

## UK Fisheries Science Advisory Panel: Advice Output Sheet

**Subject:** Review the joint evidence-based advice provided by NE/Cefas/JNCC entitled: *What are the ecosystem risks and benefits of full prohibition of industrial sandeel fishing in the UK waters of the North Sea (ICES Area IV).*

### Section 1: Advice Summary

*In 100 words or less, please summarise the core advice product detailing the key political/management points.*

The joint NE/Cefas/JNCC response to evaluate the risks and benefits of full prohibition of industrial sandeel fishing in UK waters of the North Sea is comprehensive and thorough. Benefits to commercial finfish stock biomasses are limited, with both positive and negative responses.

However, sandeel availability has been linked to seabird breeding success and survival; with the joint report indicating that seabirds would be the biggest beneficiaries if sandeel biomass were to increase as a consequence of a full prohibition of industrial sandeel fishing in UK waters of the North Sea.

The summary of ecosystem risks and benefits is usefully tabulated.

### Section 2: Summary of Advice Request

*Detail the key points of the advice request and information provided as part of the advice request form. This should include any data and literature provided by the advice requestor and should provide enough detail in order to introduce the question to a new reader.*

Defra request UKFSAP to provide a summarised review of advice from the joint NE/Cefas/JNCC response; highlighting comments/amendments required to the advice for it to be endorsed by UKFSAP.

### Section 3: Decision Process

*Detail the decision-making process in full, including the key steps from advice request to outcome, the data utilised (both supplied, and any additional data used), any references/sources, and any minor variations in opinion expressed by Panel Members. This should be presented as a 'methods' section.*

The UKFSAP Chair received the document produced by NE/Cefas/JNCC in response to Defra's advice request on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022 from Defra's Fisheries Science and Evidence Delivery Team. The document and Defra's fast-track advice request were forwarded by the UKFSAP Chair to panel members on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022 ahead of the scheduled monthly meeting of UKFSAP.

The document was reviewed by UKFSAP and comments sent to the Chair with an agreed deadline of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The Chair collated the responses received, initially drafted UKFSAP's advice based on the reviews and circulated to panel members and the UKFSAP Secretariat on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022, ahead of the next scheduled UKFSAP meeting on the afternoon of that day.

At its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022, UKFSAP discussed and agreed the draft advice for finalisation no later than 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Invited experts were in attendance at the meeting in order to clarify any issues – Mathieu Lundy (AFBI), Ewen Bell (Cefas), Jacob Bentley (NE), Mark Duffy (NE), Libby West (NE) and Declan Tobin (JNCC); together with Rob Cook (Defra) and Gemma Cripps (Defra) who coordinated the advice request.

The participation of the external experts assisted UKFSAP in its review and generated a healthy discussion which all agreed would strengthen the advice. UKFSAP concluded that generally the paper was comprehensive and that the evidence and analysis used are sound.

The panel's reviews ahead of the meeting were collated into an annotated document (*available from the UKFSAP Secretariat*) where responses to comments raised during the meeting were noted. UKFSAP agreed with the experts that the definitions in the paper need to be tightened up and to be more specific with some statements to avoid ambiguity and possible confusion. The experts agreed to revise the initial paper and resubmit by 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022 addressing the comments raised by UKFSAP.

UKFSAP to agree their draft advice on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022 by email.

#### Section 4: Core Advice Section

*In detail, please elaborate on the advice from the Panel. This should be treated in a 'results/discussion' manner.*

Whilst reviewing the joint NE/Cefas/JNCC response, UKFSAP has highlighted a number of sections where either edits or further clarifications are required. These are summarised below and available in a collated

annotated document of the draft joint report (*available from the UKFSAP Secretariat*).

Front cover: Subarea 4.

Core advice: Substantial reordering, rewording and deletion of text.

Section 1.1.: Minor comments to be addressed.

Section 1.2.: Change of heading and minor textual edits.

Section 1.2.: Clarification of term and minor textual edits.

Section 2.1.: Minor textual edits and clarification of technical term.

Figure 2: Minor comment to be addressed.

Section 2.3.1.: Minor textual edits and clarification of section with respect to (wrt) resilience. Should this be incorporated into the seabird section? Clarification wrt collapse versus decline. Caution wrt foodweb change and metric of poor seabird success.

Section 2.3.2.: Minor textual edits.

Section 2.3.3.: Additional reference added. Comment about linkage to be addressed. Great Britain? Northern Ireland?

Section 2.3.4.: Change of heading. Minor textual edits.

Table 2: Minor heading change.

Section 3.1.1.: More substantive textual edits and comments to be addressed. How many years are the simulations projected for?

Section 3.1.2.: Why is this needed? May require reordering of later section (e.g. 3.2.2.).

Section 3.2.1.: How many years are the simulations projected for? Minor textual edit.

Section 3.3.: Minor textual edits. Possible reference missing to NE modelling work.

Section 3.4.1.: Is the accuracy justified in the text; e.g. *between 1% and 3%*? Minor textual edits. Is it necessary to have both tables 3 and 4?

Section 3.4.2.: May require require moving text.

Section 4.1.: Minor textual edits.

Section 4.2.: Heading change.

Section 4.3.: Minor textual edits. Possible text deletion.

Section 4.4.: Minor textual edit.

Section 5.: Comment wrt predators.

Section 5.1.: Minor textual edit.

Section 6.: Although of interest, is this section necessary in order to respond to the request? Minor textual edits.

Table 9.: Minor textual edit.

References.: Reordering.

Annex 1.: Check year of the UK Environment Act which should be 2021 and not 2020 as stated.

## Section 5: Additional Information

*Please note any additional points (i.e. linkages to other advice, suggestions from the Panel) that are pertinent to this advice request.*

Follow-up request to UKFSAP Ref: 2022\_SandeelReview.

## Section 6: References

*Please cite any literature utilised in developing this advice.*

None in addition to the joint NE/Cefas/JNCC paper entitled: *What are the ecosystem risks and benefits of full prohibition of industrial sandeel fishing in the UK waters of the North Sea (ICES Area IV).*

Signed off by UKFSAP

Date: 08/11/2022