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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 June 2015 14:02  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** SASWG  
**Attachments:** Minutes of working group meeting SASWG March 2014 -Final.docx; SASWG 14 - 28 Aug 2014-draft minutes.doc; Action Points from No 14.docx

Dear All –

I should begin by apologising that I have been very short of time so far this year and have failed to chase people as I no doubt should have done.

However, I have also been wondering about how much enthusiasm there is among group members for it to continue?

I circulated minutes of the meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> August on October 17<sup>th</sup>. I have not had any comments. These are attached again in case you had lost them. I have extracted the action points from the minutes and also attach these separately.

As far as A.P.s are concerned, so far I have only heard from [REDACTED] (25/3/15) about the latest licence figures and a link to graphs of these data.

I emailed the group on 16<sup>th</sup> March canvassing for ideas for an agenda for our next meeting – but have only had one reply to that so far.

I phoned a few people in April asking if they thought the group should continue and the general response from the four or five people I spoke to was ‘yes’. However, for this to happen I think we will need more engagement.

I would say that a great deal of progress on the issue has been achieved in the past few years – and I think we all agree that this is in some part due to the work of the Group.

However, when re-reading the minutes we do seem to be ploughing over the same ground a great deal. Primarily we have been seeking (1) to understand why seals get shot or- what are the circumstances of the ‘last resorts’ and what factors lead to some sites shooting while others do not; (2) to support the ongoing Genuswave saga; and (3) to discuss results from new netting material trials.

Our working group established a ranked list of 11 ‘action areas’ as circulated last year (minutes of that working group are attached again). But almost all of these, ‘actions’ are dependent on industry wishing to do something, and hopefully to report back. Despite going through this process and identifying these priorities little appears to have happened over the last year and I cannot see what the group can do to move this along, other than advocate research, development or testing in these areas.

I have heard on the grapevine of several other trials and experiments being done at farm sites to try to reduce seal predation – but these are generally not being fed back to or discussed by the group (with some exceptions of course). It might be useful for those with more direct contacts and insights into the industry than I to suggest ways of improving information flow or encouraging other company involvement. It would be good if the group could help to share best or new practice ideas among companies.

Apologies if this is sounding a bit negative, but I need to get a steer from the group as to what the Group feels it can do now to meet its remit.

Finally – I have mentioned to some of you that after a recent (Easter) flurry of press activity on the issue of seal shooting, I was approached by the “Waitrose & Aquascot farmed fin fish supply partnership” asking if they could

become a member of the group. [REDACTED] tells me they have links to producers in the Northern Isles; I think they are essentially a processing and marketing organisation rather than a producer – but perhaps someone can correct me. I would like to know if I can extend an invitation to them to join the group, assuming there is sufficient interest in continuing, and we can come up with some new items or completed action points for a meeting.

Please let me know your thoughts.

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