



SC-33: Current status of the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*, in the Menai Strait, spawning potential and potential mitigation using triploid oysters.

The Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas* is a non-native species that has considerably expanded its range forming naturalised populations following introductions into Europe in the 1960s, where it has become a mainstay of shellfish aquaculture. Initially it was thought *C. gigas* was incapable of spawning in the non-native low temperature waters of the UK. However, after a century of environmental conditioning *C. gigas* has become established in the lower latitude regions of the UK, particularly in the South of England, leading to concerns about within government and environmental stakeholders that rising sea temperatures may lead to population spread of this cultured species. This represents a barrier to expansion of the shellfish industry in the Menai Strait (and across Wales), where understanding of the reproductive ecology of the species is required to inform both business investment decisions and approval of new production areas. This project will assess the reproductive potential for Pacific oysters in the current and future environmental conditions prevailing in the Menai Strait.

Impact

This project is a collaboration with companies with interests in developing and diversifying shellfish aquaculture in the Menai Strait, including production of Pacific oysters. The team will undertake applied environmental research and modelling that will address key knowledge gaps in our understanding of the persistence and reproductive potential Pacific oysters in the Strait, with results also being relevant more widely for the sector in Wales.



Project Officer
Dr David Smyth is the lead researcher for SC - 33

Project Partners
MSFOMA
Extramussel Ltd
Menai Oysters and Mussels Ltd



The Shellfish Centre is a research and innovation initiative supporting development of the shellfish sector in Wales. The Centre will collaborate with businesses to deliver science to support growth. The main focus of the project is shellfish aquaculture and the related supply chain, with scope also for research to support new/ underexploited shellfisheries and aquaculture of non-shellfish species that are compatible with shellfish production

A Research & Innovation Initiative: Supporting the development of the Shellfish Sector in Wales

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