

## **Recreational Angling Sector Working Group Meeting – 02/08/2017**

**Southern IFCA Office – 64 Ashley Road, Poole. BH14 9BN**

### *Agenda*

#### **1. Apologies and Introductions**

Present

Chris Holloway

Phil Higgins

Kim Gibbs

Charlie Annear

Paul Tomlinson

Alan Deeming

Rob Clark

Rayner Piper

Patrick Cooper

John Humphreys

Tim Ferrero

*Apologies:*

Steve Porter

Wayne Comben

Tim Ward

#### **1. Introductions**

The groups introduced themselves to the new members and those unfamiliar with the group and provided a background as to their experience in relation to the recreational angling sector, including the club affiliations and positions related to the angling trust. Professor John Humphreys introduced himself as the newly elected chair of the Southern IFCA and explained his background as a marine biologist with research interests in inshore ecology and fisheries. Dr Tim Ferrero provided his background and his role as head of marine advocacy at the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife trust. Also invited to the meeting was Rayner Piper from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Rayner provided the group with his role within the Wildlife Trust working on the scoping phase of the HLF funded 'Secrets of the Solent' project.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meetings**

Updates on the outstanding actions from the previous meeting were followed up on:

An invitation had been provided to the MMO to attend and provide information of their role for those unfamiliar – *Update – although unable to attend that meeting, the local MMO office was keen to send someone along to the next one.*

Updated Wrasse Guidance was to be circulated to the group – *Update - This circulated with the agenda.*

IFCA officers were to investigate offshore flounder data and consider for trends. *Patrick Cooper explained that this had been investigated but that indications were that this was not an effective method of sampling for the flounder or identifying trends in the species.*

Home Office Guidance was to be circulated to the group following a discussion in the previous meeting in relation to the tagging of fish. *This was circulated prior to the meeting.*

### **3. Wrasse Fishery**

The Southern IFCA guidance for the Wrasse fishery was discussed with the group. Members were interested to discuss the consequences of failing to comply with voluntary measures and the impact this could have on the wrasse fishery. Rob Clark discussed the guidance in relation to the options available to the IFCA and that the benefits of working with the industry on these measures would likely provide quicker results than measures implemented through byelaws, especially with the low number of buyers and their interest in ensuring that this remains a viable source of Wrasse.

Rob Clark also highlighted the success since previous meetings, with further information on the catch rates coming in, meetings with other IFCAs as well as engagement with other partner organisations to ensure that the necessary measures were in place. In relation to this the members were interested in who to contact in relation to these biosecurity risks, particularly in relation to the transportation of water and what monitoring was in place. Rob Clark stated that CEFAS should be the first port of call for enquiries of this nature.

Concerns over the lack of a stock assessment were raised. Rob Clark acknowledged that more detailed stock assessment would be preferable, but that this was not the only fishery to exist without a stock assessment. He also highlighted the pot bait fishery which had seen removal from the same fishery consistently on potentially a larger scale for many years.

Dr Tim Ferrero provided the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trusts position. Recognizing that the fishery had not yet reached the Hampshire coast, but that they were monitoring the progression of the fishery. Dr Ferrero stated that the Wildlife Trust would like to provide position and stance backed up by strong evidence, and that they currently were supportive of the proposed measures, so long as they are complied with. Dr Ferrero did discuss that one line of enquiry nationally was to consider not only the wrasse as a stock, but the possible ecosystem services it provides and the impacts of its removal from the system. Rob Clark provided details of the Habitats Regulation Assessments undertaken in relation to the fishery within the MPA.

Alan Deeming raised questions on the situation elsewhere where previous fisheries had existed and failed. Rob Clark stated that Southern IFCAs aim was to follow the research coming out of the other fisheries and that indications were that multiple measures, such as those proposed were likely to be effective.

### **4. Secrets of the Solent – HIWWT**

Rayner Piper provided information on the secrets of the Solent project and his role within it. The Secrets of the Solent is a new Heritage Lottery Funded project, looking to develop a project running for four to five years with a proposed start date of around May next year. The aim of the project is to promote the benefits of the Solent and the marine wildlife within it. Rayner explained that early work suggested that many of the public were unaware of the habitats and wildlife provided by the Solent and that the project would look to raise further awareness. Rayner stated that as the project was still in its infancy it was considering a number of different avenues. Charlie Annear and Chris Holloway stated that many anglers were catch and release and were generally supportive of anything that shines a light on the marine environment.

## **5. Southern IFCA Surveys**

Patrick Cooper and Robert Clark highlighted some of the relevant surveys that had taken place recently. This included the netting surveys at sites in Dorset, Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight. Patrick Cooper thanked those who had helped or provided advice that fed into the survey and explained that the sites would be surveyed again in the Autumn. The data provides the IFCA with useful information on the benefits of these environments as nursery habitats.

## **6. RASG Membership**

Members considered the request of an angler from the Portland area to join the group. The secretary was encouraged to request further information from the individual for the groups consideration.

## **7. Joint Project**

A concept note was provided to the group discussing the aims of a joint project with the IFCA, the Recreational Angling Sector Group and the Dorset Wildlife Trust. The project aims to raise public awareness and participation of responsible RSA practices. The group was supportive of the ideas, Mr Deeming hoped that this could be considered further East and that some of the outputs including signage would be appropriate for the Isle of Wight seagrass closures.

## **8. Any other business**

Alan Deeming enquired as to the Enforcement model now that Ian Jones had left. Rob Clark explained that Ian had successfully embedded a national enforcement model into the working at Southern IFCA and ensured he left a team who were capable of working within that system. Taking the management of that system would be three senior officers, Jon Meek focusing on Intelligence products and handling, Sam Dell focusing on tactical coordination and David Mayne Leading on casefile management.

Alan Deeming raised concern over Cod, with other members of the group agreeing that catches were low across the district. Rob Clark provided the stock assessment for cod indicating that this is what the likely future quota would be based on.

Phil Higgins enquired about MCZ designations for bream. Rob Clark stated that no new announcements had been made.

The group were provided the new recreational angling tacklebox stickers which were well received, although a number of the group highlighted that they themselves use higher sizes.

The Chairman expressed the concerns of many local anglers regarding the activity of one beam trawler operating in Poole Bay. He was of the opinion, that this activity was of the highest importance to the future management of fisheries in the local area and many local anglers were disadvantaged by the actions of one vessel. Mr Annear thanked Southern IFCA for their response in regards to concerns raised when the vessel was active. The Chairman signifying again that although the vessel may not be in breach of fisheries byelaws, the angling groups would be pressing to see changes to balance the social and economic interests of Poole Bay by ensuring better future management. He stated that the byelaws proposed to manage marine protected areas to ensure trawling did not damage the features of these sites, it was time to take a wider view and ensure that some forms of trawling did not damage the wider area and angling interests.

*Included Papers:*

RASG Meeting 27/04/2017 minutes

Wrasse Paper - IFCA Committee

Wrasse Guidance

Home office guidance