**Marine Group Meeting**

**18th April, 13.30 – 16.30**

**WWF Scotland Office**

Please remember to have a copy of the Advocacy Strategy with you

Chair: Calum Duncan

Present: Calum Duncan (MCS), Peadar O’Connell (RSPB), Emma Crane (MCS – New public affairs officer), Sarah Dolman (WDC), Emilie Devenport (LINK), Calum Langdale (LINK), Daphne Vlastari (LINK), Sam Collin (SWT), Helen Senn (RZSS), Guy Linley-Adams (S&CTS), Alex Kinninmonth (RSPB), Lyndsey Croal (RSPB), Alison Lomax (HWDT), Calum Duncan (MCS), Richard Luxmoore (NTS), Esther Brooker (WWF – on speaker).

**Agenda**

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|  | **Item** | **Who** | **Timing** |
| 1 | Welcome and intros | CD | 13.30 |
| 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) | CD | 13.30 – 13.40 |
| 3 | Member updates  Species Champions Initiative/group event – Calum Langdale | All | 13.40 – 14.00 |
| 4 | MPAs:   * UK Dolphin and Porpoise Strategy Workshop * *MG approach to the upcoming MPA consultations will be considered collectively at the end of the meeting.* | CD | 14.00 – 14.15 |
| 5 | Marine Planning:   * Sea Scotland (update) * CMPP (update) * NMP (update) | CD | 14.15 – 14.30 |
| 6 | Fisheries   * Seafloor Integrity Report (draft visuals) * PMF – consider LINK approach and next steps. * Aquaculture update * Aquaculture – ECCLR Inquiry recommendation | CD | 14.30 –15.00 |
| 7 | Other   * Brexit – ELUK/ GUK update * Summer student opportunity (Loran Scholar – fisheries) * Electrofishing for razor clam – trials – scientific research * MG Communications strategy – Press opportunities, suggested blog content & authors. | All | 15.00 – 15.10 |
| 8 | AOB | All | 15.10 – 15.20 |
| 9 | Comfort break | All | 15.20-15.30 |
| 10 | Discuss public facing strategy for upcoming consultations (see draft table 1)   * Upcoming consultations (MPAs, PMFs) & Timeline * Consider LINK approach, key messages and leads * Outreach strategy (including social media, videos and SSS web) * Summary and actions | All | 15.30-16.30 |

**Minutes**

**2. Rolling actions**

Since our last meeting, Paul Walton (RSPB) met with SNH raised funding among other concerns. Suggested a follow up meeting with Francesca and Mike Cantley (Director of Policy) on marine. Paul/LINK following up.

AK/CD to write to international organisations to support Offshore MPA management

Thanks to Sam for briefing on LWTS report, and Esther for input.

**3. Member updates and Species Champions**

No particular member updates

Species Champions marine event

Calum Langdale, LINK Species Champion intern introduced the Species Champion 100 day challenge being developed by the Wildlife subgroup. There are now over 100 (101) Species Champions. The 100 day challenge aims to celebrate this milestone and encourage Species Champions to take action for their species. It will be held over parliamentary recess, starting in June until September.

There are currently 26 marine species across the membership: 5 MCS, 5RSPB, 10 WDC, 2 HWDT, 2 SWT, 2NTS.

Calum L suggested we might want to consider organising a marine related event.

SD suggested boat trip (Aug 2017 boat trip was successful).

The Maid of the Forth (RSPB Lothians regional project) was suggested. It is a specially organised cruise trip running along the Forth, hosted by RSPB with RSPB experts and guide on board. There are currently two events (one Thursday pm, one sat am), and MSPs have already been invited. Last year had 3 MSPs signed up and only 1 joined. We would need to organise special ‘marine’ trip. AK suggested we could also arrange to depart from North Berwick for a more ‘interesting’ route, rather than near the bridges. The seabird centre also run a boat trip from their Seabird centre (north Berwick).

RL suggested St. Abbs Head (Walking along coast). Likely to see seabirds, potential also for cetaceans. Lots of other things also going on around St. Abbs – HWU, St Abbs VMR. MCS are on the board/advisory panel for St Abbs VMR, could see if they could help be involved with organising.

Would need to be before the summer (end of July) to see seabirds. RL could talk to property manager at St. Abbs Head.

**ACTION: Marine project team (CD, SD, ED) with RL, CL to pursue option of St Abbs Head. With St Abbs VMR/NTS.**

Members are also encouraged to do additional species specific activities for their species.

CL – LINK will prepare a list of suggested activities for MSPs to do, that can include physical activities, but also indoor actions (i.e. motions, tweets etc.). Members welcome to suggest additional actions.

AK raised sandeel species champion – RSPB would like this species to be represented.

RL raised sea trout has a champion but hasn’t done anything yet. This would be a good opportunity to encourage action.

GLA suggested Atlantic salmon be added to the list of species – others in the room agreed. GLA S&CTS forward atlantic salmon as a suggested species.

**ACTION: CL to follow up with GLA about getting Atlantic Salmon a Species Champion.**

DV – LINK had raised other species (including fish), felt that there was a lack of capacity in organisation to deal with this. If organisations feel there is a particular species that needs attention they can flag this, and arrange a particular meeting/activity to arrange.

**4. MPAs**

UK Dolphin and Porpoise Conservation Strategy

Marine Scotland are leading a workshop this week (19-20th April), with UK institutions (JNCC) on a UK wide conservation strategy. Several organisations will be attending. Those attending have seen a draft of the strategy to inform the workshop. We have been asked to agree to confidentiality agreement, so only able to share with those attending the workshop at the moment, so we are limited in how much we can share on the strategy and from our attendance. We have been putting together comments on the draft strategy to inform our feedback on the day.

AK will also be joining to get an idea of how this could look for seabirds. Also interested in finding out more about approaches to bycatch (monitoring, mitigation etc.). Wanting to understand how we can join up between cetaceans and other taxa to make sure there is a plan to join up of those too, and increase coverage (Currently less than 1% reported in UK).

*UPDATE: Marine Scotland have confirmed we are able to share the draft document among marine group members. We have also been invited to provide written comment by* ***Friday 4th May****. Sarah Dolman, Cecily Spelling (WCL) and Emilie Devenport will coordinate member input into this.*

WCL Bycatch group have produced two briefings on bycatch (1 longer one for Defra to be given next week, and a shorter one for MPs). Because this is a cetacean strategy, should make reference to cross taxa bycatch. Want to get some targets in their – monitoring bycatch, even just starting with easier fisheries and building up to the rest.

WWF recent report on REM can be a positive way forward with this.

**5. Planning**

Sea Scotland

2 day marine conference, in its third year looking at marine planning, this year focusing on communities and young people. Registration has been open for around a month and sign ups increasing. The steering group are aiming for a significant chunk of delegates to be youth and community representatives – almost filled youth quota, have had some community sign ups though harder for some groups to get there. ED/AL will be attending FFI Coastal Communities Network meeting at end of May and will be an opportunity to gather community input/comment on conference topics. The [programme](http://www.seascotland.scot/conference-2018/programme/) is developing well, and the group are working to develop the workshops for Day 2. All encouraged to promote sign up of those they think should be there. More information on the website <http://www.seascotland.scot/>, or from Emilie.

**ACTION: All to promote Sea Scotland conference, send to those you think should be there.**

CMPP

CD attended CMPP workshop on 30th March. The group put together an initial draft Vision Aims and Guiding Principles document, CD provided initial comment and invited quick comment from the group. That draft paper has gone around the whole partnership, and has also been circulated to the MG.

CMPP have sector specific workshops. CD attended fisheries sector group on behalf of LINK.

Alex Watson Crook been voted as a non-permanent member of the CMPP Board representing SSACN. She also works for SIFT, who wanted to be on the partnership, and were previously voted down. Those present at the time felt there was enough fisheries representation through IFG and CFA. Alex is also on the board of SSACN (who are on the CMPP), they proposed her onto the board of the partnership and that has been accepted in her capacity as SSACN. Howard Wood (Director of COAST) is on the board of the partnership.

NMP

ED coordinated LINK response to NMP review with help of EB and SC. NMP review report has now been published, and Scottish Ministers decided not to replace or amend the NMP at this stage.

WWF submitted a letter to the ECCLR Committee on the NMP asking them to look at the review and mentioned that they had a few concerns. EB also written a blog on NMP: <http://blogs.wwf.org.uk/blog/campaigns/scotland/is-scotlands-national-marine-plan-fit-for-purpose/>

Robin (WWF) is trying to sort a meeting for EB/ED to talk with clerks from ECCLR Committee. We will try to convince them to look at this and provide more information on PMF and other work coming down the line.

EB/ED can share in advance when that meeting is for members to have the opportunity to input if they like to.

AK – appeared on panel for Crown Estate Scotland Bill 17/4/18 as RSPB on behalf of LINK. Part of the powers of that bill is devolution of crown estate assets (including seabed and foreshore) to local authorities. AK pointed out to the committee, that a few years down the line from the NMP is that there isn’t a single regional marine plan established. Flagged that before we devolve those powers, we need to determine what we want those coastal seas used for first. Priority needs to be developing regional marine plans, before deciding how we lease those assets. This will help for consistency.

Shetland Marine Plan should be on future agendas – that will be coming along soon. The development of the Shetland draft Marine Plan, going to seek approval from ministers in Q1 2019, and to go to consultation in Q2 2019. Not a single plan in place before Q4 2019.

**6. Fisheries**

Seafloor Integrity Report

Seafloor Integrity Report – commissioned a while ago to look at the health of the seabed, and how you define what sustainable activity is. Now looking at packaging the report. ED been in touch with designer about visuals for SFI report. Draft visuals (i.e. colouring, design, format etc.) have been shared to the Marine Group. ED asking for feedback to pass on to the designer in the next week

**ACTION: All to provide feedback to ED on draft SFIR visuals by Friday 27th April.**

PMF review

Draft PMF document sent around before the meeting summarises the options for that we understand MS are considering in their SEA. It also includes the 3nm suggestion and notes on Open Seas mapping work. Table outlines pros, concerns. Opportunities for comment on those approaches.

86% of the known extent of the features that MS are considering fall within 0.5nm of the coast. Another proposal to put a buffer around every PMF record, some outside 0.5nm. The third proposal is to freeze current fishing footprint.

Questions – what is our definition of risk? Do we treat all 11 the same – are there some that are more susceptible than others. ‘Significantly impacting national status of pmfs’. Depends on their conservation status in our waters, and coverage in MPA network.

Stakeholder workshop will now be on 14th May for PMF work and inshore MPA management measures (T2).

CD take is combination of all of the above, or an additional option that is not there yet. Beyond 0.5nm, + records that we know will be outside 0.5nm, + freezing footprint.

RL suggested that combined approach likely to look like 3nm.

Supposedly fishing footprint currently doesn’t overlap with PMFs. There will be fishing beyond where they think the current footprint is. Not clear how this option will help to improve the marine area. AK/RL don’t think we should have anything to do with this option.

SIFT/COAST likely to be interested in this. Would be really interesting to find out current thinking from their organisations.

Principles – 1. Need the precautionary principle built in. we know little about the distribution of these things. 2. We want scope for recovery, given appalling state of seabed at the moment. If what we are being given doesn’t account for that we should be asking for more.

Could link with the continuity bill.

Phil OS modelling looking at water movement on the seabed. Contentious in areas that are less naturally disturbed. Depending on how you set the parameters of that model/low or high water movement. Go fish areas are quite far offshore. OS proposing their approach as an alternative for modelling PMF records. We understand Phil is going to try and get this approach published/peer reviewed – though not likely to be in time for this first workshop or consultation.

RL - Aquaculture likely to have a cumulative impact on them, as well as other industry activity

ACTION: All to look at PMF document put together by EB/ED by Friday 4th May.

Worth having a meeting before that workshop on 14th May – to get our heads together, based on comment on that document.

**Aquaculture**

Aquaculture subgroup met on the 10th April to recap on recent LINK evidence sessions and look at subgroup work. Aquaculture members have recently provided evidence for ECCLR and RECC inquiry into salmon farming.

SC was in a session this morning with regulators. 3 more sessions to go in RECC inquiry. The deadline for written evidence is 27th April.

The subgroup had been working on a policy document that became a briefing (taking out the recommendations) to make it useable and acceptable to all. The subgroup have decided to keep it as an internal document. The ECCLR committee publication was so strong that it covered all our points.

There is still SEPA review coming up. They have sectoral workshops coming up in May/June. This is when they will release their sectoral plan, and consultation to feed into that. Not sure how the workshops will respond to that.

SEPA and RECC inquiry have been main focus. Haven’t had time to look at forward plan for the subgroup. Once these things are finished, the subgroup will take a step back and look at next steps, how they will respond to specific applications and case studies, how they will respond to other work. Next meeting set for early June.

CD – MCS have internal meeting next week to decide their approach on ECCLR report. Suggested we put something short out saying we support the recommendations from ECCLR, in written evidence.

Approach to RECC call for evidence: Each member will submit their own evidence. SC will submit a joint response that will respond back to ECCLR Committee report.

Aquaculture position on ECCLR inquiry report

GLA S&TCS campaigning in 2013 led to ECCLR/RECC inquiry. Couldn’t have imagined how punchy the ECCLR report is and on the point. Thought it would be helpful for as many groups as possible sign up to a moratorium while ECCLR report is fresh.

ECCLR Report wording – says that current expansion will be unsustainable if it goes ahead as is.

GLA – ECCLR saying that if it goes ahead will be unsustainable, as they won’t be able to address these issues. Would like LINK to consider whether there are enough groups in the MG to back a moratorium pending outcome of RECC inquiry. On basis that Aq industry won’t be able to adopt these measures quickly, and so moratorium would prevent further damage until we can adopt alternative measures/ensure it isn’t damaging.

Expect RECC final report before summer recess – difficult to tell what this will look like. Likely something on ADDs. Regulators going in all sorts of directions. SEPA DZR. Not sure what the timetable for second stage is.

RL – important to stress that there are a lot of applications to go ahead at the moment. Seems that groups are trying to get these sites approved before changes come through

SC – although regulators were talking about different things, they all agreed that there needs to be an overarching strategy for aquaculture going forward.

An opportunity to put something very persuasive in before RECC output. The decision from the marine group would be to inform Aq subgroup response to RECC Committee.

SC – SWT would not be able to support a moratorium. Would need to say that further growth needs to consider mitigation measures.

ECCLR has stated that the status quo is not an option, the industry is currently causing damage. Any likely expansion is likely to cause irrecoverable damage. There hasn’t been a precautionary approach applied and this needs to be applied.

DV – If LINK generally are saying that we want to have a precautionary approach that would mean that the science and ability to say that something is sustainable is not quite in place yet. The Precautionary Principle requires us to stop, put something in place, then start.

SWT support genuine precautionary approach – if you have genuine precautionary approach you shouldn’t have a need for moratorium. You would know the risks, and prepare for it/measure for it.

What are member’s views in response to the ECCLR Committee.

S&TCS – moratorium on expansion

NTS – moratorium on expansion

SWT – can’t support moratorium

MCS – tbc, meeting on 24th

WDC – moratorium

HWDT – tbc internal discussion needed

RSPB – tbc internal

WWF Scotland – tbc internal, need comment from Piers (away until 24th)

RZSS – tbc internal discussion needed (does it include closed containment?)

**ACTION: All to pursue internal discussion to come back to marine group by Friday 20th April, Tuesday 24th absolute final.**

DV- If we have mentioned at any time that we support a precautionary approach and the evidence suggests that the way we implement precautionary principle – this means that we need to stop an activity until it is fixed. This is important to consider previous LINK use of precautionary principle, to be consistent with legislation. Important that we are consistent to cover our backs politically too.

*UPDATE: DV shared the EC Communication on the application of the precautionary principle:* [*https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52000DC0001&from=EN*](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52000DC0001&from=EN)

*The interpretation by the European Commission is consistent with international law/agreements, eg. Rio Summit.*

*The bottom line is that the precautionary principle comes into play when there is an identified risk, uncertainty about the full risk and implications but it is deemed (and this is a political decision) that there is a need to act and not let the situation fester. As the text reads: “The appropriate response in a given situation is thus the result of an eminently political decision, a function of the risk level that is "acceptable" to the society on which the risk is imposed.”*

AK – if our understanding of impacts of AQ hasn’t changed since 2002, and report is saying current activity is unsustainable we should draw on that.

WDC – we should endorse the ECCLR report. ADDs not being controlled appropriately. Moratorium of expansion + cleaning up of the industry.

Press – NTS likely to put out our press statement.

LINK could put out our statement as press statement when we submit evidence.

**7. Other**

Brexit

SG believe there should be consent over consultation in line with Devolution settlement. LINK would agree with that. There is another meeting with JNCC next week. We seem to be progressing Clause 11. They would then need to submit suggestions to House of Commons to take things forward.

2 issues

1. Full retention of EU law
2. Consultation of the principles and environmental governance gap – environmental courts. We have this to some extent in Scotland

Further delay from Gove’s new body that would address governance gap. These are meant to be England only, not of direct concern to us. Interesting to see what Defra does with that. Agriculture white paper and fisheries bill. UK colleagues are working on position paper on fisheries bill, ScotLINK are doing Agriculture one.

Link have been having discussions with SG. That if we have bill at UK level, can we bring in some of the wider approaches (sustainability articles, preambles). UK law doesn’t really have preambles, whereas Scottish law sometimes does. How do we make sure that the fisheries Bill has those provisions, so that we can build that into management system and use that as our guide. Similarly, will be saying that agriculture should have something similar, land money for public goods.

LINK met with Mike Russel yesterday (17/4/18). Calum, Emma and Daphne.

Fisheries white paper delayed to end of May or June. Agriculture bill seems to be put through first. Not definite could slip further, we don’t know. Defra proceeding on a ‘no deal’ basis – that is what they are being told to do. Would there be anything in place by 2020.

General principles in face of fisheries bill – key UK ask, should help to inform what the devolved administrations look to do.

CD/EC meeting Caro tomorrow, meet and greet and get an update on their thinking on fisheries Bill.

Mike Russell – you only introduce primary legislation if you want to change policy. CD raised point we don’t want to throw away CFP totally – doing good things.

MR talked about 5 steps – what we need, approved concept, looking at dispute resolution mechanisms. We thought this was for future policy. He felt this was for banking existing legislation.

White paper and fisheries bill

Because of transition period – we might see the white paper but not fisheries bill.

WWF/RSPB report about governance gap released before Easter. Key conclusion that we need multiple institutions. Doesn’t put forward particular recommendations but talks to it all.

Latest update at Brexit strategy meeting. Parallel process response to the white paper.

**ACTION: ED to get RSPB report about governance gap to send around group. Via GUK report.**

**8. AOB**

Crown Estate Scotland Bill

AK gave evidence on behalf of LINK, RSPB. AK/RL submitted written evidence. Available online: <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11465>

Bill seeks to include ecosystem objectives and crown estate assets to Scottish ministers with some issue around sustainable development. Positive and good bill. Some of the aspects around it will be discussed at sea Scotland.

**10. LINK MARINE Public facing strategy for consultations 2018.**

New tab for consultations created on shared google doc: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FIefkDvXOmX25MU-sUXKoPW7zSp7CZb-KFQHRqX6mg4/edit#gid=1794455736>

A table will be created on the Sea Scotland website that outlines what consultations are happening this year, when, and when consultations are live, they will link to the consultation documents, an introductory video and blog.

Blog and introduction video for each consultation to include:

* The features within the MPA/ sites.
* How the sites fit within the network
* How the area is used/data collected?
* What activity goes on in the area?
* Encourage response (link to consultations, key points)

We should consider how monitoring of MPAs fits within the activities below.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Consultation** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** | **Aug** | **Sept** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
| **Loch Carron** | consultation | consultation | consultation | To 13th |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **MPA T2** |  |  | **14th -** MS workshop. Follow up meeting - *tbc* | consultation | consultation | consultation |  |  |  |  |
| **PMF** |  |  | **14th -** MS workshop. Follow up meeting - *tbc* | Consultation (sustainability appraisal – public) | Consultation  (sustainability appraisal – public) |  |  | MS Meeting? | Consultation 2 (proposed measures – public) | Consultation 2 (proposed measures – public) |
| **SPA** |  |  |  |  | SEA Consultation? | SEA Consultation? | SEA Consultation? |  |  |  |
| **4ncMPAs** |  |  |  | SEA | SEA | SEA |  | MS meeting? | consultation | consultation |
| **Dolphin & porpoise conservation strategy** |  | **19-20 –** MS/UK workshop |  |  |  |  |  | Consultation? | Consultation? | Consultation? |
| **Other events** |  |  |  | **9th June –** SNP conference  **20-21st** June Sea Scotland  **Mid-June:** SC 100 day Challenge | SC 100 day Challenge.  Recess | SC 100 day Challenge. Recess | SC 100 day Challenge |  |  |  |

**Table of expected consultation timeline**