

Lyme Bay Working Group

6th Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis, on 20th 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.
James Windebank, Marine management Organisation.
Ian Carrier, Southern IFCA.
Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA.
Sam Dell, Southern IFCA
Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear
Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear.
Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear.
John Warswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver.
Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.
Alex Jones, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.
Nigel Hill. Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.

Guests

Gavin Black, Natural England.
Joana Smith, Natural England.
Fiona Wheatley, Marks and Spencer.
Charlotte Cawthorne, Prince's Charities' International Sustainability Unit.

Note; six Lyme Regis fishermen attended as observers.

The chairman opened the meeting by welcoming and introducing guest participants and the six observers from Lyme Regis

1) Apologies:

Neil Wellum, Marine Management Organisation.

Tim Robbins, Devon and Severn IFCA.

Nick Wright, Marine Management Organisation.

Jim Newton, Beer Fisherman.

Chris Wason, Lyme Regis Fisherman

Minutes

2) Agree minutes of the 5th Working Group meeting:

The minutes were agreed.

3) Voluntary Code of Conduct – Progress:

Concern was expressed regarding some of the wording within the Voluntary Code of Conduct Notes of Guidance. It was agreed to remove from both the Code and Notes of Guidance items '2' and '12' and reword items '5', '9', and '11' in the Notes of Guidance. In addition, after further consultation with the Lyme bay fishermen by Alex Jones, it was agreed to amend the Code to raise the total net length from 3,200 yards to 4,000 yards with a maximum individual net length of 600 yards rather than the previous maximum 800 yards. It was further agreed that "The Code will be subject to annual review" will be written into the document. Andy Woolmer elected to reword the Code of Conduct and it was agreed by the WG that barring any errors in redrafting, the Code of Conduct would now be considered agreed and finalised.

It was further agreed that the word "commercial" should be added to the Code's title to read "Lyme Bay Commercial Fishermen's Voluntary Code of Conduct".

4) Natural England participation:

Gavin Black began by introducing Joana Smith as his successor due to a move from his post as Natural England Maritime Lead Advisor, Exeter Office. Fiona said she was looking forward to participating with the WG.

John Warswick questioned why the MoU had not yet been signed by Natural England (NE) and Gavin said that NE were happy to support the aims of the WG and the MOU but needed clarification of the area of communication, explaining that whilst NE want to be open, they are restricted by governmental confidentiality and suggested that a footnote could be added to the MoU. Charles asked whether we could record the clarification within the WG minutes instead of adding a footnote to the MoU. James said that he thought this may be acceptable but he would investigate and Joana would report back at the next WG meeting.

5) Marks and Spencer (M&S) and Sustainability:

Fiona Wheatley gave a riveting over-view of the M&S Sustainable Fish programme and also explained how seriously M&S take their responsibility in sourcing sustainable materials and products, ranging from the materials used in the construction of their stores to the products sold on their shelves. As Sustainable Development Manager for M&S, Fiona has the task of ensuring that all natural resources used, e.g. wood, palm oil, soy, water, fish, cocoa, etc., are as sustainable and environmentally friendly as possible.

Fiona said, "We've had a sustainable fishing policy for over a decade, but now we're going even further by being the UK's first company to sign WWF's Seafood Charter. We're working with them to ensure that by 2012, all our wild fish will come from the most sustainable sources possible. And in addition to this, we're now taking it even further, with our Forever Fish campaign. Over 90% of all the wild fish we sell comes from the most sustainable sources available to us, such as those certified by the Marine Stewardship Council. This is significant as our market share for fish is 14%".

Simon Pengelly asked if the Lyme Bay project is the only one of its kind within the UK and Fiona said that as far as she was aware, it is. Angus Walker asked Fiona if she thought 'we were on the right lines', to which Fiona replied, 'absolutely, you are doing great'. Charles Clover cautioned that we still have to convince the M&S Board of this.

Fiona took this opportunity to point out that the final fishery management plan would have to be scale-able; a template that could be rolled-out elsewhere. She wanted to be clear that M&S do not want to become fish police or conservation regulators; the M&S role is that of a facilitator, an enabler.

The Chairman thanked Fiona for attending and for a very informative presentation and Charles said that the M&S name will enable us to access more money. He said we are grateful and hoped Fiona would relay this to the M&S Board.

6) Sustainable Fisheries Best Practice:

Charlotte Cawthorne of the Prince's Charities' International Sustainability Unit explained the background to the 'Fishery in Transition' report which the Prince's Charity commissioned. This comprised of 50 interviews with fishery industry representatives who are involved with moves towards sustainability within their respective fisheries around the world. Charlotte said that the incentive that prompted this report was that it was noticed that fishery management was usually 'top down' and that fishermen were not very involved within it. With regards to the Lyme Bay Project Charlotte said that she thought the project was very exciting and was going in the right direction and if there are any ways in which the Prince's Charities' could help, then please let us know.

Angus said that the high profile associated with Prince Charles would actually help with adherence to the Voluntary Code of Conduct. Charlotte said that she could help with publicity at a later date once there are some notable achievements. Charles said that Lyme Bay should have its own standard and we are setting those standards now. Charlotte said that the MSC could assess the project in the interim but pointed out that whilst the MSC is

good, it is not the only accreditation available. Charlotte said that it may be useful for the Lyme Bay fishermen to meet other fishermen from around the world to get an idea of how they are coping with the global change in fishery management. There is a contingent of the Bahamian Spiny Lobster Fishery visiting the UK next month and if dates could tally, Charlotte would see if she could arrange for them to attend a WG meeting. This was greeted with enthusiasm by the WG.

7) Flag Groups:

Andy passed around some helpful briefing note leaflets on Fishery Local Action Groups (FLAG) and explained Axis 4 Funding access through FLAG. It was revealed that a previous Dorset FLAG application had failed and Andy said he would investigate the reasons for this failure. He would also investigate whether there are still funds available in the Axis 4 pot for this area and asked James Windebank if the MMO could help facilitate FLAG funding. James said he would investigate and report back.

8) Any Other Business.

The Chairman said that one major item under AOB is that we now have to write a report and we have been given an extra month which means we have until the end of April to produce it. It will initially appear in draft form and will be sent to M&S and the WG simultaneously for consultation.

Fiona said that M&S would expect to see in the report what has been done already and also what will be done in the future.

Simon asked the Chairman when the Code of Conduct will be put into place. The reply was, at the end of the consultation period.

Angus suggested that the Code of Conduct should be sent to Jerry Percy of NUTFA and that we should invite him to the next meeting. This was agreed. It was also agreed to send the Code of Conduct, the MoU and the finalised Report to the Shellfish Association of Great Britain.

9) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 9th May in order to accommodate Charlotte Cawthorne's visiting delegation of Bahamian fishermen's attendance.

Duration of meeting: 6pm – 9:45pm.

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