

Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Consultative Committee Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis on 3rd December 2013

Minutes of the meeting

Present:

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation (Chair)
Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation
Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator/Committee Secretary
Kate West, Blue Marine Foundation
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA
Sam Dell, Southern IFCA
Nick Wright, MMO
Christine Singfield, Natural England
Jerry Percy, NUTFA
Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum
Adam Rees, Plymouth University
Jim Newton, Beer Fisherman
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear
Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear
Alex Jones, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear
John Worswick –West Bay, scallop diver
Aubrey Banfield, West Bay, static gear
Nigel Hill, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear
Rowena Taylor, Graphic Designer
Mike Spiller, Angling Trust.
Donald Johnson, West Bay, static gear
Jamie Smith, West Bay, static gear

1) Apologies:

Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser
Joana Smith, Natural England
Mark Machin – Samways
Paul Wason, Lyme Regis, towed gear
Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA.

Michael Coyle, Marine Management Organisation.

Mike Green, Beer Representative.

Mark Cornwell, West Bay towed gear.

Jim Portus, SWIFA.

Minutes

2) Agree minutes of the 17th Working Group meeting:

- Sam Dell said some of the wording in paragraph 3 (c) reference iVMS project says "Defra opposed the equipment spec very late in the game" This is not the case; there is a delay due to the EU Technical Standards Directive. (For further information and project updates please visit the MMO Website <http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/protecting/ivms/index.htm>)
- Mike Spiller pointed out that in AOB, 'commercial angling' should read as 'recreational angling'.

The minutes were agreed subject to the two amendments.

3) Update on Implementation of Management Plan

a) Potting Study

Adam Rees reported that the BBC Winter Watch program producers were interested in doing a piece about the potting study and he would keep us informed of this. He said that two more fishermen from Lyme Regis were now helping with the study. Neville said that some of the potting area marker flags were missing or could not be found. Adam was asked to keep the group informed and to supply an updated marker buoy coordinate list.

b) Fully Documented Fisheries project and grant applications.

Tim Glover reported that the EFF grant for the Fully Documented Fisheries project has now been approved by MMO. An undertaking has been sought from and given by Succorfish in case the eventual type approval does not apply to the Succorfish system. Dave Hancock pointed out that a claw-back clause will be in place for 5 years and questioned whether the undertaking would cover this period. Tim said it would. Simon Pengelly said he believed that carrying iVMS would become a statutory requirement eventually. He asked whether the collected data would be made available to the IFCA's and if so perhaps an agreement to that effect could be drawn up. Further, that it might be useful to have a workshop on the subject. Tim suggested early in the New Year and said that there is huge value in data which can be used as match-funding.

Nick Wright said that Katie Hill of the Marine Conservation team is leading on iVMS project for the MMO and IFCA's and he would ask her if she could attend the next Lyme Bay Group meeting and give a short presentation about iVMS.

Tim reported that the 4 EFF Ports Improvement grant applications to MMO were nearly there and they will be agreed subject to planning consents from the Local Authorities.

Neville was asked to ensure that all information is double checked to help speed-up the process.

c) Seafish Responsible Fishing Scheme update.

Gus Caslake was unable to attend but had sent an update report. He said that 4 vessels had fully qualified, 17 had been coached and were ready for a full audit and 17 vessels were yet to start the RFS process. The main port that needs to be done is West Bay with 7 vessels outstanding. Axmouth is approximately 50% done with Angus sorting out 6 vessels last week. Lyme Regis is nearly complete; we are looking for 3-5 more vessels. In Beer all 4 commercial vessels have been coached.

d) Cefas Lobster Management advice.

Charles Clover reported that the Cefas report was now completed and that it is satisfying to see that results are now starting to come in. He said that the original report was in Cefas speak and therefore unreadable by the layman so Andy Woolmer had been asked to translate it. Neville had read the original report and pointed out that a lot of the data contained within it was very general and not site-specific which further reinforced the need for better data. Four copies of the summary were made available to the group at the meeting and further copies will be distributed with the minutes in due course. The group were asked to read it and come back to the next meeting with lobster management proposals. The proposals would then be put to the minister for consideration. This sparked a debate. Dave Sales said it was annoying that the ban on berried lobsters only went out to the six mile limit. Neville pointed out that in the most successful lobster fisheries around the world, a combination of practical measures were in place. These include escape gaps *and* biodegradable panels in pots; a minimum *and* a maximum landing size; V notching of berries females, and set-aside areas for seeding. It is the combination of these measures that lead to enormous landing returns. Simon said that he may be able to include new lobster management measures into a Southern IFCA crustacean and cephalopod review.

e) Marine Planning Consultants (MPC) (Guardline) study.

Tim reported that the MPC study was trundling along. Simon said it would be good to know how the study was going. In the absence of Liam Mcleese, Tim said that he had received an update from him. 'The key point is that we have received comments back from IFCA's, NE and MMO on the technical aspects. This has not included any fisheries activity. We have almost all the Fisherman forms in and are waiting for the last few. The next stage is to agree the methodology with the working group and at the next meeting we need an hour or so to get the fisherman and other working group members to sense check and add to our data on

fishing activity and habitats'. Neville will gather-in the remaining fishermen forms before the next meeting.

f) Catch Rights Based Management – Prof. Trond Bjorndal.

Charles introduced Professor Bjorndal by saying that this is the most theoretical thing we have done so far but it is useful to consider Rights Based Management as a way of limiting the right to fish.

Trond gave a presentation which provided examples from around the world of differing methods to achieve a rights based catch or harvesting system. These included Individual harvest quotas, (IQ's) territorial use rights fisheries, (TURFS) and fishermen's cooperatives. Jerry Percy said that in theory this is great but sometimes in practice, such as the Danish example included in the presentation, it does not work. Trond said that it has worked quite successfully in many parts of the world. John Worswick said he was concerned that many of these schemes are based on historic catch levels and inshore fishermen do not have adequate records. Trond said that these schemes do not necessarily need to be track- record related. Donald Johnson said that he currently sees inshore fisheries as TURF's without quota. Jerry said we should take this opportunity to lobby Government. Charles reminded the group that he had sent a letter asking for Lyme Bay fishermen to be considered for more quota to the previous Minister and that he had received an encouraging reply from the current Minister George Eustace, saying that he hoped to press forward with reforms that would establish a long term sustainable future for the under-ten fleet and which Charles read-out to the group. Tim said that this is a group that should be putting forward ideas for change. Jerry said that he would be happy for NUTFA to work with the group on this. Angus Walker said it would be in the group's interest to pursue these ideas with Trond and Dave Sales agreed with this. It was resolved that Jerry, Trond and Blue would liaise on this in order to progress ideas.

g) Insulated fish tubs.

Neville reported that the first of the insulated fish tubs have been delivered to Beer. These comprised of twelve 70 litre boxes, engraved with the Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve initials. The Irish based supplier, Drawm, has experienced supply problems which has postponed deliveries to the other three ports. However, it is hoped that the revised delivery date will be within the month. A standard agreement form will be held by a nominated representative from each port who will ensure the boxes are signed for prior to distribution.

4) Communications

a) Social Media

Rowena Taylor reported that Twitter followers were up to 689 (up 39 from 650) and Facebook up to 354 (up 44 from 310).

Website

Monthly updates to the News & Events pages continues. A new page on the website called 'Reserve Round-up' has been created, which summaries what has been achieved over the past month. Links to this new page will be used on the Great Dorset Seafood Campaign eNewsletter as well as the Dorset Coast Forum eNewsletter to help spread the word.

Photography

Photographer Saeed Rashid, who has offered a couple of days work voluntarily, has been out with Jim Newton to capture a day in the life of some of our fishermen. Plans are underway for Saeed to head out with scallop diver John Worswick.

ITV Westcountry News

The environment correspondent Duncan Sleightholme from ITV Westcountry News, who has been following the Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve project since the start came down to film the first delivery of the insulated fish boxes to Beer. Fisherman Jim Newton was filmed with Gus Caslake from Seafish showing him how to use the fish boxes onboard his boat. Beer is the first of 4 ports to receive these boxes as part of the scheme to enhance quality and support the launch of a brand next year.

Recreational Sea Anglers

Rowena will be liaising with Mike Spiller of the Honiton Sea Angling Club to plan ways to promote the Reserve through the Angling Trust and to recreational sea anglers. This will reach a wider audience which hasn't been tapped into as yet.

b) Lyme Bay Brand

Tim reported that his discussions with Professor of Marketing, Juliet Memeery of Bournemouth University about pro-bono help with the branding scheme were progressing with a view to her department working on a marketing plan. Meetings regarding branding have also been held with Clive Samways and Fiona Wheatly of M&S.

5) MMO/IFCA update

Nick Wright reminded the group that MMO bylaws were coming into effect in January but they would not affect Lyme Bay.

Simon Pengelly told the group that the first tranche of MCZ's had been designated and that Stennis Ledges and Chesil Beach had been included and voluntary management measures have to be considered by IFCA's before legislation. Simon said that the IFCA will survey to improve the existing evidence base.

IFCA funding to supply pot escape gaps was in place for West Bay and also, NOC are looking at an optimum size for them.

Sam Dell reported that there had been no recent incursions into the Reserve by mobile gear boats.

6) Funding update

Tim reported that funding applications were being continually written and submitted behind the scenes. The project still needs additional funding. The success of the Fully Documented Fisheries application had already been covered under an earlier agenda item as had progress on the Ports Enhancement project and both these grants require match funding.

7) Media and PR

Charles suggested that the recent filming by ITV of the ice box delivery and RFS training should be put on the website. He suggested the same for the Cefas lobster study report.

8) A.O.B.

Jerry Percy highlighted the concerns expressed by ICES with regard to the status of the Bass stocks in European waters. Discussions had been held between Member States and the Commission following a request by France to make Bass a quota species [that would result in them getting over 70% of the quota] and the resulting Brussels meeting where the request by France failed to get support and the subsequent recognition of suggestions for managing the stock through technical measures and an immediate closure of the SW pair trawl fishery that is having such a negative effect on stock sustainability. There would undoubtedly be recommendations for increased protection for the species and NUTFA would work hard to ensure that any such regulations did not unnecessarily impact on the more sustainable inshore element of the catching sector.

Donald Johnson said that the group should be aware that a proposal for crab and lobster quota is being considered by DEFRA. Nick reported that DEFRA has had a non-consultation on the subject but due to much opposition, it had been shelved. This is not being pursued at the moment because Cefas report that stocks in some areas are overfished, the stock in general is not. However, the EU says that we have exceeded limits. Jerry cautioned that this debate is still rumbling on as it is recognised that in some places, poor quality crab is fished. Trond pointed out that by fishing shellfish sustainably, economic stability could be achieved. Neville said that a comment had been received on our Facebook page which asked whether pingers were used on nets in the Reserve. Andy Woolmer has said that dolphin interactions are not an issue in Lyme Bay and he has looked at these already and met with the manufactures. He says it would be pointless using them in Lyme Bay. This was the general consensus of the group.

Nick said that MMO is becoming concerned about the proliferation of underwater noise and are looking at the effects of pingers. He informed the group that legally, pingers only apply to vessels over 12 meters.

Neville distributed the newly laminated copies of the revised voluntary code of conduct so that fishermen could keep them in their wheelhouses.

Tim thanked everyone for the first full year of the working group, congratulated members on its significant achievements and looked forward to meeting again in the New Year.

9) Date of next meeting.

28th January, to be held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis at 6pm

Duration of meeting:

6pm – 9:30pm

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