



## Scotland’s Scallop Sector Working Group (SSSWG)

### DRAFT Note of Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

Online via Microsoft Teams

Present		
Jim Watson	JW	Marine Scotland
Stuart Bell	SB	Marine Scotland
Ellen Huis	EH	Marine Scotland
Chloe Aird	CA	Marine Scotland
Femke de Boer	FdB	Scottish Whitefish Producer’s Assoc. (SWFPA)
Foster Gault	FG	Scottish Whitefish Producer’s Assoc. (SWFPA)
Malcolm Morrison	MM	Scottish Fishermen’s Federation (SFF)
Elaine Whyte	EW	Community Inshore Fisheries Alliance (CIFA)
Andrew Brown	AB	Macduff Shellfish
Carole Laignel	CL	Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation (SSMO)
Simon MacDonald	SM	West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (WCRIFG)
Jennifer Mouat	JM	North and East Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (NECRIFG)
Duncan MacInnes	DMac	Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries Group (OHRIFG)
John Hermse	JH	Western Inshore Scallop Group (WISG)

Apologies		
Lynda Blackadder		
Sheila Keith		

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- JW welcomed the group and asked for any last minute additions to the agenda.
- SB outlined the need for the SSSWG to demonstrate maximum transparency and proposed that, from this point, the group adopt a process of sharing all outputs (once agreed) via RIFG website or the Marine Scotland website.

### Actions

1. Members of the group to contact Inshore Team if they have any concerns relating to switching to immediate sharing of outputs from the SSSWG.

### 2. Marine Scotland Update

- JW provided an update from Marine Scotland, including:
  - New Ministers now getting to grips with their portfolios.



- Acknowledgement that some of the organisations represented at the SSSWG have already requested meetings with the new Cabinet Secretary.
  - Regarding the Future Fisheries Management implementation plan, the road ahead will become apparent after the Parliamentary recess.
  - Discussion between SNP and the Green Party are ongoing.
  - There are ongoing discussions between UK governments regarding post-Brexit quota exchanges.
  - Marine Scotland will begin 2 consultations this month, on Future Catching Policy and General Principles of REM.
  - There was discussion on how fishing be prioritised within the ‘Shared Marine Space’.
- Lynda Blackadder was unable to attend the meeting but gave a written update on Marine Scotland Science work:
    - **Surveys** - MSS have conducted three scallop dredge surveys in 2021 (Shetland, east coast and west coast) but these were limited because of the reduced staff and Covid guidelines. The west coast survey also suffered because of technical issues with the ship. Survey reports are available. The Clyde will be surveyed in October.
    - **Stock assessments** - The process is underway and catch estimation has started. This is the market sampling and fisheries data (in terms of the landings and effort) which is an important component of the stock assessment. MSS has started to make the stock assessment process more transparent and publicly available by transferring previous historical assessments into SAM (state-space assessment model). The plan is that final updated assessments (input data, model configurations and results) will be made available on the stockassessment.org website.
    - **Bycatch paper** - The paper on the MSS scallop dredge survey catch composition is progressing but still in draft format, to be reviewed by MSS and shared with MS policy colleagues before it is available to stakeholders. It should prove useful in terms of documenting the species encountered, the percentage contribution of species to the catch (in terms of number and weight) and the degree of damage associated with capture (as assessed by visual examination). A reminder that these analyses are based on the MSS scallop dredge survey and that two types of gear are fished (commercial and scientific dredge).
    - **ICES Scallop Working Group** – Group will meet online this year (4-8<sup>th</sup> October) and will focus on the Irish Sea stock assessments, the dredge efficiencies review paper and discuss genetics and connectivity studies. They will review progress and agree new terms of reference for the next three year cycle.

**Actions**

None.



**3. Update on Modernisation of the Inshore Fleet**

- EH gave an update on the Modernisation of the Inshore Fleet Programme, including:
  - A letter urging vessel owners to take advantage of funded installation of REM and an FAQ document has now been sent to the fleet, as signposted at last SSSWG meeting.
  - 35 vessel owners were written to and the vast majority responded, with a reminder being sent to those who didn't.
  - 40% of installations have now been completed with a further 30 vessels being either scheduled or partially installed.
  - EH advised that if owners or their representatives wished to discuss technical aspects of the installation, she would be happy to arrange it.
  - Adopting of an REM system for scallop vessels will become mandatory – the forthcoming consultation will cover general principles of REM across the Scottish fishing fleet.
  - There was discussion about considering how new legislation being brought in might sit alongside what is currently in place, i.e. the 2017 Scallop Order.
  - There was discussion about the requirement of non-Scottish vessels to carry REM systems.
  - There was discussion about when REM systems will come to static gear fishing vessels, noting the size of that sector of the fleet and the need to gather sufficient evidence to inform what a proportionate approach would look like.

**Actions**

None.

**4. SSSWG Management Sub Group – Discussion Paper**

- SB introduced the intent and activities of the SSSWG management sub group and covered the main points of the discussion paper.
- There was general discussion regarding possible other content for inclusion in the paper, including:
  - The impact of renewable energy developments, aquaculture and emergent forms of mariculture - such as seaweed - on scallop fishing.
  - The importance of coexistence within the shared marine space.
  - The importance of transparency when licensing other marine activities besides fishing.
  - The evolving MPA network.
  - Ensuring a streamlined approach to local/regional/national management measures.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Making it easier to seek permission to trial new variants of dredging gear with the aim of making it more environmentally friendly.</li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>
1: SB to adopt latest comments and recirculate paper.

<b>5. Scallop FIP Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AB introduced the Project UK Fisheries Improvement Project, highlighting that the intent of the document is to seek ways to fill gaps in the science and suggest ways in which the fishery might be better managed. AB noted that a progress report has now been placed online.</li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>
None.

<b>6. DEFRA Call For Evidence.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW brought the current DEFRA call for evidence to the attention of the group noting:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It relates to possible removal of latent capacity from the fleet and restrictions on vessels of under 15 meters overall length.</li> <li>○ It is important that Scotland observe this process and learn from it.</li> <li>○ The call for evidence ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August.</li> <li>○ There was general discussion about whether removal of latent capacity from the fishing fleet should just pertain to Scallop Entitlements or whether Shellfish Entitlements should be considered too.</li> <li>○ It was discussed that the scallop fishing industry in Scotland have previously called for &lt;15 meter scallop vessels to be further regulated.</li> <li>○ There was general discussion about the change in shelf-life of a licence entitlement from 5 to 10 years.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Actions</b>
None.

<b>7. AOB and Date of Next Meeting.</b>



- JW made reference to the Seafish report by Jess Sparks, noting:
  - The report uses MS data.
  - Seafish have conducted other similar pieces of work for other groups previously.
  - There was general discussion on the usefulness of the report.
  - The impact of the pandemic on the 2020 data should be noted.
  - There were requests from the group to consider the report and provide feedback to Inshore Team on what other, similar work might be of value (i.e. disposal data, trade data).
  
- Next meeting data provisionally set to take place in October 2021.

**Actions**

1: Group to feedback on what other iterations of the Seafish report they might find useful by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August.