Minutes of Seafood Industry Leadership Group (SILG) meeting held at St. Pancras Meeting Rooms, Wednesday 7 November 2018

Attendees
Alison Austin, Chair
Kim Cullen, Secretary
Aoife Martin, Seafish
Ben Franks, Young Seafood Leadership Programme
James Fowey, Aquaculture sector
Victoria Cook, Foodservice and Hospitality sector
Nathan de Rozarieux, Processing sector (Commercial), sitting in for Mark Greet
Paul Trebilcock, Producers Organisation
Nigel Edwards, Processing sector (Technical & CSR)
Andrew Pascoe, Catching sector
Stuart Caborn, Processing sector (Procurement)
Ally Dingwall, Retail sector

1. Welcome, introductions, and apologies
Alison Austin (non-Exec Seafish Board and Chair of SILG) welcomes everyone to the meeting

Apologies
Debbie Cook, Seafish; Mark Greet, Processing sector (Commercial); Nicola Robinson, Defra

2. SF 2040 Vision, role and ways of working
Papers were sent round and tabled including the SF2040 Strategic Framework, the SILG Terms of Reference, the travel and reimbursement policy, and lists of all the recommendations as well as those for SILG alone. No comments were made at the meeting on the TOR, SSIG, role of Defra or relationship between ALG and SILG but attendees are asked formally to comment in writing to the Secretariat.

Action: ALL - Confirm agreement of TOR, SSIG, role of Defra and relationship between ALG and SILG.

3. Prioritised recommendations for years 1 & 2
Kim explained that as well as overseeing the delivery of the 25 SF2040 recommendations, SILG has direct responsibility for recommendations 1-3, 13, 15, and 17. They range from supporting the increased enhancement of business capability across the industry to establishing an aquaculture leadership group and an infrastructure task and finish group.

Underpinning the framework’s recommendations is the push to increase seafood consumption to 2 portions per person per week which will have a direct impact on the industry, particularly the aquaculture sector (domestically and internationally), to meet that demand. Discussion centred on better understanding the impact across the whole of the industry from the catching and aquaculture sectors to the processing and retail sector. Further knowledge on the flows of the fish supply chain and in particular what England is sourcing, producing and what people are consuming are all required in order to understand how to meet that target.

Action: KC (and Seafish) - Seek to better set out the challenge of meeting 2 portions per week per person.

4. Specific recommendations already underway
Kim, Aoife and Alison explained that work is already underway for several of the SF2040 recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Action Plan will be agreed by the SILG and then Kim as Project Manager will manage its delivery. Secretariat has been established in the form of Kim and support from a Seafood Executive Director. Initial funding has been secured and further funding bids are currently being worked on in readiness for
submission by the end of November. Kim has established a working relationship with the MMO and the Seafish Executive Director has also been keeping the MMO up-to-date.

Recommendation 2: Seafish Expert Panel currently being established and will then pick up this work.

Recommendation 4: The Seafish Marketing Manager, Leanne Muldowney (LM), is commissioning the nutritional profile work. Alison and Debbie Cook have met with Defra and Public Health England (PHE) earlier in 2018 and Alison has spent time with Defra to understand how SF2040 might influence the Balanced Score Card. Both contacts should be renewed and work progressed. LM has also had meetings with PHE to promote the 2 a week message and better understand how we can work together. This work will continue.

Recommendation 6: The Marketing Optimization Group (MOG) has been established with Marketeers attending from Youngs, Birds Eye, Clearwater, AHDB, Direct Seafoods, International Fish Canners and LUX marketing agency. The MOG met on 8th October and will meet again in January to continue their discussions around reviewing the impact of a population shift to 2 a week seafood consumption. The MOG has formally accepted that they will advise and guide the SF2040 recommendations allocated to them.

Recommendation 7: The MOG has already started the work to build a shared understanding of the barriers and opportunities around seafood, based on research already commissioned by Seafish. This work will continue.

Recommendations 8 and 9: These are Medium to Long-term recommendations however LM and KC have already started thinking about further EMFF funding to support this work. This is work which is already ongoing across the UK, led by Seafish but a successful EMFF application will allow this England-only additional work to be undertaken. The MOG will shape this work.

Recommendation 11: Seafish is actively working within this topic. Bill Lart at Seafish has begun a stocktake of the fish stock assessments currently underway. The discussion highlighted how important this area is to progress in a co-ordinated manner and at pace.

Action: KC – to work with AA and AM to consider the best way SILG can add value to this challenge.

Recommendation 19: Seafish is doing lots of work in this area – e.g. online tariff tool and a horizon scanning piece. Malcom Large, Seafish, has established regional Export Forums as a better option to creating one large group. The first one was held the day before the UK Seafood Summit (i.e. 17.10.18) and attended by 150 delegates. A South West event was held in early November. This work can be re-visited if the SILG are of the view that a different approach should be taken to meet the needs of the commercial exporting sector.

Action: ALL – Consider Seafish current approach and communicate to KC/AA if there are unmet needs for existing and potential exporters.

Recommendation 20: To date this work has also been picked up by Malcolm. Defra is keen to see SF2040, Seafish and themselves work together on the ‘Food is Great’ campaign. Seafish and the Department of International Trade are working together to ensure that seafood is better represented in the ‘Great’ campaign.

5. EMFF bids - priorities

Recommendations 6-9: LM and KC are actively pursuing potential consultancies to progress this work and have formulated a plan for a staged bid to submit for EMFF funding which would enable further work on the recommendations. SF2040 recommendations include developing a consumer growth strategy with 1 and 5 year action plans, creating a domestic market demand for a wider variety of English-caught species.
Recommendation 11: Robust and accurate data on fish stock supplies would increase the sustainability within aquaculture and wild catch fisheries. Further EMFF funding could bring the current information together, summarise a helicopter view, and identify the gaps and a way forward noting plans of different players.

Recommendation 13: The SF2040 Strategic Framework highlights the need to deliver an English Aquaculture Growth Strategy, with Government supported growth targets and a revised short, medium and long term delivery plan. KC is working with Seafish and James Fox-Davies, Chair of the Aquaculture Leadership Group and member of the SILG, to consider a bid.

Recommendation 15: KC and AA are moving forward to establish an infrastructure task and finish group with representatives from across the ports, auctions, and other seafood industry facilities. Beforehand, there is an EMFF bid to consider around mapping existing facilities against current and future needs across the entire seafood value chain (and using any work that’s already been done) and linking with relevant development bodies such as LEPs. Another funding opportunity could be to commission a feasibility study into agreed seafood grading standards between boats and auctions, and propose recommendations.

Recommendation 16: A potential EMFF bid in the future could be a gap analysis of the skills, recruitment and retention needs and issues cross the entire value chain. It is important to know where and what the gaps are.

Action for all of section 5: KC/AA with AM - Consider priorities for EMFF bids and circulate a short paper to SILG members.

6. Next steps and AOB

SILG will be kept abreast of EMFF bid work programme. How we measure success will be on the next agenda. KC to email a list of future meeting dates in order to lock in the SILG calendar for the rest of the 2-year project.

Action: KC/AA - Circulate EMFF bid work programme.
Action: KC - Circulate future meeting dates to determine future SILG calendar.