



BERWICKSHIRE & NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND
COAST EUROPEAN MARINE SITE

www.xbordercurrents.co.uk

Steering Group Meeting
10.45am 26 July 2012
Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Berwick

Present:

Claire Hedley	CH	EMS Implementation Officer
Georgia Conolly	GC	St Abbs & Eyemouth VMR
Amy McIntosh	AM	St Abbs & Eyemouth VMR
Janet Khan-Marnie	JKM	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Richard Kehoe	RK	Scottish Natural Heritage
Jon Green	JG	Northumberland Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (NIFCA)
Catherine Scott	CS	Natural England
Sarah Jennings	SJ	Environment Agency

Apologies:

David Feige	DF	Northumberland County Council
Jill McCormick	JM	Environment Agency
Karen Rentoul	KR	Scottish Natural Heritage
Andy Tharme	AT	Scottish Borders Council

1. Welcome and apologies

Members introduced themselves and apologies were given (see above). The group welcomed SJ who will be working with JM, and AM who is working with GC over the summer.

2. Previous minutes and matters arising

The previous minutes were accepted and will be published on the EMS website.

CH received agreement that an invitation should be sent out to EMS Management Group members to join the Steering Group. All members not currently represented on the group will receive a copy.

CH proposed that cross-border issues/opportunities could be added as an optional, extra agenda item at the end of the main Steering Group meeting for those who wish to stay. This will help to reduce the number of meetings and the associated administration and travel.

ACTION: CH to send cover letter and invitation to join Steering Group to Management Group members.

ACTION: CH will send out a request for cross-border topics to be included on the agenda for the next steering group meeting.

3. Implementation update

CH talked through the implementation update report. CH will meet with Jessica Turner from the Northumberland Coast AONB on 7 Aug to begin planning the Management Plan Review. RK asked if large revisions were planned. CH explained that the main changes would be focused on the presentation and clarity of actions in order to create a simpler document to use. CH tabled a short paper on some of the difficulties faced from an EMS perspective when implementing the current Plan.

CH discussed a number of reported incidents that have occurred over the past months, which may have an impact on the EMS.

**** Sensitive information has been removed ****

ACTION: CH to liaise with Marine Scotland and the MMO about dumping crab material.

4. EMS officer update

CH talked through the officer update paper and future work priorities which include completion of the implementation briefs and progress report.

ACTION: CH to send a copy of Annie Cunningham's report to group members.

5. Forum

A provisional date of 18 October has been set. CH is waiting for confirmation from the venue. Due to the joint nature of the forum with Northumberland Coast AONB, AONB staff would like the venue to be in Northumberland again, and Berwick is the closest to the Scottish border. The group commented that a Scottish location should be sought for the next forum and that a separate forum should be considered if the AONB is unwilling to hold an event north of the border. CH stated that although there are savings in time and money by holding a joint event, the forum is the only chance for the Management Group to meet and that the effectiveness of a joint forum should remain under review. CH talked about possible topics to cover. RK commented on the repetition between the Management Group meeting and CHs talk. This was noted by CH who will make sure this doesn't happen at the next event.

ACTION: CH will continue to keep partners informed of plans for the 2012 forum.

6. Finance

CH tabbed the finance report. All funding for 2012 is secured and partial funds are secured up to 2015 due to a SNH grant.

7. Partner Update

RK – SNH is currently defining the consultation process that will happen for the designation of Scottish MPAs. The nearest proposed MPA to the EMS is off the Forth at quite some distance away. SNH would also welcome any short stories or press releases from CH or GC.

JKM – Monitoring work is being carried out at bathing water beaches to assess the presence/absence of 5 marine non-natives. None have yet been identified on the East coast. The monitoring may develop into a citizen science project and will be trialled in the Clyde, then the Solway if successful, and will look at 10 species covering brackish water also.

The EU will fund a 'pathways management' programme for non-natives. There is also work looking at the distribution and spread of European species to help assess movement.

SEPA will work with divers to help record wrecks over time. Divers will be asked to photograph a fixed point in order to build up time-series data. Studies will look at seasonability and changes in species. The project will follow a similar format to Seasearch and will be trialled in the Sound of Mull before being considered for national roll-out. Volunteer taxonomists will verify data online through a framework similar to iSpot <http://www.ispot.org.uk/>

ACTION: JKM to send non-native species project information to CH, CS and GC.

GC – the voluntary marine ranger has now been appointed. The Young Marine Rangers project is running and is very successful. GC is also undertaking other outreach and awareness raising activities including the Splash In! photography competition. New sighting report forms are available online and the VMR website is being redesigned. CS offered to keep GC informed about any grants that may be relevant to the VMR and the ranger's post.

CS – WFD funding now in place to analyse archived samples of *zostera* and mussels. A forthcoming hovercraft survey with the Environment Agency will allow further samples to be gathered. CS has bid for funds to look at bait digging across North East EMSs. Condition monitoring report for subtidal faunal turf is almost ready. MARCLIM will carry out further survey work in the EMS this summer and Castle Head Rocks will be recorded. A study to look at potting intensity and the impact on habitats within the EMS is also being carried out by and MSc student.

SJ – Surveys will be carried out at Budle Bay and Fenham Flats to assess WFD status.

JG – NIFCA continues to host Martin Kitching of North East Cetacean Project to carry out cetacean surveys. NIFCA also hosts Martin to carry out CEFAS Sea Angling 2012 monitoring work. Similar monitoring work is being carried out in Scotland by the Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network, funded by SNH. The Scottish work is concentrated on the west coast. Joint patrols have taken place between NIFCA, Environment Agency (EA) and the MMO. Joint small-fish surveys have also been carried out between NIFCA and the EA on the Tweed estuary, and NIFCA has gone on survey Alnmouth estuary with further surveys planned. Findings about the juvenile fish using the estuaries will go on the NIFCA website <http://www.nsf.org.uk/>

8. Date of next meetings

Thursday 1 November 2012	10.45am	Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed
Thursday 7 February 2013	10.45am	Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed
Thursday 2 May 2013	10.45am	Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed
Thursday 8 August 2013	10.45am	Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed
Thursday 7 November 2013	10.45am	Council Offices, Berwick upon Tweed

Table of Actions

Actions	Who
Send cover letter and invitation to join Steering Group to Management Group members	CH
Send out a request for cross-border topics to be included on the agenda for the next steering group meeting	CH
Liaise with Marine Scotland and the MMO about dumping crab material	CH
Continue to keep partners informed of plans for the 2012 forum	CH
Send non-native species project information to CH, CS and GC	JKM

(The status column will be populated over the coming three months prior to the next Steering Group meeting).