

Clean Catch UK: Joint Action to Reduce Wildlife Bycatch

Report for Spurdog Local Focus Group Meeting



Meeting Date and Time: 21 October, 2021, 10:00-12:00

Location: Harbour Commissioner's Office, 22 Strand, Newlyn

Summary Points

- Clarity was sought about the CCUK programme, particularly around the risks of combining bycatch issues of different species under one initiative.
- A summary of fishermen's self-reported bycatch data for the first 3 years (2017 -2019) of the Spurdog Bycatch Management Programme was presented to the group. Members asked that all dead discard data be included or referenced within the context of the value and proportion of total catch. The economic impact of spurdog bycatch was of interest to industry members.
- Industry members referenced a need for a more 'positive profile' of their fishing activity and their efforts in the programme - although there was concern about public perception of the programme with catching a vulnerable species.
- An industry priority was to secure additional quota for the programme, through international swaps and/or annual fisheries negotiations with the EU.
- Members sought to understand options for the spurdog bycatch data to be used to inform the abundance of spurdog in the Celtic Sea - with a view to contributing to the stock assessment for spurdog in the North-east Atlantic. Members asked for the existing self-reported data from the programme to be presented in a compelling 'narrative' for ICES to consider.
- To be suitable to inform the management of spurdog, how data is collected, and the types of data collected, the Spurdog Bycatch Management Programme will be evaluated.

Full Schedule of Actions

	ACTION	Responsibility
1	Cefas to share spurdog programme report in draft with LFG members, prior to wider dissemination and publication.	Cefas
2	CFPO to investigate potential for international quota swaps.	CFPO
3	Defra to use the data collected so far to inform the spurdog quota required for the programme.	Defra
4	Clean Catch team to consider sharing positive news stories, and examine the potential of the Spurdog Bycatch Management Programme report, which is currently being prepared, as a vehicle for public information dissemination.	All
5	Cefas to include the industry's input regarding the need for a more positive profile and their comments on quota in the aforementioned report.	Cefas
6	Cefas to roll-out the CCUK app to Spurdog LFG members from January 2022.	Cefas
7	Cefas to present the programmes' data to the ICES Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes in 2022 and explore possibilities for further data collection to inform on spurdog abundance and stock status.	Cefas
8	CFPO to examine the possibility of accessing FISP funding to collect data for use in stock-assessment as a separate / parallel project to the existing programme.	CFPO
9	Spurdog LFG to continue the current programme.	All
10	CFPO to deny requests from within the PO for other vessels to join the programme at the current time.	CFPO
11	Defra to look into the possibility of a flexible monthly quota allocation, per vessel.	Defra

