

Fisheries Resource Education Program: Business of Fishing

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Fishermen & science collaboration – practical steps for the fishermen of the future

Collaboration is a must in these austere times, where fishermen hold the key to new streams of data – for fish stocks, the fishing industry and the wider marine environment.

A new breed of fishermen and scientist are looking to improve the way the industry contributes to data collection at sea. Fishing into the Future, along with partners the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association (SFPA) and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) have published guidelines on data collection that describe a 'recipe for success' to help these groups work more closely together. This new tool has been produced as part of the broader Fishermen-Science Interface Programme, which was supported entirely by Seafish through their Strategic Investment Programme (SIP).

The *Guidelines for Industry-Science Data Collection* provide a step-by-step framework – presented as a series of key questions to consider – which will support more effective data collection by the fishing industry as a whole. They provide added context through relevant case studies where fishermen and scientists have worked together successfully.

With the call for 'Big Data' increasing, fishermen can add capacity to an over-stretched system as they set-sail on potential 'research platforms' each time they leave harbor. Likewise, with an eye for quality control, fish processing factories can be efficient biological sampling platforms. Harnessing this potential will be vital for the way our seas are managed and will contribute to ensuring we have 'seafood security' for future generations.

Jim Masters, Executive Director of Fishing into the Future and project manager, said "Fishermen want to help gather data which can improve the management of their fisheries – but they often don't know what data to collect; when, how or why. This new tool answers these questions, while also tying in closely with the training work we are doing through our Fisheries Resource Education Programme. We are extremely grateful to Seafish and our other partners for their support in bringing this project together."

Steve Mackinson of the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, and lead-author of the report, said "Enabling the pelagic industry to become respected providers of scientifically credible data means focusing on efficient ways to improve the quality of data. These guidelines provide a tool to help us make plans to achieve that."

Cefas's Stephen Mangi, who managed the project within Cefas commented: "Designing and delivering industry-science data collection programs requires having the right tools to assist scientists in

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generating robust scientific evidence, but also empower fishermen to collect relevant data. The Guidelines present the essentials of what it takes to co-design and co-deliver industry-science initiatives, helping to identify those people and institutions that should be involved, and the roles they need to play.”

Notes for Editors

- Fishing into the Future is based in Brixham, Devon (see details below)
- Contact Jim Masters (Executive Director) for more information
- The project has been funded by generous contributions from the Seafish Strategic Investment Programme (SIP)
- Images available on request
- Project partners include:
 - Scottish Pelagic Fishermen’s Association (SPFA)
 - Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)
 - National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations (NFFO)
 - World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
 - Seafish
- Fishing into the Future also recently ran a training programme through their Fisheries Resource Education Programme called the Business of Fishing – see a separate Press Release for more details.
- Visit our website for more information about both products:
 - [Business of Fishing course](#)
 - [Industry Science Data Collection](#)