

**Note of tenth meeting of Discard Action Group held at  
Defra Offices, London Monday 4 April 2011**

**NEW Seafish discards page** – for minutes and further information on discards and the Discard Action Group (DAG) activities see:

<http://www.seafish.org/fishermen/responsible-sourcing/protecting-fish-stocks/discards>

**Attendees**

Mike Park (MP)	SWFPA/Seafish Board Member (new Chair)
Karen Green (KG)	Seafish
Phil MacMullen (PM)	Seafish
Malcolm Large (ML)	Seafish
Mike Montgomerie (MM)	Seafish
Ashley Wilson (AW)	Defra
Ali Scoleri (AS)	Defra
Roy Smith (RS)	Defra
Tom Catchpole (TC)	Cefas
Julian Roberts (JR)	MMO
Jim Portus (JP)	SWFPO
Jess Sparks (JS)	Seafood Scotland
Toby Parker (TP)	UFP
Mike Mitchell (MM)	The Seafood Company
Chris Leftwich (CL)	Fishmongers Company
Callum Webster (CW)	Keo Films
Bill Wiseman (BW)	Skipper – SWFPA
David Milne (DM)	Skipper and Chairman, SWFPA
Jane Sandell (JS)	Scottish Fishermen's Organisation & SAFPO
Melissa Pritchard (MP)	ClientEarth
Jonathan Moore (JM)	ClientEarth
Giles Bartlett (GB)	WWF
Tim Silverthorne (TS)	Southeast Seafood
Peter Duncan (PD)	MCS
Rob Enever (RE)	Natural England

**1. Welcome and apologies**

MP welcomed the group to the tenth meeting of the Discard Action Group.

Apologies were received from:

Andy Revill	Revill Nation
Tom Rossiter	Cefas
Nigel Edwards	Seachill

Dale Rodmell	NFFO
Mike Berthet	M&J Seafoods
Clare Pescod	MSC
Angus Radford	MMO
Emily Howgate	Seafood Choices Alliance
John Atkinson	Co-operative Society
Leila Fonseca	Defra
Toni Ferdinands	Defra
Bertie Armstrong	SFF
Allan Gibb	Marine Scotland

## 2. Minutes from the last meeting held on 8 February 2011

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

## 3. Actions from the last meeting

Progress was noted as summarised below, with more detail elsewhere in these minutes:

### Fact sheet on remote electronic monitoring

The fact sheet will be updated in April when numbers have been finalised on the Catch Quota Trial 2011. JR commented that there would be 12 vessels in the North Sea and that four had applied for the SW beam trawl trial.

**Action:** Fact sheet to be drafted.

### Unaccounted mortality

This was an update on a presentation given at the February meeting by Phil MacMullen to quantify all fishing effort.

**Action:** The presentation will be added to the Seafish web page.

### Update – Channel 4 Fish Week

CW mentioned that a further hour-long Hugh's Fish Fight programme was due to be aired w/c 6 June 2011 to coincide with World Oceans Week, but that this was still to be confirmed. Actions taken at EU level by Damanaki had really taken over the sequence of how things would develop. Keo Films are in discussion with Defra about whether it is possible for a derogation to allow filming of a discard-free port and how it would operate. Keo has met with MM and PM to discuss selectivity issues and is now well-briefed on the complexity of the issue. There are plans to develop a European version of the Hugh's Fish Fight web page.

**Action:** Group to continue to maintain contact with Keo Films.

### The DAG and its role

The exact remit and role of the DAG was raised at the last meeting. It was agreed that, given the current focus on the discards issue, the group should be re-invigorated to identify pressures and be pro-active in looking for opportunities to take the issue forward. The Terms of Reference for the

group were to be revised. The revised TOR was tabled at the meeting and there was some discussion on this centring on: its autonomy; its authority; how 'pivotal' its role actually was; the fact it was a 'cross-industry' group; how it aligned with the Common Language Group; the fact attendees/recipients were not 'members' but participants'; how to determine whether the group was meeting its objectives; what indicators could be set to show whether it had achieved its objectives.

**Action:** Further revisions will be made to the TOR and this will be circulated to the group.

### Focus Groups

At the February meeting the group agreed to form four focus groups, under the remit of the DAG, with the aim of accelerating any measures that could help reduce discards. The four areas are: Science and information gathering; Regulatory change; Selectivity and technical measures; and Market. Seafish has looked at the membership of each of these four groups and nominated a secretary for each group. The Regulatory group met on 25 February. The other three groups met on the 4 April.

## **4. Recent activities**

### **1 March meeting in Brussels**

There was a high level meeting to discuss the whole discard issue in Brussels on 1 March. This has resulted in a joint declaration on discards under a reformed Common Fisheries Policy – signed by Denmark, France, Germany and the UK. There are 17 points in total. See: <http://www.seafish.org/fishermen/responsible-sourcing/protecting-fish-stocks/discards/discard-projects> under key documents.

#### **This is a summary of the key points:**

- Reinforce the commitment to an ambitious reform of the CFP based on the principle of sustainable development.
- Reiterate their strong commitment to the sustainable use of fisheries resources based on the best available scientific knowledge and the need to develop a more robust pool of scientific expertise at European level.
- Reaffirm their support for the basic pillars of the CFP.
- Note that management systems based on fishing effort in the present form are not suited as a means of ensuring the sustainability of mixed fisheries.
- Reiterate their view that the wasteful practice of discarding significant quantities of fish, that is tolerated and in some cases even promoted by the current structure of the management system, must be ended.
- Encourage the Commission to undertake an impact assessment in order to consider the extent of discarding in the various fisheries.
- Call for discard bans to be gradually introduced where appropriate by changing to a system of genuine catch quotas as part of a 'tool box' of measure to avoid discards, after a sound evaluation of exiting pilot

projects, and to improve control and data on the overall mortality and state of fish stocks.

- The role of Producer Organisations should be strengthened and that within a system of genuine catch quotas the PO should be given the task of ensuring each fisherman has the required quotas for target species and by-catches.
- In the transitional phase toward genuine catch quotas the participation of fishermen should be on a voluntary basis.
- Call upon the Commission to make the avoidance of discards and the introduction of genuine catch quota systems one of the central elements of the reformed CFP.

Damanaki speech [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/damanaki/headlines/speeches/2011/03/20110301\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/damanaki/headlines/speeches/2011/03/20110301_en.pdf)

### **15 March European Parliament meeting**

This meeting looked at regional solutions to management and the necessary connection between government and stakeholders using Conservation Credits as an example.

### **European Fisheries Technology Platform – call for information by 15 April**

The EFTPs' Board of Directors met with Damanaki on 15 March. Following this meeting the EFTP is compiling existing information about ongoing discards projects at European level. This compilation will help the EFTP to overview all the initiatives implemented to solve/improve the situation. Information is required by 15 April via an on-line questionnaire at the EFTP web site <http://www.eftp.eu> This requires specific information on R&D and Innovation projects; current status; scope and duration; and funding.

**Action:** The DAG will be registered as an ongoing project.

### **Stakeholder meeting in Brussels – 3 May**

Registration is now open for this. On March 1st, the subject was debated with Member States and Members of the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors. Now the Commissioner would like to hear the opinions of stakeholders on this. An exchange of views will be held in Brussels on the afternoon of May 3rd 2011 starting at 1.15pm. Online registration is now available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/index_en.htm)

Mike Mitchell, Mike Park, Tim Silverthorne, Jim Portus and Giles Bartlett all indicated they would be attending.

**Feedback from focus groups** – full minutes from each focus group will be produced and added to the Seafish web page  
<http://www.seafish.org/fishermen/responsible-sourcing/protecting-fish-stocks/discards>

**5. Regulatory focus group** – full minutes to be added to website  
The Regulatory group met on 25 February. The aim was to produce a paper/letter to Damanaki on discard reduction as a result of the meeting and

communicate it to the Commission and other bodies. It should be issued by the Discard Action Group as a consensus of their views.

**The key points were:**

1. A discard ban is the ultimate aim.
2. The industry is itself capable of resolving discarding. What the industry needs is a regulatory framework coupled with incentives to empower the industry to do so.
3. While policy-making should remain centralised with the European institutions, we need a decentralised CFP that empowers and incentivises fishermen to find their own solutions to discards.
4. Decentralising fisheries management should allow MSs to ensure that local, regional-level decisions are made about the tools, technical measures and incentives that can be used to reduce discards. This will include regulatory flexibility that encourages fishermen to innovate, develop and experiment with selective gear and techniques.
5. Decentralised, participatory management should also allow long term plans to include tiered measures that alleviate short term negative effects on fishing communities and businesses dependent on them.
6. Regulation that couples discard reduction with data gathering will improve fisheries management.

Tools that could be used to reduce discards:

- Spatial management inspired by the Norwegian precautionary area system
- Individual fishing and by-catch quotas and encouraging their efficient utilisation e.g. by facilitating trading between owners and even between MSs
- Where possible, avoiding effort limitation (in particular limitations on days at sea) as a management tool, because of its potential to encourage discarding
- Removing catch composition requirements, since they are unrealistic and prescriptive, and encourage discarding.

**Action:** MP to send a draft letter to the group for comment on Monday 18 April. This letter should be representative of the consensus of the group as a whole.

**6. Market focus group - full minutes to be added to website**

It was the consensus of those present that two fundamental questions needed to be addressed:

- Why is a species unpopular and/or discarded due to the lack of a market?
  - skin, bones, fear of the unknown, size etc.
- How can you make a species popular? – education and instruction.

It was agreed that because multiple retail and foodservice outlets require a consistent, guaranteed large scale supply then targeting discards at this market was not appropriate, therefore large processing companies would not be the route to take. Instead the members agreed that discards should be targeted at the niche specialist retail (high street fishmongers) and foodservice (restaurants and gastro pubs) markets.

The following species have been identified (by Defra/Cefas) as the most suitable for commercial exploitation: red gurnard, flounder, red mullet, pouting, grey gurnard, john dory, dab and tub gurnard. The least suitable are northern hake, pollock, haddock, coley and black bream.

**Next steps:**

- Determine which species are going to be targeted – UK under-utilised species. This can be based on the Defra/Cefas list.
- Seafish was asked if it could provide sales data on these under-utilised species and how detailed it could be.
- Once list agreed investigate how to market and to whom - what species are likely to be available and when - their quantities, size, preferred size, geographic location, supply route.
- Look at the possible niche markets for these fish.
- Dovetail with promotional campaigns which target these niche markets and ‘educate the educators’ including targeting restaurants, catering colleges, the chefs of tomorrow, fishmongers.
- Develop a seasonal calendar for fresh fish and develop a campaign around it.

**7. Science group - full minutes to be added to website**

There is an increasing legal requirement for a lot more data. New technology means that this data can be transmitted on a more regular basis. However it is important that the data conforms to certain standards (latest FAO guidelines go a long way towards this). There is a disconnect between what is available, how it is presented and where it is held.

There is a lot of data available ie data produced under the Catch Quota Trials and data used to gain, and then needed, under MSC accreditation guidelines.

**Next steps:**

- Group to be instrumental in coming up with a set of guidelines as to what information is required by scientists and how should it be presented.
- One possible option for the future was ‘Seafish Science’ which would provide a conduit for the collection of fishing industry data to feed into science based policy decisions.

**8. Selectivity group** - full minutes to be added to website

This group focussed on NE nephrops and fisheries in the South West. There have been successful selectivity measures adopted in these areas which could be transferred elsewhere. It was recognised that industry needed information on technological advances and needed incentives to use these devices.

The aim was selectivity devices that prevented the unwanted fish being caught in the first place, rather than devices that caught and then released the fish. Success would depend on a regional approach being adopted.

**10. Any other business**

- The next meeting has been scheduled for **Wednesday 29 June** in London. The venue for the next meeting has been very kindly provided by Seafood Choices Alliance (CAN Mezzanine 32-36 Loman Street, Southwark, London, SE1 0EH).
- The meeting will be the same format as this meeting – focus groups in the morning followed by a main meeting. Likely start time 11.00am.
- Agendas for each of the focus groups will be issued well in advance so participants can decide which group meeting to attend.
- There were comments there were very few foodservice or retail representatives at the meeting. It was hoped this could be rectified at the next meeting.
- Toby Parker has invited the group to tour the facilities at UFP factory in Grimsby as part of the next meeting in September/October.

<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>
<b>Terms of Reference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circulate revised Terms of Reference to group</li></ul>	KG
<b>Fish Fight campaign and Keo Films</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DAG to maintain close contact with Keo Films</li></ul>	Seafish
<b>Unaccounted mortality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation and FAO guidelines summary to be added to the discards page.</li></ul>	KG
<b>Catch Quota Trial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revisit the fact sheet on remote electronic monitoring in April.</li></ul>	KG
<b>Regulatory focus group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letter to be drafted and sent to the group for comment on Monday 18 April.</li></ul>	MP
<b>Next meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage more retailer/foodservice representatives to attend</li></ul>	KG