

Lyme Bay Working Group

3rd Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis, on 17th January 2012

Minutes of the meeting

Present:

Charles Clover, Blue Marine Foundation.

Tim Glover, Blue Marine Foundation. (Chair)

Neville Copperthwaite, Project Coordinator.

Andy Woolmer, Fishery Adviser.

Neil Wellum, Marine Management Organisation.

Nick Wright, Marine management Organisation.

Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA.

Ian Carrier, Southern IFCA.

Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA.

Sam Dell, Southern IFCA.

Pete Newton, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver.

Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear

Chris Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, mobile gear

Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.

Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axemouth, static gear.

Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axemouth, static gear.

Jim Newton, Fisherman, Beer, static gear

1) Apologies:

John Warswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver.

Minutes

2) Agree minutes of the 2nd Working Group meeting:

Jim Newton pointed out that in section 5, "Examples of best practice", he had suggested a 2,000 metre net limit, not a 200 metre net limit as written. Jim also reported that Brett Newton would not be attending any more WG meetings as his presence was adequate to represent Beer.

Neil Wellum pointed out that in section 2, Over-arching principles, "*it must be ensured that the three principles do not conflict with the IFCA's responsibilities*" should read, "*it must be ensured that the three principles do not conflict with the MMO or IFCA's responsibilities*".

Neil also pointed out that the MMO had previously flagged-up some of the problems caused by the implementation of the Lyme Bay cSAC and that this should be noted.

3) Signing of the MOU:

Neil Wellum suggested a number of corrections to the draft MOU including using the correct description of candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC). Neil thought a chart of the area with accompanying boundary coordinates would be useful by way of an appendix.

Charles Clover suggested that para. 2 of the MOU could be made clearer by qualifying "*unforeseen consequences*" with "*notably, an increase in static gear*".

Neil said he would provide a form of words to describe the cSAC area and also to clarify that both the MMO and IFCA's would consult to a wider audience than the WG's brief. He also commented that our project may help inform DEFRA.

Angus Walker thought that the order of the three over-arching principles did not reflect their importance and requested that *i) best practice in protecting biodiversity within a European special area for conservation*, be swapped for *iii) creating the maximum long-term benefits for coastal communities of adopting the best practice*. Members were of the opinion that all three principles were equally important but agreed to Angus's request.

It was agreed to re-draft the MOU taking into account all comments and then re-send prior to the next meeting in order for all parties to consult with their relevant organisations. **The aim is for all members to be in a position to sign the MOU at the next meeting. The chairman reminded all members that we have only until end of March to agree measures and write a report so we needed to get the MOU done and out of the way.**

4) Update on fisheries survey:

Andy Woolmer reported that he was processing the questionnaires received from fishermen and appealed to the fishermen for more to be submitted.

Dave sales and Jim Newton said that they would be submitting more questionnaires during the coming week.

5) Community based activities:

Charles Clover reported a recent visit to Plymouth University by the Blue Marine Team and spoke of the research work that Plymouth had been doing with the aid of ROV's equipped with underwater cameras. It was suggested that a tourism-based business should be investigated involving the use of ROV's that could capitalise on the management measures resulting from the WG recommendations. . Dave Hancock was of the opinion that the majority of fishermen wanted to go fishing rather than take tourists out on trips. Angus Walker suggested that Keo Films may be interested in becoming involved with such a venture. Andy Woolmer said that he may be able to borrow an ROV for demonstration purposes and would investigate.

Dave Sales reported that he had been on a visit to the National Lobster Hatchery in Padstow, Cornwall, and had formed the opinion that lobster restocking would be beneficial to local fishermen. Dave said he thought this would "fire-up the public". Charles proposed that we should consider working the idea up but that a more measured approach needed to be taken in undertaking lobster fishery management so that we ascertained first what was most appropriate and cost-effective for the area. Tim Glover said that we should agree to look into it and report back. To this end Andy Woolmer will liaise with Cefas to develop a study that will provide the WG with lobster management advice including an assessment of the various potential actions including restocking and v-notching.

Andy also highlighted that it was possible to establish Fishery Local Action Groups which involves participation from other fishery, tourism, retail and food sectors. These groups are able to fund projects using EFF money to increase markets, diversification and add value to existing fisheries. The project could help establish one of these FLAG groups to help the industry access more funding and address the socioeconomic issues. MMO (NW) was going to find out whether AXIS 4 EFF funding was still available to establish FLAG groups."

6) VMS project:

Neil Wellum gave an update on the VMS trials and said that a joint report by MMO, the IFCA's and the South West Inshore Fishermen's Association (SWIFA) will be published soon. A decision will then be made regarding the access of mobile gear into the Lyme Bay cSAC. Asked if there will be a roll for VMS on a national basis, Neil said that Zonal Management is taking off and this lends itself to VMS. Neil suggested that there could be a link to the Lyme Bay project on the MMO site.

Angus Walker informed the group that he is involved with SeaFish in minimum-size VMS trials at Axemouth. Chris Wason said that in his opinion, all registered fishing vessels should have VMS installed as it is unfair to target individual sections of the industry.

Charles asked if Blue installed VMS, what would happen to the data and would regulators take the data and act on it? Neil stated that the data is confidential and only the regulators have access to it; and yes, they would act on it but they now have to work-out how to implement the data. Also, "people will have to become more serious about policing". Andy Woolmer pointed out that self-policing is integral to community management and is central

to the Seafish/Scallop Association Scalping Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is currently being integrated into the Responsible Fishing Scheme. Ian Carrier thought VMS to be a great tool and has had a look at Permitting Bylaws and said VMS could be part of the conditions. Tim Robbins believes there is EU funding available for VMS monitoring. Simon Pengelly suggested inviting Succorfish to the next meeting to give a short presentation on VMS.

7) 8) Shellfish conservation measures/Management measures and structure.

Tim Robbins reported that the IFCA's had been given a whole new raft of powers but he needed to check on the legalities. Tim envisaged 3 immediate shellfish conservation measures, pot limitations, pot tagging and VMS.

Charles asked how existing local fishermen could be "established" within any proposed conservation restrictions. Angus thought proof of historic fishing would be suitable. Charles summarised that he thought that a permit to fish and proof of fishing history would be suitable qualifications for a grant scheme for providing VMS equipment for fishermen. Tim Glover suggested that perhaps Blue could buy and issue VMS. There was a discussion about VMS.

Ian Carrier pointed out that it would be useful to know the number of existing registered fishing boats in the area and said he would provide this information.

Simon Pengelly thought that a voluntary scheme could be put in place prior to the enactment of a bylaw to enable the project to progress. However, Andy Woolmer thought that pot limitation may have to be delayed until enforcement is in place, although this would give us time to reach sensible limitation numbers through considering stock limitations and reef habitat.

Charles agreed to talk to Plymouth University to explore a Lyme Bay stock carrying-capacity commission. Andy Woolmer will include this issue when discussing lobster management with Cefas.

Paul Wason brought up the distasteful and wasteful practice of crab-crushing – this involves the crushing of any crustacean inadvertently caught in a net, in order to remove it quickly – Paul thinks it should be banned.

Tim Robbins said that this could be addressed by including a ban within a permit bylaw.

When asked if there is anything that the WG could do to help regulators with the implementation of a permit bylaw, Tim Robbins said that the existence of the WG was in itself helpful but that once the bylaw is applied for letters of support were always a further help.

The consensus around the table was that adaptive management would be the key to a comprehensive system. . Andy Woolmer explained that an adaptive management framework enabled the 'tweaking' of management in response to changes in the fishery and the environment. Tim Robbins thought this to be extremely important because the Lyme Bay project will be seen as a test area for future SAC's. In order to achieve this, Neil Wellum said that the IFCA's would need to implement the most flexible permit scheme possible.

With regards to flexibility, Tim Robbins thought that in theory, once a permit bylaw was in place, permits could be changed within weeks. Andy Woolmer will meet with both IFCA's around the time of the next meeting to begin the development of an adaptive management framework for the project area.

9) Any Other Business.

Tim Glover reported that Marks and Spencer wanted all possible stakeholders to be informed. This includes fishermen who may lose-out due to management measures that may be implemented within Lyme Bay.

It was agreed to contact people such as Nick Prust of SWIFA and Jim Portus of the South Western Fish Producers Association.

Also, consideration should be given to inviting Natural England, as statutory nature conservation advisors, to the WG meetings.

Duration of meeting: 6pm – 10pm

10) Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 15th February 2012, 6pm at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis.

Agenda Attached

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Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve Working Group

**Wednesday 15th February 2012 at 6pm at The Royal Lion Hotel
Lyme Regis**

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting
3. MOU
4. Proposed Management Plan
5. Plymouth University Marine Institute presentation on Monitoring Regime
6. Lobsters / Cefas
7. Tourism
8. FLAG groups and funding opportunities
9. A. O. B.
10. Date of next meeting

Note: This meeting will be joined by representatives of Plymouth University Marine Institute and Cefas