

## Aquaculture Leadership Group Meeting Minutes – 7 February 2019

### In Attendance

James Fowey, ALG Chair

Kim Cullen, SF2040

Martin Syvret, Dorset Coast Forum

Dr Stuart McLanaghan, Seafish

Oliver Robinson, British Trout Association

Kelsey Thompson, Morecambe Bay Oysters

Alison Austin, SF2040 Chair and Non-Exec Seafish Board

Michael Gubbins, Cefas

David Jarrad, SAGB

Dr Lewis Le Vay, Bangor University

John Holmyard, Offshore Shellfish

Sara Catahan, Defra

### With Apologies

Roger Covey, Natural England

Colin May/Chris Sweeting, MMO

### Guests

Dr Eunice Pinn, Seafish

George Rutledge, Defra

Edward Hind-Ozan, Defra

Simren Shahpuri, Defra

Dr Tom Pryke, Defra

### Meeting Minutes

#### Agenda #1

##### Welcome

#### Agenda #2

##### Setting the scene: ALG vision, role and ways of working

- Purpose of ALG and vision
- Relationship to SF2040 Seafood Industry Leadership Group
- Discussion and questions

JFD spoke about the future of aquaculture and the purpose of the ALG. He touched on the opportunities and potential within the sector:

- There are no simple solutions to promoting growth in seafood consumption. Education, the promotion of the welfare benefits, the reduction in impact on the environment – these are all valid avenues for investment but no one solution is going to provide the uptake that is required.
- Aquaculture
  - Aquaculture in 2040 is going to be diverse – in terms of species, in terms of applications and in terms of business size.
  - Aquaculture is not just food (e.g. cleaner fish, fish for aquaria, fish for medical research and bio-fuels)

- ALG should keep in mind opportunities /advancements in:
  - Technology
  - Investment
  - Intellectual capital
- Government and Commerce
  - We need a new way of interacting with governmental bodies. An 'us and them' attitude will not work.
  - Keep ALG meetings positive in nature. If there are specific issues between industry and government, there are other forums where those grievances can be picked up.
  - This group has a very special remit – to grow the UK economy with regard to aquaculture
- ALG has formed in early 2019 with the world of aquaculture on the cusp of great change. Populations are rising towards an estimated 9 billion by 2050 and the farming of protein and the fishing of wild stocks are, arguably, closing in on the limits of what's possible with our resources. Aquaculture is one area where a real difference can be made.
- ALG will look at achievable goals in the short, medium and long term.
- There are only limited resources available to this group and therefore it is imperative that when formulating proposals, ALG considers whether what is being proposed is achievable in the short to medium term. Blue sky thinking is great, but if ALG is to make an impact, quick wins in the short term are required.
- This group is not just about growing the aquaculture economy but broadening its scope, promoting its values and better demonstrating its contribution to the UK economy, the seafood industry, and the benefits of employment, health and opportunity for communities

### General Comments

Clarification was requested on broadening ALG's scope beyond shellfish as this was not the original intent.

- As a result of Defra senior leadership push to look at other exciting things to widen the scope and in order to capitalise on the short, medium and long-term thinking it is important to include service fish/non-food fish because of the opportunity, potential and value to the sector.
- There is a wider compelling narrative of aquaculture that ALG should not only be a part of but help to create.
- It makes sense to have a wider scope than just shellfish as the sector is changing and somebody has to fight corners so it makes sense for it to be ALG.
- Optimism and realism are both required
- ALG needs the quick wins as the (shellfish) industry needs assistance
  - This is understood and sets an important precedent for ALG – so now is the time to move forward.
  - Shellfish is important to ALG and is a priority however the group also has to keep an eye on the future
- ALG is an industry group using public funds (EMFF funding) so the group has a responsibility to point out where things are not working.
- Salmon are not included in ALG's scope.

## Agenda #3

### **Update on SF2040 aquaculture activities**

- Terms of Reference – paper tabled
- Changes to recommendations 13 &14 – paper tabled
- Ideas for possible EMFF aquaculture proposals – paper tabled
- Discussion, questions and seek agreement

### Terms of Reference

No comments

**Action Point:** (KC) Once Recs 13 and 14 are approved, add to ToR and email to ALG for approval.

### Changes to recommendations 13 & 14

- Concern was raised with the some of the changes to the recommendations such as the removal of Defra as a responsible partner in a bullet point and other text alterations.
  - Defra is limited in resources right now due to Brexit.
  - Defra is still listed as a responsible partner throughout Recs 13 &14
  - There are actions that ALG members can take through their own organisations.
  - SF2040 secretariat to review the changes within Recs 13 & 14
- The 2012 aquaculture strategy has research that is still relevant
  - The 2012 strategy will be used to inform the new strategy
  - In 2019/20 Seafish will be working on ‘the size of the prize’ – looking at growth potential of the sector both food and non-food. This report and findings will be presented to ALG. This information will be relevant to the new strategy.
- Clarification asked for with regard to ‘high value and novel species’
  - The retail and foodservice representatives in the Seafood Industry Leadership Group (SILG) mentioned it.
    - SILG wants aquaculture to play a more prominent role in the seafood industry.
  - By adding high value and novel species to the Rec 13 recommendation, ALG is putting a marker in the ground.
  - ALG should strive to ensure industry has the tools so that if someone wants to try high value and novel species, they can.
- Food security is a big issue and it is important for consumers to have confidence in the quality of British seafood

**Action Point:** (KC) Change Recs 13 & 14 to reflect the discussion and email to ALG for approval.

## Ideas for possible EMFF aquaculture proposals

### Rec 13 proposal

- There's a paper published in journal that will be helpful
  - Knowledge Needs paper by Aisla Jones et al. Also the NERC/BBSRC Sustainable Aquaculture Workshop report
- MMO are currently creating the next generation of maps looking at:
  - biological resources (species list);
  - technical constraints (draw lines where its technically unfeasible to have an aquaculture site); and
  - planning constraints (implications and compatibilities)
- Stakeholder engagement will be important (e.g. Trade associations)
- A concern was raised that the proposal undercuts those who went before and spent much time and money to set up a business
  - It was pointed out is this fair to the future of aquaculture farming. Improving what is difficult and complicated is important for the industry to grow.
- A concern was raised if farms outside a zone could be targeted.
- The application process itself requires work
  - Wales did something similar and it's useful up to a point
  - Hard to see how you shortcut the regulators
    - Don't want to shortcut the regulators but improve the aquaculture application process and an understanding of where the viable sites are located

**Action Point:** (LLV) Forward papers to KC for wider circulation

**Action Point:** (KC) Circulate papers to ALG

**Action Point:** (KC) Revise Rec 13 proposal where possible in light of discussion and circulate to ALG for further comment before stakeholder engagement and invitation to tender

## Agenda #4

### Lunch

## Agenda #5

### Seafish aquaculture work

- Explanation of tabled papers and questions

SAGB is on the ARCH-UK Board

**Action Point:** (KC) Review Arch-UK website, teams and projects to identify alignment with SF2040 aquaculture recommendations. Consider approaching ARCH –UK if there is good alignment and worth contacting for further information and/or potential partnership opportunities. Touch base with DJ as required.

## **Agenda #6**

### **Developing an Assurance Scheme for Shellfish and Human Health (DASSHH)**

- Presentation
- Discussion and questions

No comments

## **Agenda #7**

### **Defra: Thinking about the EMFF replacement fund (Title of presentation: Future Grant Engagement)**

- Presentation and group exercise
- Discussion and questions

The Defra team will compile the notes from the ALG session and use them to inform the new fund framework and resulting consultation.

**ACTION POINT** (KC) Ensure ALG contributes to final consultation phase as a group.

## **Agenda #8**

### **Defra: Exports of fish and fish products to the EU – No deal planning**

- Presentation
- Discussion and questions

ALG had various questions for Defra requesting clarification and further information.

**ACTION POINT** (KC) Forward DJ and OR's email details to Simren Shahpuri for further correspondence

**ACTION POINT** (KC) Circulate Simren's presentation to ALG

## **Agenda #9**

### **Next Steps /AOB/Finish**

#### Next steps

- ALG will:
  - Confirm and agree to revised aquaculture recommendations via email before next meeting
  - Agree to ToR via email before next meeting
  - Determine advance calendar via email
    - **ACTION POINT** (KC) Forward ALG a Doodle table to determine next meeting dates

#### Any other business

- Information disseminated re: MMO's 'Iteration 3 on Marine Plan Development Consultation'
- ALG reminded that SF2040 will reimburse travel for those working for non-govt organisations.
  - **ACTION POINT** (KC) Forward SF2040 travel policy and reimbursement form to ALG