

**Note of Common Language Group (CLG) meeting held at Friends House, London.
Thursday 10 November 2016**

For the CLG minutes and meeting presentations see:

<http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/discussion-forums/the-common-language-group>

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Mike Kaiser welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Alice Bartz	ClientEarth
Alison Austen	Seafish Board
Ally Dingwall	Sainsbury's
Alma Bonillo	Joseph Robertson Ltd
Andy Hickman	Tesco
Andy Matchett	Combe Fisheries Ltd
Angela Doherty	CP Foods
Ben Lambden	New England Seafood
Bernadette Clarke	Marine Conservation Society
Brad Hart	Co-op
Carl O'Brien	Cefas
Cassie Liesk	New England Seafood
Catherine Murphy	Marine Management Organisation
Chris Williams	New Economics Foundation
Christina Dixon	World Animal Protection UK
Dale Rodmell	NFFO
David Jarrad	Shellfish Association of Great Britain
Emi Katoh	MRAG
Erin Priddle	Environmental Defense Fund
Estelle Brennan	Lyons Seafoods
Frances James	MacAlister Elliott & Partners Ltd
Giles Bartlett	Sealord
Harry Owen	MCB Seafoods
Helen McLachlan	WWF
Herman Wisse	GSSI
Ian Rolmanis	Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
Jamie Davies	Pew Trusts
Jess Sparks	Seafish
Jim Masters	Fishing into the Future
John Butler	Oscar Mayer Group
Karen Green	Seafish (Minutes)
Kenny Coull	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Laky Zervudachi	Direct Seafoods
Lucy Erickson	Marine Stewardship Council

Malcolm Morrison	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Mercedes Rosello	University of Hull
Mike Berthet	Global Aquaculture Alliance
Mike Kaiser	Bangor University (Chair)
Neil Auchterlonie	IFFO
Nick Connelly	Seafish
Nick Neeld	The Big Prawn Company Ltd
Richard Stansfield	Flatfish Ltd
Stella Bartolini	Fish Tracker
Steve Mackinson	Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association
Stewart Cuchey	Cefas
Tom Pickerell	Seafish

Apologies

Alex Olsen	Esperson
Brian Young	Seafish Board, NFFF
Chris Brown	Asda
David Garbutt	Sealord
Hannah Norbury	Marine Stewardship Council
Huw Thomas	Pew Trusts
Jon Harman	Cleugh Maritime
Katie Miller	ClientEarth
Libby Woodhatch	Seafish
Marcus Coleman	Seafish
Martin Jaffa	Callander McDowell
Melanie Siggs	Sancroft International
Mike Park	SWFP/Seafish Board
Nigel Edwards	Icelandic Seachill
Phil MacMullen	Seafish
Ross Jolliffe	Cefas
Steve Simpson	University of Exeter
Toby Middleton	Marine Stewardship Council

2. Minutes from the last meeting held on 29 June 2016.

The final minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting and have been added to the CLG web page. Attendees were asked to take note of the meeting guidelines. In the following minutes Seafish will provide a link to the various presentations given at the meeting but not summarise the whole presentation. In the main we do not attribute the comments made at the meeting. Papers were sent round and tabled covering the activities of the other Seafish groups (Aquaculture, Discards, Ethics and Skates and Rays) and a list of forthcoming seafood events. A full list can be found on the Seafish website: <http://www.seafish.org/about-seafish/news-and-events/events>

Matters arising covered the circulation of various links which were sent round in the CLG meeting follow-up email. All the presentations were added to the website. There were requests to look at the upcoming Marine Conservation Society (MCS) fish scores, the European Maritime Fisheries Fund, the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) and more innovation, which are all on the agenda today, and Brexit, in response to which we held a very successful meeting on 7 October.

Making the best use of fishery data

3. Industry Generated Data in the Management Context. Dale Rodmell, National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664064/clg_nov2016_nffo.pdf

Dale described the historical background to the relationship between industry and science and the origins of the Fisheries Science Partnership; the current context of fisheries policy, management and industry generated data; and detailed initiatives NFFO has been involved in to better evidence fisheries to show how each fishing vessel could be used as scientific research platform; each fisherman could contribute to the evidence base; and how technology is reducing the transaction costs of doing science.

Conclusions:

- Industry is key to filling the evidence voids that currently hamper a lot of fisheries and marine management decision making and the stability of fishing businesses.
- Evidence is also key to re-orientating a management system from top-down to bottom-up.
- Fishing is in the early stages of a digital revolution - potential to revolutionise collaborative partnerships and management.
- Although collaborations are becoming more sophisticated they often remain trials and are not yet becoming the modus operandi.
- Building trust with industry will be key to moving forward and industry must be central in leading a way forward.
- The management system should be providing the enabling framework for results based management. Too often it is hindering it.
- Therefore we must work on the scientific and policy front to change this.

Discussion

- **Question.** From CEFAS analysis what was holding industry back? There is a challenge if fishermen expect to be paid. **A.** It is important to recognise the long-term interests of the industry. The challenge is to develop a framework and build in longer-term incentives.
- **Q.** Is it possible to build into this vision recognition for those who take the first steps? **A.** This will be evidenced in other ways. This data will be fed into other systems, such as standards, which are incentives. The improvements in data collection have in turn brought about improvements on the ground.
- **Q.** The retailers appear to have been more engaged with fisheries working within Fishery Improvement Partnerships (FIPs), than with data collection programmes, is that the case? **A.** It has been. The real challenge for retailers is the translation of these initiatives to consumer messaging.

4. Industry Dependent Data - a silver bullet? Jim Masters, Fishing into the Future.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664067/clg_nov2016_ftf.pdf

There is a clear need for better evidence to deliver EU goals (e.g. Common Fishery Policy (CFP), Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)) and improve the sustainability and environmental credentials of industry (e.g. Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood (RASS), MCS) but resources are declining. The Data Collection Framework (DCF) is critical to this. There is greater flexibility for end-users to define the details of data collection from 2017 onwards but there are some challenges - all data needs to align with existing national programmes and coordination, and needs to meet quality standards and collection guidelines; it needs to be reviewed through the ICES benchmarking process to

quality assure data and time-series data needs sufficient years of information to make a difference. The UK outside EU will still have international agreements to abide by. The cost-benefit analysis needs to stack up so Fishing into the Future is looking into data collection protocol guidelines and showing how that could come to life with the co-design of a survey for channel scallops.

Discussion

- **Question.** I like the idea of protocol guidelines. What is the vision? **A.** Ultimately we wanted fishery generated data to be used by ICES but it has to be tailored. It is a process with national acceptance first, then we would like to see a Memorandum of Understanding developed around its use.

5. Fishing4Data Task Group and the Celtic Seas Partnership. Dale Rodmell, NFFO.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664070/clg_nov2016_fishing4data.pdf

A Fishing4Data Group has come together as a collaboration between national fisheries organisations, environmental NGOs, retailers and, technical and scientific stakeholders who have all agreed that the overarching goal is to see data gaps preventing effective fishery and conservation management addressed. A statement of intent to work together on a shared goal has been produced as 'A strategy to make industry collected data scientifically credible and salient to inform policy and its implementation.' The second Fishing4Data workshop took place in Bristol. The priority for now is to secure funding for a fixed term Fishing4Data officer who will be responsible for the development and production of the strategy under the direction of the group. There is a possibility that Fishing into the Future could host the post.

6. Development of an industry acoustic survey for 6a-7bc herring. Steve Mackinson, Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664073/clg_nov2016_spfa.pdf

Steve outlined the issue for herring in western waters and the need to determine the quantities of herring in each of the stocks, and hence management areas, with new and robust methods to adequately identify individuals. This industry-led collaborative survey aimed to measure abundance of spawning populations of herring using acoustics and biological sampling and has produced the first industry-led scientific acoustic survey on herring in Europe.

Overall discussion

- **Question.** I am aware that fishermen have complained in the past that they have collected a lot of data in the past but it has not been trusted by scientists to be useful. Fishermen routinely collect data how can this be validated. Will the proposed protocols enable the use of this data? **A.** A lack of trust has been the key reason behind the development of protocols. The end user is foremost – it is important to know in advance how the data will be used.
- **Q.** Will the protocols address the problems that have been associated with the information that has already been collected? **A.** We need to address the mismatch between what has been collected and what is required. However it is important that we have the resources to analyse the data and other organisations could get involved to address this.
- **Q.** Is 'citizen science' the end-game? **A.** This is already happening as seen with the North Sea herring survey. This is a huge historical data set with records of interviews with fishermen. This has been generating information to generate a useful outcome.

- **Q.** With any of these fishermen-generated activities it is important to talk to ICES in advance. There are parallel processes operating – there is the standard annual assessment and a benchmarking process, and it is important to engage with the benchmarking process. Each year stakeholders are invited to contribute to this process.
- **Q.** Are there processes in place for data validation to give scientists confidence in the data? Is there confidence we know what is required by ICES? **A.** That is the bottom line and ultimate aim. We need to find the gaps and recognise different perspectives.

Funding opportunities

7. Update on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. Catherine Murphy, Marine Management Organisation.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664076/clg_nov2016_emff.pdf

The UK has a total allocation of €243 million (around £190 million) which is split between: England – MMO (€92.1 million); Scotland – Marine Scotland (€107.7 million); Northern Ireland - DAERA (€23.5 million); and • Wales – Welsh Government (€19.7 million). Funding in most cases is pre-matched by the Government and by the applicant. The rate it is matched at depends on the status of the applicant (public or private) and what they are applying for. The Chancellor stated on 3 October 2016 that the government will guarantee EU funding for structural and investment fund projects, including agri-environment schemes, signed after the Autumn Statement and which continue after we have left the EU. The application process was outlined.

Discussion

- **Question.** Is there any money available in terms of compensation schemes for fisheries that have closed? **A.** Not as a rule but it is worth putting forward any ideas for consideration.
- **Q.** What confirmation is needed that match funding is available? In the past match funding could be in the form of in-kind contributions. **A.** We generally ask whether match funding is in place but don't generally ask for proof. We can take contributions in kind but this should not generally amount to more than 10% as a guideline.
- **Q.** The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) was underspent at the end. How can we ensure that this does not happen again? **A.** This time we will be running a 'totaliser' all the time and don't want any underspend this time and we are time constrained. The key is to get applications in quickly. When we physically leave the EU we will no longer have access to EMFF.

Action: Flagged up links to advice and signposting.

8. Fish Stock Status. Carl O'Brien, CEFAS.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664079/clg_nov2016_cefas.pdf

This looked at stocks in the North-East Atlantic with an overview of global trends. For North East Atlantic stocks there is a generally improving picture with exploitation down and the number of stocks within safe biological limits increasing. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (2016) 69% of stocks sustainably fished in 2013. The FAO approach is weighted to larger stocks which are generally in better condition than smaller stocks based on an analysis of stocks in the RAM Legacy Stock Assessment Database. The timetable for the meetings up to the December Council 2016 and the setting of TACs and quotas for 2017 was outlined. These negotiations become a political

compromise which is by and large determined by scientific advice but for some stocks there is some debate.

Discussion

- **Question.** What is the position re herring in VIb and VIaN? **A.** A zero TAC has been stipulated subject to further research. There will be an in-year amendment and officially they don't need a quota until August.
- **Q.** Is there going to be a resolution to the issue with bass? **A.** This continues to rumble on. Scientists can't agree on the most appropriate science. In the meantime the stock is being exploited three to four times over what it should.
- **Q.** What is the likelihood of a complete ban on bass fishing next year? **A.** Possibly 50/50 but perhaps open for recreational fishers rather than a complete closure.
- **Q.** What is the situation with North Sea sprat in 7d and 7e. There are three boats and the science is there so why does the precautionary approach continue to be applied? **A.** There is some disagreement and different issues with some perception of decline based on the drop from three vessels to one vessel. It will be argued to go on the annex list.

'Lightning' initiatives updates

9. Seafish study into fish and chip nutrition. Tom Pickerell, Seafish.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664082/clg_nov2016_f_cnutrition.pdf

This outlined what the study had included: full nutritional analysis of combinations of variables in 'fish, chips and mushy peas'; an analyses of acrylamide and SO₂ in combination of variables of chips; a portion size survey; and a survey of consumer preferences to ask what nutritional data they want to know (if any) and what portion sizes are preferred. Seafish conducted this survey to future proof the sector to changes to the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulations and to inform decisions about what consumers actually want/care about, whether portion sizes can be set better, when/how do chips exceed the SO₂ allergen level and when/how acrylamide levels increase? The overall conclusion was that portion size is highly variable and an average 'standard' portion is huge which causes the total meal nutritional values to be inflated. • Clearly there is potential for a recommended standard portion size to be developed and used by Fish and Chip shops across Britain.

Discussion

- **Question.** Was there variation in the cost of portions? **A.** Yes there were dramatic price differences across the UK but there was not direct correlation between price and portion size.
- **Q.** Were any fish and chip shops selling pollack? **A.** Yes but we focussed on cod and haddock, however very few fish and chip shops gave much of a range choice.

10. Global Sustainable Seafood I. Herman Wisse, GSSI.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664085/clg_nov2016_gssi.pdf

This is a non-competitive approach to provide clarity on seafood certification. GSSI recognised the Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management certification program in July and the Iceland Responsible Fisheries Management Certification Programme in November. In addition a public consultation on the benchmark report for MSC was launched in November. In addition many retailer global sourcing statements now reference GSSI. **Action:** Provide link to GSSI.

11. Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC). Alice Bartz, ClientEarth.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664088/clg_nov2016_ssc.pdf

This outlined the latest developments including social responsibility criteria, priority fisheries for Fishery Improvement Partnerships linked to Project UK, alignment with the Seafish Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood (RASS).

Action: Provide link to SSC.

12. Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI). Christina Dixon, World Animal Protection UK.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664091/clg_nov2016_gggi.pdf

A global, cross-sectoral approach to tackling lost and discarded fishing gear. In year 1 GGGI has developed a best practice framework for gear management at different stages of gear life cycle. In year 2 the aim is to undertake extensive external consultation with industry and stakeholders to launch the new framework mid-2017. FAO is very closely involved in the consultation.

Action: Provide link to GGGI.

13. Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS). Tom Pickerell, Seafish.

The Responsible Fishing Scheme was officially launched in the House of Commons in January 2016. In total 190 vessels are in application with 26 certified. The Scheme has been publically committed to by a number of retailers by including RFS vessels in their sourcing policies. New RFS revamped and slimmed down application packs which make applying for the scheme easier than ever were launched on 3 November 2016. The RFS website now also contains updated Compliance Support Guides (CSGs) to help applicants understand all areas that need to be complied with to successfully achieve RFS certification. There are now six CSGs in total; five sector-specific guides, (Demersal, Shellfish, Nephrops, Pelagic and Scallops), and one consolidated cross sector guide that applies to all sectors and covers issues such as health and safety, catch traceability, onboard food preparation and the environment. Two EMFF applications are pending. The future of RFS beyond the current Seafish Corporate Plan (post March 2018) is currently being discussed internally with an announcement shortly.

Discussion

- **Question.** How does a lot of international interest equate with fairly low figures in the UK? **A.** The Scheme is progressing at all levels and in the UK is growing but this was always going to take time. We do want to internationalise the scheme and are looking at a fully funded pilot in another country. However there are costs associated with international translation of the standard.

Action: Provide link to RFS.

14. Marine Conservation Society (MCS) latest ratings update/Partnership with Monterey Bay/Update on methodology review. Bernadette Clarke, MCS.

http://www.seafish.org/media/1664094/clg_nov2016_mcs.pdf

Detailed the summer ratings review; changes to the database including increased efficiencies, multiple users, the ability to publish data to an app or website immediately, streamline data management and better data validation; the winter ratings review; and the methodology update. There were also details on the new MCS partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium under the Global Seafood Ratings Alliance.

Action: Provide links to MCS and the Global Seafood Ratings Alliance.

15. Date of next meeting and AOB

Mike Kaiser suggested, on behalf of the Science Advisory Group, the idea of a future CLG that focuses entirely on cutting edge scientific advances in different areas of interest to the seafood industry. The areas could include the following categories: fisheries, aquaculture, seafood integrity, consumer behaviour, processing technology, capture technology, etc, so very broad cutting across the entire remit of the CLG. CLG tends to focus on current and not future developments, so a look forward would be excellent.

The CLG agenda regularly includes a section with updates on new and ongoing initiatives. To save each presenter having to give a background to the initiative each time, which can be repetitive it was suggested that we include, alongside the CLG page on the Seafish website, a list of key initiatives with links.

The date for the next meeting was not discussed but was later set as Thursday 2 March 2017 at Friends House, London. The CLG Steering Group will meet to discuss the agenda for the next meeting. Any ideas for agenda items for either of these meetings should be sent to k.green@seafish.co.uk