

# REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUP

## Meeting Notes 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### North East 4b

15:00 – 17:00 MS Teams Conference Call

#### Attendees:

##### DEFRA

Matt Darlison  
Abby Johns  
Thamy Duffield  
Louise Farmer  
Matthew Radford

##### MMO

Katie James  
Andy Wills  
Emily Theobald  
Tim Dixon  
Eleanor Holford  
Patrick Gray

##### IFCA

Mark Southerton  
Tim Smith

##### CEFAS

Ewan Bell

##### INDUSTRY

Jo Ackers  
Andrew Faichney  
Fredrick Griffin  
Kevin Henderson  
Stan Rennie  
Brian Dunn  
David Wilkins  
Tom Yale

#### **1. Introductions – Patrick Gray, MMO**

Update from the National meeting January 20<sup>th</sup> 2022:

- Bass FMP will begin consultation this year as Defra want to develop the management of bass and are asking industry to contribute.
- Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS) – Defra has launched a 12-week consultation on the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS) which sets out the legally binding policies the UK Government and Devolved Governments will follow, at a UK level and individually, to create this vision for the fishing industry. The [consultation](#), running from January 18th to April 12th, will welcome views from industry and all those interested and affected by the proposed policies. You can read the full statement, including key objectives, [here](#). Stakeholders can send their questions to [jointfisheriesstatement.consultation@defra.gov.uk](mailto:jointfisheriesstatement.consultation@defra.gov.uk)

Traceability project mentioned at the last RFG via the MMO Evidence team: **Fisheries Traceability**

- Fishers and businesses involved in England's seafood sector are invited to have their say on traceability in the industry. Learn more and complete the survey by clicking on the following link: <https://bit.ly/3GD1g4x>

FMP update from Defra:

- We have moved into a delivery stage regarding the FMPs and have identified six frontrunners and subsequent delivery partners who will be charged with drafting the FMPs.
- We are finalising a toolkit, evidence strategy and engagement plan to help support the FMP development process.

## 2. Quota – Sarah Allison, MMO

See presentation provided for the meeting and comments in Appendix 1.

Reminder to contact [InshoreQuotaManager@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:InshoreQuotaManager@marinemanagement.org.uk) with questions and quota enquires.

Industry raised the impact that the sandeel fishery and heavy fishing by Danish vessels on the NE bank in May and June is having on birds, seals and the fish. There was a Defra consultation on sandeels last year which NIFCA contributed to.

**ACTION:** Eleanor Holford to find out the results on consultation and feedback to the group.

## 3. IVMS – Andy Wills, MMO

Legislation is due to come into force which will make it a legal requirement for all vessels under 12 metres in length to have an inshore vessel monitoring system (I-VMS) installed and transmitting data to the MMO when they are at sea in English waters. This is part of the Government's strategy to improve data collection to support development of more responsive fisheries management measures and practices that will enable industry to benefit from leaving the Common Fisheries Policy.

- Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inshore-vessel-monitoring-i-vms-for-under-12m-fishing-vessels-registered-in-england>
- News story: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/inshore-vessel-monitoring-systems-in-2022>
- One stop shop: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1044850/IVMS\\_On\\_stop\\_shop\\_FINAL\\_050122.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1044850/IVMS_On_stop_shop_FINAL_050122.pdf)

Any I-VMS queries should be directed to the mailbox: [IVMS@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:IVMS@marinemanagement.org.uk)

*Why does industry have to have a device fitted when many fish in the same areas?*

To get more accurate data to inform better policy and improve management. Data about the location, scale and seasonality of fishing effort from the majority of English fishers will give the industry powerful information they can use when presenting their case for example in planning consents for marine development, fisheries management or resolution of gear conflict issues with other marine users. Many fishers work in sensitive areas and the data will help IFCA and MMO manage these areas.

*There are cheaper devices which include airtime, why can't these be used?*

The type approval process was open to all suppliers to submit a device, costs etc but no cheaper devices were approved either because they were not presented or they did not meet the criteria.

*What's the point of putting a device on a 6m boat which only fishes 2 miles from the shore?*

The Statutory Instrument requires boats under 12 meters to have an IVMS device fitted. Some smaller boats do fish in sensitive areas and this requirement will mean the MMO have access to better data which will inform better policy.

*There are other devices for less money which include airtime for £30 per year? These could be given out for free as they cost much less than £650 and airtime would be covered by the grant.*

The type approval process was open to all suppliers to submit a device, there are cheaper products available but none were approved. The roll out gives fishers choice of products and allows them to choose the most suitable device for their vessel.

*Why are you asking fishers to pay £650 at this time of year when many boats are not earning due to the time of year, weather, and maintenance etc?*

The grant funding can only be processed through reclaiming once fishers have receipts and invoices. The MMO acknowledges that this is difficult but it's the way the process works unfortunately. Some suppliers are offering free airtime and installation.

#### **4. Annual Review of the RFG – Eleanor Holford, MMO**

The Terms of Reference are very flexible, and the groups are designed to be driven by industry. If industry have feedback on how the groups are run, please send an email ([regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk)) or call Emily or Eleanor. The RFG team will be sending round a survey for fishers to complete, we would appreciate you taking 5 minutes to complete it. We plan to hold the next RFG meeting in May in person, with the option to dial-in through Teams.

#### **5. Industry**

Crab and lobster mortality in Teesside:

The investigation started September/October 2021 and was managed by the EA. Since then, Defra have taken over and are currently coordinating the investigation to try and find the cause of the incident. Lines of enquiry which Defra are clear are probably not the cause:

- Chemical contamination (discharges, dredging, sediment sampling, contaminants in the water column, cyanide).

- Disease, chemicals, licenced activities at the time of the incident.
- Pyridine contamination – scientists are fairly clear that this is not the cause of this incident.

The current hypothesis is that the incident was caused by a harmful algae bloom – satellite images show a bloom which produced toxins that can impact crustaceans. This has happened before in other parts of the world.

Defra are working to keep industry updated on the developments of the investigation as they have been criticised for not updating fishers in a timely manner. Defra are using various bulletins and the Whitby Fishers Association to keep fishers updated. Defra have seen the report commissioned by the Whitby Fishers Association and are in discussions with the Defra scientists about the findings.

Stan Rennie reported two incidents of pollution to the EA in the weeks before the crab and lobster mortality, which to his knowledge were not investigated. The EA report on the algae bloom includes a picture taken by Stan Rennie which shows the dust from a scrap boat.

**ACTION:** Louise Farmer to investigate both incidents reported by Stan.

Louise Farmer reassured the group that the data used to prove the harmful algal bloom hypothesis is based on multiple sources of data.

*Have you established the problems came from the Tees?*

No, Defra have modelled the events and have not established that the problem came from the Tees.

**ACTION:** Defra investigation bulletin on the Tees crustacean deaths to be sent to the group.

In September dead razor bills and guillemots were washed up on the shoreline around Amble at the same time of the crab and lobster crab mortality. There is scientific literature on events from other areas of the world that shows a harmful algae bloom can impact bird populations.

## **6. Catch App – Katie James, MMO**

**ACTION:** Katie James to feedback ideas for changes to the Catch app to the Catch Recording team.

For the port you leave and the port you return to to be auto filled for fishers who just go out for the day and the addition of a box for notes.

Fishers with under-10m vessels who are not yet submitting their data to MMO via the Catch Recording app are urged to download and familiarise themselves with this software as soon as possible.

A link to this app can be found in the invitation sent by MMO to all under-10m vessel owners. If you didn't receive this, or need assistance setting the app up, you should call our dedicated helpline on the number below.

**Contact Centre: 0300 0203 788**

From **28th February 2022**, we will begin enforcing the associated licence condition, in line with [our Compliance and Enforcement strategy](#). More details on the PowerPoint below.

## **7. UK Seafood Fund: Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships scheme – Matt Darlison, Defra**

The [FISP scheme](#) will improve and share knowledge of fisheries and aquaculture by funding data collection and research to support sustainable fisheries management. This will be done through collaboration between the fishing and seafood industry and research organisations.

The FISP scheme and the existing Seafood Innovation Fund share the £24 million of funding allocated to the science and innovation part of the UK Seafood Fund.

To get funding, you must either bid for a contract or apply for a grant.

Contracts of up to £300,000 are available to carry out a full research project. Grants of up to £20,000 are available to develop research proposals.

Here is a more detailed breakdown of the FISP funding areas. The ITA (FISP Part A) and ITT (FISP Part B) from the first funding round which provides full detail on scheme and applicant requirements.



The **FISP Network** delivered in collaboration between Fishing in the Future, Fishmongers and Fishing Animateurs is a platform that supports with identifying ideas aligned with FISP objectives and funding areas, connecting industry with scientists and support with writing a proposal and matched funding. Further information can be found on the link:

- <https://youtu.be/jQVY9pHJWz8>
- <https://www.fishinganimateur.co.uk/>.

The first funding round awards has been published, read more about this here:

- [£1.4m delivered to projects supporting sustainable fishing and fisheries science across the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [FISP projects - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [FISP projects: organisations that have been awarded grants and contracts in round 1 of the scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The second round of funding opens 2<sup>nd</sup> March and closes midday 25<sup>th</sup> April.

### **UK Seafood - Infrastructure scheme**

At least £65 million in grant funding is available through the Infrastructure Scheme. The scheme will fund projects that build capacity across the UK fishing sector supply chain through investment in:

- ports

## Official Sensitive

- processing
- aquaculture infrastructure

This is a competitive scheme. To get funding, you must bid for a grant. Each successful applicant will be awarded a minimum of £250,000 and maximum of £5 million.

You can apply for funding if you're involved in fishing, processing or aquaculture and are:

- an organisation, business or charity
- a trade association
- a public body or local authority with a focus on activities including ports and using funds for environmental improvements or management of fisheries
- a consortium
- an officially recognised producer organisation

The scheme opens for applications the week beginning 7 March 2022. The application form and supporting documents will be available from this page.

If you have any questions in the meantime you can email: [uksfinfrastructure@defra.gov.uk](mailto:uksfinfrastructure@defra.gov.uk)



INFRAS WEBINAR  
aqua copy.pptx

## Feedback from industry

- Some industry members would prefer grants were made available for day-to-day needs e.g. engines.
- Others felt that grants should cover port side infrastructure.
- There was frustration from industry that the minimum grant figures were too high, the grants were not focused on developing a sustainable fishery and that the inshore fleet would not benefit from these in terms of the price fishers get for their catch.
- Defra are still developing the criteria for future rounds of funding to make it more accessible.

## 8. AOB - Patrick Gray, MMO

Industry would like the MMO to better manage the engine power of the potting fleet.

Industry would like the MMO to sort out the berried lobster regulations.

**ACTION:** Eleanor and Emily to investigate these points.

**Meeting closed**

**Next meeting: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

**Appendix 1**

<b>Stock</b>	<b>U10's Comments</b>	<b>O10's comments</b>
<b>NS Cod</b>	<p>Smaller Cod, lots of issues with seals. Keen to keep up catch limits as people maybe turn to netting due to the crustacean die-off on the NE.</p> <p>Industry want to keep some quota available as more turn to netting due to the crustacean die-off in Teesside.</p> <p>Lack of sandeels is the issue end of April and May Danish fishers.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> to find results of the Defra consultation.</p>	<p>Industry want to keep some quota available as more turn to netting due to the crustacean die-off in Teesside.</p>
<b>NS Anglers</b>	No comments	No comments
<b>NS Mackerel</b>	<p>This is a summer stock and industry want quota available for the summer. Last year was a bad season for mackerel – hoping for a better season this year.</p>	No comments
<b>NS Nephrops</b>	No comments	No comments
<b>NS Skates &amp; Rays</b>	No comments	No comments
<b>NS Plaice</b>	No comments	No comments
<b>NS Sole</b>	No comments	No comments
<b>NS Whiting</b>	No comments	No comments