

This [Fisheries Management and Innovation Group](#) bite-size meeting took a close look at the ‘frontrunner’ FMPs, which are being prioritised for delivery in 2023 in England and Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland have a different approach). All of these frontrunners involve a partnership between fishers, researchers and regulators, but they are piloting different ways of preparing FMPs. The lessons learnt from these projects will help shape future FMP work. Through a series of presentations, and follow-on discussion, we found out more about how the alternative approaches are working.

Links to the presentations

[Government policy - FMPs/Joint Fisheries Statement/UK Fisheries Act 2020](#). Annabel Stockwin and Jon Davies, Defra.

Discussion

- **Q. If the situation arises that the Precautionary Approach is required, how often will there be a review of the state of data and knowledge to enable a stock to move away from the PA? Is there a legal requirement on Fisheries Authorities to fund the necessary data gathering and scientific endeavour to enable the move away from the PA?**
A. PAs do have some criteria associated with it. Number of hurdles and barriers to make sure you are using the PA in the right way. FMPs have to be reviewed on a set timetable – every six years. It will be more frequently than this.
- **Comment.** With Cuttlefish and Squid having a very short life spans and the stocks varying a lot from year to year it is going to be very hard to get an idea of the actual stock without quite a bit of guess work.
- **Q. Can you please confirm that Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) is the minimum standard?**
A. Yes that is correct.
- **Why have certain species been selected i.e., crabs, lobster, scallops, when something like grey mullet has not been included, as well as other commercial species? When could they be included?**
A. We are constantly reviewing the list of FMPs in place. There was a reason for the prioritisation process.
- **Q. What would be the trigger to more frequent FMP reviews, please? Can more FMPs be created without a formal process.**
A. A lot of measures are going on without FMPs. This process is to bring all this together in a holistic way. This is all evidence-based – this will be the main trigger. The current plans themselves could identify a trigger point

[Crabs, lobsters and whelks in English waters](#). Lewis Tattersall, Seafish.

Discussion

- **Q. Were a range of stakeholders involved in engagement e.g., larger commercial interests vs small scale/inshore fishers who often do not or cannot attend meetings?**
A. Yes, a wide range of stakeholders were involved in the process, ranging from small scale to larger vessel operators / multiple vessel owners - both attending themselves but also via POs and associations - but also more widely across the supply chain including processors, merchants, exporters and non-fishing stakeholders e.g., NGOs. Obviously, we are dealing with a very disparate sector, but we did endeavour to engage with as many individuals as possible in the process.

[King scallop in English and Welsh waters](#). Jim Portus, Scallop Industry Consultation Group (SICG).

Discussion

- **Q. Non-EEA migrant fishers working above 48 hrs a week on ~£3.50 an hour is the norm currently in scallop fisheries. Well under minimum wage. Work and rest in C188 are also**

not being upheldthe scallop fishery working pattern with two skippers on shifts but crew who fish both shifts is a major problem in terms of labour exploitation...and safety. What can FMPs do with regard to decent work...? Isn't that a social objective? If not...why not?

- **A.** FMP will have chapters covering all aspects including C188. There are laws in place, and they need to be followed. It is right to include references to the legislation re social wellbeing.
- **Q. Is it intended the scallop FMP will replace western waters limits?**
A. The scallop FMP is a guide to future management. Fishing authorities will need to implement changes to legislation. It is not a legislative instrument - it is a guide.
- **Q. Is there going to a vacuum i.e., legislation rescinded before the FMP is fully on track?**
A. This has been addressed by the members of the working group. There will be no vacuum between legislation. We will need a suitable alternative before we remove any legislation currently in place. There will not be a gap.
- **Q. From a version of the evidence used to underpin the scallop FMP a map provided on the location of scallop did not show the scallop to be present in the Solent and waters around the Isle of Wight. We have a well-developed dredge fishery for scallops which is managed under a permit byelaw and is surveyed by us twice a year to collect population data. It is important that this fishery and the location of scallops in this area is recognised in the FMP. It has been raised by Southern IFCA, can I ask if this has been addressed and the Solent included in the areas identified in the FMP?**
A. The Working Group has engaged with the Association of IFCAs to ensure any gaps are filled.

[Bass in English waters co-design and stakeholder engagement process.](#) Kate Langham, Policy Lab.

Discussion

- **Q. Was there any difficulty in identifying recreational fishers?**
A. We found numerous avenues to engage. Overwhelmed with the reaction and input we received. Collective intelligence debate was very useful.
- **Q. How much time and resources did you dedicate to the stakeholder engagement?**
A. The whole project has been about stakeholder engagement.
- **Q. How did you address issues where solutions might contradict each other/not be compatible with other aspects or solutions?**
A. Some scenarios with differing views. Have been put forward as differing views. Have seen the different options portrayed. Difference have been reported.
- **Comment, not a question.** I (along with many local fishermen) was a stakeholder in bass FMP and felt the process was really good. The use of the online surveys really opened up opportunities for fishers to be involved.
- **Q. Your stakeholder engagement is really impressive. What avenues did you use to ensure that you reached so many people? Also how did you ensure that people with poor IT skills were able to participate?**
A. It was really about finding different ways to engage. Different methods. Survey and in-person option. Many different methods and approaches.
- **Q. Could you pick out crew responses versus owner operator responses?**
A. Did have crew approach us in person. No barriers to respond. But not everyone wanted to identify themselves. This was not always apparent.
- **Q. There was a lot about the potential measures. Not much weight given to discussing goals and priorities for the FMP.**
A. Policy Lab was very much about the process. We had clear objectives from Defra.

Channel non-quota demersal stocks (NQS). Isobel Johnston, Marine Management Organisation.

Discussion

- **Q. The FMPS are being built round inclusivity. Any critique of the depths of the discussions.**
A. We have engaged with communities. Always listening. Feedback has been positive.
- **Q. Will this FMP take into account potential wider impacts of the fishery to align with the ecosystem approach- e.g., potential habitat impacts linked to trawl gear?**
A. Ecosystem approach. Very much looking at this.
- **Q. Did you only ask UK registered fly shooters?**
A. Poolside visits. We are open to everyone.
- **How will you get more recreational fishers to take part?**
A. We are looking to identify locations and times for this sector in particular.

Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel mixed flatfish. Emma Ulyatt, Defra.

Discussion

- **Q. Very impressive approach to stakeholder engagement. Some of these FMPs will be done in isolation. At what point will you get together to dovetail them? What is the process once they are constructed?**
A. The Administrations have a formal working group to discuss policy across the board. There is strong co-operation. Joint plans. But individual Administrations can pursue policies in their own waters.
- **Q. There appears to be an overlap with the channel NQS FMP in 7d for turbot, brill and lemon sole. How will the two FMPs interact?**
A. We're working closely together with Emma and her team to ensure we coordinate the FMPs. This will need addressing. There will be discussion over this.
- **Q. Given the wide range of species included in the channel demersal stocks, are you prioritising any particular species in the first iteration?**
A. We did look at prioritisation, but we need to get all the evidence in and consider it before making any decisions on species that should be prioritised. But hopefully as you've seen from the documents online it is an issue we're considering.
- **Q. The King Scallop FMP, NQS FMP and Bass FMP all look very different method wise. I wonder if Policy Lab undertook the scallop FMP, would it look the same as Jim's submission? – which one would be the better with regards to the aims and objectives? Is there not a need for a standardised approach in developing the FMPs to ensure consistency of outputs?**
A. We have very deliberately taken different approaches to find out the strengths and weaknesses so that we can all learn on the most appropriate way to develop FMPs.