

## Regional Inshore Fisheries Group Network

### RIFG Chairs' Meeting Note

30<sup>th</sup> August 2021, via Microsoft Teams – 1pm – 3pm

#### Attendees

Present		
Stuart Bell - Chair	SB	Marine Scotland
Chloe Aird	CA	Marine Scotland
Gordon Taylor	GT	Marine Scotland
Duncan MacInnes	DM	Outer Hebrides RIFG
Simon Macdonald	SM	West Coast RIFG
Jennifer Mouat	JM	North and East Coast RIFG
Donald Nicholson	DN	Outer Hebrides RIFG
Carole Laignel	CL	Shetland Shellfish Management Organisation (SSMO)

Apologies	
Kate Rydzkowski	Orkney Sustainable Fisheries (OSF)
Jim Watson	Head of Domestic Fisheries Management

#### 1. MS Update – Stuart Bell – 13.00

- Advised that Marine Scotland are currently working on resource priorities on the back of the agreement with the Green Party and an announcement will be made as soon as practicable.
- We are committed to continue working with the RIFG network, as this is an important mechanism for our Future Fisheries Management Strategy.
- A positive meeting has been had between the Cabinet Secretary and the Community Inshore Fisheries Alliance (CIFA), putting across key issues in the wake of the SGP announcement.
- DM – Commented on wishing to have a discussion on how the announcement affects existing work such as support for new entrants.

#### 2. Updates from Chairs – 13.25

## West Coast

- Creel management paper is nearing completion to circulate for everyone's comments. JM is assisting with drafting.
- A WCRIFG meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 and was well attended.
  - Allister Philp felt his suggestions had not been discussed sufficiently.
  - Carlos Mesquita (Marine Scotland Science) gave a presentation on stock assessment of shellfish.
- Nick Turnbull has a meeting with Cabinet Secretary on Mull Crab box on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
- Meetings of the Aquaculture Work Group will be held more frequently. Jill Barbour from MS Aquaculture & Development was recently in attendance.
- Seafood Brexit Group – next meeting will be on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
  - Last meeting of this group suggested packaging, compliance and a shortage of drivers is causing issues.
  - Supply will likely begin forcing prices up come Christmas time.
  - Spain have reduced the prices on Prawns from Scotland by 25% which is making the market effectively unsustainable.
- SM attended the most recent SSSWG meeting.
- The Solway Cackle proposal continues to develop.
- Elaine Whyte praised effort of RIFGs in the Fishing News last week.
- Clyde Sub group meeting saw discussion on creel management and implementing the scallop recommendations.

## North & East Coast

- Gear conflict – Continues to be an issue in this area. Meetings have stalled and people are reluctant to return to the table.
- Geofencing proposal – there are outstanding issues with this project and there will be a meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to address them.
- Aid to navigation project – looking for another trial to be completed after the previous one. One of the skippers has already bought some units to test fitness for purpose.
- 2 working group meetings for offshore renewables attended – Moray Firth group was a good positive meeting. Forth & Tay group meeting was very fractious.
- Seafish crab & lobster group – would like to circulate a paper to all the chairs and get their thoughts and ideas for management measures.
- Mackerel quota – successful year, however issues raised on how the fishery is managed and control measures. Would like to set up a RIFG working group to look at quota and marketing. Hopefully can achieve a good price as it's been very variable.

## Shetland

- Attended the RIFG Aquaculture Working Group, SSSWG meeting, 2 Meetings with SSEN around cabling and interaction with shellfish fleet, as well as SSMO Advisory Group Meeting, AGM and board meeting.
- The Chairperson Ian Walterson stood down as planned and was replaced by Robert Williamson who has agreed to remain as Chair until at least May next year when the post will be readvertised. Sydney Johnson has replaced Garry Leask who stood down as Vice-Chairperson.
- Press release for new chair and vice chair will go ahead soon, however nothing will happen until after review next year.
- Velvet Crab – Review of the reference points has been carried out by Shetland UHI. Beth Mouat gave a presentation on this. Various other issues were discussed, including certain groups wanting to reinstate the 3 mile limit.

### Outer Hebrides

- Pot limitation project is going very well, with just 3 still to be fitted.
- Brown crab is showing a serious decline.
- Catches of Nephrops are increasing steadily, but prices are down.
- Fishers are observing large shoals of Spurdog.
- Wrasse permits are being issued and good catches are being reported amid higher sea temperatures.
- Blue fin tuna – 7 derogations issued for catch and release. It is hoped a quota could be obtained in the future.

### Orkney Update

- For the last few weeks KR has been working with UK large multiple retailers to try and secure market presence for the Orkney shellfish. The companies place a lot of emphasis on their suppliers either being in a Fisheries Improvement Project or MSC certified.
- KR has re-established the FIP for brown crab for Orkney. This has come from the huge reliance the inshore sector has on the export of shellfish and the need to improve UK/Scotland market presence.
- Hannah Fennel and Kate have been working together with OIC to try and identify suitable projects for Orkney and will set up a working group.
- Fishers have been concerned regarding the SGP/SG coalition agreement draft, particularly around consultation and correct use of evidence.
- Crab tagging – the Chairs will get together to discuss resuming this project.

### 3. Acoustic Deterrent Devices – Jennifer Mouat – 14.00

- David Whyte presented the Acoustic seal deterrent device which will be shared alongside these minutes.

### 4. Privacy Policy for RIFG Online Meetings – S Macdonald – 14.45

- JM – Feels there is too much information in the document and would like to see it scaled back. She will highlight sections to change and return.
- DN – Asked why we need a privacy policy. Explained that we need to protect personal information such as email and telephone number.
- CL – Said that this policy should be driven by Marine Scotland.

#### 5. RIFG Project Proposals – 14.40

- Marine Scotland has received two applications for projects from across the RIFG network. Applications will be shared with colleagues for comment and feedback will be given as soon as possible
- The Chairs are invited to submit applications now for potential projects they may wish to take forward next year.

#### 6. AOB – 14.50

- **Action** – Organise a FFM Meeting to discuss priorities with Chairs/Jane MacPherson/Jim Watson.