

Fishing into the Future: Round-up July 2016

This has been a busy period for Fishing into the Future, as we see our projects begin to bear fruit. You can [download our Annual Report for last year here](#).

Perhaps most significant has been the progress we've made on industry data collection and strategy. We have been working with the Celtic Seas Partnership and the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations to take forward initiatives on industry-generated data.

Industry-generated data: strategy and protocols

We were asked to convene and facilitate a meeting of key professionals in this field to stress-test ideas, and review current drivers, in order to align effort and expectations as this vital subject gains increasing traction. Whatever the political landscape, data generated by the industry needs to be acceptable, and accepted, by the end-user scientists. To that end, our work on developing methodological protocols to improve consistency and quality of data collected will be an important step forwards towards a future where industry data is used as the 'norm'.

You can download the [Cefas meeting report here](#), but the main outputs are that strong leadership is needed to take this issue forward, as is good collaboration between organisations that are already actively working in this area. The great news is that all parties involved appear keen and willing to work together to find a solution. The Celtic Seas Partnership will be producing a Statement of Intent that captures these issues and we will publish this as soon as we are able.

Channel scallops: co-designed biological survey

We are working with the UK-based Channel scallop fleet to co-design an essential stock assessment and biological survey, which will take place in 2017 – and yearly from then on. Our work on this is to ensure industry concerns and suggestions are embedded and considered in the Summer pilot surveys, then informing the nature of the full-blown survey in early 2017. We have the first in a series of workshops on July 19th, where we will capture these concerns and issues and work with our partners Cefas to address these within the pilot survey itself. We may then need to hold a second workshop to assess the performance of the pilot and to provide the industry with a further opportunity to influence the format, protocols and incentives for the full-scale survey.

Training for sustainability

We have been successful in securing match-funding for two training pilot projects. The first pilot project will take place in Scotland, thanks to funding from Sainsbury's. This project is being assessed by the EMFF team within Marine Scotland as we speak and we are hoping to be awarded the funds in time for a September start – watch this space!

The second pilot is benefiting from match funding from Morrison's Foundation Community Fund. This will be used to apply for EMFF funds for a similar English pilot training programme, with a more introductory-level curriculum. This funding application is being drawn up at present.

We would like to thank both these supporters for their generosity and foresight in helping get these projects off the ground. We expect the courses to be a great success, and to gain great traction nationally once their 'proof of concept' has been demonstrated. The intention is to roll these out to wider audiences in the fullness of time.

Stakeholder engagement

We will be working on building a number of other projects over the next few months, all focused on the need for better engagement mechanisms for the fishing industry, and the need for a neutral convening body capable of contributing capacity to issues and debates as they arise. We see ourselves operating within this neutral convening role, and are able to leverage the experience of our Trustees (of which two thirds are active fishermen) to help us with this. We will also be focusing on raising awareness for good practice in the fishing industry, with an emphasis on gear innovations, technology and governance.

Other events

We were asked to attend the recent International Sustainability Unit's sustainable fisheries summit to report on our progress over the last few years. This gave us unparalleled exposure and profile and a chance to present our thinking and ideas to an international audience. We are grateful to the ISU for giving us this opportunity, and for supporting us throughout our development. We continue to work with John Goodlad from the ISU, whose experience and insight is invaluable.

Please keep an eye on our website and social media for more information and updates from Fishing into the Future on our work. As always we are seeking core support to help underpin our business model, which combines partnership funding and specific project funding to deliver services for sustainable and prosperous UK fisheries.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and if you have any queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch: info@fishingintothefuture.co.uk.