

# REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUP

Meeting Notes 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

East – 4C

15:00 – 16:00 MS Teams Conference Call

Attendees:

**INDUSTRY**

Dean Fryer  
Esther Gilson  
Fran French  
Paul Gilson  
Jerry Percy  
Trevor Armstrong

**Defra:**

Andrew Carroll  
Lydia Osbourne

**Cefas:**

Jim Ellis

**IFCA:**

Julian Gregory

**MMO:**

Courtney Inch  
Danielle Davis  
Katie James  
Rachel-Louisa Joyce  
Justin Rowley  
Rebecca Thomas  
Daniel Wardle

**1. Welcome, Introduction and actions and updates – Justin Rowley (MMO)**

**2. Quota – Katie James (MMO)**

Katie James from the Quota Management team (MMO) updated the group on quota allocations for the coming year. Presentation can be found below:



4c Quota  
Presentation Jan 23.p

Katie gave an update on the uptake of NS Cod, NS Skates & Rays, NS Mackerel, NS Spurdog, NS Sprats, in the area and explained the allocations in 4C.

If anyone has any questions surrounding quota in the South East, please contact [katie.james@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:katie.james@marinemanagement.org.uk).

*A member of industry raised concerns at the lack of knowledge from governing bodies on Spurdog.* Jim Ellis from Cefas explained that when the measure first came in it was because sexually mature females were being targeted and the population collapsed. Now the stock has recovered it can be moved off of the prohibited species list, but it is important this stock isn't over exploited

*A member of industry raised concerns around having to discard Spurdog.* Jim Ellis from Cefas responded that by having the reference size of 100cm prevents active seeking of the species. The legislation is waiting to be signed off and is likely to be lifted in early spring.

### 3. Year ahead – Courtney Inch (MMO)



Future 4c.pdf

- Regional groups were set up to help the inshore fishing fleet and non-sector to share their views of fisheries management with Defra, MMO, Cefas, IFCA etc
- We are adapting to your needs
- In response to feedback RFG team members will regularly visit ports in the region at request from industry
- If you have any questions, please contact:  
[regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk)

Industry members discussed the importance of coastal access and highlighted the negative impact of mental stress on fishers and a lack of young fishers entering the industry. They also expressed concerns about overregulation and a lack of progress in addressing these issues. Justin Rowley, the meeting organizer, emphasized the purpose of the meetings as providing a platform for industry members to voice their concerns and keep the conversation going. Additionally, a member of industry mentioned that the industry is overregulated, and the overregulation has caused the industry to struggle to make a living. Courtney added that the purpose of port visits is to provide an opportunity for heads of management to meet with industry members and discuss these issues

### 4. MPAs - Rachel Louisa Joyce (MMO)

Rachel Louisa Joyce the Marine conservation manager in the MMO gave a background on the MPA programme.



2023\_01\_18\_SE\_RFG\_  
MPA Update\_RLJ.pdf

The MMO has proposed management measure to prohibit bottom-towed fishing in 13 MPAs, over the moderate energy circalittoral rock features present in Farnes East, biogenic reef (*Sabellaria* spp.)

features present in North Norfolk Sandbanks and Saturn Reef, and Haisborough, Hammond, and Winterton. The proposed byelaw also revokes the current MMO Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton European Marine Site (Specified Areas) Bottom Towed Taking Gear Byelaw.

Formal consultation on the proposed management measures will take place from **January 17, 2023, to March 28, 2023.**

MMO will also gather and analyse evidence for a call for evidence on the impact of mobile species such as harbour porpoise and marine birds in five sites planned for **Summer 2023.**

Industry members and various stakeholders engaged in a discussion to express their concerns and raise questions about the data and information being used in this process. Industry sought clarification on the origin and accuracy of the data and queried the potential impact of proposed measures on the industry. The stakeholders also noted the limitations of the gear codes and the potential for a "spatial squeeze" with the overlay of windfarms. Members also brought up the difficulties in providing exact fishing location due to the constant changing. One of the participants suggested that the government should provide financial support for the industry. The facilitator of the consultation, Rachel, reassured that the process is still ongoing and that they are looking for input from the industry to ensure that fishing can coexist with other activities. Rachel also explained that the stage 4 of the consultation is about mobile species, and that stage 3 is not proposing to shut down all the areas for all gears, or to put people out of business or stop fishing but ensure that sustainability and coexisting.

Evidence wanted: Areas of fishing, gear used, financial information.

If there are any further questions, please email: [Conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:Conservation@marinemanagement.org.uk)

## 5. Thames Inshore Survey - Jim Ellis (Cefas)



Thames inshore  
survey\_v2.pptx

The Thames Inshore Survey aims to investigate the condition of sole stocks in the Outer Thames in order to inform assessments and management. The survey is important for the economic stability of the fishing and processing industries in England. The survey focuses on minimal coverage of grounds less than 20 meters deep, which are important for juvenile sole. The survey aims to collect additional data on coastal species and integrate it with marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (mNCEA) projects. The survey used a Chartered fishing vessel in two survey areas and was conducted over a 14-day period. The survey used 2m beam trawl, Concerto RBR, mini-CTD, Niskin, and 3m beam trawl to gather data on the abundance-at-age of sole and plaice, as well as data on the wider fish assemblage and selected invertebrates.

The survey found that Sand gobies were the most abundant and occurred at the highest frequency at 79 out of the survey stations. Otoliths were also taken from juvenile herring. On the final survey day, 6 x 3 m beam trawls were deployed, 2 at additional sites and 4 at existing prime sites. Additional water sampling for mNCEA was also conducted at 23 of the historic YFS locations. The 'eye on water' App was used, which derives a standardized measure of water colour and sends it to a central European database. The survey also aimed to validate a processing routine established using satellite colour data.

There was a discussion from industry that restricting fishing isn't necessarily the answer. It depends on what is needed to be looked at.

The RFGs team are coming to the East next week and these conversations can be continued there.

1. **AOB**

- IFCAs across England are looking to recruit general members. The general member roles are voluntary roles and are appointed from various sectors (commercial fisheries, marine environment specialists, recreational fisheries and anything else i.e. divers). The link to the job role and how to apply can be found here: [Exciting opportunity to participate in the management of inshore fisheries and marine conservation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exciting-opportunity-to-participate-in-the-management-of-inshore-fisheries-and-marine-conservation). If you have any questions about these roles and how to get involved with IFCAs, please contact [leanne.tan@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:leanne.tan@marinemanagement.org.uk).
- **The closing date is 13th February.**
  
- **King Scallop Closure – Sarah Bedingham (MMO)**

Sarah Bedingham from the Fisheries Management Team highlighted that there is a **call for evidence** on proposals for a king scallop dredge fishery closures in ICES area 7d and Lyme Bay area of 7e in summer of 2023.

The proposed closures are to protect the stock during spawning in area 7d and limit depletion of the stock in area 7e due to displacement of fishing effort.

MMO is leading this consultation on behalf of the UK Fisheries Administrations, and has been working closely with Defra, Cefas and SICG to provide proposals for the length of the closures and supporting scientific information.

A range of closure lengths (from 15 May or 1 July or 1 August to 30 September) has been suggested in part due as a response to a EU seasonal closure in EU waters of area 7d and some of 7e from 15 May to 30 September and the concern of displacement into UK waters due to the EU closure.

The call for evidence will be published week **commencing 23rd January** via the MMO website, social media, and the Fisheries bulletin. The MMO fisheries management team (FMT) are also working with the MMO Communications team to produce a physical document package for distribution.

FMT invite you all to engage with the call for evidence and share the call for evidence announcement with your stakeholders and customers. FMT are available to meet to discuss the proposed closures if that would be useful.

If you have any questions regarding the process, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

You can email [effort@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:effort@marinemanagement.org.uk)

A member of industry raised concerns over the closure. Sarah responded that if industry members can encourage as many people as possible to submit evidence on how the closure will affect them then all points can be considered going forward.

### Appendix 1:

The i-VMS project is progressing whilst independent testing is taking place on the 4 type approved devices, fishers can still research and order devices during this period.

The funding for the devices is available until the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The SI has not been laid or implemented as of yet but with a view towards this being set for later in the year.

Update on IVMS can be found here:



IVMS.pdf

### Appendix 2:

Schemes/ grants which might be useful for the inshore fleet/non-sector.

We've seen a healthy uptake in FaSS2 which opened for applications in April this year and continues to be available for prospective applicants up until March 2025.

If you are interested in applying please contact the grants team at [FaSS.queries@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:FaSS.queries@marinemanagement.org.uk) to discuss their project.

We have 3 confirmed panel dates for 2023 for those projects where the total cost exceeds £150,000, listed below.

Finally, there is a phasing in period for safety rails and non-slip deck which are two common items in Health and Safety apps we often receive. MCA have confirmed that these items will become mandatory on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 so for any vessel that isn't classed as new (built after 6 September 2021) applicants can apply for these items until that 5<sup>th</sup> September date.

3 Panels		
Deadline	Panel	Days between
31/01/2023	23/03/2023	51
31/05/2023	26/07/2023	56
30/09/2023	21/11/2023	52

### Appendix 3:

The UK Seafood Fund (UKSF) are providing two rounds of funding.

**UKSF Round 2** closed on February 3rd, 2023.

**UKSF Round 3** opened on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January and will be focused on fleet modernization and engine replacement for the SSCF. Defra held an industry webinar recently and have circulated a Q&A document about Round 3 which can be found here:



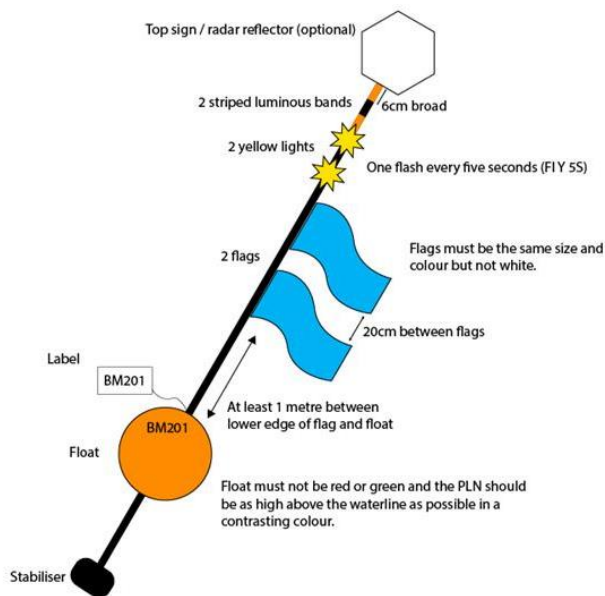
Fleet Modernisation  
QA.pdf

If you would like to ask further questions you can register and submit questions on the system here:  
<https://scis.marineservices.org.uk/workbench.ofml>

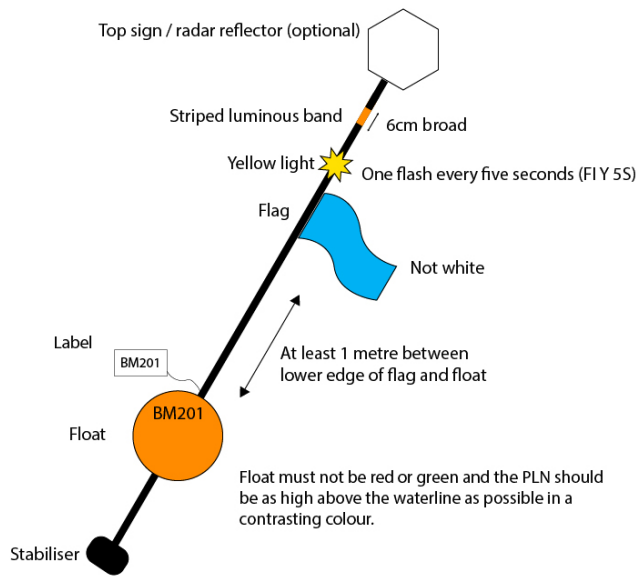
#### Appendix 4:

#### **Guidance on marking of fishing gear, retrieval, and notification of lost gear**

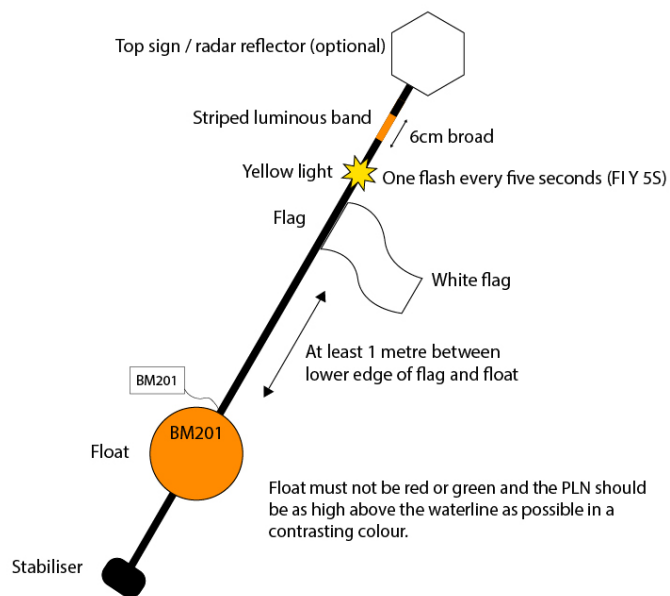
Information can be found here: [Marking of fishing gear, retrieval and notification of lost gear - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)



**Figure 1:** Diagram of a western sector marker buoy



**Figure 2:** diagram of an eastern sector marker buoy



**Figure 3:** diagram of an intermediary marker buoy

Other useful resources:

[How to Label \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Boarding Ladder infographic \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Electronic Logbook V5 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[How to complete a Paper Log Book \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)