

Lyme Bay Working Group

5th Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis, on 6th March 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.
Nick Wright, Marine management Organisation.
Ian Carrier, Southern IFCA.
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA.
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear
Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear.
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear.
Jim Newton, Fisherman, Beer, static gear.
John Warswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver.
Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.
Chris Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, mobile gear.
Alex Jones, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.
Nigel Hill. Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.
Dr Antony Jensen, Southern IFCA Chairman.
Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum.
Matilda Bark, Dorset Coast Forum.

1) Apologies:

Neil Wellum, Marine Management Organisation.
Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA.

Minutes

2) Agree minutes of the 3rd Working Group meeting:

The minutes were agreed subject to the meeting date correction and a correction in section 4 to '10pot strings' instead of '10 metre strings'.

3) Update on actions and developments (eg research study):

The Chairman reported that Professor Martin Attrill is in the process of putting a price together for the Lyme Bay pot study and that Cefas will also design part of that study. Andy Woolmer said he was working up a framework for a wider Strategic Environmental Assessment that would include fishery, environmental and economic assessments. This work will identify current good practice and then underpin the development of management to address any shortfalls. Charles Clover pointed out that there is already a DEFRA stock-carrying capacity study in existence and we should find this study in order to avoid duplication.

4) Feedback on International best practice:

Charles reported that following his attendance at the World Ocean Summit in Singapore he had observed the global move towards the transition of fisheries to sustainability and cited examples such as Morro Bay in California where more selective methods (hooks instead of trawls) were being tried successfully with financial investment from conservation organisations. That fishery and other in the Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit's report Fisheries in Transition was now run under "catch shares" – a form of rights-based management. Charles suggested that the Working group (WG) should consider investigating the production of a paper exploring rights-based fishery management systems which could be included in our question as to what is best practice. He suggested that money be put aside to fund a PhD student to write the paper. There was a discussion amongst the WG and concerns were raised that this was a move towards an exclusive fishery. Charles assured the group that this was a move to head-off any potential criticism in the future that we have not looked at all best practice options.

John Warswick asked what rights management is. Andy Woolmer said he would he would put an explanatory note together for the next meeting to address this question.

Dr Antony Jensen said that being prepared for things is a good idea, especially for such a ground breaking program as this. He added that what the WG is doing down here has never been done before in the UK. He recommended that either CEMAR, University of

Portsmouth, and in particular Helen Glen of Portsmouth University to produce the Rights Management paper. The chairman asked Andy to co-ordinate this.

5) Feedback and discussion on the consultation draft of the static gear Code of Conduct:

The draft Code of Conduct was debated at length. Although the criteria contained within the Code was agreed at the last meeting, the two Lyme Regis representatives (Paul and Chris Wason) were not present at that meeting. Also, this 5th meeting was attended by two additional fishermen from Lyme Regis (Alex Jones and Nigel Hill). All four brought issues to the table which resulted to changes in the criteria and the format of the Code. The only material changes finally agreed were the net length limits. Alex Jones pointed out that, because of quotas, young fishermen fishing from small boats out of Lyme Regis needed to lay as much net as possible to make even a modest living and the previously agreed 2000 metres would severely affect their catches and income. It was agreed to simplify the document by removing all supporting text. A concise bullet-point document was preferred, with a separate explanatory document. It was pointed out that the concise document could then easily be carried aboard a fishing vessel.

The revised code of conduct was summarised thus:

- A net limit of 3,200 yards divided into four 800 yard nets.
- If significant crustacean bycatch occurs in nets they will be moved to different ground
- A crab pot limit of 250 pots divided into twenty five 10 pot strings.
- A whelk pot limit of 510 pots divided into seventeen strings of 30 pots.
- No undersized fish/shellfish to be used as bait.
- Provide escape hatches in parlour pots or soft-eyed creels.
- Any registered fishing vessel that wants to fish within the Lyme Bay cSAC must be equipped with VMS.
- Voluntarily V-notch berried lobsters.
- Clearly mark all gear.

With regards to the voluntary stock carrying capacity research study to be carried out by Plymouth University, concerns were expressed regarding ownership and publication of the data. It was agreed to be minuted that any research study would not be made public without the express permission of the WG. It was pointed out by Dr Anthony Jensen, who explained the process of academic report publication, that Professor Martin Attrill should be made aware of this condition sooner rather than later. Nick Wright pointed out that sight of study data may be conditional by potential funders.

The fishermen were asked to consult with their respective associations with regards to the revised static gear code of conduct and report any feedback to the next working group meeting.

Comments made by Chris and Paul Wason about previous initiatives which they feel disadvantaged them, were noted.

6) FLAG Groups and funding opportunities:

This was deferred until the next meeting pending further information.

7) Any Other Business.

Simon Pengelly suggested that we should invite Succorfish along to the next meeting to talk about iVMS.

It was agreed that a representative should be invited to meet and talk with the WG at the next meeting.

Charles raised the subject of a representative of Natural England attending the next meeting and signing the MOU. The invitation of Natural England was met with resistance from fishermen present. It was pointed out by Nick Wright that NE were a vital part of the consultation process and the WG should recognise that they need to be included. Andy Woolmer concurred. As a compromise solution, the chairman suggested that the WG needed to have any further discussion and agree the Code as a first item at the next meeting and NE should then be invited to join the meeting at 7.30pm. This was agreed.

It was also felt that the selection of representative of NE to attend the meeting was absolutely critical and two names were put forward as preferred options.

Duration of meeting: 6pm – 9:15pm

9) Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 20th March, 2012, 6pm at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis.