

## Minutes: UK Scallops Steering Group

Meeting Date: 18th January 2023

Location: Online

Name	Company
AB: Andrew Brown	Macduff Shellfish
AH: Adam Holland	Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation
AL: Andy Lawler	Cefas
BC: Ben Collier	Northern Ireland gear trials
BL: Bill Lart	Seafish
CM: Caitlin McNally	Defra
CD: Calum Duncan	ScotLINK
CJ: Carlyne Jenson	Flatfish Ltd
CM: Carrie McMinn	AFBI
CP: Claire Pescod	Macduff Shellfish
DD: David Donnan	NatureScot
EW: Elaine Whyte	Communities Inshore Fisheries Association (CIFA)
FN: Fiona Nimmo	Poseidon
JE: Jack Emmerson	Isle of Man Government
JP: Jo Pollett	Marine Stewardship Council (Chair)
JH: Juliette Hatchman	South-Western Fish Producers Organisation
LG: Laura Gale	Tesco
LB: Lisa Bennett	Marine Stewardship Council
MF: Mairi Fenton	Heriot-Watt University
MDN: Michele De Noia	NatureScot
PS: Patrick Smith	DAERA
RW: Rob Whiteley	Natural England
SC: Sally Chamberlain	Seafish Northern Ireland
SJ: Sophie Jenkinson	Morrisons
TH: Thomas Hollick	Tesco
<b>Apologies</b>	
LyB: Lynda Blackadder	Marine Scotland Science

### Purpose of the meeting

- 1) Remind Steering Group of key actions for this year and score changes needed ahead of the annual review in March/April
- 2) Update on Mairi Fenton's PhD and get Steering Group input on potential management scenarios to model
- 3) Update on Fishery Management Plan progress across the Devolved Administrations

The FIP action plan aims for the following performance indicators to meet SG80 at the next annual review of progress in March/April.

1.1.1 Stock status	2.4.3 Habitat Information
1.2.1 Harvest Strategy	2.5.1 Ecosystem Outcome
1.2.2 Harvest control rules and tools	2.5.2 Ecosystem Management
2.2.1 Secondary Outcome	3.1.1 Legal and customary framework
2.2.2 Secondary Management	3.1.2 Consultation, roles and responsibilities
2.3.1 ETP Outcome	3.2.1 Fishery specific objectives
2.3.2 ETP Management	3.2.2 Decision making processes
2.3.3 ETP Information	3.2.3 Compliance and enforcement
2.4.2 Habitat Management	

### **Agenda Item 1: Stock status and 2023 survey plans (PI 1.1.1, 1.2.4) (AL/CM/LB)**

AL updated that results from the 2022 stock surveys in English waters are expected to be published April 2023. Survey resources are limited, and there is a Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG) Project Steering Board (PSB) meeting in March to decide priority areas. Dredge surveys for the Eastern Channel and North Sea have been confirmed for September 2023. The central North Sea (including Dogger Bank) survey is still to be confirmed.

CM reported that the Northern Ireland ‘erratum stratified’ based surveys will run 11-15 February 2023 (fixed grid, surveying 42 of 164 stations this year). There are four commercial dredges, one with a fine mesh layer to retain small bycatch and juvenile scallops. Survey data is processed and analysed using the ICES category 3 assessment. The 2023 landings advice is for a 10% reduction in catch due to the survey index and reduced landings per unit effort. AFBI are also completing a genetics project funded through European Maritime and Fisheries Fund that can hopefully contribute information on population distribution to the FIP, due in Spring 2023.

LB shared Lynda Blackadder’s update. The Marine Scotland Science (MSS) Shetland scallops survey will sail 26th January - 10th February 2023, with dates still to be confirmed for East coast, West coast and Clyde. There are no updated stock assessments for scallop stocks in Scottish water. Staff are preparing data and further work on stock assessments will be undertaken this year. Comments have been received from members of Project UK on the Bycatch Paper being drafted by LyB. The report still must undergo an internal review process before publication.

#### *Discussion*

AB and CD were interested in when the survey data will be published from Marine Scotland to inform management advice, particularly as LyB’s team has recently recruited a new staff member.

#### **Actions from agenda item 1:**

- CM to share AFBI’s genetics project report with Steering Group when available.
- LyB to share the latest ICES WGSscallop report with Steering Group/ Secretariat
- LyB to share an expected publication date for Marine Scotland’s survey data

**Agenda Item 2: Habitat PhD update (PI 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.4.3) (MF)**

MF presented an update on her PhD looking at the impact of dredge gear on seabed habitats, and supporting the development of any habitat management plans under PI2.4.2 (see slides). She shared existing management measures of scallop fisheries globally and invited the Steering Group to propose management scenarios for her to model. Scenarios proposed after the meeting can be submitted through a questionnaire, which will include details on what data is available to inform the modelling (e.g. in the absence of inshore iVMS).

*Discussion*

The Steering Group were very supportive and appreciative of MF's progress and updates. MF confirmed that modelling could be done on the impacts of modified gear and that precautionary approaches can be adjusted accordingly for the different models. CD suggested a number of management scenarios to consider including modelling closures at varying distances from shore, and considering existing and future MPA management measures. MF acknowledged that a limitation of the study was the lack of data for <12m vessels. She will be modelling the footprint of the fishery if the bottom 10% of 'least fished' areas were removed from the fishing area, and how that would impact landings.

CP will respond to the questionnaire, and was encouraged that MF was considering the impacts of fishing displacement when suggesting closing fishing grounds and the inclusion of Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). CP suggested modelling the national scallop FMP management approaches (which are still in development) such as an effort cap, and rotating seasonal closures.

BC suggested including the effect of proposed offshore renewable energy sites, and impacts of dredging on blue carbon. MF said that blue carbon is beyond the scope of her PhD, however Heriot-Watt do have other research underway on blue carbon. JH offered to share updates when available on the Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships (FISP) funded project with Bangor University on the impact of bottom towed gear on blue carbon.

**Actions from agenda item 2:**

- MF to share questionnaire with the Steering Group on potential management scenarios
- Steering Group members to complete Mairi Fenton's potential management scenarios questionnaire (deadline 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb)
- JH to share updates on the FISP Blue Carbon project when available

**Agenda Item 3: Endangered, Threatened and Protected species (ETP) (PI 2.3.2, 2.3.3) (LB/BL)**

The Clean Catch UK (CCUK) app is still being rebuilt following technical problems with the software that were identified last year. Seven 'groups' within CCUK need rebuilding. An app extension has also been proposed from August 2023. LB discussed an alternative ETP monitoring app, [MoFI](#), that the Joint Demersal Fishery (JDF) is developing, which should be ready in summer 2023. This app was developed to for use with trawl gear, and could potentially be adapted to suit other fisheries when it is completed.

BL updated the Steering Group on the ETP species section of the FMP. FN confirmed that the environmental sub-group agreed upon a distinction whereby reef forming or habitat forming ETP species are treated as 'habitats', and individuals are treated as 'ETP'. BL will add to the alternative measures report by including a paragraph on gear-seabed interactions, and where modifications can be made to reduce disturbance. He will also include a reference to MF's PhD outcomes in the report because of her work in spatial management and ETP species.

#### *Discussion*

MF offered to include records of benthic ETP species within her habitat mapping work (at sea square level) to show where there is overlap with the fishery. BL to complete review of alternative measures reports by end of February.

#### ***Actions from agenda item 3:***

- BL to complete the alternative measures report by the end of February to share with Steering Group
- BL to contact with BC to seek any ETP information from gear trials for the alternative measures report
- Secretariat to resend MF the updated list and distinctions of ETP species and habitats
- MF to look at including records of benthic ETP species in habitat mapping work to show where there is overlap with the fishery

#### **Agenda Item 4: Update on FMP progress (Principle 3)**

##### *Scottish Government FMP (JP)*

Although Marine Scotland have said that they will turn their attention to creating a national scallop FMP, AB said comments from Scottish Ministers have emphasised that their focus is on priority economic stocks. Marine Scotland are also going through a restructure which is likely delaying the scallop FMP process. JP said Jim Watson stated that a formal plan has yet to be released and that it will be discussed at the next Scottish Scallop Sector Working Group (SSSWG) meeting. JP noted that the Project UK scallop FIP FMP is not trying to replicate national legislation, but does connect expertise from the wide range of stakeholders.

##### *DAERA FMP process (PS)*

PS updated that there is a commitment in the Joint Fisheries Statement for an overarching inshore FMP which will cover key stocks in Northern Ireland (crab, lobster, king and queen scallops) within the 12nm limit. The next stages are confirmation of government structure and working group formation that has balanced stakeholder representation. JE confirmed for JH that there is very little (if any) scallop fishing outside the 12nm zone in Northern Ireland.

##### *SICG national FMP (CP)*

CP updated the Steering Group on the SICG's progress in FMP governance, section development and review process. Public consultation of the FMP and Evidence and Research plan will be released in April 2023 for 12 weeks. Comments will be considered by Defra and the working group, with Secretary of State sign off by September 2023, before a 12-18 month period to refine the management approaches.

*Discussion*

MK asked whether the harvest control rules will use an ecosystem-based approach, whereby both catch and effort limits are being included. MK suggested a decision support tool to illustrate any suggestions made, which was supported by the group. JH suggested the Round 1 and Round 2 Scallop FIP Steering Groups prepare responses to the Defra FMP consultations. JP agreed that the Secretariat can respond to the consultations on behalf of the FIPs, based on the content of the FIP action plans.

*FIP FMP (BL)*

BL confirmed that the FMP remains a live document, and that there will be updates to be included with the development of the national FMPs. BL still needs a map of the Irish Sea area of the fishery; CP says she has this.

**Action from agenda item 4:**

- PS to share any updates on the Northern Irish FMP development with the Secretariat
- CP to share information on consultation process for English and Welsh national FMP draft with Secretariat
- CP to send BL a GIS file for the Irish Sea area of the fishery

**Agenda Item 5: Compliance and enforcement (PI 3.2.3) (JP)**

JP updated that within the UK, England and Wales have been rolling out iVMS on their inshore vessels. Jim Watson provided the group with a written update saying that voluntary Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) installation for the >10m scallop dredge fleet is nearing completion while installation on the <10m is in progress. iVMS is only relevant to dive boats, and the first REM analysis report is expected in early 2023 (this can be circulated to the Steering Group).

*Discussion*

RW said it's important to be aware that there are still limitations with iVMS/REM data. Previously, MMO representatives said that iVMS data would be available through freedom of information act, however this should be confirmed to make sure this also applies to Scottish waters.

**Actions from agenda item 6:**

- Secretariat to contact JW about obtaining REM analysis reports when available
- Secretariat to contact Marine Scotland Compliance about future access to iVMS data

**Agenda Item 6: In-Transition to MSC (ITM) (JP)**

The new version of the MSC Standard 3.0 will be applicable for any fishery entering the programme from April 2023. The MSC has also recently broadened the scope of its In-Transition to MSC (ITM) programme to include all fisheries interested in using the MSC framework as a FIP. Poseidon will undertake a gap analysis for the FIP with this year's annual review, which will indicate how the FIP is currently tracking compared to the requirements of V3.0. However, the ITM process may provide an alternative avenue for the FIP to enter full assessment using V2.0. The Steering Group are invited to decide on the course of action following the gap analysis and annual review in April.

*Discussion*

CP and AB agreed that resource allocation and workload need be considered in the decision.

**Actions from agenda item 6:**

- Secretariat to check with the MSC science and standards team to see if a new FMP template is expected with the new version 3.0

**Agenda Item 7: FisheryProgress.org Social Requirements (LB)**

LB shared a reminder of the FIPs remaining actions for the FisheryProgress.org social policy requirements (see slides). The grievance mechanism is required in May, and vessel list in June. Exceeding these deadlines would require an extension request through Fishery Progress. The Secretariat also intends to reapply to the Resource Legacy Fund, in order to help complete the social risk assessment requirements.

**Actions from agenda item 7:**

- Secretariat to confirm with Steering Group members that vessel list gathered so far are representative of their membership
- Steering group to review the vessel list and provide feedback to the Secretariat
- Secretariat to follow up with JH about a contact at the MCA

**Any Other Business**

N/A

**Meeting Closes**

Actions Arising	Responsibility
CM to share AFBI's genetics project report with Steering Group when available. -	Carrie McMinn
LyB to - share the latest ICES WGScallop report with Steering Group/ Secretariat - share an expected publication date for Marine Scotland's survey data	Lynda Blackadder
MF to - share questionnaire with the Steering Group on potential management scenarios	Mairi Fenton

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MF to look at including records of benthic ETP species in habitat mapping work to show where there is overlap with the fishery</li> </ul>	
JH to share updates on the FISP Blue Carbon project when available	Juliette Hatchman
BL to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complete the alternative measures report by the end of February to share with Steering Group</li> <li>- contact BC to seek any ETP information from gear trials for the alternative measures report</li> </ul>	Bill Lart
Secretariat to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- resend MF the updated list and distinctions of ETP species and habitats</li> <li>- contact JW about obtaining REM analysis reports when available</li> <li>- contact Marine Scotland Compliance about future access to iVMS data</li> <li>- check with the MSC science and standards team to see if a new FMP template is expected with the new version 3.0</li> <li>- confirm with Steering Group members that vessel list gathered so far are representative of their membership</li> <li>- to follow up with JH about a contact at the MCA</li> </ul>	Secretariat
PS to share any updates on the Northern Irish FMP development with the Secretariat	Patrick Smith
CP to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- share information on consultation process for English and Welsh national FMP draft with Secretariat</li> <li>- send BL a GIS file for the Irish Sea area of the fishery</li> </ul>	Claire Pescod
Steering group to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- review the vessel list and provide feedback to the Secretariat</li> <li>- to complete Mairi Fenton's potential management scenarios questionnaire (deadline 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb )</li> </ul>	Steering Group