

Celtic Sea and Western Channel demersal Fisheries Management Plan: Working Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Celtic Sea and Western Channel Demersal FMP

To prepare a draft fisheries management plan (FMP) for demersal species listed below in English and Welsh waters of the Celtic Sea and Western Channel (ICES Areas 7e, 7f, 7g, 7h) in line with the obligations made in the Joint Fisheries Statement and by the overarching Objectives set out in the Fisheries Act 2020.

The FMP will look to prioritise the demersal stocks listed below and/or fisheries within English and Welsh waters of the Celtic Sea and Western Channel so that an iterative approach can be taken to develop the FMP now and into the future.

The FMP will deliver a draft of the first iteration to Defra for Quality Assurance in Spring 2025, with a view to publication by the end of 2025.

Species included in the CSWC demersal FMP*;

Bony fish

- Monkfish/anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius*),
- Cod (*Gadus morhua*),
- Sole (*Solea solea*),
- Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*),
- Blue ling (*Molva dypterygia*),
- Saithe (*pollachius virens*),
- Red seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*),
- Roundnose grenadier (*Coryphaenoides rupestris*),
- Megrim (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis*),
- Fourspotted megrim (*Lepidorhombus boscii*),
- Pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*),
- Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*).

Skates and rays

- Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*),
- Small eyed ray (*Raja microocellata*),
- Shagreen ray (*Leucoraja fullonica*),
- Blonde ray (*Raja brachyura*),
- Sandy ray (*Leucoraja circularis*),
- Spotted ray (*Raja montagui*),
- Cuckoo ray (*Leucoraja naevus*),
- Blue Skate (*Dipturus batis*),
- Mediterranean starry ray (*Raja asterias*),
- Round ray (*Rajella fyllae*),
- Sailray (*Rajella lintea*),
- Starry ray (*amblyraja radiata*),
- Undulate ray (*Raja undulata*),

- White skate (*Rostroraja alba*),
- Longnosed skate (*Dipturus oxyrinchus*).

Deep sea sharks

- Blackmouth catshark (*Galeus melastomus*),
- Iceland catshark (*Apristurus laurussonii*),
- Black dogfish; (*Centroscyllium fabricii*),
- Portuguese dogfish (*Centroscymnus coelolepis*),
- Birdbeak dogfish (*Deania calcea*),
- Great lanternshark (*Etmopterus princeps*),
- Velvet belly lanternshark (*Etmopterus spinax*),
- Mouse catshark (*Galeus murinus*),
- Gulper shark (*Centrophorus granulosus*),
- Kitefin shark (*Dalatias licha*),
- Leafscale gulper shark (*Centrophorus squamosus*).

Shellfish

- Nephrops (*norvegicus*).

*As listed in the JFS, the working group may consider that further species need to be scoped into the remit of the FMP.

2. Purpose of the working group

The purpose of this working group is to act as an advisory group to help develop the FMP alongside the MMO as lead delivery partner. In addition, the WG is to function as a forum for engagement on the Celtic Sea and Western Channel demersal FMP.

Incorporating learning from previous FMPs, the Celtic Sea and Western Channel demersal FMP Working Group will serve a more advisory function, allowing for input into proposed management and key deliverables of the FMP, rather than as a drafting or decision-making group.

MMO will seek feedback and input from the group on the species to prioritise, overall development of the FMP and any potential management measures proposed in the FMP. All group members will seek opportunities to engage the wider fishing industry** and other key stakeholders as appropriate.

**fishing industry refers to both commercial and recreational sectors.

3. Objectives of the group

The specific objectives of the working group are:

- a) development of the FMP alongside the MMO as lead delivery partner, by providing input, feedback, and steer.
- b) Allow MMO to provide updates to key fishing industry representatives and other key stakeholders on the management of fisheries within scope of this FMP.
- c) Assist the planning and delivery of the FMP to be informed by fishing industry perspectives and others' expert knowledge.
- d) Contribution to the development of the FMP Evidence Statement, enabling the industry to inform, feedback and steer evidence gathering.
- e) Provide clarity about how and at what stage the fishing industry and other key stakeholders can influence the development and implementation of this FMP.
- f) Contribute to, and help facilitate, effective engagement with the wider fishing industry and other sectors regarding this FMP.
- g) Understand impacts and unintended consequences of any proposed management measures in the FMP.
- h) Allow early identification and resolution (or escalation) of potential risks and issues.
- i) Identify conflicts or opportunities with other FMPs or management programmes.

4. Responsibilities of the group

- a) Provide expert opinion and/or evidence to steer development of this FMP and or the evidence plan.
- b) Make recommendations for the development of the FMP and of the Evidence Statement.

5. Responsibilities of the representatives

- a) Represent members of their community by expressing their community or organisation's views and providing regular feedback to them of the development of this FMP
- b) Provide timely feedback on papers circulated for meetings or outside of committee when required
- c) Provide suitable deputies that can input and engage on the agenda items where appropriate (see point 8).

6. Membership of Group

The working group members will be as follows:*

Name	Job Title	Role on WG
Rachel Thirlwall	MMO Principal Fisheries Manager	Working Group Chair
Nicholas French	MMO Principal Fisheries Manager	Working Group Deputy Chair
Mark Qureshi	MMO Fisheries Manager	Working Group Secretariat

Emily Theobald	MMO South West Principal Marine Officer	MMO coastal operations representative
Anna MacLennan	MMO South West Regional Fisheries Group lead	MMO SW RFG representative
Hannah Rudd	Angling Trust Policy Advisor	Representing recreational sea anglers
Drew Collin	Anglo Scottish Fish Producers' Organisation	Representing offshore Scottish vessels fishing in English waters
Paul Dolder	Cefas Principal Scientist and Advisor for mixed fisheries	Cefas Celtic Sea fisheries lead
Andrew Pascoe	Cornish Handline Association	Representing handliners in the FMP area
Chris Ranford	Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation	Cornish Inshore and offshore fishermen
Colin Trundle	Cornwall IFCA (CIFCA)	Representing CIFCA
Phil Green	Defra Celtic Sea Policy Division and EU negotiations	Defra FMP Policy lead
Sarah Clark	Devon and Severn IFCA	Representing D&S IFCA
David Stevens	Fishing into the Future	Representing Fishing into the Future
Judith Farrell	Humberside Fish Producers' Organisation	Representing offshore vessels
Nick West	Mevagissey Fisherman's Association	Representing inshore fishers in Cornwall
John Balls	North Devon Fisherman's Association	Representing inshore fishers in North Devon
Adam Holland	Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation Fisheries Sustainability Officer	Representing Northern Ireland Fishers
Edward Baker	Plymouth Fishing and Seafood Association, CEO	Representing interests of PFSA members
Juliette Hatchman	South West Fish Producers' Organisation	Representing offshore vessels
Adam Doyle	Stevensons & Sons Ltd (Newlyn)	Representing Processors in Cornwall
Jim Evans	Welsh Fishermen's Association	Representing inshore fishermen in south Wales
Mark Stafford	Welsh Government	Welsh Government FMP lead
Colin Charman	Natural Resources Wales Lead Specialist Advisor: Marine Fisheries	Lead Specialist Advisor: Marine Fisheries
Harry Owen	Western Fish Producer Organisation (WFPO)	Representing WFPO

*To be updated once initial working group invites have been sent out and more representatives have been identified

Working groups members have been identified through initial engagement and categorisation into different tiers (collaborate, consult or inform) based on their likely interest, influence, impact, and expertise level. Representatives across geographic areas who are perceived to be 'guardians' (supported by the wider community) were chosen to provide different perspectives across the FMP areas. Further information on this can be found in the FMP Comms and Engagement Plan.

7. Frequency, governance, and arrangement of meetings

An initial welcome meeting will be called in late September (date TBD). Meetings will be called to discuss specific issues or questions, rather than to give updates on the project. These meetings will have clear aims and objectives that will be communicated with the working group beforehand. Meetings will primarily be held via Microsoft Teams due to dispersed nature of members but face to face meetings could be arranged if necessary and if the group agrees. If a group member is unable to attend a meeting, they should forward the invite to a suitably authorised and competent deputy. The group may also need to review and provide feedback on papers outside of arranged meetings.

The MMO will act as a group Secretariat to coordinate the arrangements for each meeting, including: the agenda, minutes and provision of supporting papers and documents in agreement with the chair.

Meeting invites and agenda – where possible, MMO will aim to convene meetings and provide an agenda as early as 10 working days, and by no less than 5 working days, in advance. The agenda will be based on specific items relevant to the development of the FMP. At the time of circulation, the Group may add items to the agenda.

Meeting papers - papers for consideration by the Group will be developed by the relevant team in conjunction with the Secretariat. Where possible, papers will be circulated 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Meeting actions – updated and approved action log from meetings will be circulated within 5 working days of the meeting by the Secretariat.

Meeting minutes - minutes will be produced for external publication in order to provide transparency. Individuals will not be named within the minutes related to discussion points; however, in interests of transparency attendee names will be listed.

8. Principles

The following are the guiding principles that all members of this group must adhere to. At the close of each meeting participants will be afforded the opportunity to provide feedback on the success of the principles during the meeting.

Principle one

All parties will work in an open and transparent manner, with a “no surprises” culture operated between all parties.

Principle two

All participating stakeholders will be given the opportunity to feedback on how the meetings are functioning. Feedback will be recorded and kept under review to allow for improvement in the functioning of the meetings.

Principle three

The effectiveness of the working practice will be kept under review, with any changes necessary to improve its use agreed by all parties.

Principle four

Communication during meetings will be conducted on the basis of respect for all group members, including different opinions and perspectives.

Principle five

The MMO secretariat will be responsible for compiling and circulating copies of meeting minutes. Recording of meetings can only be undertaken by the MMO, and will require prior agreement from all attendees.

9. Review

These Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

10. Declaration

The following lead representatives agree to the principles and considerations outlined above, which will be used as a framework for each organisation within the stakeholder group to follow.

CSWC demersal FMP: Working Group Code of Conduct

1. Behaviour management

Behaviour will be monitored to ensure all meetings have productive and successful outcomes. Behaviour will be monitored and managed in meetings by the chair and facilitator, however, our expectations for conduct are clearly laid out here. These will be distributed along with the meeting invite and agenda, to all participants at every meeting.

Attendees of meetings must be:

Accountable

- Issues, decisions, and actions will be accurately recorded in the form of minutes which are published publicly. All group members will have the chance to review and challenge if they feel they don't accurately represent what was discussed.
- Actions will be assigned to a specific person or group and followed up.
- Members will be expected to seek the views of their wider representative groups and disseminate information out accordingly.

Constructive

- Discussions must be constructive and stay on point.
- Members must respect the viewpoint of others.
- Healthy debate is encouraged but members should not talk over the top of one another.
- Rude/abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Members will challenge the problem or issue not an individual.

Efficient

- Whilst the chair will be in charge of timings, members will respect the time of the group by keeping comments brief and on topic.
- Members will seek to address issues and follow up actions in a timely manner.
- Questions will be answered promptly where possible.
- Feedback on processes used is encouraged and will be actively sought.

Fair

- Any complaints relating to the system of operation or conduct of its attendees, during or between meetings, must be raised through the Chair of the meeting or through direct contact with the MMO Head of Fisheries Management Plans.
- If issues cannot be resolved within the group, they can be raised via the MMO's complaints procedure.
- Attendance may be temporarily or permanently suspended if a member of the working group does not conduct themselves correctly, treats any members without respect, or follow and adhere to the above charter, there will be temporary suspension of the individual. If any actions taken by the individual, whether verbal or physical, that is considered threatening, dangerous and/or consistently counter to the purposes of the groups, the individual can be permanently suspended. A temporary or permanent suspension will be issued by the MMO Director of Operations or the MMO CEO. This will be judged on a case-by-case basis and escalated through the Principal Fisheries Manager to the Head of Fisheries Management Plans, Head of Sustainable Fisheries to the Director of Operations or the CEO to issue permanent suspension.

Professional

- Discussions must remain professional.
- Members must respect the Chair, the facilitator and their authority.
- The group will seek and respect the best available evidence and advice where appropriate.

Transparent

- Name of attendees and the organisations they represent will be publicly available.
- Meeting notes will be circulated, approved by attendees and published online.
- As actions are taken, updates are provided as frequently as possible.

Involved

- Members will be expected to remain interested and active members of the working group.
- Members will be expected to be in full attendance to the working group meetings. Where this is not possible, a suitable deputy will be nominated at the earliest possible opportunity. This needs to be communicated to the Chair or Secretariat prior to the meeting.
- Opting out – if you no longer wish to remain involved with the working group, please communicate directly with the Chair or Secretariat, and a suitable replacement representative will be sought.

2. Facilitation

The MMO may invite a facilitator who would have the responsibility to apply principles of collaboration. The facilitator shall possess the following attributes: be objective and not directly involved in decision-making processes; take a guiding role in encouraging participants to focus on the goals of the FMP and how to achieve them; possess sufficient personal authority to discuss partnership working with multiple stakeholders; be experienced in resolving problems and disagreements between stakeholders.