**PAPER 1**

**WCRIFG Scallops Management Work Group Meeting**

**17 December 2019**

**MEETING NOTES**

**Attendees:** Stuart Bell (MS),Diane Buchanan (MS), Femke de Boer (SWFPA),Tommy Finn (CFA), Alasdair Hughson (SSDA), Alastair McNeill (Chair), Malcolm Morrison (SWFPA) Elaine Whyte (CFA)

**VC: (1) Oban -** John MacAlister (JMcA/SWFPA), Allan MacLean (MFA)**,** Nick Turnbull (MFA)

**(2) Stornoway –** Duncan MacInnes (WIFA)

**Telephone**: John Hermse (SA)

**Apologies:** Kirsty Dearing (SNH), Alastair Sinclair (SCAD), Alistair Philp (NWRFA)

**Introduction**

The Work Group was formed as an outcome of the recent WCRIFG Management Committee Meeting in August 2019 when the subject was an agenda item. The completion of a consultant report prepared for the WCRIFG was circulated to the WCRIFG members in August as a follow-up to the presentation of the draft report at the WCRIFG March Management committee meeting. The consultant Report was based on initial suggestions for scallop management measures in Argyllshire waters south of Mull proposed by the Argyll & Mull Subcommittee and Clyde Subcommittee, respectively.

The outcomes/recommendations of the work group will be reported to the WCRIFG Management Committee meeting in January 2020.

**Discussion**

The following bullet points reflect the discussions of the Work Group:

* There is little point in implementing an increase in Scallop MLS without remote electronic monitoring being implemented first.
* The fishing industry agreed to a review of the new minimum landing size of 105mm after a few years of its implementation.
* Diving is currently out of control on the west coast and management is abysmal. As the MPAs have expanded, the number of rogue dive operators have increased greatly.
* There are large numbers of unregistered 1-2 man bands around the Summer Isles.
* There was general support for something similar to the Hobby Fishermen SSI for scallop divers.
* Previous work done by Simon Dryden on better identify and prosecute rogue operators through Registration of Buyers and Sellers legislation was mentioned. This led to discussion on the need for a multi-facetted, multi-agency approach to enforcement of this issue by Marine Scotland.
* There was discussion of a curfew scheme for scallop fishing, whether this would be at odds with the current days at sea method of regulating the fishery and whether this scheme could be modified to ‘hours at sea’.
* Lynda Blackadder’s stock assessment data should be consulted in order to make management decisions.
* Curfews would advantage non-nomadic vessels but long steaming times and diversion of effort to specific places would have a major negative impact on larger nomadic vessels.
* In support of a curfew system, the use of REM would allow authorities to differentiate between steaming and fishing time.
* There are observations of the Isle of Man scallop fishery that suggest it is deteriorating year on year in spite of use of a curfew system.
* It was agreed to keep curfew systems on the table as there would be no means to trial such a scheme until Modernisation of the Inshore Fleet Programme was further developed anyway.

**Actions**

1. Marine Scotland to follow-up potential of multi-agency action against rogue operators
2. Suggested there should be a further work group meeting circa February 2020
3. Marine Scotland Science input requested for next Work Group meeting re: stock assessments
4. WCRIFG members should consider proposals for scallops’ management in one or others of the areas identified in the consultant report. This could be done by means of a paper to the next Work Group meeting.