

**Minutes of the third meeting of the Pelagic Industry Issues Group  
Held at Thistle Hotel, Dyce, Aberdeen  
1<sup>st</sup> October 2013**

**1. Present**

John Goodlad (JG)	Chairman
Andrew Pillar (AP)	
Alan McRobb (AMc)	
Lynn Forman (LF)	
Ian Gatt (IG)	
Ian McFadden (IMcF)	
Jim McConville (JMc)	
Malcolm Large (ML)	

**2. Welcome & Apologies**

JG welcomed all to the third meeting of the Pelagic Industry Issues Group.

Apologies were received from:

Brian Isbister  
Simon Leiper  
Michael Clark  
Francis Clark  
Robert Duthie  
Emma Hatfield

**3. Minutes of Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

The minutes of the second meeting were accepted as a true record.

**4. Matters Arising**

- Terms of Reference as previously circulated and tabled at the meeting were accepted.
- Domestic & Export Panel Minutes – ML confirmed that these had been circulated and a link to the minutes had been included in the minutes of the second meeting. ML confirmed that he would continue to circulate the minutes to members of the Issues Group.
- Levy consultation – IMcF confirmed that he had submitted a written response. The group were encouraged that there was no desire to raise the levy rate on pelagic species though they did not agree with the proposal to reduce levy rates on white fish and shellfish. IMcF suggested that should Seafish collect a surplus of levy this could be rebated on a pro-rata basis.
- Representation on the Importer & Processor panel – ML confirmed that a representative of pelagic processing companies would be free to apply for any future vacancies. Appointments would be made by Seafish based on an open selection and interview process.
- Letter to the Commission regarding pelagic processing quotas – IMcF confirmed that this had been sent but that circumstances had overtaken it with regards an EU ban on importing Faroese pelagic species. A grey area exists regarding the importation of Faroese salmon as the farmed salmon is fed on fishmeal that is likely to have been produced from the banned pelagic fish. It was proposed that the Group Chairman, JG write a letter seeking clarification on this point.

## **5. Seafish Update**

Since the last meeting, Seafish had appointed Dr Tom Pickerell (Technical Director) and Rob Bruce (Corporate Relations Director). Rob has now resigned and the search for a new Corporate Relations Director has started.

ML gave a brief overview of the work being undertaken by Seafish that impacts on the pelagic sector:

The Responsible Fishing Scheme review will be put before the forthcoming Panels with members asked to make their recommendations. It is hoped that the Panels will reach a consensus position through the Panel Chairs and that will be put to the Seafish Board in November.

The review of the funding of Fishing Safety training has resulted in third party funding being identified thus reducing the burden on levy. Two vacancies currently exist within Fishing Safety which has had some impact upon delivery.

ML had visited Japan International Seafood Expo in August as part of the SDI group at the Show. He reported that the exhibition was quite busy and contrary to what he had been told prior to going to Tokyo it was not dominated by machine manufacturers and that many suppliers including the national groups such as the Norwegian Seafood Export Council had pavilions at the show. ML recommended that consideration should be given to a British pelagic pavilion at the 2014 exhibition as this may be an effective means of meeting retail buyers.

JMc confirmed that the pelagic companies that partook in the British seafood pavilion at World Food Moscow were pleased with the exhibition. It was felt that four days is too long for the exhibition with most business done on days two and three. Owen Patterson visited the exhibiting companies and hosted a reception at the British Embassy. It was felt that the reception was worthwhile and a similar reception should be considered next year.

Plans are well advanced for the China Fisheries Expo at the beginning of November and the reception to be held on the middle evening. ML confirmed that the China British Business Council will run a reception desk at the event and invite local and, where applicable national dignitaries. ML asked that exhibiting companies cooperate with CBBC.

The Brussels based Stakeholder Engagement Advisor has been appointed, initially on a one year contract and ML thanked IG in particular for his help in getting Defra and Marine Scotland to approve the position.

The "Business of Fishing" film has been viewed at over twenty events (including at the Commission and House of Lords) organised by Seafish and has been well received at all the viewings.

Within the Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood (RASS), the Responsible Sourcing Guides are continually being updated. IG confirmed that the drafts of last updates for pelagic species had been circulated for comment by members of the Group and he urged that they see drafts for comment before updates are published.

## **6. Stock Assessment**

In Emma Hatfield's absence IG gave a brief overview of the stock status. The up to date mackerel assessment is due for release in two days (3<sup>rd</sup> October) and as such IG could not comment.

Based on the EU/Norway management plan, a TAC of 480,000 tonnes of North Sea Herring was agreed. Fishing mortality of North Sea Herring is quite low resulting in a healthy SSB .

A TAC of 28,000 tonnes of West of Scotland Herring represents an increase of about 2% and is based on a management plan that has been in place for four years.

There is likely to be a 30% decrease in atlanto-scandia herring

The news on blue whiting is likely to be very good and there should be a significant increase in TAC advice for this species.

The mackerel egg survey is very good with the survey indicating that the core spawning area largely remains unchanged to the west of the British Isles and Bay of Biscay.. Acoustic surveys indicate large stocks of mackerel.

## **7. Pelagic Export Support**

ML confirmed to the meeting that we were entering the final months of a three year export assistance agreement reached with the pelagic industry through the Herring Buyers Association. The agreement ends at the end of 2013 with the conclusion of the China Fisheries Expo.

ML confirmed that Seafish had budget agreed by the Panels through until end of March 2015 but urged members to give some thought to the export assistance that they would be seeking and to feed this into the Panel discussions. Work on the new Seafish corporate plan will start at the March 2014 Panel meetings.

## **8. Any Other Business**

- ML raised the point that Angus Garrett's work on greenhouse gas emissions illustrates that seafood performs relatively well from a GHG emissions perspective, and pelagic fisheries are considered relatively energy efficient. Conversations with industry have involved IG and SPFA colleagues. To date, IG and member skippers have contributed to this agenda in the following ways:

Contributing to the discussions that led to the development of the Pas2050-2 standard for assessing GHG emissions in aquatic food products (2012);  
Helping trial a prototype GHG emissions profiling tool that members of the seafood industry can use to profile their chains, and specifically to profile GHG emissions in the pelagic sector (2013);  
Helping shape the draft "Position statement on GHG emissions in seafood" (2013).

On behalf of Angus Garrett, ML said it would also be useful to engage the interest of processors in this agenda, specifically in relation to profiling.

- AP drew the meeting's attention to the changes in port levies by the Levy Port Authority. It would now be based on the proportion of a vessel's mackerel and herring quota landed in the port.

- The agenda for the next Seafish Common Language Group to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> November will include an item on mackerel.

#### **9. Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the meetings are best held before the Seafish Domestic & Exporting Panel meetings. The next Panel meeting will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> March and it was therefore agreed that the next Pelagic Issues Group Meeting would be held at the Thistle Hotel, Aberdeen Airport on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014