



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Cafodd y ddogfen hon ei lawrlwytho o LLYW.CYMRU, efallai nad dyma'r fersiwn mwyaf diweddar.

Ewch i <https://llyw.cymru/wales-whelk-advisory-group-meeting-7-september-2022-html> (<https://llyw.cymru/wales-whelk-advisory-group-meeting-7-september-2022-html>) i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

Gwybdaeth am [hawlfraint](https://llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint) (<https://llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint>).

CYHOEDDIAD

Wales Whelk Advisory Group meeting: 7 September 2022

Note of the inaugural meeting held virtually on Wednesday 7 September 2022.

Cyhoeddwyd gyntaf: 10 Tachwedd 2022

Diweddarwyd ddiwethaf: 10 Tachwedd 2022

Cynnwys

Present (#section-109201)

1. Welcome and Apologies (#section-109203)

2. Purpose of the Group (#section-109205)

3. Whelk Fishery Calendar and Website (#section-109207)

4. Whelk Fishery Report (#section-109209)

5. AOB (#section-109211)

Actions (#section-109213)

Present

Julian Bray, Domestic Fisheries Policy and Management, Welsh Government - Chair

Tim Bowman Davies, Fisher

Kevin Denman, Fisher & Southwest Wales Fishing Communities

Jim Evans, Welsh Fisherman's Association

Natalie Hold, Sustainable Fisheries Wales, School of Ocean Sciences, Bangor University

Mark Merrick, AM Seafoods – Buyer/Processor

Chloe North, Southwestern Fish Producer Organisation

Tim Croucher, Head of Shore Based Fisheries Operation, Welsh Government

Matthew Sayer, Senior Policy Analyst, Fisheries Science, Welsh Government

Andy Bradick, Fishery Manager, Welsh Government

1. Welcome and Apologies

Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and introductions were made.

Apologies were received from:

Carl Davies, Fisher

Kevin Moore, Fisher

Stuart Jones, Fisher (After meeting)

Colin Charman, Natural Resources Wales (After meeting)

2. Purpose of the Group

The chair explained that the new Whelk Fishing Permit (Wales) Order 2021 is an Adaptive Management Order allowing Welsh Government to change management of the fishery on the basis of evidence.

An important part of that management will be the input from this group to improve and develop the fishery.

The Terms of Reference for the group were reviewed in the meeting. Additional comments have been received after the meeting and a revised version of the Terms of Reference will be circulated before the next meeting.

3. Whelk Fishery Calendar and Website

Andy explained that this is the first year of the permitted fishery and we are now halfway through the permit period. (1 March to end of following February)

The calendar of fishery management activities each year were described including when and how the group will be required to provide input to the management of the fishery.

Reference was made to the comprehensive guidance on the management of the fishery on our website. <https://gov.wales/whelk-fishery> (<https://gov.wales/whelk-fishery>)

4. Whelk Fishery Report

Andy went through some of the data collected from the first 6 months of the fishery.

Although 94 whelk permits were issued only 51 were used during the first 6 months with typically 35 vessels fishing per month.

Landings are lower than the 2015-19 reference period but this was in line with expectations based on the 2020-2021 fishery data.

A Monthly Catch Limit (MCL) of 50 tonnes per vessel had not been varied during the first 6 months of the permit period. Only on 9 occasions did vessels land more than 75% of their MCL.

A fairly flat profile of about 500 tonnes per month was taken between March and July with an expected decline in August to 350 tonnes in line with historic fishing patterns.

The Annual Catch Limit (ACL) was set as a baseline for this period at 5,298 tonnes based on the reference period. This should be considered a ceiling rather than a target.

In the first half of this permit period 2,986 tonnes have been taken selling for £3.4 million with a potential 2,312 tonnes of the ACL remaining. The expectation is that this will allow continued fishing with an MCL of 50 tonnes per vessel for the remaining 6 months of the permit period when activity levels are typically lower.

An average Landing per unit effort (LPUE) of between 2.18 and 2.32 Kg of whelk per pot hauled was recorded but with significant vessel and spatial variation around these average figures.

A precautionary approach to fisheries management was being taken in this initially data poor fishery.

The importance of submitting timely and accurate catch returns to enable adaptive fisheries management was highlighted.

Comments received:

CN – An MCL of 50 tonnes is too low for larger nomadic vessels, some flexibility over two-month blocks would be welcome.

NH - Not just the MCL that is important but also will depend on the market and fuel costs.

MM - Stockpile of whelk in cold stores both here and in Asia is limiting demand and reducing the price of whelk, the increases in fuel prices are also challenging. This is having a damping effect and the whole fishery is subdued.

CD (written) – Permit fees should only be used to recover science costs and not enforcement or administration.

CD (written) – It is important to review data collection and remove unnecessary duplication of input by fishers.

JE - Some UK Seafood fund, Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships (FISP) money left and was there any data gaps that could be filled through this scheme?

5. AOB

Next Meeting will be in early November

In preparation for permit period 2023/24 the group will review:

- Summary scientific stock report
- Proposed Annual Catch Limit (ACL)
- Proposed initial Monthly Catch Limit (MCL)
- Proposed permit condition changes
- Proposed permit fee

The Chair then drew the meeting to a close.

Actions

Action 1: Publish revised version of Terms of Reference to group members before the next meeting - AB

Action 2: Date of next meeting to be circulated as a calendar invite - AB

Efallai na fydd y ddogfen hon yn hollol hygyrch.

Drllenwch ein **datganiad hygyrchedd** (<https://llyw.cymru/datganiad-hygyrchedd-llywcymru>) i gael rhagor o wybodaeth.