



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1.0 THE PARTIES

Blue Marine Foundation
Fishermen Representatives of the Lyme Bay Working Group
The Marine Management Organisation
Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&SIFCA)
Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (SIFCA)

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Lyme Bay reefs are nationally important conservation features and important fishing grounds for local fishing communities. Defra submitted the Lyme Bay and Torbay candidate Special Area of Conservation ("the cSAC") to the EC in August 2010. The cSAC comprises two parts, one in Lyme Bay and the other in Torbay.

The Lyme Bay component of the cSAC overlaps with the majority of an area in which fishing using bottom towed gears is prohibited by the Lyme Bay Designated Area (Fishing Restrictions) Order 2008 ("the 2008 Order"). The 2008 Order, which prohibited the use of bottom towed gears, has resulted in a consequential increase in the use of static fishing gears in the area, such as lobster pots and nets.

Due to unforeseen consequences resulting from the introduction of the Lyme Bay cSAC, (notably an increase in increase in static gear) the Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve Project aims to implement a framework for management that develops best practice in conservation and fisheries management. To this end a Working Group of fishery and conservation stakeholders has been formed based upon co-management principles. In making this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) all parties recognise the mutual benefit to be gained from working closely together in order to maximise the positive gains of their respective actions for the environment, commercial fisheries, local communities and the regional economy.

3.0 PURPOSE OF THIS MoU

3.1 This MoU establishes the basis for joint working between Working Group members in order to foster understanding and a good working relationship. This will enable us to develop,

promote and implement best practice in fishery and conservation management within the Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve in order to maximise socioeconomic benefits for local coastal communities.

4.0 SCOPE OF THIS MoU

4.1 The geographic area covered by this MoU comprises the boundary co-ordinates of the Lyme Bay component of the cSAC. The position co-ordinates and chart for this area are set out in

5.0 JOINT STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

5.1 Core Principles

1. We agree that we will support and promote the Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve Project Principles:
2. The socio-economic and cultural importance of the fisheries within the area should be acknowledged and be central to fishery and conservation management which will aim to maximise the socio-economic benefit to local communities and secure their long term sustainability
3. Protected habitats and species will be afforded appropriate protection from disturbance and damage. We recognise that a diverse and healthy marine environment is of paramount importance and that the habitats and communities within the Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve, including the SAC, should be managed to secure their long-term protection.
4. Best possible fishery management practices will be developed, promoted and adopted to secure the long-term viability of target species populations

5.2 Collaborative Working

We recognise the benefits of collaborative working and Working Group members will seek to develop wider collaborative arrangements, either jointly or individually, which contribute to the aims of the Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve Project. We will share information about such arrangements with each other.

5.3 Exclusion

Operation of this MoU will be without prejudice to the statutory duties and powers of the SIFCA and D&SIFCA and the MMO, and the independence of Natural England, Blue Marine Foundation and individual members of the Working Group. The two IFCA's and the MMO will continue to engage with a wider range of parties than those subject to this MoU in the course of exercising their statutory duties in relation to the cSAC and the 2008 Order

6.0 KEY AIMS

6.1 Delivery of actions to achieve the principles and aims set out in this MoU will be detailed in the management plans, business plans and strategies published jointly or separately by

the Statutory Bodies and Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve Project. We will liaise and consult each other, regarding the development and ongoing delivery of such plans on a monthly basis.

6.2 The Lyme Bay Fisheries & Conservation Reserve Project Working Group will review this MoU annually in order to take account of improvements in knowledge and strategic or organisational policy changes.

6.3 Key aims to be delivered through these plans will include:

6.3.1 Ways of working

- Working together - The development of a culture of trust and mutual respect is central to fostering a better understanding of the various issues affecting participating stakeholders.
- Data & information sharing - Agree ways of sharing data and information, including spatial seabed and fishery information, local knowledge and relevant scientific research to ensure that management decisions are well informed and evidence led. The confidentiality of any data in respect of individuals will be respected by the parties to the MoU.
- Communications - The timing of communications and requests for information between parties to be appropriate to the issue in question.
- Engaging others - Engage with other relevant local and national stakeholders in promoting the project with the aim of delivering the project aims.

6.3.2 Identification and Development of best fishery and conservation management

- Current management - Participants will identify where best practice is already applied in Lyme Bay
- Best practice elsewhere - Identify best practice in operation elsewhere that could be applied in Lyme Bay
- Novel approaches - Working jointly, participants will develop novel approaches that will address site specific fishery and conservation issues and deliver the long-term aims.

6.3.3 Improving knowledge and understanding through collaboration

- Survey and monitoring - In order for management to be developed in an informed manner and to be able to assess its effectiveness there is a need for practical survey and monitoring work. In order for this work to be most effective a collaborative approach between fishermen, scientists and statutory bodies will be adopted

6.3.4 PR, promotion and announcements

- The content and release of any PR or promotional material or the making of any announcement relating specifically to the project will, where practicable, first be approved by the Working Group.