



Pre-course Reading

Safeguarding the Future

sustainable development training
for the professional business



Fisheries Management for the Future

sustainable development
training for the Fisheries
Management sector

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Fisheries Management for the Future

A training programme for use in workshops to help small and medium-sized businesses integrate sustainable development principles into their business practice.

Pre-course reading

You should read and act upon these notes prior to the workshop. They provide background information about some of the topical issues that might affect your business. They also pose a few questions for you to think about beforehand.

Purpose of the workshop

Thank you for signing up to find out more about sustainable development and ways in which your business might respond to the challenges it presents. The Welsh Assembly Government is obliged to promote sustainable development, and is planning actions that will affect everyone in Wales, including large and small businesses. Working towards sustainability presents many business opportunities and can improve profit margins, but businesses may also find it necessary to change the way they operate to meet more exacting government requirements.

The workshop will help you to integrate sustainable development principles into your business practice. You will be able to keep ahead of the increasing demands to operate in more sustainable ways. In particular you will be more competent to:

- Explain the terms 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' to your colleagues and customers
- Assess how challenges from government, employers and customers for sustainable development might impact on your business
- Apply 'joined-up' thinking to working out solutions to business and sustainability issues
- Apply techniques that help you integrate sustainable development principles into your business planning
- Prepare a sustainable development action plan
- Obtain further advice and support.

Recreational angling

The inland recreational fisheries sector in Wales includes game and coarse angling on rivers and on natural and man-made lakes. In Wales, often because of the small size of these enterprises, they tend to be part of a larger integrated business involving either other types of farming or tourist accommodation. In some cases they are run as sideline or 'hobby' businesses. However, this does not imply that inland recreational fisheries are lacking in value or that as a sector they do not have huge potential for success, as this extract from the Welsh Assembly Government website illustrates:

"The recreational fisheries of Wales have great social, economic and environmental importance not only to those who live in the Principality but also to some 400,000 people each year for whom fishing in Wales is a factor in their choice of holiday destination."

"Recent research sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government has highlighted both the present value and, significantly, the growth potential for our recreational fisheries as a source of rural employment."

With over 240 salmon and trout rivers, an increasing interest in river coarse fishing, several hundred natural lake fisheries, more than 20 large reservoirs, an increasing number of small stocked still-water fisheries, 150km of canal towpaths and 1200km of coastline with some 300 charter boats operating from Welsh ports, Wales is ideally placed to meet the needs of all angling sectors".
<http://www.fishing.visitwales.com>

A Strategy for the Recreational Fisheries of Wales was published in November 2003. The document describes a high-level framework via which Assembly-Sponsored Bodies with an influence on fisheries, ecology, tourism and economic development can work in partnership with angling governing bodies, clubs and fishery owners to maximise the value of Welsh fisheries.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/foodandfisheries/fisheries/recreationalangling/?lang=en>

The following facts and figures are not comprehensive but give an indication of the contribution of the sector to the Welsh economy.

	Annual turnover (£m)	Employment (full-time equivalent)
Game angling	8.2	171
Coarse angling	39.4	90
Totals	47.6	261

Table 1: Contribution to the Welsh Economy

(Adapted from 'Study into Inland and Sea Fisheries in Wales' Nautilus Consultants, 2000)

The statutory environmental protection agency, Environment Agency Wales, maintains a database of over 250 still-water fisheries in Wales. There are at least 20,000 coarse anglers resident in Wales and visitor surveys from 1998 showed that 408,000 visitors participated in fishing during their stay in Wales. Fifty-six thousand of these visited Wales especially to fish.

Visiting anglers are estimated to spend around £63.7m per year. Coarse fishing is amongst the most popular recreational activities in the UK, and Wales draws anglers from other parts of the UK because of its impressive landscape. Inland fisheries in Wales have the potential to contribute to a sustainable food supply and sustainable tourism. Investing in the ecology that underpins the business in order to produce a viable economic return is one of the keys to achieving sustainability in the fisheries sector.

<p>Strengths</p> <p>The wide range of fishing opportunities and an ‘unspoilt’ environment mean recreational fishing is popular. Venues are not overcrowded and there is still room for growth in all sectors.</p> <p>Coarse fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large numbers of venues • Stocks of coarse fish are healthy • High participation levels by Welsh residents and visitors • Attractive surrounding countryside. <p>Game fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low price of participation compared to Scotland but not Ireland • Availability of licences • Attractive countryside • Varied game fishing opportunities in both location and species. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>A lack of strategic development and support/marketing infrastructure meaning that potential customers are unaware of fishing opportunities. Associated facilities, accommodation and access can be poor.</p> <p>Coarse fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of coarse fishing representation compared to game fishing • Lack of good match-fishing facilities • Questionable value for money at some venues • Illegal activity (licence avoidance and specimens poached from ponds). <p>Game fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depleted wild fish stocks; salmon in particular • Water quality and pollution risks.
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>New and existing venues, accommodation, facilities and marketing initiatives can be substantially improved. There is still room for growth in all sectors.</p> <p>Coarse fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting international events • Increase recruitment of non-anglers through simplified participation and coaching. <p>Game fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted marketing including sea trout (<i>Salmo trutta trutta</i>), brown trout (<i>Salmo trutta spp</i>) and grayling (<i>Thymallus thymallus</i>) • Business opportunities associated with visiting anglers 	<p>Threats</p> <p>The strength of the UK Pound (£) and the decline in long-stay holidays means fewer people are visiting Wales for long periods. This means the promotion of specialist holidays such as fishing is necessary, but promotion should be balanced with environmental concerns such as the disturbance of wildlife and health of diadromous fish stocks, and the needs of other users.</p> <p>Coarse fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunistic commercial fishery operations may damage the reputation of others • Few suitable match-fishing venues • Pollution and disease causing fish-kills. <p>Game fishing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on watercourses from development • Purchase of fishing rights by outside interests.

Table 2: SWOT analysis for coarse fishing and game fishing (adapted from ‘Study into Inland and Sea Fisheries in Wales’ Nautilus Consultants, 2000).

Questions to think about:

- How have the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, to the inland recreational fisheries sector changed since 2000?
- Is climate change now the biggest threat to maintaining fish stocks?

Sustainable development in Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government is the principal agency among others responsible for inland fisheries management in Wales. The Government of Wales Act 1998 placed a duty on the Welsh Assembly Government to promote sustainable development. The Assembly published its Sustainable Development Scheme *Learning to Live Differently* in November 2000. This was followed by an action plan to implement the Scheme in March 2001. Since then annual reports monitoring performance have been published and following a consultation exercise, a revised Sustainable Development Scheme *Starting to Live Differently* was published in 2004.

Starting to Live Differently 2004 states, "the principles and vision of the Sustainable Development Scheme will drive everything we do. We will integrate these into our work and actively require or influence others, for example local authorities, public bodies, business, the voluntary sector and communities, to do the same to deliver change. We will seek to enable them to do so."

The Assembly has an ambitious vision of a sustainable Wales that will require all people to take part if it is to succeed. The Assembly states its plans will be based on:

- Promoting a diverse, competitive, high added-value economy, with high skills and education, that responds to sustainable development opportunities, minimises demands on the environment and maximises the distribution of the benefits
- Action on social justice that tackles poverty, poor health, and consequences of disadvantage and provides people and their communities with the means to help themselves break out of the poverty trap
- Action in our built and natural environment that enhances pride in the community, promotes biodiversity, promotes local employment and minimises waste generation, energy, water and transport demands
- Strengthening Wales' cultural identity and helping to create a bilingual country, while looking confidently outwards and welcoming new cultural influences
- Creating a place which values its children and where young people want to live, work and enjoy a high quality of life, and where future generations enjoy better prospects in life and are not landed with a legacy of problems bequeathed by us

- Supporting people to live healthy and independent lives, irrespective of income, location or disability
- Valuing everyone in society and promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting openness, partnership and participation, so that people can play a part in taking decisions that affect them
- Contributing to sustainable development at a global level as well as locally and taking account of the global impacts of decisions made in Wales.

Sustainable development is often seen as an environmental issue but it is just as much about wealth creation and tackling poverty and injustice¹.

Question to think about

What actions could the Welsh Assembly Government take that would support inland fisheries in Wales?

Wales and SMEs²

- Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, or SMEs, are defined as employing between zero and 249 employees. In the UK there are 3.75 million active businesses, 85% of them in England. In all the regions of the UK, SMEs make up over 99% of businesses
- In the UK as a whole, 55% of the workforce works in SMEs. SMEs account for 51% of turnover
- In Wales, 67.1% of the workforce works in SMEs and they account for 61.4% of turnover. Agricultural businesses are highly represented. This is to be expected, as 78% of Wales is agricultural land, 14% forestry and only 8% urban land
- SMEs providing goods and services to the public and private sectors are likely to find their operations will be required to meet certain sustainability targets in the future. This workshop will place businesses in a better position to integrate sustainable development principles into their activities and hence meet these requirements.

¹ <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/?lang=en>

² SME statistics from Small Business Service at Department of Trade and Industry

Questions to think about

- Could the growing demand for local food supply increase the demand for table fish? Could carp become a table fish again?
- As people look for alternatives to flying to reduce their carbon footprints, could fisheries in Wales attract more residential visitors?
- Is the recent upsurge in interest in healthier lifestyle choices having an impact on recreational fisheries?
- What are the three main challenges facing your business?

About the project

This initiative being delivered by a team of academics based in Swansea University's School of the Environment and Society, aims to benefit SMEs.

Professional Practice for Sustainable Development – PP4SD for short – is a national project that has designed and published training materials, and runs training courses for professionals in sustainable development.

The Swansea project has targeted four business sectors over a one-year project: (Aquaculture, Environmental Management, Fisheries Management and Agricultural Manufacturing) and can be adapted to any SME in the land-based sector.

As part of the Higher Education sector's commitment to working with industry and the wider community, the aim of the PP4SD project at Swansea is to assist Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Wales to become more confident in putting sustainable development principles into their working practice.

Project Director, Dr Jane Claricoates, said:

“PP4SD can help SMEs to move towards complying with increasingly stringent legislation about employment, health and safety, and the environment, as well as with increasing demands from customers and consumers for environmentally-friendly practices and products. Sustainable approaches to business planning and reporting can help small businesses to become more efficient, cost-effective and competitive.

The PP4SD project was another mark of Swansea University's commitment to sustainable development, and is just one of a number of initiatives taking place on campus.”

The PP4SD project was supported by the Welsh Assembly Government's Knowledge Exploitation Fund (KEF) and the European Social Fund under Objectives 1 & 3.

In addition, the Swansea-based project worked closely with Lantra, the Sector Skills Council advising the government on training for environmental and land-based industries.

For further information on PP4SD and the Swansea University project, please visit <http://www.pp4sd.org.uk/>