

## **Feedback in relation to meetings with the under 10 fishing industry on 25 and 26 August 2010**

The main points or questions for clarification from the meetings were summarised by Angus Radford (Deputy Chief Marine Officer) and these points, together with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) response, are detailed below.

### **What can the fishing industry expect out of Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform?**

Long term, the MMO is looking for genuine reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The key to this is achieving a framework that supports more simplified and decentralised decision making, moving away from micro management of fisheries and providing clearer entitlements to fish so that fishermen can better plan for their business in the long term. Like the industry, the MMO is keen to see what CFP reform will look like in practice.

### **Attendees are interested in proposals from the SAIF (Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries).**

The Sustainable Access to Inshore Fisheries (SAIF) project is currently looking at the imbalance between the catching capacity and quota available to the inshore fleet. Further information on the scheme is available at [www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/fisheries/documents/fisheries/fishfocus17.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/fisheries/documents/fisheries/fishfocus17.pdf) or by emailing [accesstofisheries@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:accesstofisheries@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

### **How can communication be improved between MMO and inshore industry?**

The MMO are currently reassessing its consultation process including how it engages with the fishing industry. So far this has resulted in the MMO setting up a shared mailbox which allows the industry to send in their views and opinions regarding quota. This feedback can then be used by the MMO to inform the setting of quota. Further information on this mailbox is available at [www.marinemanagement.org.uk/news/news/101007.htm](http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/news/news/101007.htm)

In addition, the MMO are looking at how its local coastal offices can be further utilised to collate views and local opinions from the industry on the issue of quota.

### **Could an annual questionnaire be sent to owners on stocks they wish to fish and when?**

The MMO are taking this suggestion forward and are preparing a questionnaire which will be sent to the industry as the MMO believe this will be an excellent way to engage and inform on quota.

### **Attendees raised a general feeling of concern regarding the impact of marine conservation zones (MCZs) upon the inshore fleet.**

The MMO is working closely with the marine conservation zone projects to understand what implications there maybe for any site put forward as a marine conservation zone. As this work progresses the MMO will strive to engage with all interested parties and representatives from the fishing industry.

**A suggestion was made for a cap on the current under 10 metre leasing scheme.**

The MMO have sought comments and opinions from the fishing industry in respect of the under 10 leasing scheme via their website. These views will be used to inform a meeting which will take place on 11 October 2010 between the MMO and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to discuss the leasing scheme in general. The agreed outcomes from this meeting will then determine the way forward for the under 10 leasing scheme.

**Attendees were keen on exploring ways to improve regional management of the MMO.**

In terms of regional quota management this is an option that is being explored under SAIF (more details on website referred to above). In respect of the general regional management of the MMO, MMO coastal offices feed into the MMO head office on a monthly basis in relation to quota, in order to ensure that local knowledge for each regional area is passed on and considered when quota is set. While this arrangement has worked well in the past, as already stated new methods of consultation to ensure regional views are represented are currently being considered.

**Could the transmission of licence variations be done by email or text message?**

The MMO are always keen to provide information to the industry in a format that is both responsive and fast. Therefore we are looking into the possibility of providing variations by email rather than the current postal format. However, these investigations are at an exploratory stage and in the meantime the MMO website is an excellent source of information for variations, which is constantly updated.

**Could vessels under 10 metres complete a logbook if fishing in more than one area?**

The MMO are currently looking into this suggestion to see how it could work in practice and assess the benefits it would provide. Clearly this matter is strongly related to the issue of declaring landings and further information on this matter is provided below.

**Concerns were raised about the level of undeclared landings and misreported catches.**

The MMO shares the concern of the industry about the level of misreporting catches that disadvantages fishing communities that are dependent on the stocks in the areas where they fish and undermines fish stock assessment. The MMO plans to put conditions in place to reduce misreporting of catches. These will include, in the first instance, the mandatory completion of an EC logbook for all under 10 metre vessels fishing in both sea areas IVc and VIId in a single trip as well as those wishing to fish in both ICES divisions VIId and VIIe in a single trip.

Masters will also be required to complete the time and position of crossing the ICES boundary and the catch on board. This will come into force on the 15 November 2010 and the industry will receive further information with their licence variations. Operators of vessels under 10 metres who these rules apply to should contact their local MMO office to obtain a logbook and help on its correct completion.

**Attendees expressed a general preference to keep fisheries open at a low limit rather than close them.**

For certain species it is already too late for this to be a viable option in the current year. However the MMO are looking at this as a possibility for next year, in terms of having low catch limits that strive to permit fisheries to stay open all year round, rather than high catch limits which can mean the early closure of a fishery.

**Could the MMO provide incentives towards more sustainable methods of fishing?**

While the MMO are unable to provide specific incentives for sustainable fishing, the MMO do have schemes that provide funding for undertakings which improve sustainability and full details of these schemes are available at [www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/funding/index.htm](http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/funding/index.htm)

Those who meet the scheme criteria are encouraged to apply.

**Concerns were raised that monthly catch limits were inadequate for some vessel operators in the inshore sector.**

Catch limits are set, taking account of all vessels in the under 10 metre sector, which is made up of boats of various lengths and capabilities. Smaller vessel operators would be disadvantaged if monthly catch rates were set at higher levels which could only be caught by the largest vessels in the sector. Monthly quotas are set to maximise the requirements of the entire under 10 metre sector rather than focus on the needs of any specific vessel.