

## **Recreational Angling Sector Group Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 - Minutes**

**Location: Southern IFCA Office, 64 Ashley Road, Poole, BH14 9BN**

**Time—1700**

### **Attendees:**

Chris Holloway  
Dick Stubbs  
Charlie Annear  
Wayne Comben  
Phil Higgins  
Steve Porter  
Alan Deeming  
Trevor Gibbs

Patrick Cooper (Southern IFCA)  
Robert Clark (Southern IFCA)

### **Apologies and Introductions**

IJ and SP cannot make meeting. New Members Trevor Gibbs and Steve Porter were welcomed to the group.

### **Minutes of previous meetings**

The minutes were agreed and signed. No major amendments required, but the chair did ask as to whether the previous meetings were available on the website. Currently this is not the case but this would be changed.

### **Bass Measures Discussion**

New bass measures impacting the recreational and commercial fishers have been negotiated and agreed in Europe for 2016. Members of the group voiced extreme concern over this new legislation and the Chair shared a correspondence he had sent to the minister. Mr Deeming discussed the petition from anglers to remove the legislation, DEFRA's response and the AT response to this being available on their website. Members of the group were concerned over the impact this could have on tackle shops and charter businesses. Mr Porter stated that so far it had

not had an impact on his business; with many anglers being conservation minded, not interested in landing the fish and were still happy to target the bass as catch and release.

Many of the group felt that anglers had been targeted due to association with illegal unlicensed fishers. Members of the group felt that although this did happen, it was not as wide spread as the perception and that these illegal unlicensed fishers should be separated wherever possible from anglers.

Some members of the group felt that the legislation last year had more chance of achieving voluntary compliance from the anglers as they still had a resource and most could understand the benefits.

The figures around the impact of mortality caused by anglers that were used in the negotiation were discussed with members of the group feeling this was an overestimate and was too high.

Rob described how, in his view as an observer, the December Council negotiation resulted in the outcome: suggesting that to trace this back it is necessary to start with the commission proposal, whereby the Council negotiation then worked through the 'trading off' of mortality associated with activities to try and achieve an outcome that would reduce mortality (based on the percentiles described in the STECF reports) in an attempt to achieve MSY by 2019. Although the UK minister had come under intense criticism it is likely that the international dimension and the format of the negotiation resulted in the outcome as opposed to a lack of regard in the UK to the value of the recreational sector: the outcome being a function of the nature of the emergency measures.

*ACTION – RC to circulate figures from which the angling mortality is determined.*

Members were concerned that mid water drifters that had been prohibited from bass would change to gill nets. Rob explained the nature of these operations, and that fixed gear was less effective in the areas of the drift netting, but with all of the measures, so as to ensure the objectives were being achieved, monitoring was required.

Members were interested in how the IFCA might enforce the legislation. Rob explained that as with any legislation it would be a proportionate response and would feed into Southern IFCA's risk based approach to enforcement.

### **Solent EMS Consultation**

Patrick provided background to Southern IFCA's bottom towed gear consultation in the Solent EMS, explaining that in December Southern IFCA issued copies of a consultation on new proposed management measures within the Solent European Marine Site. The proposed management is designed to achieve Southern IFCA's responsibilities as a competent authority under the Habitats and Bird Directives and has come about as part of DEFRA's revised approach to the management of commercial fisheries within European Marine Sites.

Mr Stubbs raised some concerns regarding the impact that this could potentially have for bass anglers who often rely on sand eels caught in trawls within Langstone Harbour for bait. Patrick explained the process undertaken through assessment and that although it was a bottom towed fishing gear consultation each gear would be considered separately for its impacts and that sensitivity pathways had already been screened out such as disturbance to terns for sandeel trawling. The other potential impacts would be considered in a HRA and if it is found to be compatible with the features the activity would fall outside of the proposed measures.

The group felt that in response to the consultation it would like to make the following clear:

- Sandeel trawling is not a purely commercial activity and is undertaken to provide bait for recreational angling.
- The proposed measures, if they were to include sandeel trawling in Langstone Harbour, could have a significant impact on the recreational bass angling.

*Action – Patrick to pass on these points from the group in response to the consultation.*

### **Communication of Angling Legislation**

The group discussed a mechanism for distributing information for anglers and a 'hub/database' where this could be found. Rob stated that it was something the IFCA would be considering and it is looking to develop its angling page.

### **MCZ Designations**

Rob began discussions regarding the designations of tranche two MCZs. Within the Southern IFCA district the Needles has been designated. Rob advised that from designation the information received was that conservation advice is expected within 2 years. The implementation of measures will be on a risk prioritised basis.

Members did discuss the impact that these could have on existing activities and that to date it had been minimal. Rob asked the group to consider the potential impact these designations could have on new developments and that the biggest impact could be through new licencing.

### **Solent and Dorset Coast pSPA Consultation**

The proposal for the Solent and Dorset pSPA was discussed by the group. Rob explained that it was designated for terns and their foraging range. The requirement to designate a number of SPAs was discussed and Rob stated that at this point no information had been provided that indicated restrictions on fishing as a result and reminded the group that it had the potential to impact new developments.

### **IFCA Membership Vacancy**

Rob discussed with the group that there is currently an opening in the IFCA membership. The MMO are advertising for a member on our committee and indicated they are looking for a member with an interest or experience in recreational fisheries. Rob suggested members view the advertisement and pass on/apply as appropriate. Mr Higgins raised an issue with the advertisement date.

*Action – Rob to follow up with the MMO regarding mistake in advert*

### **Any other Business**

- *Beach Replenishment*

Mr Higgins raised a number of amendments to the timeline for the beach replenishment in Poole. It should have begun in January but now was pushed back to March. Rob asked how the group felt regarding consultation, the majority felt they had not been consulted thoroughly through clubs or organisations. Rob discussed the licensing process and the public register.

*Action – relevant MMO licence applications to be circulated around the group in the future:*

[https://marinelicensing.marinemanagement.org.uk/mmofox5/fox/live/MMO\\_PUBLIC\\_REGISTER/](https://marinelicensing.marinemanagement.org.uk/mmofox5/fox/live/MMO_PUBLIC_REGISTER/)

**Time and Date of next meeting**

27<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 at 1700. Southern IFCA Office.