

# **Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association**

**Meeting, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
Management School, Bangor University**

## **Minutes**

### **Attendance**

Sue Utting  
Lewis le Vay  
Tim Croucher  
James Wilson  
Rowland Sharp

Chair  
Bangor University  
Welsh Assembly Government  
Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd  
Natural Resources Wales

### *Advisors*

Jim Andrews  
Trevor Jones

Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order

### **1. Chair's announcements**

### **2. Apologies**

Mike Barton  
Keith Andrews  
Ioan Thomas

Ynys Môn County Council  
Licensed hand pickers  
Gwynedd County Council

### **3. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014 were accepted.

### **4. Matters Arising**

It was considered that most of the matters arising from the last meeting were addressed on the agenda for the current meeting.

It was noted that leaseholders had checked the boundaries of leased areas in the vicinity of Ballast Bank on the shore after the last meeting to check the relationship between charted areas and the topography of the shore.

### **5. Membership of the Association**

There were no new Members of the Association.

### **6. Financial Update**

Jim Andrews reported that invoices had been issued for leases for the second half of the year. James Wilson indicated that the reserves held by the Association were accumulating in line with the financial plan agreed at previous meetings.

## **7. Welsh Government Activity**

### **a) Meetings and Correspondence**

Trevor Jones reported that a very productive meeting had been held in Cardiff on 3<sup>rd</sup> September with the then Deputy Minister for Fisheries, Rebecca Evans. MSFOMA representatives had pledged a commitment to support the implementation of the Wales Fisheries and Aquaculture Strategy, which the Minister had welcomed. There had then been a productive discussion about how to tackle the administrative and policy obstacles that were frustrating progress with the Menai Strait West Fishery Order proposal.

It was noted that a new Minister for Natural Resources, Mr Carl Sargeant, had subsequently been appointed, and that Rebecca Evans is now the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food.

It was agreed that meetings should be sought with the new Minister and that contact should be maintained with Ms Evans.

**Action: Chair**

It was noted that the WG objectives for increasing shellfish aquaculture production have been adopted by the UK Government as part of the multiannual national plan for the development of sustainable aquaculture, which is itself part of the UK commitment to EU objectives for developing marine aquaculture.

James Wilson reported that the Bangor Mussel Producers Association is developing a food strategy that may be of interest to both Ministers.

### **b) Progress with new leased areas**

James Wilson and Keith Andrews declared their interest in this agenda item and left the meeting while it was discussed.

It was reported that the Minister had consented to the issuing of leases for new cultivation areas by MSFOMA. There were a few queries about the conditions associated with this consent that were presently being discussed with officials.

After some discussion it was agreed that lawyers should be instructed to draw up the new leases once these queries had been resolved, It was also agreed that the full lease fee should be charged for these areas.

It was noted that WG officials had not yet provided a response to the request submitted in July for confirmation of the Association's status as a competent authority with respect to the Habitats Regulations. It was agreed that confirmation should be sought on this matter as well as the status of the Minister's consent for the leases.

**Action: Chair**

### **c) Menai Strait West**

Trevor Jones reported that there had been no further progress other than the favourable meeting with the Minister.

### **d) Environment Bill**

There was some discussion of the status of this Bill, which WG officials had previously indicated would solve all of the obstacles to progress with Fishery Orders.

## **8. NW IFCA Activity**

### **a) Seed mussel fishery, Morecambe Bay**

James Wilson and Trevor Jones reported that an area suitable for seed mussel dredging had been identified in Morecambe Bay in September by the industry and IFCA Officers. By the time that dredging had been authorised more than 50% of the mussels had been consumed by starfish.

There was considerable concern about the management of the fishery during 2014. An extraordinary meeting of the Technical, Scientific and Byelaws Sub-Committee was due to be called in mid-October, and representatives of this Association were due to attend a normal TSB meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> October.

It was proposed that a letter should be sent by the Association to the IFCA to encourage a more proactive and expeditious approach to the management of this resource.

**Action: Chair**

### **b) Vessel size proposals**

The report on this matter was received, noting that no significant progress has been made.

### **c) Morecambe Bay Fishery Order**

The report on this matter was received, noting that no significant progress has been made.

## **9. Fishery Management Issues**

### **a) Bangor Pier**

There had been no further news on this issue.

### **b) *Bonamia***

It was reported that Cefas had inspected the western Menai Strait again in August.

### **c) Invasive Alien Species (IAS)**

#### ***Didemnum vexillum***

Rowland Sharp reported that more outbreaks had been recorded on pontoons in Holyhead marina in October. This had been reported to Welsh Government and a meeting was due to be held shortly to discuss the appropriate response.

NRW are encouraging action to address the spread of *D. vexillum* via the marine pathways project.

#### **Japanese shore crab *Hemigrapsus sanguineus***

There have been no records of this species in North Wales and the only record from Wales remains that from South Wales.

**d) *Norovirus***

James Wilson reported that a meeting had been held in Brussels in October to discuss management options and research into *Norovirus*. This meeting had been attended by the SAGB and Bangor Mussel Producers Association, as well as delegations from Ireland and Holland.

Plans are being made to commission an evidence based review of Norovirus management. This would consider the impact of a new standard; cost implications for the water industry; and also the cost of implementation / monitoring; evidence that any testing procedures are fit for purpose; and also an assessment of the public health risk.

**10. Any Other Business**

**a) Correspondence**

No correspondence other than that referred to in reports had been received.

**b) Moorings**

It has been reported in the local media that Anglesey County Council is due to review service provision arrangements for moorings, and is also seeking to save £4M in its budget. It was agreed that any changes to the management arrangements to moorings in the Fishery Order area should be kept under review.

**11. Date for next meeting**

The next meeting is set for 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at 10am.