

Cromer Shoal MCZ Project Board Meeting Notes

Meeting Time/Date:	15 15 hrs 2 nd February 2023	Venue:	Via Microsoft Teams
Attendees:	Jennifer Love, Natural England Alice Tebb, Agents of Change John Davies, Fishing industry Inge Smith, Eastern IFCA member Julian Gregory, Eastern IFCA Samantha Hormbrey, Eastern IFCA Judith Stoutt, Eastern IFCA Ron Jessop, Eastern IFCA Kristina Gurova, Eastern IFCA	Apologies:	Jon Butler, Eastern IFCA Luke Godwin, Eastern IFCA

The notes from the previous meeting were accepted as true record.

New Actions Arising and Ongoing Actions			
Actions		Owner	Update
<i>New Actions Arising</i>			
2/2/2023	Circulate comms strategy review and recommendations with Project Board	KG	
2/2/2023	All to consider capacity to participate in Crab Festival in Cromer	All	
Ongoing Actions			

23/5/2022	Research & Development T&F Group to update the precautionary rugged chalk area by incorporating the additional data (from ROV and Cefas multibeam study).	SH/RJ	2/2/2023 Ongoing SH has completed a draft proposed update; this has been circulated within the Research T&F Group with a view to getting a final version agreed at next meeting and for this to be shared with the Project Board.
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Completed Actions from Previous Meetings			
Actions		Owner	Update
29/11/2022	All members to consider alternative communications channels available for promoting meetings and ARM work and reaching wider audiences.	All	2/2/2023 This is a separate item on the agenda, KG to present review of Communications Strategy and proposed updates.
29/11/2022	SH to chase up Blue Marine Foundation about the industry meeting to discuss proposals for the natural disturbance study.	SH	2/2/23 Complete . Meeting scheduled for 14/2/23.
29/11/2022	RJ and SH to engage with Bex and come back with recommendation on how to proceed with WT relationship.	RJ/SH	2/2/23 Complete . RJ and SH had a project meeting with Bex and have invited her to attend research group meetings.

Progress updates and new actions and decisions

Societal Value Study

- JSt explained that the idea behind this study is to have something in writing to refer to when we make reference to the social value of the Cromer crab fishery. While we have some values relating to economics, none are available on social value specifically. This study would enable Eastern IFCA to properly reflect the wider value of the fishery to support management decisions.
- Sue Ranger and Ally Fraser from MCS joined call to present their research proposal for the societal value study. SR is the social science lead at MCS and has undertaken a lot of work with Eastern IFCA in relation to the community voice method. AF is a social science researcher who would lead on the study.
- AF presented three main approaches available and noted the pros and cons of each method:
 - 1) Millennium Ecosystem Assessment – This approach examines the different services that different environments can provide to society, including cultural services such as sense of place (enabling a look into how people feel about the Cromer fishery and the social and cultural values that people think about). The proposal is to focus on 4 categories of services. Pros are that the approach would enable us to make use of existing videos that MCS already have; the 4 category approach is achievable within the limited time AF has available; ecosystem services framework is well understood and widely adopted language which could be good for management. Limitations are that some of the complexity and interconnecting relationships of the value may not be captured.
 - 2) Multistep Approach – This approach would look at all the data we currently have and put it into different themes. We could disseminate a survey to varied stakeholders based on the themes, asking stakeholders to value them in terms of how important they are to them. This approach allows you to pick out perceived values of individuals but also across communities. This is a good approach, providing additional detail but it is more complicated and entails additional work. It is also unlikely that we would be able to speak to every stakeholder spoken to during the original desk-based research. SR noted that the big question for the Project Board is how important is it to get an even more diverse set of opinions, going further into the wider community. This wider reach is not something which we have necessarily looked at yet – community voice was more focused on fishing industry and stakeholders closer to them; we have never combined all sources and put them back to the community (a global look at all data collected over a time period).

	<p>3) <u>Building on Justification Theory</u> – This approach would take the interviews and data we currently have and allow us to measure not only what individuals value for themselves, but what they recognise as a value for someone else, organised across 7 themes (do people think the fishery is fairly managed, what do they think about conservation, tradition, emotions, etc.). This approach allows you to pick up on what people value for themselves as well as for others within their community, providing an additional layer to the value study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JG questioned whether there is scope to include a sense of value around the MCZ, not just the fishery or whether that would expand the scope of the study too much. SR noted the question is for Eastern IFCA to decide – whether the unit of measurement is the fishery in the round or the MCZ in isolation. JG responded that it's the fishery in the context of the MCZ. • SR explained that it is also important to think of replicability – it would be good to do something which you would realistically be able to do again. Other linked questions are how useful is this study; how can it be applied; what can change as a result of having this information? • It was observed that this study could feed into Eastern IFCA's impact assessment, but that there is uncertainty about the 'change' it could effect because of the wording of Eastern IFCA's duties in relation to the MCZ under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The key benefit of the study is that it would give Eastern IFCA the confidence to communicate the wide-ranging societal impact of management of the fishery. • JG questioned what resources would be required to carry out the study. SR noted that MCS have the time to use the information they already have. If we wanted to do more, it would need more resource. • Discussion was had around the available capacity to undertake further stakeholder surveys. • DECISION: SR and AF to formalise proposal and for it to be agreed outside of the formal Project Board meeting structure. All members agreed to proceed. • SR and AF left the meeting.
Research & Development Task & Finish Group Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England advice on Eastern IFCA's potting assessment was received on the 9th of January 2023. • Gear Impact Study – Inhouse analysis of 2022 video footage is ongoing. Majority of videos have been annotated and awaiting final QA from RWJ/SH

- Mapping sensitive chalk features – SH completed a 2022 draft review of habitat data using current data to define rugged chalk extent. 2022 video data being analysed by Envision. Results will inform future iterations of map.
- Natural Disturbance Study – Meeting held in December with Project Delivery Group to discuss scientific aspects of the project. A minimum of 3 150 x 150m sites will be required for the study. 16 suitable sites have been identified. SH is writing a summary report detailing each site with rationale for their suitability. These will be shared with the industry in February for their feedback (industry meeting with Blue Marine Foundation and Eastern IFCA scheduled for 14/2/2022).
- Liaison with EA fisheries technical team about scientific equipment they use and whether any could help with Cromer work. EA use Split Beam Bio-base Eco-Sound equipment that could profile the seabed to 1cm resolution. Organising a trial of this equipment later this month. Also borrowed 2 BDS/Backpack devices that can fitted to pots and/or ropes to measure and record movement.
- Fishery mapping – 2022 tracker data have been analysed. Currently running into a few issues with Access/Excel due to the volume of data involved. Seeking external IT support with database
- Trialling adaptive gears – Bought a trial shank in 2022 to test gear adaptations but was unable to deploy. This aspect of the project has possibly been superseded by the Natural Disturbance Study, both in priority of resources and the questions that might need to be answered. Will potentially use the gear during 2023 to study movement of gear during tidal cycles using electronic sensors.
- Chalk Value study – Biosampling stopped over winter period. Looking at ways of incorporating meat yields.
- It was noted that i-VMS information has the potential to strengthen data on fishing activity. This should be available from the MMO and returns should include information on pots hauled in a day. The issue is that roll-out and national implementation is not yet complete.
- It was observed that buoy count data is not entirely reliable as different fishers use different quantities of pots on a shank.
- IS explained of a range finder technique she has used when working with the MMO which provides a rough guide for range. JL commented that this has been tested by Natural England but that it has had limited success.

NE Advice on Eastern IFCA's Potting Assessment:

- JL provided a summary of the advice. More detail is needed in Eastern IFCA's ARM plan before NE can give a final statutory conclusion. Pressures from fishing activity are not likely to be impacting on

	<p>the conservation objectives of the site at the current time, so we can proceed with ARM but additional management is needed. NE advises that a clear plan for management going forward needs to be in place this spring. This is on the understanding that things change and the plan does not need to be rigid. NE is interested in seeing the first suite of proposed management ideas. The crux of the advice is that we need to be showing that the process is moving forward, otherwise we would be open to challenge and may need to take a more precautionary stance. A huge amount of necessary research is ongoing which needs to be supported by iterative management so that we can clearly evidence that risks are being effectively mitigated against.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SH noted that Eastern IFCA has reviewed the advice and is producing an interim report and ARM plan in response. • AT asked about NE's position on the IFCA byelaw making process and whether it would be enough for the byelaw to be 'made', noting that the procedural requirements of the byelaw making process are lengthy and Ministerial sign-off can take years. JL responded that NE is aware of this process and taking a pragmatic view. NE's position is that ideally, some additional voluntary measures would be implemented while the formal process is ongoing. • JG noted that Eastern IFCA may seek legal advice on the use of byelaw 8 (inherited from Eastern Sea Fisheries Joint Committee) to support interim measures. JD expressed understanding that time is of the essence, noting that any action must be carefully considered to avoid alienating fishers. JG observed that Eastern IFCA is conscious of creating unnecessary risk for the industry but that going too slowly could jeopardise ARM, which would require more precaution and a greater impact on fishers. We all want to achieve the right level of environmental protection with the right level of fishing. • JL noted that we are moving in the right direction and that the process is going well but that we need to be able to evidence that we are moving forward at the pace that is required by legislation. NE won't ask for the impossible and is aware that the byelaw will take a while to come into force. We need to focus on using this time to get a first suite of measures ready, to progress the Blue Marine Foundation study and consider adding to the voluntary measures already in place.
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Management Task & Finish Group update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KG gave the Management Update due to LG's absence. • Phase 2 of the informal consultation ended on 30th January, and we are in the process of reviewing the responses received. They will feed into the development of a byelaw to deliver ARM, and the associated impact assessment. • We are on track with bringing a draft byelaw to the Authority at the next meeting on 8th March 2023. We are developing a flexible permitting byelaw to provide a framework for introducing management measures as identified through research.
Communications Strategy review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KG, SH and AT have reviewed the internal comms strategy and made some recommendations going forward. These were agreed by Project Board members. • It was discussed that while social media can be a positive channel for communications, care must be taken on what to post and when (reference to disruptive response to Blue Marine Foundation meeting post). • It was noted that the Crab Festival in Cromer could be a positive opportunity for proactive engagement with the community – 3rd weekend in May. • ACTION: KG to circulate with members for additional comments. • ACTION: All to consider capacity to participate in Crab Festival in Cromer.
Stakeholder Group (SG) update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the last meeting, a face-to-face meeting was held at Northrepps Village Hall on 6th December 2022. It was attended by 35 stakeholders (roughly half were fishers, a quarter council members or related, and the other quarter was made up of an environmental group and associated interests). • The meeting had two main parts. First was a check-in with stakeholders about the ARM process and how they are finding it. Stakeholders more commonly felt that it was going well, particularly with regards to conversations around lost gear and relationships. Stakeholders also felt that a face-to-face meeting was really beneficial. Things that were not going well included that no regulatory management was in place yet and that the definition of the rugged chalk is still unknown. When asked about the future, there were two key areas of concern – 1) uncertainty and; 2) the future viability of the fishing industry. Future opportunities included – 1) informing the community through printed press and 2) the potential opportunity for a constructive result both for fishing and the environment. The second part of the meeting was about Eastern IFCA's informal consultation on the development of a byelaw, including thoughts around current proposals and suggestions about other measures. Agents of Change are writing up the full notes of the meeting to feed into the consultation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the meeting received really positive feedback across all sectors though it was generally agreed that it was a bit too long. All Project Board members congratulated AT on the success of the meeting.
Evidence Review Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Evidence Group meeting was held on the 23rd of January. SH took feedback from group on the rugged chalk review and shared the proposed experimental areas for the natural disturbance study for comment.
Highlights and exceptions – project progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural disturbance study is on track for industry engagement in mid-February – we hope to have a final proposal in March so that we can start applying for funding. Byelaw development on track and we are expecting to bring a byelaw to the next Authority meeting in March. Eastern IFCA has received advice on our potting assessment at the beginning of January. This pushes back timeline for interim report and ARM plan to March for internal draft and April for final to be shared with NE. Gear impact analysis is progressing but on hold at the moment as other workstreams are higher priority.
A0B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
Date of next meeting	Monday 27th March at 15.15

Decision Log		
Date	Decision	Update
2/2/2022	PB meeting notes will be succinct and will show key updates and actions and decisions to support the business-like nature of PB meetings.	N/A
2/2/2022	The Chairs of the two Task and Finish Groups will provide bullet point updates at each SG meeting.	N/A
4/4/2022	Based on Management T&F Group's formal recommendation, a decision to begin the byelaw drafting process was formally taken by the Project Board.	23/5/2022 Informal consultation

		comms are in development
4/4/2022	A 'decision log' will be added to the meeting notes to keep track of decisions taken, as distinct from updates on actions from previous meetings.	NA
23/5/2022	The amended Stakeholder Group ToRs and Code of Conduct are to go back to the Stakeholder Group for deliberation and agreement.	
23/5/22	Moving forward, tracker data will be cross-referenced against ROV footage to enable impacts to be assessed.	N/A
20/9/2022	Progress the societal value study as a partnership arrangement with MCS.	
2/2/2023	SR and AF to formalise proposal and for it to be agreed outside of the formal Project Board meeting structure. All members agree to proceed.	
2/2/2023	Agree to the recommendations in the 2023 comms review report.	