Cromer Shoal MCZ Project Board

Terms of Reference

Context

Natural England have advised Eastern IFCA that rugged chalk (raised structures of exposed chalk) is damaged by potting. The pots that are most damaging to the rugged chalk are those left in the water for longer periods (e.g. lost gear). Natural England have also advised that, whilst incidents of damage to rugged chalk by normal potting activity are individually small, they accumulate into a level of impact that hinders the conservation objectives of the site.

Rather than needing to take a precautionary approach, in which any interactions between potting and complex outcropping chalk would need to be stopped with immediate effect, Natural England advised that an Adaptive Risk Management (ARM) approach would be more suitable for this fishery. Under an ARM approach, appropriate management measures would be developed through an iterative process over the coming years whereby management and research inform each other in a feedback loop.

The issue of pots left in the water for long periods, such as lost pots, is required sooner and management to enable fishing effort to be monitored may also be required.

A Steering Group was initially established to coordinate and oversee the ARM approach. It subsequently became apparent that it would be more appropriate to have a Project Board focussed upon project direction and management, Task and Finish Groups to address research and management matters and a Stakeholder Group to support active societal engagement with the project.

Purpose

The purpose of the Project Board is to manage the adaptive risk management approach to commercial fishing activity on rugged chalk within the MCZ.

Membership

Senior Responsible Owner – Julian Gregory, CEO Eastern IFCA

Senior User - Jon Butler, Head of Operations, Eastern IFCA

Senior Suppliers

- Conservation advice - Georgie Roberts, Natural England
- Fishing activity assessment – Judith Stoutt, Eastern IFCA
- Research – Ron Jessop, Eastern IFCA
- Management – Luke Godwin, Eastern IFCA
- Fishing industry participation - John Davies / Nicola Webster
- Stakeholder Group Facilitator – Alice Tebb, Agents of Change

Project Manager – Stephen Thompson, Eastern IFCA

Overall Function

The broad remit of the Project Board ('the board') is to support the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) in providing overall direction and management for the project. However, established project management methodology makes it clear that the project board is not a democracy. The SRO remains the key decision maker and is ultimately accountable for the project's success. This reflects the functions of the primary organisations engaged in the project _but_ in recognition of the importance of collaborative working in ARM, the SRO will _seek consensus wherever possible_.

In order to progress key workstreams Task and Finish Groups will be established. The board will approve the composition of and objectives for these groups and will monitor progress and ultimately sign off on completed work.

In order to ensure all opportunities regarding the project's success are explored, the board will receive and assess information and evidence from the Stakeholder Group and any other legitimate source. Recommendations and suggestions that are accepted by the board will be applied to the project in the most appropriate way, which may include seeking further information and directing the Task and Finish Groups to engage with Stakeholder Group members as required.

Role Specific Functions

The board provides the SRO with stakeholder and technical input to decisions affecting the project, but ultimate authority and accountability reside with the SRO, who takes executive responsibility for decisions relating to the project.

The structure and roles of the Project Board are broadly in line with established project management principles but have been adapted to suit the nature of this particular project and the ARM approach.

For the purposes of this project the term 'user' reflects the ongoing operational and management functions of Eastern IFCA, which includes consideration of the perspective of the fishing industry as users of the MCZ whose activity is the subject of ARM.   The term 'supplier' reflects the technical and operational inputs required to deliver ARM.

The **Senior Responsible Officer** is ultimately accountable for project success. To maximise the chances of success the interests of both those who specify the business requirement and those providing the products or services to meet the business requirement are represented on the board.

The responsibilities of the **SRO** (as chair of the board) include:

- appointing a project manager, agreeing a remit and delegated authority
- signing off the scope of the project
- agreeing all major plans
- authorising any major deviations from the agreed stage plans
- signing off completion of each stage, including the deliverables, and giving approval to start the next stage

- ensuring the required resources are available
- resolving any conflicts escalated by the project team, supplier or delivery agent
- agreeing the project tolerances for time, quality and cost
- providing overall strategic guidance for the project
- quality assurance of the project
- providing advice and direction to the project manager
- approving all project reports
- resolving deviations from plans or escalating if necessary
- mediating and resolving conflicts between project team, end users, suppliers and delivery agents or escalating if necessary

The responsibilities of the **Senior User** include:

- ensuring the desired outcome of the project is specified
- ensuring progress remains consistent with the user perspectives
- promoting and maintaining focus on the desired project outputs
- ensuring the required user resources are made available
- ensuring products are signed off once completed
- prioritising and contributing user opinions to board decisions
- resolving user requirements and priority conflicts
- providing the user view on follow-on action recommendations
- briefing user management on all aspects of the project
- quality assurance of the project

The responsibilities of the **Senior Suppliers** include:

- agreeing and delivering on objectives for supplier activities
- ensuring progress remains consistent with supplier perspectives
- promoting and maintaining focus on the desired project outputs
- ensuring the supplier resources are made available
- ensuring products are signed off once completed
- contributing supplier opinions on board decisions
- briefing non-technical management on supplier aspects of the project

The **Project Manager** is responsible for delivering the project, with authority and responsibility from the Project Board to run the project on a day-to-day basis.

The responsibilities of the Project Manager, operating within agreed reporting structures, include:

- planning and monitoring the project
- managing the production of the required deliverables
- preparing and maintaining project, stage and exception plans as required

- managing project risks, including the development of contingency plans
- liaison with related projects to ensure that work is neither overlooked nor duplicated
- monitoring overall progress and use of resources, initiating corrective action where necessary
- reporting to the board on project progress through highlight reports and end stage assessments
- liaison with appointed project assurance representatives to assure the overall direction and integrity of the project
- maintaining an awareness of potential interdependencies with other projects and their impact
- adopting and applying appropriate technical and quality strategies and standards
- identifying and obtaining support and advice required for the management, planning and control of the project
- managing project administration
- ensuring that up to date information on the project and its progress is readily accessible to all interested parties utilising appropriate media
- conducting a project evaluation review to assess how well the project was managed
- preparing any follow-on action recommendations

In recognition of the varying stakeholder interests in the project a formal Stakeholder Group has been established and **Stakeholder Group Facilitator** is a specific function on the board that will be undertaken by Agents of Change. The independent nature of the role holder, with direct access to and participation in the board, is intended to demonstrate transparency.

Key elements of the role are to:

- coordinate, host and facilitate the Stakeholder Group
- reflect feedback, from the Stakeholder Group and other appropriate sources to the board
- facilitate connection between the Project Board and knowledgeable Stakeholder Group members and other appropriate sources to support the research and management aims as appropriate

Accountability

Both Natural England and Eastern IFCA have statutory responsibilities and Project Board representatives will be accountable to their respective organisations.

Eastern IFCA are the relevant regulator and are ultimately responsible for decision making with regard to the implementation or not of any management measures.

Notwithstanding the above, the objective is to work collaboratively and wherever possible to achieve consensus.

Administration

Chair and Vice-Chair – these roles will be undertaken by the CEO and Head of Operations from Eastern IFCA

Meeting frequency: six weekly or more frequently as required

Location: Meeting locations will be agreed by the group at the preceding meeting but with remote meetings via Teams being used wherever possible to avoid the requirement for travel

Deputising: In their absence members may nominate a deputy for their organisation/sector to attend in their stead. This will usually be an individual with relevant experience and expertise and sufficiently senior to have a decision making mandate.

Documentation: Minutes to comprise actions and decisions only. A draft version will be circulated to members only and approved notes will be published on the Eastern IFCA website.