

REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUP

Meeting Notes 18th May 2023

South 7d

15:00 – 17:00 MS Teams Conference Call

Attendees

Industry

David Curtis
Bill Brock
Tom Russell
Martin Cure
Richard Stride

Defra

Andrew Carroll
Matt Darlison
Kate Kurton
Iain Glasgow
Freya Mitchison
Katie McNally

MCA

Laurence Capstick

Cefas

Sophy Phillips

Apologies

Neil Whitney

MMO

RFG Team:

regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk

- Rebecca Thomas: Fisheries Officer
- Caley McIntosh: Fisheries Manager – caley.mcintosh@marinemanagement.org.uk
- Courtney Inch: Principal Fisheries Manager – Courtney.inch@marinemanagement.org.uk

Quota team:

inshorequotamanager@marinemanagement.org.uk

- Katie James: Quota Manager - 07747638655
- Jacob Bestwick: Quota Manager - 07469443840

PMO/ Chair

- Paul Johnson – South Principle Marine Officer
paul.johnson@marinemanagement.org.uk

Other MMO personnel:

Sean Douglas
Emily Theobald
Sarah Bedingham
Adam Kershaw
Danielle Davis
Georgia Clack

1) Welcome & Introductions - Paul Johnson (Chair/MMO)

- Paul Johnson updated on the actions the Regional Fisheries Group team have undertaken since the last South RFG meeting:

You said	We did
Fishers asked for more information regarding potential grant funding and why the engine replacement scheme does not include trawl boats.	We have been in discussion with Defra regarding available grant funding and have brought the team along today to answer your questions.
The inshore fleet wanted an opportunity to speak with the minister.	We hosted a national meeting back in March. Thank you to all those who participated. We are still working through the actions.

- Lex Palmer, from the under 10m catch recording team, is seeking participants for a focus group to feedback on functionality of the catch recording app. This group will provide insights on catch recording practices. The time commitment will be minimal, with virtual calls taking place once every three months or so. Interested volunteers can contact Caley McIntosh from the RFG team at: Caley.McIntosh@marinemanagement.org.uk.

2) Quota update Katie James and Jacob Bestwick (MMO)



South 7d Quota
Presentation May 20.

- Jacob Bestwick introduced himself as the the new inshore quota manager, sharing the role alongside Katie.
 - Katie James: 07747638655
 - Jacob Bestwick: 07469443840
 - inshorequotamanager@marinemanagement.org.uk
- Jacob gave an update on the quota allocations in the region, please see the PowerPoint attached for more information.
- Cod - There was a discussion with industry if the cod allocation should be kept at 1 tonne through the summer.
 - Members of industry suggested that cod is more likely to be needed at the end of the year, as less can be caught in summer months. The quota team are going to review the current allocation and potentially adjust to allow more in winter months and reduce current catch limit.
 - **Action:** Quota team to review current allocations.
- Plaice – A recreational member questioned why the uptake of plaice is lower than the stock that is available.
 - There was a discussion between industry members plaice have only recently appeared in the South due to low water temperatures.
 - There was a discussion between industry members about the ability to access mixed fisheries. There was a comment that mixed fisheries are in a healthy situation for the under 10's fleet.

- Sole – There was a discussion between industry members for the sole quota allocation to be reduced in the summer to 2 tonnes as it would suit industry to have more quota for the Autumn. The quota team will review the current allocation to allow more in autumn months and reduce current catch limit.
 - **Action:** Quota team to review current allocations.

Questions from industry

Q: A member of industry asked what is happening on the allocations with mackerel.

- There is no update currently, but the quota team will update soon.

Q: A member of industry asked if the mackerel stock stable is in the eastern channel?

- Jacob responded that the uptake has increased in the last 3 years.

Q: A member of industry asked what area of the sea encompasses Western mackerel?"

- Jacob responded that he will check – but most are ICES areas 6 and 7.
- A member of industry mentioned that it is good for there to be a catch limit as it encourages engagement in the fishery.
- Jacob responded that currently the UK trade a lot of the quota out for this stock, but this can be reviewed if there is the demand to fish the stock from industry.
- Paul Johnson noted that there has been more interest in small scale mackerel fisheries in the South. However, the quality and the size of the handline mackerel fishery in the South West is very good which may impact the commercial value of mackerel caught here.
- A member of industry responded that this is correct, however, there has been increased activity for handlining mackerel in Sussex and therefore there is an increase in the selectivity of the stock. It was added that this is an important and growing sector.

- **Action:** An update on mackerel allocation to be sent out via RFGs mailing list.
- **Action:** For the quota slides to be sent out before the next RFG meeting allowing time to for industry to review these.

3) I-VMS update – Sean Douglas, Head of Regulatory Assurance (MMO)

- Sean Douglas, Head of Regulatory Assurance in the MMO, gave an update on I-VMS.
- Last year the MMO rolled out I-VMS devices through grant funding to industry. Feedback was then received suggesting that some devices may not be compliant with the MMO's Type Approval specification. In response, MMO have been undertaking an independent testing process to provide additional assurance to fishers ahead of the wider rollout of the I-VMS programme.
- Suppliers were advised not to market, sell or install any devices pending the outcome of the independent testing assurance process.
- On 21 April 2023, MMO took action to suspend one of the suppliers after receiving evidence the supplier has disregarded this instruction. Whilst this suspension is in place fishers are advised not to purchase this device if they intend to seek MMO grant funding.
- This independent testing is now complete, and two of the devices have failed the assurance process. Type Approval status will therefore be revoked from Maritime Systems Ltd MS44 device and from the Satlink Nano as they have been shown to not meet the original Type Approved specifications set out by MMO. This will be effective from 12:00pm Friday 19 May 2023, subject to final confirmation from MMO. The remaining two devices, Fulcrum Nemo and Succorfish SC2, will remain Type Approved following minor fixes and further review.

- If there is an issue with the device individuals have on board, the MMO will be in direct communication with affected vessels. The MMO will also be updating the government website with advice on the government in the coming weeks.
- The MMO stated that there is a lot of misinformation on social media and asked industry members to ignore that.
 - The most recent update from the MMO can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mmo-announces-the-results-of-i-vms-device-testing>
- If you have any questions, please contact the I-VMS team or the funding team, depending on your query...
 - I-VMS emails to ivms@marinemanagement.org.uk
 - Grants team email: FaSS.queries@marinemanagement.org.uk
 - Michael from the grants team Telephone: 0208 026 5539

Questions from industry

Q: A member of industry was pleased to hear how the MMO recognises the value of I-VMS, as it is of great value to the management of stocks. The industry member mentioned that the airtime this company provided was cheaper than any others, meaning there will be higher running costs with other retailers because of this, has this discussion been had?

- MMO responded that they are committed to I-VMS data as this provides strong evidence base moving forward to support industry and counter spatial squeeze.
- The MMO are engaging with all companies involved and working closely with a legal team.

Q: A member of industry asked why type approval wasn't this done before?

- There are a number of processes by which we can provide a type approval which we did do. We adopted a fully legitimate type approval but there have been some amendments to ensure mistakes do not happen in future.

Q: A member of industry asked what happens if a fisher has paid Maritime Systems but the device hasn't been installed yet?

- If a fisher has installed a Maritime Systems MS44 but has not yet had the device fitted to the vessel then MMO will honour a grant claim provided we have evidence of invoice/proof of payment. Fishers are being advised that they should no longer purchase the two revoked devices for I-VMS purposes as they will no longer be funded by MMO grants. Please get in contact with the grants team about that – I-VMS grant queries contacts:
 - Tel: 0330 041 6579
 - Email: ukfisheriessupport@marinemanagement.org.uk

4) Future TAC Management of Lemon Sole, Witch, Turbot and Brill - Iain Glasgow (Defra)

To bring TAC's in alignment with the ICES advice, to improve sustainability, brill in 7de is likely to come under TAC management from 2024.



For more information, please read the following document:

Questions from industry:

Q: A member of industry raised that the UK need to be aware of the EU gaining an advantage with TAC plans. This member raised concern over the 5-year period research period.

- Defra responded that researchers have looked at 10-year, 5-year and 3-year periods outside of Covid and there is not a great deal of difference in regard to how to share quota.
- There was a discussion about having an alternative quota for specific species set for areas 7d and 7e.

5) Grant Funding - Matt Darlison and Kate Kurton (Defra)



Regional Fisheries
Groups - May 2023.p

- Defra recapped the available funding schemes in England.
- Defra advised anyone who is considering applying for funding to submit an expression of interest before completing the official application, to find out whether the bid is applicable for funding.
- Please refer to the PowerPoint slides for more information on available grant Funding.

Open Funding Opportunities

FaSS

- The FaSS is currently open for applications and is aimed at small, local projects supporting either individuals or multiple businesses. The FaSS can provide a maximum contribution to a project of £250,000.

[Fisheries and Seafood Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

- This is a rolling opportunity that does not have a deadline date – you can apply throughout the year.

Infrastructure Round 4: Recreational Sea Fishing (Closing 19 June 2023)

- You can apply for a minimum of £10,000 and a maximum of £100,000 for projects supporting the recreational fishing sector to develop and improve infrastructure and promote sustainable growth.

[Apply for the UK Seafood Fund: Infrastructure Scheme round 4 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Infrastructure Round 3: Fleet Modernisation (Closing 31 October 2023)

- Funding is available to replace engines for the small-scale coastal fleet; up to a maximum £40,000.

[Apply for the UK Seafood Fund: Infrastructure Scheme round 3 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

- Defra explained that 'Fleet modernisation' is a pilot. This trial has been aimed at the small scale inshore fleet for now due to the ease of executing and monitoring the trial, but further decisions will be made in the future about extending the funding.

Questions:

Q: A member of industry asked if there is any funding available to charter/recreational vessels?

- Defra responded that the mentioned opportunities are only available to registered and licensed vessels.
- Defra mentioned that there are various rounds in FaSS that are relevant to recreational fishers and will liaise with the industry member directly regarding this.
 - **Action:** Defra to speak to industry member on decision making behind commercial specification.

6) Channel Demersal NQS FMP – Jessica Duffill Telsnig (MMO)

Jess gave an update on the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species Fisheries Management



South RFG

Plan which can be read here: [Presentation May 20](#).

Questions from industry:

Q: A member of industry asked how will the MMO be measuring cuttlefish?

- Jess responded that this still needs to be decided and will be asked in the upcoming consultation.

Q: A member of industry asked why the date for MCRS is in the longer term?

- Jess responded that there are different years because we have needed to stagger our workload due to resource.

Q: A member of industry asking what the process is for including other species in the plan?

- Jess responded that all species will be considered, but initially these species have been prioritised as they need more urgent management. You can also read more about how these decisions are made on the JFS here: [Joint Fisheries Statement \(JFS\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- If there are any further questions you can contact the FMP team directly at: fmps@defra.gov.uk

7) King Scallop Closure – Sarah Bedingham (MMO)

- The king scallop dredge fishery will be closed from 1 July – 30 September.
- In ICES area 7d , the fishery is closed for all UK and EU vessels except the 10m and under fleet.
- In ICES area 7e, the fishery is closed for all UK and EU vessel except the 12m and under fleet.



1 Page Poster King
Scallop Closure decis

- Please see attached poster for further information:

- You can read more information on the call for evidence here: [Call for evidence: ICES area 7d and Lyme Bay king scallop dredge fishery closure - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Questions from industry

Q: A member of industry stressed the importance of monitoring the additional pressure on the UK side of area 7d as this data will influence future decisions.

8) MCA Q&A session - Laurence Capstick (MCA)

Q: A member of industry raised concerns about the medical assessments, and asked what happens if a fisher does not pass the medical?

- Laurence responded that it depends on the medical assessment, if it is the ML5 they may get a referral. If it is an ENG1 then it is very unlikely a fisher will fail this. BMI is not an automatic failure and one's doctor will be able to inform individuals of how the situation can be managed.
- For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificates-of-medical-fitness-answering-fishermens-questions/your-certificate-of-medical-fitness-questions-answered#will-this-prevent-fishermen-from-work-will-this-cause-a-reduction-of-fishermen-in-the-industry>

Q: A member of industry asked whether a personal doctor can be used?

- Laurence responded that for the ENG1 this must be done by an MCA approved doctor. The ML5 can be done by any registered doctor.

Q: A member of industry asked, regarding ML5, for individuals over 65 years, does it have to be renewed?

- ML5's are valid for 5 years up to the age of 65 and a maximum of 1 year after the age of 65.

Q: What happens when the Grandfather rights are no longer available?

- Laurence responded that the Grandfather rights will be carried forward into the subsequent years. If you apply for the Grandfather rights before the 30th November 2023 you will be eligible.

If there are any further questions you can contact Laurence at: laurence.capstick@mcga.gov.uk.

Please also contact Laurence with any port suggestions for MCA in person engagement events which are in the process of being planned.

9) AOB – Paul Johnson (MMO):

A member of industry mentioned that there was a successful visit from Fishermen's Mission who came to do dentistry, give health and mental health advice to Fishers.

Marine Planning:

The Marine planning team would like your feedback on what your experience has been of using Marine Plans in your work? Whatever your thoughts are, this is your opportunity to share them with us by completing a monitoring survey.

- Please follow this link for the South Survey: [South Marine Plan Monitoring Survey 2023 \(qualtrics.com\)](#)

If you have any questions regarding marine planning, please contact...

- Zia Fikardos (eastern extent – Isle of Wight – Folkestone, Kent):
Zia.Fikardos@marinemanagement.org.uk, 07342 052157

- Marie Canny (Felixstowe, Suffolk – Folkestone, Kent):
Marie.Canny@marinemanagement.org.uk, 07917 594331

Fisheries Management Plans Engagement – have your say

- Do you have views on Fisheries Management Plans? Have you been made properly aware of what a Fisheries Management Plan is? What do you think of the process of developing Fisheries Management Plans so far? Have you been able to participate? Has the collaborative approach been meaningful? Is it meeting your expectations? Have your say!
- Defra have commissioned an independent research team to assess how the development of Fisheries Management Plans is progressing. It will provide evidence and advice to Defra, the MMO and others on how to improve the development of the plans. Your views and opinions will be a key part of this evidence.
- If you would be interested in discussing the FMP stakeholder engagement with the research team or would like to know more about this research, please contact:
 - Ellie Cook at: **FMPEvaluation@icf.com or +44 20 3096 5511**