

## Shellfish Industry Advisory Group (SIAG) Meeting

04 February 2021

Remote meeting via Zoom

### Attendees

Barrie Deas, NFFO (Chair)  
 Andrew Brown, Macduff Shellfish  
 Andrew Wheeler, Andy Wheeler Fisheries Consultancy Limited  
 Aoife Martin, Seafish  
 Bill Brock, Brighton and Newhaven Fish Sales  
 Claire Pescod, Macduff Shellfish  
 Colin Bannister, SAGB  
 Cordelia Bagley, Defra  
 Ewen Bell, Cefas  
 Gary Hodgson, Venture Seafoods  
 Harry Wick, Northern Ireland Fish Producers' Organisation  
 Helen Hunter, Defra  
 Jim Evans, Welsh Fishermen's Association  
 Jim Portus, South Western Fish Producers Organisation

John Balls, North Devon Fishermen's Association  
 Julian Roberts, MMO  
 Kirsten Milliken, Seafish  
 Les Lawrence, Dorset Fish and Shellfish Ltd.  
 Lewis Tattersall, Seafish  
 Mark Moore, Dartmouth Crab Company  
 Martyn Youell, Waterdance  
 Matthew Johnson, Defra  
 Mike Roach, Holderness Fishing Industry Group  
 Neil Robson, Genesis Fishing  
 Paul Brown, Brown & Bright Shellfish Ltd.  
 Paul Trebilcock, The Cornish Fish Producers Organisation  
 Sarah Clark, Devon and Severn IFCA  
 Sarah Horsfall, SAGB  
 Steven Williamson, Lynn Shellfish Ltd.  
 Trevor Bartlett, Devon Crab

### Apologies:

Iain Spear, Coombe Fish  
 Patrick Smith, DAERA

## 1. SIAG updates

Members were invited to raise issues and concerns in an open discussion session. The following topics were raised:

### Gear marking

The Cruising Association contacted the SIAG to initiate discussions about the appropriate marking of static gear ends and the possibility of including gear marking/construction on the SIAG agenda to help avoid entanglement. In 2018 the Cruising Association raised a parliamentary petition regarding gear marking; a response was issued by the government which cited existing EU legislation on gear marking.

It was agreed that the SIAG should open dialogue with the Cruising Association about gear marking.

More information on gear marking regulations can be found on the government's guidance note [Marking of fishing gear, retrieval and notification of lost gear.](#)

### The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Defra provided a brief overview of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with a focus on Article 8 on non-quota species.

Article 8 states that "access will be granted to fish non-quota stocks in each other's EEZ at a level that at least equates to the average tonnage fished by that Party during the period 2012-2016". However how non-quota species tonnages are allocated and enforced is to be determined. It was noted that tonnage limits will apply only to UK vessels when fishing in EU waters and vice versa (not UK vessels in UK waters).

To date there have been only preliminary discussions on fishing access and allocation for non-quota species. The SIAG will serve as a forum through which to update members on negotiations.

### **Additional resources for seafood businesses**

The following resources may be useful for WMG members:

1. [UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, December 2020](#) (including summary document and full TCA including Annexes and Protocols)
2. Seafish resources on [UK Exit from the EU](#)
3. Seafish guidance notes for:
  - 3.1 [Seafood exporters](#);
  - 3.2 [Seafood importers](#), and;
  - 3.3 [Seafood catchers/farmers](#).

## **2. Updates from the species management groups**

The SIAG has a standing action to present an update on the work of each species management group at each SIAG meeting.

### **2.1 Crab Management Group (Claire Pescod, Macduff Shellfish & CMG Chair)**

The CMG met on 28 January 2021, the group has progressed work in the following areas:

- A CMG science sub-group has been formed; the purpose of the CMG science sub-group is to understand and steer the scientific research that needs to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the CMG and sustainably manage crab and lobster fisheries;
- Following the end of the transition period here is an opportunity to review and amend the Western Waters effort regime (WWER) legislation to ensure that management is science-based and fit for purpose. The CMG are working with Defra to table a proposed timeline for the review process at the next CMG and will hold a one-off meeting of the CMG dedicated to discussing the WWER in 2021;
- Simon Dixon from the MMO attended the last CMG meeting to discuss latent capacity in the fleet; this work showed that 34% of shellfish entitlements in the fleet in 2019 were unused (recording no shellfish landings). Addressing latent capacity remains a priority for members and a non-paper will be tabled at a future CMG meeting to open discussions on the topic;
- Defra work on assessing the effectiveness of management measures in UK crab and lobster fisheries is progressing well and interim outputs were well received by members;
- Poseidon consultants have provided the CMG with a proposal to undertake a review of UK crab and lobster fisheries. The CMG science sub-group will provide feedback to Poseidon on the proposal.

### **2.2 Whelk Management Group (Aoife Martin, Seafish & WMG Chair)**

The WMG met on 14 January 2021, the group has progressed work in the following areas:

- A WMG science sub-group has been formed; the purpose of the WMG science sub-group is to understand and steer the scientific research that needs to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the WMG and sustainably manage whelk fisheries;
- The WMG held dedicated discussions around the TCA and focused on Articles relating to non-quota species and access;
- Defra work on assessing the effectiveness of management measures in UK whelk fisheries is progressing well and interim outputs were well received by members;
- Emma Dixon-Lack and Chris Rowland from the MMO attended the last WMG meeting to discuss details of the Catch App. The group will explore how Catch App and Seafish economics data could potentially be used to provide a better assessment of whelk fleet performance;

- Work is continuing on a WMG work programme and discussions on managing fishing effort will be included on the agenda of the next WMG meeting.

### **2.3 Scallop Industry Consultation Group (Jim Portus, SWFPO & SICG Chair)**

The SICG met on 10 December 2020, the group has progressed work in the following areas:

- Recent work of the SICG focused on discussions around EU Exit negotiations and preparedness;
- The SICG hold routine discussions on effort limits through the WWER which from 1st January applies only to UK vessels in UK waters;
- In 2020 the SICG responded to a call for evidence on the impact of a temporary closure of the Dogger Bank king scallop fishery; a formal consultation is now underway on the introduction of a byelaw to prohibit the use of all towed fishing gears in the SAC and a buffer zone. The Consultation ends on 28 March 2021 and the SICG is working up its responses.
- The SICG has been working closely with Defra on the development of future management plans, particularly around the proposed tonnage limits laid out in the TCA;
- It is possible that the TCA may impact scallop fisheries operating in EU waters, particularly in the Baie de Seine fishery;
- There are concerns about a possible “race to fish” as the WWER no longer applies to UK vessels in EU waters and there are as yet unknown tonnage limits for the non-TAC species in EU waters.

## **3. Updates from other projects**

### **Future of Our Inshore Fisheries: Mapping inshore fisheries project (Kirsten Milliken, Seafish)**

Future of Our Inshore Fisheries (FOIF) is an industry-led project which aims to transform UK inshore fisheries management by delivering work against five core themes: co-management, collaborative science, credible fisheries management, rights and access, and effective compliance.

A key task of the FOIF project is to establish and pilot a set of co-management principles which outline the different stages of co-management and respective roles of industry and government.

A pilot project is underway, being delivered by Heriot-Watt University, to map inshore fisheries by species, stock and management status. The project will create an open access database where metadata is captured, shared, and updated. Several shellfish species are included in the pilot study including all UK lobster; brown crab in areas 4.a, 6.a and 7.a; and whelk in areas 6.a and 7.a.

Other FOIF work areas include:

- Developing a Harvest Strategy Standard that will guide how inshore fisheries are managed;
- Creating a guide to fisheries plans which explains how fisheries plans could be drafted as per the Fisheries Act 2020 (with the SIAG developing the National Shellfish Fisheries Plan), and;
- Undertaking a review of inshore fishery access measures to determine optimal arrangements.

FOIF is a long-term work programme which shares common goals and ethos with the SIAG. The SIAG and FOIF project will schedule regular updates to identify opportunities for collaboration, transfer knowledge, and avoid duplication of effort in delivering objectives.

## **4. The National Shellfish Fisheries Plan**

The following proposed structure for the National Shellfish Fisheries Plan (NSFP) was presented:

- Introduction – what is the purpose and aim of the NSFP;
- Overview – what is in scope and what is the legislative context;

- Overview of shellfish fisheries – what is the current status of shellfish fisheries, with regards to economic performance, data gathering, stock status, management, and gaps in current knowledge;
- Vision, objectives and outputs of the NSFP, and;
- Implementation – setting annual work plans with specific objectives and monitoring progress, and;
- Timeframe – establishing review periods and establishing critical delivery dates.

Any members interested in being a peer reviewer for the NSFP are asked to volunteer.

## 5. Actions

<b>Action no.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
5.1	Minutes from the WMG and CMG to be shared with all SIAG members (in addition to including a standing agenda item SIAG meetings to provide an update on species management groups)	Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
5.2	Create one-page documents to summarise key messages from each SIAG, and species group, meeting to be uploaded to the Seafish site to raise awareness about the work of each group	Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
5.3	SIAG to write to the Cruising Association to open dialogue regarding appropriate marking of static gear ends	SIAG
5.4	Schedule regular catch up meetings with the FOIF project team	Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
5.5	Ongoing work on the development of the draft National Shellfish Fisheries Plan	Seafish
5.6	Any SIAG members who would like to be part of a group of peer reviewers for the National Shellfish Fisheries Plan should send their details to Seafish	All SIAG members