

# *Fisheries science in Welsh waters: a collaborative approach between fishers and scientists*



**European Fisheries Fund project:**

*Sustainable use of fisheries resources in Welsh waters*



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# Aim of the project:

## Sustainable fishing in Wales

National and EU legislation is changing!  
The burden of proof will soon require that fisheries are NOT having a negative impact on fish stocks or the environment

This could have serious implications for current fishing practices

This project aims provide the necessary data



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# How to achieve sustainability

Are fisheries already operating sustainably?

- Limited data on stock status
- Limited data on fishing activities (fleet under 10m)
- Habitat data incomplete
- Difficult to make sound management decisions on limited scientific evidence




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# Successful sustainable management approaches in fisheries have generally been stakeholder lead or had substantial stakeholder support.

## STRIKING THE BALANCE

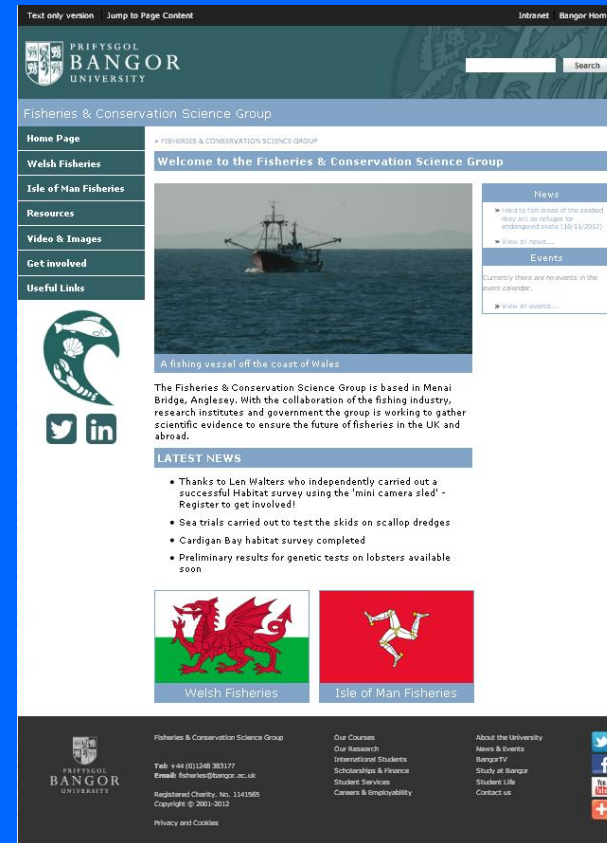


**July 2012** An Ecosystem-Based Approach for MCZ Management in Wales

The current implementation of Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones in Wales threatens the culture and economy of Welsh coastal communities by prohibiting traditional low impact fishing and recreational activities. This report outlines a viable alternative MCZ approach that will promote ecosystem recovery and resilience and better our understanding of the marine environment without adverse impact to fishermen and local communities.

Prepared by Dr A.P. Woolmer for Welsh Fishermen's Association Ltd - Cymdeithas Pysgotwyr Cymru Cyf

Welsh Fisherman's Association




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Fisheries & Conservation Science Group

Home Page | Welsh Fisheries | Isle of Man Fisheries | Resources | Video & Images | Get involved | Useful Links

### Welcome to the Fisheries & Conservation Science Group





A fishing vessel off the coast of Wales

The Fisheries & Conservation Science Group is based in Menai Bridge, Anglesey. With the collaboration of the fishing industry, research institutes and government the group is working to gather scientific evidence to ensure the future of fisheries in the UK and abroad.

#### LATEST NEWS

- Thanks to Len Walters who independently carried out a successful Habitat survey using the 'mini camera sled' - Register to get involved!
- Sea trials carried out to test the skids on scallop dredges
- Cardigan Bay habitat survey completed
- Preliminary results for genetic tests on lobsters available soon



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**Added bonus of gathering data:** MSC or other accreditation schemes also require evidence in form of scientific data and evidence base management strategies.

The screenshot shows the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) website. At the top left is the MSC logo, a blue circle with a white fish and the text 'MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL'. To its right is the text 'Marine Stewardship Council' and 'Certified sustainable seafood'. A search bar is located at the top right. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, About us, Healthy oceans, Track a fishery, Get certified!, MSC's impact, Where to buy, Cook, eat, enjoy, Newsroom, and Documents. A purple banner below the menu says 'YOU ARE HERE: Home'. The main content area features a large image of a coastline with a beach and mountains. Text on the left describes the MSC's fishery certification program. Text on the right says 'Sustainable Seas, Marine Stewardship Council (April 2012)' and includes a link to watch a short film. Below this are three columns: 'Use the' with images of MSC salmon products and links to find a certified supplier and use the MSC ecolabel; 'Sustainable fishing' with an image of a fisherman holding a sign and links to find a sustainable fishery and get certified; and 'Cook, eat, enjoy' with an image of salmon and links to find sustainable fish and recipes.



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EFF project aims to bridge knowledge gaps through innovative science in collaboration with the fishing industry

Engagement of the industry in these projects is vital. Without it this project fails to produce any usable outcomes for the fishing industry.



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**Work-package 1— Fishers knowledge (survey)**

**Work-package 2 — Habitat surveys**

**Work-package 3 — Stock status of target species**

**Work-package 4 — Connectivity of welsh stocks**

**Work-package 5 — Assessment and management advice**

Additionally we will address and specific burning issues to assist the fishing industry with the sustainable management of marine resources.



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# Work-package 1 - Fishers knowledge

Questionnaire survey across Wales with active and retired fishermen

## Aim:

- To map past and present fishing grounds and their importance to the industry
- Map conflict zones with other users
- Map ecological data of the target species (i.e. nursery grounds, migration routes etc.)



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## Work-package 2 — Habitat surveys

**Work to be conducted:**  
Habitat mapping of priority sites for industry

### **Aim:**

- Provide precise data on the location of specific species and habitat features for spatial management



# Work-package 3 — Stock status of target species

Scallops, crab, lobster, prawn & whelks  
Bass and other fish species

## Work to be conducted:

Devise appropriate sampling program to conduct stock assessments  
Implement sampling programs that can continue after EFF

## Aim:

Collect data on welsh stocks to aid management decisions



## Where we need your collaboration!

### Fishers Questionnaire Survey:

- All present and past fishers
- Register your interest with us tonight – sign up form!

### You can choose to receive:

- Regular updates
- On-line newsletter
- Contact from our team about up-coming opportunities



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# Where we need your collaboration! – Scallop sector

1. Red bag scheme - Size structure indicator of stock health
2. Scallop dredge skid trials – Modification reduces contact area of belly
3. Fishing intensity trial in Cardigan Bay to ensure scallop dredging can continue in a sustainable way into the future.



# Where we need your collaboration now! – Static gears

1. On board camera system to sample catch and by-catch of crab and lobster
2. Prawn and whelk fishers adding a single scientific pot to their strings to be collected once / month (pot provided)
3. Collection of temperature & video data by adding a logger / video to their pots



## Where we need your collaboration now! – Finfish

1. On board camera system to sample catch and by-catch in bass fisheries
2. Access to track plot data or carrying of GPS tags to identify main fishing grounds for bass
3. Data collection by providing the intestines of fish and scales together with the size of the fish (sampling kits and training will be provided)



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# Will I get paid if I get involved in this project?

In general the answer is no

Biological data collection has to be collaborative  
Data collection will not impinge on your earnings but will require some commitment

If there are dedicated research tasks for which a fishing boat would be required full time the project has some funds to charter respective fishing vessels



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Any questions?



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