
Proposed Partnership Between the FSBI and IFM

Purpose and objectives

This paper is to present the headline benefits of a closer partnership between the FSBI and IFM. This note has been jointly prepared on behalf of the IFM (David Bunt and Chris Mills) and FSBI (Gary Carvalho and Jane Smith) at the request of the Chairman and President of each organisation by Nigel Milner and Paul Coulson.

It summarises the benefits and opportunities of closer collaboration, noting where synergies might arise, any issues that may be faced and how these might be managed. A summary of the organisations' key features is included to inform the assessment (Table 1).

Key Strengths of Each Organisation

FSBI majors on establishing a scientific evidence base in fish and fisheries science with relevance to policy, through publicising fish and fisheries science, networking, and grant funding of scientists. The IFM majors on the practical implementation of policy through a strong training and development programme for fisheries practitioners, advice, and best practice guidance.

Mechanisms and Benefits

The following are seven mechanisms for collaborative working that are potentially of benefit to members and organisations.

1. **Joint membership** – cost reduction of combined membership should bring increased, stabilised and resilient recruitment because spread across larger constituency of multiple sectors (e.g. managers, scientists, operations, students, 3rd sector volunteers, public. This is a key objective of both organisations.
2. **Networking** – Development of social media, website links, specialist groups/sections would expand opportunities for members. It would lead to greater exposure to relevant interest groups who might want to participate (e.g. NGOs, Trusts, Universities) and greater effective weight for apolitical lobbying. Additional material to populate social channels and increase traffic of each organisations. Expanded range of career opportunities.
3. **Publicity** - Mailing lists, press/media contacts, opportunities to raise awareness of fish and fisheries in wider aquatic conservation and nature contexts.
4. **Joint events** - Conferences, seminars, local events, workshops, as appropriate would demonstrate, emphasise and strengthen links between science and practice.
5. **Training** – Will meet joint needs and opportunities for mutual support from specialisms within each organisation. Potential to increase training portfolios and income, for example field sampling training for research students could be at discounted rates. Enhance courses with e.g. quantitative stock assessment and genetics from FSBI. Positive benefits from signposting each other's training courses.

6. **Journals and educational materials** – JFB, FISH and IFM training literature offer different perspectives to each constituency. Potential for joint discounted subscription. The expectation is for increased circulation of all materials.
7. **Joint position/policy statements** – added value of having both organisations supporting a position/policy on matters of common interest e.g. climate change, marine fisheries, over-fishing, invasive species, environmental impacts, habitat and biodiversity loss.

Potential Issues to resolve

The following potential issues need to be evaluated, managed or mitigated.

Mechanism and Benefits (ref 1-7)	Issue	Management / Mitigation
Joint membership (1)	Fee changes. IFM rely on membership income to fund their activities and any reduction would have a financial impact. FSBI membership income is only 2% of annual so minimal risk.	Financial impacts of fees options will be modelled and optimised. In both organisations membership categories and fees are likely to be streamlined by April 2021. However, both organisations are prioritising membership growth
	Loss of identity of organisations. Membership support for closer ties is needed.	Collaboration aligns with strategic policies of both organisations. Recent FSBI survey indicates membership support for the benefits from such collaboration; but further views on this proposal will be solicited by questionnaire within IFM.
Joint publicity (3)	General Data Protection Regulations apply	Manage and comply through membership policies and administration.
	Communications routes could be confused	It will be made clear at the time who leads. Clear leads for communications in both organisations to be identified.
Joint Events (4)	Joint events could reduce vital income for both organisations.	Flagship events would remain independent. Specialist events could be run, in partnership as appropriate.
Journals and educational materials (6)	Potential loss of income	JFB income is ~ 90% of total FSBI income, so minimal risk. FISH is only distributed to IFM Members, no institutional subscriptions. Wider circulation could possibly lead to greater advertiser income. Members newsletters and equivalents will be managed within each organisation.

Proposed implementation

A phased implementation is suggested that takes the simpler mechanisms first, namely networking and joint statements; then joint events and training; lastly dealing with the mechanisms of joint membership and journal subscriptions. The latter two need further modelling and evaluation, but they time well with the streamlining of membership structure and fees in both organisations which are planned to be introduced by April 2021.

If approved this paper would serve as an outline agreement between the FSBI and IFM to take effect from January 1st, 2021.

Details of implementation would be developed through contacts of both organisation and their appropriate committees. Initially, Paul Coulson for the IFM and Nigel Milner for the FSBI will serve as these contact points.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Closer working will bring mutual benefits for the respective members and for the influence and resilience of both organisations. Enhancing the connection between evidence, policy and practice sends a positive, strong statement at a time when science-led decision-making is coming under challenge.

IFM Council and FSBI Council are asked to:

- Consider and confirm that the risks and benefits presented for their organisation and members are as set out here, or to raise further matters and to comment on the adequacy of the management/mitigation measures.
- Agree the adoption of this paper as an outline agreement between the organisations and endorse the proposed timetable.

30th November 2020

Table 1 Outline of the key features of each organisation

FEATURE	FSBI	IFM
Status	Registered Charity	Membership focussed Institute representing fishery managers. Currently going through the process to become a charity
Founded	1967	1969
Structure and staff	President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Council (currently 19 members), Guests of Council with reporting specialist committees. One part-time (0.5 FTE) salaried Administrative Assistant. Membership services provided by external supplier.	2 full time staff overseen by a Chairman and an Executive made up of 9 members. Wider council of circa 25 members. Regional membership branches.
Main objects	Supports scientific activity in fish biology and fisheries science through charitable activities including grant funding, travel awards and conference sponsorship, and through the publication of the Journal of Fish Biology.	To support and promote sustainable fisheries management for the benefit of our members, fisheries, wildlife and society.
Membership number and trend	634 (mid 2020)	500 increasing (2020)
Membership location	International membership	UK and Ireland. Very few international members
Categories of membership	5: being, Basic (without JFB); Full (with JFB); Retired; Student (with JFB); Honorary	6: being, Registered, Associate, Affiliate, Subscriber, Student, Corporate
Fees	Basic - £10; Full - £30 (with JSB); Retired - £15; Student - £15 (to be reviewed by April 2021)	Registered - £65; Associate - £75; Affiliate - £40; Subscriber - £40; Student - £15; Corporate – Max £175 (to be revised from Jan 2021)
Key activities	Funding (travel, research), networking, fish science promotion through JFB and symposia; public briefing papers	Training; conferences; workshops; networking events (local); production of position statements; strong social media presence
Existing links with other organisations	American Fisheries Society, Japanese Society of Fisheries Science, Royal Society of Biology	Member of the England Fishery Group, Environmental Policy Forum and Wildlife and Countryside Link. Registered body with the Society of the Environment and able to award Chartered Environmentalist status. Work closely with similar organisations such as Wild Trout Trust, Atlantic Salmon Trust, Angling Trust etc