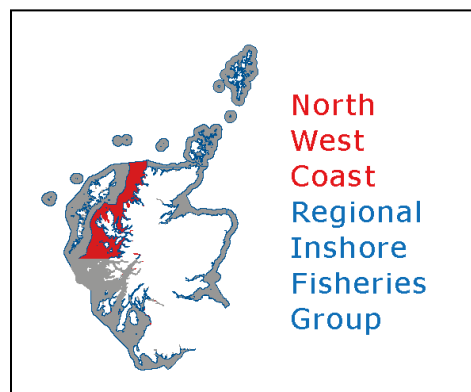


**NOTE OF MEETING**  
**held in the Skye Bridge**  
**Studio, Kyle of Lochalsh**  
**at 17 00 on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025**



Present in person:	Alistair Philp-SCFFF Kirsten Leahy,SFF, Joy Riley Portree FO; Duncan McAndrew-NWRFA, A Hamilton, Chair
Present online	Kenny Coull MNWFA: Mairi Henderson MNWFA,
Apologies:	None

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction.</b></p> <p>AH welcomed the attendees reminded the assembled that this was a safe space for those directly involved in fishing to have their say. He noted the low attendance, but believed it understandable on a fine spring evening that followed stormy days.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Marine Directorate Update:</b></p> <p>The meeting discussed the Marine Directorate’s planned activity that may impact the inshore industry for the coming year. This included discussion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Plans to introduce inshore vessel tracking systems in 2025:</u>  The meeting discussed recent progress and welcomed the move to installing equipment aboard vessels.  A question was raised (AP) as to whether the Marine Directorate intended further consultation before installing?  The Chair advised that, to the best of his knowledge all consultations had been completed. AP questioned the relevance of consultation work that had been carried out in 2016. The Chair, responded that, although it was before his time in office, his understanding was that there had been more recent consultation work concluded.  <i>AH agreed to raise the matter with MD for clarification.</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>National Marine Plan 2</u> The meeting noted the continuing development of the National Marine Plan 2 and that there was no further information to impart following the consultation on the Planning Position Statement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Crab and Lobster Fishing: Comments about the Interim Measures:</b></p> <p>The meeting discussed the request from Marine Directorate staff for Feedback on the interim measures. The Chair emphasized that, during the Review there were several potential routes for skippers to become involved in this consultative exercise (such as the National Creel Boat Survey, responding to the circulated briefing note sent either direct or via associations and more), this is the final opportunity for voices to be heard.</p> <p>It was felt that, as the area had been largely compliant in not landing berried females and had little local experience of super crabber activity, that the measures were broadly welcomed.</p> <p>A view was expressed (AP) that, while it was too early in the process to fully understand any impact that these measures are having on stocks, the interim measures will make no meaningful impact. There was interest that the impact on stocks of the increased MLS in 2015 should be established evidentially to create a baseline position from which to compile evidence.</p> <p>The meeting discussed other mechanisms for establishing more environmentally sustainable fishing. In particular the requirement for a system of creel limits, broken down with separate limits depending on the target species.</p> <p>The Chair advised that, the Regional Inshore Fisheries Group Network had heard this in their National Creel Boat Survey where it had emerged by far as the over-riding issue affecting the industry.</p> <p><i>He undertook to raise the matter on behalf of the NW Regional Inshore Fisheries Group with the Marine Directorate.</i></p>
<p><b>3.1</b></p>	<p><b>Regional Management- Call for Evidence</b></p> <p>The meeting briefly discussed the above call for evidence and advised that he had submitted a response on behalf of the NW Regional Inshore Fisheries Group.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Impact of Kelp Farming on the Industry:</b></p>

	<p>The meeting discussed the increasing volume of applications to lease seabed to the develop of kelp farms over existing fishing grounds. It concurred that this represented a substantial threat taking a community asset into private control in a manner that could never happen in land based systems.</p> <p>DMcA sought that it become a responsibility of the applicant to have a burden of proof that an area was not used for fishing rather than the other way around.</p> <p>The meeting welcomed the RIFG intervention including the meeting with the Crown Estate and sought stronger support over the protection of fishing space against encroachment from aquaculture.</p> <p>The meeting discussed whether fishing organisations should become involved with aquaculture developers at the planning stage to guide them to the least encroaching sites for their organisations. Following discussion it was agreed not to as that was likely to cause potential conflict between skippers as most ground was used by someone.</p> <p><i>The meeting confirmed that it was appropriate for the Chair to continue to be involved in planning applications.</i></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business:</b></p> <p>Kirsten Leahy, SFF raised the matter of the development of a fish farm off Little Colonsay west of Ulva. SFF had prepared presentation material showing trawling activity over the proposed site and agreed to share it with others. The Chair confirmed that he was already involved in discussions with licensing authorities regarding the site.</p> <p><i>KL to share slides</i></p> <p>The meeting discussed the need for a leaflet and/or video to instruct skippers on how to safely v-notch lobsters avoiding haemorrhaging to the animal. AH and AP agreed to take the matter forward.</p> <p><i>AP/AH to progress</i></p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Close of meeting:</b></p> <p>The meeting will closed at 18 42.</p>