**Marine Group Meeting**

**14.00-17.00, WWF Scotland, The TUN, Tuesday 11th July 2017**

Chair: Calum Duncan

**Agenda**

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|  | Item | Who | Timing |
| 1 | Welcome and intros | SD/All | 14.00 – 14.05 |
| 2 | Review of actions from previous meetings  *Rolling actions list can now be found* ***and edited online****here*: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FIefkDvXOmX25MU-sUXKoPW7zSp7CZb-KFQHRqX6mg4/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FIefkDvXOmX25MU-sUXKoPW7zSp7CZb-KFQHRqX6mg4/edit) | SD | 14.30 – 14.40 |
| 3 | Member updates | All | 14.40 – 14.50 |
| 4 | MPAs:   * MSP boat trip (opportunities) * T2 campaign and consultation plan * Swim-with/wildlife tourism management research. | All | 14.50 – 15.30 |
| 5 | Marine Planning:   * Sea Scotland * LWTS report | CD | 15.30 – 15.40 |
| 6 | Fisheries   * LINK Future vision paper * Aquaculture | CD/All | 15.40 –16.20 |
| 7 | Other   * WCL ELUK MSFD workshop – positions and notes * Acts for Post-Legislative scrutiny – deadline 28th July. * MG Communications strategy – suggested blog content & authors for July/August. * EEB | All | 16.20 – 16.40 |
| 8 | AOB | All | 16.40 – 16.50 |
| 9 |  |  |  |

**2. Duncan Halley Q&A session on Norway fisheries**

Wildlife biologist for Norway Institute for Nature Research (NINA).

In Norway, species stock management and conservation are managed by the same people. Norway has benefitted from being outside the CFP, and there are opportunities for Scotland/UK to do so as well. The waters around Norway that fall under the CFP (North Sea zone) are depressed, whereas the fish stocks in waters outside of the CFP (North Atlantic) are much more resilient. Norway made a bilateral deal with Russia in 2008 that lead to rapid stock recovery (See pg. 18 of presentation handout).

The waters within the EU and North East Atlantic are currently fished at maximum sustainable yield. Norway was in a similar position in the 1970s, where technical advances made it easier to catch more fish, leading to a collapse in their fishery. Norway has since developed methods to establish ‘sustainable stocks’. The main difference is political will to follow scientific advice (of fish stocks).

Although this would require reducing quotas (in line with scientific advice), and hence reducing catch & income, DH considered this would be an investment in the future of Scotland’s fisheries. The experience from Norway is that this investment pays off - the short term reduction in quota would lead to stock recovery, and allow subsidies to be removed. DH suggested short term funding to compensate those who lose fishing quota in the short term – “borrowing from the future”.

There is an opportunity to promote that in Scotland, as fishermen asking for science based decisions. AK flagged amendment to Conservatory motion a couple of weeks ago, taking a science based/ecosystem approach. All the words to hold people to account are there, but we always come back from negotiations asking for more.

All research on fisheries in Norway is funded by the Government. Although the science mirrors the advice produced by ICES, Norway fund and follow their own scientifically determined advice. DH advised that it would be better to develop a framework for fisheries now, before getting down to the detail.

CD query whether the Norwegian fjords have benefited from the evolution of an inshore cod fishery, rather than the shellfisheries that have evolved in Scotland? Duncan felt this was outside his area of expertise, suggested contact with the Norway Fisheries Directorate.

**Action: CD to email DH to ask who he could contact within the Directorate about this.**

SD noted that this message was more powerful coming from someone like Duncan, he mentioned he met with Alex Salmond and others on this topic last year. There may be future opportunities where it is worthwhile involving Duncan, and running things past him – he said he would be open to further engagement with the LINK Marine Group. Suggested linking DH with Marine Scotland staff who will be working on Sea Fisheries Strategy.

**Action: ED to draft blog with Duncan on his recent chapter on fisheries management in Norway**

Duncan was surprised to hear of an announcement about closed containment within Norway’s aquaculture sector, and did not expect this was likely. He considered salmonids to be the main problem with aquaculture.

**Marine Group meeting minutes**

**NEW ACTIONS**

**All: review LWTS brief & send comments to SC.**

**All: Add suggestions to fisheries contacts in consultation plan.**

**All: review MPA T2 consultation LINK positions table by 9th June.**

**All: Continue promoting Sea Scotland conference among networks.**

**All: Think of speakers for EEB and input to DV.**

**CD: email DH to ask who he could contact within the Directorate about this.**

**CD: Talk with authors of SFIR and SNH about potential launch event.**

**CD: Draft a plan to use SFIR and circulate along with final draft of SFIR to MG members mail DH to ask who he could contact within the Directorate about this.**

**CD: Review whether LWTS priority for budgets etc.**

**EB: Share the MPA network map with ED.**

**EB: Follow up with Rhona about her research and feedback at next meeting.**

**ED: liaise with suggested authors on blogs**

**ED: Redraft MPA update briefing for MSP boat trip.**

**ED: Invite Anne-Margaret from SWFPA to next MG meeting.**

**ED: Email updated MPA T2 table with LINK positions to MG for comment before sending to SNH.**

**ED: Share final swim-with report with SNH and prompt SMWWC.**

**ED: Make contact with Hugh Williams and other press for coverage for Sea Scotland.**

**ED: Draft 3 pillar briefing (non-urgent) ahead of boat trip to share with MG.**

**ED: Prepare high level brief to send around the MG for CC.**

**ED: Share WCL MSFD workshop invite with the MG.**

**SC: Review when and how to use the LWTS report.**

**4. Member updates**

Salmon and Trout Conservation Scotland have joined LINK Marine Group. They will be having LINK inductions in the coming weeks and join the next meeting onwards.

LINK Staff update: Esther and Emilie have accepted new contracts to extend their posts until mid–November. From the 1st of July, Esther will return to work 1 day a week, and Emilie will work 3.5 days a week.

RSPB – Phoebe Cochrane (previous LINK Economics Officer, now taking forward LINK Climate work) will be working on a Heritage Lottery Funded project on floating wind. Puffarazzi - The Citizen Science element of RSPB’s Project Puffin – will launch this Thursday 1st June. The project will encourage people to send in photos of puffins feeding to get a better idea of their feeding habits.

MPA outreach plan – draft sites, not this financial year from SNH. Community resources.

**5. MPAs**

**MSP boat trip opportunities**

DV and ED are liaising with the ECCLR committee, who may now take a more active role in organising. It appears they are also planning an away day of sorts during the summer and have suggested combining the two. This would mean we are not leading the day but can still attend, supply briefings as planned. If this is the case, we can also think about whether we may want to do something in addition to this later in the year (not necessarily a boat trip). We are waiting to hear back from the committee who are considering it with members at present.

We have also received the MPA FF bid that we put in for the boat trip. This included some budget for travel, as well as covering costs of boat hire, lunch etc. We have let the steering group know that our plans are currently on hold but that we still aim to run/attend an event and will keep them posted.

It was clear at the meetings we held with MSPs last week and other comments that there it is still a need for an update on MPAs of sorts. The previous briefing we sent was not well received, considered because of negative framing/wording. Suggested producing a similar brief that takes a step back, laying out the state of play, and what the next steps are - clear that it is coming from Scottish Government advice, not just what LINK would like to see.

EB flagged that she created a map of the existing network and next steps that are required.

**ACTION: ED Redraft MPA update briefing for MSP boat trip.**

**ACTION: ED to share the MPA network map with ED.**

**T2 campaign and consultation plan**

ED flagged SG suggestion to have a fisheries lead to ensure consistency of messaging and no gaps in who we are talking to. ED suggested AK/CD as possible leads given contacts with the industry. Following MPA T1 and Offshore, those present considered it important to keep fishing industry in the loop and make sure we meet with them ahead of the consultation. Suggestion to create a spreadsheet of contacts & update with contact.

Considered that anyone operating in the inshore could be affected by the management measures. Should meet with SFF, individual Federations, SWFPA and CFA. Suggestion to meet with Anne-Margaret from SWFPA, and invite her to the next MG meeting.

**ACTION: ED to arrange MG meeting with Anne-Margaret from SWFPA.**

**ACTION: All to add suggestions to fisheries contacts in consultation plan.**

MPA T2 consultation LINK positions table. At SNH meeting last week, David and Katie expressed an interest in seeing the tables and were happy to review them. ED has updated the table from workshop and member feedback. There are still some gaps requiring further member input. Suggest meeting SNH again after they have seen our measures, and fedback on habitat mapping updates.

**ACTION: ED to email updated table around the MG for comment before sending to SNH.**

Discussed MPA T2 campaign and outreach plan. Ideally we would like both but with resources should prioritise high numbers of responses as minimum. Encourage community responses where possible. SD suggested online resources for communities that we could make available on SSS web (i.e. find your nearest MPA, download a campaign pack/ images to create placards/host an event etc. etc.). Placards idea – encourage people to take photos of themselves with a statement supporting MPA and asking for robust measures/why they want an MPA, in their local area/where MPA would be. Also discussed the option of combining coastal activity with RZSS Wild About Scotland Bus (i.e. as an opportunity to spread the word, take resources, co-ordinate an event to coincide with Bus tour etc.). Important to discuss at next MG meeting when more members present.

Noted that this campaign will be more positive about MPAs in general, and their management measures. RSPB have noticed SNH seem to be pulling away from the idea of protected areas in favour of landscape scale planning – PAs seen as too complex. Another reason to demonstrate positive support for MPAs as part of the campaign. Keep MPA campaign plan on the agenda for next MG meeting.

**4ncMPAs**

We are awaiting further news on delayed 4 ncMPAs. SNH said it was not expected this financial year. December will be the four year anniversary of when they were first announced. SD thinking of creating and publishing some management measures to mark the anniversary & push for them to be considered. We know that it is not that RC is not willing, but that Marine Scotland do not have enough resources to look at this. Resources should form a part of future briefing/advocacy.

**Swim-with/wildlife tourism management research**

The legal analysis of regulation on swim-with activities by Edinburgh University Lawyer (James Harrison) has been finalised. This is now a LINK report and we can use as we wish – we will share at upcoming CMS meeting in the Autumn. The report runs through existing legislation and options for reform – from which we can choose to make recommendations. It is also clear in the report that there is a case for precautionary measures (could argue this is enough to put measures in place).

We have shared the report with SNH and they felt that they still need proof that swim-with is happening on a large scale, and that it is a problem, before they can consider doing anything about it. On our call to discuss the report and next steps, we considered it would be valuable to get someone to go out on a boat over the summer to begin recording what the extent of the industry is, and record impacts on species. This would have implications for future MPA management for mobile species – we need to decide whether this is a LINK priority. SD understanding is that MPA FF are now only accepting joint applications. Suggested that we could have a strong case as LINK for money to fund a student or similar to do this initial research over the summer.

EB flagged that a student (Rhona) she has worked with previously has been looking into behavioural impacts of swim-with on basking sharks, via Sealife Surveys throughout the whole of Scotland. One to watch as we know the industry is growing (SD flagged – Basking Shark Scotland, Sealife Survery, as well as tours coming from the US). At the CMS meeting there will be a small steering group who are developing management advice on swim-with. Led by a fairly conservative researcher – likely to be precautionary measures.

**ACTION: EB follow up with Rhona about her research and feedback at next meeting.**

**SMWWC**

Last correspondence from SNH (and also LHM who had attended a training course), was that the code was in print for imminent release. This was a few weeks ago at least, so likely to be any time now. Noted that we haven’t had the chance to properly input into this code, and haven’t heard anything from SNH. Sharing the Swim-with report is an opportunity to prompt them on this again. When the code comes out, there may be an opportunity to write a joint letter to SNH about what we feel is missing.

**ACTION: ED share swim-with report with SNH and prompt SMWWC.**

**6. Marine planning**

**Sea Scotland**

Just three weeks until Sea Scotland. Programme and logistics coming together. The advert has gone out through the usual channels, as well as Bob Earl. Members to continue advertising Sea Scotland via networks and social media. Suggestion to resend via MASTS network, also to review academics networks.

Discussed media coverage for the day, suggestion to bring in Hugh Williams (who covered Sea Scotland last year – though Programme Scotland 2016 does not exist anymore), and potentially also local press.

Roseanna Cunningham still lined up to give introductory talk – though tbc as may clash with ministerial meeting. Caro considers this is less likely to go ahead, given elections. Graham lined up as back-up. Caro can also step in to close the meeting.

Also discussed outputs from the conference – report, blog with key findings, and letter to RC (if she can make it) thanking her & providing summary of key points.

**ACTION: All to continue promoting Sea Scotland conference among channels.**

**ACTION: ED to make contact with Hugh Williams and other press for coverage on the day.**

**LWTS**

SC has drafted a briefing, asking for comment from MG. Noted that the report itself requires reformatting. We had copies present at Sea Scotland last year. Not sure how many there were or what this required, or whether it is worth it again. MG to decide whether this is a priority given limited time & resources – particularly SC & CD.

**ACTION: SC to review when and how to use report**

**ACTION: CD to review priority for budgets etc.**

**7. Fisheries**

**Loch Carron**

LINK letter sent to thank RC for rapid move to designate Loch Carron MPA and review protection for some PMFs outside the network. SD, CD and ED met with Greens, Labour and Tories last week to discuss the incident, MPA designation and implications for wider seas measures. Clear that there is misconception about what MPAs are for, and wider seas measures. LINK produced Loch Carron briefing to send to those we met with and the ECCLR committee who will be considering the subordinate legislation (of Loch Carron MPA) next week (Tuesday 6th June). We have also supplied Claudia Beamish with a few suggested questions for her to pose (See below). We have had a few more requests for meetings and will continue to liaise with MSPs and others on this topic.

*Oral Question 31/05/17: Claudia Beamish: To ask the Scottish Government what the timescale and arrangements are for the consultation on the review of priority marine features outside of the marine protected areas network. (S5O-01057)*

RL questioned what LINK end goal is in terms of PMFS - whether we are saying that there must be no damage to PMFs outside of the network, or if we are willing to accept some (if so, how much?). NMP wording is that marine activities do not ‘significantly impact national status’ of PMFs – what does this mean for LINK? Can apply to flame shells, but also burrowed mud with Aquaculture applications, where SNH decisions state that they do not expect significant negative impact on burrowed mud from aquaculture activity – but not clear how this is defined, or what LINK is aiming for. CD is closest to this and asked to provide feedback, most likely to have an idea of what this should look like.

SNH hadn’t sorted out what this means for them yet. Also noted that SNH decision is to review PMFs with highest risk – not necessarily all PMFs. SNH have produced advice on thresholds for case study work, where thresholds differ for different features. RL to review SNH advice in interim.

Suggestion to create a briefing about SG’s 3 pillar approach to nature conservation to clearly frames MPAs within wider seas measures.

**ACTION: ED to draft 3 pillar briefing (non-urgent) ahead of boat trip to share with MG.**

**Inshore Fisheries Bill**

We would like to see fisheries reform – whether specific inshore or combined. From recent discussions with SNH/MS seems unlikely that this will happen before we exit the EU. More likely that there will be a Fisheries Strategy, and this will become a combined Bill (inshore + offshore).

**Fisheries Pilots**

Marine Scotland announced two pilot projects to determine how to manage inshore fisheries. One pilot project will be community led, the other will be spatially designed with less industry lead. This was announced last week, but MS don’t know where these pilots will be held or when they will begin. There is an opportunity to feed in to where these pilots should take place.

**LINK Future vision paper**

We produced a briefing that was shared with Caro Cowan’s team at Marine Scotland earlier this year. At our meeting with Caro earlier this month she informally invited us to prepare a high level briefing doc that points out our key asks (and the things that we think are at wider risk – not just fisheries, but wider marine conservation too). They would like to share publically so show support for similar measures. We have agreed to send on in the next couple of weeks.

**ACTION: ED to prepare high level brief to send around the MG for CC.**

**Aquaculture**

The subgroup is working on their position paper. SC currently working to cut it down and then it will be shared with the wider group. The remit of the paper has broadened beyond MPAs, to cover environmental impacts of Aquaculture sites in Scotland.

**8. Other**

**WCL – MSFD**

WCL are organising a two day workshop for ELUK Marine members about the MSFD, what is at stake and what we can do to make sure it is carried over. This could be a good opportunity to use/share the Seafloor Integrity Report. Considered that CD may be best placed to go, ED to circulate invite to the group to decide who can go.

**ACTION: ED to share the meeting invite with the MG.**

**Social Media Strategy**

Upcoming blogs:

* Monitoring (expected out next week – other recent blogs took precedence)
* Bottlenose dolphins (SD Guest blog)
* Black Guillemots (PO Guest blog)
* Sandeels (PO Guest blog)

Suggestions for future blogs:

* Duncan Halley Guest blog on Norway & Fisheries management in Scotland
* Richard Liley (Scottish Seagrass) blog on seagrass (for MPA cons)
* Ruth Fraser (RZSS) blog on Wild About Scotland Bus coastal community visits + Marine

**EEB**

DV is leading on organising the European Environment Bureau meet this year, LINK is hosting – 8th November. Daphne has asked for input on the marine session – on who could speak. Initial thoughts were to have some-one non-EU (i.e. Norway fisheries – Duncan Halley?), MEP – (Ian Duncan perhaps). Input from MG welcome. Suggestion that perhaps the 1st minister, or Roseanna Cunningham could take part.

**ACTION: MG to think of speakers for EEB and input to DV.**

**9. AOB**

Nature of Scotland Awards, deadline in 12th June. Welcoming submissions from organisations that feel they fit the criteria (either your own or some-one you know). There is a marine category, but also others (i.e. Tourism) that have a marine element to them.

Also MASTS has put out a call for abstracts for their AGM 4-6th October. There is an SNH hosted session on marine SNH session - Safeguarding Scotland’s coasts and seas…. perspectives and visions. They are looking for science success stories, and what the future holds. The deadline for abstracts is 4pm Friday 7th July. Suggested it could be a place to submit the Seafloor Integrity Report, and potentially Rhona’s work on swim-with.

Next MG Meeting expected late July.