

# REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUP

Meeting Notes Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

## North West

15:00 – 17:00 Microsoft Teams Conference Call

### Attendees:

#### MMO

Sarah Allison – Quota Team  
Ed Baker – Quota team  
Eleanor Holford – Regional Fisheries  
Richard Hoskins - Head of Fisheries and Marine Conservation  
Katie James – Quota team  
Chris Sweeting – Evidence Team  
Mark Taylor – NW PMO  
Elizabeth Wyatt – NW SMO

#### DEFRA

Andy Carroll – Inshore reform  
Lydia Osborne - Inshore reform  
Paul Harvey – Quota management  
Emma Westling – Social researcher

#### CEFAS

Jim Ellis – Director  
Carl O'Brien – Chief Advisor

#### IFCA

Stephen Atkins

#### INDUSTRY

Andy Bynam  
Steven Brown  
Phil Capper  
Paul Fagan  
Stu Fagan  
Ron Graham  
Kevin Lewney  
Brian Philipson  
Thomas Watson  
Simon Ward

#### SeaFish

Rebecca Treacy

1. Chair Welcome & Introductions - Mark Taylor, MMO
2. Quota management – Presentation - Katie James, 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.

3. Community Schemes – Paul Harvey, DEFRA

The aim is to pilot a new process/management approach for fisheries in England. They are looking for ideas from you on how this should work, what can be learned from the current system, and what

should be done differently. There is more information about the schemes on the questionnaire document. If you know anyone who might be interested, please send this information onto them.

Please return the completed questionnaires to Paul Harvey: [Paul.Harvey@defra.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Harvey@defra.gov.uk) and if you have any questions please also contact Paul Harvey by email or phone 07769285656.



~~Official Sensitive~~  
~~Expression of In...~~

#### **4. Industry discussion**

Industry would like the RFG's to reflect issues which directly and currently affect the North West. Industry suggested a monthly meeting with the MMO Quota team with a representative from each port to discuss the coming months quota.

**ACTION:** Quota team to discuss.

Question about the science behind Bass by-catch rules as there seems to be an abundance. Defra are aware of and considering requests from industry to review the amount of bass that can be caught but nothing has been finalised yet. Defra have meet with industry to discuss how policy, science and industry can collaborate on to collect usable data to help inform future policy decisions and Bass is being considered as a potential front runner, Fisheries Management Plan.

There are fundamental structural issues the North West industry is facing. Despite the variety of problems for the industry in the NW there are some common themes:

- Markets – prices that the fish commands in the NW are lower than in other regions.
- Transport – geographically isolated.
- Vessel upkeep - technical measures (iVMS, gear specifications).
- Local market development - Fishers believe there is a lack of Buy-in from local authority. Co-ordination of activity between industry and local authority needs to be improved
- Access to fisheries.

#### **Possible Solutions:**

- Feasibility study - will be carried out to develop a vision for the NW commercial fishing sector. This will look at what the issues are, find a common vision and work towards it to ensure that future projects will be relevant and adequately address the issues raised. The study would involve the industry, local authorities, Seafish, Defra, IFCA's, processors etc.

**ACTION:** MMO would like this to be carried out as soon as possible.

Funding is needed to get this started. This may come from government or external sources. This would need to be spent in the right areas through working with industry.

- PO - possibility of forming a PO for the NW U10's. This would be a lot of work but would give industry ownership and an opportunity to share knowledge.

- Suggestion that a Fisher from each Port to meet with Quota Managers monthly to discuss coming month's quotas

**ACTION:** Katie James to discuss with industry

- Community Quota Management scheme.

**ACTION:** The feasibility study was agreed to be a good idea. Richard Hoskin to meet with Barrie Deas (NFFO) and Ron Graham and pull a small group together to commission the study and ensure there is funding available. Richard Hoskins will feedback the progress of the study at February meeting. If anyone would like to be involved, please contact [Regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:Regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk)

In Cornwall there is a scheme where the country council, marketers, processors, and fishers are all linked up to improve the industry in the SW.

**ACTION:** RFG team to find a representative from the Cornish scheme to come to a NW RFG meeting and explain how it works and whether a similar scheme could work to the NW. The group was unsure whether this would be useful or if a representative from the South East would be more appropriate as the fisheries are more similar.

Plaice 7a discard ban Exemption which is an issue in the nephrops fishery. Industry discussed the proposed technical measures contained the fishing gear requirements and landing obligation 2021. If there is an interest Defra and Cefas policy team could take this forward for dispensation. There is scientific data from the Irish sea but to get the exemption would require and full discard assessment.

**ACTION:** Mark Taylor to explore getting dispensation with DEFRA.

## **5. Collaborative science - Carl O'Brien, CEFAS**

Why is there no Seabass nursery in Morecombe Bay?

There was not enough data to look at another nursery area. There is a Bass nursesey at Heysham and this seems to be doing a good job.

IFCA are planning a small fish survey which could be used to collect data and the potential for a Bass nursery in Morecombe.

**ACTION:** Mark Taylor and Steve Brown to raise with the NWIFCA.

**ACTION:** Mark Taylor to speak to IFAC about 27 permits for netting Bass.

## **6. National Representatives – Lydia Osborne, DEFRA**

We are looking for representatives from this group to attend a national RFG meeting. They would need to attend meetings online and then feed back to the wider RFG.

The purpose of the national meeting is to bring together the regions a few times a year to provide a platform to distribute messages about policy of national interest. We have only held one since disbanding the Inshore Working Group so we'll be looking to hold one again in next few months. The purpose and definition of these meetings can still be moulded by the RFGs.

Propose to have chairs of RFGs and industry at the national meeting. Industry would like this item to be considered further when/if an industry chair for the Regional Fisheries Groups is chosen.

If anyone has ideas for agenda items or how you would like this to work, please contact: [regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk)

## **7. Whelks – Rebecca Treacy, Seafish**

Whelk Management Group is led by industry and was created due to the expansion of the Whelk fishery. Its membership includes fishers, POs, fishermen's associations, academia.

For those interested in joining the group please contact [Rebecca.Treacy@seafish.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Treacy@seafish.co.uk)

Key work areas of work the group:

- Stock assessment
- Establishing stock boundaries
- How Whelks interact with other species
- Bait sourcing and provisioning
- Marketing issues.



WMG RFG slides  
021121.pptx

---

## **8. AOB**

Would the group like Project UK Nephrops to attend the next RFG?

**ACTION:** potential agenda item for February RFG.

Possibility of a NW FMP are still being discussed at DEFRA.

Industry requested an update on the Bass science.

**ACTION:** Emily Theobald to speak CEFAS and DEFRA for an update.

### **Meeting Closed**

### **Next meeting**

8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 – if there are any issues you would like added to the agenda in the meantime please email [regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk)

The next meeting may be in person with the option to attend via Teams.

**Appendix 1**

Stock	U10's Comments	O10's comments
<b>Cod VIIa</b>	Moved to a quarterly catch limit – 300kgs per quarter which can be increased if needed. Until the end of 2021 only. Monthly from Jan 2022 (but this can be reviewed once we have TACs for 2022)	
<b>Herring VIIa</b>	No decent market for Herring so not targeted.	
<b>Plaice VIIa</b>	No Comments	
<b>Nephrops VII</b>	No Comments	
<b>Sole VIIa</b>	<p>Would be good to have quota for Sole. for next year, especially in peak periods.</p> <p>Peak period for Sole August – April.</p> <p>Consistency is needed and fishers will invest in equipment if they know the quota is available. A good catch limit would be 1.5 tons.</p> <p>Industry would like a 3-year forecast but as it stands quota is assessed yearly.</p> <p>Sole 7a - ICES' advice for 2022 quota is +2% on TAC(2021).</p>	
<b>Skates and Rays VII</b>	Is Skate quota likely to remain the same as 2021? No guarantees but likely to remain the same.	

Reminder to contact [InshoreQuotaManager@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:InshoreQuotaManager@marinemanagement.org.uk) with questions, quota enquires or additional stocks to be included in the presentation.