

MARINE RESOURCES PANEL MEETING

101st Meeting

Brief notes and action points from meeting held on Teams

19th April 2021

Present:	William Peggie – Director Natural Environment (Chairman) Mike Taylor (MT) – representing Jersey Aquaculture Association Don Thompson (DT) - representing Jersey Fishermen’s Association Paul Bizac (PB) – representing Jersey Fishermen’s Association Chris Isaacs – representing Jersey Recreational Fishermen Ian Syvret (IS) – representing Jersey Inshore Fishermen Gareth Jeffreys (GJ) – representing Société Jersiaise Natalie Porrit (NT) – representing Jersey Merchants Steve Mullins - representing Jersey Recreational Fishermen Jason Bonhomme - representing Jersey Fishermen’s Association Royston Rimeur – representing North Coast Harbours
In Attendance:	John Young (JY) – Minister for Environment Gregory Guida (GG) – Assistant Minister for Environment Greg Morel (GM) – Assistant Director - Marine Resources Paul Chambers (PC) – Marine & Coastal Manager, Marine Resources Francis Binney (FB) – Marine Scientist, Marine Resources Alex Plaster (AP) – Marine & Fisheries Assistant Officer Dot Miller (DM) - Minutes
Apologies:	Stanley Richard-Dit-Leschery (SR) – representing Ports of Jersey

		Action
1.	Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting and Matters Arising	
	<p>Bass netting (page 3) – gill should be gilt head</p> <p>Subject to the above amendment the minutes were approved.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Bass roe – MR have been sampling landed catches since beginning of April, more to take place prior to the end of the month. Report back fully at the end of summer.</p> <p>Bass netting – ongoing.</p>	MR Team
	<u>Capture Fisheries</u>	
2.	Scallop Management – JFA proposals and research update	

	<p>FB – four days dredging around the island using standard dredgers and queenie dredgers. One more day is planned on the west coast to resurvey areas where vessels have been active recently. The results will be circulated in the Annual Report and probably as a separate document.</p> <p>PC – referred to the power point presentation shared to the meeting for scallop stock assessment. Excellent data set, 3,000+ measurements. Overall, the state of the stock is not too bad and suggests that is recovering perhaps from intensive fishing activity pre-2016. Provisional results suggest that the current fishing level is slightly above maximum sustainable yield and that stock biomass is low but that the stock is in a good position in terms of future management. However, this is an initial assessment and a more thorough analysis is needed.</p> <p>The proposal to move minimum size to 105 mm could reduce the annual Jersey catch by 54 tonnes and to 110 mm by 100 tonnes. This would be temporary and would probably be temporarily compensated for either by increased fishing effort.</p> <p>DT – figures PC has shown are really helpful. The proposal to raise the landing size is not over concern for current stock, but it is to build sustainability in the stock going forward, now is probably the time to be taking that measure. Looking at the levels of effort currently, and what we will have once the licensing regime is in place, there will need to be a number of measures put in place. Raising the MLS now isn't contentious and now seems to be the right time to do this. PC - biomass analysis will be available later this year. There is no reason not to move MLS to 105 mm.</p> <p>GJ – increasing MLS is a good forward proposal. From PC's presentation there is potential for increased effort so need to focus on the science behind that.</p> <p>CI – science needs to be taken into consideration, need to evaluate the whole situation.</p> <p>PC – any increase in effort would only be short term, the scallops not caught by moving the size up will be caught the following year.</p> <p>S Viney – been scalloping for over 20 years, we're back to a place where the scallops are plentiful, the idea of raising the MLS is an insurance policy to protect the stock. With regards to extra effort, French wouldn't be able to do extra hours as they need to return to market. Fully supports increasing the MLS.</p> <p>FB – expressed thanks to Mr Viney and Mr Singleton for helping with this work. Should we be looking at moving the ring size if we're moving the scallop size? SV – wouldn't look to increase the ring size at present but would measure some scallops through the rings next time we're out. Maybe look at the ring size if scallop MLS goes up to 110mm.</p> <p>WP – in summary, all agreed to look at increasing size, stock in a good place , do we agree increasing size is the way forward do we do this now or wait for the data? Meeting only agreed that it's the good idea to raise to 105mm but waiting for available data in the next few weeks.</p>	

3.	Atlantic Blue Fin Tuna – MR update and JFA proposal	
	<p>DT – JFA produced a paper containing the main principles – zero quota in the UK, this has now changed, stock is going in the right direction, fish are prevalent in our waters. Need to be doing catch and release work now to prove the fish are in our waters. Makes sense to move the ban and decide what kind of fishing can be allowed. Looking at the situation where the UK has an allocation of 48 tonnes, it would be a missed opportunity not to get this data and make a claim on some of this allowance.</p> <p>AP – been in discussions with Defra, who are in the middle of organising a tuna tagging programme, predominately charter fishing boats. Received funding to start a programme running this year, Exeter University will be assisting with satellite tags and coming to Jersey in the summer. Blue Fin Tuna in the Atlantic has never been recaptured with these tags on, but with satellite tagging we will have some really good information for years to come.</p> <p>DT – for the benefit of the Panel, tentative steps at the moment, but things are changing, some stocks will diminish and other stock will come in to take their place, Blue Fin Tuna looks to be prevalent in our waters, don't know what size of fishing this could be but it could be worth millions to the Island if the tuna can be fished. These steps are very important to move to stocks that could become more prolific.</p> <p>PB – confirmed that any charter vessels must have a Defra fishing licence, even to tag.</p> <p>S Mullens asked if Exeter were experienced? AP confirmed that this was the case. SM asked if there is a spotting programme now that sightings can be recorded? AP not at present but sure something can be set up as it would be really useful, can definitely formalise something and useful to include. Could maybe piggy back on the dolphin recording app; GJ confirmed it would be simple to add tuna to the dolphin app.</p> <p>CI - tuna going on protected species wasn't really required nor should it be now, wildlife conservation needs to be looked at, AP – the fish just suddenly turned up on the shores, the French can't pick these up through the Wildlife Law.</p>	MR Team
4.	Lobster management measures review and update	
	<p>Management measures – Lobster working group's plans got shelved due to Covid, time now to relook at those. Lobster MSC review is due this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation reductions – sliding scale based on boat length • Long-time gradual use of parlour pots /areas • Cap pots • Increase MLS • Berry hen ban <p>PC – There was a 25% drop in potting effort in 2020 and so had wondered if any impact on the stock could be detected. Brief analysis and very tentative from</p>	

	<p>measuring approx. 50 lobsters per month (1,800 total). PC shared the 'Lockdown Effect' presentation. Average landed carapace length has gone up 6mm (female) and 4mm (male) since autumn 2019 as has the rise in berried females. Lobster stock is still below acceptable health levels but it is recoverable. Larger lobsters are being landed now so could be prudent to talk about increasing the MLS.</p> <p>NP – buying stock from Guernsey, strong possibility that the lobsters in our viviers are not necessarily from Jersey. Minimum size fully supported but only if Guernsey and France agree to it, difficult enough exporting at the moment without different sizes going around.</p> <p>DT – the method of arriving at any change / introduction of new measures, the JFA willingly participated and at the time the fleet were doing considerably better than they are now, but we can agree some potential good measures. Measures introduced need to be supported by the fleet and some will not go down well. Need to look at what the most appropriate ones are at the present time.</p> <p>CI – decisions need to be based on science, although economics are important it must be driven by science not opinions. MR need to tell us what will have the best outcome for stocks, not what commercial fishermen want to do.</p> <p>FB – DT's suggestion of meeting with the industry to discuss the science/measures would be the best way forward.</p> <p>DT – with regard to CI's comments about opinions, it needs to be noted that most of the measures to support the lobster stock have been driven by fishermen, to suggest we are going on opinion and not using the science is not fair comment.</p>	
5.	Bass fishery proposals	
	<p>AP reviewed the document previously sent to Panel members.</p> <p>CI – just need to be mindful that it is a recovering fishery, tread carefully with Bass.</p> <p>GJ – closed season needs to be changed, queried whether there are any environmental queues in predicting when the bass breeding system would be taking place. AP all this work is ongoing at the moment with the Gonad analysis, lot of variables that need to be considered and we are currently studying the data.</p> <p>CI – asked if the netting study will stop before June. AP advised we have data from the last three years provided by the commercial sector, however the study can't be run during the summer.</p> <p>CI – how do you treat outcome of bycatch, how can it be accurate data? AP advised that in our netting study, the bycatch we see compared to the logs from the permit holders has been very similar, also MR do carry out enforcement checks on landings.</p> <p>Modifications to the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 90 mm nets - Fishing time limit (night and one hour before dusk an dawn) 	

	<p>- Trawling and unknown bycatch from large vessels</p> <p>DT – not keen on further restrictions, professionals need to fish where they know where to fish.</p> <p>Some of the smaller boats are struggling to survive at present (dogfish) – AP confirmed that MR have given this consideration. Interesting to hear that some of the fleet feel this way. JFA/MR to discuss separate to the meetings. SM suggested cutting nets down in height if you want to catch dogfish only, and keep well below the waterline; dogfish swim along the bottom and bass swim over, limiting nets to 2 or 3 feet off the seabed would eliminate the chance of catching bass.</p>	
	Aquaculture	
	6. Temporary holding bed – further 1 year extension to be considered	
	<p>The Shellfish industry have said this needs to be extended. MR supports this request and proposes to continue this for a year due to Covid restrictions. If a further extension is requested after one year, a formal consultation would need to take place.</p> <p>CI – suggested it becomes a permanent bed, however MR stated this should just be a one year extension and review after that.</p>	
	<u>Other matters</u>	
	7. <u>Update post Brexit/vessel licencing update / FMA</u>	
	<p>GM</p> <p>Licencing: waiting on applications to come in to fish in Jersey waters, 36 French applications so far, 24 are very detailed, remaining 12 vessels have provided sufficient information to qualify for the TCA. All larger vessels, all VMS enabled. VMS enabled vessels must be in receipt of a licence from the Minister by the end of this month. A request has been received from the EU to give the smaller boats a little bit more time to put their applications together, which we have granted.</p> <p>No response yet from the EU regarding Jersey boats that want to fish in French waters.</p> <p>TCA licences - all information will be on the Greffe website when they are lodged. Going to States this week.</p> <p>Landings: Difficult process to get produce into the EU through the export route through the BIP in St. Malo. Fisherman who direct land have worked very hard to facilitate this, however French office only operate 9am to 5pm which fisheries do not.</p> <p>Exports: vessels are still going to St Malo, relationship seems to be improving and developing. NP advised of a large export going tonight. Good relationship with the Veterinary office in St Malo. NP, speaking from the merchants' point of view, is so far so good, just very important that paperwork is completed thoroughly and correctly.</p>	

	<p>The Fisheries Management Agreement hasn't been updated since 1996, very out of date for example in licensing, and doesn't reflect our relationship with the UK. Panel will be updated on progress with this.</p> <p>DT – the roll out of the TCA has not been good for the industry, and asked if GM and JY would meet on a Teams with JFA so we can drill down on some points?</p> <p>JY – we have gone from getting 4 days notice of new agreement to 10 days to the amnesty agreement, we needed to equip ourselves to control and manage our fisheries the way everyone round the table wants. GM and the MR team are so impressive and the work done by this team so I can lodge new regulations is commendable. Fine of £100,000 plus 2 years in prison if rules not adhered to. JY has made it clear to France and UK. Not everything is agreed</p> <p>GM happy to meet with JFA this week.</p> <p>GJ – increase of minimum landing sizes of scallops – is this universal now? GM confirmed that this was the case, the onus and obligation to manage stocks is on the Minister, any regulation will apply to any vessel fishing here.</p> <p>Berth at Granville: still a great deal of support from Jersey and French locals at La Manche and Normandy for the BIP (border inspection post) landings. No update on timeframes. Waiting on Paris/Brussels to make it work. We aware this is a priority with the industry and pushing on every meeting that is held. The application is in there and is being pushed at every opportunity, however there is a block at national level.</p> <p>DT – this is not what Ian Gorst promised us and is unacceptable that we cannot land in Granville.</p> <p>JY made it absolutely clear that the amnesty that was extended to the end of June <u>did not apply</u> to the large vessels, only the small vessels.</p>	MR Team
	<u>Next Meetings</u>	
	<p>Monday 12th July 2021 Monday 4th October 2021 Monday 24th January 2022</p> <p>All meetings to commence at 2.15 p.m.</p>	
	There being no other business the meeting closed at 5.15pm	