

**The Association of IFCAs
Members' Forum Meeting 10th March 2015 – 10:00 to 14:30**

To be followed by the Association Directors Meeting at 14:30

DEFRA, Nobel House

ACTION MINUTES

Attendance for the Meeting

CEO: Stephen Bolt (SB)

Chair: John Lamb (JL)

Members: Eddy Derriman (ED), Sam Davis (SD), Rob Clark (RC), Stephen Atkins (SA), Tim Dapling (TD), Tim Robbins (TR), Anthony Markley (AM), Will Wright (WW), David McCandless (DM), Mike Hardy (MH), Elaine Hayes (EH), Tony Tomlinson (TT), Phil Haslam (PH), Steve Watt (SW), Les Weller (LW), Andy Guy (AG), Malcolm Sims (MS)

Sam Evans (SE), Nigel Gooding (NG), Terence Ilott (TI), Rob Matthews (RM), Richard Inman (RI)
DEFRA, John Tuckett (JT), MMO, George Eustice, MP

Minutes: Michelle Woodley

Apologies for absence: Robert Arckless, Chris Morris, Karen McHarg, Colin Eastwood, Ian Davies, Hilary Cox, Tony Delahunty

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Minutes of the last Association meeting 3rd December 2014 – agreed
Matters arising not on the agenda: none
- 3) Finalising matters to raise with the Minister:
 - Update on 4 yearly report to Parliament
 - IFCAs/MMO joint working JL
 - Pro-active Bass management SB
 - What will happen with the MPA process? WW
 - Bylaws MS
 - Aquaculture management – the IFCA role RC
 - Tidal lagoons AM
- 4) CEO report/update
 - VAT – Issue fully resolved
 - Budget out turn for 1st and 2nd Quarter - SB explained that the predicted out-turn would be around £5-10k over budget, but that following the adjustment of the £15k authorised spending from the reserves (on Habitats Directive legal advice), this would then become a £5-10k underspend
 - Budget proposals 2015/16 and beyond – Association income for this financial year was slightly higher due to the Associate Membership fees. The standstill budget for 2015-16 was agreed at the December Members Forum meeting.
 - Legal Advice on Habitats Directive – It was re-iterated that the Legal advice document was not for general public circulation. **Action 1: COG to prepare a paper to clarify the IFCA interpretation of the Habitats Directive. Action 2: SB to engage with Natural England over the revision of the MOU**
 - Driftnet Ban – It was agreed that this issue would not be discussed further at present.

- Capital Equipment Insurance - Although the under-writers would remain the same for the Insurance of the Association owned equipment, the account needs to move with the brokers. **Action 3: SB to liaise with Colin Trundle (Cornwall IFCA) and action move.** The £4k costing has been absorbed into the budget
 - Four yearly report to parliament update – RI confirmed that this will be potentially put before parliament on 17/3/15
 - MPAs -
 - i. Reporting to Project Board: **Action 4: SB to send out MPA reporting requests by 13/3/15.** Completion deadline for these is March 24th to enable SB to report at the April Project Board meeting
 - ii. MPA Revenue £300k division between the IFCA's: **Action 5: SB to send out simple template for the IFCA's to bid for a share of the revenue monies to enable the achievement of DEFRA's MPA 2016 deadline.** The final decision on allocation will be made by DEFRA
 - iii. MPA NE timetables: **Action 6: IFCA's to report back to SB regarding the revised conservation advice template, and in particular how the £300k revenue may alter the importance of the revised NE timetable**
 - Bass Update – The IFCA position on Bass was discussed with the Minister (see appendix 2) and was not consequently re-discussed. The IFCA Bass Position is a draft working document for discussion with DEFRA. It has not yet been discussed with individual committees, but represents an appropriate way forward for the IFCA's.
 - MMO/IFCA Joint Working – This was discussed at length with the Minister, Sam Evans and John Tuckett (see Appendices 1 and 2)
 - Association Meeting Log – For information
- 5) MMO Appointee recruitment process update – There were 84 vacancies and 108 applicants. 96 applicants were interviewed. Discussions around shortcomings from the recruitment process centred around the lack of communication, the complexity of the application process disenfranchising applicants, calibre of applicants and timeline issues. JT said these would be addressed at a formal post-process "lessons learnt" review.
- 6) 11.00 Sam Evans, Nigel Gooding, Rob Matthews, Richard Inman, Terence Ilott, John Tuckett. Introductions and brief updates: Appendix 1
- 7) 11.30 George Eustice: Appendix 2
- a) Minister's perspective
 - b) Questions and Answers
- 1 pm Lunch
- 8) Unfinished items
- 9) Date of next Members Forum Meeting 9th June 2015
- 10) AOB (Please advise in advance)
- 14.30 Close of meeting to be followed by Association Directors meeting

Appendix 1:

John Tuckett, Sam Evans, Rob Matthews and Terence Ilott Question and Answer session with the Members

There was discussion around joint working. JT said that any joint working approach needed to be imaginative, and start from a 'blank sheet' rather than from pre-conceived ideas. JT mentioned that the MMO had set up a Fisheries project board dealing specifically with fisheries management.

Action 7: SB to contact Andy Beattie regarding Joint working.

SE then spoke of the necessity for joint working, and for the need to be positive about this. There would need to be governance in place to enable equitable partnership working. SE said that there was a need to recognise that each organisation has a responsibility to fulfil its delivery targets, and any joint working should not hinder this.

JL said that the IFCAs were interested in discussing the potential for creating efficiencies in delivery through co-operation with other stakeholders. WW spoke of the importance of recognising the individualism of the regional IFCAs and for the need to adopt a flexible approach to take account of subtle nuances rather than adopt a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. TD stressed the need to look for opportunities for co-operation to achieve the aims of each organisation.

EH raised the query on a previously mentioned marine mammal report on the protection of mobile species in special areas of conservation. TI explained that this was a JNCC report and that he would make enquiries about it and respond to EH via the Association. **Action 8: SB to ask TI for details of the report and forward to the IFCAs as appropriate**

Nigel Gooding update

There have been 4 years of close working between the IFCAs and DEFRA, with good examples of delivery of HLOs.

Evidence should be gathered via the IFCAs, EA, DEFRA, the MMO and CEFAS on how joint working and collaboration would promote success. TR mentioned that evidence gathering is duplicated with the IFCAs going to sites and finding CEFAS and NE have already gathered evidence. This is an area where partnership working would prevent this duplication. PH said that there needs to be acknowledgement to the stakeholders involved, that the process has moving targets, and NG agreed that it is important to communicate the message that there will be incremental increases to the management measures to achieve targets and to prove effective.

TD mentioned that the pace of achievement is not always recognised at a local level, as IFCA members may have diverse views. He suggested that DEFRA could produce a guidance plan to promote the work of the IFCAs to the IFCA members, to ensure their future support. A plan is needed to help the IFCAs communicate their drivers and expectations to their members. **Action 9: SB to ask TI to review.**

NG was asked for an update on CFP: NG indicated that the regional implementation of the discard ban had presented no significant problems with pelagics. However a demersal ban will need to be implemented on a regional basis, with a phased approach seeking agreement from the counties in that region. There will be a consultation on how to practically implement a ban, its impact on licensing control, and its management. It is hoped to gather information from fishermen first-hand. It is hoped that the timescale will be commencement in January 2016 and phased by species to January 2019. A species led targeted approach could marginalize inshore fisheries. NG said that the consultation will create an overhaul for all fleets, with solutions being fed in to the plans, with an agreed approach region by region.

NG stressed that regular DEFRA updates via the Association would keep regions abreast of developments. He acknowledged that it will be the biggest challenge since the UK joined the CFP. JT mentioned that there would need to be joint working over the implementation of the discards ban.

The subject of the Section 31 grant was discussed. RM explained that there would be targeted allocation based on needs.

Appendix 2: Minister's perspective followed by questions and answers

The Minister spoke about the 4 yearly Report to Parliament. Themes were the work that has been achieved despite the challenges of budget and the environment. He mentioned the variance in committee sizes around the IFCAs; those that are too big make decision making difficult, whilst the very small committees may not be representative of key interests.

Within Marine planning there is a need for democratic accountability. Licensing decisions made via Local Authorities or IFCAs can get caught in a lengthy process before being agreed. The Minister said that there was a need to simplify the process, creating an environment where closer working between the IFCAs and the MMO can speed up the process, but still maintain the appropriate level of accountability.

MCZs: The 2nd tranche consultation is continuing as agreed. The 3rd tranche consultations will begin in 2016; the aim of these is to explain designation to the layman to obtain support for this necessary protection of features. The Minister announced £300,000 in New Burdens money to support the IFCAs to achieve their 2016 targets. JL voiced concern that the IFCAs may not receive all of this from the Local Authorities. RM of DEFRA clarified that this was NOT New Burdens funding, but a Section 31 grant which the IFCAs could apply to DEFRA for via the Association.

SB spoke to the Minister about the IFCAs pro-active draft consolidated position on Bass. The Minister responded by saying that at the December Council (EU) emergency measures for a pear trawling ban for the January-April season had been discussed. He acknowledged the need to recognise fishing mortality from gill netting and otter trawling, and spoke of bag limits and minimum landing size as being possible management measures to consider.

JL spoke to the Minister about joint working, and the Tri-Partite meetings being held between the IFCAs, DEFRA and the MMO, and re-iterated that the IFCAs were positive about the need to explore joint working. TD said that the culture of co-operation (which is mentioned in the MACAA) needs to be remembered especially for such areas as training, survey work and enforcement to avoid duplication of tasks and wasting of resources.

TM spoke to the Minister regarding tidal lagoons, with particular reference to those in the North West. He enquired on the emergence of marine planning in these areas. SE agreed that it was a relatively new area to be managed and that there was a need to monitor these areas and to evidence any emerging impacts on the marine environment.

MS spoke about the timescales currently surrounding bylaw creation. The lengthy process is having a negative impact on the professional reputation of the IFCAs. SE responded by saying that a Bylaw team to specifically process bylaw applications in a timely manner was needed. SE asked that any problems currently surrounding bylaw processing should be brought directly to him and his team, for attention.

RC spoke about aquaculture, saying that at the end of the recent consultation, the IFCAs were now managing these 100 year old sustainable fisheries. The IFCAs are sub-leasing the land to these commercial businesses and there is no public right to access the sites. The IFCAs would welcome clarification from Sea Fish and/or DEFRA regarding the role and capacity of the IFCAs in this area of enforcement/management. SE responded by saying that in this new area of management there is a need for the conservation and economic opportunities to be contextualized. Further discussion would be needed on this.

MPAs were discussed by the Minister who acknowledged that the Tranche 1 sites had represented a big challenge, impacting greatly on the time and resources of the IFCAs. He said that the IFCA model was however best placed to implement this challenging management plan, as their individual localism provided good solutions to protect the marine environment at a relatively low cost. RC said that overall tranche 1 had not been contentious, as voluntary measures and

local agreements had been adapted to reflect current conservation issues. However the challenge of tranche 2 would be the likely need for more bylaws to be created. LW mentioned the reference areas and the challenges on legality. NG said that the issue would be taken to the new administration following the election. The project to review the potential use of HPMA's in tranche 3 is ongoing to investigate if they might provide a useful tool in the well managed network of Marine Protected Areas. DEFRA are considering the results of a recent report, and will incorporate findings into the tranche 3 sites.

TD thanked the Minister for the support via the DEFRA capital funding which has enabled the IFCAs to use shared kit, to provide evidence which supports sound management plans. However TD enquired whether the NE timetable of conservation advice was consistent with the DEFRA timings, as there are still issues with providing sound evidence within the timescales required.

Table of Actions

Action Number	Action	By whom
1	COG to prepare a paper to clarify the IFCA interpretation of the Habitats Directive	Tim Dapling
2	Association to engage with Natural England over the revision of the MOU	Stephen Bolt
3	Association to liaise with Colin Trundle and action move	Stephen Bolt
4	Association to send out MPA reporting requests by 13/3/15	Stephen Bolt
5	Association to send out simple template for the IFCAs to bid for a share of the revenue monies to enable the achievement of DEFRA's MPA 2016 deadline	Stephen Bolt
6	Report back to the Association regarding the revised conservation advice template, and in particular how the £300k revenue may alter the importance of the revised NE timetable	All IFCAs
7	Association to contact Andy Beattie regarding joint working	Stephen Bolt
8	Request for details of the report on mobile species protection to be forwarded to the IFCAs as appropriate	Stephen Bolt to liaise with Terence Ilott
9	Association to ask DEFRA to review guidance to IFCAs	Stephen Bolt to contact Terence Ilott