

***Common Language Group
Meeting at MIC Centre, London
20 October 2010***

Meeting notes

Present:	
Name	Organisation
Mike Kaiser Chair	Seafish Board Member/Bangor University
Ian Hagg	Findus Group
Karen Green	Seafish
Aniol Esteban	New Economics Foundation/Ocean 2012
Phil MacMullen	Seafish
Andrew Mallison	MSC
Jon Harman	Seafish
Anne Chamberlain	IFFO
Andrew Nicholson	Co-operative
Mike Mitchell	The Seafood Company
Angus Garrett	Seafish
Alex Olsen	Espersen Group
Dale Rodmell	NFFO
Simon Rilatt	Trident Seafoods
Ray Kennedy	Defra
Richard Parsons	Defra
Andy Matchett	Ocean Fish/Riddlers
Emily Howgate	Seaweb-Seafood Choices
Paul Riches	Defra
Mike Short	FDF
Melissa Pritchard	Client Earth
Mark Duffy	Natural England
Keri Torney	Defra
Jess Sparks	Seafood Scotland
Lasse Bruun	Baltic Seafood 2020
Clare Eno	CCW
Sally Bailey	WWF UK
Peter Stagg	Le Lien Ltd
Chris Leftwich	Billingsgate Seafood Training School
Jodie Johnston	Tesco Stores Ltd

Richard Luney	Marks and Spencer
Peter Duncan	MCS
David Parker	MCS
Martin Cooke	ETI
Laky Zervudachi	Direct Seafoods
James Muldoon	Scottish Government
Angus Cragg	Defra

1. Welcome, apologies and introductions

After the introductions, apologies were taken from:

Name	Organisation
Lucy Blow	New England Seafoods
Chris Brown	Asda
Jamie Smith	SSPO
Tony Middleton	MSC
Claire Pescod	MSC
Doug Beveridge	Sustainable Fish Partnership
Peter Hajipieris	Birds Eye Iglo Group
Melanie Siggs	SCA
Mike Berthet	M&J
Nigel Edwards	Icelandic Group

2. Minutes from the meeting held on 20 July 2010

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

3. Matters arising

Progress was noted as summarised below, with more detail elsewhere in these minutes:

Discard Action Group

KG tabled a paper updating the group on the progress of the group and informed them that they had a number of good presentations on the day. A Seafish fact sheet on electronic monitoring had been developed and there were new 2009 discard figures available.

There had been a request to produce a RSG regarding underutilised species i.e. dab, cuttlefish, flounder, etc. The group were asked to contact KG to rank order of species. A paper was tabled on the Channel 4 fish season with the topic being focused on fish species not usually consumed in the UK. It was suggested that Gordon Ramsey's programme makers should be put in touch with ICES for up to date information and for the group to contact JH with any information in relation to this topic.

Aquaculture Common Issues Group

KG tabled a paper updating the group on the past work that the group had been involved in:

- discussions on Class B (shellfish) waters
- progress with aquaculture forum
- progress on strategy
- conference reports
- wild and farm fisheries debate
- aquaculture certification
- Channel 4 Fish Week

Seafish send out an e-alert every month that details fishmeal, fish oil, facts and figures and a question & answer sheet on aquaculture will be circulated before the next aquaculture meeting in November. Suggestions on which species to be added to the factsheets are to be emailed to KG.

Bill Lart (BL) has surveyed 22 people who use the RSGs, asking what they are used for, how they are being used and if they are useful: a report has been produced. Suggestions were for the RSGs to stay broadly the same, and to add in links to other schemes or the evidence bases used to for the RSGs. It would also be helpful to be able to compare the advice from different sources such as Fishsource and Fishonline. Foodservice and the F&C sector would like to have it more visuals and clearer yes/no advice, to cover more different species and possibly to extend material for PoS use.

Assessing advice: feedback to Seafish; plans for MCS

PD informed the group of MCS's future plans, particularly regarding renewing Fishonline and splitting into consumer- and industry-facing versions. They have engaged an external team to undertake a user survey of current experience and future needs. They plan to have ~15 telephone interviews each lasting 20-40 minutes. MCS are looking for multiple retailers, restaurateurs, chefs, producers/processors, the catching sector, aquaculture and industry representative bodies to volunteer for the interviews. They are not working with BL but hope to feed their findings into the CLG.

In the discussion that followed there was some concern that the survey couldn't cover the range of opinion likely to be expressed in each sector.

Data-poor fisheries: progress update

BL has been looking at a risk assessment-based approach to stocks for which data are missing or inadequate. He has been working with John Cotter (ex-CEFAS) on ways to model ecosystem stability as an indicator that overfishing might be occurring. This work was in response to an enquiry from Ally Dingwall at Sainsbury. PMac presented this work at a conference in Galway in October, which was well attended by delegates from FAO, World Bank and many institutes. The presentations will make up the contents of a special edition of the ICES Journal of Marine Science in 2011. This prompted some discussion within the group in looking at which fisheries had not been assessed. JH suggested that Seafish train up Seafish staff in the methodology and then provide a service to industry based upon a prioritised list of species. The group agreed with this.

KT informed the group that Defra was putting in more funding and Cefas are doing work on underutilised species and looking at catch quota and longer-term management strategies.

UK Scallop Group

JH has been involved in a dialogue with the scallop industry regarding good practice guides (GPGs) following the last meeting. There had been two workshops which have taken place with scallop fishermen and processors. The aim was to make compliance with the GPGs a condition of supply; the majority of the scallop processors would be happy with this and suggested that it be incorporated into the RFS.

The grant applications for the GPGs and the Channel Scallop MSC accreditation have both been agreed. The next meeting of the UK Scallop Group is Wednesday 17th November and there will be a consultation process on the workshops.

The group would like more discussion regarding toothed dredge fisheries, the level of habitat disturbance and the prospects for defining an acceptable environmental footprint.

MK informed the group that in it hadn't been possible to make any awards for the Scallop Dredge competition because the innovations needed further development, but it had been a useful process that would be repeated.

Actions:

- Contact KG re species listing for DAG and ACIG
- Contact JH with information re Channel 4 fish season
- Contact PD to volunteer for survey
- DS to circulate note from EH regarding focus groups
- Develop discussion further through UK Scallop Group on habitat disruption
- DS to circulate note of findings from Scallop Dredge competition

4. Defra's Sustainable Supply Work

AG updated the group on progress this work. He also presented the results of a survey that he had undertaken. This asked for views on the extent to which the outcomes described in Fisheries 2027 were currently achieved. This led to a discussion of using the document and the survey results as a means of focusing and prioritising actions from the sustainable supply work. Six areas were suggested for action and it was agreed that further progress depended on this reviewing and refining the scoring of certain areas and populating the priority areas with specific actions. Defra was supportive of this approach as a means of taking some of its own policies forward. AG agreed to liaise with the group to populate the tool and keep moving this initiative on.

Actions:

- Group to populate the tool that AG had circulated

5. Marine Stewardship

MK described an article about the Marine Stewardship Council by Jennifer Jacquet and others and published in Nature magazine. It was very critical of the MSC process and also took a very negative view of aquaculture. MK thought that the article was unbalanced and didn't recognise the many positive aspects of the MSC scheme. He had drafted a response with Louise Hill from WWF who had supported and co-signed the letter to Nature. This had generated a series of emails. There had been several other responses to the article but a letter from MSC had been so heavily edited that its intention and tone had been altered to an extent that MSC were left no option other than to withdraw the letter. The WWF have commissioned a report regarding MSC criteria which would be circulated to the group.

Actions:

- WWF report to be circulated to the group

6. Animal Welfare

PMac informed the group that a new NGO called “Fishcount” had been formed to campaign for the welfare of wild-caught fish. PMac had investigated the issues around welfare and circulated a discussion paper on this topic. There has been some concern over this in the retail sector as there had been increasing media interest. It was thought that the CLG could help find a realistic perspective that would demonstrate a responsible attitude.

EH suggested focusing on larger fisheries first. AM commented that, as with farmed fish, there could be increased economic gains from humane killing and other improved practices. MK informed the group that he was involved in a group that had been considering fish welfare issues and collated some papers on them. He would arrange for these to be circulated to the group. MM commented that there may be some transferrable skills from aquaculture and fishing technology and that the fishing industry may get involved even more if the product quality goes up. The group all agreed on the need to be precautionary in order to be able to demonstrate progress on capture fisheries. It was also suggested that Seafish could include this in RFS at some point in the future, that a working group could be set up to draft a position statement and that Seafish keep a watching brief on the topic.

Actions:

- MK to circulate papers
- Seafish to keep a watching brief
- Seafish to propose a working group
- Seafish to draft a position paper

7. Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP)

PMac described his involvement with this group’s panel on adapting to climate change. This included such issues as changing stock distribution patterns. He also had copies of their most recent report that summarised all the work and theories about what was happening and gave levels of confidence in the predictions of climate change and its implications for marine users. The link to the report is:

<http://www.mccip.org.uk/media/7562/mccip-report-2010-2011.pdf>

8. Importers’ Issues

Ethical trading: PMac introduced a briefing note that he had produced on ethical issues in international fish trading. Much of this related to trade with producers in less developed third countries.

Martin Cooke (MC) from the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) then gave a presentation on ethical issues as they may relate to importers. He informed the group that the ETI was a three way alliance/membership organisation of NGOs, companies, and trades unions with 40% funding from DfID. It aims to improve the lives of people working in the global supply chain. The ETI base code underpins their work in nine sections and prescribes 6 principles of ethical trade.

In discussion MC explained how they focused on good labour conditions because if these genuinely were sorted out the parties involved would usually have made provision for everything else. Some members queried conditions for contract labour on boats working in international waters and even on some boats registered in the UK. No clear answers were available and there was concern that more information needed to be available. EH informed the group that Melanie Siggs has attended an Environmental Justice conference recently, EH would provide the group with feedback. It was suggested that a working group should be set up to identify and discuss common themes in this area.

Actions:

- a working group to be set up to consider ethical trading issues
- EH to feedback to group re Environmental Justice conference.

Carbon Use: AG had raised this at the previous CLG meeting in July and was now revisiting it. It was agreed that this was an issue that the seafood industry needed to focus on and agree on common positions. It was suggested that we look at other industries to see how they are progressing in relation to CO2 emissions. AG will circulate some ideas/notes on the subject to the group.

Actions:

- AG to circulate draft note.

9. CFP reform

PMac circulated a note which suggested possible elements of a UK consensus position on CFP reforms. This proposed a series of underpinning principles with which a reformed policy should comply and then dealt with a number of issues such as regionalisation, discarding, setting long-term management objectives and the broader policy framework of the marine environment and spatial planning. PMac asked for feedback on any issues or omissions in the draft paper.

A number of presentations (available on request) were given from contributors including NFFO, the UK Administrations, Catch Credits and Oceans 2012.

It was noted that there was much common ground between these various positions, particularly in respect of:

- the region- and fishery-specific nature of the current problems
- regionalised management with centralised setting of objectives and decentralised delivery,
- the need for long-term adaptive management,
- better catch monitoring
- greater responsibility for fishermen through involvement in management
- the potential value of real-time, fishery-derived information
- fleet differentiation to be a matter of national discretion
- action on discarding
- the problems associated with third country fishing arrangements

It was pointed out that the Commission was hoping that the UK would make major contributions to developing policy and could have a disproportionate influence on the reform process. PMac was instructed to revise his draft taking into account the comments made and to make a number of firm proposals for reform that were each backed by case studies. SB agreed to send a list of points to PMac based on meetings she had recently had in Brussels. She would also circulate details of a workshop organised by EJM spatial management.

Action:

- PMac to amend CFP paper and circulate to the group
- SB to email PMac with comments and circulate workshop details

10. Any Other Business

MK suggested that the next meeting should include an item on nano-particles in fish packaging. JH would canvas for opinions.

EH informed the group that registration for the next Seafood Summit was now open and that there was support needed in funding delegates from the catching sector.

EH informed the group that nominations for the Seafood Champions would be announced on the 12th November 2010. EH would send the link to DS who would then circulate it to the group.

PS asked that a presentation from the Aquaculture Stewardship Council be added as an item to the next meeting's agenda.

The group asked to be updated fortnightly on Channel 4 season programmes.

KG informed the group that there would be several Consumer Research workshops taking place; please contact her if you would be interested in attending:

- Grimsby 1st December
- London 2nd December
- Aberdeen and Exeter week commencing 5th December 2010

Actions:

- JH to canvas for opinions regarding nano particles presentation
- DS to circulate link to group regarding Seafood Champions
- Aquaculture Presentation to be added to next meeting's agenda
- Group to be updated fortnightly on Channel 4 programmes
- Contact KG if you are interested in the Consumer Research workshops

Date of Next Meeting

The group agreed to have the next meeting on Wednesday 2 March 2011, venue to be confirmed.

CLG actions

- Matters Arising - Contact KG re species listing for DAG and ACIG
- Matters Arising - Contact JH with information re Channel 4 fish season
- Matters Arising - Contact PD to volunteer for survey
- Matters Arising - DS to circulate note from EH regarding focus groups
- Matters Arising - Develop discussion further through UK Scallop Group on habitat disruption
- Matters Arising - DS to circulate note of findings from Scallop Dredge competition
- Defra's Sustainable Supply Work - Group to populate the tool that AG had circulated
- Marine Stewardship - WWF report to be circulated to the group
- Animal Welfare - MK to circulate papers
- Animal Welfare - Seafish to keep a watching brief
- Animal Welfare - Seafish to set up a working group
- Animal Welfare - Seafish to draft a position paper
- Ethical Issues - A working group is to be set up
- Ethical Issues - EH to feedback to group re conference that Melanie Siggs attended
- Carbon Issues - AG to circulate his notes
- CFP - PMac to amend CFP paper and circulate to the group
- CFP - Create a focus group to take the work forward
- CFP - SB to email PMac comments/amendments
- AOB - JH to canvas for opinions regarding nano particles presentation
- AOB - DS to circulate link to group regarding Seafood Champions
- AOB - Aquaculture Presentation to be added to next meeting's agenda
- AOB - Group to be updated fortnightly on Channel 4 programmes
- AOB - Contact KG if you are interested in the Consumer Research workshops