

ShellEye Webinar Summary



ShellEye was delighted to host a webinar with several aquaculture farmers / business owners in November 2016. The online presentation and discussion of the ShellEye project provided an excellent opportunity to review the progress of the project and obtain vital feedback from key stakeholders, who will be users of ShellEye forecasts in Phase II of the project and hopefully into the future.

The project team members present were: Peter Miller, Jenny Lockett, Kelly-Marie Davidson (PML), Jamie Shutler (University of Exeter), Carlos Campos (CEFAS). Key points from the webinar are presented below. The identities of non-project participants have been kept confidential.

General

- There are various satellites available each collecting different resolution images, some on a daily basis. New satellites are regularly being launched improving the resolution and frequency of images collected.
- A 7-day composite of cloud free data is used to create an overall view for the week for the ShellEye bulletins. Cloud does not affect the biotoxin forecasts.
- E.coli is a bigger concern than HABs and storms-induced outflows have a massive impact upon farms. E.coli is causing supply issues. If there is an incident of E.coli and stock is held from market, customers will just go to another supplier and may not return.
- Really interesting, in shellfish and finfish there is industry realisation that environment is changing, blooms are becoming more frequent. Anything that can help industry reduce costs will be beneficial.
- It was decided that the website archive of the bulletins would have all the images that have been produced, as some may be left off the emailed version, and would fill the gaps between email bulletins.
- Prediction for shellfish culture could also be very useful for a future lobster aquaculture industry.
- Cork never experiences biotoxin issues. Also Loch Ryan could be another site for study.

Bulletins

- ShellEye will have to be extremely careful with any closure advice and should focus on recommending increased sampling activity.
- Detailed maps are needed so can focus on specific area, which should be possible once Sentinel 3 data is available, but an overview image would also be helpful.
- Weekly bulletins would be fine for lobster hatchery purposes. During the peak algal bloom season in summer it could be useful for shellfish and finfish farmers to receive bulletins every 3 days or bi-weekly.
- Bulletins could include additional data on SST, wind direction, species info etc.

Cost

- There will be no charge for the service during the lifespan of the project development but if it proves to be useful, long-term sustainability may rely on a reasonable and affordable subscription service.
- Affordability would depend on the size of the farm. Shellfish farms tend to be smaller / poorer than salmon farms.
- It has to be cheaper than 50x weekly official sampling; mini test packs are cheap and cheerful but reliability is uncertain.
- Price and the reliability of the bulletins will be key to the success of an ongoing service.