**Project UK Fisheries Improvements Stage One: Crab and Lobster**

**(Facilitated by the MSC)**

Tuesday 30th April 2019 10:00 – 15:30

Jurys Inn, Exeter

Attendees

BP Beshlie Pool South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen Ltd

CS Chloe Smith Southern IFCA

GC Gus Caslake Seafish

TH Tim Huntingdon Poseidon

TR Theresa Redding Natural England

CP Claire Pescod MSC

JP Jo Pollett MSC

MB Matthew Bamping MSC

Dial In

HG Hubert Gieschen MMO

HH Helen Hunter DEFRA

FF Frank Fleming VeriFish

Apologies

Estelle Brennan Labeyrie Fine Foods

Chrissie Ingle Devon & Severn IFCA

Juliette Hatchman Macduff Shellfish

Rachel Irish MMO

## Welcome and Introductions (CP)

* Intros
* Last of Year 2 meetings- TH to run through Annual Review
* Flag up discussion of other issues that may be of interest to continue to engage industry
  + **GC**: Data collection
  + **TH**: Haddock post harvest issue 🡪 Fisheries Management Plan template, other things can be added
  + **BP**: poor quality being landed into port and being used; crab being used as whelk bait
* Separate out from specific FIP meeting but under the same meeting (sub-group meeting in conjunction)
* CP informed the group that she will be leaving MSC at the end of May

## Minutes and Action Points (JP)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Lead** | **Activity** | **Progress** |
| NA | Claire | Circulate June minutes for sign off | Done |
| NA | Gus | Action from last meeting still ongoing- MV to collaborate with GC to explore the direct comparison of the effectiveness of escape gaps, why in some IFCAs it is mandatory and benefits to fishery |  |
| Action 1 and 2 | Sarah | Collect IFCA data on management strategies and combine with MMO data | Updated Tim pre- meeting |
| Action 1 and 2 | Hubert | Send Sarah MMO data on all management measures in place (Sarah and Hubert to connect directly) | Hubert sent this |
| Action 1 and 2 | Sarah | Circulate findings in March for Tim to review, and present at next meeting | Done |
| Action 1 and 2 | Poseidon/Rod | Identify anything else that needs doing on this action prior to next meeting | Update at meeting |
| Action 1 and 2 | Bill B | Update on update DEFRA work and western waters regime at next meeting | Helen to update at meeting |
| Action 1 and 2 | Sarah | Update on SAGB at next meeting | NA |
| Action 1 and 2 | Poseidon/Rod | A1 change Y2 to Y3 to fit in with Brexit discussions for action 1&2, and update Action Plan to put Sarah Clark as lead. Update version and circulate to group. Add industry consultation to action plan. | Updated in Action Plan |
| Action 3 | Gus | Using TH's template add effectiveness matrix, special capacity and gear conflicts to alternative measure report and work with the industry on the group to complete | Done |
| Action 3 | Jo | Check Rachel Irish is on the steering group list | Done |
| Action 3 | Sarah | Look at Lyme Bay voluntary measures and send to Gus/Jo | Done |
| Action 3 | Gus | For next meeting review seafish database for effectiveness of different pots and see what is caught in each type (with / without escape gaps) and present the update | Done |
| Action 3 | Chloe | Find southern IFCA research on escape gaps and circulate to group | Done |
| Action 4 | Rosslyn | Look for historic CEFAS data on larger/offshore boat bycatch, and pull out percentages of species for next meeting | Done- will email |
| Action 4 | Sarah | Check vessel sizes used in Matt’s study | Done |
| Action 4 | Sarah | Get in touch with Mike at Holderness Fishing Group as they have their own research vessel and may have other data | Pending |
| Action 4 | Matt | Add caveats on data sources to presentation so it can be uploaded to the FIP website | Done |
| Action 5 | Jo | Check with MMO re: CEFAS report, per Beshlie’s feedback | Done |
| Action 5 | Jo | Circulate the CEFAS report to the group, collate feedback and ensure CEFAS have received | Already signed off |
| Action 6 | Jo | See if Frank Flemming can give an update on the Irish FIP at the next meeting, and ensure standing updates going forward, and Rod to get update from Frank when they speak soon | Pending |
| Action 6 | Gus | Arrange Jim Evans or Welsh PO to provide update on Pre-assessment progress in the Celtic sea through contact by GC | See Scallop S2 |

* Questions/comments on last meetings minutes?
  + Taken as signed off
* Additional minute run-through
  + Sarah – sent through IFCA man strategies work
  + Outreach meeting after annual review on progress of PUKFI
  + CEFAS feedback to be discussed as part of actions

## Update on the Annual Review process (TH)

* 5 years as of March 2017
* Now end of yr 2 🡪 annual review will include progress for up to end of yr2
* 1-page summary to be made
* Key table = Table 3 🡪 progress against milestones
  + To be updated by end of week
  + Changes summarized on BMT
  + Tracks where FIP plans to be Vs where it actually is
* Update to be done and then individuals chased up if needs be
* A short explanation to be included as to why some actions are behind target
* Conference call/webinar to feedback on review
  + Good opportunity for FIP to show what it is doing for funders etc.
  + Good way to wrap up yearly changes that have occurred

**Action: TH to create 1 page summary of year’s progress**

## Action 1 and 2 Harvest Strategy and HCR (Subgroup/TH)

* Discussions about management sub group
* Reminder – Harvest Strategy:
  + Stated approach to how to harvest a particular fishery
  + Needs to be definitive and explicit
  + Given multiple jurisdictions of fishery, there may need hierarchical strategy recognizing the various IFCAs and people involved in fish management
  + Ideal place to put in management strategy – formalized into half a page of text which can become more defined/structured as FIP goes on
* HCR is next step 🡪 how are harvest strategies being implemented
  + Linked to Scientific reference points based on biomass, CPUE etc. (MSC not prescriptive)
  + Must be agreed in advance
* IFCAS have different bylaws and how they’re adapted
  + Some alignment/agreement must be reached
* Other crab fishery went through FIP and failed on these issues
* Some work has been done 🡪 SC provided info on different management approaches between IFCAs
  + Good start
  + Comparative analysis was originally envisaged to be done by consultancy
  + Basis for HCRs but no trigger points etc.
    - What are Trigger points?
    - Example: Minimum Target Reference points 🡪 if biomass (or other indicator) falls below this minimum then they trigger a review of HCR and fishing rate is reduced accordingly
  + No full control rules currently in place but good start to see similarities/differences
  + May be justifiable differences but should be some overall agreement on management practice
  + Potential for harmonization should be worked out and how these existing laws may be used by FIP
  + A Management sub-group call did occur but it was a while ago 🡪 included DEFRA, MMO, IFCAs
* New sub group to be set up
* Natural England (TR) to lead on sub-group in order to gain consensus 🡪 Neutral chair
* Key constraint to FIP – best use of targeted time for Poseidon
* DEFRA still happy to be involved in sub-group – when they have more information to feed in, they will
* Management Sub-group: Defra, MMO, IFCAs (Sarah/Chloe), Beshlie, Natural England
* Timelines to be implemented – Friday deadline for chairing
* Once sub-group has been implemented, may move FIP up to 60-80 bracket for A1/2
* Some consideration on Harvest Strategy by next SGM in July/Aug
  + Sub-group meeting in May/June
* TR: is there a Harvest Strategy template?
  + Currently within Fishery Management Guidelines
  + Look at fish cert guidelines 2.0 🡪 Caveat that they are incredibly detailed
  + Capacity Building Training Manual - Gives guidelines as to what assessors are looking for as well as examples from other global fisheries - Look into training workshop 🡪 PUKFI workshop potential but need to look at funding potential
* Need to discuss about public consultation
  + Other members of the fishery that might need to be consulted
* Annual review presentation will be good opportunity to get in touch with members that may have fallen by wayside

**Action: Sub-group to be developed and first meeting to be help before next Steering Group meeting in July**

**Action: MSC to re-circulate Terms of Reference and Scoping Document developed for sub-group**

**Action: Find out what other crab fisheries have done re: HCR- Shetland?**

**Action: Aim to have HCR draft for next SG meeting and then take out for wider agreement**

Defra update from Alex

* Legislation in place to roll over Western Water Regime after Brexit
* Not originally much science basis but looking at ways forward on this
* Not the best management regime for static gears
* Science research currently ongoing:
  + - Cefas stock assessments
  + Crab/lobster population relatively stable but fished above MSY
    - Looking at ways to improve Stock Assessment criteria in terms of spatial structuring and local management levels across IFCAs
    - Technological trials
  + Lobster camera scheme – mounted cameras in pots
    - Real time indicator of entry/exit of animals in pots
    - No data yet

**Action: Defra to present results (if out) next meeting – need to get greenlight from Cefas**

* + Bluetooth caliper collection
    - Send real-time data back to Cefas linked to catch location for sex, size etc
    - TR: How long trails being run?
      * Caliper collection has been running longer than lobster camera
      * Lobster camera still in tank trials
      * Still in trail phase but more info to be got form Cefas
    - GC: how far down line are Defra looking at alternative measures for management?
      * Discussions ongoing
      * Anything introduced needs robust scientific backing
      * Work coming out of FIPs will feed in so working with industry is key
      * Still early stages and welcome input as to what alternatives should be prioritized
  + Any realistic timeframe? FIP is 2 years into 5-year plan
    - Data collection improvements to continue
    - Now over no-deal panic can now rethink alternatives and consider what data needs to be collected
    - No timeframe currently implemented
    - WW effort regime still in place while in EU and will roll over until changed
    - TH: re-enforces that national management system is moving and proceeding and FIP management strategy needs to be embedded into national framework.
    - Management sub-group must understand context and how strategy will embed with national rules/regs are fully coherent
    - All need to work together
    - Defra involved in this FIP, good for management group to have potential implementation on local and national scale
  + TH: management sub-group to come up with reference points based on science. Signs that fishery being overfished, was green in pre-assessment.
  + HCRs must be put in place and highlights their importance.
    - 1.1.1 might have to be re-visited at a later date

## Action 3 Primary and Secondary Management (Gus)

* Review alternative measures to reduce unwanted catch
* If others found then look at matrix of effectiveness, health/safety impacts, cost implications etc.
* Possible that no additional measures should be implemented but would need to show TH why decision is what it is
* Table of effects of gear modification
  + Restricted use of parlor pots might have negative effect on crew safety 🡪 if working inkwells then there might be a driver that bait will run out
  + Pot based design minimum impact on C&L but might help out for other species/habitats
  + Mesh size costs untenable for pots currently in service but not cost effective for current fleet in use
  + Pot size could be added in if needed
* TH: cost element of escape gaps – given fishery is now very valuable, is it not an affordable thing relatively speaking to implement?
  + If bycatch of velvets of financial importance, then escape hatches means a loss of income to fishers
  + Lobsters can also escape through escape gaps if too big
  + Looking at minimum landing size changes between IFCAs, you might lose lobsters that are over national minimum landing size but under Devon & Severn IFCA landing size
  + In Southern IFCA there are areas that fish at just above minimum landing size
  + Some have had to give up velvet crab as to get funding from EMFF escape gaps needed to be implemented
* BP: are double parlor pots being implemented?
  + Bigger pots more effective for lobsters
  + Inkwells better for crabs due to ease of access
  + In areas of dense crab there becomes a traffic jam with parlor pot trap door entrance
  + Different conditions/gear constructions across different districts mean that FIP may not be able to consider HCR completely the same way
* TR: are escape hatches made of plastic?
  + Wood escape hatches would be more effective
  + No ghost fishing with inkwell but there is with parlor
  + Wooden escape gaps would eventually biodegrade, and crab could escape – would happen over a number of years
  + Work in the US over biodegradable plastics
  + Netting itself if plastic based but looking at net recycling schemes etc. 🡪 need facilities
  + Voluntary schemes – Defra:
    - Marine plastics high up on agenda
    - Can feed back to specific Defra team
    - Currently just voluntary but more financial support would be ideal

**Action: Helen to send contact for biodegradable plastics in Defra**

* TH: GGGI best practice guidelines
  + Large amount of work on crab fisheries
  + MSC review of marine litter
* Difference between crab and lobster
  + HCRs may differ slightly, with different trigger points etc.
  + Big regional differences
  + Should be fine but needs to be documented
  + Ecosystem management approach should be broken down into regional areas within overall management system
    - Some changes could be made and harmonized as part of FIP
    - Review of Southern IFCA potting strategies to be undertaken
  + Various reviews should be captured within management plan and specifically written down
  + Long and short-term objectives need to be defined
    - These could reflect different regional priorities
* Does anything else need to be done?
  + Documentation of strategies on a sub-regional basis needs to be done and a cross check to see what else may be done
  + Address any gaps/inconsistencies
  + IFCAs (CS/SC) to follow up on this, adding to work carried out by SC

**Action: Lead Change from Seafish to IFCAs**

**Action: Gus to recirculate report**

## Action 4 Secondary Information (IFCA/Tim)

* Review of outcomes from Matt Voller’s report
* Report has now been completed and limitations been spoken about 🡪 data set not specifically collected for project
* Now need to work out whether report is a good representation of FIP
* Big data gap for larger vessels – focus on small inshore vessels
* Both secondary species that were found are both target species (both still below 5% threshold though)
* GC: project inshore suggested that lobster was the only species above 1%.
  + PI is specifically about information being available
  + Species are both data deficient so would use RBF during first full assessment
  + No analysis for spider crabs- usually a net rather than pot fishery
* TR: This data may be the only available data but not clear that it has been interpreted correctly
  + Caveats were asked to be added in that data was not collected for report
  + IFCA provided him with dataset
* Is there any other data available?
  + Cornwall IFCA have permitting bylaw that you must submit shellfish returns in terms of %
  + There is no bycatch as not retained species are returned alive 🡪 means that there is extremely high survival
  + No data on stock to be able to verify either way
  + Escape gaps were closed as part of data collection 🡪 with them open then this will lower significantly
* With escape gaps open, all secondary species added up to less than 10%
  + Backs up GC’s view that escape gaps are working
* May be wrong interpretations as to the data
  + Summary of good and bad points of report
  + SC will have raw data 🡪 ask her to provide this for interpretation

**Action: GC to follow up and create summary (positive/negative, landing data review, from MMO)- If agreed that discarded species are not an issue then landings data can be interpreted to give understanding of secondary level of catch.**

**Action: Gus to get Sam Davies’ data from Cornwall? Speak to Adam Reece about his data? Ask Sarah Clark for raw data used in report.**

* Crab & Lobster bottom of pile for science
  + Recommendation of standardization of data collection

## Action 5 ETP (BP)

* Update on ETP paper and feedback from MMO on Cefas report
* Brexit has meant that this has taken a back seat
* Report taken out to industry
* Talk through email at last meeting and taken to MMO- only one concern over a piece of legislation
* Also been sent to TR at Natural England for feedback
* A bit more work needed that might have been expecting to be in Cefas report regarding spatial footprint
* What is needed? Is spatial aspect needed?
* GC: low level interactions mean that spatial aspect is probably not necessary and not relevant
* TR: previously spoken about not enough data, if FIP is data poor what is the low interactions suggestion based on? Robust evidence should be provided
  + No 5% limit for ETP, any interaction should be considered
  + There are very few interactions (a few Whales and some Giant Goby) 🡪 whales are an emotive species
  + Some markings on whales suggest entanglements
  + FIP could gather NGO re-assurance that interactions are low
* GC: Defra Cetacean conservation group, sub-group to south west and channel
  + Possibility of west coast of Scotland
  + Areas where channeling of animals is an issue
  + Projects like lobster camera could give this re-assurance that monitoring is in place
  + TR: big emotive issue and needs to be evidence to show that it is not a big problem
  + BP: Should be something within the management strategy 🡪 centralized point of data collection of sightings
    - NGO had been discussed but fishermen would be less willing to put forward info
    - System could be reviewed by NGOs so that it can be proved to be working (South West Focus Group)
    - Will need industry discussion and support
    - Beshlie willing to do but wanting more support before fully committing
    - Would be good thing for FIP to be involved in
  + GC: if commitment could be gained from fishers that they will log interactions with Whale and Dolphin Trust then that might work?
  + BP – one interaction with a whale in her region but wasn’t part of the crab/lobster fishery
  + CP: new Scotland report finding more strandings with damage from gear interactions and need to be ready to defend position that interactions are not an issue
  + TH: probably no primary research needs to be done, published info about migratory routes should be put down on paper within fisheries management plan
    - Map of migratory routes and where fishery occurs and re-assurance that voluntary interaction scheme put in place
    - May be able to get SMRU observers out who can produce report on interactions 🡪 gives validity to claims

**Action: Beshlie to lead on this- fishermen inform her as central point, and have eNGOs endorse system (e.g. WWF or SW focus group) – by end of year a pilot system will be in place**

**Action: Beshlie to add mitigation measure to the report**

**Action: Find SNH ETP intersection report**

**Action: TR find migratory routes map vs where fishery is to add to report**

**Action: Beshlie draft short 2-page literature review and send to group for comment**

## Action 6 Fishery Specific Objectives (All)

* Management plan to be developed within the management sub-group
* Brexit still a problem so wait to see the impacts of Brexit and what happens

**Action: Tim to speak to Ollie Tully re: views on reference points**

## Update from Frank Fleming

Industry keen to progress its own agenda points

Different issues in industry don’t always align perfectly with standard

3 core areas:

Improved management

* Open access fishery in Ireland
* Too many people joining fishery
* FIP tasked with finding best technological solution
* Proposing to set up data hub that fishermen own
* Capture data through electronic means and then give different parts of data to relevant authorities
* That way industry retains ownership of data
* Pilot in progress
* Data can measure length of gear
* GC: how is engagement from industry?
* Industry crying out for engagement
* Biologically sensitive area off Ireland – set number of KWatt days
* Fishery closed after these days were reached
* 30 vessels in pilot group, 20 engaged and lots of pressure on the final 1/3
* In terms of fleet itself in terms of Electronic Monitoring, industry ownership of data is increasing keenness
* If industry accepts that more management has to occur there needs to be a way in which the industry retains most control
* UK being driven by managers, while in Ireland it is being driven by industry
* How are links with fish managers? Mandatory VMS etc.
  + Ongoing discussions but not always liked by industry
  + Getting across to industry that something will happen but if industry don’t engage it may not have control of the agenda
  + If managers are allowed to undertake this on their own they might come up with something that isn’t a good fit and may be more expensive than it could otherwise be
  + Being part of FIP may be an additional driver to market access
* TH: have you developed a formal Harvest Strategy/HCR?
  + Currently running pilots but nothing written down
  + As it evolves would be happy to share with this FIP
  + Some work being done in terms of HCRs, lot of concern over high price of BC meaning lots of market drivers are in play

Replacement bait for whelk

* 1st 2 trial baits did not work out
* 3rd now up to 67% catch rate in comparison to crab
* Going in the right direction
* Must work out attractants to put in synthetic baits
* Without large budget it has to be trial and error
* Group must now make decisions about what the next pathway is
* Industry is pleased with catch rate
* Steep learning curve and balancing factors that come into play
* Industry has huge interest in making this work
* Cutting down markets for lesser quality crab will have significant impacts
  + Hoping to eliminate value for lower market product
  + Even low value crab is increasing in value due to Chinese market
* TR: synthetic bait and Green Crab bait, what is in synthetic?
  + Different chemicals
  + Would have to ask group before sharing with this FIP – talk to group
  + Look at constituent components of what makes bait attractive then can replace these with synthetic substances
  + Hard to get away from brown crab fully but last trial used 5% unprocessed with the rest being synthetic
  + Key whelk beds found to be near mussel beds 🡪 looked at mussel industry, took some of blue mussel shell to create synthetic bait
  + Byproducts from processing factories and other parts of industry
* CP: Interesting to test food safety studies. Some processors are restrictive on ‘additives’ in products
  + Trialed all baits at sea
  + In middle of 4th trial
  + Trialed both in lab and in fishing conditions
  + One scientist been involved in synthetic bait in Alaska Snow Crab fishery
  + Could be major break-through for sustainability of crab
  + Bait must have no impact in food chain and not have any environmental impacts
  + ‘chemical’ possibly a strong word
  + If this can be raised to 80% success rate then from a sustainability point of view you may be able to push industry towards this
* GC: do whelkers use 2 different baits in fishery?
  + Crab and dogfish
  + Turns out that bait was being just put on its own rather than mixing it with dogfish
  + Crab attracts whelks into pot and dogfish retains it there
  + GC done some work on waste product bait for lobster – ‘Waste Debate Project’
    - Problem with break up and small fish
  + Whelk requires a lot of effort to get into pot so need to be encouraged more strongly than in fish fisheries
* Struggle with industry engagement in this FIP so good to see how Irish FIP is encouraging attendance/engagement
* TR: cost benefit analysis been undertaken?
  + Currently a little more expensive but not much
  + Not at commercialization phase, but must be affordable 🡪 thus looking at offcuts and byproducts
  + Has to be affordable at the end of the day

Chain of Custody for Brown Crab

* Developing accurate vessel lists and then undertaking CoC type project within processors to sign them up
* Most FIPs come down to moving fishery towards MSC standard but don’t spend much time on the supply chain
* Lots of time and effort in improving fishery but if you don’t reward industry in market place then it will be difficult to keep them on board
* How easy will it be to get processors CoC certified
* Not quite at full circle but is growing quickly

**Action: FF invited back to next meeting, either to attend in person or call in - Some cross over in vessels potentially and many common issues**

* TH: issue about bait not really been discussed, if volume of bait used in fishery >5% of landings then it needs to be considered as a landed species
* Bait usually mackerel, gurnard, fish frames/bones etc.

**Action: GC to work out approx. weight of individual species are under 5% - may have to commission something**

* If using Cod frames would that make a difference?
  + Not sure answer to this

**Action: MSC to check with Science and Standards re: cod frames for bait**

* Mackerel not a good bait – Gurnard is more popular
* Farmed salmon frames
* One of larger boats grossing £1mill with bait costs ~25% of that
* Issue with wrasse being used as bait for salmon farming

**Action: Add bait as agenda item for next meeting**

## Reminder on action & updates (Claire)

* *Fishery Progress*
  + To be updated by MB as soon as possible
  + Separate Seafish and MSC websites in the process of being updated/created
* *Comms- film and logo*
  + Film in development
  + Planning to launch at MSC awards in July
* *Annual review next steps*
  + TH to write up review and to get in touch with anyone he needs to in next week
  + Webinar to happen once it has done
* *Date of next meeting – Doodle Poll*
  + Roughly every 4-6 months – doodle poll to be sent out for July/August meeting