# **Project UK Fisheries Improvements**

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

**(Facilitated by MSC)**

Tuesday 3rd July 2018, 13.30 – 16:00

Conference call

Welcome Introductions & Apologies

Attendees:

**AG:** Adam Green NESI

**BP:** Beshlie Poole South Devon and Channel Shellfish Association

BB: Bill Badger Defra

**CI:** Christie Ingle, observer Marine Pioneer

**CN**: Chloe North MSC

**CP:** Claire Pescod, Chair MSC

**CT**: Colin Trundle Cornwall IFCA

**DM**: David Markham Blue Seafood

**EB:** Ewan Bell Cefas

**GC**: Gus Caslake Seafish

**JH**: Juliette Hatchman Macduff

**LZ:** Laky Zervudachi Direct Seafoods

MJ: Martin Jowell MMO

**MV:** Mathew volla Plymouth University student

**NR**: Nathan de Rozarieux Falfish

**PB**: Pia Bateman

**RM:** Roz MacCintyre Cefas

**RH:** Rhiannon Holden MSC

**TH**: Tim Huntington Poseidon

**THo:** Tom Hooper Scilly Isles IFCA

**WH:** William Harvey W Harvey and Sons

Apologies:

Mark Webber OceanFish

Estelle Brennan Lyons

John Balls North Devon Fishermen's Association

CP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Christie Ingle to the group and described the Marine Pioneer project, which works with blue marine and aims to develop partnerships between fisheries managers and industry and create research management plans. CI talked about the herring project.

CN discussed the annual reviews with 6 actions in the FIP. Whereby this meeting will address actions which have come out of the minutes, and asked whether there were any clarifications on minutes? CP said that the minutes can be signed off, subject to issues/alterations which come up with actions, get them posted up on PUKFI website. CP eluded that the FIPs actions are all on target except from action 1.

TH gave an overview of FIP and review- saying that it is midway through Y2 of the 5 year FIP, the two species but slightly different areas. Broadly on track- review of BMT. Score the fishery as it goes through 5 years. What we thought scores would improve to, in 1 2 3 4. Matches all the way through P1. All on target however there wasn’t much change expected in year 1. TH emphasised that this second year is therefore a critical year. All the PIs are ranked therefore have a full pass. TH said that the FIP has started off quite high in BMT index compared to other FIPs such as Scallop/Monkfish. TH posed to the group whether there were any questions on the annual reviews or BMT results.

Action updates, Principle 1, Action 1

Action 1 is to Develop formal harvest strategy that includes adaptive management measures where appropriate.

TH described the pot/trap fishery as a mature fishery with management in place and moving management more to principle zone criteria. Management was said to vary from different locations which will be subject to action 2. How do managers want to control, input controls, vessels, come up with formal harvest strategies so that it is coherent between the IFCAs, the intention was to put out review of different management measures and inputted on, and then have position paper on where the FIP is. The Shetland fishery has been re-certified, how have fisheries outside this area managed their fisheries. TH said that there is the issue of funding, as the action was originally going to be carried out by cefas but due to conflict of interest this has not been conducted.

TH reflected on the progress and said that the group have been formed sub-group, whereby harvest strategy will need to take into account of Brexit, the group can still come up with a strategy before that and outcome. In the action plan it referred to more industry involvement which was clarified.

CN announced that the group was unsuccessful with first funding application. Therefore the SW panel pot by seafish was proposed that it might be able to cover the work involved therefore CN tendered and MEC came back with a couple of proposals, therefore the group selected MEC, to carry out research and see where the conflicts are and where the gaps are to fill them. However there have been difficulties in funding and the pot won’t cover all of it. CN proposed that the group could do EMFF application, and whether this is something that we are going to try and do- 6-8-10months, however we don’t want to put action on hold. Going to try and resource this internally. CN has set this up- IFCAS, DEFRA AND MMo. Take industry input through consultation with the group. Had first meeting and created ToR for this, aims to align with action plans and hit y2 milestones of action plan. Trying to get funding to cover consultancy work and developing harvest strategy and harvest control rules.

BB asked whether additional membership is required? An option for industry representation, initial meeting group, how far the group can get with? Current management, how much can be taken forward with resources, even if it is just identifying gaps. CN funding project, whether it can be done with committee and analyse the data- preparing groundwork to address what gaps there are? GC gave an overview on SW panel FIP is not a large pot, advisory committee want value for money, £8-9,000 for all FIPs in SW, available to match fund, cannot be 100% funded-.

CP asked for clarification on the FIPs in SW, GC said that this funding would cover PUKFI only, as long as advisory group agrees, it needs agreement from the committee itself. **ACTION:** In action plan it needs to be updated so that the leads are properly represented in management sub-group. CN clarified that Cefas and industry, now the paper is not going ahead with this, harvest strategy and harvest control rules the management sub-group will be the management lead. Bill and bleshie agreed that was okay. Industry representation at appropriate stage, CN flagged up in annual review that industry was needed.

JH asked whether there is a note on the sub-group, ToR has gone to sub-group, still in draft form, would be good to send this around sub-group of final ToR. Keep everyone aware of what’s going on,

CP asked the group about developing a proposal then consulting, flexible for industry in terms- what is possible? Everyone happy with how that sets up? BP agreed that it’s going well. With the anticipation to Produce proposals for harvest strategies by end of March, therefore they will be consulting. Behind on action 1 and get back on y2 and try and do research. CP asked group who this industry representative would be? BP stated that it will depend on outputs and documents who would want to be consulted. Action once proposal is more developed look to who will be used to consult. BB look to getting industry involved from the beginning, are all different sectors being considered? Look to get recommendation from the group/ sub-group in due course

Action updates, Principle 1, Action 2

TH gave overview of action related to developing a harvest strategy, stating that there must be an agreement on input controls or pot effort or mixture of different approaches, put in formal harvest control rules which are proactive and link to stock status. It was advised that if the stock drops to a certain state, then actions should be taken and agreed in advance, and put into a fisheries management plan if there is a need to input the actions. Awaiting development of coherent harvest strategy this may need to moved to year 3.

CN described that Y2 and y3 will be moved together, TH linked the proposals and consultations, and to leave a year to implement them and gauge how they have worked. Can’t develop harvest strategy and control rules as this requires a harmonisation between the different IFCAS. The steering group will check the harvest control rules in y2 as review. TH said having a matrix of different management of IFCAS, 2 certificated fisheries, western water regimes could be include this in the review.

EB said that once these harvest strategies have been implemented and are up-and-running, the need for different IFCAS to harmonise measures could take a long time as this needs to be run past different committees and so on. CN stated that this is part of the year 4/5 milestones embedded in management processes, year 2 – 2.5. EB described that as part of developing these rules and put through the committees, it will require a lot of collaboration ‘It’s going to be tight’, process will easily take two years.

TH asked the group how much could be achieved offline by virtual meetings, stating that one tool might be after the review has been done by the 31st March 2019 reviewed measures how much alignment is needed, then a one/two-day workshop could be set-up so that all IFCAs can be represented. How much harmonisation is necessary? If some time is spent on harvest control rules, why some ifcas use different fishery/pots? At least this can be done together. EB agreed.

CP said a management sub-group will be written into plan, overall aim and workshop could be made as an action to work on having that set-up. CN confirmed that. TH conveyed that once the strategy is available in a proposal, it needs to be well organised, position papers in place and objectives defined.

CP eluded to the fact CN will be in position 3-4 months and support role in agenda. Drafted out before CN leaves. CN clarified that the action y2/y3 milestones have been merged, and moved to y1. CN said that she might able to possibly do that and change the milestone on fisheries progress to manage expectations and properly reflecting when that is likely to be taken account of.

Action updates, Principle 1, Action 3

TH described the action summarising that this will be looking at minimising mortality of non-target, look at what bycatch has been taken by the fishery, less commercially available catch. Gus has done the review, make more area specific in terms of the UoA. Discuss with the industry and how it might be integrated into fisheries management. Formal management systems.

CN spoke that GC did a review of alternative measures, and that the group will hear about recommendations and how to implement them. One of the actions, was to look at area specifically, to include ghost gear, add retrieval and management measures into management review. Furthermore, if there are recommendations how we mainstream these?

GC outlined the study stating that it took into account primary and secondary species, gear measures, marketing spider crab, protocol behind lost gear. Looking at pre-assessment results there were three primary and 12-13 secondary species all below the half a percent of catch, apart from lobster which is a target and whelk greater than 1%.

GC continued that for Lobster, cod, bass, - a lot of work being done, introduction in licenses, minimum landing sizes and level of catches low of the primary. No main secondary species have been identified. Less than half a percent. Low level. Classification as minor species, whelk, pollock, mixed ray below half a percent score sg80 below. GC looked at options from gear measures: applicable to the secondary level- escape gaps used in some IFCAS, positive: improve in extent of usage EMFF funding which was made available seen as more selective, utilised funding and moving away from pots with escape gaps and with, outside mandatory measures.

Mesh sizes, unwanted fin-fish, wrasse, retain crustaceans, options for setting pot design and entrance either inkwell or parlour will change the species which enter, restrict entrance through those type of methods, get rid of skates and rays- steel base that has flaps rather than plastic solid base, can escape as the pot is being hauled. From a management point of view, pot limitations and tagging. Levels of activity, seasonal closures and seasonal reporting of bycatch, high levels of interaction catches at very low levels. In terms of recording, if you have shellfish entitlement to fill out monthly shellfish return, scope in column 8, monitor potential bycatch. MMO have stated that berried lobster could be extended to inclusion.

GC said that from an IFCA point of view, bylaw, shellfish permit, options to investigate pot box or bycatch box. Retrieval of lost gear, most fisherman in SW will have access to a creek, end markers, weather interactions with other vessels. Vested interest in getting gear back as it is expensive £50+ up plus ropes, bring pots back, ghost fishing a big element. EMFF funding gave fisherman an opportunity to exchange new pots for old with more access to funding and pots to be scrapped sustainably.

**Action for GC to circulate review.** TH confirmed that if bycatch is at a low level, nature of the fishery need to address review of alternative measures, what is done now with the work and recommendations? Concluded that if the Bycatch levels so low what other secondary/minor species might be involved. Recommendations need to be formalised in report and considered by all relevant management groups, and for POs and formally say yes, escape gaps should be made mandatory. Recommendations should be formally considered, adopt those or not, documented, outputs to the report. Or not practical? Y2 requires formalisation so that this is reviewed by relevant management authorities or bodies. Stage for implementation more work on the recommendations.

GC stated that it might be worth looking at how effective are escape gaps? Research about whether these are successful… any scientific papers- other technical measures very little. Gear technology work, levels of capture rather than escape. Therefore, recommendations would warrant further work. MV said that his work has a direct comparison, gathering data on closed and escape gaps and shellfish returns.

GC said the Cornwall IFCA is using an app and editing elements to app, rather than jotting it on paper and could include that in report.

NdR asked that in terms of the effectiveness on escape gaps, from an MSc at bangor, were effective on lobster, but had no effect on crabs. TH said the levels of bycatch needs to be addressed, significant level? Pots at low level? Overengineering? For condition to be caused anyway?

TH addressed that the only element of focus here is a need to manage bycatch species in the review of alternative measures. CN asked why has some of the fishery got mandatory conditions but the other half has none. Severn Devon IFCA have mandatory for a scientific reason, surely this could be applied across the whole of the fishery. GC could put this in the report..

CP said if there is a big increase in escape gaps and use of them, basis of why it is mandatory in Devon and Severn, formal recommendations, all is being done, use of them>? Key thing circulate report with formal report to put around the group whether anything additional needs to be done.

NdR said to bear in mind, if escape gaps do become mandatory they are not funded by EMFF therefore it may not encourage shift as fishers won’t be able to access funding, rather than encouraging ifcas code of conduct, that vessels within must have them to be part of the FIP client group for certification. CP clarified that this must not necessarily be mandatory and eligible to funding. GC effective to let juvenile lobsters go, either or fisheries, orientated around crab capture and lobster is a bycatch, less than 10% by weight. Implementing across the board, how would it benefit fishery going forward. GC to investigate.

TH discussed the crab and lobster fishery targeting. If you did bring in escape gaps in? Briefly for y2 include area specificity, ifca by ifca, approach on allow escape gaps, technical measures and see from one table. Speak to the IFCAS.

EB mentioned a link to paper 1982- Clive brown from Cefas did a lot of work on escape gaps, does go on to talk about efficiency about letting crab and lobster through, not exclusively. Uptake recent, putting escape gaps lower clearing time for pots? Benefit to letting juvenile animals out aids them in catch processing as well. NdR said that 80% of fisherman would buy 1 pit get 4 free, main incentive is financial… therefore it is essential to keep this funding in place.

CN discussed a case study of the Shetland fishery- compare- mandatory escape gaps in crab and portion which goes out velvet crabs, BP stated that this is only mandatory in pots with soft eye, make their way out, area specific due to the rationale of why each area might use them. They tend to use soft eye to target lobster, crab mesh bigger and climb out. Individual preference, tides, currents, ground? Benefit for lobster fishery on escape gaps. CP IFCA by ifca,

EB **stock assessment sheets**, byelaws in place, comment in place, new odds- only for certain types of pots. **Action for EB to send link GC, when new ones are released**. Y2 milestone not at stage yet, when we will be trialling alternative milestones. Relevant stakeholders, next step? TH push mainstream element, GC final report, what we would do with it, review of alternative measures if practical and effective? Then they don’t need to be used. CP finalised that by the next meeting GC will have the review and matrix completed? GC agreed that yes that should be okay. **GC to present piece of work, potential for further alternative measures and how to mainstream results**. CN to ensure that recommendations are with the views of the steering group. **Action for GC to send draft to group midway so that people can feed in as discussed by email**. Move Y2 > Y3 milestones. Fisheries progress, properly reflected.

Action updates, Principle 2, Action 4

TH discussed that this is about secondary species, effort information availability, and ensuring this is made available to managers. TH’s slides gave overview of the primary data collected, quantifying that, the pot fishery and the level of bycatch discarded and whether there is a landed difference. This work has been undertaken by MV at Plymouth University.

MV described the nature of the research, looking at three studies, in the isle man and IPA south Devon and Lyme bay. The data is not given by biomass and will be conducting a data survey off the north coast. Based on numbers, fall over 5% spider crab as well, whole study, In some ways the individual numbers, population numbers rather than one large individual. Could be relevant, to link to biomass. Necora puber/ velvet smooth crab were found. Over the length of each study 6%, IPA - , lyme bay spider 34%

It was asked whether the Southern ifca take into consideration catch rates, TH said is there much variation within months some months? High or consistent? MV concluded that he hasn’t done breakdown yet, however it has been done by boat which is consistent across fleets, difference between areas of data, lobster data Lyme bay data escape gaps closed catch everything higher percentage of Necora Puber.

CN asked whether MV’s research could be tied in with GC’s report, whereby less than 0.5% of all species, was from the pre-assessment and only looked at landings not catches. What is the state of discards? MV said we have to assume as there is no data… there are studies which say that high percentage to go back, study review. TH most post discard can be assumed to be low, useful to include what’s been done on this. TH said to MV, whether there is classification of different pot designs, lyme bay/isle of man- parlour pots and the other ink wells and parlour pots. Use a combination on 1 boat. Can’t pull apart? TH asked whether sarah from southern ifca knows about-size dimension changes MV stated that we can’t claim whether there is a difference.

Chrissie Ingle injected that parlour pots mainly used in the North. GC reflected that different designs, hard eye varied design and there’s lots of difference between inkwell. MV conveyed his aims that he hopes to quantify all catches coming out of each pot, weight of bycatch, whereby MV asked whether the pre-assessment will have weight of catch- landings, bycatch worked out from MMO database. GC concluded that you wouldn’t get a lot of data in percentage of weight, numbers, Dataset? Percentage of catch. MV discussed the research, datasets and using project inshore outputs

**ACTION:** **TH get in touch with Crick for pre-assessment- source?** What you are measuring for other secondary species. MV expanded om the datasets he has, based view of bycatch on. TH said that the Pre-assessment doesn’t analyse data and gaps, GC also stated that you must be clear about data you are collecting. what data gaps- fishing gear, lack of total catch ..

CN introduced that Craig Baldwin will be collecting data in Cornwall, who is a final year student undertaking sampling pot design in terms of bycatch. The student will gain access to the TCC day boats recording catch and go on single 4- daytrip and another student is looking at public perception if relevant…? MV said this would good for the project overall. **CN to forward to details CB- MV use right protocol and ifca, and data collections, directly coordinate- that- take that as an action.**

CN drew back to the action plan and discussed available data, based on further data collection March 2019- if MV runs report past TH is enough? or further data collection on different data collection projects needed? **Action to add MV in action plan as lead with IFCA**. Remove BP and MK and remove south Devon and channel shell fisherman

Action updates, Principle 2, Action 5

TH gave summary of action on ETP risk assessment, P2.3 – looking at risk assessment, to understand what ETP species might be present and level of interaction to the gear and what mitigation measures could be implemented. Cefas produced report to analyse this, however in previous meeting it was discussed that there was a lack of spatial mapping on producing the report.

RM stepped up to presenting for Stuart (absent), review on impacts on ETP. In appendix 1 of CITES convention, only species known to occur in potting regions, Map which identified – over 12m vessels – GIS gaps in VMS south Devon inshore fisheries missing.

No entanglements for birds, Turtles- occasional entanglements, sightings of different species, green turtles, loggerheads, low in the rest of the world. Marine mammals- humpback whale entanglement emerging issue, different whales, no other interactions? Reported in fishing gear and set gear responsibility and contact B’ divers association.

BP clarified the issue that it was a new fisherman to the area not a pot fisherman, travelled in IPA, hit floating ropes, not freed, by divers, since then there has been an education programme. With a mitigation of a floating rope.

Shark, skates and rays- Minimal interaction, not interactions reported. Depends on behaviour. Habitat choices? Distribution overlaps with potting area. Seasonal and irregular. Bony fishes, giant goby small enough to enter pots- incidents where seahorses- may attach to pot mesh may detach themselves as they are hauled, survival is high if dealt with properly. Invertebrates- pink sea fan and sea pens, current levels of reporting enough flexibility to sustain minimal damage. RISK level and severity and mitigation included. Low for most species. Medium to negligible. Subjective based on reporting, interactions with habitats. Open to some interpretation.

Mitigation and recommendations:- see presentation for further information

* Entanglements
* Bycatch incidental – giant goby and seahorse, return them unharmed to maximise survival and biodegradable hatches. To allow larger species to escape.

RM said that it was drawing on studies than drawing on data, Stuart did with data, no datasets on this. Confirming that there are few reporting’s, that it hasn’t happened that often. TH responded that improving self-reporting and mitigation where necessary might be an option. Cornwall ifca, app and shellfish activity returns. CN was asked on case studies of self reporting? The example of the Shetland fishery was given whereby there is an extra box on their logbooks showing additional ETP interactions.

EB clarified that the comment section is very small- with a spread information about ETP and bycatch, in form, it would need to be allocated on a day by day basis. EB also laboured that it is hard to read handwriting and will not be practical solution to capturing data. RM said that apps generally have more potential which are user friendly at both ends. Could be inputted as box within app, however the offshore fleet has a different logbook reporting system.

GC said that this could be put on the remarks page, or minimal interaction, note that this could take the form of the single word. For ETP, not viable for bycatch, berried lobsters. Sea watch and MBA- to record ETP species, are organisations which people report to. Not mandatory, just another thing to fill in EB. Not sure what is required to pass criteria. Sardine MSC > record ETP species, all vessels dedicated boxes for birds, cetaceans and seals.

Log-books, provide the disclosure of opportunities to interact with whale or seal, turtle? BP turtle, MV not in bycatch surveys. CN said if there is a low risk, maybe scale the actions to the size of risk, some way of proving interactions and filling out zero, NGO? That would agree to be the receptor of this information and report it there. BP is hopeful, to report ETP to NGO.

CN asked about Industry rep- pass this information onto- like the seal example… Having a conversation, it would be good to start to think about a group which can represent all vessels, pass details to ETP person. Client group and champion of this sorts of things. BP said that sounds like a plan to have an industry sub-group, that covers all of the different fleets. Vessel group of rouses, **ask offline- who best to have on industry sub-group to have industry issues onboard. CN take action to set that up.**

CP fed back to Marine Scotland and SMRU, could be an equivalent in Shetland. Sensitive area for our fisheries, it would need to go through industry body to collate and make anonymous. Look at action lead, sub-group to take that forward. Industry sub-group to take action, BP could coordinate- as informed by cefas work commissioned. Most fisheries which enter the programme have a condition on ETP species. i.e. Gathering data

The steering group asked about Y2/ 3 further data collection as required, outcome of Cefas work, does it need to take this forward. Given the sensitive nature of ETP data. If and where is it needed? IFCA could be in there. And processors which own vessels. Poole harbour joint client and groups.

Action updates, Principle 3, Action 6

See TH’s presentation:

Transboundary: -inshore and offshore as well as country boundaries. Look at objectives require short and long term and regionalised management plan CN clarified. Offshore and inshore, managers. Needs and objectives, steps to do, discuss their management objectives. Present Irish FIP, management objective issue…. No international crab stock assessment?

EB asked about sharing any other information about other stock assessments? EB said he had no awareness of a stock assessment. French FIP may get in touch with about the science. NWWAC- happening this week. Brexit is included, transboundary management arrangements. CN concluded that having a management plan that encompasses how it is managed, looking at for all FIPs coming up with template for FIP.

Review and promote if necessary as a standing agenda item, shared stock management objectives, year 1- 2 milestone. Ticking with rest of work, start to consider more with other countries.? Principle 1 and 2 for focus. Frank Fleming fed in- update on fisheries specific objectives. And talk to Margot French colleague. Addressed through management group, and group for agreement and to member states fine for milestones.

Any comments on actions discussed so far?

**Cn was given an action to update- Cefas rules on data collections**

NWWAC project, fully documented fishery- NNFO- ask for update- meeting this week, successful whether if gets funding. More this week, send around. Add white crab mortality issue? Irish FIP consultancy work, more about issue. Soft crabs?? Mortality not captured in data, WH brought this up, no-one had issue. CP asked where he feels the issue might be and how this could feed into consultancy work? March 2019 in ACC, then be ejected? Irish fishery does have landings not captured? BP said they do not catch it here. Ask will to get more clarity. RM remarked that mortality is higher of discarded soft crab, unaware of any extra work.

The BMT scores were discussed giving a reminder that all actions are on track except the first one, used this to identify actions moving forward. Some Comms around annual reviews all FIPs are progressing well, talked about having statement and moving forward. Key improvements, have short paragraphs about social media and circulate link. And fisheries progress to send out tweets. Out to group, anything which will be useful? Press-release to go out, fishing news.

Next meeting date October/November, Rhiannon send doodle poll with meeting – in person Exeter- any final comments? CI- thanks for joining. Send a link to the website for project, pioneer project for more information.