

Management Proposals of Inshore Fisheries Groups

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Introduction

This document lists the initiatives developed by the six pilot Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFGs) which are thought to have a potential for environmental impact and invites comments on them.

These IFG management proposals have undergone a strategic environmental assessment (SEA), the results are set out in the Environmental Report which accompanies this consultation document.

Background

Six pilot IFGs were established as a result of the Strategic Framework For Inshore Fisheries 2005¹. This framework identified a need for more localised management of inshore fisheries around the Scottish coast and a system that would place fishermen at the heart of the decision making process.

Each pilot IFG was tasked with engaging with commercial fishermen operating within their IFG area and developing local management proposals. An Executive Committee comprising catching sector representatives, an independent Chairman and a Co-ordinator developed these Management Plans, assisted by an Advisory Group of stakeholders including Government Agencies and other organisations with an interest in the marine environment.

Once completed, these Management Plans were submitted to the Scottish Inshore Fisheries Advisory Group and successor body the Fisheries Management and Conservation Group for approval, as outlined in the Strategic Framework. The Plans have now been approved and generally cover the following areas of activity:

- Activities to support the opening of new and/or closed fisheries, including the collection of baseline information
- Improved data collection and management information
- Fisheries management measures, e.g. creel controls, limiting access, increasing minimum landing sizes, reducing discards/bycatch
- Conflict resolution mechanisms, e.g. codes of conduct
- Economic activities, e.g. marketing, labelling, sustainable fisheries accreditation, measures to support fisheries diversification

For additional information on IFGs and to view the Management Plans developed by the pilot IFGs, please go to: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Sea-Fisheries/InshoreFisheries/IFGsMap>

¹ available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/03/20860/File-1>

High Level Objectives

The Strategic Framework set out a list of High Level Objectives which management proposals should reflect. These were:

- **BIOLOGICAL:** to conserve, enhance and restore commercial stocks in the inshore and its supporting ecosystem.
- **ECONOMIC:** to optimise long-term and sustained economic return to communities dependent on inshore fisheries, and to promote quality initiatives.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL:** to maintain and restore the quality of the inshore marine environment for fisheries and for wildlife.
- **SOCIAL:** to recognise historical fishing practices and traditional ways of life in managing inshore fisheries, to manage change, and to interact proactively with other activities in the marine environment.
- **GOVERNANCE:** to develop and implement a transparent, accountable and flexible management structure that places fishermen at the centre of the decision-making process, and that is underpinned by adequate information, legislation and enforcement.

Background of SEA

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that certain public plans, programmes and strategies (PPS) be assessed for their potential effects on the environment. The IFG management proposals fall under Section 5(4) of the Act.

As part of the SEA process, the Management Plans were assessed to determine whether the proposals contained had the potential for environmental impact – whether that be a positive or negative impact. Many initiatives, such as development of marketing brands for local fish products, were seen to have no or little environmental impact and were ‘screened out’ of the process; these initiatives are not the focus of this document or the accompanying environmental assessment.

The SEA process has focussed on those initiatives in Management Plans with the potential for environmental impact and these proposals are explored in more detail in the accompanying Environmental Assessment.

Development of Management Plans

As detailed above, IFGs developed Management Plans for their areas in which they proposed management initiatives they believed could be of benefit to their areas.

These initiatives are largely at an early stage of development and not yet ready to be implemented.

For many of these proposals a lot more work needs to be undertaken to establish their feasibility/desirability before they can be put in place. However, a key aim of the SEA process is to factor in environmental considerations at an early stage of policy development. Therefore, before these proposals are substantially developed we want to invite comments on the proposals listed below which are explored in depth in the accompanying Environmental Report.

Next Steps

Marine Scotland invites views on the environmental impact of the management proposals outlined below by 10 October 2013. These views will then be summarised in an “outcome of consultation” document.

There is no commitment on the part of Marine Scotland to implement or legislate for the proposals contained in this document. However, Marine Scotland, as part of its continued support for IFGs, will be making funds available to support activities and projects that the IFGs have identified in their management plans.

Funds will be allocated subject to an application being approved by a panel comprising representatives from Marine Scotland Policy, Marine Scotland Science and Seafood Scotland. Funding will not however be released for proposals outlined below until the SEA process is completed and any relevant views have been considered.

Responses

We are inviting written responses to this consultation paper by 10 October 2013. Please send your completed response to:

lfg@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
or
Inshore Fisheries Groups
The Scottish Government
Marine Scotland
Area 1B - South
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

The Scottish Government may make the responses to this consultation paper available to the public and to the Scottish Parliament. We will acknowledge responses and may publish an analysis of the responses after the consultation. If you respond to this consultation you are requested to complete the enclosed responded information form attached at annex B. This will ensure that we handle your responses appropriately.

Annex A

Management Measures Proposed by IFGs with Potential for Significant Environmental Effects

The attached list briefly summarises initiatives developed by the six pilot IFGs which are thought to have the potential for environmental impact. They are explored in depth in the accompanying Environmental Report.

| Management Proposals |
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| Fisheries accreditation |
| Increase minimum landing size <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown Crab • Velvet Crab • Lobster • Nephrops • Crawfish • Razor fish (from 110mm to 175mm) |
| Lobsters – reduce maximum landing size for females Crawfish – establish best practice maximum landing size |
| Berried fish: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return and v-notch berried lobsters • Return berried creel caught Nephrops • Crawfish - no landing of berried females • Velvet Crab – return berried females |
| Hobby fishermen – controlling or monitoring of activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creel limits need clear signage and where appropriate quota restrictions • Monitor activity and ensure clear creel marking • The above applies to Nephrops/Lobster/Crabs/ Scallops |
| Access/regulatory measures for licensed fishermen in IFG areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cap creel vessel numbers • Nephrops permits; closed areas • Introduce permit for shellfisheries • Effort control within shellfish licensed fleet • Review access arrangements in all fisheries (e.g. zoning/spatial management and consultation code) |
| Data gathering measures/ Investigate potential for new fisheries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop fisheries with appropriate management measures (Cockles, Mussels, Winkles, Oysters, Scallops, Razorfish) • Develop pilot fisheries with appropriate management measures (Brown shrimp, Paelamon Prawns, Squat lobsters, Otter shell, other Bivalves) • Scientific surveys to establish whether a fishery can be established (Bivalve, Sprat, Brown/Pink shrimp, Smelt) • New fisheries & unmanaged fisheries - Surveys to collect baseline data which can be used to calculate fishing effort. • Determine biological status of stocks (Brown crab, Velvet crab) • Scallops - Investigate cause of scallop decline where appropriate • Investigate whether existing fishery can be developed based on sound management (Squid, Cockles) |

| Management Proposals |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock assessments for under-utilised species • Sprat fishery – determine and evaluate the economic viability of development of sprat fishery within the area • Whelk - Investigate whelk stock in area • Lobster - Establish lobster stock's status to establish possible management measures • Green Crab – establish importance of commercial fishery • Mussel - determine if significant sub tidal mussel beds exist with the MFIFG area; establish importance of commercial fishery within area to determine developing opportunities • Native Oyster – Investigate whether existing fishery can be developed based on sound management • Queen scallop – establish if scallops can be developed as a targeted fishery or form a by-catch from other fishing activity • Clam fishery – Investigate whether existing fishery can be developed based on sound management • Plaice – establish stocks in local area • Clam – identify stocks within the area and determine if existing fishery can be developed • Seek to secure appropriate funding and support for the development of sustainable fishing techniques, exploratory fishery trials, stock assessment/dynamic research and market evaluation of market opportunities for under-utilised species • Investigate the potential for jigging and squid fishery • Cockles – Develop cockle fisheries – surveys of cockle beds • Razorfish – Stock surveys to develop fishery • Squid and Crawfish - Pilot fishery with Marine Scotland observers to gather data • Velvet crab – establish scientific base for fishery • Wrasse fishery – Establish scientific base to Identify management requirements in the developing wrasse fishery • Catch sampling of crab, lobster, velvet crab and Nephrops |
| Ensure appropriate use of collected fisheries data |
| Brown Shrimp – identify vessels to take part in pilot fishery |
| Fishing gear/methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate effects of increased creel mesh size & escape panels • Explore funding for new fishing techniques/trials • Razorfish - In addition to local reporting, initiate a wider scientific research programme and investigate the potential for specialised gear to be developed and used in razor fishery • Investigate static gear only zones for Nephrops in areas with multiple resource use • Support for new gear for pilot fisheries • Promote use of eco – dredge; scallop dredgers to work to UK Scallop Code of Conduct |
| Participate in national and regional management of Nephrops |
| Investigate separate management of Moray Firth functional unit |
| Bycatch/discards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor by catch discards • Explore limiting quota allocation or specifying gear type to reduce by- |

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| Management Proposals |
| <p>catch/discards/poor stock quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haddock – develop reporting system to record discard levels and develop management measures haddock by catch • Reduce discards – cod recovery |
| <p>Establish fisheries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Mackerel and/or Herring Fishery/ Establish a small scale mackerel and herring fishery • Establish a small scale sprat fishery • Investigate winter cod fishery • Lobster stock enhancement • Squid - seek review of current prohibitions • Wrasse - Ensure any potential wrasse fishery is carried out responsibly |
| Landing and supporting infrastructure – ensure requirements of fishing fleet are identified |
| Support fuel efficiency measures |

Annex B

Management Proposals of Inshore Fisheries Groups

Respondent Information Form

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

| | | |
|----------|-------|-------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Postcode | Phone | Email |

3. Permissions – I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes No

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

4. *Environmental Impact*

4.1 What are your views on the possible environmental impacts of the management proposals put forward by Inshore Fisheries Groups?





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The Scottish Government
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