

MARINE CONSERVATION ZONE (MCZ) STEERING GROUP

Meeting 5	28th June 2021	2:30pm
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MEETING NOTE

Present		
Julian Gregory	JG	Eastern IFCA
Georgie Roberts	GR	Natural England
John Davies	JD	Fisherman
Kevin Jonas	KJ	Jonas Seafoods
Johnny Seago	JSe	Fisherman
Keith Shaul	KS	Fisherman
Alice Tebb	AT	Agents of Change, Marine Conservation Society
Luke Godwin	LG	Eastern IFCA
Stephen Thompson	ST	Eastern IFCA
Ron Jessop	RJ	Eastern IFCA
Judith Stoutt	JSt	Eastern IFCA
Kristina Gurova	KG	Eastern IFCA
Apologies		
Jon Butler	JB	Eastern IFCA
Nicola Webster	NW	North Norfolk Fisherman's Society

Agenda Item	Key points of discussion; decisions and actions
1. Introductions/ Apologies	Apologies from JB and NW.
2. Notes and actions from previous meeting	<p>Notes of the previous meeting were agreed.</p> <p>ACTION 3: LG to set up Management Task & Finish Group and arrange first meeting. Ongoing: LG to arrange as soon as possible</p> <p>ACTION 4: Management Task & Finish Group to develop objectives for the group for approval of the Steering Group. Complete: Terms of Reference (including objectives) circulated to Steering Group. Objectives drafted for discussion at first Management Task & Finish Group</p> <p>ACTION 14: EIFCA to create data-sharing agreement, aiming for roll-out in early June (ST/LG). Ongoing, being finalised.</p> <p>ACTION 15: Ask IFCOs to speak to JD in relation to wider roll-out (ST) Ongoing and complete.</p> <p>ACTION 16: JB to report back to JG on discussions, including name change, majority (but not unanimous) view that NGOs should not be in the Steering Group, and regarding JG's liaison with AT about how she feels the Agents of Change project could co-ordinate wider stakeholder discussions about the MCZ. Complete. On agenda for today's meeting.</p>

	<p>ACTION 17: EIFCA (LG/KG) to work with NW to develop communications strategy. Ongoing; on agenda for today’s meeting.</p> <p>ACTION 18: *Action taken by EIFCA after meeting, reflecting agreement of need for a timeline although no “owner” was agreed during meeting for this action*: EIFCA to draft timeline for research and management. Ongoing: EIFCA developing flow chart to show relationship between research and management, rather than plan with fixed timelines.</p>
<p>3. Research update (RJ)</p>	<p>RJ described the Research Task & Finish Group (RT&FG)’s outline of workstreams and their drivers, requirement and approach. The four workstreams are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping fishing activity • Mapping sensitive chalk features • Assessing the impact of current fishing practices • Trialling alternative gear technologies and fishing practices. <p>Field work is planned to start in July. ST stated that EIFCA are in contact with Seafish gear technologists in relation to potential gear modifications. JG highlighted that it is a priority for EIFCA to order a new ROV to conduct fieldwork. GR stated that EIFCA are able to borrow NE’s ROV, though it is likely to be underpowered for the Cromer work. JS noted the research workstream outline is similar to the flow chart being developed. AT suggested the outline be presented as a live document, showing what progress has been made and what outputs are visible to stakeholders. JG agreed this idea fits with stakeholder communication objectives.</p>
<p>4. Management update (LG, Management Task & Finish Group co-ordinator)</p>	<p>LG has developed and circulated draft Terms of Reference, including objectives, for consideration. LG thanked JD and GR for their contributions. He stated he has drafted a plan for objective 1a (management of lost gear); it is intended to start to discuss this with the management group soon. JG explained that EIFCA is experiencing considerable workloads, which has unfortunately delayed progress with this group so far. It was AGREED to adopt Management T&FG Terms of Reference in principle subject to any changes. ACTION 19: All send any comments or questions on Terms of Reference to LG.</p>
<p>5. Communications & Engagement</p>	<p>JG set out a proposal to amend the Steering Group as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Replace the Steering Group with a smaller, more agile group called the Project Board that will focus on delivery. To include one fishing industry representative and AT who would provide a link

between the Project Board and the Stakeholder Group.

- b) Establish a wider Stakeholder Group (AT to discuss).

JG emphasised it is important to have fishing industry representatives on both Task & Finish Groups as well as the Project Board and Stakeholder Group. JG proposed to co-ordinate the various meetings and plan them for the year ahead.

AT stated there is a need to collaborate across industry and regulators, but noted there are other knowledgeable, legitimate stakeholders and the new Stakeholder Group would be a way for them to be involved. The meetings would be carefully facilitated and would be run in a similar way to the community groups run by Agents of Change in 2018 and 2019, AT had drafted Terms of Reference for the Stakeholder Group and circulated them just before today's meeting.

ACTION 20: All to review Stakeholder Group Terms of Reference, and send feedback to AT, with a view to agree them at next Project Board meeting.

Concerns were expressed that such a group might become a forum for arguments between extreme views, and that a new group might hinder progress. Fishermen already struggle to attend meetings and would struggle more to attend more meetings.

AT noted the Stakeholder Group meetings would be carefully managed to prevent those with the loudest views dominating. JG acknowledged the need to make progress with the work and explained the Stakeholder Group would provide a mechanism for others to be involved and input without them delaying progress of the Project Board.

JG had spoken to a representative from The Wildlife Trusts who explained they have expertise, knowledge and possible funding available to assist with the MCZ work.

It was observed that there have been instances of the media being used by some to target criticism at fishermen and EIFCA. Having a wider Stakeholder Group will allow a wider audience to understand the real situation and allow them to verify or counter press releases.

AT suggested the organogram be altered to show the Stakeholder Group can be a data mine for the Task and Finish Groups: people are offering help and information to be used in the work. JG noted the value of having a forum where we can listen to wider views and decide what is useful. We want to avoid alienating people.

GR acknowledged fishermen's concerns about more meetings, but suggested it is easier to bring people alongside if we have a Stakeholder Group. GR suggested the Terms of Reference include a note about behaviour; the group felt this would be beneficial.

KJ appreciated the value of having a Project Board to move things forward, and that wider stakeholders need to have an input.

KS noted that EIFCA need to help "the man on the beach" understand that the MCZ issue is as relevant to conservation groups like the RSPB as it is to his livelihood. Fishermen are very fearful that they will be out of business next year. It is realistic that there will only be four boats working out of Cromer in 15 years' time anyway.

After further discussion it was **agreed**:

- Project Board to include one "senior industry user" (Fisherman: JD or NW), one "senior technical research rep" and one "senior technical management rep".
- Research Task & Finish Group to include one fisherman (JSe)
- Management Task & Finish Group to include one fisherman (KS).
- Stakeholder Group to include many fishing industry reps, including KJ.

ACTION 21: EIFCA to circulate revised group structures.

The group discussed the merit of the Stakeholder Group inputting to help understand the socio-economic value of the crab fishery, i.e. its importance to the local economy and community. JD noted that considering this angle could suggest to some fishermen that the fishery is coming to an end. AT noted the intention is to highlight the wider value of the fishery. It is acknowledged that at time of designation the financial impact was not properly

	<p>considered because it was said potting would not be affected. LG noted such information is sought when doing the Impact Assessment that regulators present [to Defra] when proposing new management measures.</p> <p>AT requested suggestions of how the wider industry could engage with the Stakeholder Group. The group noted the difficulties around relationships with some individuals. KJ recognised the merit in having a wider Stakeholder Group to include, as well as conservationists, those such as cafes, shops and guest houses, who could all be affected by MCZ decisions affecting the crab fishery.</p> <p><i>Communications strategy</i></p> <p>JG introduced KG, who then briefly described the draft communications strategy, which has been circulated to the group. KG emphasised that effective communication is extremely important for encouraging collaboration. AT asked if KG is leading on comms now. JG said KG will have a role but it will be a collaborative approach. AT noted that comms should be a two-way process, with commitments to respond and to take points on board. JG noted the Stakeholder Group will be a key part of engagement.</p> <p>ACTION 22: All to review the Communications Strategy (after KG has re-circulated it), with a view to formally adopt it at the next PB meeting.</p>
<p>6. Any other business</p>	<p>ACTION 23: Terms of Reference for Project Board, Research Task & Finish Group and Management Task & Finish Group to be updated by JG, RJ and LG respectively to reflect creation of Stakeholder Group.</p> <p>ACTION 24: EIFCA to place all relevant documents onto MCZ webpage (ST)</p> <p>RJ reported meeting with a local diver/conservationist and The Wildlife Trusts last week. This highlighted to RJ the amount of damage caused by lost pots – greater than what RJ had previously understood. KS suggested that if lost pots are being found by divers, the divers should be buoying them off so they can be located and retrieved. LG noted this is their intention in the future. JD noted that reports of lost gear are not verified.</p> <p>AT asked if fishing industry members are happy for her to contact them outside this meeting. JD confirmed he is. AT noted that an organisation called Ghost Fishing UK are supporting of fishing and could help with lost gear.</p>

7. Next meeting	To be agreed with revised group structure.
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Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Owner
3	LG to set up Management Task & Finish Group and arrange first meeting.	LG
14	EIFCA to create data-sharing agreement, aiming for roll-out in early June (ST/LG).	ST/LG
17	EIFCA (LG/KG) to work with NW to develop communications strategy.	LG/KG/NW
18	<i>* Action taken by EIFCA after meeting, reflecting agreement of need for a timeline although no "owner" was agreed during meeting for this action*</i> EIFCA to draft timeline for research and management	RJ/LG/KG
19	Send any comments or questions on Management Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference to LG.	All
20	Review Stakeholder Group Terms of Reference, and send feedback to AT, with a view to agree them at next Project Board meeting.	All
21	EIFCA to circulate revised group structures.	ST
22	Review the Communications Strategy (after KG has re-circulated it), with a view to formally adopt it at the next PB meeting.	All
23	Terms of Reference for Project Board, Research Task & Finish Group and Management Task & Finish Group to be updated by JG, RJ and LG respectively to reflect creation of Stakeholder Group.	JG, RJ, LG
24	EIFCA to place all relevant documents onto MCZ webpage	ST