

# Supply Chain and Consumer Panel Minutes

Virtual meeting held 1 February 2021

## Attendees:

Chris Lamb (Chair)  
Yvonne Adam (Youngs Seafood)  
Steve Challouma (Nomad Foods)  
Andrew Crook (National Federation of Fish Fryers)  
Mark Drummond (Independent, Fish & Chip Sector)  
Andrew Kenny (National Federation of Fishmongers)  
Malcolm Large (FASFA)  
Leah Riley Brown (British Retail Consortium (BRC))  
Oliver Tanqueray (Client Earth)  
Sarah Riddle (Northern Light Consulting Ltd.)  
Mike Berthet (Independent, Food Service)

## Seafish:

Marcus Coleman  
Aoife Martin  
Hazel Curtis  
Louise Ballantyne  
Helen Duggan (Secretariat)  
Fiona Wright (Observer)

## Apologies:

Mike Mitchell (Board Member)  
Giles Quick (Kantar World Panel)

## Welcome and format of meeting

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, shared apologies and outlined the format.

## Minutes of the previous meeting

2. Members reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. No amendments were proposed. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.
3. Helen confirmed actions arising are complete or due to be discussed at the next meeting.

## EU Exit – Status, Challenges and Response

4. The Panel members shared their observations on how things have progressed since 1 January. Aoife and Fiona then shared an update on what Seafish are doing to support and facilitate an informed response. Key discussion points follow.
5. Initial disruption has been significant for all businesses exporting seafood to the EU and shipping products across the Irish Sea. Issues were predicted but it is clear there's a level of complexity that was not understood until the changes were implemented. It is going to take a while for the issues to settle down. EU customer confidence is being lost due to the delays, particularly in France.
6. Seafish opened a direct support service for all seafood businesses at Christmas. Most issues being identified are very specific to individual product lines and supply routes. Everyone is encouraged to send details of all issues to [regulation@seafish.co.uk](mailto:regulation@seafish.co.uk). The more knowledge we have the more we can help.

7. Consolidated loads are causing the most pain. DFDS have stopped mixed loads whilst the most crippling issues are resolved. There are issues with systems, training and paperwork. We expect people will get better at completing the paperwork relatively quickly.
8. Many businesses exporting to the EU are re-allocating much of their office-based resources to manage the increased workload. Recruitment will follow where this needs to be sustained. It's clear that costs and paperwork requirements will remain greatly increased, even when things settle down. It will be some time before the consequences become clear.
9. Different EU customs checkpoints are interpreting the rules differently. Better connections have been made between UK and member state port officials.
10. Live bivalve molluscs from Grade B waters that have not been depurated are no longer allowed into the EU. This is having a huge impact on the sector, particularly for producers in England and Wales. Seafish and the SAGB are supporting Defra in drafting a formal response to the EC. Aoife will keep Mike B informed on progress.
11. The shellfish sector has been particularly impacted, with the EU exit issues following the losses suffered in December due to the French border closure. Many businesses usually dependent on EU Exports are currently dependent on low prices and local customers.
12. Processors are focussed on getting ready for the significant disruption expected on imports from April, in addition to managing the current disruption on exports. It's clear a significant increase in resource is going to be required to manage these supply routes, particularly where product is being shipped on to NI. What the consequences will be for having the wrong paperwork or product labelling is currently unclear.
13. Import changes will affect frozen-at-sea supply into the F&C sector when the interim agreements with the EEA end. In the meantime, the F&C and independent retail sectors have not been greatly impacted. Andrew K and Andrew C were encouraged to share details of specific issues noted with the Regulation Team.
14. A new specialised fisheries management committee will be set up to oversee management of shared stocks and sustainability in the long term. It will include representatives from the UK and EU. Seafish won't have a seat but will work closely with Defra and Marine Scotland to support. There is particularly keen interest in the work we facilitate on gear selectivity. Progress will be formally reviewed in four years.
15. Seafish are involved in several calls a week between Government and industry representatives, discussing issues being identified and progress being made. Restrictions being applied have often been in place for some time so the history has to be explored and understood. Discussions on ROI/NI/GB trading routes will remain a key focus.
16. We are working hard to establish guidance on what the 1200-page [EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement \(TCA\)](#) means for the seafood sector. Rules of Origin implications are particularly complex and will have an implication for most businesses. Website updates and webinars will provide clarity as it becomes established. Both will be promoted by our e-alerts and social media.
17. In the longer term, the development of e-traceability systems is an important area of work that will make things easier (e.g. systems like blockchain). A number of UK-based industry

leaders have contributed to the development of a global standard by the [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability](#), but this is in the early stages of uptake. It is important that solutions pursued are based on open access systems that are available to all.

- Mike B has direct experience in this field and is happy to share further information.
- Oliver is directly involved in the GDST initiative and will be happy provide progress updates at future meetings as required.

### Annual Plan 2020-21 – initial discussions

18. Seafish presented a high-level overview of focus areas that are currently proposed to be included in the next Annual Plan. The members shared feedback on areas of specific interest. No areas were proposed to be added or removed.
19. Activities underpinning the Love Seafood initiative should seek to encourage greater diversity of consumption in the UK and promote seafood consumption in the hospitality sector industry as lockdown restrictions are eased. **Action 1** – Hazel will share these suggestions with the marketing team and provide feedback to the Panel.
20. Aoife outlined additional detail on the scope of work planned to help industry secure sustainable supply and meet consumer demands for supply chain integrity. Activities discussed included:
  - plastic packaging consultations and microplastics;
  - plans to enhance and update the Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood;
  - supporting collaboration with the SSC on supply chain led initiatives;
  - fisheries management work, which will primarily focus on shellfish species; and
  - animal welfare, which will primarily focus on crustacea. Sarah will share a link to the recently released salmon sustainability charter with Aoife.
21. Seafish will help promote updates on the progress of the Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard to key stakeholders, which is now owned and operated by the GSA. No dedicated resource is available to directly support uptake beyond that.
22. Our approach to delivery of all activities will continue to be flexible and agile to make sure our commitment of resources remains aligned with levy income throughout 2020/21.

### Update on Marketing Strategy

23. A paper outlining an update on the marketing strategy implementation was shared with the Panel prior to the meeting.
24. It is important for us all to keep reiterating that Love Seafood is a long term initiative, seeking to positively influence consumer attitudes towards seafood, increasing value perception (i.e. it is not seeking to drive sales directly – that's what industry does.)
25. The Love Seafood brand launched 1 October and the Q1 results are encouraging. Hazel encouraged all members to engage and help us widen the reach as far as possible. Birdseye and Youngs were thanked for demonstrating how businesses can use the Love Seafood assets we're making available.
26. Performance dashboards are in development and will be presented at future Panel meetings, once available.

27. The review of events that Seafish were running before the pandemic is in progress. We are planning how to seek views from seafood businesses throughout the supply chain on our B2B activities under the marketing strategy. We will keep the panel updated on timings and approaches.

### Date of next meeting

28. It was agreed the next meeting will be held in May. **Action 2:** Helen will circulate a doodle poll and coordinate arrangements.

### Meeting close

29. Chris encouraged everyone to help promote the open call to recruit our next Chair and up to two new members.

30. Marcus and Chris thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.

### Action list

No.	Action	Timeline (Status)	Owner
1	Hazel will share the suggestions on Love Seafood activities with the marketing team and provide feedback to the Panel.	February (complete)	Hazel
2	Helen will circulate a doodle poll and coordinate arrangements.	March (complete)	Helen