

MARINE RESOURCES PANEL MEETING

100th Meeting

Brief notes and action points from meeting held on Teams

25th January 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 Stanley Richard-Dit-Leschery (SR) – representing Ports of Jersey
In Attendance:	John Young (JY) – Minister for Environment Gregory Guida (GG) – Assistant Minister for Environment 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:	Greg Morel (GM) – Assistant Director - Marine Resources

		Action
1.	Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting and Matters Arising	
	Page 2 para 2 – remove the word lost. Page 3 para 4 – add work rather after six months. Subject to the above amendments, the minutes from 19 th October were approved.	
	<u>Capture Fisheries</u>	
2.	Update from JFA on current industry priorities	
	DT stated that there is a need to be working on a cohesive strategy for the fishing industry. The JFA have never looked to Government for financial support, but things are becoming difficult. Under 15m safety code for vessels is incurring a lot of costs to get the boat registered. Every vessel will have to be surveyed for the Vessel Registry and massive costs will be incurred to meet the new code. Jersey fishers cannot compete in the 3 to 12 miles with French vessels, and we need a strategy to plan for the future with some sort of funding, there is never a budget for this in Jersey, UK have put aside £100m.	

<p>DT stressed that at some point there has to be money allocated for the fishing industry or there will cease to be one.</p> <p>WP asked if JFA have had any meetings with Economic Development in this regard. DT advised that the fiscal stimulus policy might be able to help, but this wouldn't be funded from the Rural Economy Strategy. WP advised that the intent is to consider Fisheries matters more in this strategy. Funding won't come through Environment Dept., it will be Economic Development and Greg Morel is liaising with them on this.</p> <p>GG advised that Government is very aware that Fisheries needs support during the current crisis and going forward, and is trying to get someone from EDD/Treasury to assist with this. Short term support has been requested and this is where John Vautier will be very useful to assist with this. Fishing will change, both due to covid and Brexit. Government is trying to support as much as possible but having to liaise with two government departments to do this.</p> <p>SR advised on the new under 15m vessel fishing safety code – some minor amendments have been suspended due to covid. Since then several more amendments have been introduced, however the construction side of vessels already in the industry are not affected. A working group has been set up to go through the code section by section and working for a way for Jersey to comply with the code. Existing measures remain in place for the moment. It is hoped that the new code will be over the line by the new year and a meeting is being held every three weeks regarding this. It is a work in progress, safety standards must be maintained with the minimum documentation and costs with Jersey and the UK.</p> <p>DT advised he made clear to Ian Clarkson in EDD to ensure Jersey's status is secure, appropriate and timely to find a budget to help with the changes. Good meetings are being held, but this doesn't take away substantial costs to the fleet, and Ian Clarkson could put pressure on his minister to help identify a budget.</p> <p>DT in response to GG said there absolutely is a need for funding, but the strategy isn't just about funding, it's about the environment, where should fisheries sit within Government? Hospitality want to support the local industry. The need for financial support is right now, but the strategy needs to look much further ahead.</p> <p>WP reaffirmed that agri-economic strategies does sit under EDD, however marine officers are responsible for assisting and informing what that strategy might look like and in consultation with the industry.</p> <p>NP – the strategy is really important from the merchant's point of view. Covid has played a massive part in this, but markets are still there and markets are strong. Merchants are looking to find different customers and appreciate paperwork is a nightmare, but are offering that service so fisherman can land locally and can help with exports. Fishermen could avoid direct landing if the paperwork is too prohibitive.</p> <p>DT stated that the JFA completely recognise the role that merchants play, but there are species out there that are doing so well but can't tap into it because there isn't the market for them. There are good fisheries around the island but we need a</p>	
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	<p>strategy so that Jersey benefits from these stocks. DT wanted to assure NP that nothing JFA do would not recognise the important role merchants play.</p> <p>WP stated that the department will continue to work on this and Government is engaged.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Jersey Recreational Fishing Association fishery proposals</p>	
	<p>Recreational bass fishing</p> <p>SM suggested bringing the recreational closed season in line with the commercial closed season. DT advised that the JFA has no problem with this alignment. FB – it was in line with the UK closed season for visitors etc. no other reason, not based on any scientific or stock. DT stated that the commercial closure is based on scientific evidence for the breeding season.</p> <p>SM – Recreational fishing would like to increase the closed season by an extra month, i.e. mid Feb to mid-May instead of mid-April and there is scientific evidence to back up that there is still spawning taking place into May.</p> <p>JB - was not in agreement with this, however occasionally this needs to be done but is dependent on water temperature but not annually.</p> <p>FB – the monitoring carried out last spring on Bass needs more exploration, may be related to sea temperature, Marine Resources want to continue monitoring to try and glean more information and be guided by this.</p> <p>SM - added that the size of the roe is very important and wants Fisheries to look into this.</p> <p>The meeting agreed that fisheries officers would undertake more work on this.</p> <p>Bass netting</p> <p>SM voiced concern over the demise of some species e.g. gilt heads, white bream and mullet over the last couple of years due to gill netting. Inshore netting needs reviewing. FB advised that February / March is usual review time to make decision for the rest of the season. JB stated that it was not fair to blame the demise solely on the gill netting. More work/review will be undertaken by Fisheries officers and CI stated that a review is long overdue.</p> <p>DT commented that there are interesting proposals about closed season and agrees more work should be undertaken. There are anti-netting feelings, however DT disagrees with this, and it has been proven that netting can target the sectors. Happy to engage with discussions. Netting may be a small sector but is really important for the commercial fisheries and most of the catch goes to the local markets. Cannot accept anti netting across the board.</p> <p>AP advised that Marine Resources are conducting a netting study which will finish in June 2021, and hope to publish a paper following that with all the results by the end of 2021.</p>	<p>MR</p> <p>MR</p>

	<p>CI – facts are based on general research or studies, not just a personal opinion, need to see the science and take it from there.</p> <p>JB - has spoken to the fishermen that are netting. It's a short season and fishers have already given away ml size on netting, but confident that research will show the 90ml works fine.</p> <p>GJ – we need to look at the results once the netting review is concluded and base decisions going forward on that.</p> <p>SM - the biggest concern is that the way inshore netting is going that stocks will be in the same position and have to revert to no netting again, no one wants a total ban again. There is a need to put something in place now for both recreational and commercial fishing. JB agreed, and hopefully everyone gets a bite of the cherry.</p> <p>PB - commented about the pair trawling round out island taking lots of Bream. PC acknowledged there have been long standing issues around pair trawling, in terms of quantifying offshore affecting inshore amounts. It is difficult but hopefully there will be more management control of our waters later this year.</p> <p>JB - will invite SM to the next Bass meeting with Fisheries and then take the results of that to Panel.</p>	JB
	<u>Other Matters</u>	
4.	2021 – 22 Science programme update	
	<p>FB – research priorities are climate change monitoring and commercial and recreation active/ongoing projects. Planned projects – funding pending.</p> <p>DT – no one doubts the importance of science that is needed now. At the last panel meeting there was a scrutiny item on budget available for the science projects – do you have a budget? WP advised that there was budget agreed for research funding within the Government Plan.</p> <p>JY advised that the Government Plan is a competitive process, very bureaucratic, hurdles and rules are huge, so delighted with the bids put forward had survived rigorous scrutiny. There is good support from ministerial colleagues on the importance of science. PC stated there is good support from industry, students etc., very happy with the resource and remit for these projects.</p> <p>DT – flagging up Bream nesting grounds survey, pelagic trawling on the nesting grounds, need to look after this stock. PC confirmed he is aware and making progress and will discuss at a later date.</p> <p>DT – blue fin tuna – need to adapt to changes in the environment, and it would be good if Jersey could put in a bid for some of that. Could be a lifeline for the future if allowed to fish. SM agreed with DT, or a catch and release fishery. AP advised it</p>	

	<p>would be unlikely that Jersey would get much quota for blue fin tuna, certainly not enough to support the commercial industry.</p> <p>JY – with regard to bream, there can be no changes to conservation measures during the 90 day agreement.</p>	
5.	Marine Stewardship Council (lobster, whelk and spider crab)	
	<p>Lobster – annual reviews continue, four-year review which is a total review. Large piece of work.</p> <p>Whelk and spider crab funding secured. Sufficient data for whelks, but may take another year for spider crabs. Better updates in the future.</p> <p>IS waiting on preliminary results from MSC for whelks and spider crabs.</p> <p>Labelling and MSC on lobster, IS given permission to label lobsters with Jersey cable ties.</p> <p>DT trialled MMO catch recording app, really nice kit, very helpful. Jonny hoping to get the app up and running by the end of this quarter, a few modifications to make it more suitable for Jersey and is waiting on an update. Will need to see changes before rolling out.</p>	
6.	Update Post Brexit/vessel licensing update/FMA	
	<p>Will advise by email latest state of play, GM not available to attend this meeting. Panel agreed to this.</p> <p>DT update on discussions with the FMA will be helpful to plan a strategy, as FMA is crucial to that.</p>	
	Next Meetings	
	<p>Monday 19th April 2021 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 5.30 p.m.	