# **UK Fisheries Improvements**

# **SW Crab & Lobster FIP Steering Group**

Thursday 26th October 2017, 12.30 – 16.30

Gipsy Hill Hotel, Gipsy Hill Ln, Exeter EX1 3RN

Introductions & apologies

**Attendees:**

Adam Green (AG) Lyons

Bill Badger (on phone)(BB) Defra

Chloe North (CN) MSC

Claire Pescod (CP) MSC

Craig Baldwin (CB) Falmouth Marine School

Laky Zervudachi (on phone)(LZ) Direct Seafoods

Neville Pitman (on phone)(NP) Seafood and Eat It

Ros Macintyre (RM) Cefas

Sarah Clark (SC) Devon & Severn IFCA

Simon Pengelly (SP) South IFCA

Tim Huntington (on phone)(TH) Poseidon

Will Harvey (WH) W.Harvey & Sons

**Apologies:**

Andy Hickman Tesco

Beshlie Poole South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen

Colin Trundle Cornwall IFCA

David Markham Blue Seafood

Emma Rowse Rowse Fishing & The Real Cornish Crab Company

Gus Caslake Seafish

John Balls North Devon Fishermen’s Association

Juliette Hatchman Macduff

PUKFI roundup

CP updated the group her meeting with Seafish and the decision on Seafish’s involvement since Tom Pickerell left.

Under Tom Pickerell, Seafish was in charge of Workstream 1 for Project UK, this was the workstream that was aiming to do a large-scale mapping and pre-assessment for all key commercial fisheries in the whole of the UK. They now have Aoife in Tom’s position and have been discussion Seafish involvement internally. They will make a decision and tell everyone at the CLG meeting in November, as to whether Seafish will commit resources to push Workstream 1 forward in whatever capacity, which may take the form of hiring an external project manager. If steering group members want to highlight their opinions on Seafish’s involvement with Seafish, they are encouraged to do so as Seafish is currently in discussion for its new corporate plan. Bill will represent Seafish for the plaice and lemon sole group, and Gus will represent Seafish for the other FIPs.

CP updated the group on the plans for expansion of the project to cover Sottish and Irish Sea scallops and nephrops.

The aim of this meeting today is for action leads to get clarification on actions, to update the group on whether they are on track, and to seek support from other members of the group if necessary.

Minutes & action points

CP explained the difference between the short-term actions that arise out of each meeting, called Minutes Actions, and the longer-term Actions that make up the Action Plan, called Action-Plan Actions.

The were no comments on the minutes from last time, so they were signed off and will be uploaded to the Seafish website.

A summary of the minutes-actions from the last meeting is below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Number | Lead | Action | Status |
| 1 | CP | update group after meeting with Seafish | At meeting |
| 2 | GC | look into whether there may be funding in the Seafish SW panel projects fund. | Complete |
| 3 | RM & TH | work together to get a more detailed quote for the position paper on Harvest Strategy. | Ongoing |
| 4 | BB/HH | give more of an update on the Defra regional management plan work at the next meeting. | At meeting |
| 5 | IFCAs & industry members | send Gus a list of all of the management measures and initiatives like escape gaps and code of conduct, that is happening on these stocks that has an effect on minimising the mortality of non-target species caught in the fishery | Ongoing |
| 6 | CN | gather information from steering group members are which vessels are involved. | Ongoing |
| 7 | BP | send the Seascope research report from Scotland round the group. | Complete |
| 8 | SC & BP | look into a literature and research review of bycatch for this fishery | Ongoing |
| 9 | Cefas | gather more information about the horizon 2020 bycatch in the crab and lobster fisheries project, and feed back to the group at the next meeting, as well as highlighting this action plan to the group within Defra | At meeting |
| 10 | CN | explore with French colleagues what their thinking on FIPs and MSC would be. | Complete |
| 11 | SC | introduce CN to the Marine Pioneer Project | Complete |
| 12 | CN | invite the welsh and Irish FIPs to dial in briefly to the next meeting to discuss the co-management issue | Complete with Irish, ongoing with Welsh |
| 13 | CP/CN | progress the Fishery Progress webinar | Complete |
| 14 | CN | send poll for next meeting | Complete |

Fisheryprogress.org

CP gave a brief explanation of Fishery Progress to refresh people’s memory after the webinars that we ran with Fishery progress in September to tell people about the idea.

Information from Fishery Progress: ‘Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) throughout the world bring fishermen, suppliers, retailers, and food service companies together with conservation groups and scientific experts to address environmental challenges in a fishery. Along with clear sustainability standards, public policy upgrades, and other interventions, FIPs make fisheries more sustainable by harnessing the private sector’s power to incentivize positive change. But access to specific information about FIPs’ progress has required searching dozens of websites. And even then, prospective buyers or conservation advocates faced inconsistent documentation and questions about the data’s reliability.

FishChoice released a first-of-its-kind resource in October 2016 aimed at helping seafood buyers make better and easier sustainable sourcing choices. FisheryProgress.org is a one-stop-shop for reliable information on the progress of fishery improvement projects worldwide, using standard metrics to assess progress, and ensuring that data is independently verified. Recently, FisheryProgress hit the milestone of having 50 FIP profiles. This is critical because it means that more than half of the FIPs worldwide are now using FisheryProgress, making it truly a one-stop shop for reliable information about FIP progress.

In the webinar, FishChoice staff walked participants through the purpose of the website as well as the impact that it has had to date on improving FIP progress tracking and how industry is using it to strengthen their efforts to source sustainably.’

AG expressed Lyons’ support for FisheryProgress and said that they had experience with the website with another FIP they are doing and were able to offer experience and expertise with uploading the documents.

LZ expressed Direct’s support as well. He said it is a very useful tool for the supply chain.

There was agreement in the room to go ahead with putting the FIP on FisheryProgress.

Action updates, Principle 1, Action 1 & 2

This action is for a consultancy to do some analysis and modelling of the Harvest Control Rules to identify if they are able to work together to achieve maintenance of the stock status at MSY.

Cefas had an action from the last meeting to provide a detailed quote which would allow CN to pursue seeking funding. RS gave an update from Cefas on this – The work would involve modelling which is why the price quoted before was around £10,000. However other consultancies may be more, because they would have to build the models from scratch, whereas Cefas already have models built.

There was discussion that we need to formalise the Harvest Strategy (i.e. aim to maintain the fishery at MSY). The HCRs can then be modelled. The report should lay out ‘this is how they are managed now, this is how they are managed elsewhere e.g. using only minimum size like in Orkney. Then we need to model different HCRs. The process should maintain close involvement with the Defra, the MMO and the IFCAs to inform the consultancy how they normally manage the fishery and what is possible in terms of management, in order to model the HCRs accurately.

It was suggested that it would be good for whoever is doing the analysis, to speak with Mike Bell from Herriot Watt University who did the Principle 1 analysis of the Orkney fishery that assessed the risk of overfishing with the management they have there. They have an open-access fishery, but they manage it with a minimum landing size and their geographical location means that crabs have to be landed to Orkney and the processors can manage the minimum landing size.

*Minutes-action 1: RS to get the official quote from Cefas for the Principle 1 Harvest Control Rule modelling work.*

CN explained that, in order to funding, we need other quotes as well. She will further this and then they can think about funding.

Funding opportunities were discussed. There is the option of FLAG funding, however the fishery spans a few FLAGs and it adds another step to the EMFF process, rather than making it simpler. It would be better to go for EMFF. The obviously problem with EMFF is that it must be spent before Brexit, however, this is quite a short piece of work, so it may be possible.

Another option for funding is the Seafish SW Panel. This would be a less onerous process to get the funding, but Seafish have said that we would still need quotes to show value for money.

MSC can assist with this funding application, however, they can’t receive any more funding coming in, and as this funding is specific for this fishery, someone from the steering group will need to be able to receive the money. AG said that there could be a possibility for Lyons to receive the funding, he would need to get sign off for this though.

*Minutes-action2: CN to write tender and get quotes from other consultancies, then look into funding.*

*Minutes-action 3: AG to seek verification from the relevant people within Lyons, as to whether they could receive and administer the funding on behalf of the Steering Group.*

There was discussion about the consultations that would be undertaken to gather opinions on the management of the fishery. There are two possible ways to do it, Defra could carry out two consultations, starting with a ‘blank-sheet’ one at the beginning to get ideas, and then followed by another one based around management opinions. Or, they could just carry out one consultation laying out a number of different options. The former, involves the fishing industry from the beginning but is more expensive and time consuming than the latter.

BB updated the group that there are no reports from the NE crab management plan consultation yet, but Defra will circulate it when there are. He stated that Defra confirmed its support for this project and has demonstrated this in relation to the PUKFI by agreeing to be observer members of the steering group. It will be important to be able to continually demonstrate how the objectives of the project contribute to the Government’s objectives in order to justify and protect Defra’s continued commitment and involvement. By attending the steering group meetings Defra can advise on how best to do this and offer support where appropriate. With regards to being able to take the management proposals into account, it will help if they are presented with the right accompanying information to allow Defra to do the impact assessment that they have to do before consulting on anything. This impact assessment must assess multiple options such as the impact of the status quo, of the ideal option and of a compromised option. Defra will work with the group to help them provide the right information, and present the proposed management in the correct format. Defra will also know when it is likely to come up, so they can prepare the relevant authorities within government. The fact that Defra will be present at these meeting, means that they can tell us if we are going down a wrong track with the management plan that would never be accepted. This all makes it more likely that the aims of the project will be met.

Minutes action 4: BB to *consider consultations and this project, and provide some information to the group about how best to proceed.*

It was questioned whether Cefas are appropriate to lead this action because, even if Cefas are selected to carry out the research, after delivery of the paper the actions would not be delivered by Cefas. It was agreed that the management authorities would be best placed to lead, potentially with an industry lead as well. It was decided to re-visit this at the Jan/Feb meeting.

Action updates, Principle 2, Action 3

There is a need to review alternative management measures to minimise UoA-related mortality of all non-target primary and secondary species caught by this fishery. This is not necessarily to say that more measures should be put in place, but we need to show that it has been looked into and anything that can be shown to reduce mortality of unwanted catch, has been implemented.

Gus was not able to attend the meeting but gave CN an update before that he is on track to complete the year 1 milestone. He will then send it round the IFCAs for their assistance in inputting their regional knowledge.

*Minutes-action 5: TH to send Gus the GGGI best practice to build in to the review.*

Action updates, Principle 2, Action 4

This action is to quantify the information that is available on secondary species caught by the fisheries. It was agreed to change the year 1 milestone to get rid of the reference to Seascope. TH clarified that instead of a risk assessment, this could be better described as an analysis but the conclusions about the available information should be linked to risk. For example, do we have enough information to assess the risk of capture of a certain species.

Beshlie from South Devon and Channel Shellfishermen was unable to attend the meeting but had explained to CN before that she has taken on the treasury role at SD&CS as well, and is requesting assistance on delivering this milestone. SC is working on this action with Beshlie and agree to be joint action lead.

SC showed the work she has done on this so far which included some slides of the kind of data that is available from the PhD project in the Inshore Potting Agreement area. This PhD project gathered a lot of data on board fishing vessels including catch composition data. SC is going to do the literature and data review of all relevant research that has collected his kind of data, and write it up in a document, with additional resource assistance from other IFCAs.

CB explained about the data collection he has been carrying out with his students, and the plan for data collection on board the Rowse’s fishing vessels next year. CB only has undergraduate students so is limited to the outputs of the analysis, but the students are able to collect data and do basic analyses.

Mike Kaisers paper on the catch composition of the Isle of Man crab fishery was highlighted. In this research they have gathered a lot of catch composition data as well. There was an idea that we could compare this data set and the IPA data set and use that to infer whether there are significant differences in bycatch in different areas, if so, more data collection may be required to fill in the gaps. However, if the catch compositions are similar we could extrapolate that across the Channel and the Celtic sea, the catches do not vary significantly. This was thought to be a good project for a Masters student. SC has links to Plymouth university and often gives them masters projects.

Permissions to use the data would have to be sought.

CN explain about the MSCs work with Masters students via the Science Scholarship Fund, which could be explored.

*Minutes-action 6*: *CN to explore possibility of MSC involvement in the Masters student via the Science Scholarship Fund.*

*Minutes-action 7: CN and SC to progress the masters project proposal to send to Plymouth*

*Minutes-action 8: SC to seek permission to use the IPA and IoM catch composition data*

Action updates, Principle 2, Action 5

The ETP assessment is included in the Cefas contract that was funded by EMFF, and is going ahead. The contract has been signed and draft conclusions should be ready by the time of the Jan/Feb meeting.

It was agreed to combine the milestones for years 2 and 3 because it is more realistic to give more flexibility in the time to do the milestones.

Action updates, Principle 3, Action 6

This action is to have wider discussion and agreement of management needs and objectives with trans-boundary management authorities e.g. across UK inshore and offshore areas, and with French and Irish Management Authorities. And to formalise this harmonising discussion in the group ToR.

The group sought clarification about whether we go through a specific set of questions/tasks at each meeting so show we are making steps? TH said that this was not necessary, we just need to ensure there are regular discussions with other Management Authorities and where there are common issues they are starting to be addressed. It was agreed that we will discuss this with other Management Authorities at every meeting, as appropriate.

CN updated that she is in contact with her French MSC colleague about PUKFI. The French are thinking about doing a pre-assessment.

The IFCAs have transboundary discussion and get together 3 times a year at their Technical Advisory Group.

Introduction to Irish crab FIP projects

Frank Flemming joined the meeting via phone. He is running the Irish crab FIP. He explained the main aims of their FIP is to create a management plan, and to address the issue with white (soft) crabs. We stated that the Irish are happy to collaborate and share what they are doing, as we have shared aims and a shared fishery.

AOB & date of next meeting

CN explained about the purpose of the Jan/Feb meeting is to gather the information on how we have address the year 1 milestones, in order for TH to write the annual progress review. We must therefore ensure that the year 1 milestones are met by the Jan/Feb meeting.

CN will send a poll out for the date of the next meeting.

Summary of minutes action from this meeting

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Number | Lead | Action | Status |
| 1 | RM | get the official quote from Cefas for the Principle 1 Harvest Control Rule modelling work. |  |
| 2 | CN | write tender and get quotes from other consultancies, then look into funding. | Complete |
| 3 | AG | seek verification from the relevant people within Lyons, as to whether they could receive and administer the funding on behalf of the Steering Group. | Complete |
| 4 | BB | consider consultations and this project, and provide some information to the group about how best to proceed. | Complete |
| 5 | TH | send Gus a GGI best practice to build in to the review. | Complete |
| 6 | CN | explore possibility of MSC involvement in the Masters student | Complete |
| 7 | CN & SC | progress the masters project proposal to send to Plymouth | Complete |
| 8 | SC | to seek permission to use the IPA and IoM catch composition data | Complete |