



**Fisheries & Conservation Science**

**European Fisheries Fund Project**

**Sustainable Use of Fisheries Resources in Welsh Waters**

**Science User Advisory Group Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013**



Y Gronfa Pysgodfeydd Ewropeaidd:  
Buddsoddi mewn Pysgodfeydd Cynaliadwy  
European Fisheries Fund:  
Investing in Sustainable Fisheries



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



PRIFYSGOL  
**BANGOR**  
UNIVERSITY

**Sustainable Use of Fisheries Resources in Welsh Waters**

## Science User Advisory Group Meeting (SUAG) – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

The Cambria, Aberystwyth

**Apologies:** Sion Williams Llyn Pot Fishermen's Association, Richard Dyer North Wales Fishermen's Cooperative, Phil Coates, Phil Wensley, Bill Somerfield Welsh Government, Mark Gray Seafish, Brett Garner Llyn Fishermen's Association

### Attendees:

Bangor University: Mike Kaiser, Hilmar Hinz, Gwladys Lambert, Lee Murray, Giulia Cambie, Jodie Haig, Julia Pantin, Natalie Hold, Lewis Le Vay, Anwen Williams

Seafish: Holly Whiteley

Welsh Fishermen's Associations: Jim Evans, Carol Evans

Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers: Roger Cook

Welsh Inshore Scallop Association: Jason Thomas

Llyn Fishermen's Association: Mark Roberts

Welsh Inshore Scallop Association: Len Walters

WFA – Whitefish: Gareth Willington

Cardigan Bay Fishermen's Association: Huw Evans

Bangor Mussel Producers: Trevor Jones

Welsh Government: Jodi Massey

Countryside Council for Wales: Colin Charman, Nick Thomas

Minutes taken by Anwen Williams

Chair: Jim Evans

Points of note	Actions arising
<p>Chair of the Group: Jim Evans WFA</p> <p>The chairman welcomed all and introductions were made.</p> <p><b><i>Role of the SUAG and staffing changes</i></b></p> <p>It was noted that there were a core of attendees from industry that consistently attend the meetings, Identified a need to improve communication to increase engagement from all areas.</p> <p>Hilmar Hinz would be leaving at the end of the month and he was thanked for his valuable contribution to the project.</p> <p>After an appointment process, Dr Lee Murray would be taking over Hilmar Hinz's role. Lee has been the lead scientist on Bangor University's contract with the Isle of Man Government to deliver sustainable fisheries science.</p>	<p>JE to chase up regarding communication issues.</p> <p>JE to organise meeting with CEO of NRW to</p>

There was a discussion around the role of the new NRW body in Wales in relation to fisheries science. It was agreed that their input was necessary before the SUAG presents any of its own initiatives to Welsh Government. The group agreed unanimously to engage with NRW to clarify roles in relation to fisheries.

There was a discussion about the role of scientists. LM and MJK reiterated that a scientists role was to answer questions and present options and scenarios together with outcomes. It was the SUAG's role to make decisions having considered these options and advice and then present these to Government.

In order for the SUAG to operate in this manner it was considered that an independent chair should be elected to this role.

***Matters Arising***

Project re profile. The original Sustainable Fisheries in Welsh Waters project was submitted as a £2.54M project package. The Marine Management Organisation stipulated that only short projects below a certain threshold of funding would be eligible for EFF. For this reason the original package was split into two phases, phase 1 (£1,499,965) and phase 2 (£1,053,441). The Former ends in February 2014. The project needs to be reprofiled through a project variation form (PVF) to join phase 1 and 2 together. The group was asked to endorse the reprofile of the project to ensure the project funding continues until 2015. Additional work to enhance the project was outlined with a presentation of the need and benefit of including this work and the opportunity to include expertise from Aberystwyth University. The group was asked to endorse this additional budget in the PVF (£751,989)

MJK raised the potential for the SUAG to have representation at the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council that includes the Irish Sea in its remit. MJK offered to attend a meeting of this group and report back the benefit of attending. Thereafter recommended a fisherman representative of the group should attend.

outline role of SUAG and WFA initiatives.

JE and MJK to write jointly to Peter Davis (commissioner for sustainable futures Wales) to ask if he would consider this role. If positive PE to be invited to next meeting for members of SUAG to consider PE as potential candidate.

A show of hands was requested by JE. Bangor scientists did not vote. All other attendees were in favour of the proposed project variation.

Group endorsed MJK to attend meeting and report back.

***Report on work packages and update on progress***

Fishers knowledge questionnaire: This had been delayed due to the care being given to ensure that the consent agreement protected fishermen to the maximum extent possible under FOI legislation. The members of the SUAG were happy with the re wording of agreement.

The questionnaire survey will be rolled out with fishermen in the late spring – early summer.

Habitat surveys Cardigan Bay. There was a discussion that it would be desirable to have a multibeam survey done of the area in advance of that proposed by the MCA due to the pressing need to have a comprehensive map of Cardigan Bay to inform management.

Scallop stock population biology surveys were scheduled for 2013 and 2014. In addition to the use of dredges, towed video sleds were being deployed. A floating array camera system was in production and due to be tested for use with inshore fishermen.

Lobster and crab - Cameras aboard vessels were being trialled with successful outcome with crab and lobster fishers. These were collecting data with minimum interference with fishing operations. The proposal is to connect these to GPS with a company such as Succorfish.

Approximately 10 boats around Wales have already been engaged for data collection for crab and lobster, aim to engage a further 5. Data on size, sex, CPUE etc will be collected. Temperature loggers will be deployed on pots to understand the implication of temperature re stock assessment.

Prawns/Whelk – fishers have started to provide samples re sex, size, maturity studies.

Sea Bass - spawning grounds South Wales need to be sampled in winter 2013/14, sampling protocols have been identified in co-operation with Swansea University. Dr John Lancaster to help develop juvenile sampling with Giulia Gambie.

Report on questionnaire survey outputs at next meeting (Bangor University)

Bangor University to see if it is possible to schedule a multibeam survey in the current programme of work.

JE to discuss collaboration with Succorfish on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

<p>Connectivity of stocks – Importance of PVF for this work package in order to increase realism of connectivity models and increase their use in fisheries management..</p> <p><b>Project costs</b></p> <p>MJK highlighted to the group that the financial claims in relation to the project were posted on the website in a bid to make the project a model of transparency.</p> <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Historic rights 6 nautical miles – agreed that the Minister is reminded to address within current reforms. The key contentious issues lie within the 6-12 miles zone. Discussed the possibility of Bangor University providing the minister with a briefing with regards to beam trawling impacts.</p> <p>Mark Roberts raised the issue of MLS variation for scallops within and outwith the 12 nm zone. This presents a complicated situation and needs clarification. MJK suggested that we could look inside/outside the 12 mile to challenge current legislation – need to get scientific evidence to support any changes.</p> <p>IFG meetings, Andrew Lewis, Welsh Government – legislation re escape gaps in lobster pots opposed by fishers. CBFA are interested in researching escape gaps in collaboration with SeaFish. Noted that Julia Pantin will be including similar work as part of this project. Natalie Hold has allocated underwater cameras to look as juvenile lobster/crabs, we can use the same set up to look at behaviour in pots with and without escape gaps. Cardigan Bay trials might be used for this.</p> <p>Manx consultation – MR stated support (seconded by JE) for the Manx consultation on the queenie bye law as a model for the wider Irish Sea.</p> <p><b>Meeting end</b></p>	<p>Group asked to approve the additional work to provide briefing. Bangor staff did not vote. Remaining show of hands all agreed. Bangor University requires access to appropriate fisheries data (landings, VMS). JE to look into access issues.</p> <p>Bangor University to look at evidence for differences in growth rates inside and outside 12 nm within surveys proposed.</p> <p>JE, HE and HWh to outline specification needed. Need to understand what is cannibalised if no escape gaps</p>
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