

FMAC – INSHORE SUBGROUP
DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aim

To explore, develop solutions, and provide advice and recommendations on nationwide inshore fisheries issues that align with delivery of our Fisheries Management Strategy.

Background

Scotland's Fisheries Management Strategy sets out our approach to managing sea fisheries in partnership with our stakeholders through 'co-management' and in a way that balances environmental, social and economic interests. The strategy forms one of the cornerstones of our Blue Economy approach and sets out a vision for Scotland to be a world class fishing nation delivering responsible and sustainable fisheries management which provides access to a high protein, low carbon food. Sustainability, support for biodiversity and consideration of the wider ecosystem is at the heart of how we manage Scotland's fisheries and protect our marine environment.

Scotland's inshore fisheries make an important contribution to the economic and cultural fabric of our coastal communities. Around 80% of Scotland's 2,000+ registered fishing vessels operate in our inshore waters (12NM). Many are small, family businesses, comprising a mix of Nephrops trawlers, scallop dredgers, creelers, hand liners, and divers. These vessels fish primarily for high quality shellfish, the majority of which is destined for export markets.

Management of these valuable inshore fisheries must be considered in balance with other competing pressures facing Scotland's marine space. Scotland, like other nations, is facing the twin crises of climate change and loss of nature and biodiversity. There is increasing competition for marine space; this being in response to competing activities including increased demand for marine products, energy, and transport, along with measures intended to increase environmental protections in key areas.

This group will help us ensure that inshore fishing interests are fully understood and considered as we seek to improve management of inshore fisheries in this shared marine space.

Scope

The group will help shape the development and practical implementation of key policies. It will utilise a co-management approach to develop solutions to difficult nationwide fisheries management and conservation challenges within Scotland's inshore area (out to 12 nautical miles), in alignment with the following:

- Strategic delivery of key inshore aspects of our FFM strategy and delivery plan objectives, including development of for example diversification opportunities and support for new entrants into the industry, in order to improve resilience and support sustainable and responsible inshore fisheries management.
- Delivery of commitments outlined within the Bute House Agreement in order to deliver sustainable fisheries within Scotland's shared marine space. This includes practical implementation of policies such as inshore vessel management measures, fisheries management for MPAs and key biodiversity locations outside of MPAs, and implementation of HPMAs across 10% of our marine space.
- Support strategic development and implementation of RIFG-led fisheries management measures in order to address priorities that span regions or have a national focus.
- The scope of this FMAC sub-group will concentrate on inshore fisheries matters. It will however need to draw links to wider work ongoing across the other issues identified, and will facilitate join up as needed. The remit of the group may need to be expanded over time.
- Recognition of the kind of fisheries that typify the inshore area out to 12 nautical miles and that not all vessels that spend part of their time in these waters (for example pelagic trawlers), will fall within the scope of this group.

Role of the group

- 1) Support the aims and responsibilities of the Sub-group and FMAC.
- 2) To bring knowledge and experience to help understand options to improve management of different inshore fishery sectors and provide appropriate support to the fishing industry whilst delivering on objectives;
- 3) To work together in a productive and collegiate way to generate and deliver actions;
- 4) To identify barriers and enablers and how these should be taken account of;
- 5) To make wider strategic links across the Scottish Government portfolio, also identifying connections to external developments and work across the UK;
- 6) To support the development of policy solutions and help inform recommendations to Scottish Ministers;
- 7) To secure stakeholder input to delivery of Scottish Government commitments under the 2020 Fisheries Act;
- 8) To link with the overarching FMAC group, relevant subgroups, keeping stakeholders up to date and carrying out joint working where relevant;
- 9) To provide a linkage to the RIFG network, enabling it's Chairs to provide regular updates on general activities and development of Operation Plans, as well as allowing joint working where relevant;
- 10) To identify priorities and develop a programme of work for the group, and

11) To consult and engage with their members, and be willing to take responsibility for delivery of some aspects of the work programme.

Membership of the group

Membership will include representation from a range of inshore stakeholders including the Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (RIFG) Chairs, along with other fisheries representatives and environmental groups. It will therefore be drawn from FMAC members and some non-FMAC members who hold relevant experience and expertise. Active fishers will be considered as potential non-FMAC members where their input is relevant.

Chair and secretariat

Chair to be agreed. Secretariat to be provided by the Scottish Government.

Meeting frequency

Initial meeting 23 February 2023, with meetings expected to be held three times annually. Meetings to be held virtually or in person as needed.