

**JNCC MARINE PROTECTED AREAS TECHNICAL GROUP (FORMERLY
MARINE NATURA PROJECT GROUP) FINAL MINUTES
FIRST MEETING (ALSO REFERRED TO AS 22ND MN2KPG MEETING)
10th SEPTEMBER 2009 JNCC, MONKSTONE HOUSE
FINAL MINUTES**

Present (around table):

John Goold (JG) - JNCC (Chair)
 Ian Saunders (NS) (Secretary) - JNCC
 Lynda Warren (LW)
 Annabelle Aish (AA) -JNCC
 Nicola Church (NJC) - JNCC
 Charlotte Johnston (CJ) - JNCC
 Beth Stoker (BS) - JNCC
 Mark Tasker (MT) -JNCC
 Peter Clements (PC) - NE

Video-conferencing:

Kirsty Lindenbaum (KL) - CCW
 Matthew Murphy (MM) - CCW
 Kirsten Ramsey (KR) - CCW
 Maggie Hatton-Ellis (MHE) - CCW
 Joe Breen (JB) - DOENI
 Kirsten Kober (KK) - JNCC
 Sonia Mendes (SM) - JNCC
 Jim Reid (JR) - JNCC
 Andy Webb (AW) - JNCC
 Linda Wilson (LJW) - JNCC
 Nigel Buxton (NB) - SNH
 Katie Gillham (KG) - SNH
 Carol Hume (CH) - SNH

Adam Cole-King (ACK) - CCW

Apologies:

Therese Cope (JNCC)
 Jamie Davies (JNCC)
 Neil Golding (JNCC)
 Amy Ridgeway (JNCC)
 Natasha Lough (CCW)
 Jen Ashworth (NE)

Sian Whitehead (CCW)
 Kate Bull (NE)
 Hugh Edwards (NIEA)
 Howard Platt (NIEA)
 Ian Bainbridge (SG)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

JG welcomed the attendees. Apologies were noted as above.

JG welcomed everyone to the 1st MPA Technical Group meeting (a progression from the former MN2KPG). He said that he was aware that a few people had been asking about the changed structure of this group but as far as he was concerned it was business as usual; this is a Director-owned meeting with country agency and JNCC representatives. There will be a different tier as a sub-group (non-executive representation, chaired by Lynda Warren), and that issues needs to be considered that include non-Natura MPA discussions. There was little scope for further discussion on this issue, particularly as there were problems with the VC connections.

2. Minutes of the 21st Marine Natura Project Group Meetings and matters arising

Additional comments on the minutes from the 21st meeting were provided by NB for information. A summary of action points from the previous meetings and outcomes is provided below.

Action Point Number	Action	Outcome

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20.4	CCW and SNH to provide concerns in writing regarding the Conservation Objectives wording. Following a replacement for Paolo a meeting is to be arranged between key people within the next 6 months (by August, 2009) with Lynda Warren as chair, with a resulting paper to be considered by the Project Group.	Ongoing
21.1	Carol Hume to get clarification on who authorizes consultation to begin on Scottish sites, i.e. UK or Scottish ministers	Completed Following discussions with Phil Alcock at SG it has been confirmed that SG have full devolved responsibility for Natura in Scottish inshore waters (to 12nm). Therefore the process is for SNH to submit site selection documents for new Natura sites directly to SG. Scottish Ministers then decide whether to take the site forward to consultation and would inform Defra and JNCC of this decision. Following consultation Scottish Ministers will decide whether the site should be submitted to Europe. If the site becomes a cSAC (a location approved by Government for submission to the European Commission) it would be submitted to Defra and JNCC to act upon the submission to Europe.
21.2	John Goold and Charlotte Johnston to raise above question of who has authority to begin consultation on Scottish sites at the next UK MPA Policy Group meeting on June 26.	Completed In agreement with above
21.3	Nigel Buxton to ask Scottish Government how progression of sites to address the insufficiencies highlighted at the Atlantic Bio-geographic Moderation seminar will work in detail at their next SNH/SG liaison meeting.	Completed Whilst the issues relating to Scotland from the Moderation meeting may be identifiable, the specific details of how they should be implemented are still being developed. Further discussions with Scottish Government are anticipated in the near future and a verbal update on the current situation will be given at the next meeting (MN2KPG22 – Sept 10)
21.4	Charlotte Johnston to distribute a table of conclusions from the Atlantic Bio-geographic moderation seminar	Completed
21.5	All relevant project group members are encouraged to read the Offshore SPAs Paper and return comment to Andy Webb and Kirsten Kober	Completed Comments received and incorporated
21.6	Nigel Buxton to inform Amy Ridgeway when the Scottish SPA sites have been authorised by the SG minister for sending to Europe to enable the updating of a	Ongoing This issue is still progressing. The Consultation Reports for 30 out of the 31 proposed SPA marine extensions are now with the Scottish Government, awaiting ministerial decision. The final single site

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	shapefile of all the UK SPA sites, maintained at JNCC.	report is due to SG imminently. Once that has occurred it will be clear how to proceed on these 31 proposals, but only then there will be any requirement to update files. However in that situation the person in SNH to contact for the relevant Shape files is Marlaina Pickering (01463 725117) in our Geographic Information Group. The Group will be updated on the precise situation at the next meeting (MN2KPG22_Sept10).
21.7	All relevant group members to send comments to Andy Webb on the SPA boundaries for common scoter and red-throated diver methodology paper	Completed Comments were fed through CSG
21.8	All agencies to update their plans when the MN2KPG_Plan document is circulated by Therese Cope. The document is circulated 1 month before a meeting. Updated documents to be returned to TC. This document is used to advise Committee	Completed
21.9	JNCC to provide inter-sessional information on Pisces Reef to the MN2KPG group for comment.	Ongoing It was agreed by Neil Golding and Therese Cope that due to the site progression timetable (and as such other priorities), the Pisces Reef site SAC SAD will not be available until the February 2010 MPA Technical Group meeting.
21.10	John Goold to speak to Scottish Executive regarding the SAC progression process, i.e. clarification on whether Scottish sites are advised to SG or to Defra	Completed In agreement with 21.1. and 21.2 above
21.11	Carol Hume to request permission for JNCC to have the dSAC boundaries information for a shapefile of all UK SAC sites which JNCC maintains and is publicly available.	Completed CH asked Phil Alcock at SG about this request and they would be content for boundary information to be provided to JNCC once a site is a pSAC i.e. a location approved by Scottish Government for consultation as a possible site).
21.12	CH to seek clarification of the statement made by David Mallon about seals at the moderation meeting.	Completed CH asked SG about this and they do not think such a statement was made at the moderation meeting / there must have been a mis-understanding. In contrast SG are fully aware that there is a need for further assessment with regard to the scientific reserve on feeding areas as there is not enough data on this aspect.
21.13	Charlotte Johnston and Carol Hume to organise a liaison between Sue McQueen (JNCC) and Jennifer Ryles (SNH) on FOI requests to produce some guidance to be discussed at the	Completed

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	next meeting.	
21.14	Carol Hume to send comments on the Conservation Objectives wording to Charlotte Johnston and Annabelle Aish	Ongoing -corresponds with AP 20.4, above.
21.15	Carol Hume to contact Annabelle Aish for discussion on the Ecological Coherence methodology paper at a later date	Completed

3. EU and UK Marine working groups

3.1. Update on European marine Natura

CJ briefly reported on follow-up from Galway meeting. There have not been any other EC Natura 2000 meetings since the last MN2KPG/MPA Technical Group meeting (May 2009).

3.2. Update on activity of UK Marine Biodiversity Policy Steering Group

JG updated the group on the last meeting. The agenda was dominated by the MCZ network guidance. CJ plans to give a presentation at the next meeting for offshore SACs, SAC network and SPAs.

3.3. Update on activity of UK MPA Policy Group

BS updated the group on the Bills in Scotland and England/Wales/NI and on SACs and SPAs. JNCC is looking into setting up an annual stakeholder forum.

4. Selection of SACs for Annex I habitats

4.1. UK SAC work programme for forthcoming sites (MPATG1_MN2KPG22_1_MN2KPlan

4.2. Papers regarding SACs to Project Group and to JNCC Committee/ Agency Councils (MPATG1_MN2KPG22_2_Papers)

4.3. Update on survey plans

The above three agenda items were discussed together. CJ updated the group on offshore SACs. CH updated the group on Scottish sites. The group was informed that there will be no more survey apart from a possible follow-up survey on a potential reef area to the east of the main East Mingulay reef complex. PC updated the group on work in inshore English waters.

There were no SAC papers for information or discussion.

There are no survey plans at present apart from a CCW/JNCC collaborative survey in NW Anglesey planned for October 2009 to look for *Modiolus modiolus* beds.

4.4. December Committee annual update paper on the progress towards completion of the network of SACs for Annex I habitat

CJ informed the group of the December Committee paper plan, i.e. the annual paper summarizing the current situation of and future plans towards completing the N2K network. Issues with the plans were discussed and it was proposed that CJ and MM discuss further outside the meeting and then have a meeting with the following participants; Carol Hume, Kirsten Ramsey, Joanna Ridgewell/Michael Coyle and Joe Breen.

AP 22.1 Charlotte Johnston and Matt Murphy to discuss issues relating to the December Committee ‘Completing the network’ paper and then organise a meeting with the following participants Carol Hume, Kirsten Ramsey, Joanna Ridgewell/Michael Coyle and Joe Breen for further discussion

4.5. Conservation Objectives Update

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AA updated the group on the wording of the conservation objectives. CCW and SNH have some issues with the paper and will discuss further with AA.

AP 22.2 Carol Hume and Mike Cumplin (CCW) to send comments to/discuss issues with Annabelle Aish concerning the wording of the conservation objectives.

AP 22.3 Therese Cope to follow-up why the SACRep paper was listed amongst other papers, but not discussed. If SNH have further comments these will be forwarded to Therese Cope.

4.6. Red Bay SAC SAD and Conservation Objectives (MPATG1_MN2KPG22_6_RedBaySAD; MPATG1_MN2KPG22_7_RedBayConsObjs)

JB updated the group on the Red Bay SAC SAD. He queried the designation process. They are going to formal consultation on 22 September 2009 via NIEA. They have had approval from the Northern Ireland minister and Westminster. It was suggested to put a caveat in the conservation objectives to say that the typical species listed may not be a definitive list. The group were informed that the stony reef feature within the site has not had a full assessment as it is typical of the surrounding habitat. It was suggested that the stony reef feature could be listed but graded a D and if the representativity criteria is a D-grade there is no need to take this further in terms of writing an assessment (as stated in the EU dataform guidance notes). JB informed the group that the conservation objectives will be modified to include aggregates.

5. Selection of SACs for Annex II species

5.1. Seals at sea contract - review of application for selection criteria for cetaceans

CJ informed the group that the contract not moved forward yet. It was mentioned that there is data from the south west but not for the whole of the UK.

CJ asked the group whether it was worthwhile JNCC pursuing the seals at sea contract and clarified that this would involve the following:-

- i) Collate all the data to date and review in terms of whether it can identify hotspots at sea and / or regular occurrence of seals in certain areas
- ii) Is the above data suitable to review the criteria for selecting SACs?

NB. The previous review was undertaken in 2002.

CH feels that more data is required and agreed that it would be worthwhile for JNCC to progress the seals at sea contract

CH gave an update on Scottish sites, particularly regarding the Sound of Barra. This site is now under consideration by Scottish Government and is currently at dSAC status.

5.2. Update on progress on outcomes from Galway Atlantic Moderation meeting

CJ updated the group. Defra will report to the EC in October with queries highlighted at Galway. There is some uncertainty with the process as to how JNCC/SNH/CCW/NE/NIEA will feed into it. With regard to Annex II species it is proposed that JNCC will progress on a UK basis.

ACK informed the group that there are discussions taking place between CCW and WAG regarding sites for harbour porpoise. It was stated that there are concerns with the grading for harbour porpoise for the outer wash sites. The cetacean monitoring programme was discussed and it was proposed that Mandy McMath (CCW) would report progress on Welsh cetacean work to the Marine Mammal working group and to the MPA Technical group.

JG informed the group that a paper on forward plans to progress the outcomes from the meeting is going to Committee in September.

An update on the situation of lampreys, sea caves, dolphins and seals was also given to the group.

AP 22.4 Mandy McMath to report progress on Welsh cetacean work to Marine Mammal working group and MPA Technical group

6. Consultation, Advice and Management of SACs/SPAs with marine components

6.1. Update on SAC consultation plans

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PC informed the group that informal dialogue has begun on the six inshore dSACs. The two inshore/offshore Wash joint sites are going to informal dialogue next week (w/c 14 September 2009). The expected date for all eight sites to go out to formal consultation is 26 November 2009.

6.2. Update on SPA consultation plans

NB updated the group on Scottish sites. The consultation reports on the proposed seabird colony extensions which have been well discussed at previous meetings have been forwarded to Scottish Government for ministerial consideration. There is nothing current to report from NI.

7. Timetable of work for marine SPAs

7.1. General update on marine SPA work and forward timetable

(MPATG1_MN2KPG20_1_MN2KPlan; MPATG1_MN2KPG22_2_MN2K Papers)

JR updated the group on JNCC's plans and papers. The paper, 'Draft JNCC Marine SPA Team Work Plan' has been updated since last UKMPA policy group. JR stressed that there was still an action from the June UKMPA policy group for the Devolved Administrations to provide a clear policy framework and timetable for the marine SPA work.

Inshore: Aiming to survey selected areas of Shetland and Outer Hebrides this winter, and to carry out SPA boundary analysis for selected sites

Terns: The first season of tern fieldwork went well.

Breeding red-throated divers: Aiming to possibly produce a Committee paper on recommendations / advice for Sept 2010

Breeding shags: considering contracting out a pilot analysis of existing data

Offshore: Analysis of the offshore work (as far out as the British fisheries limit) has gone to CSG. The result was that it required peer review. BTO and RSPB are both looking at it. Comments are still needed from CCW and NE. CSG are meeting again in November to discuss way forward. Aiming for a March 2010 Committee paper.

Balearic shearwaters: First season of fieldwork completed this year, and aim to do second season next year.

MM gave an update from the CCW perspective. ACK stated that the colony extensions are going ahead and they anticipate consultation on at least 1 but possibly all 3 by the end of the financial year/ early next Spring.

NB added to the update on Scottish work as JR's update covered SNH's work. Further updating of the above paper will take place over the next two quarters. Work is currently progressing to complete the MoA to cofund the work of 2010 and progress bids for further work in 2010/2011 within SNH.

PC updated the group on NE's work and informed the group that Alan Drewitt is away and so it will be 10 days before NE can respond to the above paper. One comment concerned table 1 and the fact that the tern work is not included. JR clarified that was because the table referred only to inshore work. There was a short discussion with ACK and AW about the fact that the Camarthen Bay report is not yet published. PC confirmed that colony extensions are not being progressed at present but will be looked at in future. There was a question regarding tern work in England and possible departure from the agreed UK wide modelling approach. PC confirmed that the possible additional work that NE was considering regarding the tern work would be compatible with the agreed JNCC programme of modelling work.

AP 22.5 Peter Clements to email comments on SPA workplan paper to Jim Reid

7.2. Agency updates on SPA work programmes

PC gave an update on NE's work. MM updated the group on the success of the tern work in Cemlyn Bay. JR/NB updated the group earlier (7.1)

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7.3. Methodological issues in the JNCC analysis of the numbers and distribution of seabirds within the British Fishery Limit aimed at identifying areas that qualify as possible marine SPAs (MPATG1_MN2KPG22_4_MethodsMarineSPAs)

JR updated the group on the paper. MM has no issues apart from the fact that there is limited coverage in Cardigan Bay due to a lack of data, although the paper is compassionate towards these data gaps. JR informed the group that comments from the peer review will be circulated to groups. NB is presently returning Scottish comments to JR. ACK is talking separately to JR about organising a meeting with the RSPB. JR stated that England needs to engage with the RSPB regarding hotspots.

AP 22.6 Jim Reid to send peer review comments to Therese Cope to circulate to group

8. Marine Protected Areas: non-Natura work

8.1. Update on MCZ process

AA gave an update on the 2 MPA/MCZ projects. The MCZ project contains 4 regional projects, one of which, Finding Sanctuary has its stakeholder groups established. The other regional projects hope to have their stakeholder groups in place by the end of 2009. JNCC will lead on international stakeholder engagement. The MPA project that concerns Scottish waters is still recruiting staff. Wales, is at present, establishing the most appropriate way to engage stakeholders.

KL updated the group on CCW's work. WAG are about to launch their MPA strategy and are setting up groups.

KG gave an update on the Scottish guidelines for identifying MPAs.

9. Any other business

There was no other business

Summary of action points

Action point number	Action	Action by	Action on
22.1	Charlotte Johnston and Matt Murphy to discuss issues relating to the December Committee 'Completing the network' paper and then organise a meeting with the following participants Carol Hume, Kirsten Ramsey, Joanna Ridgewell/Michael Coyle and Joe Breen for further discussion	December, 2009	Charlotte Johnston and Matt Murphy
22.2	Carol Hume and Mike Cumplin to send comments to/discuss issues with Annabelle Aish	February, 2010	Carol Hume, Mike Camplin
22.3	Therese Cope to follow-up why the SACRep paper was listed amongst other papers, but not discussed. If SNH have further comments these will be forwarded to Therese Cope.	February, 2010	Carol Hume
22.4	Mandy McMath to report progress on Welsh cetacean work to Marine Mammal working group and MPA Technical group	February, 2010	Mandy McMath
22.5	Peter Clements to email comments on the SPA workplan paper to Jim Reid	November, 2009	Peter Clements
22.6	Jim Reid to send peer review comments to Therese Cope to circulate to group	February, 2010	Jim Reid