

Seafood Industry Leadership Group Final Meeting Minutes – 27 January 2021

In Attendance

Neil Auchterlonie, Chair (NA)	Ally Dingwall, Sainsbury's (AD)
Kim Cullen, Secretary (KC)	Nigel Edwards, Hilton Food Group (NE)
Nathan de Rozarieux, Falfish (NdR)	Stuart Price, Nomad (SP)
Nicola Robinson, Defra (NR)	James Fox Davies, Fowey Sea Farms, ALG Chair (JFD)
Jim Portus, SW Fish Producer's Organisation (JP)	Hazel Curtis, Seafish (HC)
Cameron Moffat, Youngs and Young Seafood Leader's Network (CM)	

Guests

Lydia Osborne, Defra (LO)	Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis, MP
Giulia Grierson, Minister's Private Secretary	

Apologies

Andrew Locker, Lockers Trawlers (AL)	Dr Mark Berry, SEP Chair (MB)
Paul Trebilcock, CFPO (PT)	

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome

- NA welcomed SILG members and guests to the meeting and listed the apologies

2. 15 Dec 2020 minutes

- Accepted

3. Seafish Update

HC provided the update

- Extraordinary Seafish sector panel meetings are currently ongoing to share post-EU experiences and to determine if a strategic response is required from the organisation
- Reminder: [Strategic Review of Seafish](#) is in preparation for 2021. Industry will be consulted in the summer.
- Seafish continues to support stakeholders through the [EU-Exit transition](#), [the global pandemic](#), and the launch of [Love Seafood by Seafish](#)
 - SILG members are encouraged to visit the Love Seafood webpage and use the social media channels and assets
- Seafish is working with Department for International Trade to collaborate on export trade webinars with countries outside the EU (e.g. [Japan](#) and [the UAE](#)) and to determine the way forward to promote UK seafood
- [Home & Dry campaign](#) is underway
 - It aims to connect and engage with fishermen on the issues of staying safe at sea. The purpose of the website is to act as an information hub

Discussion

- In terms of the impact of Love Seafood on domestic consumption, the advice from the Seafish Board and sector panels was that first there is the need to make a generational shift in attitudes toward including seafood in the diet. Therefore, it was determined inappropriate to use sales on consumption figures in the short-term as a measure of success of Love Seafood. First, the tracking the emotional response and attitudes of consumers will be the measure of success. Later in the initiative, sales will be tracked to determine its impact on seafood consumption.
- As part their ongoing responsibilities, Seafish purchases retail data at the point of sale on a regular basis. Seafish can track the changes in retail, consumer behaviour and foodservice at a detailed level. Analysis is available in a series of publications, downloadable spreadsheets and presentations.
- There has been a focus on the high obesity rates in the UK and the fact it is a risk factor of COVID-19. Love Seafood includes obesity through its 'balanced living' theme (the other two themes are convenience and choice).

Actions

- KC to compile Seafish Market Insight webpage information and online resources in order to provide SILG members with guidance

4. Defra Update

NR and LO provided the update

- Defra is reviewing the [EU Trade and Cooperation agreement](#) and working with the negotiation team to understand what sits behind the text to provide context
- Defra also actively involved in the implications for access to UK waters (6-12 nm) and licensing. The UK [Single Issuing Authority](#) was set up 2 years ago as the governmental body for the licensing of foreign vessels that wish to fish in UK waters and for UK domestic vessels wanting to access non-UK waters. Began licensing on New Year's Eve and has been a success
- Annual negotiations for fisheries started in mid-January with the EU to agree positions on governance and scope. Given the EU-Exit, the UK is now on a different playing field – now on par with EU so there's been a learning curve on both sides with regard to how the negotiations will work and develop
- Defra are actively working on the export issues between the UK and EU
- [Defra consultation on additional quota](#) – will issue govt response once EU negotiations are complete
- [Defra consultation on economic link](#) – will issue govt response soon
- [Call for evidence on Remote Electronic monitoring](#) - the information is being analysed
- Inshore fisheries: Continuing to engage with Inshore Working group (members from around the English coast) to understand the issues they've experienced through COVID-19, EU-Exit and trade deal. Aiming to establish regional groups and that planning is ongoing

Discussion

- A definition of 'inshore' has not yet been achieved in the context of Defra's inshore activities. It is inherently difficult to define, and industry disagreed with previous definition attempts in terms of Defra's work

Actions

- NR suggested to bring a Defra export colleague to the next SILG meeting to provide further insight and answer questions

5. SF2040 ALG Update

JFD provided the update

- Next ALG meeting: 10 February 2020
 - Final discussion of revised Recommendations 13 and 14
 - Speakers: Robert Clark, Association of IFCA, on their aquaculture positioning statement; and Ben Coppin, MMO Marine Planning team, on the purpose and scope of aquaculture in Marine Plans
- English Aquaculture Strategy (EAS)
 - Meetings with organisations listed in Delivery Plan are ongoing
 - Complete: Cefas, The Crown Estate, the Environment Agency, and Seafish
 - In progress: MMO, Defra, and research funders and academics e.g. UKRI, Aquaculture Research Collaborative Hub (ARCH-UK), etc.
 - Important to ensure and track EAS activity and impact

Discussion

- JFD met with several MPs to discuss the EAS and aquaculture opportunities and will meet with others
- JFD and KC will continue to report back to SILG with EAS updates

6. SF2040 Update

KC provided the update

- Funding update
 - Current funding ends 28 Feb 2021
 - Defra & Seafish supportive of programme continuation
 - Seafish agreed to 25% of total grant for one-year funding
 - Letters of support received from SILG and ALG industry members
 - Application provided to MMO for steer on funding availability
 - Important for programme planning and certainty to investigate multiple sources of funding (private, UK Research Councils, etc.)

7. Discussion with Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis, MP

Discussion

- SF2040 can play a supporting role in both the UK food blue growth government agendas
- Proper funding in seafood is necessary to delivering overall food security and blue growth agendas and to encourage sustainable, low carbon food growth and an increase of domestic ('buy British') seafood consumption
- As a result of the 2008 global recession there was a decline in UK seafood consumption. Fortunately, the 2019 figures show an incline up to 1.1 portions of the recommended 2 portions of seafood per person per week. 2020 figures demonstrated large growth in seafood retail sales, however, due to the

unprecedented closure of the food service sector as a result of COVID-19 the total impact on consumption has shown some gain has been lost

- Three government pan-UK funding streams soon to be released:
 - £32 million for the EMFF replacement fund
 - £100 million for the fishing sector and coastal communities; focus on ports, sustainability and green technology
 - £23 million for those who have lost money through export difficulties backdated to 1 Jan 2021
 - JP highlighted that Local Authorities can't access EMFF / MFF funding and as some own ports and fishing markets and want to expand or improve infrastructure this is problematic.
 - Action: JP to provide NR with evidence
- SILG industry members reported that as of end of January, fish was getting through to the EU better than the previous 3 weeks since 1 January, however:
 - There is still over a 24-hour delay from the norm which for fresh food is unacceptable
 - COVID-19 government support needs to continue particularly for the inshore fisheries
 - Problems continue with the customs process on foreign soil
 - Difficult to disentangle what are COVID-19 issues and which are Brexit related – hard to get a clear picture as a result
- There is a good opportunity for aquaculture growth in England
- The Minister highlighted the following priorities for the seafood industry:
 - Overcoming immediate administrative and logistical export / import difficulties
 - Getting the government funding schemes up and running
 - Tackling some difficult conversations around sustainability
 - Protecting MPAs
 - Persuading people to buy and eat more domestic fish

8. SF2040 Recommendation Refresh

Discussion

- Rec 3: Best practice across the English seafood industry
 - The word 'capacity' is problematic
- Rec 4:
 - This is about where seafood sits in an overall healthy diet; want positive comparisons with other proteins
 - Demonstrate the role of seafood in a healthy lifestyle backed up with scientific, up to date messaging in an ongoing dialog with consumer
 - What is the action / project that can be taken?

9. Next Steps/AOB/Finish

- NA and KC to determine next steps to complete recommendation refresh over email and individual SILG member workshops
- Next meeting will be late spring on Zoom