

Crab & Lobster Management Group (CMG) Meeting

28 January 2021

Remote meeting via Zoom

Attendees

Claire Pescod, Macduff Shellfish (Chair)
 Amber Knight, MacNeil Shellfish
 Andrew Wheeler, North Eastern IFCA
 Anne Freeman, Defra
 Aoife Martin, Seafish
 Arjen Brouwer, Defra
 Barrie Deas, NFFO
 Beshlie Pool, South Devon and Channel
 Shellfishermen's Association
 Brian Pawley, NFFO
 Colin Bannister, SAGB
 Duncan Jamieson, Defra
 Ewen Bell, Cefas
 Hannah Fennel, Orkney Fishermen's
 Association
 Harry Wick, Northern Ireland Fish
 Producers' Organisation
 Helen Hunter, Defra
 James Cook, DR Collins

John Balls, North Devon Fishermen's Association
 Kevin Favis, Favis of Salcombe Ltd.
 Les Lawrence, Dorset Fish and Shellfish Ltd.
 Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
 Mark Moore, Darnmouth Crab Company
 Martyn Youell, Waterdance
 Matt Whittles, Defra
 Matthew Johnson, Defra
 Mike Roach, Holderness Fishing Industry Group
 Natalie Hold, Bangor University
 Nigel Favis, Favis of Salcombe Ltd.
 Paul Brown, Brown & Bright Shellfish Ltd.
 Sarah Clark, Devon and Severn IFCA
 Sarah Horsfall, SAGB
 Sarah Hussey, Sea Farms
 Simon Dixon, MMO
 Stuart McLanaghan, Seafish

Apologies:

Carl Davies, Gwen Paul M BS115
 Huw Thomas, The Cornish Shellfish Company Ltd.
 Jim Evans, Welsh Fishermen's Association
 Rachel Irish, MMO

1. Discussions on Brexit

Defra representatives from a range of teams (including Negotiations and Access, Veterinary Trade Facilitation, and Trade teams) were invited to attend the CMG meeting to host an open discussion session on Brexit related issues specific to crab and lobster.

Defra provided an update on the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). To date there have been only preliminary discussions on fishing access and allocation for non-quota species. The CMG will serve as a forum through which to update members on negotiations.

More detailed notes on this section will be sent as a standalone document; notes will be combined with those from the Whelk Management Group discussion on Brexit.

Additional resources for seafood businesses

The following resources may be useful for WMG members:

2. [UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, December 2020](#) (including summary document and full TCA including Annexes and Protocols)
3. Seafish resources on [UK Exit from the EU](#)
4. Seafish guidance notes for:
 - 4.1 [Seafood exporters](#);
 - 4.2 [Seafood importers](#), and;
 - 4.3 [Seafood catchers/farmers](#).

2. Other issues and concerns

A concern was raised about recent media coverage of the possible impact of static gear fisheries in the Cromer MCZ and potential changes to management within the designated area.

This issue falls under two existing CMG priority areas: assessing the wider environmental impacts of crab and lobster fisheries on the marine environment, and spatial considerations around co-existence in the marine environment.

Members acknowledged that the impact of static gear fisheries is an increasingly important aspect of the wider environmental impacts of inshore fisheries and discussed several projects that have been undertaken, or are ongoing, in SW England and Scotland to look at the environmental impact of potting.

Several members offered to share resources/research outputs with the CMG that address the topic of benthic impact of static gear fisheries.

3. CMG updates

Western Waters effort regime alternatives: revised approach (Matt Johnson, Defra)

- Following the end of the EU-exit transition period, the UK has regulatory autonomy and is able to replace or amend existing fisheries management legislation. Whilst the Western Waters effort regime (WWER) has been rolled over into UK legislation (so is still in effect in 2021) there is now an opportunity to review and amend the legislation to ensure that management is science-based and fit for purpose;
- In December the CMG had discussed holding a dedicated meeting of the group in February 2021 to discuss the WWER; however this timeline has now been deemed unsuitable due to difficulties surrounding the TCA and the new UK-EU trading relationship and the Defra resource available. Whilst this is still a priority area for members (particularly those currently operating under the WWER), many businesses are currently focused on other issues;
- This is expected to be a time-consuming piece of work, from the point of view of both industry and regulators, and as such a decision has been made to phase this work in over the next few meetings of the CMG;
- Delaying this work also means that the Defra team is able to take into account ongoing negotiations around non-quota species access and the TCA;
- A proposed timeline, from informal consultation through to formal consultation, will be presented at the next CMG and Cefas will be invited to present on their review work regarding management of crustacean fisheries.

Assess effectiveness and appropriateness of existing management tools (Matt Johnson, Defra)

- The aim of this action is to build on the baseline information prepared by Defra on management tools by including information on effectiveness and appropriateness. This research will be used to inform future discussions on management of crab and lobster stocks.
- The team has encountered some challenges with this work, including issues around defining effectiveness in the absence of defined management objectives or specific performance indicators.
- Anecdotal information on effectiveness of management measures has been collected from all IFCA's.

- There is a need to look at management of fisheries outside IFCA jurisdictions and in Scotland, Wales & NI. Defra will continue to collect anecdotal information on effectiveness to the devolved administration level and then this work will be paused as a reference document. The report will be used to inform CMG management discussions.
- There is a clear need for this type of review work and progress was strongly welcomed by CMG members;
- Since the Future of Our Inshore Fisheries conference in 2019 there has been an increased focus on fisheries co-management and a move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to management, continuation of this assessment work is incredibly important to inform discussions about what works and what doesn't;
- Anecdotal evidence (like that being collected through this piece of work) is valid, and in some cases a qualitative review of management effectiveness will be more useful than trying to gather quantitative data;
- When complete, the spreadsheet will be shared with CMG members via MS Teams and the document will be maintained as a "live" record of what management measures are currently in use;
- A similar task was carried out as part of the SW crab and lobster FIP, the results of which can be shared with Defra.

4. CMG science and data

Members commented on the progress of this action:

Formation of the CMG science sub-group (Mike Roach, Holderness Fishing Industry Group)

- A CMG science sub-group has been formed and met for the first time on 12 January 2021. The purpose of the CMG science sub-group is to understand and steer the scientific research that needs to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the CMG and sustainably manage crab and lobster fisheries.
- The aim of the CMG science sub-group is to:
 - Understand what research related to crab and lobster fisheries is ongoing/completed;
 - Identify gaps in current knowledge required to meet management objectives set by the CMG, and;
 - Develop a scientific research plan to address gaps and ensure there is sufficient information available to inform discussions on the sustainable management of crab and lobster fisheries in the future.
- The science sub-group will have a standing action to feedback to the CMG at each quarterly meeting. The science sub-group will initially meet monthly though meeting frequency may be revisited.
- Mike Roach was appointed as the liaison to report back to the CMG on the work of the science sub-group. Membership of the science group is to be widened slightly.

Latent capacity in the fleet (Simon Dixon, MMO)

- MMO data on latent capacity in the fleet between 2008 and 2019 were presented; the Excel sheet will be circulated and has graphs/pivot tables allowing members to look into the data themselves;
 - Some key figures from the data are:
 - The percentage of shellfish entitlements which were unused decreased from 44% in 2008 to 34% in 2019;
 - Whilst some churn is expected, it is likely that those not using their shellfish entitlement, but active in other fisheries, are the same vessels year-on-year.
- The increase in active kW (the engine capacity of active vessels) has increased suggesting that whilst the number of vessels in the fleet has remained relatively stable, vessels entering the fleet are more powerful.

Members commented on the update:

- Addressing latent capacity remains a priority area for CMG members, there is an opportunity to engage with CMG members about prioritising latent capacity as a work area;
- Any action on latent capacity would only be taken after full public consultation and discussion with industry. The CMG provides a useful forum through which informal discussions can be held as a starting point on this topic.
- A non-paper on latent capacity would be drafted to inform discussions and a way forward.

Poseidon proposal (Claire Pescod, Macduff Shellfish)

Following an action from the last CMG meeting, Poseidon consultants were approached and asked to submit a proposal to undertake a review of UK crab and lobster fisheries. The final output of this work would be a comprehensive report and recommendations on future fisheries management similar to the report [The UK Scallop Fishery: Current trends, future management options and recommendations](#) which was produced by Poseidon for the Scallop Industry Consultation Group in 2018.

A proposal has been received from Poseidon to deliver this review; the CMG science sub-group are in the process of reviewing the proposal and will provide feedback to Poseidon.

5. Actions

Action no.	Action	Responsibility
3.1	Circulate Defra shared inbox details for CMG members to a) raise concerns/issues relating to EU trade, and b) express an interest in joining weekly sessions	Matt Whittles, Defra
3.2	Share reports from D&SIFCA relating to assessments of the wider environmental impacts of pot fisheries in MPAs	Sarah Clark, D&SIFCA
3.3	Add an item on Hannah Fennel's PhD work to a future CMG meeting (date TBD)	Lewis Tattersall, Seafish Hannah Fennel, Orkney Fishermen's Association
3.4	Share SW crab and lobster FIP management measures inventory document with Defra	Beshlie Pool, SD&C Shellfishermen's Association
3.5	Prepare a proposed timeline for the WWER alternatives work to present at the next CMG and invite Cefas to present on their management review work in relation to amending the WWER	Helen Hunter, Defra Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
3.6	Complete work on assessing the effectiveness of management measures (with a focus on management of UK wide crab and lobster fisheries outside of IFCA jurisdictions)	Matt Johnson, Defra
3.7	Widen discussions with MMO (via the WMG) about fishing activity data collection through Catch App and recording pot type to discuss if this could/should be expanded	Natalie Hold, Bangor University
3.8	Create a non-paper to inform discussions on latent capacity	Helen Hunter, Defra Lewis Tattersall, Seafish
3.9	Circulate the following resources: - Latent capacity worksheet from Simon Dixon; - Poseidon scallop report to Science Sub Group Seafish economics slides and questions for CMG members to respond to	Lewis Tattersall, Seafish