

**Draft Minutes of STAP Meeting 8 – The Royal York Hotel – 04<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

**Attendees:**

Joanna Redhead - JR – Net Gain

Peter Barham - PB - Seabed User & Development Group

Rob Spray - RS - MCS & Sea Search - (LW & EE Hub)

Dale Rodmell - DR – NFFO (YH Hub)

Neal Hill - NH - Royal Yachting Association

Paul Lane – PL – NEIFCA (YH Hub)

Kirsten Smith - KS - Wildlife Trust - (YH Hub)

Dave Lock - DL - BSAC - (EE Hub)

Steve Williamson - SW - Kings Lynn Fishermen/ESFC - (LW Hub)

Aisling Lannin - AL- Natural England (NE Hub)

Ana Jesus -AJ - JNCC

Chris Nicholson - (for Rachel Hanbury) - CN - MMO

Steve Barnard - SB – Net Gain

Trevor Jameson - TJ – Chair

Maire Williams – MW – Net Gain

Hilary Thompson – (for Angie Fitch-Tillett) – HT – (NNC)

**Apologies:**

Jon Whitton - JW - Whitby Charter Boats - (YH Hub)

Mick Borwell - MB - Oil & Gas UK

Adrian Lester - Chamber of Shipping

Nigel Proctor – Sea Angling (YH Hub)

Item	Action
<p><b>Item 1: Expected outputs of meeting</b></p> <p>TJ: Welcomed everyone to the 8<sup>th</sup> StAP meeting. Introductions around the table.</p> <p><b><u>Expected outputs of the meeting</u></b></p> <p>The expected outputs for this meeting were to bring the StAP up to date on progress made since the draft final iteration was submitted, including SAP feedback.</p>	
<p><b>Minutes and Actions from May meeting</b></p> <p>The previous minutes were approved as a fair &amp; accurate record. JR confirmed that actions were in hand.</p> <p>Comment: Raised potential problems in Dog Head Reference Area and yacht anchoring within the Wainfleet Channel.</p> <p>Comment: Previously asked the SAP/SNCBs for a view on displacement effects/impacts – have any comments been fed back yet?</p> <p>JR - No. The next outstanding fisheries issue is likely to be around the validation of landings, at which time Net Gains economist will also interview key fisheries representatives on these issues.</p> <p>Comment : NFFO will be happy to feed into this.</p> <p>JR - Ian Rowe will liaise with the NFFO over this.</p>	
<p><b>SAP feedback on the draft final recommendations</b></p> <p>JR – Ran through the main points of the SAP feedback for the group in a PowerPoint presentation.</p> <p>Comment : Supported the SAP comment on the lack of use of AA EI information during the site selection. Discussion on ecological value has been subservient to socio-economics across the last few rounds of the hub meetings – doesn't agree that it is possible to claim that AA EI has been used.</p> <p>Comment : Suggested AA EI was taken into account early on in the process (eg 2<sup>nd</sup> round) – to identify where sites should be.</p> <p>JR –Yes, and the data produced after October was always going to be harder</p>	

to incorporate during the subsequent rounds.

Comment : Yes, but additional information (research, ground truthing) not used effectively – citing example of clay exposures.

Comment Raised the issue of “clipping of boundaries”.

JR – Yes. By meeting and exceeding targets early in the process it gave us the option of reducing the site areas.

Comment: There is still the outstanding issue of exactly where the ecology meets socio-economics – for example if AAEl were embedded within the ENG then the process would have been more aligned to/alike to the N2K process.

Comment: Discussion on boundary movement regarding dMCZ NG2 and movement of the site 200m offshore. Is there the possibility of addressing this anomaly locally?

Comment : Recognised that apparently contradictory comments from SAP regarding conservation objectives were the result of working with limited data.

Both AJ and AL suggested that it needs to be recognised that a full evidence base will need to be produced but it is important that we use expert opinion and other available information to identify proxies for full evidence where we can.

Q: Does SAP view the large number of “maintains” as a fear or resistance amongst stakeholders.

Comment : No. We are using what we have – we cannot address the issue as fully as we would like – but recognise that the situation may change when more data comes in.

Comment : If all is set to “maintain” it may give a wrong message to industrial/commercial operators. They would reasonably expect more of a balance.

Comment : Needs to be viewed again after the full ground truthing and reporting has been done – once all arguments are presented it is likely that the “maintain” designations are robust.

Q: Queried the inclusion of sub tidal mixed sediment within NG9.

JR – Subsequent to receiving the REC data there was a change of habitat within NG9 , which meant approximately 50% of site not protected, and also that the target for that habitat not met. Meetings were held with the commercial fishing sector to agree inclusion of that habitat. No boundaries changed, only recommended features at site.

### Progress made at EE/LW Regional Hub

An update was provided on progress made on Reference Areas in the additional Hub meeting of Lincolnshire/Wash and East of England on the 29 June.

JR introduced the work and outputs from the EE/LW Hubs held 29<sup>th</sup> June to clarify the Reference Area sites for:-

Peat and clay exposures; sea grass; salt marsh; saline reed beds; starlet sea anemone; blue mussel; subtidal chalk and sabellaria reef.

Comment : Some disagreement in the blue mussel RA conclusions – felt not agreed at the Hub that offshore site met the ENG criteria, but was retained as an alternative.

Comment : No site boundaries were identified for offshore site and this would go forward as a preferred option if subsequent information suggests it doesn't satisfy the ENG criteria then the selection will default to the Sea Palling area.

JR - Subtidal Chalk was not fully tied down.

Comment : Not content that sufficient discussion was held on the site.

Comment : Local commercial fishing is dependent on inshore area so if there are alternatives then they should be followed up.

JR – Both sites are taken forward within Annex . with pros and cons for both options

Comment : This is perhaps because “new” areas were suggested late in the day and this has wasted time in identifying final options – this is a good opportunity lost.

Comment : We should recognise that there are issues with the process – it is not perfect but we have a good set of proposals to take forward together in a number of starting points for further examination/consideration for features that aren't definitely covered.

JR - *Sabellaria* – suggested search area within the Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton SAC to be carried forward into an annex. No definitive location identified.

Comment : raised concerns over potential restrictions on yachts and commercial vessels in channels adjacent to the Dogs Sands. Skegness Yacht Club operate from Wainfleet Channel – will need to be engaged in management measures work and in any further detailed discussions on boundaries of Reference Areas at Dog Sands.

## **SNCB quality assurance exercise on Conservation Objectives**

AL - Introduced Natural England's work on Vulnerability Assessment Quality Assurance work. As fisheries could not be completed, cumulative impacts could not be fully assessed (although the cumulative impacts for all other activities have been taken into account). For this reason, Natural England's QA cannot be fully delivered until (likely) the end of July. (Full consistency across all four Regional MCZ Projects needs to be ensured – especially with regard to the relative assessments of intensity of activity and hence likelihood of exposure to pressures.)

AJ – Provided similar at the time for JNCC (offshore sites). As well as QA intention was to ensure consistency across all four Regional MCZ Projects (and to check that assessments were in line with those done under N2K work) Also have identified where further work should be focused.

Comment : Reminded group that only small % (3-5% perhaps) of the inshore fleet are fitted in VMS.

AJ/AL - Both commented that Natural England and JNCC had worked together for one day to assess those sites that fell between or overlapped both the "inshore " and "offshore" areas.

JNCC suggest the following changes:

NG6 - All features except for *Sabellaria are* set to recover (*Sabellaria* is set to maintain). *Sabellaria* is dependent on the underlying Broad Scale Habitat (which was set to recover), and is more sensitive, so therefore *Sabellaria* should also be set to recover.

NG16 – First cut and Stakeholder review resulted in maintain – but JNCC have suggested adopting a precautionary approach; the effect on site is focused on North East corner around Swallow Hole at a much higher intensity. May be necessary to zone management and to set conservation objective of feature (Swallow Hole) differently to the site as a whole.

NG17 – JNCC had some concerns and felt that "recover" may be a better conservation objective given the cumulative impact of the density of (oil and gas) infrastructure.

Comment : Welcomed the fact that a more in-depth review of fishing data has been undertaken.

AJ – Pointed out that the need for future collaboration in the fishing industry to evaluate activity intensities and pressures more closely. This is because (a) restrictions from CFP would require such a detailed assessment and (b) management measures may well be detailed at a "gear-specific" level.

<p>Comment : Raised the issue of under 15m (non VMS) fleet operating static gear outside of 12nm.</p> <p>AJ – Recognises this and will seek to incorporate Fisherman information when it is made available to them in a standardised format. Also appreciates that ultimately a more detailed assessment will need to be done after the Net Gain process has been completed.</p>	
<p><b>Management measures</b></p> <p>MW – Introduced the work undertaken at the two meetings with MMO, IFCA, NE and JNCC, which focused on fisheries management at sites with “recover” as the Conservation Objective.</p> <p>Q - Can we consider zoned management?</p> <p>JR – Will relate to feasibility – if there are discreet, well defined areas of features that need management and /or if activities are well understood.</p> <p>Comment : This approach ok for well defined restricted features – what about wider more dispersed Broad Scale Habitats?</p> <p>JR – It is likely that zoned management is less likely an option in more broadly described areas.</p> <p>Comment : Byelaws must be evidence based, proportionate and be supported by cost benefit analysis (i.e an Impact Assessment) so these “checks and balances” will apply to protection of features.</p> <p>Comment : Would like some assurance that if zoning is possible it will be actively encouraged/considered.</p> <p>MW – Not written in as a certainty but options for zoning will be considered in the IA where appropriate.</p> <p>Q– Will StAP have sight of the assumptions document from SNCBs?</p> <p>AL – Yes – will take an action to circulate when they are available.</p> <p>Q– Can StAP have a copy of MW’s presentation?</p> <p>JR – Yes.</p> <p>Q - What are the proposed managements in the commercial sector – especially with regards to landings data?</p> <p>JR – To be planned – Ian Rowe to convene local meetings to get the input.</p> <p>Q– Are we looking for management recommendations or just options?</p>	<p><b>MW to circulate to the StAP</b></p>

<p>JR – Ideally recommendations but options may (pragmatically) be the most likely outcome if the RSG does not meet consensus.</p> <p>Comment – Ultimately the designation of sites as formal MCZs and the implementation of management measures is likely to take some considerable time – following on from the Net Gain Project. It is likely that existing RSG members will be involved in the future to help keep the process moving.</p> <p>Comment – Agreed. Stakeholders will need to be carried along with the process and not “left on the sidelines”</p> <p>AL – Natural England recognises this.</p> <p>TJ – This is essential. Good will of the Stakeholders needs to be maintained and this can be ensured if there is continued involvement</p> <p>Comment – My understanding is that the process will be split with site designation running ahead of consultation over management measures whilst sites will go to consultation by 2012. (2012/13 for management measures).</p>	
<p><b>Large Group Meeting</b></p> <p>JR – Gave an overview of planning for The Large Group Meeting II and the likely agenda to include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Stakeholder Group - when from and where?</li> <li>• Overview @ network/site by site basis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How we got to where we are</li> <li>○ What is in the sites</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Management implications</li> <li>• Feedback on draft final recommendations</li> <li>• Format of the final report</li> <li>• Next steps – team changes</li> <li>• Change of Symbology</li> <li>• Support for sites</li> </ul> <p>Comment – There have been comments at Hubs that there has not been enough time to chase down details at each site. We need to have definitive discussions on site boundaries and site features.</p> <p>Comment – Concerned that the majority of sectors most largely affected by</p>	

measures at sites will not be present. How can we hope to have a full discussion?

JR – We should have a good agreement of what is needed at each site.

Comment – But the detail is still missing (e.g different gear type restrictions)

AJ – Will need to clarify and manage the expectations of the group over this area of the agenda. What are we looking to agree within the management and what would be reasonably expected to be discussed when management measures are being proposed post site designation.

JR – This is not a Net Gain role to come up with details of byelaws. It is more generic than that.

Comment – It is critical that we produce clear statements on what the MCZs are. What the management measures are. Make it clear as to what is agreed and what will be up for review and debate outside of the Project subsequent to final project reporting. Give clear indication of how the process will go forwards – timelines and likely content i.e what is done, what is still to be done and who will do it?

Comment – Clarity over what information we have used and where it will go – i.e how can the same information be made available for subsequent work.

AL – Natural England have appointed a post to follow up from the Regional MCZ Projects.

Comment – It would be good to have a future timeline.

AL – Consultation is likely to be late spring – best guess.

Q – Is there a real hope that voluntary/code of conduct will work?

IFCA – Yes. Some areas will be ok with voluntary/code of conduct.

Comment – Where there is good supporting monitoring (eg VMS) then it is more likely to succeed.

TJ – So, what have we done, what will be done in the future and how/when will it be done..... Also it is important to go away from the meeting with a feeling of how successful the Project has been.

JR – Do we need time for site specific map work or just clarify how we are at our current position?

Comment – Boundary finalisation would be useful.

IFCA– Specific clarification on markers/designations e.g do we use LAT LAST MLWS etc etc

<p>AL – May be some specific boundaries that can be clarified.</p>	
<p><b>AOB and Date/Venue of next meeting</b></p> <p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>For an update following the Large Group Meeting II – JR has initiated a doodle poll.</p> <p>AL – It is apparent that Net Gain among the four Regional MCZ Projects have worked hard to get consensus and support from the Stakeholders. It is clear that Net Gain have succeeded in getting good support; vindication of the early decision to split the Project to run across four regional hubs.</p>	