

REPORT ON IFM SURVEY 2019/20

Summary

- The survey was launched on 13 Dec 2019 and closed on 6 March 2020.
- A total of 260 responses was received. 140 members; 120 non-members.
- The survey was targeted at fisheries professionals and has been successful in that approximately 90% respondents fit this profile.

Part 1. Respondent Information

- Females are under-represented in fisheries in general, but female membership of IFM is even lower. Need to address this imbalance.
- IFM membership has an older age profile than non-IFM, and probably does not reflect the profile of the profession. We need to increase recruitment in all age groups <55 years.
- IFM membership does not reflect the overall profile of fisheries professionals in terms of duration of employment in the sector – probably a further confirmation of our older age profile.
- 77% hold at least one degree. Do we need to broaden our appeal to non-qualified / non-professional interest groups?
- 29% respondents with an IFM qualification is probably quite a good uptake - could this be increased through enlistment of more angling club / fishery managers, conservation officers etc?
- CEnv - analysis indicates that 26% of member respondents have CEnv – maybe not a bad uptake rate but could possibly be increased through clear statement of benefits and streamlining of CPD procedure etc.

Part 2. IFM Membership

- Almost all members indicated that they would renew, with <0.1% stating that they have *Not yet decided*.
- 62% non-IFM respondents are lapsed members, and a significant proportion appear to be recently lapsed; 16% of non-members indicated that they would renew, while 23% have *Not yet decided*.
- 43.6% of respondent members also belong to another organisation
- Main reasons for not joining IFM:
Don't see any benefit - 36%; *Not encouraged by employer* - 21%
- Reasons for lapsed membership - clear message that 24% see no significant benefit in being a member.
- 14% of members think fees are too high – consider reviewing costs?

Part 3. Communication

- Low level of interaction with social media– possibly reflects age profile?
- Consider an initiative to get more members to join the various social media platforms?
- A significant proportion of the membership (19%) would like to receive information by email.
- Vast majority (77.6%) rate FISH magazine content as Good to Excellent.
- Several suggestions of topics for inclusion in FISH - useful information for FISH editor – full details of responses can be passed on.

Part 4. The Role of IFM

- IFM performance under specific headings – quite a good level of satisfaction among respondents.
- We should be concerned about low level of satisfaction with *Branch activity* and *Mentoring / career development*.
- Specialist Sections - all sections seem to be of significant interest to respondents.
- IFM courses: 44.4% respondents have attended a course at some stage – this probably includes several non-members / ex-members.
- Potential training topics: good level of interest across the range of potential courses notably River rehabilitation / habitat enhancement, Fish habitat assessment, Engineering for fisheries - fish pass design etc.
- Issues for IFM to focus on - climate change is by far the issue respondents would be keen to see IFM focus on. We need to have a clear position on this and to be able to issue statements when appropriate. It may also be an idea to provide advice to fishery managers on how to protect their waters against rising temperatures etc.
- Services & benefits for members - some clear messages here on how we need refine and develop what we offer, notably on Career development, mentoring etc.

Part 5. IFM Branches

- Responses to the survey broadly reflect the distribution of members throughout the UK and Ireland.
- We know that membership is quite good in England but very poor in the other home countries. We should seek to address this.
- Low rate of branch membership – either some members do not realise there are local branches or, more likely, their local branch is inactive e.g. East Anglia, North West, Southern, South West.

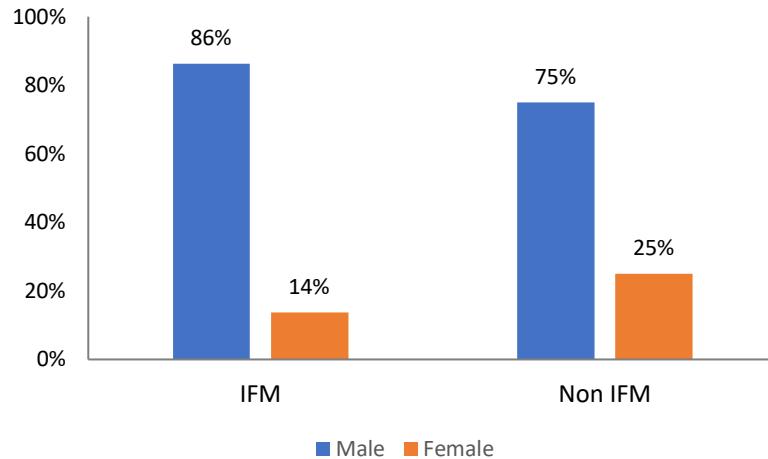
- 66% of membership consider that their branch does not run a sufficient programme – perhaps not surprising given the current low level of activity in some branches.
- Branch activities – 47% of members think *Not enough* information is communicated about branch events.
- Up to 58% respondents might be interested in assisting with their local branch. Where a name is supplied, we could follow this up.

Part 6. General

- Up to 56% respondents might be interested in assisting with the running of IFM. Where a name is supplied, we could follow this up.
- Additional comments about IFM - some interesting views in considering how we should develop; several examples included.
- The survey was targeted at fisheries professionals and has been successful in that approximately 90% respondents fit this profile.

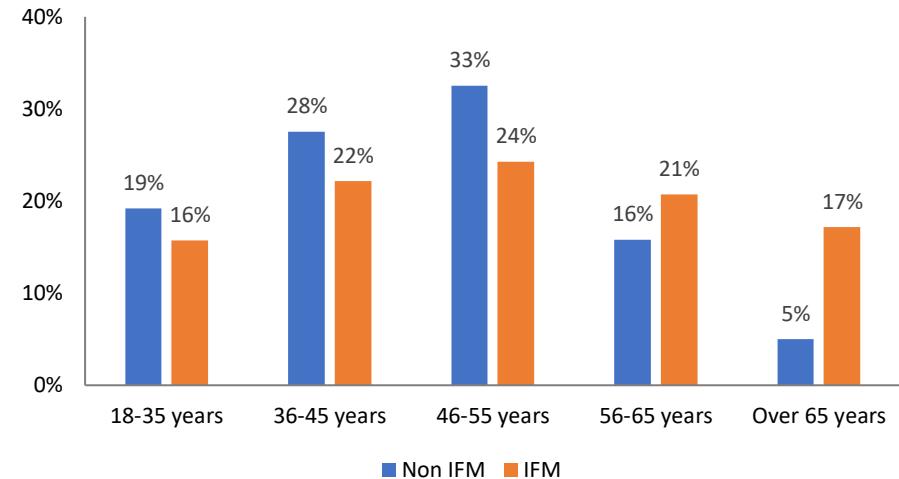
Part 1. Respondent Information

1.1 Are you: Male / Female? 260 responses; 19% respondents female; data combined with Q2.1 for analysis:



Comment: Females are under-represented in fisheries in general, but female membership of IFM is even lower.

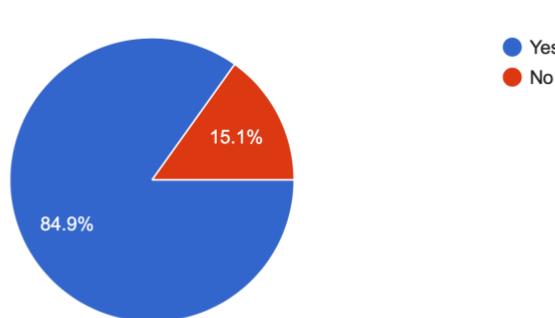
1.2 What is your age? 260 responses; combined with Q2.1 for analysis:



Comment: IFM membership has an older age profile than non-IFM, and probably does not reflect the profile of the profession. We need to target age groups <55 years.

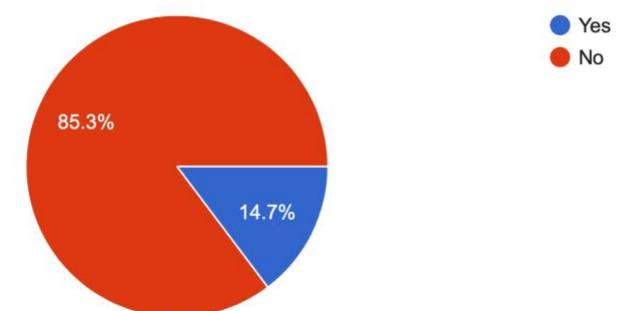
1.3 Are you employed as a fisheries professional i.e. manager, scientist, enforcement officer, technician, consultant, fish farmer etc?

258 responses



1.4 Are you retired / semi-retired?

258 responses



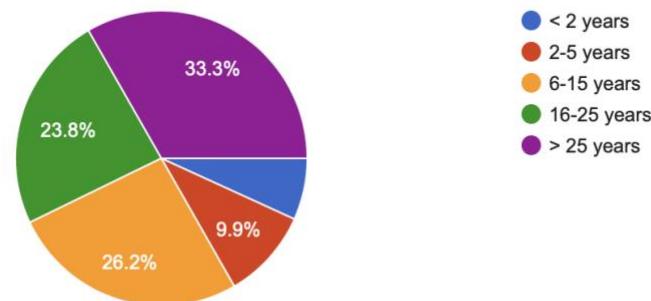
1.5 In what capacity are / were you employed?

257 responses:

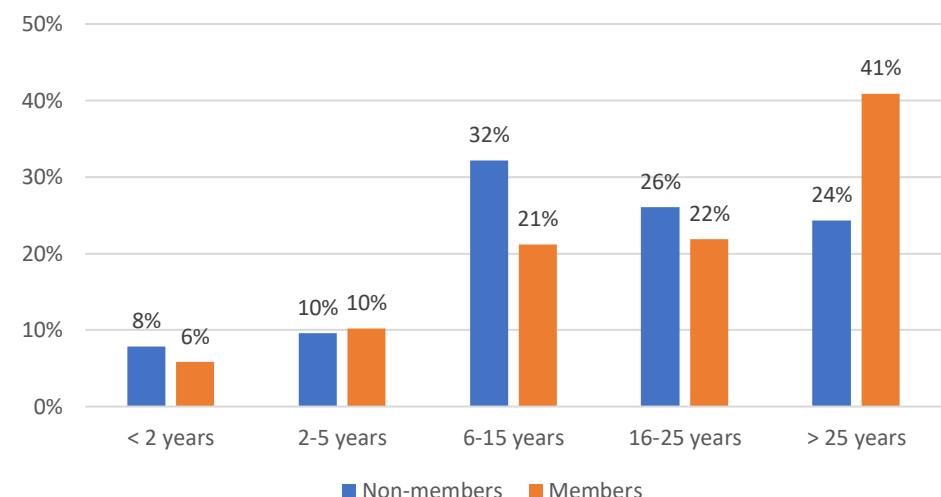
Employment capacity	N	%
Fisheries officer (management /technical)	65	25%
Fisheries scientist / biologist	61	24%
Manager/ Administrator	46	18%
Consultant / technical advisor	35	14%
Fisheries officer (enforcement / bailiffing)	15	6%
Fish farmer	8	3%
Other (varied)	27	11%

1.6 How many years have you been employed in fisheries? If retired please indicate how long you were employed in fisheries.

252 responses



Data combined with Q2.1 for analysis:



Comment: 57.1% respondents have been involved in fisheries for >15 years. Second graphic illustrates that our membership does not reflect the overall

profile of fisheries professionals – probably a further confirmation of our older age profile.

1.7 Do you hold any of the following qualifications?

223 responses:

- Primary degree (BSc; BA etc) 77%
- Masters (MSc; MA etc) 35%
- Doctorate (PhD; DPhil) 21%
- Other 14%

Comment: 77% hold at least one degree. Do we need to broaden our appeal?

1.8 Do you hold any IFM qualifications?

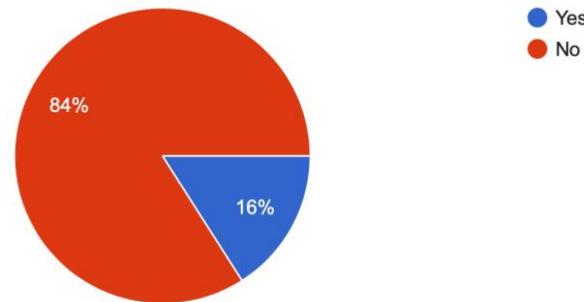
255 responses



Comment: 29% respondents with IFM qualification is probably quite a good uptake among members (and non-members?). Perhaps this could be increased through enlistment of more angling club / fishery managers, conservation officers etc.

1.9. Have you been awarded the Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) qualification through IFM?

257 responses

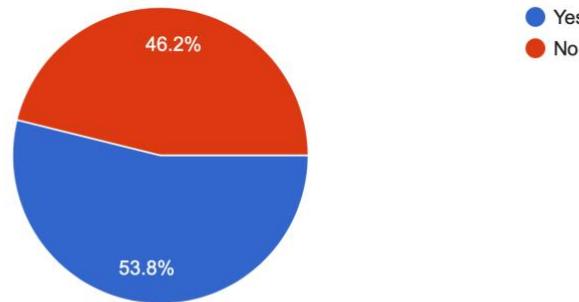


Comment: Analysis indicates that 26% of member respondents have CEnv – maybe not a bad uptake rate but could possibly be increased through clear statement of benefits and streamlining of CPD procedure etc.

Part 2. IFM Membership

2.1 Are you a current member of the IFM?

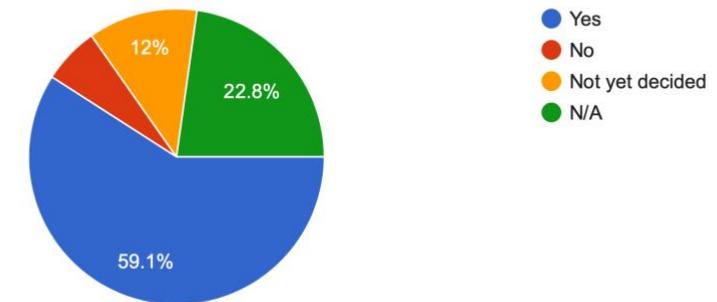
260 responses



- 140 members
- 120 non-members

2.2 Will you renew your membership of IFM next year?

259 responses

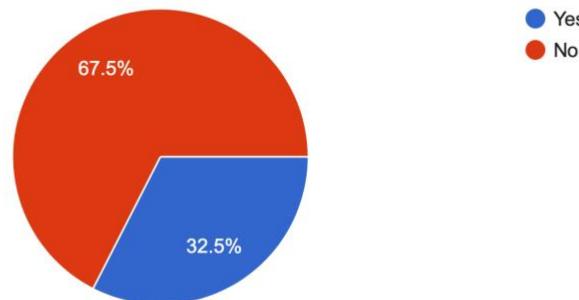


Comment:

None of the 140 member respondents answered *No*, while only 4 (<0.1%) are *Not yet decided*; however, 16% of non-members indicated that they would renew, while 23% have *Not yet decided* (clearly these must be recently lapsed members).

2.3 Are you a lapsed/previous member of the IFM?

246 responses

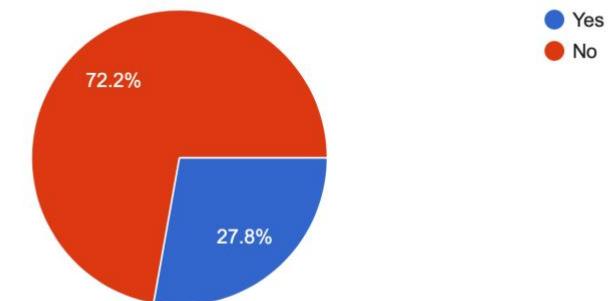


Comment:

Analysis indicates that 62% non-IFM respondents are lapsed members.

2.4 Do you belong to any other professional body or scientific association?

259 responses



Comment:

44% of respondent members also belong to another organisation

2.5 Do you belong to any of the following? (or are you a past member?)

90 responses:

- FSBI 33%
 - FBA 22%
 - CIEEM 20%
 - Royal Society of Biology 15%
 - CIWEM 6%
 - AFS 6%
 - Other 39% i.e. 39% of the 90 respondents belonged to at least one other professional body
-

2.6 If you are not a member of IFM, which of the following is the reason(s) for not joining – more than one reason may apply.

112 non-members responded, some giving more than one reason for not joining:

- Don't see any benefit 28%
- Other 28%
- Not encouraged by employer 16%
- Belong to another prof body 8%
- Was not aware of IFM 4%
- N/A 21%

Excluding N/A:

- Don't see any benefit 36%
- Other 29%
- Not encouraged by employer 21%
- Belong to another prof body 10%
- Was not aware of IFM 5%

Main reasons given under "other" grouped as:

- Membership lapsed & not renewed / renewal difficulties / forgot to renew 31%
- Haven't got round to joining etc 17%

Comment: Several respondents recorded more than one reason for not joining IFM – disregarding N/A we had 87 responses and 100 reasons given.

Main reasons for not joining: Don't see any benefit - 36%; Not encouraged by employer - 21%

2.7 If you are a previous/lapsed member, which of the following is the reason(s) for cancelling or failing to renew your membership – more than one may apply.
107 previous/lapsed members responded, some giving more than one reason for leaving IFM:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • No significant benefit in membership | 24% |
| • Not supported by employer | 8% |
| • Poor communication from IFM | 7% |
| • Membership fees excessive | 7% |
| • Lack of local branch activity | 5% |
| • Joined another prof body | 4% |
| • Change of job – not working in fisheries | 3% |
| • N/A | 44% |

Excluding N/A:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • No significant benefit in membership | 42% |
| • Not supported by employer | 14% |
| • Poor communication from IFM | 12% |
| • Membership fees excessive | 12% |
| • Lack of local branch activity | 8% |
| • Joined another prof body | 7% |
| • Change of job – not working in fisheries | 5% |

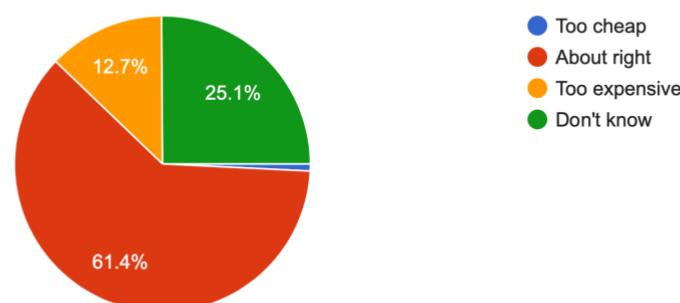
Comment:

Excluding N/A we had 50 responses from lapsed members with 74 reasons given for leaving IFM.

There is a clear message that a significant number (42%) see no significant benefit in being a member.

2.8 Bearing in mind value for money, is the cost of IFM membership:

259 responses



Comment:

Analysis of members' / non-members' responses indicates:

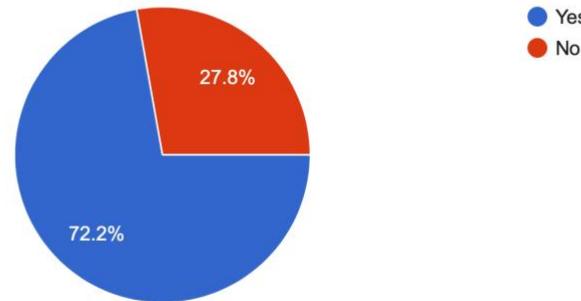
- 14% members think fees are too high
- 11% non-members think fees are too high

It is concerning that more than 14% of our members think fees are too high.

Part 3. Communication

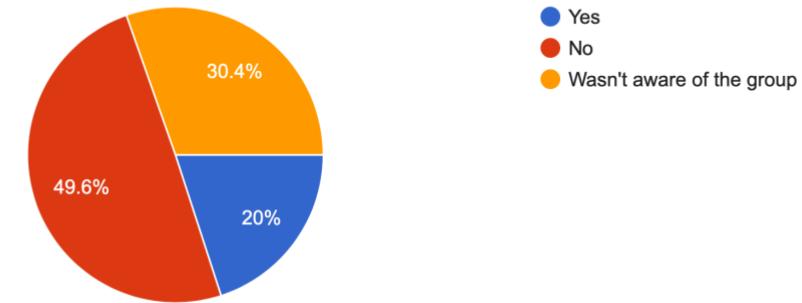
3.1 Do you talk to your colleagues about IFM?

259 responses



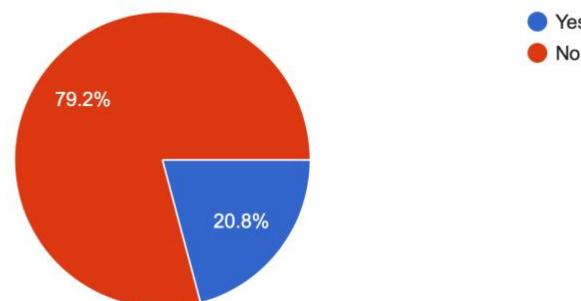
3.2 Are you a member of the IFM Facebook Group?

260 responses



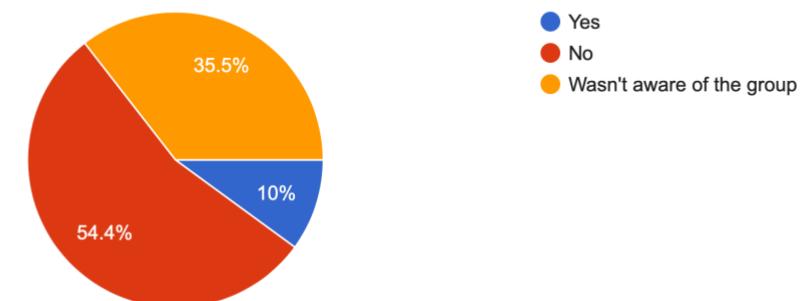
3.3 Do you follow IFM on Twitter?

259 responses



3.4 Are you a member of the IFM LinkedIn Group?

259 responses



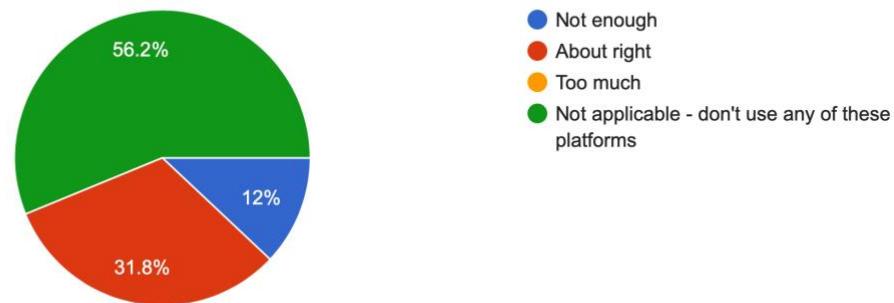
Comment:

Low level of interaction with social media—possibly reflects age profile?

Consider an initiative to get more members to join the various social media platforms?

3.5 Do you receive adequate information from IFM via these platforms?

258 responses



3.6 Would you prefer to receive information by other means? Please specify.

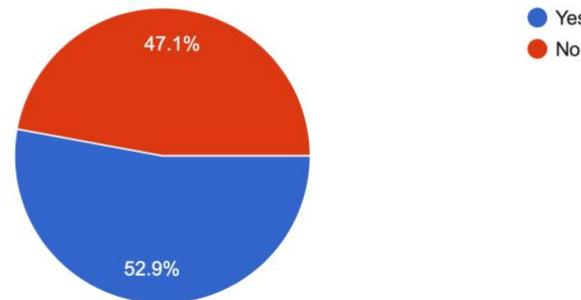
77 responses:			N	Total responses	%
No			13	77	17%
Email			46	77	60%
Fish magazine (some would like hard copy)			8	77	10%
Newsletter			3	77	4%
Other (e.g. text, post, phpBB)			5	77	7%

Comment:

This data appears to suggest that a large proportion of the membership (60%) would like to receive information by email. However, analysis of IFM members' responses shows that only 19% of 140 members indicated a preference for receiving information by email – still significant, but not major. Question should have had Y/N option and then space to specify means of receiving info (if No) i.e. by email.

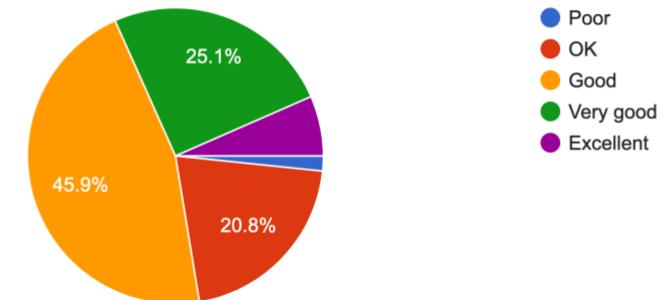
3.7 Do you receive FISH magazine? (either electronic or hard copy)

259 responses



3.8 Tell us what you think about the content of FISH magazine

183 responses



Comment:

Vast majority (78%) rate content as Good to Excellent.

3.9 Are there any specific topics you would like to see featured in FISH magazine?

71 responses; 59 suggestions + 16 stating n/a or comment that coverage is good.

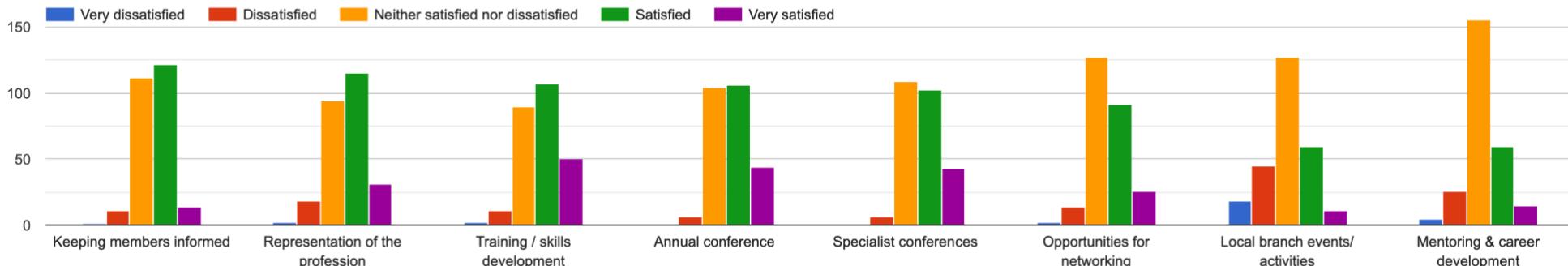
Suggestions	N	%
Fisheries Management - range of specific issues	20	34%
Jobs / Job Profiles / Professional Development / Role of IFM	11	19%
Estuarine / Marine fisheries & related issues	9	15%
Climate Change	5	9%
Coarse Fisheries	5	9%
Regional Content – more features relating to Scotland, Wales & Ireland	5	9%
Fish and the Environment	4	7%

Comment:

Useful information for FISH editor – full details of responses can be passed on.

Part 4. The Role of IFM

4.1 Please tell us how well you think IFM is performing in the following areas.



260 respondents:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Keeping members informed	0.0%	4.2%	43.2%	47.1%	5.4%
Representation of the profession	0.8%	6.9%	36.2%	44.2%	11.9%
Training / skills development	0.8%	4.2%	34.6%	41.2%	19.2%
Annual conference	0.0%	2.3%	40.0%	40.8%	16.9%
Specialist conferences	0.0%	2.3%	41.9%	39.2%	16.5%
Opportunities for networking	0.8%	5.4%	48.8%	35.0%	10.0%
Local branch events/ activities	6.9%	17.3%	48.8%	22.7%	4.2%
Mentoring & career development	1.9%	10.0%	59.6%	22.7%	5.8%

% Satisfied / Very Satisfied:

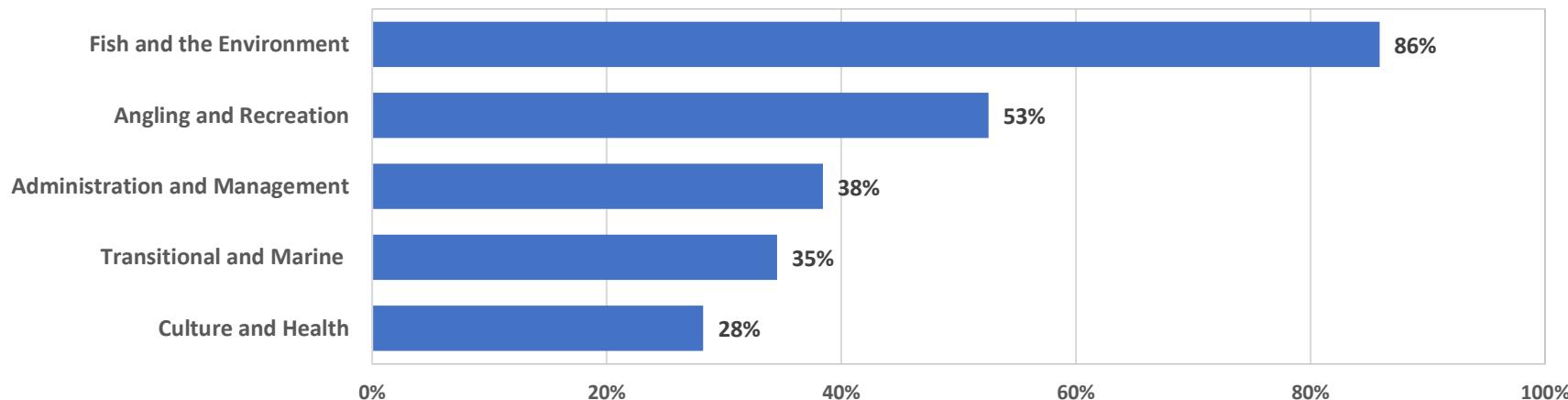
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|------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|-----|
| • Keeping members informed | 53% | • Specialist conferences | 56% |
| • Representation of the profession | 56% | • Opportunities for networking | 45% |
| • Training / skills development | 60% | • Local branch events/activities | 27% |
| • Annual conference | 58% | • Mentoring & career development | 29% |

Comment:

None of these are glowing endorsements although anything >55% *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* is probably a reasonable indication that we are doing quite well. However, we should be concerned about the last three, notably Branch activity and Mentoring /

career development, on which <30% of respondents were either *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied*. Of particular concern was Branch Activity on which 24% of respondents were either *Dissatisfied* or *Very Dissatisfied*.

4.2 Within IFM there are five Specialist Sections – please indicate which field covers your principal interests (more than one may be relevant). 255 responses:

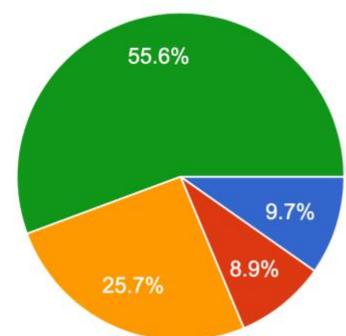


Comment:

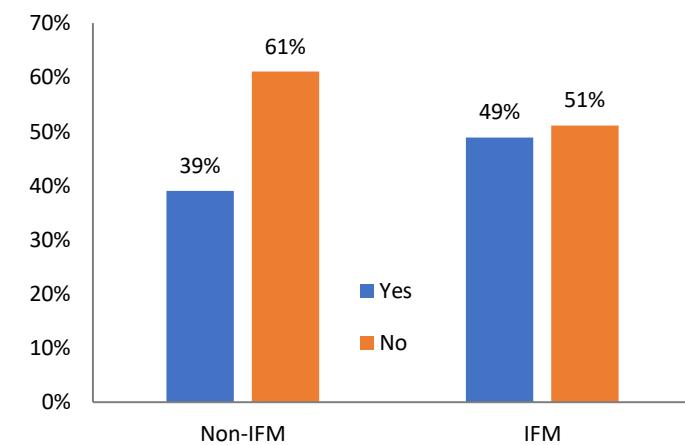
No real surprises here – all sections seem to be of significant interest. Many respondents have indicated more than one – we had 611 indications from 255 responses.

4.3 Have you ever attended an IFM training course?

257 responses



- Yes, within the last 2 years
- Yes, within the last 2-5 years
- Yes, more than 5 years ago
- I have never attended an IFM course



Comment: 44% respondents have attended an IFM course at some stage – significant % non-members have attended a course, possibly lapsed members.

4.4 What topics for training might be of benefit to you?

224 responses:

- | | | | |
|---|-----|--|-----|
| • River rehabilitation / habitat enhancement | 53% | • Fish survey techniques - electrofishing, netting etc | 31% |
| • Fish habitat assessment | 52% | • Fish ageing techniques | 28% |
| • Engineering for fisheries - fish pass design etc | 50% | • Fisheries enforcement | 23% |
| • Environmental legislation | 46% | • Other | 10% |
| • Fish health, parasites & disease | 38% | | |
| • General freshwater ecology - water chemistry, invertebrate identification & assessment, macrophyte identification | 34% | | |

Comment:

There was a good level of interest across the range of potential courses notably River rehabilitation / habitat enhancement, Fish habitat assessment, Engineering for fisheries - fish pass design etc. Food for thought.

4.5 Are there any specific fisheries or environmental issues would you like to see IFM focus on over the next 3 years – please list as many as you like.

110 responses including 8 None or n/a etc = 102 responses, some with more than one suggestion.

Issue	N	%
Climate change / global warming	41	40%
Water quality & related issues	11	11%
Predation	8	8%
Legislation & Enforcement	8	8%
Fisheries post-Brexit	7	7%
Careers, CPD, accreditation etc	7	7%
Estuarine, coastal & marine fisheries	6	6%
Water management & flooding	6	6%
Invasive species	6	6%

Issue	N	%
Wild salmon / salmonid issues	4	4%
Coarse fishery management issues	4	4%
Funding of fisheries	3	3%
Fish health & welfare	3	3%
Angling - socio-economic aspect	2	2%
Catchment management	2	2%
Aquaculture	2	2%
Migration / fish passage	2	2%

Comment:

Climate change is by far, the issue respondents would be keen to see IFM focus on. We need to have a clear position on this and to be able to issue statements when appropriate. It may also be idea to provide advice to fishery managers on how to protect their waters against rising temperatures etc.

4.6 Are there any other services or benefits you feel IFM could offer to provide a better service to members?

68 responses including 15 None or n/a etc = 53 responses, some with more than one suggestion:

Issue	N	%
Career development, mentoring, CEnv advice	10	19%
Better communication with members	8	15%
More local branch activity	7	13%
Advice on fisheries management / technical guidance	5	9%
Increase training programmes	4	8%

Issue	N	%
Raise profile of IFM, recognition of profession etc	4	8%
Better website inc membership renewal, online CPD etc	3	6%
Online library, access to publications	3	6%
More of a marine focus	2	4%
Links with similar groups	2	4%

Selection of comments under these headings listed below -

Career development, mentoring, CEnv advice:

"Career advice and info on jobs"

"Career development / mentoring"

"A clearer outline of the chartered status and its benefits"

"Mentoring, knowledge transfer from older members to younger members starting out in career, can span organisations"

Better communication with members:

"More communication"

"More newsletters"

"Promotion of social media networks could be helpful. I wasn't aware that these existed"

More local branch activity:

"More networking and local branch activity"

"The annual meetings are good. So more of these at a local branch level"

Advice on fisheries management / technical guidance:

"Easy access technical guidance documentation"

"Independent fisheries advice"

Increase training programmes:

"Active local branches and better training and development like CIEEM"

"Training aimed at angling club managers as opposed to the EA..... IFM ignores the biggest market for its services by ignoring fishing clubs and their water needs"

"More of a marine focus. Scope for developing specific marine fisheries management programme for early career IFCA/MMO/Defra staff. Already enforcement training in place but environmental/research side has no development or introductory courses"

Raise profile of IFM, recognition of profession etc:

"Reach out to non-members and people that didn't even know you existed"

"Better representation of the profession and a widening of some form of membership to semi-professionals and interested amateurs"

"I wonder if IFM could be more visible in providing a professional view on a range of environmental and fisheries matters? more of a campaigning/lobbying role for the a professional, science-led voice standing up for our aquatic environment"

Better website inc membership renewal, online CPD etc:

"A website that provides better service. CPD on-line"

Online library, access to publications:

"Better access for members to relevant key fisheries papers and grey literature"

Comment:

Some clear messages here on how we need refine and develop what we offer to the membership.

Part 5. IFM Branches

5.1. In which IFM region are you based? 255 responses:

Region	No. responses	% responses
Ireland	35	14%
London & South East	32	13%
Midlands & Lincolnshire	32	13%
Scotland	31	12%
Southern	26	10%
Yorkshire & North East	26	10%
South West	20	8%
East Anglia	19	8%
North West	17	7%
Wales	17	7%

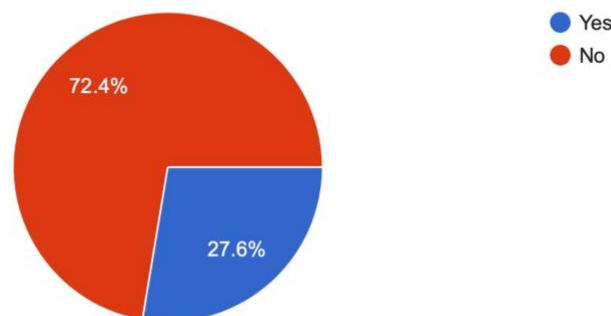
Region	No. responses	% responses	% members
England	172	68%	73%
Scotland	31	12%	13%
Wales	17	7%	7%
Ireland	35	14%	8%

Comment:

Responses to the survey broadly reflect the distribution of members throughout the UK and Ireland. We know that membership is quite good in England but very poor in the other home countries. We should seek to address this.

5.2 Do you belong to a regional branch of IFM?

257 responses

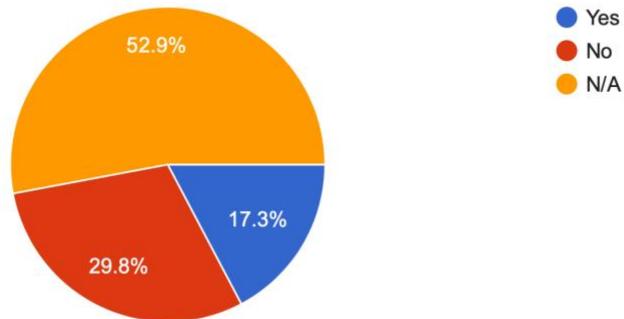


Comment:

Strange that only 28% respondents (N=71) belong to a local branch - responses to Q2.1 indicated that 140 members responded to the Survey. This would indicate 70 members don't realise there are local branches or, more likely, that their local branch is inactive e.g. East Anglia, North West, Southern, South West.

5.3 Do you feel that your branch runs a sufficient programme of events?

255 responses

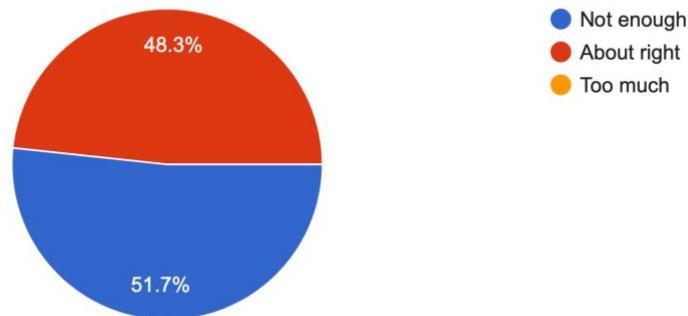


Comment:

Analysis of IFM members' responses indicates that 66% consider that their branch does not run a sufficient programme – not really surprising given the current level of activity in some branches.

5.4 Do you receive adequate information about branch activities?

207 responses

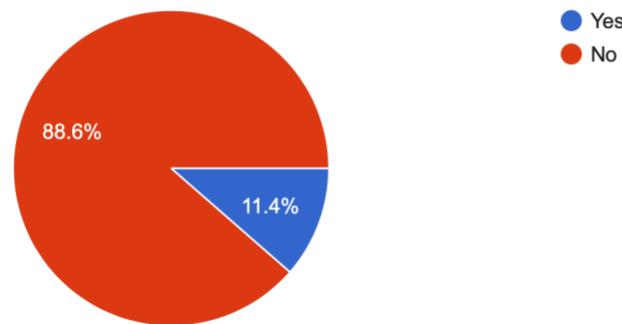


Comment:

Just over half think *Not enough*, but the number of respondents indicates that many non-members have responded to this question. Analysis of IFM members' responses indicates that 47% think not enough information is communicated about branch events.

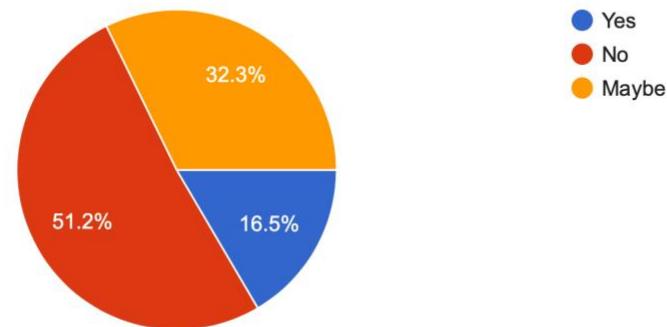
5.5 Do you attend meetings of another branch other than your local region?

245 responses



5.6 Would you be interested in assisting with running of the local branch e.g. on committee?

248 responses



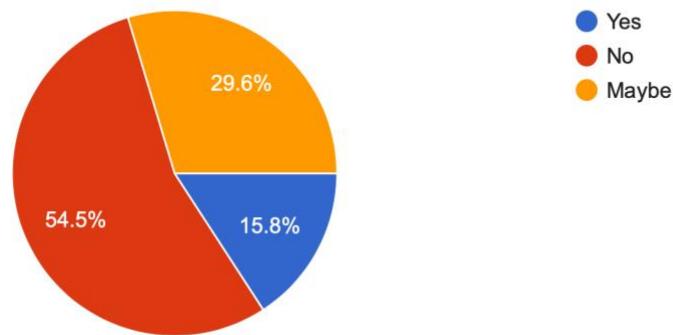
Comment:

Analysis of members' responses indicates that up to 58% might be interested (Yes 25%; Maybe 33%). Where a name is supplied, we could follow this up.

Part 6. General

6.1 Would you be interested in assisting with the running of IFM?

253 responses



Comment:

Analysis of members' responses indicates that up to 56% might be interested (Yes 22%; Maybe 34%). Again, where a name is supplied, we could follow this up.

6.2 Please use this space to write in any additional comments you would like to make about IFM

64 responses including 5 None or n/a etc = 59 responses, mostly very helpful in considering how we should develop; several examples:

Generally positive comments:

"The IFM is excellent and supports fishery management well. I personally intend to get a lot more involved in the work of the IFM. Continue the good work"

"I love being part of the IFM and serving on the London and SE branch committee"

"Great organisation! Very professional"

"I have benefitted from IFM membership for the last 21+ years; from Certificate and Diploma courses to Chartership, conferences and networking."

"I am happy to give something back, particularly for members at the beginning of their careers"

"It seems that the more you put into IFM, the more you are likely to get out of it"

"Flexibility in course delivery is great, we had a course in fish survey techniques and ID tailored to our needs which was brilliant"

"I found the diploma course excellent and really want to gain more knowledge"

"I only attended the recent Dublin event but I thought it was really inspiring. I will be joining this weekend to see what I may be able to contribute to the organisation"

"I think that the IFM does an excellent job! It would be helpful to focus more on the marine environment"

"Looking forward to assisting with development of IFM Scotland branch"

Positive comments with suggestions:

"Some IFM branches are not very active and any training events all seem to be in the UK which is difficult to attend if based in Ireland"

"I think the IFM is good and have been a member for 40 years. It doesn't seem to inspire my younger colleagues to join. I don't have any answers to that"

"I'd like to know more about the benefits of IFM membership and would consider joining"

"IFM is very good and developing in Ireland, it needs more support to carry out some of the functions which it does in the UK"

"I think, in general, the IFM does great work to better inform people of fisheries management especially through education such as the diploma

qualification - I would however like to see more outreach to universities..... students who attend more mainstream universities have not heard of the organisation"

"Development of CPD courses with statutory fisheries bodies"

"A great organisation to belong to, enjoy FISH magazine and the annual conferences always look really good. Would like to feel a bit more involved as a member though, more chances to network and learn off other professionals outside of conferences would be good..... Really keen to see more opportunities for specialist IFM training in the future to help with professional development"

Compliments on staff:

"The level of professionalism within the employed posts in the IFM is to be applauded"

"Paul was an excellent point contact recently when we needed to discuss electrofishing training options. Although we didn't proceed with an IFM course for various reasons I would definitely choose IFM for future courses based on the help and advice provided"

Negative comments – some with helpful suggestions:

"Don't really feel it serves me any use now - will probably no longer join"

"Given its potential to influence fishery management it has too low a profile"

"The IFM should have a very visible place in our fisheries world, standing clearly on important issues. I do see position papers on a range of issues, but I'd like to hear IFM's voice louder"

"While I like the idea of the IFM and enjoy FISH magazine I personally think as an organisation it is not inclusive and elitist. The impression seems to be it is very qualification driven..... There are many fisheries people who do not have lots of qualifications but are still good at what they do and want to be involved in a like-minded organisation. Somehow the IFM doesn't seem to be that relevant or recognised in day to day fisheries management"

"Whilst the guys that run IFM Scotland are doing their very best it is not clear what the branch (or indeed the institute generally) is trying to achieve in Scotland..... If IFM wants to encourage support from managers such as myself (and the consequential knock on effect with staff) then we have to see what that benefit is. This could be many things - staff development and progression, business support, innovation, funding etc. I am more than happy to discuss this further if you think this is helpful" (Phone contact supplied)

6.3 Name (optional):

125 respondents (48%) gave their names.

Comment:

This could be very useful in following up on any helpful suggestions and offers of assistance with the running of branch activities etc.

6.4 Employer / Organisation or Retired / Semi-retired

180 responses, including 9 which could not be assigned:

Category	N	%
Govt fisheries body / agency / district board / local authority	101	59%
Consultancy / commercial scientific	19	11%
Retired / semi-retired	16	9%
River Trust	10	6%
Inshore / Marine fisheries authority	7	4%
Angling	6	4%
Universities / FE colleges	4	2%
Aquaculture	3	2%
Utility Company	2	1%
Miscellaneous	3	2%

Comment:

The survey was targeted at fisheries professionals and has been successful in that approximately 90% respondents fit this profile.
