

Minutes: UK Scallop Steering Group meeting

Meeting Date: 18th July 2022

Location: Online

Attendees	Organisation
AB: Andy Boulton	Waitrose
AD: Andy Dietschel-Buehler	Flatfish
AH: Adam Holland	Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation (NIFF)
BC: Ben Collier	Northern Ireland gear trials
BL: Bill Lart	Seafish
CP: Claire Pescod	Macduff Shellfish
DD: David Donnan	NatureScot
EB: Esther Brooker	ScotLINK
EW: Elaine Whyte	Communities Inshore Fisheries Alliance
FN: Fiona Nimmo	Poseidon
JE: Jack Emmerson	Isle of Man government
JH: Juliette Hatchman	South West Fish Producer Organisation (SWFPO)
JP: Jo Pollett	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
JPo: Jim Portus	Scallop Industry Consultation Group
KK: Katie Keay	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
LB: Lisa Bennett	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)
LH: Lief Hendrikz	WWF UK
MF: Mairi Fenton	Herriot-Watt University
MP: Mike Park	Scottish White Fish Producers Association (SWFPA)
RW: Robert Whiteley	Natural England
SM: Simon Macdonald	West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group
Apologies	
Lynda Blackadder	Marine Scotland Science (MSS)
Andy Lawler	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)
Carrie McMinn	Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
Calum Duncan	ScotLINK

Purpose of the meeting

This meeting focussed on the results of the annual review at the end of year 3, and the progress made against performance indicators. There was an update on the progress of the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP), and an opportunity to discuss the environmental subgroup and future progress on Principle 2 actions.

Agenda Item 1: Update from annual review

FN provided an update on the annual review at the end of Year 3. The Benchmarking and Tracking Tool was updated for each Unit of Assessment (UoA), and overall the UK Scallop FIP is behind target. At the end of Year 3, five performance indicators (PIs) fail to reach SG60: harvest strategy (PI 1.2.1), harvest control rules (PI 1.2.2), ETP outcome status and management (PI 2.3.1 and 2.3.2) and habitat

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management (PI 2.4.2). A further 13 PIs are within the SG60-79 category. Harvest strategy (PI 1.2.1) and harvest control rules (PI 1.2.2) both require work to define, progress and implement them, including defining reference points and agreeing a management response if those reference points are triggered. Secondary species outcome (PI 2.2.1) and ETP (PI 2.3.1-2.3.3) are behind target while the group waits for Marine Scotland Science to publish its catch composition report. A score increase from SG<60 to SG60-79 was seen in habitat outcome (PI 2.4.1) thanks to work MF completed on relative benthic status (RBS). FN explained that further refinement of the RBS research is needed, and will inform next steps for habitat management (PI 2.4.2) which is still <SG60.

Most Principle 3 scores will improve through the development of the national scallop Fishery Management Plan, led by the Scallop Industry Consultation Group. This FMP will improve clarity of decision-making processes (PI 3.2.2) and agree fishery-specific objectives. During Year 4 there needs to be a focus on demonstrating compliance and enforcement (PI 3.2.3), which relates to concerns around scallop dredgers fishing within Marine Protected Areas (MPA).

Discussion

CP asked whether it was necessary to update the action plan, or review the timelines following this annual review. FN said the action plan is a living document and the timeline for deliverables could be updated, although that needs to be well considered and agreed by the Steering Group.

The most impact the Steering Group can make in Year 4 will be on Principle 2 actions, and JP talked about using the environmental subgroup (ESG) to deliver this. FN suggested the ESG could host a workshop to address any remaining concerns about the ETP scores. JE mentioned the Isle of Man management plan for King scallops which was based on the MSC FMP template and added that there is some data on by-catch and ETP which might be relevant for this group.

Actions from Item 1:

1. JE to share IoM bycatch data with the Secretariat.
2. Secretariat to arrange an environmental subgroup meeting and consider hosting a workshop to address any remaining Principle 2 concerns.

Agenda Item 2: Update on Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG) Fishery Management Plan (FMP)

SICG FMP

CP summarised that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural affairs (Defra), has commissioned the SICG working group to be the delivery lead for the FMP (as required by Fisheries Act) for King scallops in English and Welsh waters. The SICG working group established a sub-group to draft the initial stages of FMP and the draft objectives. CP said they are at the beginning of the FMP process and the aim is to go out to stakeholder engagement around beginning of September.

JPo and CP are leading on the paperwork for the national FMP and discussed multiple documents relevant to the process. An Evidence Statement document is being developed, which outlines all

information currently available for the King scallop fishery and will help identify evidence needs to feed into the FMP –Defra requires all management interventions to be evidence-based. CP added that the SICG is aware there are no scientists on the FMP subgroup, so they are considering setting up a science group separately to assess the evidence requirements. This would be separate to the Project Steering Board (PSB), which is set up to comment on the stock assessment.

CP stated that when the FMP goes out for consultation, it will include two initial management interventions which will be aligned with the FIP requirements for a harvest strategy and harvest control rules. They are aiming to go out to public consultation in April 2023, with the intention to formally publish the FMP in September 2023. Prior to consultation in April, the working group intends to deliver a stakeholder engagement plan from 8th September, presenting a first draft outline to full SICG for input, and also organising port visits and online Teams events to try to engage all stakeholders.

Scotland

CP talked about the Scottish Scallop Sector Working Group (SSSWG), who will be developing a scallop FMP for Scottish waters, once instructed by Marine Scotland. There is overlap in membership between the SSSWG, SICG and this FIP Steering Group, which should ensure information and updates are shared. However, JP noted that Marine Scotland representatives are resource limited and not often able to join the Project UK meetings. DD reminded the group about the relevance of the Bute House Agreement, which includes management for priority marine features (PMFs) and marine protected areas (MPAs), as well as an inshore cap on vessels. Marine Scotland is expecting to consult on the inshore cap including iVMS and latent capacity, and DD requested that the timeline of the FIP action plan is aligned with the timelines in Scottish legislation.

CP suggested the Secretariat could formally ask a Marine Scotland representative from the SSSWG to attend FIP meetings and act as a liaison between the two groups. FN asked if there was a flowchart of the different scallop groups and how they interact with each other. JH will be expanding the SICG terms of reference to include how the group interacts with others, which she will share when done. JH and CP confirmed that the national FMP will cover the English and Welsh EEZ, and include the multi-year strategies that are being drafted for reciprocal access to UK and EU waters.

FIP FMP

FN said the FIP FMP should be viewed as the FMP for any client group that might be taking the fishery into certification. CP confirmed that the national FMP template is very similar to the document the Steering Group is drafting for the FIP, and will circulate the template if it is publicly available.

JH said the SICG has been discussing management for a long time and reiterated that the formal FMP is not intended to delay this further. JH acknowledged that industry representatives have concerns about the management options, and have questioned whether an industry consultation will occur. JH also acknowledged that this FIP is waiting on the FMP also to progress some of the performance indicators.

CP said the focus has been on the Defra-commissioned FMP so little work has been done on the FIP FMP since the last Steering Group meeting. BL has created a SharePoint page on the Seafish website to host the FIP FMP and has posted the draft content there. BL and CP agreed to update the FIP FMP once management interventions are out for consultation.

BL asked about the approach for Irish waters. JH explained that Irish waters are difficult to manage because multiple administrations have input into it, and they are still looking for solutions to that.

Actions from Item 2:

1. CP and BL to discuss updates for the FIP FMP
2. CP to share Defra FMP template, if available, with Steering Group
3. CP and JH to coordinate inviting the FIP Steering Group members to the FMP workshops in late 2022
4. JH to share the structure of PSB and their updated ToR
5. Secretariat to invite Marine Scotland to provide updates at Steering Group meetings on behalf of the SSSWG.

Agenda Item 3: – Update on habitat impact research

MF provided an update on the skid dredge project being trialled by Heriot Watt University. This report has been published, and MF is drafting a paper to send for peer review. She is also looking at the similarities and interactions of management measures for scallop fisheries globally, and intends to share more information at the next Steering Group meeting. MF presented a map of modelled habitats plus broad scale VMS data, which gives a broad overview of habitat impact, however needs to be interpreted with caution until the data can be refined. MF explained that she has not been able to include rocky substrate as it is not possible to calculate the penetration depth.

Next steps for the research will be to consult with the inshore fleet on their fishery footprint, in the absence of iVMS data.

Discussion

MF and JH discussed whether looking at the similarity between successful management measures globally could be used to identify the best combination of management measures for use in the UK. CP said she would add MF to the SICG science working group so the habitat research can contribute to the evidence requirements of the FMP.

RW and MF discussed comparing the BH3 habitat model with other impact tools, and MF said she has requested a masters project to compare the different indicators used in the various habitat models. The ICES Benthic Impacts and Trade Offs working group are currently looking at alternative options for calculating fishing impacts and the outputs of that workstream will be useful to ensure the results of MFs PhD are robust. RW and MF agreed the importance of capturing the uncertainties and caveats in the report.

Actions from Item 3:

1. CP to add MF to the SICG science working group
2. MF to share the review of global management measures once complete

Agenda Item 4: Update on environmental subgroup

JP reminded the group that within Round 2 Steering Groups there is a joint environmental subgroup, which will reconvene to try to progress the Principle 2 actions identified in the FIP action plans. The

focus for the scallop FIP will be on 'ETP outcome, information and management', and anyone who wants to join the subgroup is welcome. JP asked the Steering Group to raise any other topics for discussion, and reminded the group of the discussion points for the subgroup to consider: the wheelhouse guide and missing images, ETP section of alternative measures report and the potential historic distribution of PMFs and fishery footprint.

Discussion

BL requested the subgroup arrange a face-to-face meeting. BL added that the alternatives measures report now includes the Heriot Watt University work on skid dredges, and commented that the ETP section needs more content. A Doodlepoll will be circulated to find a date for the meeting in the next couple of months. RW requested to join the subgroup.

Actions from Item 4:

1. Secretariat to:
 - Organise a date for the next environmental subgroup meeting
 - Add RW to environmental subgroup
2. BL to send updated alternatives measures report to Secretariat

Any Other Business

JP provided an update on the Fisheries Standard Review. V3.0 of the MSC Standard was signed off by the MSC Board and is expected to be published in October 2022. JP explained that new fisheries entering the MSC program after May 2023 will need to be assessed against V3.0. The next annual review will involve updating the action plan to address any new requirements in V3.0.

Meeting Closes

11:20am

	Actions Arising	Responsibility
1	JE to share Isle of Man bycatch data with the Secretariat	Jack Emmerson
2	Secretariat to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. arrange an environmental subgroup meeting and consider hosting a workshop to address any remaining Principle 2 concerns b. invite Marine Scotland to provide updates at Steering Group meetings on behalf of the SSSWG c. Organise a date for the next environmental subgroup meeting d. Add RW to environmental subgroup 	Secretariat

3	CP to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. share Defra FMP template, if available, with Steering Group b. add MF to the SICG science working group c. discuss updates with BL about the FIP FMP d. coordinate with JH to invite the FIP Steering Group members to the FMP workshops in late 2022 	Claire Pescod
4	MF to share the review of global management measures once complete	Mairi Fenton
5.	BL to send updated alternatives measures report to Secretariat	Bill Lart
6.	JH to share the structure of PSB and their updated ToR	Juliette Hatchman