

Recreational Angling Sector Working Group Meeting – 13/04/2021 – 17:00

Southern IFCA Office – MS Teams Meeting

Present:

Chris Holloway
Ian Jones
Patrick Cooper
Simon Pengelly
Jamie Small
Kim Gibbs
Alan Deeming
Tim Ferrero
Kareema Randall

Apologies: Phil Higgins, Brian Bleese, Steve Porter, Charlie Annear, Nick Fisher and Lyle Stantiford.

Agenda

1. Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the previous meetings were accepted.

2. Introductions

Members of the group introduced themselves. Members were informed that Kareema Randall from DEFRA would be observing with particular interest in the Bream Updates.

3. Bream Updates (PC)

- MCZ Sidescan Sonar Survey – Purbeck Coast, Southbourne Rough and Poole Rocks.

An update on previous discussions was provided to members of the group. Members were informed DEFRA have been able to allocate funding for side-scan sonar survey taking place in May of this year. The project is being developed and led by Natural England, working with CEFAS and the EA in order to deliver this. The aim is to undertake surveying across the sites, and identify areas where bream nests are located within the MCZs. The survey plan had been adapted slightly from previous versions, and the EA and CEFAS were able to provide suitable opportunities for COVID secure surveying. PC informed the group that Southern IFCA were providing insight into survey techniques based on previous surveys. PC informed the group that they would be updated as more is known on the success of the survey.

PC also provided information on work the IFCA was doing to improve understanding of activity data relating to bream. This included standardised patrols covering large areas of the MCZs and work with charter vessels on logbooks.

CH enquired about why there was a concern relating to bream as the fishery was as good as it had been. SP fed in that they were a designated feature of the MCZ, particularly vulnerable at certain points in their lifecycle. CH highlighted that much of the angling undertaken was catch and release, SP indicated that this was some of the information the IFCA hoped to capture through additional data gathering.

4. Virtual Sea Angling Forum (IJ)

IJ informed the group he would be taking part in the virtual sea angling forum run by the angling trust on the 22/04/2021 encouraging members to attend.

Highlighting that the group would be one of the points of discussion, IJ enquired if there was any changes members of the group would like to see made to the way it was run. Suggestions from the group included:

- Promoting Portsmouth/East Hampshire representation.
- Moving the meeting time to 19:00 whilst meetings are virtual.
- Ensuring angling information is easily accessible on the website.
- Feeding information to anglers through tackle shops.

5. Studland Bay MCZ (CH)

CH made some enquiries regarding recent stakeholder meetings regarding anchoring in the Studland Bay MCZ. CH had concerns over some of the management proposals being discussed. SP indicated that anchoring would be the remit of the MMO, and they led on the stakeholder events in March, highlighting various management options and mechanisms. SP encouraged members to engage with the MMO on these measures.

6. Coastguard Purbeck Coast (CH)

CH raised concerns that recreational fishers had been provided inaccurate information from the coastguard regarding no fish zones. IJ indicated that information had been passed on to the MCA and the IFCA would offer to follow up with further engagement if required.

7. Netting Review (SP)

AD raised concerns that the proposed management measures associated with the netting review did not progress past the TAC in February, particularly highlighting a concern relating the weighting that evidence, provided by a fisher at the meeting, was given. SP and IJ indicated that a new working group would be held, including new members. At the group members will be considering those areas where management concerns were flagged at the TAC. IJ reminded members that options for management were tightly bounded by designations, particularly the SACs which have salmon as a feature, and any changes would have to be compatible with those designations. IJ assured members that this workstream was ongoing and would continue to progress.

CH felt it could have been beneficial for certain parts of the review to progress, such as the netting around piers code of conduct. IJ indicated that this had been taken into account and the aim was to progress the netting around pier at the TAC in May.

8. Any Other Business

- TF highlighted that he had been contacted as part of his role at the wildlife trust regarding a major sea angling competition planned for the Solent – the Sea Angling Classic. <https://www.seaanglingclassic.com/>. Members had not heard of this but thanked TF for highlighting it.