

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Agenda & Papers- 14th December 2022 Association Meeting

**Zoom Conference: Link |
Meeting ID XXXXX| Password XXXXX | Phone in XXXX**

1. Chair's announcements
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of interest
4. Minutes of last meeting ([attached](#))
5. Matters Arising
6. Register & declarations of interests (verbal)
7. Financial update ([report](#))
8. Water quality in the Menai Strait ([report](#))
9. Public Profile of the Association (verbal)
10. Welsh Government Activity ([report](#))
11. North West IFCA Activity ([report](#))
12. All Party Parliamentary Group: Shellfish Aquaculture (verbal)
13. Menai Strait East ([report](#))
14. Menai Strait West Fishery Order ([report](#))
15. Project funding update (verbal)
16. Fishery management issues
 - a. Coastal / marine developments
 - i. Bangor Pier
 - ii. Sand in the dock
 - b. Environmental / health issues
 - i. Shellfish hygiene classifications
 - ii. *Bonamia* in the western Strait
 - iii. Non-native species
17. Any Other Business (verbal)
 - a. Correspondence
18. Proposed dates for next meetings (note the reduction to 3 meetings):-
 - a. 27th April 2023 (2 weeks after the end of Easter holidays)
 - b. 14th September 2023 (2 weeks after the end of Summer holidays)
 - c. 14th December 2023 [AGM]

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

**Meeting, 14th September 2022
Marine Centre Wales, Menai Bridge
& Zoom Video Conference Call**

Minutes

Attendance

Members

Alan Winstone*
James Wilson*
Lewis le Vay
Kim Mould*

Chair
Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd
Bangor University
Myti Mussels Ltd

Observers

José Constantino†
Rowland Sharp
Ruth Iliffe
Trevor Jones

Welsh Government
Natural Resources Wales
Royal Yachting Association Cymru
Menai Strait (West) Applicants

Advisors

Euryn Roberts
Mark Charlesworth
Jim Andrews*

Natural Resources Wales
Natural Resources Wales
MSFOMA Secretariat

Notes

** These individuals are also Directors of the Association*

† These individuals participated remotely

1. Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular Ruth Iliffe from RYA-Cymru, who had taken up the Association's invitation to participate as an observer at MSFOMA meetings. Nia Jones from North Wales Wildlife Trust had also been keen to attend, but had a prior engagement that prevented her attendance.

The Chair noted that this was the first MSFOMA meeting that had taken place in person for nearly 3 years.

2. Apologies

Alex Scorey
Gareth Roberts
Howard Mattocks
Ioan Thomas
Iwan Huws
Julian Bray
Michelle Billing
Nia Jones
Rob Floyd

Natural Resources Wales
Bangor City Council
Beaumaris Town Council
Gwynedd County Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council
Welsh Government
Welsh Government
North Wales Wildlife Trust
Welsh Government

3. Declarations of Interest

A meeting attendance list and register for declaring interests had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair asked participants in the meeting to declare an interest in each agenda item before speaking.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting that took place on the 8th of June 2022 were accepted.

5. Matters Arising

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

Some items raised at the June meeting that were not formally addressed on the agenda were discussed:-

Sand in Penrhyn Dock

James Wilson reported that there had been no further progress with removal of the sand that had accumulated in the dock and was restricting access.

It was agreed that this issue should be kept under review.

Action: JW, Secretariat

Bonamia

James Wilson indicated that Cefas remained unwilling to review the boundary of the Bonamia designated area that extends from the tidal limit in the Conwy through the Strait and the Forydd to Llandwrog in Gwynedd and Malltraeth on Anglesey. One of the consequences of this is that mussels from the Menai Strait cannot be moved to Ireland, which is considered to be Bonamia-free.

It was agreed that this issue should be kept under review.

Water quality

This issue was still important, and it was agreed that it should be discussed under agenda item 16.

Autumn workshop / conferences

It was agreed that this should also be considered under item 16.

6. Register of Interests

The Chair reminded all participants to check their Statement of Interests on the MSFOMA website (https://www.msfoma.org/?page_id=478) to confirm whether it is accurate.

Action: All

7. Widening engagement

The Chair introduced this item. Following a discussion about the potential benefits of widening involvement in the Association at the last meeting, the Secretariat had approached Ruth Iliffe of RYA-Cymru and Nia Jones of the North Wales Wildlife Trust to invite them to participate as observers at MSFOMA meetings in the short term, with a view to formalising their involvement in the longer term.

The Secretariat reported that both Ruth and Nia had accepted this information. Ruth was present at the meeting, and Nia had been keen to attend but was unable to do so because of a prior engagement.

8. Financial Update

The financial report was accepted, with an amendment to the second recommendation which should have read “That the Association considers options for reducing expenditure and leases fees in the current and future Financial Years.”. The text in italics here had been omitted from the version of the papers circulated prior to the meeting.

The Secretariat reported that accounts for the past FY (ending 28th February 2022) had been drawn up and submitted to Companies House on schedule.

Looking at the current FY, the lease income for the past 6 months had been lower than budgeted in the Association’s Financial Plan because of the decision to reduce lease fees by ⅓ at the last meeting, which was a response to the delay receiving Ministerial consent to issue the leases. At the time of the meeting, lease fees had been received from 5 of the 8 tenants on time, and lease arrears were being chased up.

The Secretariat indicated, and industry representatives confirmed, that trading conditions for mussel farmers continued to be very difficult indeed. Exports to the EU had essentially ceased, and UK domestic mussel consumption was very low indeed. Much would depend on improving shellfish hygiene classifications from “Class B” to “Class A”, which would re-open the EU export market.

The Secretariat referred to the Financial Plan and indicated that there were some areas of proposed expenditure that could be optional, and that could be paused until economic conditions improve or scrapped altogether. Examples included the Menai West Fishery Order (budgeted at £20k over the next 3 years); the Community Fund (budgeted at £2k annually); and also the frequency of MSFOMA meetings (the Association presently holds 4 meetings each year, but is only required by its Articles to hold 2 meetings annually)..

The mussel farmers present at the meeting indicated that MSFOMA lease fees were just one of many overheads that they must continue to pay in order to remain in business. Although the lease fees were a relatively minor cost in this context, any small saving would help businesses to survive.

Ruth Iliffe and Lewis Le Vay noted that initiatives like the Community Fund had wide benefits, and that it would be appropriate to look for ways to sustain them (perhaps by MSFOMA applying for funding to support community projects around the Strait). Lewis also noted the value of regular meetings, even using video conferencing platforms, for networking and progressing initiatives such as the recent Pacific Oysters report for the western Menai Strait.

It was agreed that proposals for reducing the Association’s budget should be prepared by the Chair and Secretariat and a revised Financial Plan circulated for consideration. If approved, the Financial Plan should be implemented and lease fees for the current and future Financial Years adjusted accordingly.

Action: Chair & Secretariat

It was further agreed that the invoices for leases during the second half of the current FY should be issued after the new Financial Plan had been agreed, and not on the 1st of October as planned.

Action: Secretariat

9. Water quality

The Chair introduced this item, which was a response to the impact of the recent downgrading of the Beaumaris East shellfish harvesting area from a seasonal Class A to a Class B; and also an opportunity to review and take a more strategic approach to water quality management and monitoring, as well as identifying opportunities for the Association to encourage improvements.

These issues had all been discussed at the June meeting of the Association, at which some concerns had been raised about the exact role and remit of different organisations including the “Local Action Group” that exists to investigate unexpected high results. It had been agreed in June that it would be very helpful to hear from officers from Natural Resources Wales about their work, and to seek guidance from NRW about how MSFOMA could best act to encourage change for the better. The Chair had approached Mark Charlesworth and Euryn Roberts about this, and they had accepted his invitation to attend this meeting.

Mark and Euryn each gave very detailed and informative presentations to the meeting. The key points that were covered included:-

- The legislative framework in Wales is determined by Welsh Government. Two agencies are relevant to the Menai Strait mussel fishery: the Food Standards Agency, who determine shellfish hygiene classifications from samples taken by local authority environmental health officers; and Natural Resources Wales (NRW), who implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD), and which is intended to attain “Good Environmental Status” for the area.
- The objectives of the WFD are drivers for investment by water companies. These objectives include attaining “Class A” for shellfish harvesting areas, since the WFD incorporates the goals of the earlier Shellfish Waters Directive.
- Water company investment is overseen by Ofwat, and is the subject of successive 5 year investment cycles. Dŵr Cymru is presently in its 7th investment cycle, extending from 2019-2024 (termed “Price Review 2019” or “PR19”). Plans are being made for the priorities in the next investment cycle (“PR24”) that will set water prices and investment priorities for the period 2024-2029.
- Welsh Government guidance is that shellfish waters should be improved to Class A where this is commercially viable. In relation to the Menai Strait, current work includes:
 - NRW commissioned an economic study by Cardiff Business School that provided an objective basis for encouraging investment in water quality improvements.
 - After modelling of water quality and effluent discharges, Dŵr Cymru identified the Beach Road Pumping Station as the focus for improvements, and are investing £12M here under the National Environmental Plan. Further investment (~£10M) is also being sought.

- NRW are working with Dŵr Cymru to complete these improvements by 2025.
- PR24 is likely to look at the relationship between river catchments and shellfish hygiene results, and also includes plans for investment of £20-25M at the Treborth Waste Water Treatment Works.

Lewis Le Vay reminded the meeting of the work that the Shellfish Centre is doing with Dŵr Cymru and the Rivers Trust to better understand the sources of coliform inputs to shellfish beds. This work includes sampling at higher frequencies and higher spatial scales at times when rainfall increases. This information is being used to refine models and is helping Dŵr Cymru to determine its priorities for investment and action. It is hoped that this may ultimately emulate the success that the Shellfish Centre has achieved in the Camel Estuary in Cornwall where it is now possible to predict classification results from rainfall and river flows.

The role of Local Action Groups (“LAGs”) was discussed. NRW clarified that an LAG “Investigation State” is only triggered if a shellfish hygiene result falls outside the boundary of the current classification (e.g. for a Class B area if there is a result of >4,600 and <18,000 *E. coli* / 100g of mussel flesh); an “Action State” would be called if a Class B area returned a result of over 18,000 (or for a Class A area, a result of over 700).¹

The Association noted that this would explain why so few LAG investigation states were triggered. Over the past 5 years, Cefas data show that several of the shellfish areas in the Strait attain the “Class A” standard at least 80% of the time, but because they are classed as long term “Class B”, the occasional poor results are not investigated by the LAG.

James Wilson also noted that the LAG Investigation State Reports have the opportunity to be used to provide an objective basis for disregarding results. Unfortunately the limited involvement in LAGs meant that these reports sometimes missed critical information – an example being a bad result for Beaumaris East in May 2021 which coincided with record-breaking rainfall in Snowdonia that was not taken into account by the LAG.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate for MSFOMA to seek better involvement in the LAG (currently chaired by Ynys Môn County Council).

Action: Chair, Secretariat

It was also noted that there was a disconnect between Welsh Government national policy and the regulatory system: Welsh Government have an objective of attaining “Class A” status, which was driving the investment of millions of pounds by Dŵr Cymru. At the same time, the rules for triggering LAG investigation states for the occasional high results mean that classifications might not accurately reflect the shellfish quality on a site (because results that should have been disregarded are being used). This could be costing Dŵr Cymru millions of pounds in wasted investment, and the shellfish industry millions of pounds in lost market access. It was considered appropriate to raise concerns about this with Welsh Government.

Action: Chair, Secretariat

¹ See the guidance for LAGs here:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/local-action-groups-guidance-lbm.pdf>

The Association discussed other sources of coliform input to the Strait. The key areas of discussion were:-

- Private / single residence outfalls - NRW reported that in 2012 they had carried out a project to identify all of the private outfalls direct to the Strait and y Forydd.
- Slurry spreading and manure on farmland - NRW indicated that new legislation is coming in to control both of these potential inputs.
- Agricultural runoff - issues such as the input from sheep grazing land in the Ogwen catchment and from dairy farming in Caernarfon were considered.
- Catchment inputs generally - NRW noted that high rainfall in upland areas can result in surface water runoff overwhelming WWTW, triggering Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO) events, and resulting in coliform inputs. Investment to separate surface water from sewage effluent may help to address this.

All welcomed the presentations from Eurn and Mark, and their participation in the ensuing discussion.

10. Public Profile of the Association

The Chair and Secretariat reported that Dr Andy Olivier was continuing to use Twitter to raise the profile of the Association.

During recent discussions the Chair and Secretariat have discussed the opportunity to build links with other organisations that have an interest in water quality in the Strait. Examples included "Surfers Against Sewage". The meeting was asked to suggest other organisations that might be relevant.

Ruth Iliffe indicated that the RYA were not very active in this sphere, but that other organisations such as British Canoeing may be helpful. All agreed that this would be a useful direction to pursue.

Action: Chair & Secretariat

11. Welsh Government Activity

The Secretariat's report was noted and received.

Trevor Jones reported that a new Ministerial Advisory Group for Fisheries had been established. This had met once, and was due to meet again on 19th October.

Trevor also reported that the Welsh Marine Action & Advisory Group had become the Blue Recovery Group.

12. NW IFCA Activity

The report on recent activities of the NW IFCA was received and accepted by the meeting.

Kim Mould, James Wilson and Trevor Jones were all hoping that a seed mussel dredge fishery would soon be open in Morecambe Bay. They felt that the area proposed for fishing was smaller than the extent of the resource could support, but that it was more important to access at least some mussels rather than prolong debate and risk their loss.

It was agreed that MSFOMA should continue to encourage NWIFCA to resume work on the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan.

Action: Secretariat

13.All Party Parliamentary Group: Shellfish Aquaculture

There was no further news from this Group.

14.Menai Strait East Fishery Order

The report was accepted. It was noted that the only outstanding area of work for this Order was to review the “Managed Areas” around reef features. It was considered that in view of the low level of cultivation activity and the desire to minimise expenditure, this was not presently a priority and should be held in abeyance.

DRAFT

15. Menai Strait West

The Chair reported that MSFOMA wrote to the Minister in July to inform her about the Pacific Oyster research that has been carried out by the Shellfish Centre in collaboration with MSFOMA and local shellfish farmers. This report concluded that Pacific oysters represent a very low environmental risk, and that there are easily accessible mitigation measures to eliminate risk. The Minister was invited to progress the application for renewing the Fishery Order in the western Menai Strait using this information to support the action.

The Minister sent a holding response in August which indicated that her officials “...are considering the latest evidence...” to inform her decision making. The Chair has followed up to offer the Association’s assistance in this regard.

José Constantino indicated that no further progress had been made with the policy on Pacific Oysters. He had received a briefing from Michelle Billing about the potential need for additional consultation on the Fishery Order. After some discussion, the Chair determined that this advice related to the proposal for informal consultation with stakeholders that had been discussed with Michelle at previous meetings of the Association.

All agreed that the ball was very much in Welsh Government’s court and that MSFOMA should continue to press for progress.

Action: Chair, Secretariat

16. Funding proposals & Research Update

Lewis Le Vay indicated that the projects relevant to MSFOMA have been progressing since the last meeting. In summary:-

- **Pacific Oysters** - this report has been produced (see Item 12 above).
- **Spat collectors / MOSSS** -work was ongoing, and an application for a larger cultivation area was being progressed.
- **Water quality** -work being progressed through a partnership between the Shellfish Centre, Dŵr Cymru, the Rivers Trust, Deepdock and MSFOMA is ongoing and due to be complete in December.
- **Bonamia** - the report on research into the distribution of Bonamia using DNA markers from shellfish samples has been circulated. Some updates are being made, and results would be circulated.

Lewis Le Vay confirmed that the Shellfish Centre was due to be hosting some a conference or some workshops covering these issues in the autumn, and there could be a role for MSFOMA to support and / or participate. He agreed to provide details as these became available.

Action: Lewis Le Vay

17. Fishery Management Issues

1. Coastal / marine developments

i. Bangor Pier

No additional update.

ii. Sand in the dock

This was discussed at the start of the meeting (see Matters Arising).

2. Environmental / health issues

i. Shellfish hygiene classification

This was discussed earlier in the meeting (see item 9).

ii. Bonamia

This was discussed at the start of the meeting (see Matters Arising).

iii. Invasive Alien Species (IAS) / Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

James Wilson reported that he had seen some *Crepidula fornicata* specimens on scallop shells from Cardigan Bay.

Trevor Jones reported that he had looked for *Crepidula* in the western Strait over the weekend prior to the meeting. He had been unable to find any.

Rowland Sharp confirmed that the last local report was of from a whelk caught near Trefor.

iv. Norovirus

No further update.

18. Any Other Business

a) Correspondence

No additional correspondence had been received.

19. Dates for next meetings

Proposed meeting dates for 2022:-

- a. Q4 2022 - 14th December [AGM]

It was agreed that the Secretariat and Lewis Le Vay should liaise to book the conference room at the Shellfish Centre for the next two meetings.

Action: Secretariat, Lewis Le Vay

Summary of Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility
1.	Sand in Dock - keep under review.	James Wilson & Secretariat
2.	Register of Interests - review current Statement of interests on MSFOMA website (https://www.msfoma.org/?page_id=478) and confirm it is accurate.	All
3.	Autumn workshop / conferences - keep MSFOMA informed about plans for these events.	Lewis Le Vay
4.	Finances - review Financial Plan and explore opportunities for cost-saving.	Chair & Secretariat
5.	Finances - circulate revised Financial Plan for approval.	Chair, Secretariat
6.	Finances - delay issuing invoices pending outcome of review of Financial Plan	Chair, Secretariat
7.	Finances - develop proposals for financial control for discussion at next MSFOMA meeting.	Secretariat.
8.	Shellfish hygiene - improve links between MSFOMA and Local Action Groups.	
9.	Shellfish hygiene - write to Lesley Griffiths to highlight opportunities for her to encourage action by LAGs	
10.	Social media - look for opportunities to raise issues about water quality.	Chair, Secretariat
11.	Social media - all to send any items suitable for the MSFOMA Twitter feed to Andy Olivier (avdsolivier@gmail.com).	All
12.	Website / Twitter - provide photograph and brief resume suitable for website and Twitter	All
13.	NWIFCA - encourage adoption of Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan.	Chair & Secretariat
14.	Menai West - write to Lesley Griffiths to encourage progress with Fishery Order.	Chair & Secretariat
15.	<i>Crepidula fornicata</i> - look out for slipper limpets and report sightings of any shells / individuals.	All
16.	Date for next meeting - 14 th December 2022, Shellfish Centre	Secretariat & Lewis Le Vay

Financial Update

Background

As a company limited by guarantee, the Association is required to submit a record of its accounts at the end of each Financial Year. This report provides a brief financial update for the current and past Financial Year and sets out proposals for amending the Association's financial procedures.

Recommendations

1. That the Association formally adopts the revised 5-year plan set out in Annex B of this report, which supercedes the plan agreed at 2021 AGM.
2. That the Association considers performance within the current FY against this revised plan (Annex D)
3. That the Association receives the financial statement for the year ended 28th February 2022 (Annex E).
4. That the Association discusses the financial procedures set out in Annex F of this report, and resolves whether to adopt these, subject to amendments, as interim measures prior to formal adoption at the next MSFOMA meeting.

1. Financial Plan and Lease fees: Revisions for current and future years

- 1.1 At its September meeting the Association discussed the difficult economic conditions facing the mussel farming industry at present. It was agreed at the meeting that opportunities to reduce costs should be explored, and that invoicing should be delayed for a month (from the scheduled date of 1st October) to allow time for a review of the financial plan and for new lease fees to be calculated. It was further agreed that these proposals should be discussed and approved by the Members and Directors of the Association so that they could be implemented in advance of the December Association meeting.
- 1.2 The Financial Plan that was agreed by the Association at its Annual General Meeting is included at Annex A of this report. Proposals for a revised Financial Plan and new lease fees were sent to Members and Directors (excluding those who are lessees and would have a prejudicial interest) by the Secretariat on October 13th (see Annex B). These proposals were discussed and endorsed at a meeting of these Members and Directors on the 21st October. Invoices for layings that reflect the reduced fees agreed by the Members and Directors were issued on 2nd November 2022.
- 1.3 The key aspects of these revisions are summarised here:-
 - a) The annual budget can be reduced by £3,300pa for the next 5 years (from an average of £18,400 to an average of £15,100). This saving has been achieved by:-
 - i. Terminating our proactive work on the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order unless and until Welsh Government make a decision about Pacific Oysters;
 - ii. Reducing the number of MSFOMA meetings from 4 "in person" meetings pa to 3 meetings (2 virtual, 1 "in person");

- iii. Research & Monitoring budget reduced from £1,800pa to £500pa; and
 - iv. Community fund budget reduced from £2kpa to £500pa.
- b) Since the Association only needs to “break even”, the total income derived from lease fees can be reduced by the same amount as the budget cut. The average lease fee will therefore fall by 21% from the current FY onwards.
 - c) The Association no longer needs to maintain a reserve of £20,000 to meet the costs of renewing the Menai East Fishery Order, and it would be appropriate to reduce the reserve to £10,000.

2. Budgetary performance in current Financial Year

- 2.1 An income and expenditure report for the Association for the MSFOMA 2022-23 Financial Year (starting on 1st March 2022) against the revised Financial Plan is presented in Annex C. This shows both the actual and budgeted values for each item of income and expenditure.
- 2.2 Key points to note are:-
 - a) Income:-
 - i. Invoices have been issued for a total fee of £14,248.52. This figure is lower than the figure for future years as a result of the discount granted in the first half of the year.
 - ii. A sum of £5,693.68 is due for the invoices that were issued on the 2nd of November. The due date for these invoices was the 2nd of December, and the leases issued by the Association allow a period of up to 30 days after the due date for payment.
 - b) Expenditure this year has been significantly over budget (currently £5,177.62). This was due to:
 - i. Payment of invoices during the early part of the financial year that had been received by the Association during earlier accounting periods (both Q1 of this FY and the previous FY) for work on the administration of the fishery and the renewal of the Menai East Fishery Order;
 - ii. Accountancy fees for both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 FY being paid during this FY.
 - c) For the current FY to date, the Association has an operating deficit of £11,561.30 against the revised financial plan.
- 2.3 The Association’s bank balance at the end of November 2022 stood at £7,801.38, and is currently £8,587.08. This is lower than the target reserve of £10,000.
- 2.4 Rental income of £5,693.68 is due for the remainder of this FY. No significant items of expenditure are anticipated.

3. Annual Accounts

- 3.1 Full accounts were submitted to Companies House by the Association's accountants on 5th July 2022. These accounts include the correction to an historical book-keeping error that was detected by the Secretariat and the accountants earlier this year. They are attached at Annex E of this report.

4. Lease fees for 2022-23

- 4.1 As noted above, lease fee income for the current FY has been reduced in response to the delays that prevented leases being issued earlier in the year.
- 4.2 All lease fees have been received for the first half of this FY. Lease fees have been received for three of the eight leased areas at the time of writing this report. The fees for the remaining five areas are due on or before the 2nd of January 2023.

5. Financial Control

- 5.1 At past meetings of the Association it has been agreed that clear systems for financial control should be put in place. Prior to the June 2022 meeting of the Association the Chair and Secretariat discussed this with the Association's accountants, who identified the areas of financial control that the Association should address and also some procedures that would an appropriate level of control in these areas.
- 5.2 The key areas of Financial Control that are relevant for the Association are: a clear procedure for authorising payments; a procedure for receipts (invoicing); a system for tracking debtors; and a procedure for reporting to the Association. These procedures do not need to be onerous (the Association averages around 30 transactions per year), but do need to be transparent.
- 5.3 It was agreed at the last meeting that these proposals should be developed by the Secretariat. Proposals are set out in Annex F for consideration. Following discussion at this meeting, it could be appropriate to adopt these as interim measures prior to a formal resolution to adopt them at the next MSFOMA meeting.

6. Community Fund

- 6.1 Several participants at the last MSFOMA meeting voiced their support for the Community Fund. A result of this support has been that it has been retained (at a lower budget of £500) in the financial plan
- 6.2 The only proposal for funding received so far is from Beaumaris Town Council who are planning to created a community garden. If MSFOMA participants have any additional suggestions they would be gratefully received.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Annex A: MSFOMA Financial Plan for the period 2022-23 to 2026-2027, agreed at AGM in December 2021 [Now superceded by Annex B].

Item	Financial Year				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
1. Expenditure - inflated at 3%.					
Administration of the Order	£7,500.00	£7,725.00	£7,956.75	£8,195.45	£8,441.32
Enforcement activity	£1,200.00	£1,236.00	£1,273.08	£1,311.27	£1,350.61
Corporate core*	£1,200.00	£1,236.00	£1,273.08	£1,311.27	£1,350.61
Renewal of Fishery Orders					
Menai East	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Menai West	£7,500.00	£7,500.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	£0.00
Research & monitoring*	£1,800.00	£1,854.00	£1,909.62	£1,966.91	£2,025.92
Community fund	£2,000.00	£2,060.00	£2,121.80	£2,185.45	£2,251.02
Total Expenditure	£21,200.00	£21,611.00	£19,534.33	£14,970.36	£15,419.47
2. Recurring Income - to maintain the equivalent of a £20,000 reserve (inflated at 2.8% pa).					
Leases for lays	£18,500.00*	£18,500.00	£18,500.00	£18,500.00	£18,500.00
Licences	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	£18,500.00	£18,500.00	£18,500.00	£18,500.00	£18,500.00
Operating surplus / deficit	-£2,700.00	-£3,111.00	-£1,034.33	£3,529.64	£3,080.53
3. Reserve					
Predicted Reserve	£22,300.00	£19,189.00	£18,154.67	£21,684.31	£24,764.84
Target Reserve	£20,000.00	£20,600.00	£21,218.00	£21,854.54	£22,510.18

* Note that following the June 2022 resolution to reduce rents by ⅓ for the first half of 2022-23 the income for this FY will actually be £15,416; the reserve predictions for each year should therefore be reduced by £3,083.

Annex B: Revised MSFOMA Financial Plan for the period 2022-23 to 2026-2027, proposed and agreed by correspondence in October 2022.

Item	Financial Year					
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
1. Revised Expenditure - inflated at 3%.						
Administration of the Order*	£12,000.00	£12,360.00	£12,730.80	£13,112.72	£13,506.11	£13,911.29
Enforcement activity*	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Corporate core*	£1,200.00	£1,236.00	£1,273.08	£1,311.27	£1,350.61	£1,391.13
Renewal of Fishery Orders						
Menai East	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Menai West	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Research & monitoring*	£500.00	£515.00	£530.45	£546.36	£562.75	£579.64
Community fund	£500.00	£515.00	£530.45	£546.36	£562.75	£579.64
Total Expenditure	£14,200.00	£14,626.00	£15,064.78	£15,516.72	£15,982.23	£16,461.69
2. Recurring Income - inflated at 0% to maintain value of a £10000 reserve with 3% inflation rate applying to expenditure.						
Leases for lays	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00
Licences	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00
Operating surplus / deficit	£900.00	£474.00	£35.22	-£416.72	-£882.23	-£1,361.69
3. Reserve						
Predicted Reserve	£ 10,687.17	£11,161.17	£11,196.39	£10,779.67	£9,897.44	£8,535.75
Target Reserve	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00

Annex C: Proposed revisions to MSFOMA Financial Plan, presented to MSFOMA Members & Directors, 13th October 2022

Financial Update: MSFOMA, October 2022

The brief report below has been prepared in response to a discussion at the MSFOMA meeting on 14th September 2022 about reducing lease fee costs for the Menai Strait (East) Mussel and Fishery Order 2022. The decision to try to reduce these costs was taken to try to ease financial pressure on mussel farming businesses who are all struggling to overcome the impact of post-Brexit export controls.

The report outlines the revisions proposed to the Financial Plan, the effect of these changes on lease fees in the current FY (2022-23) and for future years.

1. Financial Plan

We can make some savings by doing the following:-

- Terminating our proactive work on the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order unless and until Welsh Government make a decision about Pacific Oysters.
- Reducing the following
 - Meetings from 4 “in person” meetings per year to 3 meetings (2 virtual, 1 “in person”) - which saves around £3k pa
 - Research & Monitoring budget reduced from £1,800pa to £500pa
 - Community fund budget reduced from £2kpa to £500pa.

The figures for the next 5 FYs then look like this:-

Item	Financial Year					
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
1. Revised Expenditure - inflated at 3%.						
Administration of the Order*	£12,000.00	£12,360.00	£12,730.80	£13,112.72	£13,506.11	£13,911.29
Enforcement activity*	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Corporate core*	£1,200.00	£1,236.00	£1,273.08	£1,311.27	£1,350.61	£1,391.13
Renewal of Fishery Orders						
Menai East	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Menai West	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Research & monitoring*	£500.00	£515.00	£530.45	£546.36	£562.75	£579.64
Community fund	£500.00	£515.00	£530.45	£546.36	£562.75	£579.64
Total Expenditure	£14,200.00	£14,626.00	£15,064.78	£15,516.72	£15,982.23	£16,461.69
2. Recurring Income - inflated at 0% to maintain value of a £10000 reserve with 3% inflation rate applying to expenditure.						
Leases for lays	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00
Licences	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00	£15,100.00
Operating surplus / deficit	£900.00	£474.00	£35.22	-£416.72	-£882.23	-£1,361.69
3. Reserve						
Predicted Reserve	£ 10,687.17	£11,161.17	£11,196.39	£10,779.67	£9,897.44	£8,535.75
Target Reserve	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00

The effect of this would be to reduce average annual expenditure over the next 5 years from just over £18,500pa to just under £15,100pa. This would translate to an annual saving of £755.90 for each laying (e.g. for Area 1 the annual lease fee would drop from £2,312.50pa to £1,556.60pa).

I would welcome comments on this, so we can finalise it for formal adoption at the next meeting.

2. Lease fees - this year

For the current FY, we already reduced the lease fee by $\frac{1}{3}$ for the first half of the year because of the WG delay consenting to the leases. Taking this into account, expenditure to date, and projecting ahead using the plan set out above, our invoicing would look like this for each laying:-

Laying	Invoiced to date (half of annual fee minus $\frac{1}{3}$)	Invoice for Remainder of 2022-23 FY
1	£770.83	£785.77
2	£770.83	£785.77
3	£770.83	£785.77
4	£871.69	£987.51
5	£1,451.49	£2,147.12
6	£871.69	£987.51
Ballast Bank	£770.83	£785.77
Bangor Deep	£770.83	£785.77
TOTAL	£7,049.00	£8,051.00

If you are all happy with these figures, I can update the invoices for the remainder of the FY and send them out later this month.

3. Lease fees - future years

If we apply the financial plan set out above for future years, the lease fees would look like this:-

Laying	Annual Fee	6-monthly Fee
1	£1,556.60	£778.30
2	£1,556.60	£778.30
3	£1,556.60	£778.30
4	£1,859.20	£929.60
5	£3,598.60	£1,799.30
6	£1,859.20	£929.60
Ballast Bank	£1,556.60	£778.30
Bangor Deep	£1,556.60	£778.30
TOTAL	£15,100.00	£7550.00

These fees are contingent on the Association adopting the financial plan set out at (1) above

Annex D: MSFOMA Financial performance for the 2022-23 FY against the updated (October 2022) Financial Plan.

Item	Updated Year Budget	Quarter 1 (1st March - 31st May)		Quarter 2* (1st June - 31st August)		Quarter 3 (1st Sept. - 30th Nov.)		Quarter 4 (1st Dec. - 28th Feb.)		Year to Date (Cumulative)			
	2022-23	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Performance			
										Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Expenditure													
Administration of the Order*	£12,000.00	£5,831.06	£3,000.00	£7,762.71	£3,000.00	£3,583.85	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00	£2,831.06	£7,593.77	£8,177.62	£5,177.62
Enforcement activity	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-	£-	£-	£-
Corporate core*													
Accountancy fees	£1,200.00	£0.00	£300.00	£1,366.00	£300.00	£1,440.00	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00	£-300.00	£766.00	£1,906.00	£1,606.00
Bank charges		£42.00		£42.00		£36.00				£42.00	£84.00	£120.00	£120.00
Renewal of Fishery Orders*													
Menai East	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-	£-	£-	£-
Menai West	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-	£-	£-	£-
Research & monitoring	£500.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£-125.00	£-250.00	£-375.00	£-500.00
Community fund	£500.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	£-125.00	£-250.00	£-375.00	£-500.00
Total Expenditure	£14,200.00	£5,873.06	£3,550.00	£9,170.71	£3,550.00	£5,059.85	£3,550.00	£0.00	£3,550.00	£2,323.06	£7,943.77	£9,453.62	£5,903.62
2. Income													
Leases for lays***	£15,100.00	£0.00	£6,197.53	£3,521.94	£0.00	£4,247.13	£8,050.99	£785.77	£0.00	£-6,197.53	£-2,675.59	£-6,479.45	£-5,693.68
Licences	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total	£15,100.00	£0.00	£6,197.53	£3,521.94	£0.00	£4,247.13	£8,050.99	£785.77	£0.00	£-6,197.53	£-2,675.59	£-6,479.45	£-5,693.68
Operating surplus / deficit	£900.00	£-5,873.06	£2,647.53	£-5,648.77	£-3,550.00	£-812.72	£4,500.99	£785.77	£-3,550.00	£-3,874.47	£-10,619.36	£-15,933.07	£-11,597.30
Reserve	£10,000.00	£19,244.26	£10,000.00	£9,974.58	£10,000.00	£7,801.31	£10,000.00	£8,587.08	£10,000.00	£9,244.26	£-25.42	£-2,198.69	£-1,412.92

* Note that these figures have been adjusted to account for the lease fee reduction for the first half of the 2022-23FY

Annex E: MSFOMA Accounts for the Year Ended 28th February 2022

REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689 (England and Wales)

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022

FOR

THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689)
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022

	Page
Company information	1
Balance sheet	2
Notes to the financial statements	4
Report of the accountants	6

THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

COMPANY INFORMATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022

DIRECTORS:

J Wilson
A J Winstone
J W Andrews

REGISTERED OFFICE:

Port Penrhyn
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 4HN

REGISTERED NUMBER:

07163689 (England and Wales)

ACCOUNTANTS:

Fraser Wood Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
Victoria House
Plas Llwyd Terrace
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 1UB

**THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689)
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**BALANCE SHEET
28 FEBRUARY 2022**

		28.2.22	28.2.21 as restated
	Notes	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	4	18,841	13,768
Cash at bank		24,397	43,948
		<u>43,238</u>	<u>57,716</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	5	(8,963)	(8,198)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>34,275</u>	<u>49,518</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>34,275</u>	<u>49,518</u>
RESERVES			
Income and expenditure account		34,275	49,518
		<u>34,275</u>	<u>49,518</u>

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 28 February 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 28 February 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

Page 2

continued...

THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689)
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

BALANCE SHEET - continued
28 FEBRUARY 2022

The financial statements have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

In accordance with Section 444 of the Companies Act 2006, the Income statement has not been delivered.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and authorised for issue on 30 June 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:

A J Winstone - Director

The notes form part of these financial statements

Page 3

**THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689)
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022**

1. STATUTORY INFORMATION

The Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association is a private company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. The company's registered number and registered office address can be found on the Company Information page.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" including the provisions of Section 1A "Small Entities" and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

Income represents amounts receivable for membership and the supervision of the North West fishery order.

3. EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS

The average number of employees during the year was NIL (2021 - NIL).

4. DEBTORS

	28.2.22	as	28.2.21
	£		restated £
Amounts falling due within one year:			
Trade debtors	2,589		13,768
Other debtors	720		-
	<u>3,309</u>		<u>13,768</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year:			
Trade debtors	<u>15,532</u>		-
Aggregate amounts	<u>18,841</u>		<u>13,768</u>

Outstanding lease fees are owed by Ogwen Mussels Limited (£14,294) and Deepdock Limited (£3,826). A seven year payment plan has been agreed with the Board, with amounts being paid in equal instalments and no interest charged.

**THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED NUMBER: 07163689)
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022**

5. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	28.2.22	as	28.2.21 restated
	£		£
Trade creditors	7,363		4,958
Other creditors	1,600		3,240
	<u>8,963</u>		<u>8,198</u>

6. TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

MSFOMA paid £33,799 to Andrews Ward James (AWJ) Limited for consultancy work, a company of which J.W. Andrews is a director & shareholder. In addition, included in Trade creditors is £7,363 owed to Andrews Ward James (AWJ) Limited.

J Wilson controls both Ogwen Mussels Limited & Deepdock Limited. These companies owe MSFOMA a total of £18,120 as of 28th February, 2022. A seven year repayment plan has been agreed with the Board, with outstanding amounts being paid in equal instalments (per note 5 above).

7. LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

The company is limited by guarantee and the governance of the association is dealt with by the directors.

THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

REPORT OF THE ACCOUNTANTS TO THE DIRECTORS OF
THE MENAI STRAIT FISHERY ORDER
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The following reproduces the text of the report prepared for the directors in respect of the company's annual unaudited financial statements. In accordance with the Companies Act 2006, the company is only required to file a Balance sheet. Readers are cautioned that the Income statement and certain other primary statements and the Directors' report are not required to be filed with the Registrar of Companies.

In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006 we have prepared for your approval the accounts of The Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association for the year ended 28 February 2022 from the Company's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given us.

As a practising member firm of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed at <http://rulebook.accaglobal.com>.

Our work has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants as detailed at <http://www.accaglobal.com/factsheet163>.

Fraser Wood Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
Victoria House
Plas Llwyd Terrace
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 1UB

30 June 2022

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Page 6

Annex F: Proposals for Financial Management and Control

The proposals set out below are based on advice provided by the Association's Accountants. Comments are invited prior to their formal adoption.

1. Procedure for Payments

- a. All expenditure in respect of goods or services shall require approval by at least two Directors of the Association.
- b. Payments shall only be made upon receipt of an invoice for the relevant goods or services.
- c. Directors must not approve expenditure for goods or services in which they may have a prejudicial interest, whether pecuniary or non pecuniary (i.e. the payment must not be to themselves, to a family member, or to a business in which they have a beneficial interest).
- d. Records shall be retained of:-
 - i. The invoice for the relevant goods / services; and
 - ii. The approval of two Directors of the Association.

2. Procedure for Receipts

- a. The annual fee for any leases and licences shall be confirmed at an Association meeting and recorded in the minutes for that meeting.
- b. Invoices for leases shall be issued twice a year, on the 1st of March and on the 1st of October.
- c. The procedure for debtors shall be:-
 - i. Issues are due for payment within 30 days;
 - ii. After a period of more than 30 days after the due date the debtor(s) shall receive a letter advising that payment is overdue;
 - iii. After a further period of 30 days the debtor(s) shall be advised that the MSFOMA licensing sub-Committee shall meet to determine what action to take; and
 - iv. Unless the debtor(s) have made full payment after a further period of 30 days or have provided a formal commitment to make full payment by instalments, the lease shall be determined and offered to a new applicant.

3. Reporting

- a. At each Association meeting the Secretariat will provide a report to the Association covering the following items:-
 - i. Income and expenditure in the current Financial Year
 - ii. Performance against the agreed budget for the current Financial Year;
 - iii. Monies owed to and by the Association (debtors and creditors); and
 - iv. The balance of funds in the Association's bank account.
- b. The annual accounts submitted to Companies house shall be presented at the first Association meeting after their submission as well as to the next Annual General Meeting of the Association.

Water Quality in The Menai Strait

Background

Water quality, and in particular the abundance of bacteria from effluent inputs, is an important factor determining the viability of shellfish harvesting and cultivation. Shellfish beds in the UK and EU are classified according to the abundance of bacteria in shellfish samples that are collected and analysed by environmental health officers from local authorities. There are six shellfish sample sites for mussels in the eastern Menai Strait.

This report considers shellfish hygiene classification in the Menai Strait, the importance of classification results for the future of the shellfish industry, and how MSFOMA may take action to encourage improvements in this area.

Recommendations

1. That the report is received, along with any verbal updates from the Welsh Government officials invited to the meeting.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There are 393 shellfish “production areas” in England and Wales, which are each classified in response to the abundance of a bacterium (*Escherichia coli*) in samples of shellfish taken within or near to the production areas. These production areas are designated for cockles, mussels, oysters and clams. *E. coli* is found in animal faeces and is used as an indicator of the likely level of sewage effluent that the shellfish have been exposed to, and hence as a measure of the public health risk of consuming shellfish.
- 1.2 Shellfish production areas may be designated Class A, B or C, according to the abundance of *E.coli* in shellfish flesh. The requirements and limits for each classification are set out in Annex III of EU Regulation (EC) 853/2004 and Articles 53, 54 and 55 of Retained EU Law Regulation (EU) 2019/627. They are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of shellfish classification requirements.²

Classification	Minimum Number of samples per year	<i>E. coli</i> per 100g of flesh	
		Requirement	Limit
A	10	80% of samples \leq 230	700
B	8	90% of samples \leq 4600	46,000
C	8	All \leq 46,000	-
Unclassified	-	\geq 46,000	-

- 1.3 Class A shellfish can be harvested for direct human consumption without any further treatment. Class B shellfish must be either purified, relayed for a month in a Class A water, or heat treated prior to human consumption. Class C shellfish must be either relayed for 2 months in Class B waters and then purified; or relayed for 2 months in Class A waters; or heat treated prior to human consumption.

² <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/shellfish-classification>

- 1.4 There are 6 shellfish production areas and sample sites in the eastern Menai Strait. Five of the six production areas have a “long term B” classification. One area (Areas 2 / B, sampled at Cegin Channel) has a “Seasonal A/B” classification, which means that it is a “Class A” from 1st October to 30th April, and a “Class B” at other times.
- 1.5 The location of sample sites and the current classification of their corresponding production areas are shown in Figure 1.

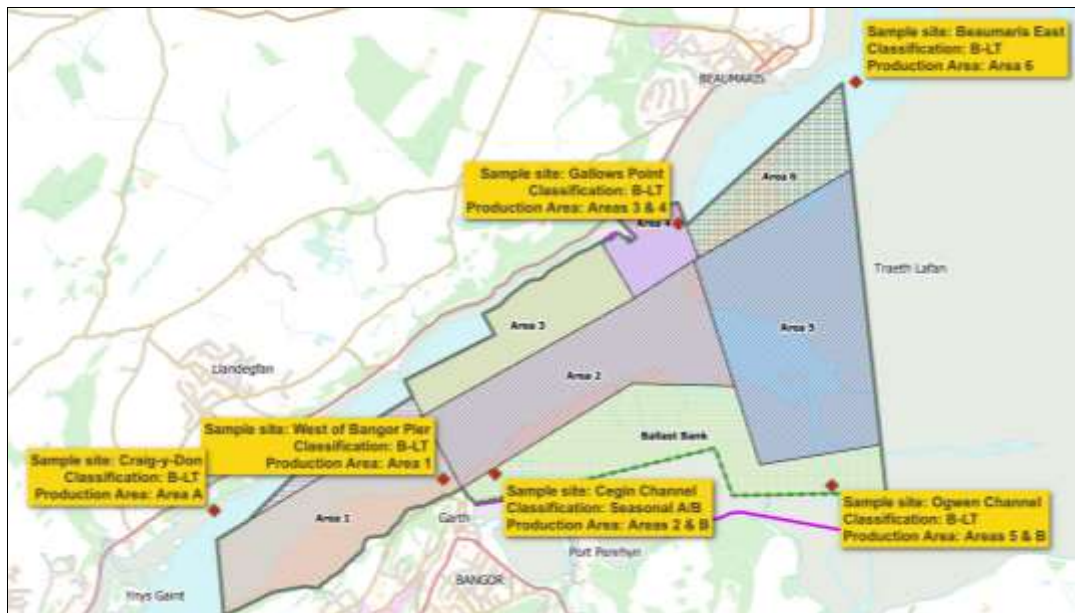


Figure 1: Map of the Eastern Menai Strait showing shellfish sampling locations, classification results, and production areas.

- 1.6 Prior to the UK's departure from the EU the main market for shellfish from the Menai Strait was in Europe. Mussels from the Class B shellfish beds were exported directly from the Strait for relaying or purification in Europe.
- 1.7 Since the UK left the EU it has no longer been permissible to export Class B shellfish directly into Europe; they must be purified, relayed or heat treated prior to export. Only Class A shellfish can be exported direct to EU markets.
- 1.8 This change has essentially prevented shellfish exports from the Strait to the EU, since the UK has very limited capacity for mussel purification (which also causes high in-transit mortality); and only 11 of the 88 mussel production areas in England and Wales have a “Class A” designation.
- 1.9 From this brief introduction it should be clear that an improvement to shellfish hygiene classifications in the eastern Menai Strait could re-open EU markets to the local industry; and any decline (in particular the loss of the Seasonal A/B classification) would have a devastating effect.

2. Managing and monitoring shellfish hygiene results

- 2.1 Shellfish samples are taken each month from the sample sites shown in Figure 1 by environmental health officers from Gwynedd and Ynys Môn County Councils. These results are collated by Cefas (the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) prior to classification of the shellfish beds, which is administered by the Food Standards Agency.

- 2.2 A time series of shellfish sample results over the past five years for the Cegin Channel is shown in Figure 2. Most results are below the “A” requirement of 230 *E. coli* / 100g. A few results exceed this value.

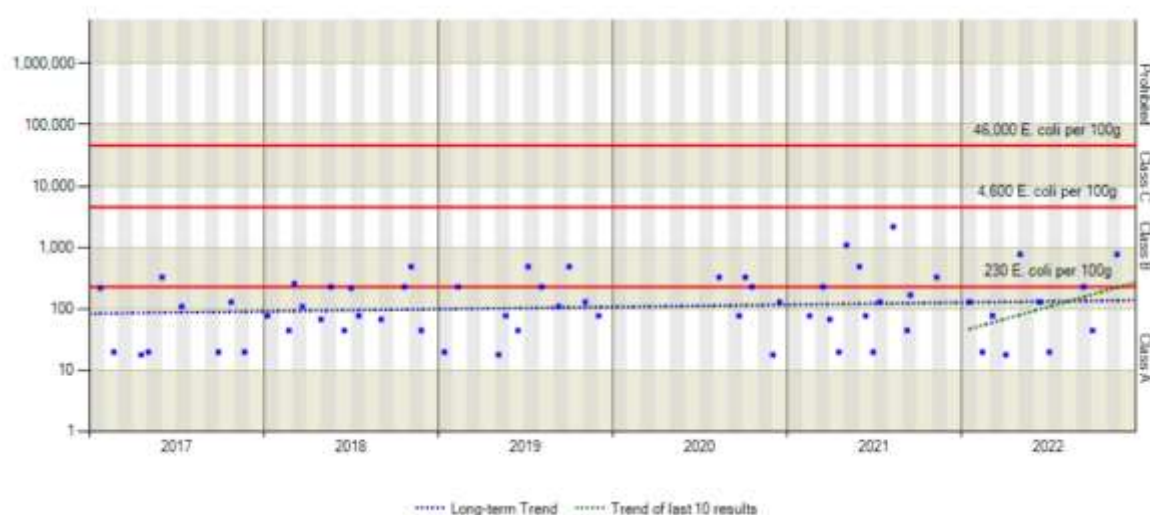


Figure 2: *Shellfish hygiene results, 2017-2022, for the Cegin Channel sample site. Horizontal red lines show the boundaries for “A”, “B” and “C” classification. Note that the vertical axis is logarithmic.*³

- 2.3 If any results are recorded that exceed the limit of 700 *E. coli* / 100g, an “Action State” is put in place, which triggers an investigation and that may result in the temporary downgrading of the classification. “Local Action Groups” that are led by local authorities are responsible for coordinating this response and producing an “Action State Report”.

3. Recent classification results

- 3.1 On the 2nd of December the Association received notification from the Local Action Group for the Menai Strait that a shellfish sample taken from the Cegin Channel on the 22nd November 2022 had returned a result of 780 *E. coli* / 100g. This exceeds the limit value for a Class A shellfish bed (which is 700). The Cegin Channel sample site determines the classification of the only seasonal A/B production area in the eastern Strait.
- 3.2 The Local Action Group has determined that it was appropriate to activate an “Investigation State” for this area, and asked for information to assist with this investigation. The shellfish bed has not been closed or downgraded at this stage because the result is only just above the trigger level.
- 3.3 In response to this request, the Chair of the Association put together a report (attached at Annex A) which looks at the factors that are relevant to this high result. The key conclusions were:-

³ <https://www.cefas.co.uk/data-and-publications/shellfish-classification-and-microbiological-monitoring/england-and-wales/shellfish-monitoring-results/details/?species=MUS&connection=SHS&PointID=B055T>

- a) The high *E.coli* result of 780/100mg was highly unusual for the Cegin RMP with only 4 samples in the past 3 years above the 700/100mg threshold and none at this time of year.
 - b) There was a rainfall event on the day before sampling which resulted in an increased river discharge on 22nd November in the Afon Seiont and Afon Ogwen. This was probably replicated in other rivers flowing into the Strait. High levels of *E. coli* were recorded on the Ogwen 24 hours prior to the sample that had the high result (mean 10,533/100ml).
 - c) Storm overflows at both sewage treatment works and CSOs were operating in the area spilling untreated sewage directly into the strait and the rivers flowing into the Strait.
 - d) These discharges are highly likely to have caused this anomalous result which should be discounted.
- 3.4 The Chair also noted in his report that there was a difference between the result for the mussel sample taken from the Cegin Channel RMP at 0819 on the 22nd November (490 *E.coli* / 100ml) and the sample taken at 1400 on the same day (780 *E.coli* / 100ml). The former was taken when the tide was in, and is thus representative of the catch taken by mussel dredgers; the latter was taken when the tide was out, and does not represent the typical catch from this area.
- 3.5 The Chair has also requested spill duration data from the Combined Sewer Outfalls (CSOs) in the area from Dŵr Cymru, which may also be relevant to this result.
- 3.6 The Local Action Group has requested that all information relevant to this recent high result is submitted by the end of the 14th December. If any Association participants have additional information, the Chair and Secretariat will relay it to the Local Action Group after this meeting.

4. Future action

- 4.1 The recent high results for the Cegin Channel have highlighted an issue that was discussed at the last Association meeting during a presentation from NRW about water quality in the Strait. The issue is that investigations are only triggered when a threshold value (see Table 1) is exceeded. For a Class B bed, this means that no action would be triggered unless a value of 46,000 *E.coli* / 100g was recorded.
- 4.2 The shellfish sample results for the past 5 years in the eastern Menai Strait are shown in Annex B. Four of these sites approach or exceed a “Class A” result for 80% of samples in this period; the other two sites exceed 70%. The highest value recorded from a total of 353 samples in the eastern Strait over this 5-year period was 7,900 *E.coli* / 100g, which is roughly 1/6th of the value that would trigger an investigation.
- 4.3 The Shellfish Centre has been working in collaboration with NRW and Dŵr Cymru to try to understand the sources and characteristics of effluent inputs to the Menai Strait, and how these may affect shellfish hygiene classification. Progress reports on this work have been given to previous Association meetings, and a further update may be available for this meeting.
- 4.4 The data at Annex B show that all of the shellfish production areas in the eastern Menai Strait are close to meeting the “Class A” standard. If this standard was

attained, it could enable exports to the EU from the Strait to resume. The Chair's response at Annex A shows how the Association might be able to improve the perception of shellfish quality in the eastern Menai Strait by encouraging investigation of occasional high results.

- 4.5 The Association is invited to consider how it may be able to provide further information to the shellfish sampling and classification system to encourage an approach that is more pragmatic and that better represents the quality of mussels harvested by dredgers in the Strait.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Menai Strait Areas 2 and B West - Investigation into a High *E. coli* Result in Mussels – 22nd November 2022

1. Background

The Menai Strait (East) Mussel and Oyster Fishery Order ("MSEMOFO") area, in the eastern end of the Menai Strait, is administered by the Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association ("MSFOMA" <https://www.msfoma.org/>) and contains one of the largest mussel fisheries in the UK.

The classified shellfish beds within the MSEMOFO have good quality mussels which are mostly consistent with regulatory Class A. However, due to occasionally high *E. coli* counts, only one of six areas has a seasonal "A" classification, with the remaining areas classified as "B". Bangor Mussel Producers (the cooperative of companies that operate the mussel production leases within the Several Order) depend on export to the EU. Since EU-exit, this requires that live shellfish exported from the UK to the EU must originate from class "A" waters.

2. Issue

On 2nd December 2022 MSFOMA was notified that a high *E. coli* result was recorded which was above the trigger level of 700 *E. coli*/100mg in a classification sample:

Classification zone (including sample co-ordinates)	Sample Date	Result <i>E. coli</i> 100g	Species sampled	Existing classification
Areas 2 and B West	22.11.2022 at 14.00	780	<i>Mytilus spp.</i>	SEASONAL-A (seasonal) 1 Oct to 30 Apr

Areas 2 and B West are represented by Cegin Channel Representative Monitoring Point (RMP):

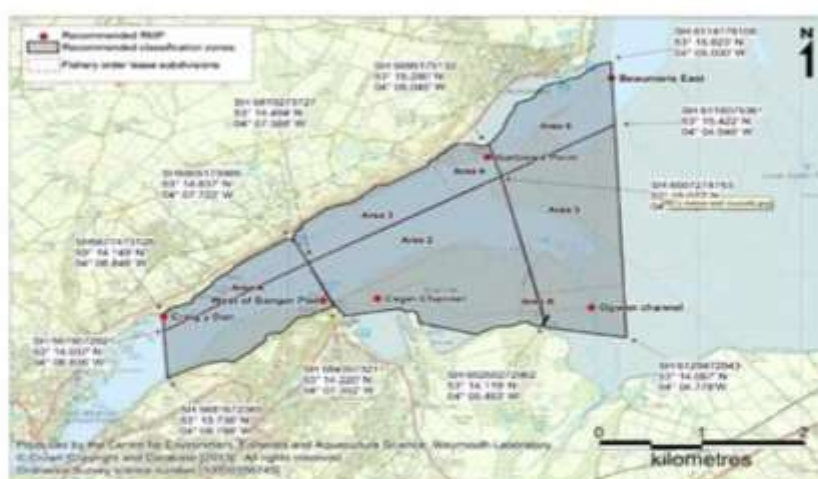
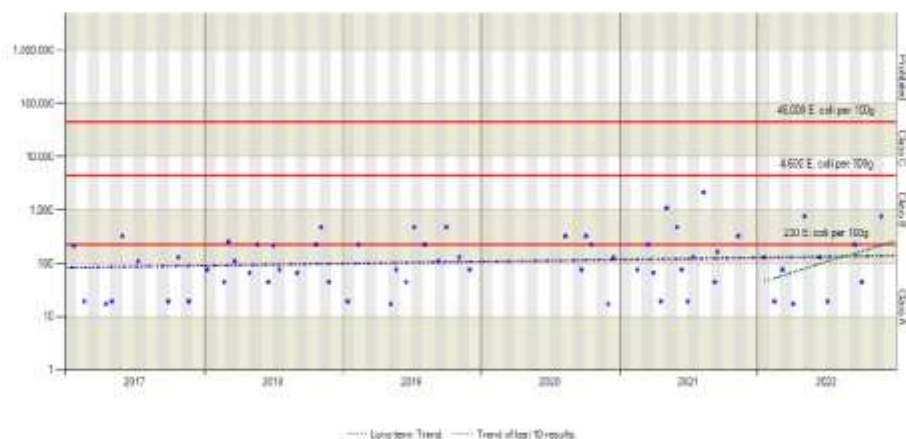


Figure 3.1: Recommended zoning and monitoring arrangements (mussels)

Results for the Cegin Channel RMP for the last 6 years¹ are shown below:



These data show that in the past 3 years 75% of samples (21 out of 28) fell within class “A” with 4 samples over the 700 E. coli /100g threshold, none of which have previously occurred within the period October to April inclusive. This indicates that the November 2022 result of 780 E.coli/100g is very unusual and likely to be caused by a contamination event.

3. Environmental Conditions

There is very high economic interest in better understanding the sources and patterns of E. coli contamination in the area. Several rivers with significant catchments and populations discharge into the Menai Strait. The area is affected by urban and rural municipal wastewater, discharge from wastewater treatment facilities and probably also by private septic tanks. Agricultural and wildlife-derived contamination may also affect the microbial water quality.

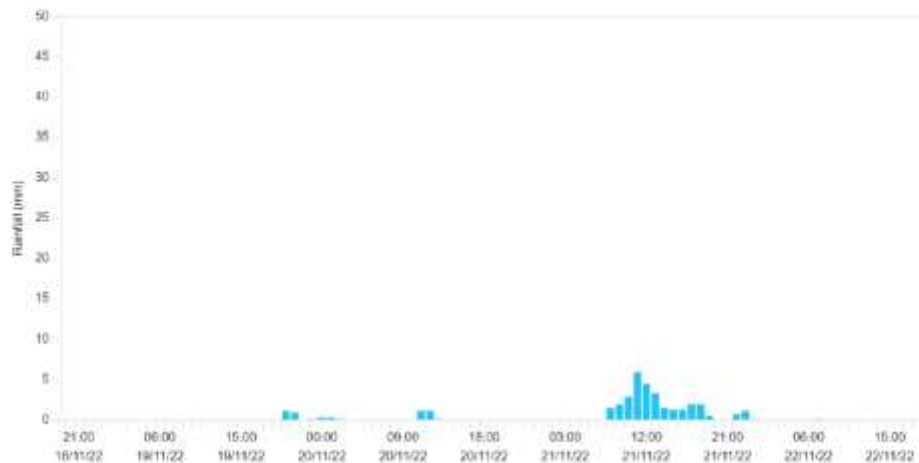
The current area classifications are based on the analysis of shellfish samples taken approximately monthly from Representative Monitoring Points (RMPs). This frequency does not sufficiently explore the temporal pattern of microbial contamination or the frequency of contamination ‘events’ and does not resolve the dynamics associated with high rainfall events. The current data lack information on whether the pollution is human sewage-derived or agriculture-related, nor the relative contribution of potential sources.

The Shellfish Centre (Bangor University) has been carrying out a study (: Project 12b Microbial sources tracking in Menai Strait, North Wales) which aims to better understand the environmental factors affecting microbial water quality and shellfish hygiene in the Menai East shellfish area and how variations in harvesting practices and sampling could be incorporated into modification of the application of the shellfish official control regulations. This project will also help to identify the

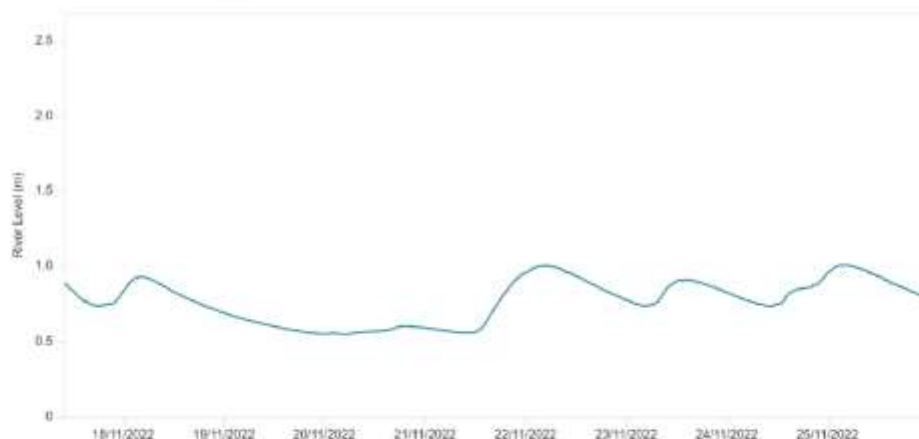
¹ <https://www.cefas.co.uk/data-and-publications/shellfish-classification-and-microbiological-monitoring/england-and-wales/shellfish-monitoring-results/details/?species=MUS&connection=SHS&PointID=B055T>

periods when faecal indicator concentrations peak, as well as inform on the source of contamination and the duration of higher risk periods. Data from this study has been used below in addition to information from Natural Resources Wales.

NRW Bethesda rain gauge recorded 31.6mm rain on 21st Nov.



The closest river gauging station operated by NRW is on the River Seiont at Peblic Mill:



The Seiont river level increased by around 0.5m between 1200 on 21st November and 0500 on 22nd November in response to the rainfall on 21st November.

Flows in the River Ogwen have been monitored by the Shellfish Centre study and show that there was a response in the discharge of the Afon Ogwen. Peak discharge of this event 24.59 m³/s @ 1615 21/11/22, remaining similar until around 2115. The investigation-triggering sample was taken at Cegin RMP around 17hrs later at 1400 22/11/22.

Bethesda Quarry raingauge

Find raingauge and profile

Return to search

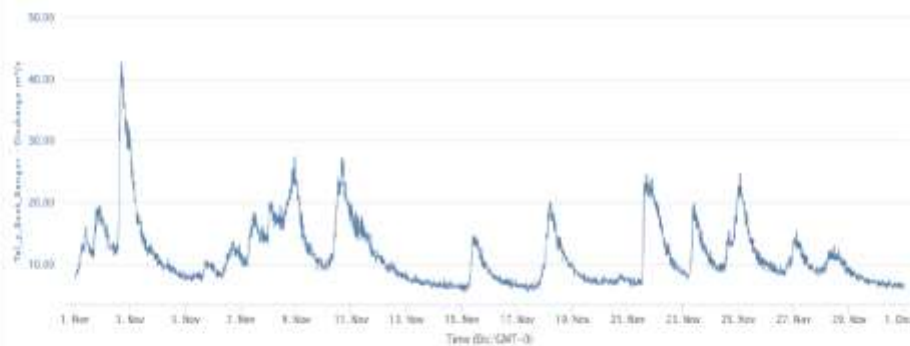
Station Details

Readings

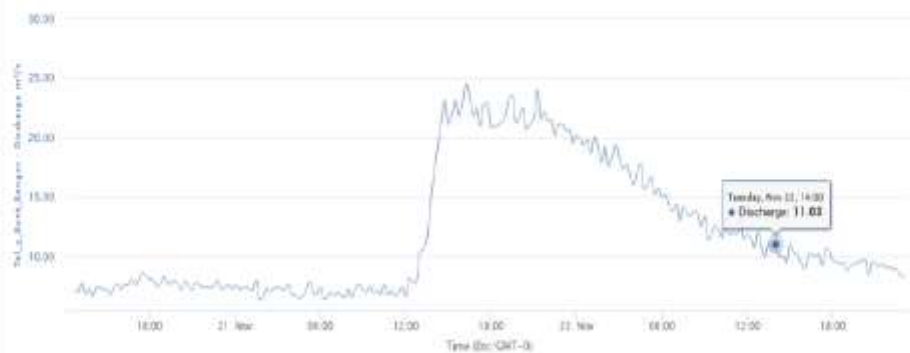
How to use this graph



Tal.y_Bont_Bangor - Discharge



Tal.y_Bont_Bangor - Discharge



The routine sampling for the study also occurred on 21 and 22/11/22.

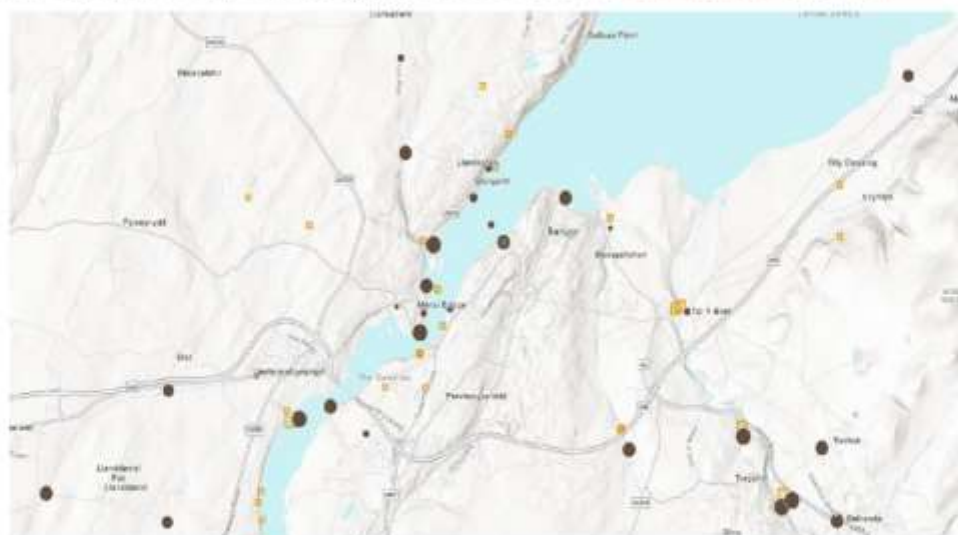
Triplicate river samples (taken before the Ogwen discharge peaked on 21/11/22) gave mean concentrations of

Ogwen	21/11/22 1420	10533 <i>E. coli</i> /100ml
Cegin	21/11/22 1400	666 <i>E. coli</i> /100ml
Adda	21/11/22 1342	4100 <i>E. coli</i> /100ml

The shellfish results are for the statutory RMPs and were taken earlier in the day than official control samples on 22/11/22

West of Bangor Pier	22/11/22 0825	490 <i>E. coli</i> /100g (MPN)
Cegin Channel	22/11/22 0819	490 <i>E. coli</i> /100g (MPN)
Gallows Point	22/11/22 0906	490 <i>E. coli</i> /100g (MPN)
Ogwen Channel	22/11/22 0942	1300 <i>E. coli</i> /100g (MPN)

There are a number of sewage treatment works (orange points) and Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs – black circles)) which discharge either directly into the area or into rivers which flow into the Menai Strait. All of these discharges are consented and are monitored by Dŵr Cymru Welsh water (DCWW) and they are able to provide event duration data for all CSOs into the area.



The main discharges are:

To the Strait:

- Bangor Beach Road Pumping Station. Permit: CG0351702
- Gorad Road pumping station. Permit: CG0353701

To the Afon Ogwen:

- Tregarth sewage works settled storm. Permit: CG0083802
- Fron Ogwen pumping station (pumps to Tregarth) Permit: CG0083901
- Rock Terrace CSO, Bethesda. Permit: CG0164901
- Bethesda sewage works storm. Permit: CG0437401
- CSO at Maes Bleddyn, Rachub. Permit: MP3328XV (to a trib of the Ogwen)

To the Afon Cegin:

- Glasinfryn pumping station. Permit: CG0185201
- Rhiwlas sewage works. Permit: CG0086002

Verbal reports from NRW confirm that on 22nd November the CSOs at Tregarth Sewage Treatment Works and Bethesda Sewage Treatment Works were both discharging. Data has been requested from DCWW on the total daily spill duration (hours) for each asset on 20th, 21st and 22nd November 2022 and this report will be updated with this information when available

4. Conclusions

- The high E.coli result of 780/100mg was highly unusual for the Cegin RMP with only 4 samples in the past 3 years above the 700/100mg threshold and none at this time of year.
- There was a rainfall event on the day before sampling which resulted in an increased river discharge on 22nd November in the Afon Seiont and Afon Ogwen. This was probably replicated in other rivers flowing into the Strait. High levels of E. coli were recorded on the Ogwen 24 hours prior to the sample that had the high result (mean 10,533/100ml).
- Storm overflows at both sewage treatment works and CSOs were operating in the area spilling untreated sewage directly into the strait and the rivers flowing into the Strait.
- These discharges are highly likely to have caused this anomalous result which should be discounted.

Further to these observations, we would draw your attention to the difference between the result for the mussel sample taken from the Cegin Channel RMP at 0819 on the 22nd November (490 E.coli / 100ml) and the sample taken at 1400 on the same day (780 E.coli / 100ml). The former was taken when the tide was in, and is thus representative of the catch taken by mussel dredgers; the latter was taken when the tide was out, and does not represent the typical catch from this area.

ALAN WINSTONE
Chair, MSFOMA
12th December 2022

Annex B: Summary of shellfish sample results from the eastern Menai Strait for the period 2017-2022 (ending September 2022)

Sample Site	Mean E.coli	Max E.coli	Min E.coli	No. Samples	Count of A	Count of B	Count of C	%A	%B	%C	Geometric Mean*
Beaumaris East	194.9	1700	18	58	49	9	0	84.5%	100.0%	100.0%	95
Cegin Channel	203.8	2200	18	59	47	12	0	79.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100
Craig-y-Don	195.9	3300	18	58	47	11	0	81.0%	100.0%	100.0%	86
Gallows Point	190.2	2300	18	58	46	12	0	79.3%	100.0%	100.0%	97
Ogwen Channel	394.6	7900	18	59	43	15	1	72.9%	98.3%	100.0%	122
West of Bangor Pier	260.9	3300	18	61	47	14	0	77.0%	100.0%	100.0%	106

* The Geometric mean is the preferred value used by microbiologists, it is defined as the nth root of the product of n numbers⁴. The geometric mean of a set of numbers is always lower than the arithmetic mean.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geometric_mean

Welsh Government Activity

Background

The Welsh Government is responsible for managing inshore fisheries in Wales. This report provides a brief update on some Welsh Government Activities that may be relevant to the work of MSFOMA.

Recommendations

1. That the report is received, along with any verbal updates from the Welsh Government officials invited to the meeting.
2. That the Association should discuss the opportunities for project funding that have recently been made available by Welsh Government.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Welsh Government website provides information about consultations and meetings of various stakeholder groups that are relevant to the Welsh Fishing industry. A brief summary of recent activity is provided below.

2. Meetings of Fisheries Groups

- 2.1 Welsh Government has established several groups to assist with the administration and management of Welsh fisheries. The key groups are:-
 - a) **Inshore Fisheries Groups** - these groups were established to provide stakeholders with a forum for communicating and engaging with Welsh Government. They were disbanded several years ago, and at the same time the membership of the Welsh Marine Fisheries Advisory Group (WMFAG) was broadened and supported by ad-hoc "Task and Finish" groups. The most recent WMFAG meeting resolved to maintain this arrangement and to review its effectiveness in December 2020.
 - b) **Welsh Marine Fisheries Advisory Group (WMFAG)** - this group was established to assist with the formulation of appropriate policies, plans, strategies and laws relating to marine fisheries in Wales. Information about this group is now available from <https://beta.gov.wales/wales-marine-fisheries-advisory-group>. The most recent published WMFAG minutes were for the meeting on 15th September 2020 (published on 10th December 2020 [here](#)), which were reported and discussed previous MSFOMA meetings.

It was reported at the last MSFOMA meeting what the Welsh Fishermen's Federation were liaising with the Minister about this group, and that it had been hoped that a meeting might take place in the spring. It is hoped that news of progress will be provided to the meeting.

- c) **Aquaculture Advisory Group** - this Group was established to help Welsh Government meet the targets that it set in the 2013 Wales Marine and Fisheries Strategic Action Plan for aquaculture production of 2,000t of finfish and 16,000t of shellfish by 2020. No meetings of this group have taken place recently. The

most recent WMFAG meeting confirmed that the AAG has been “...suspended following poor attendance and dissatisfaction.” WMFAG further resolved to remove a reference to the AAG from its own Terms of Reference “...as that sub-group was disbanded.”

2.2 **Ministerial Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF)** – this group was created by Welsh Government earlier this year. The first meeting of this group took place on the 14th July. The Chair of the Association attended the second meeting of MAGWF which took place on the 24th November 2022. A copy of the agenda for this meeting and supporting papers is provided at Annex A to this report. The key points to note from the MAGWF meeting were:

- a) The launch of a new funding scheme called the “Welsh Marine and Fisheries Scheme” (WMFS). The window for Expressions of Interest (EoI) in “Marketing Measures” (finding new products; promoting quality and added value; contributing to transparency and traceability of production) opened on 5th December and will close on the 13th January.
- b) The WG policy on Pacific Oysters is due to be considered at the next meeting of this group.

2.3 Members and Observers at the Association meeting will be asked for a verbal update on any recent meetings of these and related groups that are not reported on the Welsh Government website.

3. Consultations

3.1 There are no open consultations for “Marine and Fisheries” on the Welsh Government website ([here](#)) that are directly relevant to MSFOMA.

4. Funding Opportunities

4.1 Two WG-backed funding opportunities have become available since the last funding meeting:-

- a) The Welsh Marine and Fisheries Scheme (WFMS), which is described briefly above; and
- b) The Coastal Communities Capacity Building Fund – the Chair attended an online seminar about this fund on the 12th of December. In brief, it is a £800k fund aimed at building capacity in local groups to access other sources of funding. Its aims include both nature recovery and sustainable growth. Applications for funding are to be made via Local Nature Partnerships, with a deadline of 5th January 2023.

4.2 It would be appropriate for the Association to consider whether it may wish to put in a funding proposal to either of these schemes, either alone or in partnership with other organisations around the Strait.

5. Welsh Government Officials

5.1 There have been some informal discussions over the phone and in telephone conference calls with WG officials since the last meeting, but none of significance.

6. Communications with Cabinet Minister

6.1 Communications with the Cabinet Minister concerning Fishery Orders in the Menai Strait are reported in items 12 & 14 on the agenda.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Annex A: Papers provided for Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries meeting, November 24th 2022.

MAGWF 2022 Meeting 2

Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF)

Meeting 2: Thursday 24 November 2022, 10:00 – 12:00

Agenda

1	Welcome	10:00 – 10:10
2	Review notes and actions (see Doc 1)	10:10 – 10:20
3	Agree ToR update (see Doc 2)	10:20 – 10:40
4	Welsh Government update	10:40 – 11:00
5	Funding: new scheme to replace the EMFF (see Doc 3)	11:00 – 11:45
6	Forward look	11:45 – 12:00

See also following papers sent in advance:

Doc 1: Notes and actions from meeting 1, on 14 July

Doc 2: Updated Terms of Reference (ToR)

Doc 3: Funding Policy update

Meeting Note

Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF)

2.30 pm – 4.30 pm 14 July 2022

Agenda

2.30 pm	Welcome and introductions – Gareth Bevington Overall aims and Terms of Reference (Paper 1) - Gareth Bevington
3.15pm	Update on the Joint Fisheries Statement – Tamsin Brown
3.30pm	Minister to join meeting Strategic aims for Welsh Fisheries (discussion paper 2) - Minister and Tamsin Brown
4.25pm	AOB and Date for next meeting
4.30pm	Close

Attendees

Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths, MS
Jon Parker, Chair, Seafish Wales Advisory Committee (SWAC)
Jim Evans, Chair, Welsh Fishermen's Association (WFA)
Colin Charman, Natural Resources Wales
Natalie Hold, Bangor University
Nerys Edwards, Syren Shellfish
Carl Davies, Commercial fisher, lobster/ prawn, chartered angler
Colin Macdonald, Managing Director, Parson's Pickles
Sean Clement, Wales Environment Link, Marine Conservation Society (interim representative)
Aoife Martin, Seafish (representing Lynn Gilmore)
Officials: Gareth Bevington, Julian Bray, Tamsin Brown, Caryn Le Roux, Lisa Roberts-Clarke.

Welcome and introductions

1. Gareth Bevington (GB) welcomed attendees to the first meeting of the strategic advisory group, which the Minister would join later and was keen to hear views of the new group for fisheries.
2. Introductions were made. GB confirmed the nature and purpose of the group had come about following the review of WMFAG. The reason for a new group was to change the remit and scope and create a more traditional Ministerial Advisory Group which would advise the Minister and be broader in its representation across the industry.

Overall aims and Terms of Reference

3. GB anticipated the discussions would cover co-management and development of the separate groups alongside the strategic group. A recent

example of co-management was work for the Whelk Order, which had been co-designed outside of WMFAG. The Wales Whelk Advisory Group would meet in September.

4. GB acknowledged the Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF) did not include aquaculture representatives. The group were given the opportunity to discuss the new approach and the Terms of Reference.

Feedback on the Terms of Reference

5. Jon Parker (JP) raised concerns about not including aquaculture within the new group and noted the approach used for the Whelk Order as good practice. Queried what other models had been considered. GB acknowledged there were many comparisons to draw from. However, the best and most effective approach was the Whelk model.
6. Jim Evans (JE) agreed engagement with stakeholders was crucial. However, at present no clarity about the development of the distinct groups existed and queried what would happen in the interim. Discussion followed about the hierarchy between groups and where WMAAG fitted in. GB confirmed WMAAG was a separate entity to MAGWF and of the importance to maintain linkages between the two, but the Minister would look to MAGWF for advice from the fishing sector.
7. Colin Macdonald (CM) explained his involvement in the industry and considered MAGWF to be a good start. He understood there would be fringe groups for the areas of the fishing industries. Cockles had been going well and the work completed on the Whelk Order had been excellent.
8. Sean Clement (SC) agreed the point about aquaculture needed resolving. Transparency around the make up of MAGWF and the groups in its orbit was needed. SC welcomed participation and for inclusion of additional representation from Wales Environmental Link (WEL) in the new group.
9. Aoife Martin (AM) welcomed the initiative to provide the Minister with an advisory group and confirmed Seafish were happy to support MAGWF. AM acknowledged the new group was Welsh facing and some of the members present were also engaged within UK wide groups. Therefore, the possibility to tap into a wider knowledge base and expertise existed. Additional areas such as safety, skills, ethics and welfare and the wider supply chain be considered as well as good comms and raising awareness.
10. Natalie Hold (NH) considered co-management was key to achieving delivery, but stakeholders and government viewed the meaning differently. A definition of co-management was required from the beginning of work.
11. Carl Davies (CD) asked for more detail about the role of WMAAG. Regarding co-decision making he considered more fishers should be included in the new group. Comms from Welsh Government was important, and fishers had a role providing data for use in scientific research.

12. Caryn Le Roux (CLR) outlined the remit of WMAAG represented the whole of the marine environment, and that group had a wider ranging remit in comparison to MAGWF. Building capacity in coastal communities was a key theme for WMAAG.

Actions

13. GB thanked members for their views and would consider expanding MAGWF to include additional representation from WEL.
14. GB to provide a paper for discussion at a future meeting about co-management and explore the definition which would benefit the group.
15. To address the issue of aquaculture not being included in the Terms of Reference and consider points made about safety and supply chain with the Minister for possible inclusion into the role of the group.

Update on the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS)

16. Tamsin Brown (TB) gave a presentation on the JFS and progress to date and outlined the legislative and non-legislative elements of the Fisheries Management and Support Framework, which UK Government and the devolved administrations (the Fisheries Policy Authorities) were jointly developing. From the eight objectives in the Fisheries Act 2020, the policy framework would set the direction for the next 6 years and Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) were part of this. The consultation on the JFS closed in April and a summary of responses published on 1 July. The JFS is due to be published by the Fisheries Policy Authorities by 23 November 2022, as well as a government response to the public consultation and a response to the Energy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report on the JFS.

Questions for discussion in paper 2

17. The group were asked to consider the questions set out in the discussion paper.
 1. What do you think of these priorities?
 2. How can we improve how we directly communicate and engage meaningfully with fishers and stakeholders?
 3. How can we ensure as a group we focus on the key strategic issues and priorities?
18. JE noted the priority for key species included Whelk, Cockle, Scallop, Crab and Lobster. Bass and queen scallops were not included. There was concern on how to engage with the FMPs and decide whether to have a regional approach over a national one.
19. GB welcomed the Minister to the meeting, who thanked members for attending; and the reason for having a new advisory group and for help with

developing the fisheries strategy. FMPs were key to supporting the fishing industry. The Welsh Government was working on development of fisheries funding for 2022/23 and this had a dedicated stakeholder group.

20. The Minister confirmed the fisheries priorities paper would be discussed next and was interested to hear views. TB summarised the content of the paper referred to the JFS and management of priority species; allocation of additional quota; a new entrant scheme; science and evidence; and importance of stakeholder engagement in delivering priorities.

Views on priorities

21. JP agreed with the paper and the priorities were right, but needed to be in a different order, given present landings and volume of fishing to date. NH stated fisheries management for sustainable fisheries should be followed by science and evidence, then co-management and stakeholder engagement.
22. JE commented within fisheries management it was necessary to include a plan for the evidence. With regards to the new funding scheme JE was not confident it was a suitable replacement for European Marine Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Funding was linked to the marine plan and challenges already existed from reforms and decarbonisation.
23. NH commented the top priority areas were fisheries management, and science and evidence. Consideration also be given to climate change in the Fisheries Act. SC agreed and was pleased to see priority given to enforcement and monitoring.
24. CD explained about his work to decarbonise his vessel. Concern was mentioned regarding accessing funding for this purpose in Wales. Fishers were recognised as important in their role to provide information for science and research which could support a long-term strategy. Quota required more planning and confirmed industry needed to be better informed.
25. NE agreed science an important priority but had learned of concerns from fishers who experienced difficulty with iVMS and devices not functioning properly. In addition, there was difficulty with room for growth in the quota, meaning fishers were unable to swap fisheries compared to past practices. GB encouraged any fishers having trouble with iVMS to contact Welsh Government.

Views on how to improve communication

26. JE wanted the JFS to include a vision and forward planning. The Programme for Government was considered restricted. Overall, Defra's approach publishing monthly newsletters and use of social media was important for the industry. The UK spending review and allocated budget for fisheries in Wales was raised as a concern.

27. NH agreed a vision was important and government should focus on long term planning. Climate change and decarbonisation were long term areas of work which required a clear vision and pathways in place to achieve it. Also cycles of funding needed to be longer to achieve better planning.

28. NE raised the issue about engagement with fishers for the JFS consultation. An approach for face-to-face delivery to explain government policy was preferable and would also welcome monthly updates as mentioned earlier. JP concluded an approach addressing numeracy and literacy within the industry could be considered.

29. GB confirmed the Welsh Government had continually raised views about the budget for Wales through regular interministerial group meetings.

Views on ensuring focus on key strategic issues and priorities

30. JP acknowledged the group needed to get priorities right from the beginning and to tackle difficult areas first.

31. The Minister thanked members for expressing their views on the questions posed, which had been helpful.

Date of Next Meeting

32. GB confirmed MAGWF meetings were to be quarterly. The next meeting would be on **19 October**, and a diary marker would be sent to members.

Close

Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Version control		
Version	Date update	Approved
v1.1	14 July 2022	
v1.2	24 November 2022	

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF) is a strategic streamlined high-level group. It replaces the Wales Marine Fisheries Advisory Group (WMFAG). It has a broader range of membership and will be chaired by officials, or the Minister, where necessary will represent the Welsh fishing and aquaculture industries across the supply chain and provide advice to Ministers and officials on broad range of strategic fisheries and aquaculture issues.
- 1.2. Alongside the strategic group, more distinct groups will be established as required, to deliver co-management of specific Welsh fisheries. These groups will update the strategic group and keep them apprised of progress although there is no direct accountability from these groups to MAGWF. Until species specific groups are established MAGWF will be the temporary forum for these discussions.

2. Governance

- 2.1. Officials will ensure the alignment of governance structures and consistency of approach between the Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries (MAGWF) and the existing groups such as Wales Marine Advisory & Action Group (WMAAG).
- 2.2. A forward plan for the agenda will set out the work of the group but will retain an element of flexibility to include matters arising.
- 2.3. Clear direction for the group will be set and a programme of work with defined roles.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership of MAGWF will include fishers' and aquaculture representative bodies, supply chain representatives, environmental group representatives and academia. The main purpose of the group is to shape fisheries strategies.

The group membership will be flexible and reviewed so it can be open to new members.

4. Ways of working

- 4.1. Members of MAGWF will be asked to attend meetings on a quarterly basis. These will be held via Microsoft Teams, or in person and members are asked to provide any input outside of the meetings via email.
- 4.2. Members are expected to seek views of the representative bodies and where appropriate should forward the papers amongst their organisations. Papers should not be sent to anyone external to their organisations without prior consent from the Secretariat. Any information sharing should also adhere to data protection requirements.

5. Secretariat

- 5.1. Secretariat will be provided by Welsh Government's Marine and Fisheries Division, who will act as a central point for all communications.
- 5.2. 'Action' or 'Discussion' style minutes will be taken of each meeting and shared with members for approval. All queries should be directed to the Secretariat.

Funding Policy Update

Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries

The Welsh Marine and Fisheries Scheme (WMFS)

The Scheme comprises implementing regulations, dedicated budget, overarching policy aims and a delivery mechanism.

The Marine, Fisheries and Aquaculture (Financial Assistance) Scheme (Wales) Regulations 2022 were laid in the Senedd on 15 November.

The Scheme will be delivered via funding rounds which will be online application windows operated by Rural Payments Wales (RPW).

The scope of the Scheme is broad as demonstrated by the wide range of fundable activities. Within that broad scope, specific objectives can be targeted by funding rounds. Each funding round's criteria will be tailored to the scale and nature of the desired objective.

Funding rounds for two open call application windows has been developed to support the following objectives:

- Marketing measures, and
- Energy efficiency and mitigation of climate change.

These funding rounds have been considered by the funding policy advisory group and were chosen because they offer support for quite different objectives. They are consistent with overarching Welsh Government policy and also because the evidence we have supports investment to improve value added and the need to improve the environmental impact of operations.

Investing in Welsh Coastal Communities to build capacity for sustainable growth

As Wales, and correspondingly, the Welsh seafood sector is much smaller (on an absolute and relative measure) to other administrations within the UK, the Welsh Government is developing policy interventions to improve the resilience of the sector in order to promote self-sustaining and environmentally sustainable growth in often deprived coastal communities.

Recent stakeholder workshops have identified and evidenced the value in supporting this kind of foundational economic development. It is also expected that providing this support will foster an environment where individual organisations are able to make the most of funding opportunities available to them.

Development of the coastal capacity building proposal is ongoing and Ministers have agreed to the continued development of this work, focusing on the following overarching priorities:

1. Sustainable growth/diversification (for example to increase capacity for sustainable aquaculture, tourism, recreation, local seafood supply chains and delivery of Fisheries Objectives, as outlined in the Joint Fisheries Statement)
2. Nature recovery (for example to increase capacity for projects / collaborative approaches that support tackling the nature and climate emergency) including commitment to and improved management of the marine environment).

The aim is to invest in communities around the coast of Wales to improve skills, knowledge, commercial and community relationships in coastal activities such as fishing, aquaculture, recreational sea angling, tourism, environmental awareness and enhancement. Increasing commercial and social activity for coastal businesses/organisations that sustainably exploit marine resources and encourage cross-boundary and cross-sectoral engagement should lead to more vibrant coastal communities with positive impacts for marine businesses.

Future plans and engagement

The first funding round of the Welsh Marine and Fisheries Scheme is targeted widely. Input from stakeholders to identify potential objectives for funding round 2 and ideally agree the objective (or objectives) to target would be appreciated. It may be that a more narrowly focussed funding round might be appropriate.

As well as identifying the objective to fund, we'd also appreciate your views on how the funding round criteria should be made as appropriate for the expected applicants as possible.

The more specific and detailed a proposal, the more likely we will be able to progress it in a reasonable timescale. Any supporting evidence that you have could also be valuable.

Another meeting of the funding policy advisory group is being planned for the New Year and it would be good to be able to discuss proposals at that meeting.

North West Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Activity

Background

The North West Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) are responsible for managing sea fisheries including mussel fisheries in the coastal waters lying between the Dee and the Solway Firth. This area includes the UK's largest seed mussel resource, which is vital to the ongoing success of the Menai Strait mussel fishery. This report provides a brief update on NWIFCA activities that could have an impact on the Menai Strait mussel fishery.

Recommendations

1. That the report is received.
2. That progress with the opening of a seed mussel dredge fishery in Morecambe Bay is noted, and that NWIFCA scientific staff should be thanked for progressing this.
3. That the Association should keep the need for a Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan on the future agenda for NWIFCA.

1. IFCA Meetings

- 1.1 Since the last meeting of the Association the NW-IFCA has held two quarterly meetings, on the 29th September and the 1st December 2022. A meeting of the Technical, Science and Byelaws (TSB) Sub-Committee took place on the 7th November 2022.
- 1.2 It was noted at the last meeting that NWIFCA scientific staff had carried out survey and assessment work to enable a limited area of the mussel beds in Morecambe Bay to be opened for a seed mussel dredge fishery.

2. Changes to Byelaws

- 2.1 There are no proposals to alter any NWIFCA byelaws that may impact the mussel industry at its next meeting.

3. Changes to Personnel

- 3.1 The Chief Executive of the NWIFCA, Dr Stephen Atkins, left the Authority at the end of September after a period of 17 years in this role. The Authority is presently in the process of recruiting a replacement.

4. Bivalve Mollusc Working Group

- 4.1 No meetings of the Bivalve Mollusc Working Group have taken place since the last MSFOMA meeting.

5. Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan

- 5.1 It was reported last year that MSFOMA participants in NWIFCA business had asked the Authority to proceed with the implementation of the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan. It proved impossible for NWIFCA to progress this plan last year.
- 5.2 Given the long-term importance of the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan to the shellfish farmers in the Menai Strait, it will be important to also keep this item on the agenda for NWIFCA action. The Secretariat (also vice-Chair of NWFICA and the NWIFA TSB) will encourage action on this area of work.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Menai Strait (East) Mussel & Oyster Fishery Order **2022**

Background

The Menai Strait Oyster and Mussel Fishery Order was made in 1962 and provided the legal foundations for the mussel fishery in the eastern Menai Strait. This Order was the basis for the most successful and productive aquaculture area in Wales. The 1962 Order expired on 1st April 2022 and was succeeded by a new Order, the Menai Strait (East) Mussel & Oyster Fishery Order 2022.

This report considers the progress that has been made with implementing the new Fishery Order since it came into force on 2nd April 2022.

Recommendations

1. That the report is received.
2. That the Secretariat should work with NRW staff and mussel farmers to review the “Managed Areas” that have been established on a precautionary basis around the “reef” habitat features in the eastern Menai Strait.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Since 1962, a “Fishery Order” made by the Fisheries Minister under national legislation has provided the legal foundation for both the cultivation of mussels and oysters and for the regulation of the fishery for wild mussels in the eastern end of the Menai Strait. This has been the most successful Fishery Order in the UK.
- 1.2 The Menai Strait Oyster and Mussel Fishery Order 1962 expired on the 1st April 2022, and was immediately replaced by the new Menai Strait (East) Mussel and Oyster Fishery Order 2022, which will remain in force for 35 years. Although the wording of the new Fishery Order is different to its predecessor, and the boundary along the Anglesey coastline has been altered, it is in practical terms a “like for like” replacement which will allow mussel cultivation to proceed as before. A copy of the new Order can be viewed on the UK Government legislation website [here](#).

2. Progress with implementation

- 2.1 The process of implementing the new Fishery Order was completed earlier this year. Leases have been issued for all eight of the leased areas, and invoices for lease fees have been sent to all tenants.
- 2.2 It was noted at the previous MSFOMA meetings that some further work is required to confirm the extent of some of the precautionary “managed areas” that have been established within leased areas. These areas set a 100m buffer around known reef features on the seabed. As the need arises, the Secretariat will work with the mussel farmers and NRW to determine the extent to which these areas can be reduced without placing natural habitat features at risk.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Menai Strait West Fishery Order Application

Background

In 2012 the Association resolved to work with shellfish farmers from the western Menai Strait to renew the Menai Strait West Fishery Order, which lapsed in 2008. An application for renewal of this Fishery was submitted to Welsh Government in 2013. The renewal of the Order is essential to secure the future development of shellfish farming in this area.

A public consultation on the proposal to renew the Menai Strait West Fishery Order was carried out by the Association in October-November 2015. A significant number of objections were submitted. The Association worked with local stakeholders to address these concerns, and good progress was being made until late 2019 when WG officials indicated that concerns about cultivation of Pacific Oysters had arisen. Since that date the Association has been working with the shellfish farmers in the western Menai Strait and scientists from Bangor University to try to address these concerns.

This report provides an update on recent progress.

Recommendations

1. That the report is received
2. That action to encourage Welsh Government progress with the new Fishery Order is noted.
3. That the Association should determine how it wishes to proceed with this application.

1. Context

- 1.1 The Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order was established in 1978 for a period of 30 years. This Fishery Order provided the basis for the development of some oyster and mussel farming activity in the western Strait. The Order lapsed in 2008, preventing the further development of these businesses. An application for renewal of the Order was submitted to Welsh Government by MSFOMA in 2013.
- 1.2 After a series of discussions with Welsh Government officials, a draft Fishery Order was published for consultation in 2015. This consultation generated many objections from the local community. The Association worked closely with the objectors during the period 2015-17 to allay and address their concerns. In July 2017 the Chair of the Association wrote to the Cabinet Secretary to ask her to determine the application for the Fishery Order.
- 1.3 At the March 2019 meeting of the Association, it was reported that the Minister for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths AM had made a commitment to complete the process for making a new Menai West Fishery Order by August 2019.
- 1.4 At the Association meeting in September 2019 WG officials indicated that they were working with lawyers to determine the conditions that would be associated with the Fishery Order. It was anticipated that this would meet the December 2019 deadline proposed by the Minister.

- 1.5 In November 2019 WG officials provided some informal feedback from their legal advisors concerning a condition that could be included in the Order, requiring that Ministerial consent was given for leases before they were issued. This proposal was discussed at the last MSFOMA meeting and considered to be consistent with the approach set out in the 2015 Draft Order.
- 1.6 At the December 2019 Association meeting some concerns were raised by WG officials about the mitigation approach for Pacific oysters. At the April 2020 meeting it was reported that work was still underway to address these issues.
- 1.7 This report provides an update on recent progress with this application.

2. Pacific Oysters

- 2.1 Welsh Government has been working since 2019 to determine an appropriate approach to managing and mitigating the risk of Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) from cultivation areas in Wales becoming established in the wild as “feral” oysters.
- 2.2 MSFOMA representatives discussed these risks with WG and NRW officials between December 2019 and July 2020. In July 2020 it was reported that WG Science have produced a draft desk study (“Pacific Oyster Review”) of the situation in the Menai Strait, assisted by the University of Bangor. This review was intended provide the evidence base for informing the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of leases for Pacific oyster cultivation in the Strait. The Review has not yet been published for released.
- 2.3 Welsh Government reported to the Secretariat in March 2021 that they had made no further progress with this issue and had been focussing their resources on the Fishery Order in the eastern Menai Strait.
- 2.4 To make some progress with this issue, the Chair and Secretariat convened a series of meetings starting in January 2021 involving the prospective oyster farmers from the western Menai Strait and scientists from the Marine Centre in Menai Bridge. This collaboration resulted in the production of a report entitled “*Current status of the Pacific oyster, Crassostrea (Magallana) gigas, in the Menai Strait, spawning potential and potential mitigation using triploid oysters*” that was presented at the June meeting of the Association.
- 2.5 The report provided answers to the key concerns about Pacific Oysters in the Strait. In brief, the existing population of feral oysters is dwindling; there appears to be very little risk at present of the diploid oyster cultivation giving rise to a “feral” population in the area; and any risk can be essentially eliminated by using triploid oysters.
- 2.6 It was agreed at the June meeting of the Association that the Welsh Minister should be sent a copy of this report and invited to resume progress with the Fishery Order for the western Menai Strait. A copy of the letter sent to the Minister is attached at Annex A of this report. Her response is included at Annex B, with a reply from the Chair attached at Annex C, and the Minister’s most recent response at Annex D.
- 2.7 It will be noted from item 10 on the agenda that the Chair has asked the newly formed MAGWF group to consider the issue of Pacific Oyster cultivation, which is due to happen at its next meeting. Until that time there is no prospect of progress.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 It was agreed at the last MSFOMA meeting that the Association should seek to reduce costs. Work on the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order generates no income for the Association, and this is unlikely to change unless and until Welsh Government agree a new policy for Pacific oyster cultivation.
- 3.2 In view of financial constraints and the uncertainty about progress being possible, it is appropriate for the Association to halt work on this project for the time being. It would be appropriate to review this position at the next MSFOMA meeting, by which time MAGWF may have clarified the policy for Pacific oyster cultivation.

MSFOMA Secretariat
December 2022

Annex A: Letter sent by Chair of MSFOMA to Minister for Rural Affairs & North Wales, July 2022

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Port Penrhyn, Bangor, LL57 4HN

Lesley Griffiths, MS
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

25th July 2022

By e-mail

Dear Minister

Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order Application: Update

I am writing further to our correspondence about this Fishery Order application from 2019. At that time you were optimistic that a new Fishery Order would be in place by the end of 2019. Unfortunately no progress has been made since then due to issues around the proposed cultivation of Pacific Oysters and prioritising available resources to the making of the new eastern Menai Strait Order. We are writing to you again because we are optimistic that following the successful creation of the new Fishery Order in the eastern Menai Strait and some recent research in the western Menai Strait, it is now possible for you to make progress with the Western Menai Strait.

The key obstacle to progress with the proposed new Fishery Order in the western Menai Strait since 2019 has been concern about the risk that Pacific Oysters cultivated in the western Menai Strait could support a "feral" population of Pacific Oysters that would impact the marine environment.

In response to this concern, MSFOMA has been working with scientists from the University of Bangor to improve our understanding of the risks posed by Pacific Oysters in the Menai Strait. We have also investigated how these risks might be mitigated. This resulted in a detailed report, attached here.

During May 2022 we held a meeting that was attended by your officials to present the findings of this research. The key points to note are that:-

1. There is no evidence that historic or current cultivation of Pacific Oysters in the Menai Strait over a period of 30 years involving millions of oysters has resulted in an invasive population of "feral" oysters becoming established in the area.
2. The abundance of feral Pacific Oysters has not changed appreciably since they were first recorded in the area some 27 years ago.
3. The temperature regime in the Menai Strait only rarely provides suitable conditions for both spawning activity and larval recruitment.
4. The already low risk of a feral oyster population become established in the area can be made a negligible risk by cultivating triploid Pacific Oysters, which are functionally sterile.

It is our understanding that throughout the UK there is a delay in authorising new areas for Pacific Oyster cultivation because there is a national UK policy vacuum on this issue. This is a particularly grave concern in the post-Brexit shellfish marketplace, where the only buoyant sector is for Pacific Oysters. We believe that the current Welsh Government policy of assessing each application to cultivate Pacific Oysters on a case by case basis is both appropriate and pragmatic and provides the basis for progressing the western Menai Strait application. The experience gained by everyone involved through the successful making of the eastern Menai Strait Order, particularly the Habitats Regulation Assessment process, will also enable our limited resources to be used effectively.

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association
Company registered in England and Wales No 07163689

Can we therefore ask you to build on the foundations that you have laid in the eastern Menai Strait and show the rest of the UK how the Welsh Government is supporting its shellfish farmers by authorising your officials to work with us to progress this Fishery Order application?

This Fishery Order provides you with an opportunity to do more for the Welsh shellfish farming sector than any of your predecessors. We very much hope that you will take this opportunity and we look forward to working with you and your officials on this new Order.

Yours sincerely



ALAN WINSTONE
Chair, MSFOMA
Encs.

Annex B: Reply to MSFOMA from Minister for Rural Affairs & North Wales, July 2022

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00435/22

Dr Jim Andrews

info@msfoma.org

17 August 2022

Dear Dr Jim

Thank you for your letter of 25 July, regarding the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order application, in which you raise the issue of the cultivation of Pacific oysters (PO) in Wales.

I recognise the importance of the cultivation of PO to the aquaculture sector. I am also aware of the concerns about the risks of cultivating PO and the possible impacts on the marine environment.

My officials are considering the latest evidence, including the Bangor University Shellfish Centre report, about the cultivation of PO in Wales and other parts of the UK. This will inform future decision-making about the use of PO in Wales and will be discussed with my stakeholder advisory group.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn goheblaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb goheblaeth a ddorbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Annex C: Reply to Minister for Rural Affairs & North Wales from MSFOMA,
September 2022

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Port Penrhyn, Bangor, LL57 4HN

Lesley Griffiths, MS
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

8th September 2022

Your Ref: LG/00435/22

By e-mail

Dear Minister

Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order Application: Update

Many thanks for your letter of 17th August responding to the report that we had sent to you in July concerning Pacific Oyster cultivation in Wales.

We are pleased to hear that your officials are considering this and other evidence about the cultivation of Pacific Oysters in Wales. We note that in your response you refer to your "*...stakeholder advisory group*" and indicate that this group is due to be discussing Pacific Oyster cultivation.

On behalf of our Association, can I enquire when this advisory group is due to meet, and also if it would be helpful for us to organise a presentation of the findings of our work to the group to facilitate their discussions of this important matter.

We very much look forward to hearing from you and further collaboration to build on the successful work that you and your officials have already achieved in the eastern Menai Strait.

Yours sincerely



ALAN WINSTONE
Chair, MSFOMA
Encs.

Annex D: Reply from Minister for Rural Affairs & North Wales to MSFOMA, October 2022

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LG/00548/22

Dr Jim Andrews
MSFOMA Secretariat
Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association
info@msfoma.org

14th October 2022

Dear Alan,

Thank you for your letter of 8 September, regarding the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order application.

I welcome your offer to present the findings of your work regarding pacific oysters at an upcoming meeting of the Ministerial Advisory Group for Welsh Fisheries to help facilitate discussions.

I understand the next meeting of group will be held in the coming weeks. My officials will be in touch to provide further details.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.