

Minutes of the CPG on Fishing

14/01/20

Opening Remarks

The meeting was opened by Beatrice Wishart MSP.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Presentation 1: Management of the Scottish Wrasse Fishery

The first presentation was by Charles Millar, Executive Director of Sustainable Inshore Fisheries Trust. Mr Millar described the characteristics of the wrasse species and their use in the salmon farming industry. Mr Millar noted the lack of data on the wrasse fishery and outlined the changes SIFT would like to see to improve its management. There was a comparison with the situation in England.

Presentation 2: Offshore Windfarms and Fisheries

The second presentation was by Femke de Boer, Inshore Policy Officer at Scottish White Fish Producers Association and Malcolm Morrison, Fisheries Policy Officer at Scottish Fishermen's Federation. Ms de Boer noted that their presentation was not against offshore windfarms but was to present the fishermen's point of view. She described the tensions that have existed between the fishing industry and energy companies and how dialogue and data can be improved to the benefit of both sectors.

Presentation 3: Inshore Fishing

The third presentation was by Elaine Whyte, Communities Inshore Fisheries Alliance. Ms Whyte described the frustrations of Alliance members and their communities, including on the current licensing of aquaculture, renewables and cables. Ms Whyte noted that licensing currently takes into consideration safe surface navigation but not continued safe fishing. She gave the example of a recent rock dump on a cable on the Clyde with only 4 hours notice and how dangerous that could have been. The presentation also touched on monitoring of Marine Protected Areas and the availability of onshore services. She gave examples of good community involvement in fishery management in the Azores and Norway and noted that CIFA is supportive of Inshore Fisheries Groups.

Open Discussion

There was an open discussion after the presentations covering a wide range of topics. Several points were made about the confusion surrounding marine planning in

Scotland with comparison made to the support provided to IFCAs in England. Further points were made about the tonnage of the wrasse fishery and the data that is needed to make an assessment of stock levels. There was also further discussion about the lack of data on the impact of windfarms on the seabed and fishing grounds and improvements that could be made to windfarm licence conditions.

Close of Meeting

There was a discussion of when to hold the next meeting. Attendees indicated that it would be useful to push back the next meeting. It was agreed to hold a short procedural meeting with MSPs only on 18th February 2020 and arrange the next full meeting to be held in March or April 2020.

Attendee List:

Malcolm Morrison – Scottish Fishermen’s Association
Femke de Boer – Scottish White Fish Producers Association
Mike Park – Scottish White Fish Producers Association
Nick Underdown – Open Seas
David Bailey – University of Glasgow
Elaine Whyte – Communities Inshore Fisheries Alliance
Alex Watson Crook – Sustainable Inshore Fisheries Trust
Charles Millar – Sustainable Inshore Fisheries Trust
James Mackenzie
Beatrice Wishart MSP
Stewart Stevenson MSP
Finlay Carson MSP
Gareth Moran – Office of Stewart Stevenson MSP
Erin Simpson – Office of Beatrice Wishart MSP