

Atlantic Salmon Seawater Standards Technical Advisory Group Meeting

Summary Notes

10:00 am Wednesday 29th May 2024

Environmental monitoring (oxygen and water-borne insults)

The Group discussed protocols and best practices for monitoring key environmental parameters in the marine environment. Action plans and possible mitigation steps were considered, and gaps in knowledge and operational considerations were highlighted for further work and discussion.

Health monitoring

Routine health visits to farms by fish health professionals was discussed with the intention of clear and formal introduction into the standards. The frequency and scope of such visits was considered, as well as how such monitoring fits into veterinary responsibilities and regulatory requirements.

Slaughter

Advances in standards and regulations relating to stunning and slaughter were discussed, with specific focus on stunning and slaughter techniques including electrical stunning and novel stunning methods.

Vessel biosecurity

Best practice in regard to vessel biosecurity, especially for vessels arriving into the UK from foreign waters, was discussed by the Group with experiences shared. Topics considered for future inclusion in the standards included verification of disinfection and optimal protocols.

Staff training

The Group discussed refining training requirements for farm staff and to reflect both practical and theoretical knowledge gained by staff through formal training courses and on-farm experience and development. The difficulties with accreditation and standardisation were examined with commitments made to explore the topic further.

Cleanerfish

The Group considered changes to the cleanerfish standards and areas for future work which includes the potential introduction of welfare outcome assessments for both wrasse and lumpfish.

Atlantic Salmon Freshwater Standards Technical Advisory Group Meeting

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Recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS)

The Group discussed practices and operations in freshwater RAS, as well as issues and challenges currently being faced by farmers. Topics for consideration in any RAS specific standards include biosecurity policies and practices, water quality, alarms and sensors, and back up supplies of oxygen and power.

Crowding

Differences in crowding operations between pens and tanks were discussed with consideration to different handling procedures in both environments. A debate followed about how the standards should approach these nuances.

Health monitoring

Routine health visits to farms by fish health professionals was discussed with the intention of clear and formal introduction into the standards. The frequency and scope of such visits was considered, as well as how such monitoring fits into veterinary responsibilities and regulatory requirements.

Smoltification

Recent developments in knowledge and on-farm experience surrounding smoltification were discussed and considered with a view towards updating the smoltification standards.

Transport

The Group discussed the existing transport standards and how they could be developed and updated, as well as considering new standards.

Staff training

The Group discussed refining training requirements for farm staff and to reflect both practical and theoretical knowledge gained by staff through formal training courses and on-farm experience and development. The difficulties with accreditation and standardisation were examined with commitments made to explore the topic further.

Hatchery facilities

With the increase in dedicated hatchery and green egg facilities in the UK, the Group discussed whether any updates and changes were required to the standards. The Group also considered best practices in regard to mortality removal of eggs.