

Regional Fisheries Group Meeting

South West



Meeting Details

South West Regional Fisheries Group Meeting

Date	23/07/2026
Start Time	15:00
End Time	16:10
Location or Platform	Microsoft Teams
Chair or Facilitator	Anna Maclellan
Note Taker	Jonathan Brooks

Attendance

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Regulators</u>	
Nathan de Rozarieux	Anna Maclellan (MMO)	David Fenner (MCA)
Richard (Gus) Caslake (Seafish)	Jonathan Brooks (MMO)	
Mike Roach (NFFO)	Katie James (MMO)	
Juliette Hatchman (SWFPO)	Callum Gough (MMO)	
Zuzanna Dusza (SWFPO)	Catriona New (MMO)	
Emily Theobald (CFPO)	Charlotte Pomeroy (MMO)	
Anna Patel (FITF)	Morag Brymner (MMO)	
Harry Owen (Western PO)	Katie James (MMO)	
John Balls	Jacob Bestwick (MMO)	
Andrew Pascoe	Andy Carroll (DEFRA)	
Steve Parker	Chelsea Perrins (SIFCA)	

Agenda Items

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Recorded Start</u>
1	Introduction	Anna Maclellan	MMO	00m 00s
2	I-VMS Update and Q&A	Callum Gough	MMO	0m 30s
3	MCA Update	David Fenner	MCA	7m 30s
4	NFFO FLOWW	Mike Roach	NFFO	24m 30s
5	Octopus Update	Catriona New	MMO	40m 30s
6	Quota Uptake Update	Katie James	MMO	47m 45s
7	AOB	Anna Maclellan	MMO	1h 01m 30s

Meeting Notes and Recording

The following meeting notes are intended to be a summarised version of the key information presented at this meeting and participant questions and answers.

This meeting was recorded and can be accessed through the MMO YouTube account via the following link: [Watch Here](#)

Introduction – Anna Maclellan (MMO)

Anna Maclellan introduced herself as the chair of the RFG meeting.

Anna reminded attendees of the code of conduct and expectations for the meeting. All attendees were informed that the meeting would be recorded for the benefit of industry members unable to attend the live session. No objections to the recording were raised.

I-VMS Update – Callum Gough (MMO)

Callum provided an update on the I-VMS programme.

The rollout has resumed following issues with Succorfish SC2 IVMS devices. These devices stopped transmitting data to the MMO Hub around a year ago, meaning they were no longer compliant with the licence condition.

Owners of vessels with Succorfish SC2 devices were asked to register with CLS UK to receive a compliant Nemo device. The registration deadline for this closed on 12 July 2026. MMO reported that 95% of eligible vessels have registered, which has been considered a positive response.

Nemo devices are now being sent out. Installation will take place over the next three months.

The installation process is expected to be organised by port where possible, to group vessels together and improve efficiency. CLS UK will work with fishers to arrange appointment windows.

Key points for vessel owners:

- Once an installation appointment is agreed, owners should keep the appointment.
- Missed appointments may result in additional costs if an engineer has to return.
- The Nemo device must be charged for 48 hours before installation.
- Devices come with a one-year warranty once installed.

On enforcement, MMO will continue to take a pragmatic approach while the rollout is ongoing. However, enforcement is expected to resume in the foreseeable future. MMO will recognise where fishers are actively trying to comply with the IVMS licence condition.

MMO I-VMS Team:

Phone: 01900 508618

Email: ivms@marinemangement.org.uk

Question: There is concern that the sector has been left with a single supplier. This is the same with the AST system for larger vessels. This is a concern that they have got full control of costs for fishers. Will there be efforts to run another type-approval process to bring in other devices and suppliers?

Answer:

The intention from the initial type-approval process was to have multiple supplier options. Though there is no current intention to run another type-approval process. CLS has committed to keeping future price increases in line with normal costs and inflation.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Updates – David Fenner

David provided an update on the small fishing vessel code, skipper training and certification, consultation plans and feedback from joint engagement from recent Regional Fisheries Groups port visits.

Small Vessel Code

The MCA met with industry in bodies April to discuss the draft revision of the small vessel code. Several areas were identified for improvement.

A key change is to focus the code more on operational issues and remove material that is more relevant to construction standards or guidance on registration (MGN 60). The current MGN 60 mainly addresses pre-registration surveys. MCA is considering expanding it to cover what owners should do when dealing with new vessels.

Other proposed improvements include:

- Consolidating information on modifications.
- Consolidating repeated content on sea inlets, discharges and pipes.
- Consolidating repeated content on windows, port lights, freeing ports and skylight.

- Grouping requirements for vessels not built to standards into one section of each chapter.
- Developing a short checklist to help owners identify which sections of the code apply to their vessel.
- Reviewing railing requirements for open vessels and decked or partially decked vessels under 7 metres, where the code differs from construction standards.
- Simplifying the electrical section by aligning it more closely with the workboat code.

David reiterated that all changes will be subject to consultation which is expected in January 2027.

Skipper Training and Certification Requirements

David summarised planned changes for skippers working on vessels between 7 metres and 16.5 metres. The requirements will apply to new skippers only. Existing skippers operating in this category will not need to obtain a new certificate.

Basic safety training will be enhanced, with requirements covering safety management and stability.

For vessels over 16.5 metres, certificates will become STCW-F certificates. This is intended to avoid problems when vessels operate overseas, where foreign authorities may otherwise question the validity of UK certificates.

There will be a transitional period for new entrant skippers, expected to be around two years from the date the regulations come into force. After that, certification will become mandatory for new skippers.

There will be no mandatory requirement for existing skippers to retrain or recertify when the regulations come into force.

A consultation on this is expected in September 2026.

Joint Engagement with Regional fisheries group Feedback

MCA has attended regional fisheries group meetings around the country and intends to conduct another round in the autumn, with a Marine Office surveyor present.

Before the next round, MCA intends to produce feedback covering issues raised so far. This will set out what MCA hopes to do, what it may be able to do, and where it cannot take action, with reasons.

Common issues raised at regional meetings include:

- Consistency in inspections.
- Surveyor knowledge of fishing vessels.
- Improving understanding of how different fishing methods operate.
- Improving information on processes and what owners need to submit or demonstrate.
- Reducing the time taken for change of ownership processes.
- Improving safety messages, potentially through the Home and Dry group.
- Improving industry understanding of what surveyors will ask to see during inspections.
- What to do if a vessel cannot be inspected within the inspection window.

- Funding.

Question: How will the issues raised be turned into actions and outputs as some have been known for a long time? Industry engagement could reduce if industry do not see progress.

Answer: The MCA intends to produce a public report identifying the issues raised and what the MCA intends to do about them, and work will take place to look at how addressing issues can be built into MCA programmes.

Some actions may not be possible, but MCA will look to explain why rather than allowing issues to remain unresolved.

Comment: An action tracker for RFG meetings would help record actions, responsibilities, timelines and closure statuses. This would help maintain confidence in Regional Fisheries Groups and improve transparency.

Comment: Operational engagement with MCA is improving based on feedback. However, engagement from the MCA and Department for Transport senior leadership remains poor.

NFFO Fisheries Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables (FLOWW) – Mike Roach

Mike introduced himself as deputy chief at the NFFO and shared a presentation on the Fisheries Liaison and Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables (FLOWW) group to improve awareness of it within the fishing industry and to explain its role in facilitating engagement between fisheries and offshore wind developers. The slides can be found at the end of this document, and the best practice guidance document can be found here: [FLOWW Best Practice Guidance](#)

Mike said FLOW had previously become slow-moving, particularly while updated guidance was being developed. It was relaunched in November last year alongside the updated guidance. The intention is for FLOW to focus on clear deliverables, not simply act as another discussion forum.

FLOW's aims include:

- Providing a forum for discussion.
- Sharing good and poor examples of liaison.
- Promoting coexistence where possible.
- Understanding what happens when coexistence is not possible.
- Developing guidance and recommendations.
- Identifying future issues, particularly floating offshore wind.

FLOW has broad stakeholder representation, including fishing organisations, developers, Fisheries Liaison Officers, Defra, MMO, The Crown Estate, devolved administrations and fisheries representatives.

The FLOW steering group has two fisheries representatives, Mike Roach and Merlin Jackson from Thanet Fishermen's Organisation. Developers also have two seats on the steering group.

Mike highlighted the Best Practice Guidance for Fisheries Liaison and Offshore Renewable Developments. It is guidance, not legislation, but is the main document industry can use in the absence of legislation. The guidance covers:

- The format for liaison.
- How disruption to fishing businesses should be addressed.
- Disruption settlements.
- Protocols for lost or damaged gear.
- Fisheries community funds.
- Subsea cables.

Mike recommended that anyone fishing in or near wind farm sites becomes familiar with the guidance. He said it can be used to hold developers to account where liaison falls below expected standards. Mike shared that the main priorities for FLOW are floating offshore wind, environmental impact assessments, and data provision.

Mike said floating offshore wind is a major concern for the fishing industry, particularly in the Celtic Sea. He referred to work with Cefas gear specialist David Warwick to understand whether fishing can safely take place between floating offshore wind turbines and anchor systems.

For Celtic Sea developments, turbines of around 14 to 20 MW are being proposed. Anchor chain links may be around 2 metres long and weigh around 2 tonnes each. Mike said this has significant implications for whether and how fishing can safely continue in these areas.

Mike encouraged organisations that want to be involved in FLOW to contact him.

Question: Can advance notice when survey works start be provided, particularly because cable routes and landfall sites are a major concern. How can I access information on Fisheries Liaison Officers.

Answer: Standards can vary based on who has been appointed as the Fisheries Liaison Officer. The NFFO will only know which FLOs are appointed where its own FLO services are appointed. The Federation is available to help people understand where and how to engage.

Comment: The RFGs are happy to circulate information on Fisheries Liaison Officers more widely.

Octopus Update – Catriona New

Catriona provided an update on MMO work relating to octopus.

Current activity includes:

- A regular market sampling programme run by CFPO, Cornwall IFCA and Devon and Severn IFCA.
- A proposed project with stakeholders, including CFPO and Devon and Severn IFCA, to fund fishers to collect octopus and wider ecosystem data through the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme.
- Discussions about pot trials in the Channel Islands.
- Work at ICES level to understand how to develop a stock assessment for octopus.

- Engagement with experts from other countries to learn how they manage octopus fisheries.
- There have been conversations with the EU on potential collaboration, including data sharing. MMO has also linked with the Channel Islands to share data and learning.
- MMO is also considering what, if any, management may be appropriate for the fishery. Views from industry are welcome.
- An octopus science group has also been established.

MMO has created a new octopus webpage containing landings data, infographics and information on engagement through the Octopus Management Group. These are now being published monthly rather than every two weeks. [MMO Octopus Webpage](#)

MMO has set up a reporting portal for octopus sightings that would not otherwise appear in fisheries data, such as reports from divers, the public or recreational fishers. [Reporting Tool](#)

Question: Does octopus remain a ministerial priority following changes in the Prime Minister, Secretary of State, and ministerial team? The previous minister had been keen to prioritise octopus.

Answer: It is still early days and nothing this hasn't been passed onto the team yet.

Question: Is there any indication of the management measures that are being considered?

Answer: MMO is still scoping out possible options and gathering views. There is nothing specific to share at this stage. The MMO mailbox remains open to anything anyone wanted to raise: FMP@marinemanagement.org.uk.

Question: Is there any consideration of shared management with the EU or are you just looking at domestic management?

Answer: No update on this but will take away and get an answer.

Answer added after meeting: The UK is engaging with the European Commission and scientific experts on non-quota species, including octopus, to improve our understanding of emerging fisheries and possible management approaches. This work will help inform our future policy development and any consideration of potential management measures.

Question: There are reports of octopus sightings in the eastern Channel, does this match what the MMO are seeing?

Answer: MMO have received some reports, but not many. They will check the landings data and feedback the answer.

Answer added after meeting: Yes, we are getting very small amounts of octopus in 7d but the vast majority of landings are in 7e, with some in 7f and 7h. It is worth looking at our octopus/shellfish infographics. Within these, we include a heatmap which reflects the landings of octopus in each ICES rectangle - [Octopus & Shellfish Landings Data Summary - May 2026](#).

Catriona encouraged industry to continue sharing unusual sightings or notable changes in their fishery as this helps MMO understand octopus spread and potential impacts.

Quota Uptake – Katie James

Katie introduced herself as an Inshore Quota Manager at the MMO. Katie shared a presentation which was also circulated ahead of the meeting.

Katie provided a short summary on some of the 2027 ICES advice that was released at the end of June but highlighted that not all stock advice has yet been released.

This was followed by a quota uptake update for stocks relevant to 7efg which was summarised into current allocations, catch limits and quota uptake.

Summary tables of this information can be seen below.

Stock	ICES 2027 Advice % Change
Sole 7e	-16.2%
Sole 7fg	-1.72%
Plaice 7fg	-32%
Cod 7e-k	No change 0t
Haddock 7b-k	No change 0t
Whiting 7b-c & e-k	No change 0t
Pollack 7	-2.8%
Hake Western	-14.2%

Stock	Under 10m	Over 10m
Angler – Area 7	- Current allocation: 1204.2t - Current Catch Limit: 8t - Current uptake: 75.4t	- Current allocation: 33.2t - Current catch limit: 8t - Current uptake: 32t
Brill – Area 7de	- Current allocation: 45.6t - Current catch limit: 3t - Current uptake: 10.44t	- Current allocation: 14.9t - Current catch limit: 3t - Current uptake: 4.34t
Cod 7b-k excl 7d	- Current allocation: 4.6t - Current catch limit: 0.1t BY CATCH ONLY - Current uptake: 0.6t	- Current allocation: 0.6t - Current catch limit: 0.1t BY CATCH ONLY - Current uptake: 0.1t
Haddock 7 b-k	- Current allocation: 70.3t - Current catch limit: 1t BY CATCH ONLY - Current uptake: 0.6t	- Current allocation: 19.4t - Current catch limit: 1t BY CATCH ONLY - Current uptake: 0.7t
Western Hake 7b-k	- Current allocation: 68.1t - Current catch limit: 8t - Current uptake: 14.3t	
Herring 7e and f	- Current allocation: 14.7t - Current catch limit: 2t - Current uptake: 0.2t	

Western Horse Mackerel	• Current allocation: 25.1t • Current catch limit: 2t • Current uptake: 0.2t	
Western Mackerel	• Current allocation: 12.4t • Current catch limit: 3t • Current uptake: 2.3t	
Handline Mackerel	• Current allocation: 1010.3t • Current catch limit: • Current uptake: 5.2t	
Nephrops 7	• Current allocation: 22.9t • Current catch limit: 8t • Current uptake: 8.7t	• Current allocation: 2.5t • Current catch limit: 15t • Current uptake: 0.1t
Plaice 7e	• Current allocation: 177.5t • Current catch limit: 4t • Current uptake: 22t	• Current allocation: 38.8t • Current catch limit: 3t • Current uptake: 13.1t
Plaice 7fg	• Current allocation: 4.4t • Current catch limit: 0.5t • Current uptake: 0.9t	
Pollack 7	• Current allocation: 364.3t • Current catch limit: 2.5t • Current uptake: 94.2t	
Skates and Rays 6 & 7 excl 7d	• Current allocation: 790.1t • Current catch limit: 15t • Current uptake: 188.5t	• Current allocation: 87.6t • Current catch limit: 20t • Current uptake: 80.5t •
Sole 7e	• Current allocation: 221.6t • Current catch limit: 2.5t • Current uptake: 53.6t	• Current allocation: 21.4t • Current catch limit: 2.5t • Current uptake: 7.1t
Sole 7fg	• Current allocation: 39.8t • Current catch limit: 3t • Current uptake: 18.4t	
Whiting 7b-k excl 7d	• Current allocation: 33.7t • Current catch limit: 1t BY CATCH ONLY • Current uptake: 7.2t	
Undulate Ray 7de	• Current allocation: 221.6t • Current catch limit: 2.5t • Current uptake: 53.6t	
Undulate ray 7de	• UK 2026 allocation: 1275t • Current allocation: 1324t • Closed 1st May - 31st August.	

Small-eyed ray 7fg	• UK 2026 allocation: 57t • Current uptake: 19.7t • Catch limit: 1.25t	
Spurdog Western	• UK 2026 allocation: 3537t • Current uptake: 290.5t • Catch limit: 25t	

No questions were raised during the presentation.

For any questions related to quota please contact:

Katie James: 07747638655

Jacob Bestwick: 07469443840

inshorequotamanager@marinemanagement.org.uk

AOB – Anna Maclellan

Question: The meeting clashed with tide times. This may have made attendance difficult for some fishers.

Answer: The timing of this meeting was linked to the release of ICES advice and the need to give the team time to prepare an update. Fishers can access the recording which will be shared.

Thank you for attending this Regional Fisheries Group meeting. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or contribute in any other way, please contact the MMO Regional Fisheries mailbox: regionalfisheriesgroups@marinemanagement.org.uk or find out more via the Regional Fisheries webpage: [Regional Fisheries Groups - GOV.UK](#).

ACTIONS

Action	Owner	Due Date	Status	Notes/Outcome
Check if there has been consideration of shared management of octopus with the EU	Cat New (MMO)	To be shared in July's meeting minutes	Complete	Answer provided in these meeting notes – see pg 7
Check MMO landings data for octopus sightings in the eastern Channel	Cat New (MMO)	To be shared in July's meeting minutes	Complete	Answer provided in these meeting notes – see pg 7

Begin using an Action Tracker to keep track of actions raised during meetings and the outcomes	Anna	To be shared in July's meeting minutes	Complete	Provided here
Provide a section on Catch Recording at the next meeting	Anna	Next RFG meeting	In progress	Requested with Catch Recording team
Arrange meeting on a more suitable date to align with spring tides	Anna	Next RFG meeting	In progress	Acknowledged and best efforts to be made to align with spring tides, also taking into consideration speaker's availability and potential clashes with other external events

Contacts

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