

**Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group (WMFAG)**

**DRAFT** Notes of meeting held on Wednesday 16 May 2018 at CBFA Office, The Harbour, Aberystwyth, commencing at 10.15 am

**Attending:**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Nick O’Sullivan (NOS)	Chair
Jim Evans	Welsh Fishermans Association
John O’Connor	Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers
Brett Garner	Llyn Fishermans Association
Trevor Jones	MSFOMA
Emily Williams	WEL/RSPB
Rowland Sharp	Natural Resources Wales
Holly Whiteley	Seafish Wales Advisory Com.
Dean Parry	Cardigan Bay Fishermen’s Association
Sion Williams	Llyn Pot Fishermans Association
Julian Bray	Welsh Government
Leanne Llewellyn	“ “
Stuart Evans	“ “
Jenni Hartley	“ “
Margaret Rees	“ “
<b>Apologies were received from:</b>	
Mark Stafford	Welsh Government
Bethan Jones	Welsh Government
Len Walters	West Wales Shellfishermans Association
Kevin Denman	South West Wales Fishing Communities
Colin Charman	Natural Resources Wales
<b>By Invitation:</b>	
Sue Burton & Steve DeWaine	Pembs SAC / WWSFA (attended from 12.30)
Adam Greenwood/Chris Hill	Miller Research (attended from 12.30)

1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b> - The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Jenni Hartley, who was attending her first meeting. Apologies were as listed.</p> <p>JB thanked members for attending and their continued support. He outlined the substantial workload staffs have been dealing with since the last meeting. 'Brexit' has been placing substantial additional pressure on the Marine and Fisheries Division and the internal support services we rely on. Members were also informed of a number of structural changes within Marine &amp; Fisheries Division; an organogram will be distributed to members when available.</p> <p>JB informed members of the considerable amount of correspondence and diary requests the Cabinet Secretary had received on Marine and Fisheries issues since the last meeting. He pointed out responding to correspondence and preparing for those meetings reduces the staff time available to progress key work streams.</p> <p><b>Action 1:</b> Secretariat to circulate organogram showing new structures.</p>
2.	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b> – A revised Terms of Reference had been produced consolidating both the previous ToR and Standing Orders. The changes clarified the behaviour expected of members at meetings and subsequent action which would be taken if necessary.</p> <p>Overall members agreed the new terms of reference although a number suggested including a representative from the scallop industry to join the group to offer expertise in that area, a request was also put forward for an additional representative from WEL.</p> <p>Some members felt the current dynamic of the group was good and did not want the group to get too large and unmanageable. The Chair suggested expert representatives could be invited to join task and finish groups for particular work areas where necessary.</p> <p>TJ suggested expertise could be invited to WMFAG meetings under 3.4 of the ToR. As discussions continued it was agreed to invite associations to nominate an additional representative, i.e. each association / group would have 1 lead representative and 2 named deputies who would be able to provide additional expertise in particular areas of interest for the association. Therefore, in future, each organisation could look at the agenda items for each meeting and decide which of their 3 nominated representatives would be best placed to attend and represent their views.</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1 Terms of Reference will be amended to reflect the decision taken to include an additional nominated deputy and will be distributed to members.</li><li>2.2 Members to confirm acceptance of revised ToR to Secretariat by email and bring signed copy of acceptance (p7 in ToR) to the next meeting.</li><li>2.3 Secretariat to ask lead members for details of 1 additional deputy for their</li></ul>

	<p>organisation.</p> <p>2.4 Members to agree with their organisations who their additional deputy will be and inform the Secretariat of the nomination and provide contact details.</p>
3.	<p><b>Approval of Notes of Meeting held on 7 March 2018</b> - Notes of meeting approved as a true record. There were no matters arising.</p>
3(a).	<p><b>Actions</b> - The status of actions from the previous meeting was outlined.</p> <p><i>Action 6 – Provision of a delivery plan will remain on the list until further notice.</i></p> <p><i>Action 8/9/10 – Information leaflet for EMFF – HW provided a version in use in England and sought members’ comments. As there is confusion relating to the application process, JE explained that he would be attending a meeting with SMU shortly and would update members at the next scheduled meeting of WMFAG.</i></p> <p><i>Action 10 – Escape panels - Based on the response to action 10 (at meeting on 7 March) WFA have offered to put a case together to support an all Wales application under EMFF. If members are in support of an application to EMFF, would each FA provide their detailed responses to the Secretariat?</i></p> <p><b>Action 3:</b> Members to provide WFA with contact details for anyone in their association who would be interested in taking part in an all Wales scheme to obtain funding for the purchase of escape panels.</p> <p><i>Action 13 – Members to provide details of marketing &amp; Promotion initiatives – nothing had been provided.</i></p> <p><i>Action 15 – HW to invite Caroline Dawson to next meeting to discuss a marketing and promotion project for Welsh seafood.</i></p>
4.	<p><b>Brexit</b> - SE provided members with a verbal update on negotiations between Defra and other devolved administrations.</p> <p>A transition deal has been made between the UK and the European Union although the devolved administrations were not part of the discussions. Currently all European law (CFP) would continue to apply in the UK during the transition period and at least until 31 December 2020, although at the moment the role of the UK during the 2019 December Counsel was unclear.</p> <p>Moving forward there is a lot to be considered and in particular the need to consider which elements of the CFP would still apply post Brexit. For this, input from industry would be required.</p> <p>Members were informed a T&amp;F group of WMFAG will be set up to include industry representatives and eNGOs to develop future fisheries policy post-Brexit. Due to the urgency and detail of work involved, members of the T&amp;F group would need to be committed to regularly deal with correspondence and emails etc. as well as attend meetings.</p> <p>During discussions members felt the purpose of the group should be defined, and how decisions would be communicated to the Cabinet Secretary. Members were also concerned over the continued uncertainties involved, as such they felt</p>

	<p>contingency plans should be put in place which could consider all scenarios.</p> <p>SE will now devise a plan and contact WMFAG members seeking their agreement to set up a T&amp;F group, also seek details of who should be involved in the group, particularly those who are best placed to be commit to the purpose of the sub group as referred to above.</p> <p><b>Action 4:</b></p> <p>4.1 Secretariat to contact absent fisheries members to advise their organisations of the decision to set up a task &amp; finish group.</p> <p>4.2 JE offered to work with SE on behalf of WFA and WMFAG members to initiate work to progress the sub group.</p> <p>4.3 SE to set up meeting and inform group.</p>
5.	<p><b>Operations Report</b> – A full report was provided for information. Members also received a verbal update on a number of key fisheries, which included scallops, whelks, prawns and cockles.</p> <p>Other areas discussed included the recent vessel engine power inspections of u10m fishing vessels which had been carried out by officers from Marine Scotland, ongoing investigations and prosecutions, bass authorisation for 2018. Members were informed the new Cabin RIB ‘Catrin’ was now in Aberystwyth and would soon be fully operational.</p> <p>Members were informed Export Certificates (aka catch certificates) would be required post Brexit, to enable fishers to export their catch to Europe. As this is a particularly important work area, it will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.</p> <p>The EMFF control and enforcement work was progressing well with the MMO and other devolved administrations and includes an U10m reporting system which is likely to be required to support Export Certificates, and vessel monitoring of the under 12m fleet. A consultation will take place, possibly in the autumn.</p> <p><b>Action 5:</b> JB to ask James Watkins and Tim Croucher to attend the next meeting of WMFAG to update members on progress with Export Certificates, U10m vessel reporting and U12m VMS.</p>
6.	<p><b>Summary of progress on key work streams</b> – Members received the update which was provided for information. JB explained he would be unable to provide detailed delivery plans for each of the key work streams until the level of internal support resources available to progress the work was confirmed.</p> <p><b>Whelks</b> - Members were informed whelks had now moved to the top of the priority list because of the pressure the stock was under. Officials were now considering a different approach to introduce new legislation in 2 phases, it was hoped an announcement would be made shortly.</p> <p>Phase 1 would now include the introduction of a pan Wales permit, with various conditions being placed within the SI. These included an increase in the minimum conservation reference size, a cap on landings and a potential restriction on</p>

landings during the biological sensitive period.

LL referred to a letter sent to industry last year requesting details for a Reference Fleet, input has been received from North and South, and she was now seeking information from mid Wales area. Members were asked to discuss with their associations and inform LL if there were fishers who were willing to take part.

**Action 6:** Members to identify whelk fishers within their association who would be willing to be part of a reference fleet and forward to the Secretariat.

**Scallop fishing in an additional part of the Cardigan Bay SAC** – Members were informed limited internal support resources had prevented the progression of this work stream. If resources can be secured a more substantial update will be provided at the next meeting.

**Cockle Management Plan** – Surgeries have been held, these had provided very useful information. Officials will require further legal advice as the work progresses.

**EMFF** – Following the previous meeting, JE had undertaken an informal survey with industry to identify the interest in applying for EMFF funding for engine replacement. To date 6 responses had been received, JE would now discuss the matter further with members of the SMU. Members were asked to provide JE with details of persons who be interested in applying for such funding within the next 2-3 weeks

**Action 7:** Members to provide JE (WFA) with details of persons who would be interested in applying for EMFF funding for replacement engines on an all Wales basis.

**Fixed Administrative Penalties** – Work has progressed on this and it is intended a consultation document should be released in early July.

**Assessing Welsh Fisheries** – Members were informed a new staff member had now joined the team and work was progressing. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

**Queen Scallops** – Officials were now considering including new measures under a licence condition.

**Welsh National Marine Plan** – Work has progressed on collating and analysing the responses from the recent consultation.

**Action 8:** JB to seek information on the feedback received on the aquaculture section of the Marine Plan consultation.

**CFP** – A written update was provided. Members advised ICES advice will be available in June, with a possible stakeholder meeting being held to outline the Welsh approach in regard to December Counsel. JE raised concerns regarding the full implementation of the landing obligation in January 2019 and the significant risk of choke presented by data deficient stock and the technical inclusion of bass within the landing obligation.

**Bass** – LL provided members with a verbal update explaining a report was due to

	<p>be released. Members were also advised of the importance of providing catch information ahead of December Counsel to support discussions.</p> <p>JE informed the group of a bass tagging pilot that is in progress and will report in advance of December council.</p> <p><b>Emerging Fisheries</b></p> <p><b>Wrasse</b> – Following concerns previously raised, JB confirmed no live wrasse was bought from Wales in 2017. A meeting will take place shortly with Marine Harvest to discuss their future plans. A recent press release by Marine Harvest has confirmed the company have now successfully bred wrasse in captivity for use in salmon farms.</p> <p><b>Razor Clam Fishery</b> – A report on the work undertaken was provided for information. JH explained the report which was looking at ways in which stock assessments should be carried out highlighted that stock assessments would be challenging. Officers would now consider next steps regarding the fishery.</p> <p>EW referred to a similar study which had been undertaken by Bangor University on behalf of the North Western IFCA and asked if this could be forwarded.</p> <p><b>Action 9:</b> JH to send NW IFCA razor clam report to EW.</p> <p><b>Potential Development Areas</b></p> <p><b>Berried Lobsters</b> – following on from discussions at earlier meetings, members received a paper outlining potential future legislation which may be implemented under the CFP under Technical Conservation Regulation in late 2018 to ban the taking of berried lobster. This paper was tabled on the day of the meeting and will be forwarded to members and IFG members by the Secretariat.</p> <p><b>Action 10:</b> Secretariat to forward the paper outlining possible future legislation on berried Lobster to all WMFAG and IFG members.</p>
7.	<p><b>Update on Sustainable Management &amp; Natural Resources</b> - SE advised members the consultation which had 3 specific fisheries items had now closed. Responses were being co-ordinated by a central team and a briefing would be sent to the Cabinet Secretary to consider next steps.</p>
8.	<p><b>Items for Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <b>Breakdown of Marine &amp; Fisheries website ‘hits’</b> – it was felt the information was unclear, JB advised members a more easily digested report would be provided.</li> <li>(ii) <b>Razor Clam – Update and Report</b> – JH advised members of the report findings, this was discussed under item 6.</li> <li>(iii) <b>Survey Results – Welsh u10m vessels</b> – Document provided for information. JB explained there was concern over the number of vessel owners who were not affiliated to any fishing association or had failed to</li> </ul>

	<p>answer this question, as it was important to ensure these persons are kept informed of developments within the Welsh fishing industry. Members were informed officers may carry out a further survey to seek this information.</p> <p>Members were also asked to provide details on how they believe engagement with fishers who were not affiliated to an association could be improved.</p> <p>(iv) <b>Changes to Data Protection Act</b> – Members were informed of the forthcoming changes and how this would impact on information held. A Privacy Statement would be issued to all members.</p> <p><b>Action 11:</b> JB to provide a more easily digestible report on website hits.</p> <p><b>Action 12:</b> Members to provide suggestions to the Secretariat on how they believe engagement with fishers who were not affiliated to an association could be improved.</p> <p><b>Action 13:</b> Secretariat to issue GDPR privacy statement to all members.</p>
9.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. EW provided a copy of the New Economics Foundation Report – A Fair &amp; Sustainable Fisheries Bill (For information).</li><li>2. Date of next meeting – Members were advised the date of the next meeting would be changed – Secretariat will advise all as soon as a suitable meeting room is identified.</li></ol>
10.	<p><b>Presentations</b></p> <p>(a) Sue Burton (Pembs SAC) and Steve DeWaine (WWSFA) attended to present the Pembrokeshire Sustainable Shellfish Initiative, following the trial on the use of escape hatches and biodegradable hooks on pots.</p> <p>During discussions members put forward positive comments supporting the use of escape gaps and biodegradable hooks. A useful exchange of information took place by those already using the gaps, particularly on the best position for fitting these to enable pots to retain velvet crabs.</p> <p>Members from the North Wales explained that they were already using these items on their pots. It was agreed that it would be useful for the group to agree text to promote best practice amongst all potters in Wales.</p> <p><b>Action 14:</b> SW to provide draft guidelines on potting at the next WMFAG for members to endorse before promoting them for all potters.</p> <p>(b) Chris Hill and Adam Greenwood of Miller Research attended to inform members of their work in designing an action plan to consider the effect Brexit would have on the food export sector in Wales. Additional information would be provided to all members via email.</p> <p><b>Action 15:</b> Adam Greenwood to circulate the presentation on Welsh Seafood Brexit Readiness for information via Secretariat.</p>