

**Common Language Group meeting
2 March 2011
Fishmongers Hall, London**

1. Welcome, apologies and introduction

Present	
Michel Kaiser, Chairman	Seafish Deputy Chairman / Bangor University
Andrew Nicholson	Co-Operative
Catherine Pazderka	BRC
Chris Leftwich	Billingsgate Seafood Training School
Dale Rodmell	NFFO
Doug Beveridge	Sustainable Fish Partnership
Hannah MacIntyre	Marks and Spencer (part meeting)
Ian Campbell	New Economics Foundation / Ocean 2012
Jess Sparks	Seafood Scotland
Jim Portus	SWFPO
Katarina Veem	Baltic 2020
Laky Zervudachi	Direct Seafoods
Mark Duffy	Natural England
Melanie Siggs	SeaWeb
Melissa Pritchard	Client Earth
Mike Brummitt	Regal Fish
Mike Mitchell	Youngs
Mike Short	FDF
Nigel Edwards	Seachill
Peter Duncan	MCS
Peter Stagg	Le Lien
Richard Parsons	Defra
Sally Bailey	WWF (part meeting)
Stephen Parry	Findus
Toby Middleton	MSC
Paul Williams	Seafish
Jon Harman	Seafish
Phil MacMullen	Seafish
Angus Garrett	Seafish
Pauline Cox	Seafish, minutes

Apologies	
Alex Olsen	Espersen Group
Ally Dingwall	Sainsburys
Andrew Mallison	MSC
Andy Matchett	Ocean Fish/Riddlers
Anne Chamberlain	IFFO
Bertie Armstrong	Scottish Fishermen’s Federation
Chris Brown	Asda
Huw Thomas	Cumbrian Seafoods
Jodie Johnston	Tesco Stores Ltd
Lucy Blow	New England Seafoods
Mike Berthet	M&J
Simon Rilatt	Trident Seafoods
Tom Rossiter	Cefas
Steve Elkins	New England Seafood
Sylvette Poplowski	Fish2Fork

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 20 OCTOBER 2010

The group approved the minutes of the last meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Channel 4 Fish Week

PW presented to the group an overview of the campaign and the initiatives that Seafish had been involved in. It was noted that Seafish had provided information and data to the production teams behind the campaign to ensure a balanced approach.

PW reported that a specific website (loveseafood.com) had been developed where blogs, from the Seafish executive and PMac, were posted in advance of the programmes being aired, e-alerts had been distributed and press releases issued. A daily industry conference call was established where the broadcast from the previous night was discussed and joint approaches agreed. PW commented that the Twitter feed had not proved as successfully as original anticipated.

The group discussed the campaign in general and it was noted that the main outcome from the campaign was based around the discards debate.

The group noted that the Discard Action Group which Mike Park was now chairing was still very actively involved in many of the issues raised in some of the programmes. The group noted that two follow up programmes were scheduled for June/July 2011. JP explained that he had assisted Keo films with information relating to the follow up broadcasts. The group were keen to ensure the industry secures as much input into these broadcasts as possible.

There was concern raised that driving consumers from the main species and onto under-utilised species could result in the depletion of data deficient stocks. RP commented that information on data deficient fisheries would be published shortly. PS raised concern that the industry is now (possibly) being pushed to use under utilised species and these fisheries will be unable to supply the demand, ultimately causing reputational damage to the industry.

MP commented that although the aim of Fish Fight was to divert demand onto lesser known species, consumption of the 'mainstream' species in the UK had actually increased, and that this would be an interesting point to investigate further.

The group felt strongly that the Discard Action Group needed to educate the Fish Fight campaign team on the implications of pushing for a discard ban. NE commented that the aim should be to reduce/use all unwanted catch although he noted that not all species discarded could be put into the market and that you possibly don't need a market for all discards; controlling the problem and getting the sustainable message across the UK was key.

MB commented that the impact of the Fish Fight campaign had varied amongst his customers. The impact was limited and not as MB had first expected it would be; consumers were either aware, not aware or not bothered with the issues the campaign addressed; consumers were not prepared to pay a premium for some species and whilst alternative species were being encouraged the consumer needed to be educated correctly.

MS commented that there was an opportunity for Seafish to assist the industry by gathering information about the market change, understanding and influencing change, educating the consumer and having an impact on the long term food security debate.

PMac commented that the Common Marketing Order does offer some solutions to the market disconnect between supply and demand with PS commenting that the discard problem should be addressed via the CFP reform.

Action

- Input to Keo’s production of H F-W’s next programmes
- Capture market changes post FishFight, project possible long term impacts and work back to influence supply

(ii) Data poor fisheries: progress update

PMac explained that Bill Lart and John Cotter had now finalised an ecological risk assessment which was loosely based on the Australian model and compliant with the FAO Code of Conduct. Globally 10% of fish stocks are assessed in this manner which, for the UK, would help develop broader and stronger market links and links into the CFP reform.

Piloting of this new scheme will be done on the crab and lobster fisheries and will be co-ordinated with other bodies. DB confirmed that he intended to use this model. FAO guidelines on data poor fisheries are being produced and MD advised that a discussion with Defra on this development would be useful as there are also parallels with work they are undertaking.

A target list for data deficient species is being produced and the scheme will be piloted on some static gear fisheries. with Training on how to run the risk assessments would also be developed.

Action

- Take ‘data poor’ work forward by:
 - Finalising report
 - Confirming pilot species
 - Dialogue with SFP & FAO
 - Plan roll-out as industry service

(iii) MCS opinion surveys – update

PD explained that the initial results from the survey were received only a few days ago and his intention was to prepare and circulate an executive summary with the relevant information. It was noted that the constitution of the

participants surveyed were: nine from the processing, packaging and distribution sector; seven from the retailers and seven in support of the seafood industry.

The purpose of the survey was to understand the MCS interaction with industry and gather views and suggestions of the Fish Online service.

Key points emerging from the survey were reported as:

- MCS are stretched on resources
- Industry don't use MCS as a single resource
- MCS resources are complementary to other sources
- Accuracy and timing of rating of Fish Online need to be refined
- Would be useful to have an industry / consumer split on Fish Online
- Improvements needed to the supermarket survey
- Better search functionality

It was noted that the industry review group would be assessing the new listings and the Terms of Reference for this group would be circulated.

The Chairman commented that MCS may wish to circulate the survey results to the group to measure their views of the survey results. PD confirmed that he would prepare a report for their review and thoughts.

MD commented that data deficient species information should also be included in the survey.

Action

- Publish market survey interpretation, invite comments, circulate new advice list, formalise Review Group arrangements, draft ToRs

(iv) Fish Welfare

PMac explained to the group that three Seafish staff were investigating the legal and biological aspects of fish welfare and a holding statement was being prepared that both Seafish and the industry could use.

It was noted that the NGO driving this topic was outside of the mainstream conservation groups.

It was acknowledged that a watching brief on this topic should continue and that the statement should address and acknowledge the good points of fish welfare that we are aware of.

Action

- Capture fisheries welfare issues: continue research, draft holding statement, maintain watching brief

(v) Seafood Summit 2011 report back

MS briefed the group on the 9th seafood summit which was held in Vancouver. There were roughly 700 attendees from 31 countries ranging from industry, NGOs, science, media and academics. In addition to the main programme an oyster field trip had been organised along with breakout workshops for delegates.

Following the summit the agenda and presentations were posted online and accessed via <http://www.seafoodchoices.org/seafoodsummit/Agenda2011.php>

Whilst the group were encouraged to review the whole agenda and presentations, two sessions were highly recommended. These were the closing address from HRH the Prince of Wales and the video from Dr Ray Hilborn. This can be viewed via the link http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjiZA4pDiPg&feature=youtube_gdata_player

It was noted that the date of the next summit had been set for September 2012 and the venue for this would be Hong Kong. MS explained that the time line for the 2012 event was slightly longer at around 18 months although this would allow SeaWeb the opportunity to evaluate the 2011 summit ensuring value / benefit for money at the next summit, secure funding, in an increasing financially tight market, and time to plan a busy and interesting programme.

Members of the CLG who attended the summit commented on their experience and the benefits that they got from attending. NE commented on an interesting presentation given by Jennifer Jacquet covering the economics of the biology of the seas.

4. DEFRA'S FORWARD POLICY, FORESIGHT REPORT ON FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

AG reminded the group that they believed sustainable consumption and production of seafood was a worthwhile endeavour and briefed them on how this would work in practice.

AG explained that the pressures on the global food system were to:

1. Balance future demand and supply sustainably
2. Address the threat of future volatility in the food system
3. End hunger
4. Contribute to a low emissions world
5. Maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services

The group noted that work in this area was progressing although it now required a steering group to lead a more strategic approach to these challenges.

RP explained that the foresight report focused on the full global picture of fisheries and the role that aquaculture will play in food security as demand is increasing strongly. It was noted that a Westminster health forum is scheduled for 31 March to discuss/debate this topic in more detail.

It was suggested that the group may be interested in having a detailed discussion on the Foresight report and its findings at a later meeting.

Action

- Foresight food security issues: canvass opinion & set up special meeting

5. AQUACULTURE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

This presentation was deferred to a later meeting.

6. CO2 IN SEAFOOD PRODUCTION

AG informed the group that the meeting of the next CO2 steering group was scheduled for 30 March. This issue provides an opportunity for the industry to be active and demonstrate initiative and to focus on key supply routes (seafood systems).

Data presented to the group from a range of sources show seafood as having very little CO2 emissions however with the British Standard PAS2050 review underway Seafish believes that this lack of clarity in relation to seafood would present the industry with an

opportunity to drive towards a common approach/method. The group agreed to proceed with this.

The group discussed the impact of seafood emissions with some individuals explaining the work their company has undertaken on understanding the emissions, the impact they have and how to work towards a carbon neutral product.

Action

- Clarify issues via case studies and input into the BSI LCA standard review

7. COMMON FISHERIES POLICY REFORM ~ A PROPOSED UK SEAFOOD INDUSTRY POSITION

PMac presented his draft CFP reform proposals to the group. He explained that there was a greater role for the whole industry to be part of its governance with fishermen assisting in data collection. Good governance would require much greater stakeholders involvement, and incentives for those individuals prepared to contribute. KV commented that the Baltic 2020 group had commissioned and prepared a report on best practices within fisheries management that the group might find of interest.

MD was keen to see that the paper produced the most maximum value possible and was keen to understand how the paper would be used and whether it would target consumers and relations outside of the UK.

RP commented that WWF/ACIPE had recently held a good interactive session on the CFP although did commented that he felt the proposals and thoughts being presented were already available and that the group may have missed the boat in terms of submitting this paper.

SP echoed the comments from RP and whilst encouraged the paper presented he did have concern with the timescale and agreed that the proposals should have been submitted sooner. SP was keen to see the proposals having an impact and recommended that three or four key points should be raised in the proposals that would focus the mind of the reader, for example, the discard debate. MD commented that he was keen to see the proposals adding value and questioned what levers could be pressed to develop this.

JP was concerned that although the proposal was good the paper did not highlight anything new. Regionalisation was noted as playing an important part in the reform although this did not mean re-nationalisation. A regionalisation framework would offer the opportunity to have flexibility in managing the fishery.

MS felt that the discard debate would be so wide ranging that the group should not allow themselves to be excluded from this discussion. A gap analysis would be an appropriate means of identifying major issues.

NE commented that the Discard Action Group (DAG) has responsibility for the discard debate and that this group should not get involved in this topic. MP commented that the DAG strategy is now in place and will be ready for issue shortly and that the proposals presented by PMac complement their stance. JP commented that improving the mortality of discarded species is also an important area.

Action

- Take forward work as per discussion and dialogue with Defra

8. SUB GROUP CATCH UP

(i) Discard Action Group (DAG)

The group were informed that Mike Park had now taken over responsibility as Chairman of the DAG. Mike Park had established four working groups to tackle the discard problem and these would focus on regulation, selectivity, science and marketing. The next meeting, scheduled for April, would take a workshop based approach.

In summary it was noted that the discard solution was not any clearer and would need an ambitious reform of the CFP to eradicate the problem.

It was noted that although there was an assumption that discards are mainly a result of quota restrictions, this only applies to roughly 30% with the remaining 70% due to market forces.

(ii) Aquaculture Common Interest Group (ACIG)

PW briefed the group on the composition of the ACIG, the group also noted the brief update note which was circulated.

Key points PW highlighted to the group were:

- Regular e-alerts
- Quarterly fish news feed via Seafish website
- Comprehensive aquaculture questions and answers factsheet

- Responsible Sourcing Guides being prepared covering Atlantic Salmon, Warm Water Prawns, Pangasius and Tilapia.
- A guidance document on the classification of shellfish waters, aimed at retailers and food service buyers in the supply chain to help them understand the classification criteria, has been produced and signed off by Seafish, SAGB and CEFAS. It is presently being reviewed by the FSA.
- A fact sheet on Norovirus is being produced as a tool for industry.
- The English Aquaculture Strategy is progressing with links to Welsh, Scottish and NI strategies.

JP highlighted to the group that Stirling University aquaculture funding was being reviewed and possibly withdrawn. The group were keen to ensure that funding for the aquaculture sector is spent properly and retained in important areas. It was suggested we should write to Professor John Beddington expressing concern that expertise in aquaculture science in the UK was declining and that this was likely to be exacerbated by the potential closure of Stirling Institute of Aquaculture.

Action

- Write to Professor John Beddington.

(iii) Scallop Group

JH explained to the group that the recent Scallop Group meeting had been postponed to June although progress continued to be made. JP commented that he was disappointed with Defra's recent non formal consultation on scallop fishing.

(iv) NE Scotland Supply Group

This item was not discussed and the update deferred to a later meeting.

(v) Fish Content CoP

The group were informed that the fish content CoP was being readdressed.

9. FISHING FOR THE MARKET

RP explained that a two page summary would be circulated with work having commenced in December 2010. Information on under utilised stocks, the fish eating and purchasing habits of the consumer, fish markets in England (and how they work) would all be included. Cefas are completing their work on the scientific data with Andy Revill and his team progressing with the remaining analysis and research.

Action

- Summary paper to be circulated.

10. BALTIC 2020

KV presented Baltic Sea 2020 to the group, a Stockholm based private charitable foundation. The group noted that the assets of the foundation are to finance projects that are creative, innovative and improve the knowledge and status of the Baltic Sea. Relevant work could be undertaken elsewhere however the foundation was interested to work and collaborate with other establishments and individuals whose ethos aligned closely to what they were working towards.

Further information on the work of Baltic 2020 can be found via <http://www.balticsea2020.org/>

Action

- Establish common ground by dialogue and seek co-operative work plans

11. AOB

(i) New web links to Seafish web pages, issue guides and RSGs

The paper circulating new links to Seafish web pages, issues guides and Responsible Sourcing Guides was noted.

(ii) The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (Sofia) 2010

The summary paper was not discussed but circulated for review with the Chairman's recommendation that it be read.

(iii) Social media

PS raised briefly with the group how valuable social media could be at engaging with the end user and that technology should be utilised to enhance the industry.

PW commented that the Seafish Communications Team was investigating this form of contact. It was acknowledged there was a gap in 'talking' to the retailer / consumer and progress on this suggestion could be dealt with via the Industry Project Fund.

Action

- Draft IPF to develop seafood App

12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Confirmed for 20 July 2011 at Billingsgate Market, London.

The meeting closed at 1530.

Action Points	By	When
Input to Keo's production of H F-W's next programmes	Seafish/others	On request
Capture market changes post FishFight, project possible long term impacts and work back to influence supply	Seafish	
Take 'data poor' work forward by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalising report - Confirming pilot species - Dialogue with SFP & FAO - Plan roll-out as industry service 	Seafish (WL)	ASAP
Publish market survey interpretation, invite comments, circulate new advice list, formalise Review Group arrangements, draft ToRs	MCS (DP) Seafish (PM)	As appropriate
Capture fisheries welfare issues: continue research, draft holding statement, maintain watching brief	Seafish (PM & others)	For next meeting
Foresight food security issues: canvass opinion & set up special meeting	Seafish (AG) & Defra?	Soon
CO ₂ : clarify issues via case studies (publicise) & support BSI LCA as standard	Seafish (AG) plus Carbon Group	Soon
Baltic Sea 2020: establish common ground by dialogue and seek co-operative work plans	All	Before end 2020
CFP: take forward work as per discussion and dialogue with Defra	Seafish (PM)	ASAP
Aquaculture research: CLG to write to Professor John Beddington re potential closure of Stirling Institute of Aquaculture	Seafish for CLG	ASAP
Apps: draft IPF to develop seafood App	Seafish/Peter Stagg	Soon