

Minutes: Channel Scallop meeting

Meeting Date: 27th February 2023

Location: Online

Attendees	Organisation
Caitlin McNally (CM)	Defra
Chloe North (CN)	Western Fish Producers Organisation
Emily Condie (EC)	Southern IFCA
Fiona Nimmo (FN)	Poseidon
George Balchin GB)	Sussex IFCA
Gus Caslake (GC)	Seafish
Jim Portus (JPo)	Scallop Industry Consultation Group
Jo Pollett (JP)	Marine Stewardship Council
Juliette Hatchman (JH)	South West Fish Producers' Organisation
Lauren Parkhouse (LP)	Devon and Severn IFCA
Lisa Bennett (LB)	Marine Stewardship Council
Pat Currah (PC)	Fowey Shellfish
Rob Whitely (RW)	Natural England
Rowan Williams (RWi)	Marine Stewardship Council
Sarah Bedingham (SB)	Marine Management Organisation
Sophie Jenkinson (SJ)	Morrisons
Apologies	
Andy Lawler	Cefas
Claire Pescod	Macduff Shellfish
Andrew Brown	Macduff Shellfish

Purpose of the meeting

- 1) To receive an update on from the Scallop Industry Consultation Group on progress with the national Fisheries Management Plan
- 2) To discuss the Clean Catch UK app, and other bycatch reporting apps
- 3) To discuss upcoming Fishery Progress Social Policy deadlines
- 4) To discuss the MSC's In-Transition to MSC programme

Agenda Item 1: Update on national Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (Action 2, 3)*SICG update on national FMP (JPo)*

JPo updated on behalf of the Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG). The final draft of the FMP was submitted to Defra on the 31st January, and will be reviewed and refined using the Defra gateway process to prepare the document for public consultation in April/May 2023.. Feedback on the consultation will be considered by Defra and the FMP working group, with Secretary of State sign off expected by October 2023, before a 12-18 month period to refine the management approaches. Defra continues to liaise with the Welsh government as this is an English and Welsh FMP.

JH said a lot of 'pre-consultation' work is underway alongside the draft FMP review to ensure progress towards fishery management interventions is maintained. JH acknowledged the Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) as an important tool which is already assessing the effectiveness of current management measures, and the SICG and the Project UK Steering Group should continue to work closely together to ensure alignment between the respective objectives.

Defra update on national FMP (CM)

The national King Scallop FMP aims to ensure a robust and precautionary harvest strategy is in place in English and Welsh waters. Key principles include that it is responsive to the state of the stock, has a clear fishery specific strategy, and will be updated as appropriate to meet management objectives. Management approaches suggested in the FMP are input and output controls, closed areas, seasonal closures and a harmonisation of technical measures. These are a combination of short-term and long-term measures, and how those measures will be implemented is still being mapped out. With the current timeline of internal approvals, public consultation and government response, publication of the FMP is likely to be October 2023.

Discussion

FN, CM and JH discussed whether latent scallop capacity was still being considered as a possible intervention. JH said it is regularly discussed within the SICG, and there was a call for evidence on the topic, but the SICG hope it will be addressed indirectly through the other measures being implemented in the FMP.

GC asked whether the FMP objective to improve efficiencies within the fishery is specifically in relation to fishing gear. The group discussed that 'efficiencies' in this sense is a broad term which will capture not only gear efficiencies but technical measures, economic and environmental efficiencies as well. JH encouraged members of the Steering Group to provide a formal response to the public consultation, and JP confirmed the Secretariat will submit a response based on the FIP action plan and MSC requirements in regards to harvest strategy and harvest control rules.

Actions from Item 1:

- Secretariat to submit a response to the public consultation for the national King Scallop FMP when it is open, based on the content of the FIP action plan
- Steering Group members to consider providing a response to the national King Scallop FMP consultation when it is open

Agenda Item 2: Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species (Action 4)

LB updated on the Clean Catch UK app (CCUK) being developed by Cefas. The app has undergone significant work to rebuild the different 'groups' after testing last year revealed a number of technical errors. Group 1 is focussed on wildlife bycatch, and extensions have been made to the app to make it suitable for use on trawl and dredge vessels. Final internal testing should be complete by the end of February 2023, after which it can be trialled by fishing vessels. LB discussed an alternative ETP monitoring app, [MoFI](#), that the Joint Demersal Fishery (JDF) is developing, which should be ready in summer 2023. This app was initially developed to for use with trawl gear, and could potentially be adapted to suit other fisheries when it is completed.

Discussion

Macduff Shellfish have confirmed they have vessels waiting to trial the app when it is ready> JP confirmed while the first step is to trial the app on a small number of vessels, the plan would be that the CCUK app is rolled out across all vessels in the FIP which would be a requirement of the MSC assessment process.

Actions from Item 2:

- Secretariat to continue liaising with Cefas for any updates on the CCUK app

Agenda Item 3: Habitats update (Action 5)*Marine Protected Areas (MPA)*

LB updated on the ongoing process led by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) of implementing management measures in England's Marine Protected Areas (MPA). The public consultations for Stage 2 (formal consultation) and Stage 3 (call for evidence) are currently open and close on 28 March 2023; full management measures are due to be implemented in all offshore MPAs by the end of 2024.

Inshore Vessel Monitoring Systems (I-VMS)

The rollout of inshore Vessel Monitoring System (I-VMS) devices on all English vessels <12m in length is expected to be complete by May 2023; the only remaining vessels to have I-VMS installed are those <6m in length. Following this date, the Secretariat understands that I-VMS data can be requested from the MMO through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. It would be valuable to have a statement or agreement from someone at the MMO to confirm that this is the case.

Discussion

One of the remaining actions in the FIP action plan is to define where direct effects of the fishery remain a concern for habitats such as Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME) and commonly encountered habitats. The group was asked to raise any concerns about VMEs that aren't covered by the current designation of MPAs, so they can be considered by the habitat sub-group. Having access to the I-VMS data may also help to inform whether direct effects of the fishery are of concern in any particular areas.

RW asked for more clarity on the FOI process including the timelines to receive a response. SB from the MMO noted the questions from the group, and will provide more information to the Secretariat when available. RW will contact SB to clarify his specific questions.

Actions from Item 3:

- RW to contact SB and clarify the questions regarding how the Steering Group can access I-VMS data through the FOI process
- SB to provide a response to the Secretariat on the FOI process including the process for accessing I-VMS data

Agenda Item 4: In-Transition to MSC (ITM)

JP reminded the group that the FIP finishes in April 2024, and that the new version of the MSC Standard 3.0 will be applicable for any new fishery entering the programme from April 2023. The Steering Group have been working towards Version 2.0 for the last five years. An option available to the FIP could be to enter the MSC's 'In-Transition to MSC' program, which would enable the FIP to enter full assessment using Version 2.0 of the MSC Standard and have until November 2028 to transition to Version 3.0. Poseidon will undertake a gap analysis for the FIP with this year's annual review, which will indicate how the FIP is currently scoring compared to the requirements of V3.0. JP will circulate a memo to the Steering Group, which will provide more information on the requirements to enter ITM and the various steps involved, and the group are invited to decide on the course of action following the gap analysis and annual review in April.

Actions from Item 4:

- Secretariat to send a memo to the Steering Group providing more information on the ITM program including any costs and entry requirements
- Secretariat to arrange a final meeting after the annual review to support the Steering Group to agree on next steps for the fishery

Agenda Item 5: Fishery Progress social policy updates

LB reminded the group of the FIPs remaining actions for the Fishery Progress social policy requirements. The vessel list is required by May and the grievance mechanism is required by July. The Secretariat also intends to continue collaborating with Seafood Ethics Action (SEA) Alliance to help complete social policy requirements. The Secretariat will send an email to the Steering Group to finalise the vessel lists, and asked if anyone knew of any local grievance mechanisms that existed within industry already.

Actions from Item 5:

- Secretariat to confirm with Steering Group members that vessel list gathered so far are representative of their membership
- Steering Group members to provide any additional information required to complete vessel lists, and any grievance mechanisms they are aware of

Any Other Business

N/A

Meeting Closes

Actions Arising	Responsibility
Secretariat to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - submit a response to the public consultation for the national King Scallop FMP when it is open, based on the content of the FIP action plan - continue liaising with Cefas for any updates on the CCUK app - confirm with Steering Group members that vessel list gathered so far are representative of their membership - send a memo to the Steering Group providing more information on the ITM program including any costs and entry requirements - arrange a final meeting after the annual review to support the Steering Group to agree on next steps for the fishery 	Secretariat
Steering Group members to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider providing a response to the national King Scallop FMP consultation when it is open - provide any additional information required to complete vessel lists, and any grievance mechanisms they are aware of 	Steering Group
RW to contact SB and clarify the questions regarding how the Steering Group can access I-VMS data through the FOI process	Rob Whiteley
SB to provide a response to the Secretariat on the FOI process including the process for accessing I-VMS data	Sarah Bedingham