

## Project UK – Memo: FIP Update

For the attention of: Channel scallop Steering Group members

Memo from: Project UK Secretariat

Date of memo: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023

### Context

- This briefing is to advise the Project UK Channel scallop Steering Group on the current status of the FIP, consider next steps as the FIP timeline enters its final year and prepares to complete the action plan by April 2024.
- Supporting documents include the 2023 annual review, the ITM memo and the Version 3.0 gap analysis
- Please review these documents ahead of the annual review meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May, in preparation for discussion with Steering Group members

### Action Required

Actions Arising	Responsibility	Due Date
Review Poseidon’s annual review of progress ahead of the annual review meetings on 17 <sup>th</sup> May	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May
Review memo on the In Transition to MSC (ITM) program ahead of the annual review meetings on 17 <sup>th</sup> May	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May
Review the Version 3.0 gap analysis and consider whether additional actions are feasible to deliver in a short timeframe	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May
Steering Group members to consider potential client group formation and discuss at the annual review meeting	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May
Consider options for an ITM Project Manager or Client Group to take responsibility for delivering FIP actions and moving the FIP into full assessment when possible	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May
Steering Group to consider funding mechanisms for ITM or Full Assessment, with the support of the Secretariat, to discuss at the annual review meeting	Steering Group	17 <sup>th</sup> May

## Background

This briefing is to advise the Project UK Channel scallop Steering Group on the current status of the FIP, consider next steps as the FIP timeline enters its final year and prepares to complete the action plan by April 2024. The most recent annual review scores suggest that are still considerable issues under Principle 1 that would not pass full assessment, and it is unclear whether the fishery would achieve a pass on aggregate under Principle 2 and Principle 3:

Principle	Component	Performance Indicator	Actual Year 6
1	Outcome	1.1.1 Stock status	<60
		1.1.2 Stock rebuilding	---
	Management	1.2.1 Harvest Strategy	<60
		1.2.2 Harvest control rules and tools	<60
		1.2.3 Information and monitoring	≥80
		1.2.4 Assessment of stock status	≥80
2	Primary species	2.1.1 Outcome	≥80
		2.1.2 Management	≥80
		2.1.3 Information	≥80
	Secondary species	2.2.1 Outcome	≥80
		2.2.2 Management	≥80
		2.2.3 Information	≥80
	ETP species	2.3.1 Outcome	60-79
		2.3.2 Management	60-79
		2.3.3 Information	60-79
	Habitats	2.4.1 Outcome	60-79
		2.4.2 Management	60-79
		2.4.3 Information	60-79
Ecosystem	2.5.1 Outcome	60-79	
	2.5.2 Management	≥80	
	2.5.3 Information	≥80	
3	Governance and Policy	3.1.1 Legal and customary framework	≥80
		3.1.2 Consultation, roles and responsibilities	60-79
		3.1.3 Long term objectives	≥80
	Fishery specific management system	3.2.1 Fishery specific objectives	60-79
		3.2.2 Decision making processes	60-79
		3.2.3 Compliance and enforcement	≥80
		3.2.4 Management performance evaluation	≥80

## Key outstanding actions

For further information on progress against each action, please see the latest Action Plan.

Performance indicator	MSC Standard requirements	Activity underway
Stock status (1.1.1)	<p><b>SG60</b> It is likely that the stock is above the point where recruitment would be impaired (PRI).</p> <p><b>SG80</b> It is highly likely that the stock is above the PRI. The stock is fluctuating around a level consistent with MSY.</p>	Three of the four stock in the Channel meet SG80, but the stock assessment for Lyme Bay shows that the harvest rate is ~3x higher than hrMSY and the biomass is relatively low.
Harvest strategy (1.2.1) and harvest control rules (1.2.2)	<p><b>SG60</b> The harvest strategy is expected to achieve stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. The harvest strategy is likely to work based on prior experience or plausible argument. Monitoring is in place that is expected to determine whether the harvest strategy is working.</p> <p>Generally understood HCRs are in place or available that are expected to reduce the exploitation rate as the point of recruitment impairment (PRI) is approached. There is some evidence that tools used or available to implement HCRs are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation.</p> <p><b>SG80</b> The harvest strategy is responsive to the state of the stock and the elements of the harvest strategy work together towards achieving stock management objectives reflected in PI 1.1.1 SG80. The harvest strategy may not have been fully tested but evidence exists that it is achieving its objectives.</p> <p>Well defined HCRs are in place that ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as the PRI is approached, are expected to keep the stock fluctuating around a target level consistent with (or above) MSY, or for key LTL species a level consistent with ecosystem needs. The HCRs are likely to be robust to the main uncertainties. Available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the HCRs.</p>	Defra are due to consult on the national Fishery Management Plan over summer 2023, and this will be published in October 2023. The fishery still lacks a coherent management strategy although there is substantial support from industry to deliver on this.
ETP outcome (2.3.1), management	<b>SG80</b> Direct effects of the UoA are highly likely to not hinder recovers of ETP species. There is a strategy in place that is expected to ensure UoA	A reporting system is required to compile data on the frequency, nature

(2.3.2) and information (2.3.3)	does not hinder recovery of ETP species. Information is adequate to measure trends and support a strategy to manage impacts on ETP species.	and outcome of interactions with marine megafauna. Based on this, consider practical, efficient and cost-effective mitigation approaches that will constitute a strategy for managing the UoA's impact on ETP species.
Habitat outcome (2.4.1), management (2.4.2) and information (2.4.3)	<b>SG80</b> The UoA is highly unlikely to reduce VME habitats to a point where there would be serious or irreversible harm. There is a partial strategy in place; (b) with objective basis for confidence it will work; (c) evidence it is being implemented successfully. Reliable information on spatial extent, location & timing of fishing gear.	MPA areas have been designated in the North Sea, but management has not yet been agreed and implemented. MPA management consultations are underway and management is expected to be implemented in all MPAs by end 2024. While iVMS is now in place for most vessels in English waters, clarity is still required on who will have access to the data.
Fisheries specific objectives (3.2.1), Decision making processes (3.2.2), Management evaluation	<b>SG80</b> Short and long term objectives, which are consistent with achieving the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2, are explicit within the fishery-specific management system.  There are established decision-making processes that result in measures and strategies to achieve the fishery-specific objectives.	These will be outlined in the FMP when it is published in October 2023.

### What happens next?

The next annual review will be circulated to the Steering Group in May 2023, and will include a gap analysis against Version 3.0 of the MSC Standard and details of the MSC's In Transition to MSC (ITM) program. There will be a FIP meeting at 10am on 17<sup>th</sup> May to discuss the annual review and agree on the next steps for the remaining year of the FIP.

The remaining year of the FIP allows the Steering Group to focus on the outstanding actions, consider whether to address the additional requirements to meet Version 3.0 of the MSC Standard, and to make progress with setting up a client group and identifying funding to enter the MSC program after April 2024.

After April 2024, the MSC will no longer act as Secretariat for the FIP. This means that Steering Group meetings will no longer be scheduled and Poseidon will also no longer be available to advise fishery stakeholders on how to deliver the FIP action plan. From May 2024 the FIP will be listed as 'inactive' or 'complete' on [Fisheryprogress.org](https://fisheryprogress.org), with a public statement available detailing any outstanding actions, accordingly.

## Where do we go from here?

MSC will continue in the role of Secretariat until April 2024. During this time MSC will continue to engage with policy makers and industry on the key outstanding actions, in particular, actions related to the harvest strategy and harvest control rule that need to be set out in the national Fishery Management Plan (FMP). We encourage all Steering Group members to engage in the FMP consultation and to continue engaging with fishery managers to develop a harvest strategy and harvest control rules in line with best practice.

MSC will be engaging with scallop stakeholders in the South West to support the fisheries transition beyond the FIP and hopefully into MSC assessment. This will involve engaging with potential client group members to discuss the opportunity to form a South West sustainability hub, and exploring funding opportunities such as FASS.

The MSC will also be engaging with key supply chain companies to establish and share visibility on demand for the fishery, whilst working with international MSC offices to highlight the future opportunity for certified scallops from the English Channel. This will include communicating with the UK retailer sector to outline successes and opportunities.

## Decisions to be made

As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023, Version 3.0 of the MSC Standard is mandatory for all new fisheries entering the MSC program. As part of the annual review, a gap analysis has been provided for this FIP to outline expected scores for this fishery against Version 3.0, and identify any additional workstreams required to meet this updated version of the standard. If the fishery wishes to enter the full assessment process against Version 3.0, the next steps are to:

- Form a client group to take responsibility for the certificate
- Approach several CABs for quotes to undertake the initial assessment as well as annual surveillance audits
- Secure funding for the initial assessment as well as annual surveillance audits
- Complete a documents checklist and gather all documentation and evidence required to demonstrate that the fishery scores on average SG80

Another option is the MSC's In Transition to MSC (ITM) program. As of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023, the ITM program is open to any FIPs globally who meet the entry criteria. The ITM program provides FIPs with access to full assessment using Version 2.0 of the MSC Standard, with the understanding that all fisheries must be certified against Version 3.0 by November 2028.

FIPs joining the ITM program must:

- Have a pre assessment less than 36 months old and an associated action plan, both verified by a CAB (the Channel scallop pre assessment was updated by Poseidon in April 2022)
- Have an aim to enter MSC assessment at the end of their action plan
- Have a project manager responsible for delivering the FIP action plan
- Report progress regularly

More information on the ITM program can be found in the ITM briefing document.

A key consideration is the 'client group' that will be needed to take the fishery into either ITM and/or full MSC assessment, once the FIP timeline is complete. Forming a South West sustainability hub, comprised of catching sector representatives and processors, to hold the certificate for monkfish, along with any future certificates, could help reduce costs and streamline the certification process across the region. MSC, as Secretariat for the FIP, will be available to discuss this approach and are keen to hear from members about the concept.

## Questions

Please get in touch with any questions related to the next steps for the FIP, including any ideas or concerns you may have.