

REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUP

Meeting Notes 6th September 2022

South 7d

15:00 – 17:00 MS Teams Conference Call

Attendees:

Industry

Charlie Brock
Graham Laurence
Grant Horsburgh
Martin Hawks
Neil Whitney
Richard Stride
Jim Partridge

Recreational anglers:

David Curtis

MMO:

Eleanor Holford
Courtney Inch
Katie James
Paul Johnson
Ed Baker
Jess Duffill Telsnig
Courtney Inch

Defra:

Andy Carrol
Phil McBryde
Ross Deadman
Thamy Duffield
Alex Maydew
Katie McNally
Freya Mitchison
Lydia Osbourne

MCA:

Laurence Capstick
Javed Munir

IFCA

Tim Dapling
Sarah Birchenough

Cefas:

Sophy Philips

Seafish:

Felix Aneye
Lewis Tattersal

1. Welcome and Action – Paul Johnson, MMO

Actions since previous meetings:

- Upon request today, the FMP teams have returned who are leading on the channel non quota species FMP and the shellfish FMP. Defra have also come to discuss fly-seining as requested at the last meeting.

Other positive updates:

- **Skills and Training funding:** Round One of the [UK Seafood Fund Skills and Training scheme](#) has opened for applications. You will be able to apply for a grant until the 12th October 2022. Further details can be found on the scheme's [webpage](#). Round One is for improving

or creating training courses or specialised training equipment. Round Two which we expect to open in the Autumn will be for constructing or modernising training centres. Email was sent around on Friday with contact details but if anyone wants any more details, please do get in touch.

- **Fisheries and Seafood Scheme funding:** In a separate RFG the issue of under 12m trawlers being exempt from the FaSS Health & Safety funding was raised . We’ve taken this away and can now confirm that FaSS have now enhanced and equalised the funding rates available to fund health and safety projects for the small-scale coastal fleet. This means that now *any* vessel with a length of 12 metres or less will be eligible for a funding rate of up to 80% for health and safety projects – regardless of the type of gear used.
- Department for Transport have recently announced a support package for seafarers, including [£2.4 million funding to support seafarers’ mental wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/2-4-million-to-support-seafarers-mental-wellbeing). The Merchant Navy Welfare Board, who are administering the £2.4m fund, welcomes grants that support fishers and have previously awarded funding in this area. The grant guidelines state that the MNWB ‘supports the provision of quality welfare services for serving or retired seafarers’. This is also their mission statement and the wording seafarers is inclusive of fishers. More details can be found on the website, and the link will be provided in the meeting notes.

Other updates:

- **Fuel:** Number of people have asked about fuel. Like many sectors, the fishing industry is facing challenges as a result of global fuel prices. Vessels can utilise the Marine Voyages Relief which provides 100% relief on their fuel duty costs. Defra is continuing to engage with industry to discuss ongoing challenges and potential long-term mitigations, and we are working closely with Seafish, to refine their modelling to understand the potential impact on the fleet of fuel price increases. On top of the fuel duty relief the UK fishing sector receives, the UK Government has offered substantial funding to the fishing sector and continues to do so with funds like the £100 million UK Seafood Fund on top of schemes such as the FaSS (in England). FaSS provides extensive grant funding to fishing businesses, including through projects to enhance energy efficiency on vessels. For example, the scheme can fund investments to improve the hydrodynamics of the hulls of vessels or to reduce electricity or thermal energy consumption. Generous levels of funding have been made available to small fishing businesses – with up to 80% funding available to members of the small-scale coastal fleet and up to 60% for other micro-entities.
- **Highly Marine Protect Areas, Defra consultation:**

Dolphin Head candidate HPMA		
Briefing and Q&A	Wednesday 24 August 11am – 12:30pm	Online
Presentation and open forum	Wednesday 14 September 5:30pm – 7:30pm	Portsmouth Guildhall Guildhall Square, Portsmouth. PO1 2AB
Drop-in session	Thursday 15 September 9am – 5:30pm	Portsmouth Guildhall Guildhall Square, Portsmouth. PO1 2AB

Focus Group	Thursday 22 September 10am – 12pm	Click here to join the meeting
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Question: many EU vessels are unhappy as there is confusion HPMA's would only exclude EU vessels. This is not the case, and they are out for consultation. Some fishermen feel HPMA's are unfairly penalising the fishing industry.

2. Quota - Katie James, MMO

- **Latent capacity**
 - Temporary lift of the under-10m licence cap from 1 August 2022. The cap on some under-10m vessels which restricts their uptake to no more than 350kg per year of quota stocks will be temporarily lifted for the remainder of 2022. This is being done to facilitate uptake of available quota and as an exercise to make an initial test for any unexpected consequences of lifting the cap more permanently.
- **Additional quota**
 - The MMO were able to temporarily offer vessels with Cat B and Cat C licences additional quota: Offer of additional quota to vessels with Category B and C licences. Over 10m vessels with Category B or C licences have a limited number of quota stocks for which they can fish. Under this scheme, those vessels were able to apply for one-time offer of access to more opportunities for the remainder of 2022. This has now closed but hopefully those who wanted to took advantage of this uplift.

See Annex 1

Question: what is Defra reading into the amount of uptake given that many capped vessels will need to invest in new gear and the uncapping is temporary until the end of the year?

Response: Defra has considered this is a barrier to some and is undertaking a general licencing review. If anyone has any ideas or comments on licencing generally, please contact: Lydia.Osborne@defra.gov.uk

3. MCA Q&A - Laurence Capstick & Javed Munir, MCA

Question: The MCA is experiencing considerable opposition from the fishermen over the surveys. This is a pity because we are both meant to be on the same safe side. I believe much of the problem is caused by lack of constructive communication. Sometimes the MCA is author of its own lack of respect unnecessarily, for example: under risk assessment it asks about crabs biting. This is absolutely pointless, we all get nipped by crabs and the rest of the crew just laugh. However, I have never heard of a crab BITING, so the question is technically incorrect in the first place. It doesn't lead fishermen to have confidence in the rest of the survey.

Response: MCA to take away and feedback directly.

Question: Putting emergency stop in 3 places on deck anywhere with hydraulic appliance. No one would be in the wheelhouse but the MCA required them to move the emergency stop buttons to wheel house.

Response: MCA to investigate this case. These issues should be raised with the surveyor, the MCA takes a flexible approach to explain the alternative systems in place on the vessel to meet the requirement.

Question: MMO licencing rule say industry need to buy more tonnage in cases where the tonnage of a vessel is increased to comply with MCA regulations. Is safety tonnage still available?

Response: no not now but could come into the licencing review.

Question: it can appear random, the issues which come up on the day of the survey despite the codes are published online. The fishing industry are frustrated at the additional burdens and the tying up of boats which do not comply. Many boats are having to make modifications to vessels which have proved themselves seaworthy over decades, which leads fisherman to believe that the legislation is designed to catch them out.

Responses: the regulations are adapted from ILO legislation. The MCA do not things the regulations are one size fits all, surveyors may not make decisions on the day but there are groups of surveyors which can look at alternative arrangements to meet criteria. The vast majority do comply.

4. Defra Quota consultation – Ross Deadman, Defra



Defra Quota
Consultation slides.

This part of the consultation is an opportunity for you to help decide how we apportion **additional quota** between the four UK fisheries administrations beyond 2023. We want to ensure that quota is shared fairly and benefits all parts of the UK. Recognise quota is a zero sum game and may require compromise. **We are not changing how we apportion our existing share of quota. This will continue to be based primarily on FQA units. Please see the slides for details.**

Do you have any views you would like to share with us now, or any questions?

- To submit your response, please see.
- Do you have any views you would like to share with us now, or any questions?
- To submit your response, please see.
- **Citizen Space:** [Consultation on Managing Quota in 2023 and Beyond - Defra - Citizen Space](#)
- **By post:** Consultation Coordinator, Defra, 2nd Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX
- **By email:** quota@defra.gov.uk
- Please let us have your comments by 19 September 2022.

Comment: U10 non-sector got a bad deal from FQAs. The additional quota could be used to address this imbalance.

Question: Where does the money go? Can fishers trust the government to use it to explore new fishing opportunities?

5. Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species Fisheries Management Plan – Jess Duffill Telsnig, MMO

MMO are leading on one of the 6 frontrunners that Defra are producing, which is the Channel demersal non-quota species FMP.

This covers ICES areas 7 d and 7e, it covers demersal Non quota species. This was highlighted as an important plan due to over exploitation of some stocks and lack of data for other stocks. We are leading on talking with interested stakeholders to gain a full picture of the demersal non-quota demersal species in the Channel. We will gather evidence from various sources and use this to help us steer what we will include in the FMP. We are looking to have regular engagement with stakeholders to keep people informed and involved with the development of the FMP.

There are several non-quota demersal species listed withing the JFS such as red, tub and grey gurnards, cuttlefish, squid, octopus, John dory, red mullet and lesser spotted dogfish.

Industry led working group is being set up and will have its first meeting in September. If you have any further queries, please contact: fmp@marinemanagement.org.uk



7d NQS FMP
August 2022.pdf

Question: how can these species be accommodated in one plan?

Response: plan is to select a few species for the first iteration and then possibly have other species as different chapters. But MMO are still considering the best approach. The rationale for looking at multiple fisheries is because it reflected the nature of mixed fisheries in the UK.

6. Shellfish Fisheries Management Plan – Lewis Tattersal, Seafish



RFG Shellfish FMP
update 06092022.ppt

New stakeholder engagement events will serve two purposes:

- **Raising awareness** of the FMP development process, timeline, and legislative framework, and;
- **Encouraging active engagement** in the FMP development process and gathering feedback from stakeholders with an interest in target fisheries in English / Welsh waters, to help shape and refine FMP content
- Giving stakeholders the opportunity to comment on draft objectives and management interventions, **not** gathering initial information to create content.

Comment: on crab mortality. Seafish should consider the impact of dredging, mobile gear, and other sectors which impact the crab stocks.

7. Fly seining Defra consultation- Phil McBryde, Defra



Demersal NQS
flyseining consultati

The proposals in this consultation relate to the impact of flyseine activity in English waters and focus on:

- extending current measures (such as applying the 221kw/ restrictions for beam trawlers in the English 0-12nm to flyseine gear); and/or
- amending or reviewing existing restrictions (such as the 40mm mesh size derogation for directed squid fishery); and/or
- bringing in new measures (such as restricting fleet capacity or rope diameter and/or rope length for flyseining gear).

The proposed technical measures would apply to all UK and EU vessels in English waters only.

The expectation is that any new technical measures in English waters could come into effect during 2023.

Link to the consultation: [Fisheries: managing flyseine vessel pressure on demersal non-quota fish stocks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/fisheries-managing-flyseine-vessel-pressure-on-demersal-non-quota-fish-stocks). Closing date is 23.59 on 16 November 2022.

Question: could new measures be in by Spring?

Response: if the decision is a licencing condition, potentially yes but note government response may not be published until mid-February. But if it's a Statutory Instrument then probably not. Will continue to look at potential implementation tools in parallel.

Meeting Closed

Annex 1

<u>Stock</u>	<u>Comments U10</u>	<u>Comments O10</u>
Cod VIId	No comment	No comment
Plaice VIId & e	No comment	No comment
Skates & Rays VIId	<p>Is anyone fishing near 2t? Will know in the next 2 weeks. November and December is when some 7d fishers rely on it so would be good to keep some stock for the end of the year. Review second week in October. Keep at 2t for now and put it up on November, December. Prices aren't good at the moment which may also be why some aren't catching it.</p>	No comment
Undulate Ray VIId & e	No comment	No comment
Sole VIId	No comment	No comment
Western Mackerel	No comment	No comment
Herring IVc & VIId	No comment	No comment