

# **Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association**

**Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012, Porth Penrhyn**

## **Minutes**

### **Attendance**

Tim Croucher  
Alan Winstone  
Colin Charman  
James Wilson  
Lewis le Vay  
Keith Andrews  
Sue Utting

Welsh Assembly Government  
Environment Agency Wales  
Countryside Council for Wales  
Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd  
School of Ocean Sciences  
Licensed hand pickers  
Chair

### *Advisors*

Jim Andrews  
Jon King

Saltwater / Menai Strait (West) Fishery  
Order

### **1. Election of Chair**

Sue Utting was unanimously elected to Chair the Association for a further period of two years. She thanked the Association for the opportunity to continue in this role.

It was noted that a letter should be sent to the Minister to advise her of this appointment.

**Action: JW / JA**

### **2. Chairman's announcements**

The Chair welcomed Jon King to the meeting as a representative of the mussel fishermen at the western Menai Strait.

### **3. Apologies**

Stuart Evans  
Bob Parry  
Rowland Sharp  
Hugh P Hughes

Welsh Government  
Ynys Môn County Council  
Countryside Council for Wales  
Gwynedd County Council

### **4. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012 were accepted, with minor amendments of some typographic errors.

### **5. Matters Arising**

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

## **6. Membership of the Association**

There were no new Members of the Association.

It was noted that the County Council membership was an important opportunity for these organisations to participate in the management of the Menai Strait fishery. Huw Hughes has recently retired and Gwynedd County Council had not yet appointed a replacement. This would need to be addressed.

**Action: JW / JA**

## **7. Financial Update**

The accounts for 2011-12 are in preparation. The Association is currently accruing a reserve. It was agreed that it may be appropriate to review the lease fees at the next meeting of the Association to ensure that it continues to meet its agreed financial targets.

**Action: JW / JA**

## **8. Fishery Activity**

James Wilson reported that production had been up in 2011-12, and that seed imports to the fishery had been higher than previously. Seed mussels had been imported to the fishery from the Dee. The annual report to the Minister was due for completion shortly and would be available for the next meeting.

**Action: JW**

## **9. Handpicking licences**

The consultation with CCW over handpicking licences has been completed and it was appropriate to issue two licences.

Other fishermen were interested in obtaining licences. There was some discussion about how to decide how many new licences should be issued. It was thought that the approach set out in the recent Welsh Government consultation document on cockle fishing licences might be an appropriate procedure to adopt.

It was agreed that:-

- a. The status of the stock should be assessed
- b. 2 licences should be issued, covering a 6 month period.
- c. The number of additional licences that could be issued should be discussed and determined at the next meeting, in the light of the stock assessment.

**Action: JA / JW**

## **10. Enforcement issues**

No enforcement issues had arisen.

The Welsh Government was currently reviewing its approach to enforcement powers and procedures in shellfish beds. It was felt that these might offer opportunities for better integration of enforcement activity, and that this could be suggested to the Minister in the annual report for the fishery.

**Action JA / JW**

## **11. Moorings**

The Association considered the report on this matter and agreed that the proposed responses to the various interested parties were appropriate and should be sent by the Chair.

**Action: SU**

## **12.NW IFCA Activity**

The report on the changes to fishery management under development by the NW-IFCA was accepted by the Association.

## **13.Developing the Association**

### **a) Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order**

The Association agreed that it would be appropriate to submit the application for this Fishery Order at the earliest opportunity and also to amend the Articles of Association as proposed.

**Action: JW / JA / SU**

### **b) Conwy Fishery Order**

Discussions had taken place with fishermen from the Conwy area who were keen to progress the mussel fishery there under a Fishery Order. It seemed that these proposals were at an early stage, and that there was no need for any action by the Association at this stage.

## **14.Fishery Management Issues**

### **a) *Bonamia***

Following testing of the shellfish in the western Menai Strait it now seemed that *Bonamia* had been eradicated in that area. It would be pronounced to be free of the disease after further testing over a 4 year period.

### **b) Non-native species**

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

The eradication work in Holyhead had proceeded well. Some *D. vexillum* had been found on anchor chains, which were now being treated. Further surveys were being carried out, and CCW were looking for additional funding for this work.

#### **Chinese Mitten Crabs (*Eriocheir sinensis*)**

No Chinese Mitten Crabs had been found in the areas where seed mussels are fished for cultivation in the Menai Strait. One female crab was, however, found in the Conwy in 2010.

### **c) Norovirus**

No problems have arisen with Norovirus recently. It was understood that some international proposals for addressing marine Norovirus were being developed, and that these could have implications for the mussel industry.

### **d) Marine Conservation Zones**

It was agreed that it would be appropriate to submit a response on behalf of MSFOMA to the WG consultation on MCZs. This would need to reflect the remit

and purpose of MSFOMA whilst respecting the (potentially different) remit and purpose of its constituent organisations.

**Action: SU / JA**

## **15.Any Other Business**

### **a) “Single Body”**

CCW and EA staff confirmed that good progress was being made with the establishment of the “single body” that was due to replace CCW, EAW and the Forestry Commission in Wales. This body was due to be in place by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.

It was noted that this change might affect representation on MSFOMA (which currently allocates membership to both CCW and EAW). It would be important to keep this under review to ensure that MSFOMA does not lose expertise.

## **16.Date for next meeting**

The next meeting is set for 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 at 10am.