

## Fisheries Management and Innovation Group (FMIG)

Note of meeting held at Friends House, London. Thursday 29 September 2022.

For the Fisheries Management and Innovation Group minutes and meeting presentations see: <https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/seafood-issues-groups/the-fisheries-management-and-innovation-group/>

### FMIG in person meeting. Marine spatial squeeze and intelligent fishing.

This meeting looked at two key issues for the UK catching sector: marine spatial squeeze and the competition for maritime space; and maximising selective gear innovations to help the UK fishing industry advance economic, environmental and social sustainability.

#### 1. Welcome, introductions, and apologies

Mike Park welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### Attendees

\*speakers

Andrew Brown	Macduff Shellfish Ltd
*Barrie Deas	NFFO
Ben Collier	NI Gear Trials/ ANIFPO
Cameron Moffat	Orsted
Chloe North	Western Fish Producers' Organisation Ltd
Chris Ranford	CPFO
Chris Sweeting	Marine Management Organisation
Clarus Chu	WWF
Dave Sampson	Ocean Prime Technologies Ltd
*David Warwick	Seafish
Duane Forrington	Iceland Seafood UK
Ella Brock	Seafish
Fingal McKiernan	SSE Renewables
Georgina Karlsson	DEFRA - Marine and Fisheries - Sustainable Fisheries Team
Gerald Podschies	Interfish
Giles Bartlett	Whitby Seafoods
Grace England	Defra
*Gus Caslake	Seafish
Harry Owen	MRAG Ltd
Jacob Ashton	Mindfully Wired Communications / APPG on Fisheries
Jane Bush	Crustacean Compassion
Jo Pollett	MSC
Kara Brydson	Fisheries Innovation Scotland
*Karen Green	Seafish (Secretariat)
Lara Leonard	Orsted
Laurence Hartwell	Through the Gaps
Lief Hendrikz	WWF
Linda Wood	Marks and Spencer
Lisa Bennett	Marine Stewardship Council
Lucie Guirkinger	DEFRA - Marine and Fisheries - Sustainable Fisheries Team
Ludvig Ahm Krag	Technical University of Denmark
Marcela Vaz	Mott MacDonald

Mario Ray	WWF
*Matthew Frow	Seafish
Mike Cohen	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations
*Mike Park	SWFPA (Chair)
Mohammed Maie	Bluefin Cooperative Group Ltd
Natasha Nicolson	Prospect Brixham CIC
*Paul Fernandes	Heriot-Watt University
Rachel Knowles	Marine Management Organisation
Rhys Kibble	Brown and May Marine
Richard Joseph	Marine Space
*Rob Enever	Fishtek Marine
Simon Macdonald	West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group
Stephen Appleby	Brown & May Marine Ltd
Suzannah Walmsley	ABPmer
Tom Rossiter	SNTech

#### **Apologies**

Adam Holland	Northern Ireland Fishermen's Federation
Ana Nicula	Ocado
Anne Birnie	NESFO Ltd
Charlie Wiseman	Marine Management Organisation
Colin Charman	Natural Resources Wales
David Feary	MRAG Limited
Duncan Vaughan	Natural England
George Day	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Jen Ashworth	Defra
Jessica Duffil-Telsnig	Marine Management Organisation
Juliette Hatchman	SWFPO
Mark Woodley	Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society
Mick Scott	Fisher
Neil Witney	Fisher
Paul Joy	Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society
Sarah Hudak	Sea Risk Solutions
Yasmin Ornsby	Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society

#### **Marine spatial squeeze**

[The Frightening Outlook of Fisheries Displacement – Spatial Squeeze in fisheries](#). Barrie Deas, NFFO and Suzannah Walmsley, ABPmer. [Report link](#).

[Kingfisher project to map fishing restrictions in UK waters](#). Matt Frow, Seafish.

#### Discussion

- **Q. What has been the response from Government to the report?**  
The report has gone down well with industry and has been welcomed by Defra as a significant contributor to the debate on marine spatial planning. There has also been the recognition that there has not been a lot of discussion with industry. The report was always the starting point.

- **Q. What is the impact of offshore wind on fishing activity?**  
**A.** VMS data of fishing activity before and after a wind farm has been built shows a massive reduction after the wind farm appears. We do need the science to show what impact the wind farms have. We need to be fully aware of the unintended consequences on the inshore fleet and need to question whether the precautionary principle is being applied?
- **Q. Is there such a thing as a fisheries protected area i.e., an area just for fishing for core fishing grounds?**  
**A.** There is no formal legislation for doing this, but there are policies that protect fisheries. We do know where such core areas could be.
- We need to quantify the displacement that is actually occurring and question whether fishing is collateral damage. Action needs to be taken now because the industry is suffering, and vessels are being grounded.
- **Q. Could there be a silver lining? Could we potentially see stocks levels increasing in areas where we can fish?**  
**A.** This is a complicated question, but it is unlikely. As an example, closing large areas of the North Sea in 2004 for seasonal cod spawning did not help stock recovery. Marine Protected Areas are designed to protect individual species, not generally protect species. The spill over effect will vary by species.
- There is potential for proper industry engagement to make offshore wind and fishing more compatible. The report is a call to arms. There needs to be a much more joined up marine spatial planning approach, and better coordination on the ground between different developers. There is a lack of coherence.

## Intelligent fishing

### [Seafish gear work and the new research trawl for the International Bottom Trawl Survey.](#)

David Warwick, Seafish.

#### Discussion

- **Q. What is in place to ensure standardisation in design across research vessels in different countries?**
- **A.** Plans are available, and protocols are updated regularly. Now is the ideal opportunity for industry to create their configuration and can purchase nets based on the International Bottom Trawl Survey
- **Q. Are their differences in ground gear configurations?**
- **A.** There are only two configurations.

### [Smartrawl: In-water improvements in selectivity.](#) Paul Fernandes, Heriot-Watt University.

#### Discussion

- **Q. How much does it add to the drag?**
- **A.** There is no significant addition.
- **Q. Can you separate prawns from fish?**
- **A.** It could do but prawns are very different to fish.
- **Q. Did you use visible light?**
- **Yes.** We used a visible spectrum camera. The aim of the trial was to detect species of a certain size, but the filming does provide real-time data to the skipper, which could be used for reporting.

**Sumwing beam trawl trials in Brixham. Gus Caslake, Seafish.**

**Discussion**

- **Q. What impact did this have on bycatch and quality?**
- **A.** This varied from one haul to the next and bycatch numbers were up and down. Alongside the Sumwing trawl, the net has also been re-designed. This is now sold as a Sumwing catch. There is no real price difference.
- **Q. Who owns the common rights.**
- **A.** The patent is with a Dutch designer.

**Using illuminated pots, dubbed 'scallop discos' to attract and catch scallops. Rob Enever, Fishtek Marine.**

- **Q. Are you assessing the abundance of scallops in the ground before each haul?**
- **A.** No this is trial and error. We have adopted a flexible approach and are working in four areas at the moment.
- **Q. Why do scallops react to light?**
- **A.** To optimise feeding. They go to a place of relative refuge.
- This has the potential to turn the market upside down.
- **Q. Is there a way to encourage lobster towards a certain light?**
- **A.** There is no real evidence with lobsters, as it is not clear what they can actually see.