marine tourism operators connected to the sea while benefitting the local community.

Dr. Winchenbach added: "With tourism accounting for 20% of employment in Cornwall and contributing just over £2 billion to the [local economy](#) through visitor-related spending, the regional debate has often pitched tourism against tradition.

"Our study suggests that tourism and tradition can work hand-in-hand to support the community, deliver economic and personal benefits through increasing social interactions and improving [mental health](#)."

The study has been published in the journal *Annals of Tourism Research*.

**More information:** Anke Winchenbach et al, Constructing identity in marine tourism diversification, *Annals of Tourism Research* (2022).

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Provided by University of Surrey

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