Note of Common Language Group (CLG) meeting held at Friends House, London. Monday 29 June 2015

For the CLG minutes and meeting presentations see: http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/discussion-forums/the-common-language-group

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Mike Kaiser welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Alex Olsen	Espersen
Alison Austin	Seafish Board
Ally Dingwall	Sainsburys
Alma Bonilla	Joseph Robertson Ltd
Alyx Elliott	World Animal Protection
Andrew Smith	Iceland Seafood Barraclough Ltd
Angus Garrett	Seafish
Aniol Esteban	New Economics Foundation
Arthur Neiland	IDDRA
Carl O'Brien	Cefas
Charlotte Bury	Tesco
Charlotte Kent	Asda
Chloe North	MSC
Chris Lamb	Seafish Board
Claire Pescod	MSC
Corinne Green	Catapult
Dale Rodmell	NFFO
David Parker	Youngs Seafoods
Edward Whittle	Whitby Seafoods
Emma McLaren	SFP
Ester Luiten	ASC
Gary Hooper	Tesco
Herman Wisse	GSSI
Heather Hamilton	ClientEarth
Hannah Norbury	MRAG
Huw Thomas	Morrisons
Jack Clarke	Sole Share
John Butler	Oscar Mayer Group
John Hooper	Marine & Fisheries Management Solutions
Jim Portus	SWFPO
Karen Green	Seafish (Minutes)
Kevin Williamson	Marine Management Organisation
Kristian Teleki	Global Ocean Commission
Laky Zervudachi	Direct Seafoods
Lee Cocker	Seafish

Lucy Blow	New England Seafood
Lynne Stephen	Joseph Robertson Ltd
Martin Jaffa	Callander McDowell
Max Goulden	MacAlister Elliott
Mel Groundsell	Seafish
Melanie Siggs	Environmental Defense Fund
Mike Brummitt	Regal Fish Supplies
Mike Kaiser	Bangor University (Chair)
Mike Mitchell	Youngs Seafoods
Mike Park	SWFPA, Seafish Board
Mike Short	FDF
Natasha Hill	Fishmongers Company
Ness Smith	Pew Charitable Trusts
Paul Leonard	MMO Appointee of the Sussex IFCA
Peter Andrews	BRC
Phil MacMullen	Seafish
Richard Stansfield	Flatfish
Richard Watson	Seafish
Roger Plant	Consultant
Sam Stone	MCS
Stefan Asmundsson	NEAFC
Steve Simpson	Exeter University
Stuart Smith	Co-op
Tom Pickerell	Seafish

Apologies

Allen Townsend	
Chris Leftwich	Fishmongers Company
David Dickens	Fishermen’s Mission
David Jarrad	SAGB
Emi Katoh	MRAG
Iain Pollard	SFP
Jess Sparks	Seafood Scotland
Jonathan Shepherd	Consultant, Seafish Board
Jon Harman	ASMI
Libby Woodhatch	Seafish
Mike Berthet	M&J Seafoods
Nicki Holmyard	Aquafeed Magazine
Nigel Edwards	Icelandic Seachill
Paul Williams	Seafish
Peter Stagg	Le Lien Ltd
Ross Jolliffe	Cefas
Sara Vandamme	University of Salford
Sarah Holmyard	Consultant
Sarah Johnson	ASMI/Lotus PR
Suzanne Clift	ASC
Toby Middleton	MSC
Tracy Cambridge	WWF
Walter Anzer	FRUCOM

2. Minutes from the last meeting held on 10 March 2015.
The final minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting and have been added to the CLG web page. Attendees were asked to take note of the meeting guidelines. In the following minutes Seafish will provide a link to the various presentations given at the meeting but not summarise the whole presentation. In the main we do not attribute the comments made at the meeting. Papers were sent round and tabled covering the activities of the other Seafish groups (Aquaculture, Discards, Ethics and Skates and Rays) and a list of forthcoming seafood events. A full list can be found on the Seafish website: http://www.seafish.org/about-seafish/news-and-events/events

Matters arising
Various links were sent round in the CLG meeting follow-up email and all the presentations were added to the website and the links circulated. There has been activity since the World Animal Protection Global Ghost Gear Initiative (Seachange) presentation at the last meeting and their report on the ghost gear problem in the UK. Seafish has been advising WAP on how to move forward with this to move it from a global to UK perspective. The first meeting of interested parties has been held and there is a second meeting planned for 10 September, after the World Seafood Congress. For further information contact Alyx Elliott.

TWO PART THEMED SESSION – STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

Part 1. Seafood supply and consumption in the UK

3. Food security in UK seafood: An initial review of developments, implications and practical responses from industry and Seafish. Angus Garrett, Seafish.
http://www.seafish.org/media/1407804/clg_june2015_seafish_foodsecurity.pdf
There was a broad consultation, asking what the seafood industry means by food security in seafood; what are the important longer term developments and what action can be taken? Overall the recommendations were for industry to determine the longer term pathway and invest in actions aligned with food security concerns; for Seafish to engage across industry, provide context to key groups, and review/identify opportunities, threats, aligned actions and gaps; and for UK Government to raise seafood concerns within overall strategic view of UK food security and to work with devolved administrations to ensure a tailored policy response.
Action: Full reports are available on request. E: Angus Garrett.

4. Declining UK fish consumption/ Overview on UK seafood market/shopper insight. Richard Watson, Seafish.
http://www.seafish.org/media/1407786/clg_june2015_seafish_consumption.pdf
There is no one definitive data source. In recent years seafood consumption peaked in 2007 but has generally declined since then, fish and shellfish is a relatively expensive choice and the UK consumer has traded out of frozen and ambient (seen as staple items) and purchased more chilled (seen as a special occasion purchase). Salmon consumption continues to increase, despite the price premium over white fish.
Action: Anyone wanting to be added to the database to receive monthly Market Insight updates should E: Richard Watson.

Discussion

- **Q.** There was reference to a decline from 2007 and yet there seems to be an upturn in 2013? Will this continue to decline? **Answer.** There was an increase in 2013, it is not a pure decline. Consumption did pick up briefly but it is predominantly a downward trend and could decline further.
- **Q.** UK consumers eating UK fish landings is part and parcel of UK food security – feeding the nation? Could this change? **Answer.** In some respects it could accelerate. If there are good exports markets which give a healthier return why would anyone change supply routes, but if domestic demand could be created to appeal to a high end audience then it could change.
- **Q.** Food security is an ongoing challenge. It is refreshing to see that the explored solution is not always to catch more fish. We need to be aware of the global and the UK position. Does this represent an opportunity to push the case for more fisheries management, and can we influence the debate on this at an international level? **Answer.** This is an important agenda and we should try to lead. We need opinion leaders and need to decide who is best placed to address this. It is still early days for the food security agenda.
- **Q.** Is the real change in seafood buying patterns solely based on economics? The weekly shop is not the same, continuous grazing is now the norm, and there is an increase in chilled purchases i.e. Saucy Fish has very successfully jumped on the bandwagon. How can we address this? **Answer.** The average shopper is using six different shopping channels. There is a decline in the weekly shop and a growth in top-up shopping. The consumer has never had so much choice. It is important that the industry gets the shopper channels, and their offering to these different channels, right.
- **Q.** Given the popularity of farmed species such as salmon, the issues of forage fish, feed fish, the price of fishmeal and the use of GM - won't this make the issue of food security worse? **Answer.** Aquaculture is just one approach to addressing food security issues. Fishmeal supply and research into alternative protein sources does continue, production is very efficient and conversion ratios have improved.
- **Comment.** Salmon is always the focus re fishmeal production but in fact a significant amount is used in pet food and pig and poultry production. Salmon do naturally eat fish and there is market resistance to vegetable-only salmon diets.
- **Q.** Have we looked at the power of TV? In the past there were four channels and only a small number of celebrity chefs. Have we looked at the viewing figures for the food channels? Have celebrity chefs over complicated fish cooking and menus? **Answer.** We have not directly correlated the value of celebrity chefs. They are powerful, but it is difficult to quantify. We are always seeking ambassadors.
- **Q.** The current advertising message about the benefits of frozen generally is gaining traction. Presumably there is less waste involved with frozen? **Answer.** For us the focus is on good quality fish, whether chilled or frozen. It is all about value for money which does mean cutting down on waste, and there can be less waste with frozen, it is convenient and easy to control portion size.
- **Q.** Why is there a decline in the consumption of tuna? **Answer.** There have been issues and concerns over contamination, sustainability, price and canning materials.

Action: Look at GM and its role in future feed production as a possible CLG topic.

Part 2. The outlook for fish stocks in the face of growing demand

5. Fisheries2050 project on the future of UK fisheries. Steve Simpson, Exeter University.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1407789/clg_june2015_fisheries2050.pdf
The various strands of research was summarised in this vision: "*In thirty-five years, changes within the UK fishing industry have made it a sustainable option for meeting protein demands. Healthy oceans have been achieved alongside improvements in the economic sustainability and wellbeing of fishing communities. Consumers trust the integrity and sustainability of UK seafood supply networks and aim to buy British products, pay fair prices for their products and embrace new species as they become available. These changes, from suppliers to consumers, have made the UK fishing industry more resilient to the changes that have come about as a result of climate change. As we face more environmental uncertainty beyond 2050, we are confident that UK fisheries will not only continue to contribute to the food supply, they will also retain many social, economic, health and cultural benefits.*"

6. The current picture – UK fish stocks and the global outlook. Carl O'Brien, Cefas.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1407792/clg_june2015_cefas_stockstatus.pdf
This presentation was the day before the (delayed) ICES advice for the Bay of Biscay, Celtic Sea and North Sea fish stocks was published. Re overall trends: prospects look good with continuing improvements in terms of sustainable fishing in the North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, the West of Scotland, Irish Sea and Celtic Sea. In the North East Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea fishing generally is progressing towards MSY in all areas since 2006. Between 2006 and 2014: the number of stocks fished at MSY increased from 2 to 26; stocks inside SBL have risen from 11 to 21 and stocks with quantitative catch advice have risen from 59 to 72.

7. NEF report saying UK worst in the EU for overfishing. Aniol Esteban, New Economics Foundation.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1407795/clg_june2015_nef_landingtheblame.pdf

<u>Discussion</u>

- **Comment.** It is wrong for the NEF report to focus on a country by country basis. The balance between nations is more important. **Answer.** We have to focus on what we know, and we know very little about what goes on in the negotiations but we are looking at this to see if we can build in the reasons.
- **Comment.** Seafish adds value by looking at reasons for any discrepancy between the scientific advice and the agreed TAC. There were cases where the ICES commentary would support an increase in TAC, for example, where discards were a particular issue. This NEF report got a lot of traction and it is irresponsible to grab headlines and present one-sided information. In a lot of instances the UK is a small part of a much bigger picture. **Answer.** The point is noted and we acknowledge aspects of this report can be improved and we could look for alternative values. The media want simple facts and picked up on the fact we were illustrating that two-thirds of the TACs were being set above scientific advice.
- **Comment.** The ICES approach is to issue advice, this then goes to the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) which in turn informs the December Council. Cod is a good example to illustrate the importance of reading the detail – there are nuances to the interpretation of the advice due to

considerations about discards, rather than simply stating the scientific advice is not being followed.

- **Comment.** We need to recognise the role of scientific advice. Last year ICES recognised their model for the Baltic was not right and started to give advice in a different way. Relative stability, rather than the Member States determines quota allocation, and this is not helping anyone.
- **Comment.** The Council of Ministers has a very important role to play and we need to avoid political posturing for short-term reasons. We have two big considerations at the moment – the transition to MSY and progressing to the implementation of the Landing Obligation, both of which are going to impact on TACs and quota setting. In the South West in particular and the South West fleet we could be looking at a massive cut in operating profit. In many ways the work that NEF is doing is sensible but they are not looking at the finer detail. We should all be focussing on how we transition to the Landing Obligation. **Answer.** The *Landing the Blame* report was more continuous and provocative, but we do feel the need to bring out those sorts of reports and shed light on topics and questions, such as, have we been successful in moving EU stocks towards MSY quickly enough. There is room for improvement. We do look at the finer detail in our other work, and are always very happy to receive information. **Comment.** If inadequate reporting is recognised I can understand the frustration of the people in this room that the necessary checks and balances have not taken place.
- **Comment.** I have concerns about statements that 'we are not getting to MSY fast enough'. In my view the targets were artificial, we are making the transition and we will get there. Statements such as these also miss the point that the reform of the CFP was not just about environmental sustainability but also about social justice and the economic viability.
- **Q.** New Zealand was cited as a country that claims that over 700 stocks are managed sustainably in its waters. They refer to fishery management units not stocks, and the New Zealand fishing industry takes a lead in management. Is the UK considering this? **Answer.** Defra has looked at Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) for the inshore fleet, but it is not on the horizon generally.
- **Comment.** Moving towards MSY is a very positive news story. Where this is happening it is not difficult to build optimism. There was consensus that we need to get more out of our valuable resources and achieving MSY will benefit all of us. The work of the Environmental Defense Fund was highlighted and the launch of their discard reduction tool.

CURRENT HOT TOPICS

8. The certification arena – what is happening - with an update on GSSI progress. Herman Wisse, GSSI.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1407798/clg_june2015_gssi.pdf

Herman described the role, remit and history of the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI), how it has evolved and the current position. The GSSI Global Benchmark Tool has been road tested from March to July 2015 to validate GSSI Requirements and Indicators, validate the Benchmark Process, and the time and cost, and to train independent experts and the Benchmark Committee. Certification schemes currently participating are: Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, Aquaculture Stewardship Council, Global Aquaculture Alliance, Iceland Responsible Fisheries Foundation, IndoGAP, Marine Stewardship Council, Thai National Shrimp Standard and VietGAP. The Global Benchmark Tool was described. The tool will be launched autumn 2015 and the first GSSI recognised scheme will be announced in 2016. This is a voluntary benchmark – schemes approach GSSI.

Discussion

- **Q.** Could this be used as a platform for other things? **Answer.** Supporters in Germany are very keen to see if private certification schemes could be relied on, and which ones they should use. There was also the desire to support the broader development of sustainable supply chains.
- **Q.** To what extend will GSSI be able to reflect any changes to the certification schemes and develop accordingly? Answer. We recognise there will be changes over time and will revisit every three years. There are also strong links to FAO and fish management programmes. FAO has been involved from the beginning and see this as an opportunity to reflect upon their own work.
- **Q.** Will you be publishing the results of the pilot audits? **Answer.** The pilot audits have been very extensive to allow us to work with the tool but the results will not be published. The process starts when we open for applications. We hope that those certification schemes that took part in the pilot will be very well prepared for the actual process.

9. Overview - the use of vessel tracking and traceability systems in the UK. Kevin Williamson, Marine Management Organisation.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1407801/clg_june2015_mmo_traceability.pdf

Kevin described the legal obligations to report fishing activity (on fishermen and on others); monitoring of activity remotely (Vessel Monitoring Systems and sightings data); new Initiatives (Fully Documented Fisheries, inshore VMS); and the release of processed information (combined VMS and activity data). According to Article 58 of Regulation 1224/2009 "Fishery products must be traceable at all stages of production, processing and distribution, from catch or harvest to retail sale."

Discussion

- **Q.** This is all very pertinent and necessary given the need to stop IUU fishing. Going forward could drones be considered as the way forward re monitoring? **Answer.** Cameras in the right place to ensure no blind spots will be rolled out to all key vessels and will count for significant coverage. However we have 17 vessels with cameras and 170 that don't have them, so with the implementation of the Landing Obligation, this could be the future of surveillance but there are limitations on the use of drones out at sea such as issues with the weather. We may need more observers on board.
- **Q.** What are the issues surrounding Remote Electronic Monitoring on a vessel? **Answer.** There is the cost of buying the camera and the cost of the system. The extension of the requirement for vessels over 12m in length (previously 15m) to complete an electronic logbook and landing declaration and operate systems on board has caused a lot of extra paperwork. It is the cost and the intrusion.
- **Q.** What is the industry vision? **Answer.** The vision is to be completely legal but this does not necessarily mean CCTV. Industry is already 95% of the way there. It is necessary to target the resource to where there is the most risk.
- **Q.** For high risk fisheries, is having a camera fitted also an incentive to fish legally? **Answer.** It could be but there are no plans to change the legislation to make it that way. CCTV is a means of validation.

- **Q.** A risk-based approach to enforcement is right. There are concerns about small scale non-commercial vessels not being detected. Does the MMO see this as a problem? Answer. We take any breach of legislation very seriously and this has been raised.

10. Seafish news. Phil MacMullen, Mel Groundsell and Karen Green, Seafish.
10.1 Strategic Investment Fund
http://www.seafish.org/industry-support/funding-and-awards/funding/strategic-investment-fund
Phil MacMullen spoke about the new Seafish Strategic Investment Fund, which runs in parallel with the Corporate Plan 2015/2018. The Plan is fixed and describes in detail our work programme over the next three years. SIF is a flexible part that allows us to fund additional, strategically important work that is consistent with the Plan's objectives. The first call was due to open on 1 July 2015 and run to 31 July 2015. The first call is for proposals that will provide solutions in the following topic areas: improving supply-chain efficiency and reducing waste; improving the uptake of currently underutilised species; and innovative solutions for maintaining the integrity of seafood products. Initially a three-page concept note is required.
10.2 Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme
Tom Pickerell spoke about progress re RFS. Now that the new RFS standards and the UK Compliance Support Guides (CSGs) are completed the primary focus is working with the first group of new applicants to take them through the new RFS Certification Process. Three pilot audits have been completed with 27 vessels in the pipeline from England, Scotland and Wales, with all sectors represented, with places still available for volunteers from NI. Their feedback will help us refine the key stages of the process and all supporting materials over the coming months. Seafish is learning about the audit process and talking to United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), and is also looking at the RFS Improver Programme and using RFS within Fishery Improvement Projects. Seafish is also recruiting an RFS Standards Manager.
10.3 Seafish Corporate Plan
http://progress.seafish.org/
Details were provided on the Seafish Corporate Plan.
10.4 New Basic Fishing Methods publication
http://www.seafish.org/media/publications/BMF_Screen_Version.pdf
The BFM contains illustrations and descriptions of commonly used fishing methods, gears and rigs. The document deals with UK fisheries, with reference to other fisheries throughout the world that supply wild-caught fish and shellfish into the UK markets. The publication also provides some basic knowledge of how fish are caught using a range of fishing methods.

11. Date of next meeting
The date for the next meeting is Wednesday 11 November 2015 at Friends House, London. The CLG Steering Group will meet to discuss the agenda for the next meeting. Any ideas for agenda items should be sent to k_green@seafish.co.uk