



Project UK,
c/o Marine House,
1 Snow Hill,
Farringdon,
EC1A 2DH

Open Seas,
c/o 51 Atholl Road,
Pitlochry,
PH16 5BU

Thursday, 13 May 2021

Dear Phil,

With reference to your letter sent by email on 26 March, and confirmed as received on 13 April, I am responding on behalf of the Project UK Round 2 Steering Group members.

1. What is Project UK's position on illegal fishing?

The aim of Project UK Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) is to bring together the private and public sectors to identify and address environmental challenges in the fisheries. The FIP action plans align with the requirements of the MSC Fisheries Standard, which is explicit that the fish stocks and ecosystems within MSC certified fisheries must not be suffering from IUU.

IUU fishing takes place in contravention of the legal framework and is detrimental to achieving sustainability objectives and it also affects livelihoods. Illegal fishing is, by definition, subject to legislation, investigation by a relevant authority and subject to the principles of evidence in the appropriate jurisdiction. It is dealt with by the Courts including, where appropriate, with administrative penalties. FIPs provide a mechanism to drive systematic improvements on environmental sustainability both within, and beyond, UK waters.

2. What actions has Project UK or its partners taken on addressing illegal fishing, including illegal damage to Marine Protected Areas?

A record of all Project UK actions can be found in the Action Plans for the relevant FIP. These can be found on our website at www.projectukfisheries.co.uk. Any queries concerning specific Steering Group members' actions should either be directed to them or raised with the secretariat (MSC) to liaise with that member. A list of our partners can be found at the same address.



3. How has Project UK sought to ensure fisheries included in these FIPs are bought into the action plan, including Scallop FIP action 14?

A record of all Project UK actions can be found in the Action Plans for the relevant FIP. These can be found on our website at www.projectukfisheries.co.uk. Meeting minutes are also publicly available at the same address.

The quote taken from the West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Management Group's minutes was, in fact, inaccurately recorded and later corrected. Although a participant at the meeting made a comment indicating that "MSC accreditation may not be the best way forward", no discussion on this matter took place and no agreement was sought to support this comment.

You note in Point 2 that the target dates in the scallop action plan for Action 14 have 'slipped'. Whilst we aim to achieve all milestones within the target timeframe, overall objectives are to be delivered within the five-year span of the FIP. The Steering Group needs to be flexible based on influential external factors, and this can result in changes to milestone timelines. The annual review is a public record of progression in the FIP. The consultants consider the impact of any external influences that we cannot control and adjust the milestones accordingly to ensure the overall objectives are still achieved in the overall timeline of the FIP.

The annual reviews are being conducted in April and will be publicly available once finalised. I can let you know when they are available.

Best wishes,

██████████ on behalf of the Round 2 Steering Groups.