April 2019

Discard Action Group e-alert – latest developments re the Landing Obligation and gear selectivity
https://www.seafish.org/article/the-discard-action-group

Matters arising from the DAG meeting on 2 April and for further information.
Report produced following the Landing Obligation seminar hosted by the MSC on 6 December 2018. 7 March 2019.
The MSC have released a report on the outputs of a seminar examining the interaction between full implementation of the Landing Obligation with MSC certified fisheries in the EU. This seminar sought to explore questions around how the MSC label can provide continued assurance on sustainability, traceability and legal compliance in EU fisheries, what data and information is required by the independent assessment bodies when taking forward audits and full assessments, and how the MSC Standard can contribute to the CFP objective of gradually eliminating discards? The MSC are keen to engage with partners and others on this important topic.

The MSC has produced guidance on where and how the landing obligation may impact the outcome of a fishery assessment or surveillance audit.

A new mapping app to identify catch and discard hotspots

Hot-Spot Map Explorer survey. Look for survey at the top.
We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete the following short survey to provide feedback on this Hot-Spot Map Explorer. The Map Explorer is currently still in development and your thoughts and input could help to greatly improve this product. This survey should only take 5-10 minutes to complete

The main goal of the workshop was to get feedback on the recommendations contained in a 64-page report produced by The Nature Conservancy and the California Environmental Associates. Catalyzing the Growth of Electronic Monitoring in Fisheries. Building Greater Transparency and Accountability at Sea. Opportunities, Barriers, and Recommendations for Scaling the Technology.
In addition this was an attempt to prioritize opportunities to accelerate the uptake of EM in existing programs and identify emerging opportunities. You can find the presentations from the event here

DiscardLess

New financial assessment calculator makes it easier for fishing industry to compare gear performance. 8 April 2019.
Seafish has added an updated financial assessment calculator to its toolkit for the economic assessment of gear trials. Originally launched in December 2017, the toolkit is a valuable resource for fishermen looking to test the financial viability of new or modified gear. It reduces the business risks involved in transitioning to new gear by helping them decide which fishing gear is the most financially effective for their vessel. The new financial assessment calculator has been designed to be simpler and more user friendly and the first official assessment of a UK gear trial using this tool has now been completed, following testing in 2018. The assessment which took place as part of the final stages of the MFV Amity project was completed with help and support from the Gear Innovation and

Technology Advisory Group (GITAG), run by SFF Services, skipper Philip Reid, vessel owner Jimmy Buchan, and the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation (SFF) and the SFF Services Independent On-board Observer Scheme (IOOS)*. A copy of the toolkit and updated financial assessment calculator is available to download here. For further information about the financial assessment of gear trials contact E: Ana Witteveen

Rising fuel price poses challenge but early economic estimates suggest ‘business as usual’ for the UK fishing fleet in 2018. 1 April 2019.

Seafish has published its latest economic performance estimates for the UK fishing fleet. Based on preliminary landings data, the Seafish Fleet Economic Performance data includes the first economic performance estimates for 2018. The figures show a solid year for the UK fleet, despite the challenge of increasing fuel costs. While there are differences within segments of the fleet, the fleet collectively saw a slight increase in fishing revenues to £978 million in 2018 from £975 million in 2017 (nominal figures.) A 5% decrease in volume of fish landed (down from 720,000 tonnes in 2017 to 690,000 tonnes in 2018) was mitigated by a 5% increase on the average price per tonne landed. At £1,422, the average price per tonne landed is – in nominal terms – at its highest average price in the last ten years.

New interactive tool gives businesses easy access to UK seafood trade and tariff data for the first time. 27 March 2019.

An online system which allows businesses to easily access seafood trade and tariff data has been launched to assist seafood importers and exporters in the UK. The Seafish Trade and Tariff Tool will help seafood businesses through Brexit and beyond. Designed to be user friendly and interactive, the tool allows users to access historical trade data from 2010 to 2018 and current UK tariff data, giving them an overview of seafood markets. The tool will allow users to drill down into trade by product and country, giving businesses a better understanding of the UK seafood market as the UK prepares to leave the EU. The tool contains seafood trade data for human consumption only and is based on HMRC data. The data includes weight, value and country by year and can be displayed year by year, making comparisons easy and allowing businesses to identify trends and opportunities. It has been built using business intelligence and analytics software Tableau. The Seafish Trade and Tariff Tool is available here

Reports


This article is focussed specifically on the French otter trawl fishery in the eastern English Channel and southern North Sea. Results suggest that under the LO the choke species problem will curtail fishing activities earlier in the year, leading to significant economic losses. In the absence of significant quota top-ups (at least 75%), a change in fishing practices consisting in reducing overall bycatch by 30% is insufficient to reduce losses. With a particular attention to choke species, more economically efficient avoidance strategies can be found thanks to the nested grid method.

Feedback


Retaining fishing quotas and supporting a discard ban in principle are two key aspects of a Scottish Government paper on the future of fisheries. Fisheries Secretary Fergus Ewing launched the discussion document and urged those in the industry to have their say on fisheries management in Scotland. The paper sets out the Scottish Government’s vision for the future of fisheries, and priorities include ensuring the UK Government does not trade away access to Scottish waters and
fishing opportunities. Scotland will continue to use fishing quotas as the main way to manage stock, the paper outlines, and these will be in the hands of “active Scottish fishermen”. New entrants to the industry would be encouraged through the creation of additional licences and quota. The document supports the principle of retaining a discard ban, but said this would be adapted to be more “workable”. It also calls on the UK Government to introduce new permits to secure sustainable labour for the fishing industry. The publication of this discussion paper marks the beginning of a longer process of discussion and collaboration which is necessary to ensure that Scotland’s Future Fisheries Management Strategy is developed in partnership and is representative of wider stakeholder views. We will, therefore, want to engage with you on some bold and new initiatives and we would welcome your responses and ideas to shape how we will manage our fisheries and our catching policy going forward. Responses and comment should be sent to Citizen Space here by 7 June 2019.

This is an amalgamation of the news alerts issued in April 2019.