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**Steering Group Meeting
11.00am 12th May 2011
Committee Room 1, Wallace Green, Berwick upon Tweed**

Present:

John Elliot	JE	Chairman BNNC EMS
Claire Carey	CC	EMS Implementation Officer
David Feige	DF	Northumberland County Council
Richard Kehoe	RK	Scottish Natural Heritage
Mel Nichols	MN	Northumberland Coast AONB
Jon Green	JG	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
Georgia Conolly	GC	St Abbs and Eyemouth VMR
Aisling Lannin	AL	Natural England
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council
Karen Rentoul	KR	Scottish Natural Heritage

Apologies:

Janet Khan-Marnie	JKM	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Jill McCormick	JM	Environment Agency

1. Welcome

Georgia Connolly, ranger from the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve, and Karen Rentoul, from Scottish Natural Heritage, were introduced to the group.

2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

Action from the previous minutes - CC explained that good contacts had been made within Marine Scotland and that discussions had taken place regarding their role in the EMS and the management plan. CC also explained that marine planning in England was at an early stage and that liaison with the EMS Officer from Flamborough Head would continue as the marine plans for the East of England emerge. CC asked AL about the Natural England Beach Manual. CC was under the impression that a more environmentally focused, concise version had been produced to compliment the larger Environment Agency document. AL is not aware of such a document being produced.

ACTION: AL to double check whether there is a smaller document **done**

3. Implementation

CC has begun the 2011 round of implementation meetings with authorities. Following last year's meetings, a progress matrix has been designed to show interactions between each authority and each action. It has been designed to illustrate the achievement of the management plan to date and indicates status of all EMS related actions for all authorities as well as the EMS officer. This

format offers a summary of progress overall but can also be interrogated for individual authorities and individual actions. A more detailed text report has also been started; however, given the re-structure of numerous authorities there were many gaps regarding certain actions. As a result, the full text report will be completed following the implementation catch-up sessions which will take place during May/June. The full report will be completed over the summer months once all implementation meetings have been held.

Based on last years meetings, issues that have arisen and priority areas are as follows:

- Metadata/GIS Project
- Recreational disturbance

AL advised CC that a number of good recreational disturbance studies have been undertaken for other EMS in the UK including Teesmouth. AL also advised of a national report on options and examples of measures for protection of marine protected areas. The study covers five main impacts, including recreation. It is also likely that zoning may be brought in to manage unregulated activities within marine conservation zones. GC explained that water sport and boat recreation wasn't so much of an impact within and adjacent to the VMR, angling activity, however, does cause litter related problems. **ACTION: AL to forward national report on management measures to CC done**

CC has made good contacts with Marine Scotland through Rhona Fairgrieve from the Scottish Coastal Forum. CC passed round the *Scottish Marine Atlas* document. Good contacts have also been made within the Marine Management Organisation.

CC has been working with a number of partners to ensure appropriate representation of the EMS in various plans and documents, including:

- Northumberland LDF paper on Landscape and Biodiversity
- Oil contingency plans for Berwick, North Sunderland and Warkworth (outside EMS but close enough to cause impact if pollution event occurs)
- Northumberland Strategic Partnership Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- Consultation responses for Scottish Marine Plan Regions and Scotland's Marine Plan

AL asked CC if she had been involved with the MPA work in Scotland. CC explained that she had been given an update from Marine Scotland and that it was still early days.

ACTION: AL to forward JNCC contact details to CC done

ACTION: RK to get contact details from SNH

ACTION: CC to follow this up and engage with the process emailed JNCC

4. EMS Officer Update

EMS website

The website is now complete, although we are still awaiting transfer of the '.com' domain name from the previous designer. Once transferred, the site will be accessible through both www.xbordercurrents.com and www.xbordercurrents.co.uk and both domain names will be registered to the EMS rather than the designer. CC now has full editorial control over the content.

CC informed a list of contacts about the new site via email, who have redistributed the information through their own networks. Press releases have been published through

Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council. BBC Radio Borders advertised the site on April 13. The EMS officer has advertised the site through range of media, including Facebook, and has written a number of short articles for local publications including Alnwick Wildlife Group newsletter, Village News (delivered to houses in Seahouses, North Sunderland, Bamburgh and Beadnell), and The History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club 2010 publication. A more formal launch for the Management Group will take place at the annual forum in the autumn.

CC asked the group about the *LOVE Northumberland* logo and whether it would be appropriate to place this on the bottom of the website, either in place of, or next to the Northumberland County Council (NCC) logo. The group decided that as the EMS is linked to many partners and organisations, as well as Berwickshire, a Northumberland-focused logo was inappropriate. Also, this logo relates to a campaign and is not the logo for NCC. The NCC logo has been placed on the website to indicate funding contributions and the group decided that it should not be changed or supplanted with the *LOVE Northumberland* logo.

ACTION: ALL – Find out if there are any opportunities within your organisation to promote the website, forward contact details to CC to chase up.

Beach cleans

CC has been liaising with various groups to arrange beach cleans and litter awareness raising events. Talks have taken place with Les Weller, the secretary of Amble Sea Angling Club who is an active representative for the angling community. Les would like to get the local angling clubs involved in beach cleans to help raise their awareness of the impacts of angling related debris. Les has also distributed the 'Your Favourite Mark' leaflets that were produced as a result of the 2007 beach litter project to the local angling clubs. The recent DEFRA funded *Sea Angling 2012*, however, may have taken over a lot of Les's time. JG advised the group that Defra will be providing funding for a member of staff to undertake surveys to collect information about angling activity. This post will be hosted by the Northumberland IFCA and joint patrol and survey work will be conducted to ensure staff safety. Although the project is unlikely to gather data relating to bait digging, JG advised that the NIFCA will likely be required to look at this activity in more detail as required under the new Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009. The NIFCA may not be able to pick up existing NCC bylaws, but may be able to cross-warrant.

GC told the group about an underwater clean-up project that is running in the VMR, this will target angling related debris.

AL suggested contacting Darren McGlen, a local angler who is involved with *Get Hooked On Fishing* which helps to get young people involved in fishing.

ACTION: CC to explore opportunities of joint working with Darren

CC and Iain Robson from the AONB are liaising with a local tourettes support group from Berwick who would like to undertake a beach clean as part of their summer meeting.

Seashore safaris

Two public seashore safari dates are set. The first will take place at Seahouses on the 3rd August, the second will take place on the 1st September at Bamburgh. The EMS officer will also be helping the National Trust with some of their summer shore events. The EMS officer will also be running an event on the afternoon of the 28th June for Mobex North East, a charity providing outdoor

education for disadvantaged people in the North East. Sophie Donaldson, a local from Seahouses will be helping out at these events.

Young Rangers

On Saturday 9th April the EMS officer took the Young Ranges out to do some rocky shore surveys at Low Newton. The methodology was based on that used for the Big Sea Survey data collection. This was followed by a session on beach art.

School placement

The EMS officer is hosting a school placement for one week between 18-22 July and maybe another in October.

Nature and Experiences newsletter

A short article was published in the December edition of the newsletter 'Nature and Experiences: Natura 2000 in other European Countries'. This publication is produced by the Regional Directorate of Environment, Spatial Planning and Housing for Languedoc-Roussillon. CC explained that she would like to explore more opportunities to link with sites in Europe, particularly those with similar features and management issues.

ACTION: CC to contact H  l  ne Petit (editor of the newsletter) to see if she can recommend contacts **done**

Alnwick Wildlife Group

A short article on the rocky shore has been produced. The article was also used as an opportunity to advertise the website and officer guided tours and talks for the EMS.

Funding to support implementation:

Seal Stranding Awareness

An application was submitted to the People's Trust for Endangered Species for their UK Mammal Grant to produce a leaflet advising people how to deal with seal strandings along the Northumberland and Berwickshire coast (Management Plan action: N8.5). Unfortunately, the Trust had a large number of applications and, although they will consider funding publicity materials, there were other projects which were felt to have wider reaching conservation benefits. Out of 27 applications, only 11 received funding.

Sea Your World!

An application was submitted to the Crown Estate Marine Communities Fund to run a marine awareness raising project with two schools in Northumberland and one in Berwickshire. Unfortunately, this bid was also unsuccessful. However, this was due to the Crown Estate providing funds to support the VMR Ranger's post and therefore already providing support for EMS related projects.

BUT the EMS officer will be contributing towards an existing project of a similar nature. *Performance, Dance and Climate Change* is joint project between the Berwick Film Festival and the Maltings Art Centre, and the Culture Department of Northumberland County Council are also involved. The project will look at the impact climate change will have on the local environment and in turn hope to raise people's awareness of the direct impact on their lives. The main aim is to raise knowledge and awareness of climate change through the arts within Northumberland. Issues will then be presented by young people through dance and a choreographed film. The EMS officer is working with the project team and artists to help them represent the issues of climate change associated with the marine environment.

In addition to this project, a number of the schools I contacted during the exploratory work for the *Sea Your World!* bid have requested input from the EMS officer in classroom sessions and shore visits.

Lindisfarne Peregrini Landscape Partnership

An application has been submitted by the Lindisfarne Development Trust to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for around £2 million. The EMS officer sits on the Project Board and has been involved in the development of marine themed projects. If successful, around £60,000 has been earmarked for marine related projects. The HLF visited Holy Island on 5th May to look at some of the project proposals and the vibe was generally very positive. The bid still needs to go to the national board and a decision will be made at the end of July.

Meetings and partnership working:

- Coastal Futures Conference, January 2011: main themes included planning, MCZs, Common Fisheries Policy
- EMS officer's annual workshop: very useful meeting to talk about common issues and emerging changes. Workshop report will be available soon.
- NetGain: provided information about management measures for economists, as well as information about contacts within Northumberland County Council and site information. There will be an Impact Assessment produced to look at the socio-economic impact of site recommendations. NetGain is hoping to create a reference area for the rocky shore within the EMS. The area being put forward is north of Berwick and is the only section of rocky shore within the EMS that is relatively inaccessible from the landward side. JG explained that difficulties may arise depending on where the boundary is drawn. If the seaward boundary is drawn at MLWS, then pots may be placed within the zone during neap tides; the landward boundary will likewise have similar issues for human access from the land if people were able to reach the shore. The reference area will cover a range of intertidal rocky habitats, including moderate and high energy intertidal rock. This will be the only reference area for rocky shore in the whole NetGain area. Budle Bay is also on the reserve list as a reference area for intertidal mudflats

AL explained that Lundy, the first MCZ, is currently without a management plan and that the officer is looking for examples of best practice. AL recommended the BNNC EMS/AONB plan. CC offered to provide assistance and advice if needed.

- Sea Anglers: Beach cleans to raise awareness of angling litter
- Marine Scotland: Good contacts have been made and discussions are being held over responsibilities within the management plan
- Marine Management Organisation: good contacts have been made within the marine planning team – provided a briefing note on the various types of marine nature conservation designations which was circulated to team. Gave a presentation to the local office team about the EMS, then attended a trip to the Farnes with them
- Scottish Marine Planning Regions consultation comments sent to SBC
- Scottish Marine Plan consultation comments sent to SBC
- Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority: attended boat patrols and shore patrols on the RIB. As an IFCA member the EMS officer also attended training ran by the MMO, as well as an afternoon in London to meet the Minister
- IMCORE workshop: adapting to climate change – developing an adaptation strategy

Next steps:

Complete implementation meetings with all authorities
Produce annual progress report by autumn
Begin preparations for annual forum to be held around autumn
Produce an e-newsletter
Begin metadata/GIS project
Look into issues around recreational disturbance
Attend and host knowledge transfer days between Humber, Flamborough and BNNC EMS
Continue with awareness raising and social networking opportunities

5. Annual Forum

The group decided that an autumn forum would be appropriate timing, and that a joint event should be held with the AONB.

ACTION: CC and MN to think about a suitable venue and programme

6. Terms of Reference

CC advised the group that she would like to produce some Terms of Reference for the EMS Steering Group. The group agreed that this would be beneficial to aid discussions with Marine Scotland and the MMO about involvement with the group.

ACTION: CC to circulate draft document for comments

7. Finance

CC advised the group that all finance had been confirmed for the financial year 2011-2012. AT thanked CC for the support given over the past year and explained that the value for money based on SBC contribution was high.

8. Partner Update

AT – Borders Biodiversity week will run from 21-29 May 2011. CC will take part in the walk from Dowlaw to St Abbs on the 25th May to promote the EMS. GC will run a seashore safari on 24th May. A new leaflet has been produced for the Berwick Borders Coastal Path.

A consultant is working on a coastal path 'App' as a pilot project. There is potential to get some EMS/VMR interpretation

Local landscape designations to be created, Berwickshire coast has been put forward as a landscape of regional importance

Coastal butterfly conservation – 7 new sites have been found in Berwick

Rob Dixon is the new Director for Environment and Infrastructure (new department within SBC)

SBC has been asked to join KIMO - an organisation helping local authorities tackle marine issues such as litter and pollution

ACTION: AT to send CC a pdf copy of the coastal path leaflet for inclusion on the EMS website

ACTION: CC to contact Euan Calvert about feeding in to 'App'

ACTION: CC speak to Sam Smith about KIMO

MN – Planning permission for development at Beadnell was refused at planning committee. It was felt that the project had not taken SMP2 into account and that the scheme would prevent roll-back of the rocky shore. The committee decision was made against officer advice.

The *Take Your Dog to the Coast* campaigns has started. Leaflets have been produced and bylaws are in place for Northumberland

Coast Watch is being set up – local people will be given the tools to report unauthorised activities at the coast

Heritage Coast meeting will be taking place soon

Axer Insurance has adopted Cocklawburn Beach. JE asked whether there is an untapped resource in enterprises wishing to raise their environmental profile.

ACTION: CC to find out if seal stranding contact details can be included in Coast Watch tools

ACTION: CC to think about engaging with enterprises

AL – The final NetGain hub meeting was held 4-5 May. Two MCZs have been identified close to the EMS – one stretching from Alnmouth down to St Mary's Island and going out to 3nm at each end; the second will be further offshore and covers Coquet Island and the Farne Deeps. A small reference area is proposed in the north section of offshore site. A major nephrops fishery exists in the south end. The final recommendations will go to the scientific advisory panel on 30 June, to NE and JNCC in August, to Government on November 30, and a public consultation is expected in Spring 2012. £60k has been secured within NE for condition monitoring of EMS features nationally. This will contribute towards EU reporting in 2012.

GC – A new dive guide has been produced and is available for purchase by contacting GC

Funding for 2011-2012 is in place for the VMR ranger post

Secret Seas, a BBC program, filmed at St Abbs and the footage will be shown this Sunday (15 May)

A series of summer events has been planned

ACTION: CC to add the dive guide to the EMS website done

RK – SNH is looking for press stories. No update as yet on MPAs in Scotland

ACTION: CC to contact RK about a press story for the EMS website done

ACTION: RK to continue to find information about MPAs and how CC and get involved

JG – The St Oswald has been hosting a volunteer – Martin Kitchin – to undertake a cetacean survey. The aim of the survey is to establish the abundance and distribution of white-beaked dolphin in the area. CC has taken part in one of the survey days

DF – A working group has been set up between DF, Natural England and the RSPB to look at the cumulative impact of tourism related development on coastal birds, as well as the environmental carrying capacity. This has been triggered by a high number of caravan extension planning applications. A sensitivity map is currently being produced although it is still early days given the difficulties in assessing cumulative impacts. AL suggested looking at the Solent disturbance project. Plymouth EMS officer has introduced a levy on all development impacting upon the Tamar Estuary and funds are put back into EMS monitoring and data gathering. AT explained that a windfarm at Doan Hill near Coldingham may be looking to put money back into community projects.

ACTION: CC to find Solent study and forward to DF done

ACTION: CC and GC to look at opportunities related to windfarm development community funds

9. AOB

No AOB

10. Date of next meeting

Thursday 18th August 2011, 11am, Berwick Council Offices.