

**SEA FISH INDUSTRY AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Seafish Domestic and Export Sector Panel**

Held at the Wesley Hotel in London on Wednesday 23 November 2016

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**Present:**

John Goodlad (JG)	Chair
Bertie Armstrong (BA)	Scottish Fishermen’s Federation (part)
Michael Bates (MBa)	Scottish Seafood Association
Martyn Boyers (MBo)	British Ports Association (part)
Robert Duthie (RD)	Exporters
David Jarrad (DJ)	Shellfish Association of Great Britain
Kevin McDonnell (KM)	Scottish Association of Fish Producer Organisations
Dr Ian Napier (IN)	Shetland interests
Jerry Percy (JP)	Small Boat / Inshore
Dale Rodmell (DR)	National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations
Dave Winspear (DW)	UK Association of Fish Producers Organisations
Marcus Coleman (MC)	Seafish, Chief Executive Officer
Janice Anderson (JA)	Seafish, Business Services Director
Mel Groundsell (MG)	Seafish, Corporate Relations Director
Dr Tom Pickerell (TP)	Seafish, Technical Director
Simon Potten (SP)	Seafish, Panel Secretariat

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

JG welcomed everyone to the meeting. The following apologies were noted:

Chris Anderson	Processors using domestic catch
Jim Evans	Welsh interests
Martin Leyland	Shetland interests
John Rooney	Northern Ireland interests
Paul Trebilcock	UKAFPO
Clare Dodgson	Seafish, Board member

**2. Introduction – New Members**

2.1 JG welcomed BA (replacing Malcom Morrison as the SFF representative on the group) and recorded the Panel’s thanks for Malcolm’s valued input over many years since the inception of the Panels); MBa to his first meeting as the Scottish Seafood Association’s representative; IN who was deputising for Martin Leyland in representing Shetland interests and DW who was deputising for Paul Trebilcock as the new representative of UKAFPO.

### **3. Minutes of the 9th meeting held on 01 March 2016 (Paper 1)**

3.1 These were accepted as a true record.

3.2 JG asked Seafish for an update on Action 9.3 (Members to be informed as soon as any proposal regarding Scotland is agreed). MC advised that discussions were ongoing between Seafish, Defra and the Devolved Administrations and that current thinking was to establish an Advisory Committee structure similar to that already in place for Wales and Northern Ireland, by which Scottish stakeholders could identify and direct levy spend in Scotland. MC advised that representatives from Defra and the Devolved Administrations would be attending the Seafish Board meeting on 07 December 2016 where this would be discussed further.

**Action 10.1: MC to update Panel members on discussions regarding new arrangements for Scotland following discussion at the Seafish Board meeting on 07 December 2016.**

### **4. Seafish Update and Brexit**

4.1 MC informed members that Seafish had been asked by Defra to undertake a piece of work in relation to Brexit, specifically to share the expertise of its staff (information) and gather feedback from stakeholders to identify key concerns and desires. Seafish has been asking stakeholders three questions: (1) what is your big objective, (2) what do you want to avoid, (3) what else do you desire. Seafish facilitated a Brexit panel at the Humber Seafood Summit and a Common Language Group Brexit special and has been in direct contact with stakeholders. Five key touchpoints have been identified: fishing rights and quotas, regulation, trade and tariffs, labour and public funds. Progress will be discussed at the Seafish Board meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and Seafish plans to publish its report in January 2017 at a Brexit event being organised for stakeholders.

**Action 10.2: Seafish to share its draft Brexit report with Panel members following the Seafish Board meeting on 07 December 2016.**

4.2 JP welcomed the idea of getting everyone together in a room with Government; inshore fishermen are looking for some level of clarity on the Government's intentions regarding fisheries post-Brexit during 2017. RD advised that he had attended a pelagic meeting in Barcelona where they received an excellent presentation from Andrew Oliver (of Hull solicitors Andrew Jackson); it was noted that an article by Andrew Oliver had appeared in Fishing News 24 November 2016 edition. KM advised that the catching sector was making its expectations clear to Government; huge opportunity, but lack of clarity at the moment on exactly what might be possible. MBo advised that Government has set up a department called DEXI, which has asked BPA for a paper. DR advised that NFFO has been concentrating significant resources on Brexit; NFFO is a broad church with many interests and DR asked how Seafish could possibly "represent" the interests of industry, MG

responded clarifying that Seafish would simply be reporting industry's views, not seeking to represent them.

### **Action 10.3: RD to share Brexit presentation from Andrew Oliver.**

4.3 MBo suggested that Seafish could be digging a big hole for itself and did not feel that Seafish should get involved. The work is already being taken forward by stakeholder organisations who are feeding directly to Government. DW agreed and commented that Seafish's involvement could dilute the impact of individual stakeholder's feedback. MC reminded members that Defra had asked Seafish to do this work; cutbacks and reorganisations at Defra have limited their ability to gather and interpret feedback from across the wider seafood supply chain. MC advised that members' concerns had been noted and that Seafish would proceed with caution, taking care not to dilute industry's demands.

## **5. CP1518 Delivery Report**

5.1 TP referred members to Paper 2 and explained the structure and content of the quarterly "dashboard" reports for each workstream. JG invited comment from members.

5.2 JP questioned basis for colour coding. TP explained that the colour coding on finance was based on fixed percentage variances against budget (the difference between under- and over-spends was noted), but that the other criteria were down to the judgement of the Heads of Workstream.

5.3 IN questioned the basis for risk rating and DJ questioned who made the judgement on risk ratings. TP advised that it was Heads of Workstream who were responsible for identifying and rating risks to their team's ability to deliver any of the work programmes in their workstream. JA advised that the Exec reviews these risks and consider whether or not they represent a threat to Seafish; if so, they will be elevated to the Seafish risk register and brought to the attention of the Seafish Board via its Audit and Risk Committee.

5.4 DR questioned figures on engagement of vessels in the Responsible Fishing Scheme; TP explained that the dashboard reports were correct at end of Q2 (30 September 2016), but that more up-to-date figures had been presented at the recent RFS Oversight Board. TP advised that Oversight Board is looking to remove pinch points to speed the progression of interested vessels through to RFS certification; TP commented that there was no issue with inspection/audit capacity. TP advised that Seafish cannot undertake RFS coaching because it is the standard holder and Acoura cannot do it as it is the Certifying Authority, but others can and will be doing it, and Seafish provides documentary support (e.g., compliance support guides) to assist them. TP advised that Seafish/Acoura are also looking at pilot "group audits" for similar vessels (e.g., the Orkney brown crab fleet), although UKAS not keen on this approach. MBa advised on SSA's group scheme for MSC chain of custody accreditation; this has been very successful and SSA has now got 10 businesses involved sharing the cost; recommended similar approach for RFS.

5.5 BA suggested that KPI/annual targets for RFS certified vessels needed to be revised downwards; TP disagreed and advised that the team wanted to keep it as an aspirational target, noting that the target applied throughout the world, not just in the UK. BA expressed concern at the internationalisation of RFS, commenting that progress internationally had created unrealistic supply chain expectations in the UK, before the scheme has been properly established here. IN asked how Seafish intended to manage the risk of a mismatch between expectations/requirements of supply chain with the number of vessels in the scheme. RD advised on problems with M&S and Waitrose demanding supplies from RFS vessels and asked that Seafish is proactive in talking to retailers and explaining the reality of the situation. TP advised that Seafish had not encouraged the supply chain to set expectations and agreed that some stakeholders may wish to revise their commitments. MG commented that the supply chain was keen for UK vessels to embrace RFS as quickly as possible.

5.6 JG advised that MSC is very concerned that working conditions/social standards not currently assessed in MSC certification and is considering a fourth strand to its standards to address this. In the meantime it was keen to encourage and promote RFS. BA asked for Seafish for a proactive advocacy campaign to promote the good credentials of the UK fishing industry; TP invited BA to attend next Seafood Ethics Common Language Group to see all the good work that Seafish is doing. IN commented that there was a disconnect between what Seafish is doing in this area and the media's perception that bad practice is widespread throughout the industry. JG commented that MSC certification has given the fishing industry a tool to evidence good environmental practice; the RFS scheme provides it with the opportunity to achieve/evidence the same with regards social standards. Members noted the recent feature on the BBC's Countryfile programme. MG advised members that the media revels in expounding bad news stories, exaggerating and inflating them. MC asked what can we do together to get more vessels into the scheme and what the KPI should be; everyone agreed that getting more UK vessels into the scheme is the priority, now that problems with regards the development of the scheme have been resolved.

5.7 DR asked why the Strategic Investment Project was not having a second call for applications; TP advised that there were insufficient funds to commit to another call under CP1518.

5.8 DJ commented that the work undertaken by Seafish's Regulation team and workstream was greatly valued and vitally important, but expressed concern that no-one in the team is looking at marine licencing, MPAs, and environmental legislation generally. DJ advised that SAGB is currently contracted by Seafish to undertake some of this work, but he is concerned that this is not being done centrally by Seafish. MG advised that this work was not in CP1518; DJ responded that neither was Brexit, but work is being done on that; DJ stressed need for greater flexibility under CP1821. BA wasn't clear exactly what work Seafish would/could usefully do in this area that isn't already being dealt with between industry and government.

5.9 MBo advised of development of Responsible Fishing Ports standard (progress reported under the Insight workstream dashboard) and commented that UK ports needed to get to grips with the scheme before others start running away with their expectations and internationalisation.

5.10 MC commented that Seafish was caught between a rock and hard place regarding delivery of a CP agreed for a three-year period and its ability to flex and respond to changes.

## **6. CP1821 Development**

### **6.1 Process and Timeline**

6.1.1 JG reminded members of their role in this and how important it is that they contribute fully with suggestions for things that they want Seafish to do for them; reminding members that there were three Panels whose (sometimes varying) demands needed to be accommodated within the new Corporate Plan. MC added that Panels were advising the Seafish Board and that the final plan needed to be approved by Defra and the Devolved Administrations.

### **6.2 Outcomes from September Pan-Panel Meeting**

6.2.1 MC referred members to Paper 3 which summarised the outputs from the Pan-Panel meeting and drew attention to the two “Goal Pyramids” of Securing Supply and Increasing Demand as a way of capturing the ideas that came from members at the meeting. Paper being presented at the December Board meeting.

**Action 10.4: Seafish to share paper on CP1821 with Panel members after the December Seafish Board meeting on 07 December 2016.**

### **6.3 Areas to Focus On**

6.3.1 JG invited members to comment on the goal pyramids.

## **Securing Supply**

### **Supply Chain Assurance**

- MBa asked if under Supply Chain Assurance Seafish would consider establishing an alternative to BRC/SALSA; it was a huge step from nothing to SALSA. SP explained that Seafish dropped its accreditation schemes a long time ago in favour of assisting companies with BRC/SALSA accreditation, but that that support had been dropped under the previous Corporate Plan.

## Aquaculture Development

- DJ asked for clarification on what was meant by “aquaculture” and whether salmon is factored in. It was noted that the salmon industry freeloards on benefits from Seafish work (e.g., recipes). It was agreed that salmon could be included in Seafish’s work, providing it contributed something towards the cost of specific activities.

## Skilled & Safe Workforce

- JG reminded members that the other Panels had recommended that levy not be used to subsidise fishermen’s training.
- SP updated members on current situation regarding Seafish’s success in securing external funding that had enabled Seafish to continue subsidising (voluntary) fishermen’s training, with £1.3m of EMFF funding secured so far, using £500k from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency as match funding.
- SP updated members on the Government intentions regarding EMFF (i.e., that projects approved up to the point of Brexit would be honoured through to completion).
- TP confirmed that there was no disagreement amongst Panels that levy could be used to fund the administration of Seafish’s work in support of fishermen’s training.
- IN questioned why the funding does not extend to mandatory training.
- IN commented that Seafish was stirring up media concerns regarding fishing safety with some of its Comms messages (e.g., Deadliest Catch); BA agreed that communication needed to be proportional with fatalities at such a low level.
- MC asked what, if anything, should Seafish be doing in this area? BA suggested training and onboard risk assessment should be the focus.
- MBa suggested flipping the current approach on its head and using levy to fund minimum statutory funding and then get industry to pay for additional voluntary training and extending support to the onshore sectors of the industry.
- RD advised that recruiting staff has never been more difficult. Some parts of the industry have become dependent on Eastern European labour; it was now extremely difficult to get them and likely to become more so post-Brexit. A generational gap in recruitment of local/domestic labour has been created.
- BA commented that there were systemic reasons for present situation; efforts to attract domestic new entrants should continue as there is a sea of opportunity for the industry with Brexit; an economic upturn in the industry will resolve the difficulties.
- JG commented that a new entrant scheme was often the only way for those without a connection to the industry to get into the industry. MBa advised that SSA had developed an induction/awareness programme for prospective new entrants; if interested they then got basic training; if still interested after that they got help finding a work placement for a month; all being well they then secured employment.

## Seafood Trade

- BA commented that post-Brexit there should be no further fish caught, but possibly a redistribution of rights to catch it. He asked what changes are required in the UK to cope/react with this and how can Seafish help?

## Stock Data

- IN suggested that “Sustainability” might be a more appropriate title. He questioned the inclusion of “All Stocks at MSY” as an initial step, believing this might make a rod for the industry’s back; BA and DR agreed.
- DR asked for technical support from Seafish with regard to assessing/evidencing environmental impacts. IN commented that fishing does impact the environment and suggested that Seafish could provide comparisons with the environmental impact of other food production.
- JG suggested “all stocks managed sustainably” as a step instead of all stocks at MSY; IN questioned what Seafish’s role would be in helping industry to achieve this, and suggested that it might be “promoting sustainability”.
- JG questioned the inclusion of “MCS score” as a “sustainability metric”; members agreed that this should be removed.

## Waste

- Discards is covered under the Waste objective.

## Others

- DJ questioned what “Benchmarking SMEs” referred to? TP/MC advised that this was a service that Seafish used to provide to enable small businesses to enable them to assess how well they are doing against their competitors.

## Increasing Demand

### Seafood & Health

- IN commented that this should include promotion of seafood as the healthiest protein. Very basic promotion of simple cooking of seafood targeting those who do not eat/cook seafood (e.g., how do you bread a haddock fillet).

### Promote Consumption

- No comments.

### Education

- IN commented that in addition to recipes, Seafish should undertake very basic education on simple cooking of seafood targeting those who do not eat/cook seafood (e.g., breading a haddock fillet).
- MBo suggested that consumers needed to be educated on sustainability; this needs to be covered in the “Inform/Educate Consumers & Buyers” block. JP and JG agreed.

### Joined Up Supply Chain

- DR questioned what this was and why Low Impact of Fish Protein Production was in this section. MC responded that this was more a “how we operate” as an industry, rather than specifically about increasing demand and agreed that this step should be relocated.

## Reputation

- BA commented that Seafish needed to be more proactive than simply “Respond to Media Challenges”. MG accepted this.

6.3.2 JP commented that CP1821 will coincide with Brexit and a period during which the UK seafood industry could see huge changes; this adds further need for Seafish to have greater flexibility. IN suggested that objectives should not be set too rigidly within the Plan. JG asked how do we achieve that greater flexibility? Not allocate the full budget? Set aside funds? JA commented that levy income could be affected by exchange rate fluctuations and prices, so there would be some uncertainty over future levy income. MC asked what would be the mechanism for releasing any set aside funds?

6.3.3 MG updated members on progress with Seafood 2040 initiative being driven by Defra.

6.3.4 MC summarised by asking members to consider whether the pyramids capture everything that Seafish can do to support the industry leading up to and post-Brexit? MC reminded members that this was their opportunity to tell Seafish what it wanted Seafish to do in future. It is important for provision to be made for capitalising on opportunities presented by Brexit.

6.3.5 DR questioned where Economics and Discards were in the Pyramids. TP advised that Economics underpins many of the objectives and steps highlighted in the paper.

## 6.4 Core Work and Regional Mix

6.4.1 MC advised that the Advisory Committee approach, which is working successfully in Wales and Northern Ireland, is likely to be extended to Scotland. Consideration would be given to how much of the operational budget for CP1821 should be set aside for spending by regional groups. DR advised that NFFO was interested in Seafish’s regional strategy for the rest of England. TP advised that Exec and Board are looking at this and agreed to come back to the next Panel meetings in March with some firmer proposals.

## 6.5 Next Steps

6.5.1 MC went through the timetable for CP1821 development which had been presented at the Pan-Panel meeting. TP advised that Seafish would come back to the Panels in March 2017 with a list of options that are roughly costed, so that Panel members can decide what it wants Seafish to do. JG observed that if the total cost of what the industry wants Seafish to do is less than the available levy, this could lead to a levy cut; if what the Panels want costs more from Seafish than the available levy, this could require a levy increase. He added that it was important that the Panels are not constrained by current levy rates.



## **7. Meeting Schedule 2017**

- w/c 13 March 2017 for next round of Panel meetings
- October 2017 to finalise CP1821.

## **8. Any Other Business**

8.1 DJ commented that he had found the Pan-Panel to be very beneficial. MC added that he also thought the Pan-Panel approach was the way forward to achieve a greater joined up approach. TP advised that the Importers Panel (which had previously not been keen on pan-panel meetings) had requested another. JG agreed that it was important. MC asked if March meeting could be pan-Panel; DJ and JG asked that another pan-Panel meeting be additional to the existing plan of Panel meetings.