

Lyme Bay Working Group

7th Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis, on 9th May 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.

Simon Pengelly, Southern IFCA.

Sam Dell, Southern IFCA

Joana Smith, Natural England.

Dave Sales, Fisherman, West Bay, static gear

Angus Walker, Fisherman, Axmouth, static gear.

John Warswick, Fisherman, West Bay, scallop diver.

Alex Jones, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.

Nigel Hill, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.

Guests

Charlotte Cawthorne, Prince's Charities' International Sustainability Unit.

Mia Isaacs, Bahamas Marine Exporters Association.

Note; four 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.

Ian Carrier, Southern IFCA.

Jim Newton, Beer Fisherman.

Chris Wason, Lyme Regis Fisherman

Dave Hancock, Fisherman, Axemouth, static gear.

Paul Wason, Fisherman, Lyme Regis, static gear.

Minutes

2) Agree minutes of the 6th Working Group meeting:

Joana Smith requested that for clarification of the MoU, the following notes should be added to the minutes:

1. Clarification that the area covered by the Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve is the same as the boundary of the Lyme Bay part of the Lyme Bay & Torbay cSAC.
2. Nothing in the MOU removes Natural England's requirement to act as statutory adviser on delivering the conservation objectives of the cSAC.
3. Natural England will be open and transparent with the Group but in some circumstances we will not be able to share information which we are party to on a policy in confidence basis within government.

The minutes were agreed.

3) Lyme Bay Fishery and Conservation Reserve report:

The draft report had been circulated to Working Group (WG) members and comments were invited. Dave Sales said that he thought the report was successful in trying to tell the story of the Lyme Bay fisheries and conservation history leading to the current initiative and the report had not dodged the issues. Angus Walker felt that there was some duplication within the report which detracted from its initial easy read; the duplication occurred mainly in the appendices. Charles Clover thought the way forward would be to reduce the appendices once the document goes out for wider publication.

Nick Wright said it was an impressive document which shows how hard the WG has been working. Dave Sales noted that this is the first time nationally, that a conservation reserve has been sustainably managed and this has all been achieved by the fishermen. However, Sam Dell pointed out that there were no mobile gear fishermen present and they have not had input into the report. Tim Glover informed the group that mobile gear fishermen had

been invited through SWIFA but have declined. It was pointed out that Chris Wason operates a mobile gear vessel and is a member of SWIFA but did he not attend WG meetings regularly due to other commitments. Neville Copperthwaite reported that he, Charles Clover and Tim Glover had visited SWIFA member Nick Prust. Neville and Andy Woolmer had also talked to Nick and tried to encourage his involvement with the WG to address any mismatch in sectorial bias – larger vessels and those using mobile gears. .

Nick asked if SWIFA had seen the Lyme Bay voluntary code of conduct.

Charles said that they had and in addition, they had been offered a separate code of conduct for larger boats. Charles then read an email to the WG. The email was a response from Jim Portus, Chairman of SWIFA, to an invitation to be part of the Lyme Bay voluntary code of conduct. In the email, he declined to be involved with the Code of Conduct. However, Jim thanked all at Blue Foundation for including SWIFA in this process and said he looked forward to the report.

Andy pointed out that the code of conduct is a work in progress and that we should continue to engage with the mobile gear and large vessel-fishermen. Simon Pengelly said that it is important that the door is left open for them. There was general agreement within the WG on these points and Charles asked should we propose that the WG write to SWIFA and offer them inclusion. The Group felt this was the way forward.

Tim asked if there were any other interested parties that had not been included. None sprang to mind.

A discussion was had regarding the events that led to the current unsatisfactory situation of gear influx into the Lyme Bay cSAC and the subsequent need for management funding. Charles was of the opinion that DEFRA should have predicted the gear influx and should therefor help pay for the reserve. He elected to contact their Head Scientist, Professor Ian Boyd.

4) iVMS Presentation:

Andrew Masson, Manager of Fisheries, Selex Elsag, introduced George Henricks, Commercial Director of Succorfish. These are the companies behind the development of a Vehicle Monitoring System (iVMS) for seagoing vessels. The system is primarily based on the mobile phone network and is reliable up to 12 miles offshore. The iVMS system development was instigated by the Lyme Bay closure to mobile gear fishermen and is seen in as a potential useful tool in the management of fisheries.

George gave a power-point presentation that included real-time footage of vessel activity within Lyme Bay.

5) Fisheries Best practice from around the World:

Charlotte Cawthorne of the Prince's Charities' International Sustainability Unit introduced

Mia Isaacs of the Bahamas Marine Exporters Association (BMEA). Mia is in the UK on the invitation of the Prince's Charities to inform the fishing and conservation fraternity of the Bahamas sustainable fishing methods.

Mia gave a riveting explanation of the work that the BMEA have done towards creating a sustainable fishery, particularly with regards to their spiny lobster fishery. Interestingly, 80% of landings are caught using artificial reefs called "Condominiums" comprising of individual units called "Casitas". This method is part of an integrated management system which also includes landing size limits, closed areas, closed seasons and educating retail outlets such as restaurants not to buy undersized shellfish.

6) Any Other Business.

Alex Jones reported that the Lyme Regis fishermen were progressing with the establishment of a fishermen's cooperative. Tim emphasised that the cooperative should remain open to fishermen from the other ports within the Lyme Bay area. Andy said he would help to establish the cooperative structure and investigate EFF funding.

Tim informed the group that a stand had been booked for the Weymouth Seafood Festival, to held on the 7th and 8th of July, to promote the Lyme Bay Reserve project. Volunteer fishermen are needed to both man the stand and to suggest promotion ideas. Please contact Neville or Tim if interested in doing a stint! Tim's contact number is: 07753 937737.

9) Date of Next Meeting

To be advised.

Duration of meeting: 6pm – 10:00pm.

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