

Regional Inshore Fisheries Group Network

RIFG Chairs' Meeting Note

07th October 2021, via Microsoft Teams – 1pm – 3pm

Attendees

Present		
Jim Watson	JW	Head of Domestic Fisheries Management
Stuart Bell	SB	Marine Scotland
Helen Downie	HD	Marine Scotland
Chloe Aird	CA	Marine Scotland
Gordon Taylor	GT	Marine Scotland
Duncan MacInnes	DM	Outer Hebrides RIFG
Simon Macdonald	SM	West Coast RIFG
Jennifer Mouat	JM	North and East Coast RIFG
Donald Nicholson	DN	Outer Hebrides RIFG
Carole Laignel	CL	Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation (SSMO)
Kate Rydzkowski	KR	Orkney Sustainable Fisheries (OSF)
Karen Galloway	KG	Seafood Scotland
Vikki Halliday	VH	Marine Scotland – Seafood Team

Apologies - None

1. MS Update – Jim Watson – 13.00

Cooperation agreement – Over the next 4/5 years Marine Scotland will be focused on delivery of the marine elements of the cooperation agreement. This builds on our future fisheries strategy and includes development of the MPA network, HPMA's to cover at least 10% of Scotland's seas, and a Cap on inshore fishing activity, possible removal of latent scallop capacity and progression with Modernisation of the Inshore Fleet Programme.

Marine Scotland has been undertaking some internal prioritisation work, reviewing existing commitments alongside new commitments and resource implications as a result of the Cooperation Agreement, COVID Recovery, EU Exit, budget constraints, and regulatory/statutory functions.

RIFG Chairs meeting with Miss Gougeon – Productive meeting with many key points being raised, which included, science/evidence base, access to markets, the shared

marine space and the cumulative impacts of marine protection and offshore renewables developments on fishing and the wider seafood sector.

Future Fisheries Management – Items within the cooperation agreement, such as the inshore cap builds on the work of the FFM. The implementation strategy is being worked on for implementing and we will review all the different work streams and what to prioritise.

RIFG Project Proposals – pause on these proposals while we wait on what work will be prioritised under the Cooperation Agreement.

Outer Hebrides Pilot - MS are in talks with Mark James and other internal colleagues about how we can do more with the data coming from the pilot. Looking at how to allocate this work and get best value of this positive work.

2. Updates from Chairs – 13.20

West Coast

Privacy Notice – contacted lawyer to run over any recommendations or adjustments.

Aquaculture Workgroup – Letter sent to Prof Russell Griggs , waiting to hear from him regarding aquaculture review. Press release sent for this workgroup and this has been picked up by Fishing News/Oban Times.

Cab Sec meeting with RIFG Chairs – happy with points raised and very worthwhile meeting to promote this network.

Mull group – 3 year extension to crab box pilot which has been welcomed. MS Science will gather data gained from this additionally. Fishers worried that new entrants coming in could further saturate the fishing ground.

Oban fishers – Upset with creelers working areas, where most of the time trawling is taking place. This has seen them move from MPA areas where they are allowed to work, onto the newer ground causing some concern.

Seaguard – Cable laying between Girvan and Port Patrick, notice to mariners will be sent out on a regular basis, specifically asap when work has just been completed.

Shellfish and Seaweed farms – Meeting with Dr Carolyn Roberts consultation project on shellfish and seaweed farms- Agreed that it would be best to keep these farms as compact as possible to lessen the area covered and avoid fishers working between them.

Solway – Keen to know if recent cockles project will go ahead, large research vessel towed through creels which are still missing.

Clyde Cod Consultation – No feedback has been received for this yet.

West Coast RIFG meeting – Looking for this to take place within next 3 weeks and future ones more frequent and shorter.

North & East Coast

Geofencing Proposal – still pursuing, and appetite to move forward. Part of mitigation measures against gear conflict and comments have been provided by MS. Other areas have been looked at for examples of how Geo fencing is used, and further comments will be provided to MS in due course.

Had *Nephrops* and Scallop Project UK meeting and paper work can be forwarded to anyone who wishes to view.

Had Seafood trade meeting with Greg Allan & Lewis Paterson, was very beneficial to get everyone's views and glad to get a flavour of their priorities.

Offshore Wind consultation continue to feature and comments/objections, where necessary, have been submitted. Work has been ongoing for a Mitigation Strategy for the sites. As a result a workshop is to be held in October and in advance of that Industry have met a number of times to review each measure within the paper and agree on a joint response. It is hoped that the workshop will be an opportunity to reach some common ground

Work is taking place to develop a Damage to Gear Form in relation to wind development projects it is hoped that this will be ready to bring into use as soon as possible.

Work is continuing to look at phase 2 of the Seal Deterrent work and likely to take place in Spring 2022. St Andrews are leading as the project sponsor, however the overall project remaining with the RIFG. Looking at gaining funding which is key to expand the project in size/scope. This project has been nominated for an award in recognition of its collaborative working.

Thanked Marine Scotland's Stuart Bell for NAFC report being published, and is now viewable on the RIFG website.

Floating windfarm proposal – a lot of changes to existing licenses and these have to be looked at due to the number of variations.

Orkney

Meeting with Marine Scotland Seafood Trade Team and the processor in Orkney to discuss the issues with the ability to enter the UK market and lack of opportunities for MSC.

Asked to sit on Working Group for Fastnet which is a new accreditation platform in its early stages. Help to get this active soon is being provided by UN & WWF.

Outer Hebrides

MPAs – Frustration at MarPAMM's involvement and hoping more constructive actions will develop soon.

Difficulty with first time business owners, however have convinced the council to approve bridging loans which will make a big difference.

Labour shortage within processing and vessel sector. Researchers from Palma University working in the islands at the moment to look at the migrant labour problems. Migrants needed to come and work in fishing sector as local population don't seem to want to take up fishing.

Pot limitation pilot going well and FISH1 forms are in good order, brown crab reduced by 50 per cent compared to last year. Catches for Prawn are doing very well, whilst

Blue Fin Tuna Project – the new season is about to begin.

Aggregations of Spur Dog continue to be a problem and OH fishers continue to call for a another trial enabling them to be caught.

Crayfish traps – success with new design and early results are looking promising.

Shetland Update

The MOU between SSMO and MS Compliance has been signed by the SSMO Chairperson and sent to the MSC director for signature. It is reviewed every 5 years.

An Advisory Group Meeting was held this week. John Garriock was welcomed to the group, an ex-fisher.

Carole attended 2 project UK scallop meetings and a Fair Isle D & R MPA Meeting.

Some documents were reviewed with some small changes being made to the Code of Conduct, Replacement Vessel procedures and the Penalty System which will be taken to the Board for consideration.

The SIC provided an update on the proposed business case review of SSMO funding.

Shetland have had a pre-planning application for a seaweed farm in Yell Sound so are dealing with issues as they were using an outdated map from the spatial plan and therefore did not realise there was Buckie Whelk fishing in the area.

Shetland has an Orion project and the goal is to position Shetland to become a recognised world leading clean energy hub and as part of that they have a Marine working group which Shetland have been invited to attend. The group is looking to inform, plan and facilitate the changeover of all marine vessels in and around Shetland to low/net carbon energy systems over the coming decades.

They have also secured funding for a 7 month project called Neptune which is developing a virtual model of the current Shetland marine eco-system and researching the most applicable clean fuels to inform how and when to change the vessels over.

Carole's post is likely to be advertised next week.

3. Seafood Scotland – Karen Galloway & Vikki Halliday – 14.10

Karen Galloway

Karen is new to Seafood Scotland and is responsible for retail and driving products into industry and multiple retailers. Keen to develop a long term strategy, whilst working alongside MS. Advised of working beside multiple large retailers including Tesco which will help with sourcing strategy. Explained how there is massive interest in locally sourced Shellfish. Very keen to work alongside the RIFG Chairs and her contact details were supplied to all the chairs at the end of the meeting as requested.

Vikki Halliday – Seafood Team - MS

There was discussion around the short-life team potentially continuing beyond March 2022 with a strategy in place for summer '22 looking at longer term impact. There was discussion around Scottish produce being world class and opportunities to promote this in future with marketing playing a key role.

4. Creel and Vessel Management Paper – Simon/Jenny – 14.45

SM opened discussion on the Creel and Vessel Management paper that he has been developing with assistance from JM. The paper was submitted to Marine Scotland for comment prior to wider circulation.

Marine Scotland advised that the cooperation agreement will need to be considered when evolving this paper. Explained that capping was being scoped out at the moment with a consultation due early next year.

Brown crab data is to be released by Jan/Feb next year which was agreed will be useful. Outer Hebrides have *Nephrops* data that could be used for other areas, however agreed that there needs to be a regional approach to the stock and species.

Marine Scotland raised the value of voluntary agreements for trialled the approaches highlighted by the paper, as opposed to legislative change.

6. AOB – None