
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 July 2014 14:48
To: [REDACTED] (Seal Protection Action Group); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] hammondpr.co.uk; [REDACTED] snh.gov.uk; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] rspca.org.uk; [REDACTED]
Subject: SASWG meeting
Attachments: SASWG 13 21st Nov 2013 revised minutes.doc; Action points SASWG 13 distilled from Minutes.docx; ADD Manufacturers Enquiry responses.pdf; Minutes of working group meeting SASWG March 2014 -Final.docx

Dear All,

First many apologies for the long silence; but some intersessional progress has been made. I would like to canvas your availability for the next meeting over the summer weeks. Please could you fill in the doodle poll here <http://doodle.com/s4z9vv5774fm2p6s>

Progress

Action Points from last meeting:

- AP: **SN** to check with IW whether there is any obligation to report deaths of birds or mammals in anti-predator nest back to Marine Scotland
 - [REDACTED] *informs me that under Section 41A of The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) there is an obligation on SNH to monitor the incidental capture or killing of European Protected Species, which includes all cetaceans and otters but not seals. This is mainly directed at bycatch in fisheries but it presumably also covers bycatch in anti-predator nets? It might be worth checking with SNH if there is a system in place that covers this? In respect of birds I have no idea what arrangements might be in place.*
 - *I will be following up with SNH; does FF have a policy on this issue?*
- AP- **SN** suggested that the group should write to ADD manufacturers to ask what steps they would be taking to ensure that operators can check that their devices are producing the intended acoustic output.
 - *Completed. The returned answers to our questions have been collated into one document (attached).*
 - **PLEASE NOTE THAT MANUFACTURERS HAVE ASKED FOR THESE RESPONSES TO BE TREATED IN COMMERCIAL CONFIDENCE.**
- AP: **AO** and **JA** to draft letter, SB to supply contact details for manufacturers to JA.
 - *Letter was drafted, circulated to group, agreed and circulated to manufacturers – all have now responded. Done*
- AP: **SN** to ask SNH for a list of which salmon farm sites had been refused permission to use ADD's
 - *Ongoing discussion with SNH; no central list exists – I am trying to collate what is known.*
- AP: **SN** to send AO the latest version of the website copy.
 - *Done*
- AP: **AO** to check the status of the website updates and if there were any modifications needed
 - *Web page copy is with [REDACTED] and hopefully should be available for preview online well before the next meeting; FF has agreed to continue funding carols time and web page hosting fee.*
- AP- Working group / sub-group to be reconvened to review actions that need to be fast tracked, and to find ways to facilitate these. **SN** agreed to send an email out to confirm a date between 16th and 20th Dec.
 - *Sub-group convened in March in Edinburgh – **minutes attached***

In addition, I have learned from [REDACTED] that a trial of the Startle response ADD is being tested 'somewhere in Orkney'. It would be great if those with contacts in the industry might be able to discover more...

Those that have not seen it – [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]’ report on field trials of their device with Meridian salmon company were published last November here: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0043/00438860.pdf>

I would encourage others with Action Points against their names to let the group know of any progress.

Amended minutes and distilled action points from the last meeting attached. I will be / have been chasing people up.

Seal licence returns

Thank you to [REDACTED] for circulating information on the latest seal licence returns in email of 10th April which in case anyone missed it is copied and pasted below:

I attach a link to the final quarter returns which are now on the SG web-site at:-

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Licensing/SealLicensing/2011/2013>

I also attach a link to a couple of useful graphs showing the trends in seal licensing to date.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/Licensing/SealLicensing/appgraph>

I understand that the split is 105 seals shot by aquaculture and 169 seals shot by fisheries for this period.

It is down on the same quarter last year for grey seals and static for common seals and the emphasis is increasingly on fisheries rather than aquaculture.

Next Meeting

At the next meeting – I would appreciate ideas for the agenda *which may include*:

- “Startle response” ADD trials ongoing – if anyone can find out more
- The conclusions of the sub group that met in March (please read **minutes attached**)
- A summary of TSSC ongoing research into minimising seal depredation – assuming [REDACTED] is willing/able to do so
- Website – should be available for preview in next few weeks– if there are any further concerns [REDACTED] may attend to field questions/ concerns
- Possible presentation by [REDACTED] on FF procedures as proposed last meeting.
- Possible presentation by Terecos (has been offered)
- Possible presentation / discussion with net manufacturer as suggested at last meeting
- Possible presentation by SNH on EPS licencing in relation to ADDs
- Update on MHS net trials
- Update on data mining (seal damage in relation to location, site type, ADD use etc) by SMRU
- Update on the acoustic testing stick from FF / RSPCA?

These would be far too much to deal with – so opinions on these, or other ideas are welcome.

Finally – location of the meeting: I am aware that the last two meeting have been in Edinburgh and that 8 of the 13 meetings so far have been North of the border – in the hope of encouraging greatest participation; Despite this there were only 7 participants (+6 apologies) at last meeting, 4 of whom travelled up from England. I would appreciate some views on the location of the next meeting.

I think SNH will be unable to attend anywhere much further than the North of England, it would be good to include them, and [REDACTED] informs me she may be able to update the group on SNH policy regarding disturbance and European Protected Species licencing. (But this need not necessarily be at the next meeting).

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