



Final Report and Recommendations September 7th, 2011

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Where possible, readers are advised to download the single document in preference to the separate download sections. Although the content is identical, the hyperlinks in the report's main Table of Contents and List of Maps are severed when the PDF is split.



Final Report and Recommendations
September 7th, 2011

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The Finding Sanctuary process has been designed and facilitated by Rob Angell of R K Partnership Ltd, supported by Lynn Wetenhall and Jim Welch. The facilitators hold no formal position on any of the substantive issues that have been, or might have been, considered. It was for the participants to decide what issues were raised, how they might be addressed and how any observations, conclusions and recommendations might be recorded and communicated.

Version 14/09/2011 (minor format and spelling corrections from the original submitted on 07/09/2011, these corrections have affected page numbering but the content has not changed)

Cover Note

The Finding Sanctuary process was set up to inform Defra's decision making by providing stakeholder developed recommendations for MCZs in the south-west of England. The stakeholder process has involved a wide range of organisations and individuals interested in or concerned about Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in the south-west.

This report represents the work undertaken by the Finding Sanctuary Stakeholder Group in developing our recommendations for Marine Conservation Zones in the south-west. The report contains the agreements, comments and caveats regarding the sites we have put forward as part of a coherent network of MCZs. In order to get to this point we worked within the parameters given to us by Defra in the form of the Ecological Network Guidance published by Natural England and the JNCC. It is important to note that from individual perspectives these sites may not be our perfect or ideal choice, but we are satisfied that they represent the best negotiated outcome for an inter-linked and inter-dependent network given the time scale and parameters in which we had to work. We are making this report publicly available to ensure openness and transparency. We are not, however inviting comments on the report as this is not a public consultation but the outcome of a participatory planning approach. We are aware that Defra will run a public consultation later on in the process, after we have submitted our recommendations.

Merely by having participated in the process, no stakeholder is thereby bound to agree with every statement in the report.

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Date: September 7th, 2011

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Part I – The Finding Sanctuary Process

I.1 Finding Sanctuary's origins and early work

I.1.1 The three phases of Finding Sanctuary

Finding Sanctuary was a regional stakeholder project tasked with delivering recommendations to the UK Government on the location, boundaries and conservation objectives for Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in south-west England. The project started as a regional pilot project with no official remit, which was subsequently formalised and given its official role by the UK Government.

Finding Sanctuary developed through three phases:

- A **project initiation phase** which developed a concept and raised funds between January 2005 and April 2007.
- A **pilot phase** from April 2007 which established an initial regional stakeholder group, started to develop a planning process, and began to formulate ecological parameters for the establishment of a coherent MPA network.
- A **formal phase**, during which the planning and delivery of the final MCZ recommendations took place. There was no single, specific point in time when the pilot phase ended and the formal phase began. Instead, there was a transition over the course of 2009. The formal phase ended in September 2011, with the delivery of the project's final recommendations for Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), presented in part II.

The first section (I.1) describes the project initiation and pilot phases, as well as the transition period to the formal phase. From section I.2 onwards, this report describes the formal phase, from the end of 2009 to August 2011. Any references made to the earlier phases are the exception, and where they occur they are clearly indicated.

I.1.2 Project origins and initiation phase

Project origins

The idea for Finding Sanctuary originated from a recognition by staff at English Nature¹ that better stakeholder involvement and a strategic, regional-scale approach were needed for marine conservation planning in England, particularly for the design and planning of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Existing MPA processes in England (e.g. the Natura 2000 process, established to comply with the EC Habitats and Birds Directives) were top-down processes with no stakeholder involvement in the initial planning, and were largely being carried out on a site-by-site basis, aimed at protecting a limited number of features rather than a representative cross-section of marine biodiversity.

The concept of systematic conservation planning (developing coherent protected area networks which follow a set of common ecological design principles) had been around for several years (e.g. Cabeza and Moilanen, 2001; Pressey et al., 1993), and increasing effort was being directed by scientists and conservation practitioners internationally towards applying that concept to the marine environment (e.g. Airamé et al., 2003; Evans et al., 2004; Leslie et al. 2003; Murray et al. 2003; OSPAR 2005; Palumbi, 2003; Roberts et al., 2003; Sala et al., 2002). In the UK, the concept was

¹ Later to become Natural England

applied in the Irish Sea Pilot project, carried out for Defra's Review of Marine Nature Conservation (Vincent et al., 2004).

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority had just successfully completed an ambitious project to develop a comprehensive zoning plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park², which came into effect in 2004 (Day et al., 2002; Day et al., 2005). In California, there had been a stakeholder process to develop MPAs in the Channel Islands (Airamé et al., 2003). In addition, the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative³ was being established, which has since embarked on a successful process of establishing a network of MPAs in the coastal waters of California.

The processes in Australia and in California differed from the approach being followed in the UK at that time in two ways: Not only did they approach MPA planning at a regional scale (applying reserve network design principles to create systematic regional MPA networks, rather than individual sites), but they also gave a significant and meaningful voice to a wide range of marine stakeholders within the planning process.

In 2003, a small area within Lundy Special Area of Conservation (SAC) was designated as the first marine no-take zone (NTZ) in the UK. Following the establishment of the Lundy NTZ, other sites started to be discussed for suitability in the south west by a variety of organisations. It was the combination of observing successful processes for developing MPA networks in other parts of the world, combined with the desire to build on the success of Lundy, that led English Nature to propose the South West MPA network project, which was to become Finding Sanctuary.

Project initiation phase

A small amount of funding was found through a new Area Based Delivery Programme within English Nature. At this stage there was no direct obligation from Government, nor any official mandate for the project. English Nature initiated the project in July 2004 through a partnership with Devon County Council, Cornwall County Council and South West Food and Drink. These organisations formed what became the Regional Project Board. The Project Development Officer, Tom Hooper was recruited in November 2004, and started work in January 2005.

Through 2005 the Regional Project Board was widened to include the Wildlife Trusts, Dorset County Council and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). At this early stage, the involvement of stakeholders at a regional and local level was established as a key principle of our approach. Seeking funding was also of particular importance, and the Project Development Officer was tasked with finding the necessary funds.

The project plan was developed through 2005 to incorporate MPA decision-making, data gathering, stakeholder liaison, education and communication. Meetings were held with many different organisations to help inform and learn from different perspectives and experiences. Funding from the National Trust, Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), Cornwall County Council and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation helped to launch the project at the beginning of 2007, marking the beginning of the project's pilot phase.

² http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/management/zoning/planners_info

³ <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/intro.asp>

The project was first presented to the Defra Marine Biodiversity team in November 2006, and subsequently to the head of the Marine and Fisheries Directorate in December 2007.

I.1.3 Pilot Project Phase 2007 - 2009

Project launch and creation of the initial Steering Group

The Finding Sanctuary pilot project was launched through a regional stakeholder workshop on April 25th 2007. The workshop was attended by 107 delegates, with a broad representation of sectors from the south-west region. The principal objective for the workshop was to select a stakeholder group to participate in the planning of a regional MPA network, and to identify their broad remit. This stakeholder group became known as the Steering Group⁴.

The initial Steering Group was formed by asking delegates to identify the key organisations and sectors that should be represented, naming suitable representatives (persons) where possible. Delegates discussed a suitable size for the group, and ultimately settled on no more than 15 organisations, in order for the group to be small enough to be able to carry out the work effectively. As recorded in the meeting report, the conclusion was that the following 15 organisations should be represented on the initial Steering Group:

- Federation of Sea Anglers
- Natural England⁵
- Sea Fisheries Committee⁶
- Marine Science
- Marine NGO (Wildlife and Countryside Link)
- Inshore fishermen (boats less than 10m)
- Offshore fishermen (boats greater than 10m)
- Estuary and Coastal Forum/Partnership
- South West Tourism
- JNCC
- Professional Association of Diving Instructors/British Sub-Aqua Club (Recreational diving)
- Marine and Fisheries Agency
- The Crown Estate
- Energy Sector
- Ports and Harbours

Letters of invitation were sent out in May 2007, and the membership of individual representatives was established in July 2007. Sir Harry Studholme was invited to become the Chairman of the group. In this role he was responsible for chairing meetings and for resolving any individual disagreements or disputes.

⁴ The initial Steering Group was the direct outcome of the launch workshop. The initial Steering Group operated through the project's pilot phase. During the transition into the formal project phase, the Steering Group was expanded significantly, and this is explained later on in this document.

⁵ Previously English Nature

⁶ Now Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Agency

Establishment of the project team and work during the pilot phase

The two-year pilot phase of the project was an important opportunity for Finding Sanctuary to develop and learn within a process that had no formal responsibility. The project team was able to think and learn together with stakeholders for how group decisions could be made on an MPA network, and what components would be necessary to achieve this. The project team also focussed on gathering ecological and socio-economic spatial information, and on building awareness of the project amongst stakeholder groups.

An MPA planner was employed in April 2007, who began building the GIS capacity of the project, sourcing base mapping data, defining the study area and sourcing spatial data on the region's ecology and human uses from national and regional data providers. Work also began on formulating ecological guidelines for MPA network design and four science workshops were organised in early 2008 to help gather evidence and expertise in defining pragmatic design targets and priorities for protection. As a result, some initial ideas for network design targets were developed by the MPA planner, but the task was never fully completed. This was because it was becoming clear that the project was heading towards formalisation and that the ecological design criteria would have to be defined nationally, i.e. it would no longer be part of the remit of the project to define its own ecological guidelines. Nevertheless, the experience gathered during the science workshops proved to be useful input into subsequent discussions around the development of the national Ecological Network Guidance (section I.7.2).

The project identified a gap in the availability of spatial activity data for fishing and recreational activities and set out to collect and map this information through interviews with fishermen and recreational stakeholders. Gathering information about human use of the sea directly from stakeholders is an approach that had previously been used in the context of MPA planning in North America (see Ecotrust's work with Open OceanMap⁷). Finding Sanctuary developed the FisherMap project, based on a similar concept of interviewing fishermen about which areas they use, and getting them to draw those areas on charts for digitisation and subsequent GIS analysis. A GIS and data officer and two stakeholder liaison officers were employed later in 2007, to carry out this work. The FisherMap approach was later applied to recreational sea users, in the StakMap project (both FisherMap and StakMap are described in a bit more detail in section I.5.4).

This pilot phase was also used to research the experience of implementing the California Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), a process that had failed twice because of a lack of adequate resources and stakeholder involvement, but which ultimately established a successful, stakeholder-centred process for planning a network of MPAs. The MPA Planner, Louise Lieberknecht, visited a number of key individuals and organisations involved in the stakeholder process run by the MLPA Initiative in September 2008, and attended one of their stakeholder meetings and one of their Science Advisory Team meetings as an observer. Her visit and report helped to inform the UK on the key factors that had caused the initial failures, and ultimate success, in California. Subsequently, Finding Sanctuary organised a conference on stakeholder participation and good decision making on 23rd October 2008. Two speakers that had in-depth knowledge and direct experience of the MLPA process were invited. On the following day, a workshop session chaired by Jeff Ardron aimed to further capture the advice and experiences of those involved in the California process.

⁷ <http://www.ecotrust.org/ocean/OpenOceanMap.html>

As the pilot phase progressed, Defra became increasingly interested in the project's stakeholder-centred, regional-scale planning model as a possible way of planning Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), a new type of MPA designation planned under new national legislation (the Marine and Coastal Access Act, at the time known as the Marine Bill, as it had not yet been enacted by Parliament). The project team therefore increasingly worked with personnel from Natural England and the JNCC to help develop the national MCZ project. That included the formulation of the national Project Delivery Guidance, defining the official remit of the regional projects and regional stakeholder groups, providing feedback on the developing Ecological Network Guidance, and highlighting the data gathering support and the guidance that we would need from national partners in order to be able to achieve the task within the time available.

During the pilot phase, facilitation support was provided by Diana Pound of Dialogue Matters, who structured and facilitated the launch workshop in April 2007 and who facilitated the first meeting of the initial Steering Group, assisting them in formulating their terms of reference.

Meetings of the initial Steering Group during the pilot phase

The initial Steering Group met on the following dates:

- 23rd September 2007
- 28th November 2007
- 22nd May 2008
- 8th October 2008
- 11th March 2009 (at this time, the project had started its transition to the formal phase)

Initial Steering Group Meeting, 23rd September 2007

The first meeting of the group focussed on developing their terms of reference, i.e. defining the remit of the group, and how they wanted to work together. They agreed that meetings would be undertaken under Chatham House Rules, with comments non-attributed in the meeting reports, although they agreed to the reports being published on Finding Sanctuary's website for transparency.

The other key administrative discussions were around the role of the project team and the differentiation between the role of the Regional Project Board in managing the project and the role of the initial Steering Group in influencing decisions on MPA network design. There was also a first discussion about the role of a scientific expert group. They considered whether other organisations should be involved on the initial Steering Group, but postponed a decision for a subsequent meeting.

Initial Steering Group Meeting, 28th November 2007

At the next meeting on the 28th November 2007 there was continued discussion about the membership of the group and that many economic sectors were not represented. It was also noted that some representatives on the group were members and representatives of sectoral industry bodies or organisations, whereas other members were individuals representing sectors. At this stage the project had not been officially tasked with developing MCZs, but its aim nevertheless was to recommend a network of MPAs to Government. Many members also remained uncertain about what consensus decision making meant, and how decisions could be taken without voting.

Initial Steering Group Meeting, 22nd May 2008

At this meeting, the head of Defra's Marine Biodiversity team gave a presentation which highlighted that the Government was developing a national framework for MPA planning and designation. Finding Sanctuary was being looked at as a potential model for the delivery of recommendations for MCZs. This was the first time that the concept of a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and the Government's aim to establish three regional projects based on Finding Sanctuary's model was introduced to the Steering Group. The international and national context of the MCZ work, and the need to work towards a coherent MPA network consisting of MCZs, and other MPAs designated under separate legislation (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation – SACs, designated under the habitats directive) was explained to the group. At the time, a process was underway to identify another round of SACs by Easter 2010. There was discussion about the quality of data, timescales for decision making and what information was proportionate to make planning decisions.

With some of the early results from FisherMap available (see section I.5.4), there were discussions about how this information would be used to aid decision making and how much more data would be collected. The group were brought up to date with the progress made by the science workshops that had been run by Finding Sanctuary to identify some basic ecological requirements (see above), which demonstrated how complex it is to gain useful guidance that can help with planning processes like this. There were also suggestions to have broad areas of search or site options to be considered to help initiate the work. The use of decision support software such as Marxan (Ball et al., 2009) was also highlighted as an important tool to help with decision making.

Initial Steering Group meeting, 8th October 2008

By the time of this meeting, the project was heading towards the transition to the formal phase and the national MCZ Project was beginning to be formed. Further clarity was given about the role of the regional projects within a national process. Concerns remained about the timescale and how the design of MCZs would relate to Marine Spatial Planning. National data contracts had been let to provide ecological and socio-economic data to all of the regional projects (section I.5.2). No network or potential areas of search existed at this stage and stakeholder focus remained on membership, wider stakeholder communications and data quality.

Initial Steering Group meeting, 11th March 2009

Finding Sanctuary's initial Steering Group met for the final time in March 2009. The group were told that Finding Sanctuary had been formally set up to provide MCZ recommendations to Defra, and that they as the stakeholders would have the central role in planning the MCZs through facilitated meetings. The development of the Ecological Network Guidance (see section I.7.2), which would set the ecological design parameters for the stakeholders' task, was being carried out by Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. A project timetable with several planning iterations was presented and the need for an impact assessment was also introduced. The group discussed concerns about how the outcomes from Finding Sanctuary would be treated by Government and how environmental guidelines would be balanced with economic interests. They also discussed the expansion of the Steering Group to admit more members and make it more widely representative of stakeholder interests (see section I.3.2).

I.1.4 Transition to the formal phase in 2009

Establishment of the national MCZ project

There was no defined point at which the pilot project transformed into the formal phase. Rather, the transition occurred over the course of 2009, over the time period that the national MCZ project was being established.

A national workshop took place in March 2009, which discussed the process for the national MCZ project in detail, including, roles, remits, responsibilities and participants, as well as technical approaches to specific work areas and the gathering of best available data. The discussions held at this workshop fed into the national MCZ project's Project Delivery Guidance, a first draft of which was available in October 2009, and the final version of which was published in July 2010 (see section I.4.1).

The national Project Board was established in September 2009 and three other regional projects were formed through 2009: The Irish Sea Conservation Zone Project for the Irish Sea, Net Gain for the North Sea, and Balanced Seas for the English Channel and South East England. The requirement from Finding Sanctuary and the other regional projects was to provide recommendations for MCZ locations, boundaries and conservation objectives. National staff and the four regional project teams assembled together for the first time at a workshop on December 15th and 16th, 2009. The national MCZ project, including its participants and their roles, is described in more detail in section I.2.

Project team work during the transition period

In light of the establishment of the national MCZ project and Finding Sanctuary's changed responsibilities, the Finding Sanctuary project plan was revised, and the final version presented to the Regional Project Board in September 2009. Much of the Project Manager's and MPA planner's time over the transition period was spent liaising with national partners, to help shape the national process, and adapt Finding Sanctuary's process to reflect the project's new formal responsibilities.

The project team at this time consisted of a project manager, MPA planner, two GIS and data specialists, and liaison officers in Dorset and Devon. The recruitment of a new liaison officer for Devon in July 2008 allowed us to re-locate the current Devon officer to Cornwall. Stakeholder mapping work (the FisherMap project) continued, and expanded with further volunteer assistance, leisure sector mapping and the development of the Web GIS. A communications co-ordinator joined the project in October 2008.

The project team's data gathering role continued through this period. This included the development of the regional profile, a collection of maps showing ecological and socio-economic data for the regional project area, which was presented to the Steering Group members in November 2009.

Two key events took place during this transition period, which might be considered the beginning of the formal planning and delivery phase for Finding Sanctuary. One was the recruitment of facilitators to assist the project team and the Steering Group through the MCZ planning process. Another was the expansion of the Steering Group to its final membership (shown in appendix 2).

One of the main agenda items at the final meeting of the initial Steering Group in March 2009 was to discuss the expansion of the group to admit new members, in order to create a group that would be fully representative of marine stakeholder interests. Full details of the Steering Group membership decisions are presented in section 1.2.2.

New Steering Group members met for an induction in September 2009 and the full group met for the first time in November 2009. For Finding Sanctuary, the expansion of the Steering Group and the induction day for new members marks the end of the transition period.

The need for professional facilitation and process support was also discussed at the initial Steering group's final meeting in March 2009. A tender process was run to identify a professional facilitator for the project in June 2009, and Rob Angell from R K Partnership was selected in July 2009. A number of meetings took place through July and August with his team to familiarise them with the work and the task.

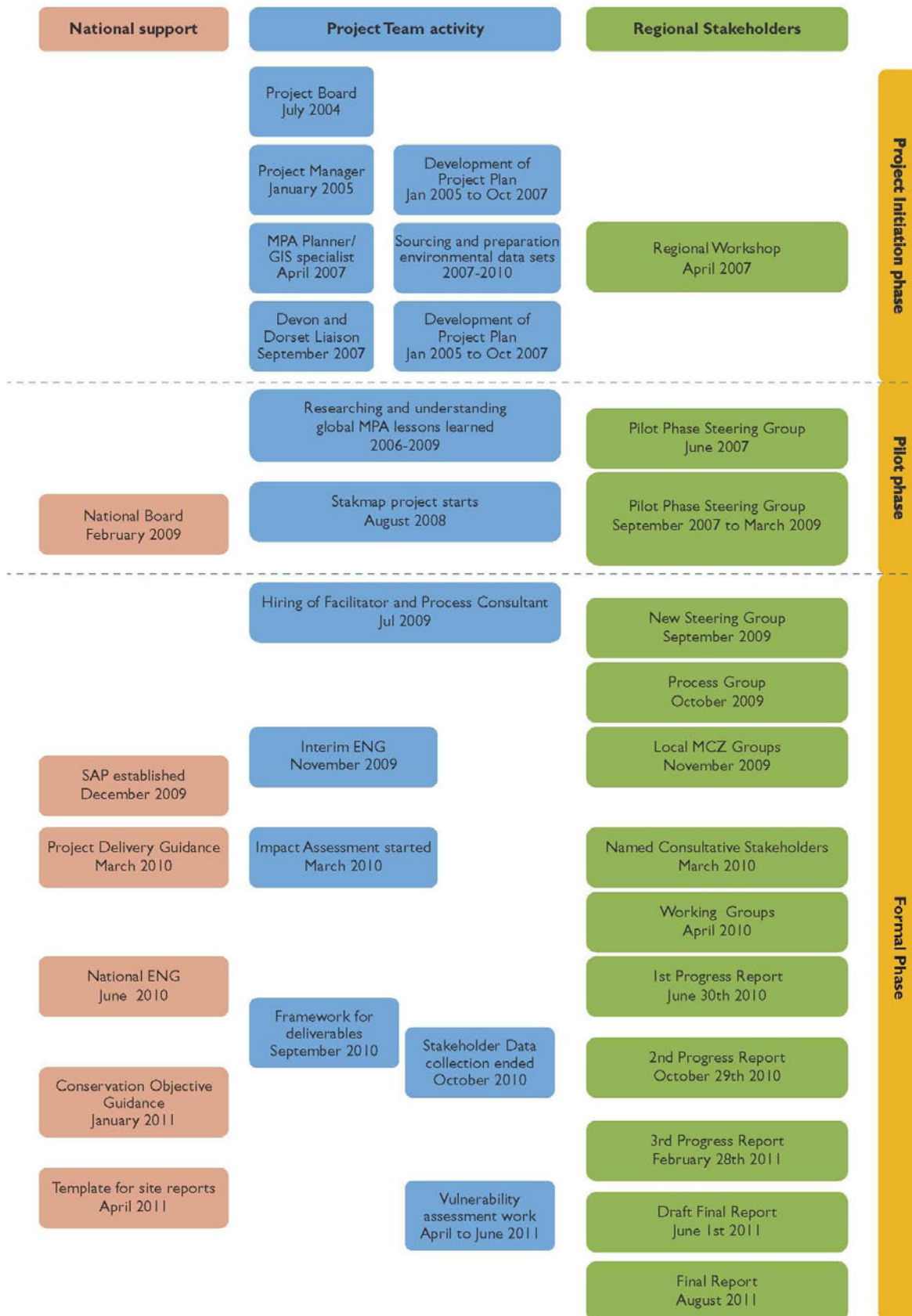


Figure 1: The chronology of the principal components in the Finding Sanctuary process

I.2 National MCZ Project 2009 - 2011: Participants and Roles

I.2.1 The four Regional Projects

The area covered by each of the four regional MCZ projects is shown below. Put together, the four projects covered English territorial waters, and UK offshore waters adjacent to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The size of each region was chosen to reflect the ecological, social, economic and political differences between regional seas in England. When the four projects started work in January 2009 they all followed the same fundamental approach, which was to place a representative group of marine stakeholders at the centre of the MCZ planning process, and to approach the task in a systematic way, at a regional network scale using the same national guidance (see section I.7.2).

At a more detailed level, there were some differences between the four projects, e.g. in the way the stakeholder groups were structured, and in the way the process was designed in detail. These differences were largely the result of the different geographies of the four regions. The size and shape of each project region and its coastline meant that each project faced its own set of logistical challenges, and each region had its own balance of stakeholder interests to consider.

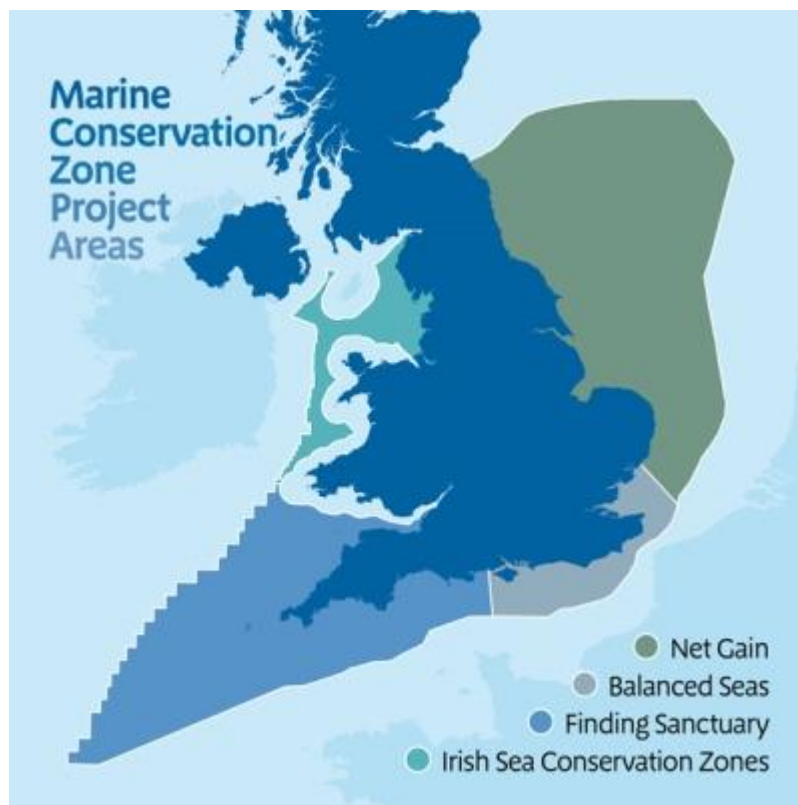


Figure 2: The Four regional projects

I.2.2 The National Project Board

The National Project Board was initially formed by JNCC, Natural England and Defra and met for the first time in February 2009. In March 2010, Defra left the National Board and became a 'critical friend'. The responsibility of the National Project Board was to provide strategic direction in the management of the MCZ project and to ensure there was cross-partner agreement on project planning, management and delivery of products across the four projects and to provide the funding.

The Terms of Reference of the National Project Board were set out in the Project Delivery Guidance (see section I.4.1), and focus on their role to deliver the Government's policy to establish an ecologically coherent network of MPAs by 2012.

The National Project Board membership comprised representatives from JNCC and Natural England at the level of Marine Director, Programme Leader and Project Manager and is chaired by Natural England, Marine Director James Marsden.

I.2.3 Science Advisory Panel

The Science Advisory Panel (SAP) was established as an independent panel consisting of well-respected scientists in December 2009. The SAP was appointed by Defra and chaired by Dr Peter Ryder, former Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Operations of the Met Office. The panel members were Professor Juliet Brodie (Natural History Museum, London), Professor Callum Roberts (University of York), Dr Keith Hiscock (Marine Biological Association, Plymouth), Professor Michel Kaiser (University of Wales, Bangor), Dr Jason Hall-Spencer (University of Plymouth), Professor Mike Elliott (University of Hull), Professor Graham Underwood (University of Essex) and Dr Beth Scott (University of Aberdeen).

The SAP's role was to 'offer objective scientific assessment of site proposals made by the four regional MCZ projects against criteria and guidance provided by the SNCBs and to provide independent scientific advice to Ministers'. (Defra SAP Factsheet) The SAP provided feedback to the regional projects following each progress report, and clarified questions regarding the interpretation of the national Ecological Network Guidance. Their advice was based on ensuring that the developing regional recommendations were meeting the ENG, and that shortfalls in the design of the network were addressed.

The Defra factsheet further stated that the SAP would, at the final stage of the process, report to the Secretary of State to help her make an informed decision on the implementation of the regional recommendations.

I.2.4 The multiple roles of SNCBs in the national and regional context

The Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCBs), JNCC and Natural England, played a number of roles within the process, acting as stakeholders, advisors to Government and funding partners. They also played a pivotal role in managing the gathering of national spatial data layers for the four regional projects, writing key guidance documents and provided assistance in the completion of the vulnerability assessments (see sections I.7, I.9), which defined draft conservation objectives at the end of the planning process.

As stakeholders, Natural England and the JNCC were represented on the stakeholder groups of the four regional projects, and therefore had a direct role in shaping the MCZ recommendations, along with representatives from other sectors. Within Finding Sanctuary, Natural England were represented on the Inshore Working Group and the JNCC on the Offshore Working Group (see section I.3.3).

As advisors to Government, formally it is the role of the SNCBs to provide advice on planning MCZs. This is why the final recommendations from Finding Sanctuary (and the other three regional projects) were submitted to the SNCBs, and not directly to Government. It will be the responsibility of the SNCBs to pass on the recommendations to Government, with any additional commentary they deem necessary.

Both the JNCC and Natural England were members of Finding Sanctuary's Regional Project Board (see section 1.3.1). In this role they were responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of the regional project, and for providing technical advice and guidance. As stated in section 1.2.2 the JNCC and NE are also the two organisations that make up the National Project Board.

Both organisations provided technical advice, data, and guidance, without which the regional projects would not have been able to fulfil their tasks. Including:

- The management of national data collation contracts which gathered environmental and socio-economic spatial datasets to underpin the planning in all four regional projects (see section 1.5.2).
- The writing of the Ecological Network Guidance (ENG), which was of fundamental importance to the process as it set out the ecological design criteria that the network configuration had to meet (see section 1.7.2).
- The writing of the Project Delivery Guidance (PDG), which set out the participants, remits, responsibilities and timelines of the national MCZ project (see section 1.4.1).
- The writing of the Conservation Objective Guidance (COG), which defined the way in which draft conservation objectives had to be developed and presented (see section 1.9).
- The management of the delivery of national sensitivity matrices, which were needed in order to be able to apply the COG (see section 1.8).
- The provision of direct advice and assistance to the four regional projects in applying the COG during the vulnerability assessments

1.3 Finding Sanctuary 2009 - 2011: Regional Project Participants & Roles

1.3.1 The Project Partnership (Regional Project Board)

The Finding Sanctuary Regional Project Board was set up in July 2004, initially consisting of English Nature (later to become Natural England), Cornwall County Council, Devon County Council, and South West Food and Drink. Dorset County Council joined in August 2005, the JNCC in February 2005, the Wildlife Trusts in August 2006, the National Trust and RSPB in November 2007, and Somerset County Council in February 2009. The addition of Somerset County Council to the Regional Project Board resulted in a small expansion of the project's previous study boundaries, extending them further eastwards within the Bristol Channel.

The Project Board was responsible for overseeing the delivery of the project and has overall legal, financial and management responsibility for the project. The Project Manager reported to the Project Board and through quarterly meetings the Board provided strategic and technical advice to support the team and its work.

The Finding Sanctuary Project Board made the decision to follow a stakeholder-driven process for the development of MPAs, rather than taking a direct role in designing MPAs themselves. After the project became formalised through 2009, the Regional Project Board took on a role which gave them responsibility for the effective delivery of the MCZ recommendations in the South West. This role has been embodied in section 2.2.1 of the Project Delivery Guidance, which states that Board members will 'not be directly involved in, and will not influence, the MCZ recommendations' (for details on what the Project Delivery Guidance is, see section 1.4.1).

The Project was hosted by South West Food and Drink, which provided the administrative support through the provision of a physical workspace, computer networking, financial accounting, payroll and general management and administration.

The Chairman of the Finding Sanctuary Project Board between July 2004 and May 2010 was English Nature/Natural England Regional Director, Janette Ward; between May 2010 and June 2011 Natural England Senior Marine Specialist Stephen Warman and since June 2011 South West Food and Drink Executive Director Christine Marshall.

I.3.2 The Steering Group

Role of the Steering Group

During the formal phase (from September 2009 onwards), the expanded Steering Group came together in a series of meetings, during which their responsibility was to develop MCZ recommendations in line with the ecological design criteria set out in the ENG, balancing the needs and interests of the different sectors represented. These meetings were designed and led by a professional facilitator (R K Partnership), although Sir Harry Studholme retained a formal role as the Steering Group Chairman during which he provided advocacy and support for the project within Government and the South West Region.

In order to manage the amount of work that was necessary, the Steering Group formed two smaller subgroups, the Inshore Working Group and the Offshore Working Group, which later merged to form the Joint Working group. The Working Groups had frequent meetings, during which they carried out the detailed MCZ planning work on behalf of the wider Steering Group, which met less frequently to review the progress made (this process of managing the Steering Group's work is described in detail in section I.3.5). The Steering Group's final MCZ recommendations are set out in part II of this report.

Steering Group Terms of Reference and Protocol

Following the expansion of the Steering Group at the beginning of the formal phase, the original Terms of Reference were updated and replaced with a new Steering Group Protocol (supplied with the additional materials listed in appendix 14). The Protocol set out the Steering Group's role in developing a set of MCZ recommendations to Government; the Group's responsibility in ensuring that different stakeholder views and perspectives were heard and considered, and that details on work progress were communicated back to constituents (i.e. other people within the wider sectors represented by each individual on the group). The new Protocol was developed by the project's new process consultants and facilitators, R K Partnership and amended and agreed by the Process Group and Steering Group (see section I.6.2) in October 2009. Subsequent changes and additions were made to it until September 2010.

The evolution of the Steering Group membership

The following sections outline how the Steering Group membership evolved through the formal phase, and the final Steering Group membership is fully detailed in Appendix 2.

In order to pro-actively widen the membership of the SG, The Finding Sanctuary team issued press releases and made direct contact to the following organisations and individuals:

- Dorset Fishermen
- Cornwall MPA Group
- Trinity House
- Water skiing
- English Heritage
- Isles of Scilly Sea Fisheries Committee
- Ministry of Defence (MOD)
- Dorset Coast Forum
- Professional Boatman's Association
- Devon Maritime Forum
- British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC)
- Royal Yachting Association (RYA)
- British Wind Energy Association
- Windsurf, Kitesurf and Wave surf
- National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO)
- Cornish Federation of Sea Anglers (CFSA)
- Department for Energy and Climate Change
- British Marine Aggregates Producers Association
- United Kingdom Cable Protection Committee (UKCPC)
- British Canoe Union
- Spearfishing (British Spearfishing Association)
- Sub Aqua Association

In applying for membership, prospective members were required to detail which organisation, sector and geographical area they represented, whether they represented their sector on any other groups, why they felt that their interests were not already represented on the Steering Group, and why they felt that they were the best person to represent their sector.

The selection of new members was carried out by the original Steering Group members at a meeting in March 2009, under the guidance of the Steering Group Chairman, and with a set of criteria that was produced by the Project Manager. This detailed that there should be an assumption for selection if the sector was not already represented on the Steering Group, if there was more than one major group, organisation or association within a particular sector, or if a sector has a particular geographic distinction or importance. Further criteria explained that if there were more than two applicants, then the Steering Group would need to evaluate the application, and if necessary carry out interviews. For any application from a sector that was already represented, the group was asked to consider if further representation was appropriate.

Applications were accepted from:

- Bridget Betts (Dorset Coast Forum, representing Dorset Local Group)
- Jim Masters (Devon Maritime Forum, representing Devon Local Group)
- Elly Andison (Environment Agency)
- Jim Barnard (Independent consultant, representing Somerset Local Group)

- Peter Bartlett (Leisure Boating, RYA)
- Derek Blackmore (Water Skiing)
- David Bond (South West Handliners and Professional Charter Skippers)
- Sam Davis (Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee, representing Cornwall Local Group)
- Rod Jones (MOD)
- Andy Green (British Canoe Union)
- Jane Maddocks (British Sub Aqua Club)
- Peter Madigan (Offshore Renewables, British Wind Energy Association, later changed to Renewable UK)
- Christopher Matthews (Duchy of Cornwall)
- Paul St. Pierre (RSPB)
- Mark Russell (British Marine Aggregates Producers Association)
- Nick Russell (English Heritage)
- Richard Stride (South Coast Fishermen's Association)
- Dave Thomasson (British Spearfishing Association)
- Armand Toms (Looe Fishermen's Protection Association)
- Steve Watt (Isles of Scilly Sea Fisheries Committee, representing Isles of Scilly Local Group)
- Richard Hill (UK Cable Protection Committee)
- Dale Rodmell (NFFO)

Applications were rejected from:

- Cornwall County Council, on the basis that sufficient feedback and communication with the council was already in place.
- Terry Mann (Dive Clean), with the recommendation that he should be invited to join the Devon Local Group.
- Jean Luc Solandt (Marine Conservation Society), on the basis that conservation NGOs were already represented and that this organisation should be represented nationally⁸
- Richard White (Devon Wildlife Trusts) on the basis that the County Wildlife Trusts should attend the Local Groups⁹
- Michael Wright (Handline fisherman) on the basis that this sector was already represented by David Bond

The Project Manager was asked to undertake interviews with Mike Concannon, Paul Taylor and Mike Bailey from the recreational angling sector, and subsequently made a recommendation for the Steering Group to accept Mike Bailey and Paul Taylor.

Following the appointment of R K Partnership as process consultants they advised on a process and structure for future decisions on SG membership. First, they undertook a structured stakeholder analysis in January 2010 with the Process Group. The purpose was to see if there were any critical gaps in the Steering Group make-up and to provide a clearer rationale for decisions over new members. This analysis showed a lack of involvement from those with international influence, the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), environmental campaigning NGOs and raised

⁸ As explained below, Dominic Flint joined the Steering Group in July 2010 to represent the Marine Conservation Society

⁹ As explained below, Richard White replaced Joan Edwards to represent regional Wildlife Trusts in September 2009

questions about the level of involvement of Local Authorities. Ultimately it was agreed that the Local Authorities should be encouraged to get involved through the Local Groups (see section I.3.6). A further outcome of this consideration was that a category of Named Consultative Stakeholders was established. This was done to give organisations who didn't want to commit to attending the Finding Sanctuary meetings but who were deemed to be legitimate stakeholders a way of participating in the Finding Sanctuary process. (see I.3.4 for a more detailed description of the NCS role and remit).

New applications were received for Steering Group membership throughout the formal phase of the process. As per the Steering Group Protocol, these were first considered by the Process Group (see section I.3.5), and if agreed were then put forward to the Steering Group for their endorsement or rejection. The list below details each application and the decisions that were made:

- Marinet (January 2010): Process Consultants RKP advised the Process Group that an environmental campaigning organisation was identified in the stakeholder analysis, but currently missing from the Steering Group. However, The Process Group decided not to take this advice and recommended that they should be involved in Local Groups and through the Defra consultation.
- British Chamber of Shipping (January 2010): Agreed on the basis that commercial shipping was not represented.
- British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC) (January 2010): Agreed, but suggested that a Named Consultative Stakeholder place should be offered.

In order to ensure consistency between the regional projects, three more sectors were invited to join the Steering Group in April 2010: the Marine and Coastguard Agency (MCA), the University of Plymouth (to represent Geology and Geomorphology) and the Marine Conservation Society. The MCA and University of Plymouth ultimately took up Named Consultative Stakeholder status (see section I.3.4), and the Marine Conservation Society took up membership of the Steering Group in July 2010 following a long discussion and ultimate endorsement by the Steering Group.

A number of membership changes (replacements) also took place over the course of the project:

- Dick Appleton was replaced by Sandie Wilson in June 2010 to represent the ports sector.
- David Bond was replaced by David Marshall in April 2010 to represent the commercial handling sector.
- Armand Toms was replaced by Paul Trebilcock in April 2010 to represent the commercial fishing sector.
- Jonet Waldock was replaced by Colin Cornish in April 2010 to represent regional economy and development.
- Peter Bartlett was replaced by Caroline Price in March 2011 to represent recreational boating.
- David Tudor was replaced by Andrew Finlay in October 2010 to represent The Crown Estate.
- Mark Layton was replaced by Dale Spree in November 2009 to represent the Professional Association of Diving Instructors.
- Peter Madigan was replaced by Paul Reynolds in October 2010 to represent the British Wind Energy Association, which also changed its name to Renewable UK.
- Joan Edwards representing the Wildlife and Countryside Link was replaced by Richard White representing the Wildlife Trusts in September 2009.

- Emma Whittlesea, representative for the tourism sector, was replaced by Malcolm Bell in January 2011
- Cheryl Hiles was replaced by Johnny Gowdy in February 2010 to represent RegenSW
- Rachel Tallon representing British Water Ski left the group in February 2010 to become a Named Consultative Stakeholder
- Richard Hill representing United Kingdom Cable Protection Committee (UKCPC) left the group in February 2010 to become a Named Consultative Stakeholder
- Tom Pickerell representing the SAGB joined the group in June 2010 and left the group in February 2011 to become a Named Consultative Stakeholder.

Following a review of the task, the time available and the number of people on the Steering Group Process consultants R K Partnership recommended the formation of Working Groups to carry out the detailed planning of the network. They also recommended the creation of a Process Group to advise on the governance and process aspects of the work. The Process Group would also reduce the amount of time that process-related issues took within the Steering Group.

I.3.3 Subgroups of the Steering Group: The Working Groups

The Inshore, Offshore and Joint Working Groups

It was recognised early on by the facilitators, project team and Steering Group members that a Steering Group of 42 members was too large a group and was not appropriately constructed (according to the RKP stakeholder analysis) for carrying out detailed planning work, engaging with complex spatial data and guidance, and having in-depth and often contentious discussions that ultimately needed to be constructive in producing a recommended network configuration. Two small subgroups were therefore formed from within the Steering Group, whose task it was to meet much more frequently and carry out detailed deliberations and planning work. One focused on planning within 12nm of the coast (the Inshore Working Group or IWG), and the other planned beyond 12nm (the Offshore Working Group or OWG). The Working Groups met every 4-6 weeks from March to December 2010.

In December 2010, the two groups merged to form the Joint Working Group (JWG), in order to combine the detailed planning work from each WG into a more holistic regional MCZ network. The Joint Working Group met six times, from December 2010 to June 2011 of which three occasions were two-day meetings.

Working Group formation and membership

The concept of the Working Groups was introduced at and agreed to at the November 2009 Steering Group meeting. With advice from the facilitator, the Process Group subsequently developed criteria for Working Group membership at their meeting in January 2010. The key criteria were that the Working Groups would be made up of Steering Group members, have a maximum of 10 people, and be cross-sectoral, maintaining a balance of interests similar to that of the wider Steering Group as far as possible.

At the Steering Group meeting in February 2010 SG members were asked to put themselves forward for membership of the two Working Groups. This resulted in the following nominations:

Inshore: Keith Bower (enforcement), Mike Bailey (sea angling), Nick Russell (heritage), Peter Bartlett (recreational boating), Rick Parker (charter skippers), Emma Jackson (marine science), Paul St. Pierre (conservation NGO), The Crown Estate (owners), Dave Cuthbert (commercial fishing), John Butterwith (commercial fishing), Dale Rodmell (commercial fishing), Roger Covey (statutory conservation), Richard Stride (commercial fishing)

Offshore: Beth Stoker (statutory conservation), John Butterwith (commercial fishing), The Crown Estate (owners), Dale Rodmell (commercial fishing), Jim Portus (commercial fishing) and Julian Roberts (enforcement)

Following this Steering Group meeting, Steering Group members (including those not present at the meeting) were asked whether they wanted to make any further additions. As a result, Oliver Wragg (BWEA) registered interest in joining the inshore group and Peter Macconnell (sea angling) asked to be added to both groups. Dale Spree (recreational diving) offered help and Sam Davis (Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee) offered input if it was needed.

The project manager then worked with the process consultant to construct and come up with the Working Group membership, using the criteria agreed by the process group as closely as possible. The following was also done:

- Since there were five fishing representatives put forward between the Offshore and Inshore Working Groups, the Project Manager made a request for them to sort out amongst themselves two representatives to sit on each of the Working Groups. Jim Portus asked for his nomination to be removed.
- Peter Macconnell and Mike Bailey agreed between themselves for Peter to take a role in the Offshore Working Group and Mike on the Inshore Working Group
- The Crown Estate had initially requested to be represented on both Working Groups, but in consultation with the Project Manager withdrew the request, as time commitment involved was significant. This was with the proviso that they would be able to review the Working Groups progress regularly, and have the opportunity to influence the work through comments and feedback.
- The Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB wanted a seat on both the Inshore and Offshore Working Groups, they agreed between themselves for the Wildlife Trusts to sit on the Inshore Working Group, and the RSPB on the Offshore Working Group.
- Peter Bartlett and Dale Spree were invited to share a place, but since no response was received from Dale Spree, Peter Bartlett was given the place to represent the recreational boating sector.
- Since enforcement agencies (Sea Fisheries Committee and Marine and Fisheries Agency) had agreed between themselves not to pro-actively putting sites forward, the Project Manager judged that it was not sensible for them to be on the Working Groups.
- British Wind Energy Association and the South West RDA agreed between themselves that Colin Cornish, an independent marine energy consultant for SWRDA could represent renewable interests as part of a broader remit to represent South West economic interests.

The final groups were constituted as follows:

Inshore Working Group:

Name	Sector
Dave Cuthbert	commercial fishing
Richard Stride	commercial fishing
Rick Parker	charter skippers
Roger Covey	statutory conservation
Richard White	conservation NGOs
Mike Bailey	recreational sea angling
Colin Cornish	regional development and economy
Peter Bartlett	recreational boating
Nick Russell	heritage
Emma Jackson/Olivia Langmead	Marine Science

Offshore Working Group

Name	Sector
Beth Stoker	statutory conservation
Rick Parker	charter skippers
Paul St. Pierre	conservation NGOs
Peter Macconnell	recreational sea angling
Colin Cornish	regional development and economy
Dale Rodmell	Offshore fishing
John Butterwith	Offshore fishing

Membership changes and substitutions

- Andrew Finlay joined the Offshore Working Group in November 2010 to represent The Crown Estate
- Peter Bartlett was replaced by Caroline Price in January 2011 to represent recreational boating
- Peter Macconnell left the Offshore Working Group in October 2010
- Rick Parker also joined the Offshore Working Group in June 2010

At the June 2010 OWG meeting, the issue of substitution arose. It was recognised that having substitutes attend Working Group meetings was not ideal, since the Working Groups met frequently and the regular members built up knowledge, trust, and working dynamics that enabled them to operate effectively. However, it was agreed in this meeting to allow a named person as a substitute, on the basis that they must be well briefed, a member of the Steering Group, and from the same sector as the person they were substituting for.

Further requests were made for substitutes, so an update to the protocol was developed by R K Partnership and presented to the Working Groups in September which stated:

1. Working group members will make every effort to attend Working Group meetings.
2. If they cannot attend a meeting, they can send someone in their place, but must comply with the following criteria:

- a. The replacement person must come from the same sector as the Working Group member that they are standing in for
- b. The replacement should be a Steering Group member. A replacement who is not a Steering Group member *can only attend if the Working Group member has established that no Steering Group member from their sector is available*
- c. The replacement must be well briefed by the Working Group member, so they are able to add value to the meeting of the Working Group and not hold it back
- d. The Working Group member must inform the Project Team of the name and contact details of the replacement person

Inviting expert witnesses

The WGs also had to address a request from some stakeholders (sectors) to bring in expert witnesses or people with more detailed knowledge of particular sites under consideration. This was referred to the Process Group who decided that as long as the whole Working Group agreed that some additional knowledge or expert input was needed then that was acceptable.

The following was added to the Steering Group protocol:

'If the Working Group, as a whole, believes that the presence of one or more people, who bring particular knowledge, is needed at one of its meetings, then the Group can invite any such expert witness, (whether a Steering Group member or not), to attend a meeting. This does not mean that the person then becomes a Group member.'

At the September meeting both Working Groups agreed to use the protocol on substitutes and invitations for expert witnesses.

Other membership issues

Before the October 2010 IWG meeting, representatives had objected to Paul Trebilcock attending from Cornwall and in the meeting fishing representatives highlighted that this would delay getting useful feedback from Cornwall on the building blocks. A need was also identified for input from The Crown Estate. A suggestion was made to organise a separate experts' day in which experts could be invited to provide information and feedback on building blocks. This was agreed and a meeting was set up for the Environment Agency, Crown Estates, Renewables sector, Ports and Harbours and Commercial fishing to attend as experts.

At the October 2010 OWG, the fishing sector requested two people to attend the next meeting as experts. An idea for an expert workshop to learn from specialists from different sectors was discounted. The group were reminded to focus on the expertise that is needed to help them make decisions. The fishing industry felt that they did not have the required knowledge of fishing activity in South Devon, Dorset or Cornwall and that having experts would allow quicker decisions. A particular issue was identified around obtaining wider affirmation of decisions and ensuring that those fishermen who are not able to get to meetings are not disadvantaged. The group also noted that wider meetings took place with the fishing industry to help gain this affirmation and validation and fishing representatives highlighted the importance of gaining buy-in from their sector. Some members of the group remained concerned that having new fishing experts join the next meeting

would upset the dynamics and working relationships, so a decision was made for the OWG to offer to attend the next fisheries meeting.

The application from Jim Portus to join the Offshore Working Group was considered, but rejected because the group felt it was at too late a stage in their work and they judged it to be a risk to the existing group dynamics as well as his lack of understanding of other sectoral needs.

I.3.4 Named Consultative Stakeholders

Named Consultative Stakeholder (NCS) status was devised by the process consultant, RK Partnership, and introduced to the Process Group (see section I.3.4) in January 2010. The basis for this new status was to accommodate organisations and individuals who had been invited onto the Steering Group, but for different reasons chose not to take up their place. With membership of the Steering Group strictly limited, it was also a useful secondary status for those organisations which were not granted Steering Group membership. With this status, stakeholders were able to provide information to the Steering Group, and comment on work emerging from the Steering Group, but they had no direct participation in the network design process.

The NCS status was adopted by the Steering Group at a meeting in February 2010. Places were immediately offered to British Water Ski and the UK Cable Protection Committee, since they had already indicated that they would prefer a more consultative role. The British Association of Shooting and Conservation also subsequently opted to take up this status. Further applications were subsequently accepted from:

- EDF Energy (July 2010)
- Trinity House (August 2010)
- Marine and Coastguard Agency (September 2010)
- MPA Coalition (September 2010)
- Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins (October 2010)
- Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation (October 2010)
- Pêcheurs de Manche et d'Atlantique (October 2010)
- Rederscentrale (November 2011)
- Angling Trust (December 2011)
- Cruising Association (January 2011)
- Surfers Against Sewage (February 2011)
- Pelagic Regional Advisory Council (February 2011)
- Cornwall Council (March 2011)
- The British Marine Federation's application for Steering Group membership was turned down, but they agreed to take up NCS status. (September 2010)
- Plymouth University School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences application for Steering Group membership was turned down, but they agreed to take up NCS status. (April 2010)
- The Shellfish Association of Great Britain transferred from Steering Group to NCS status in February 2011

No NCS applications were rejected.

I.3.5 Process Group

Process Group Role

The Process Group had responsibility for process governance and was established as a way of delegating the responsibility for detailed process discussions away from the full Steering Group. This helped to reduce the amount of time that the Steering Group had to spend on process matters, freeing up time for MPA network design discussions at the Steering Group (and Working Group) meetings. The Process Group was set up in September 2009. Over the course of the project, it met regularly to guide the overall process, assist in planning Steering Group meetings and consider issues such as membership and Steering Group member conduct.

Process Group Membership

The membership comprised four Steering Group members from different sectors, three Project team members and the project's main facilitator, Rob Angell. The selection of Process Group members was made by the Project Manager and facilitator with the aim of including members who were judged to be committed to trying to make the process work, knowledgeable and representative of different sectoral interests.

- From the Steering Group the membership consisted of: Richard White (Wildlife Trusts, Conservation), Andy Green (British Canoe Union, Recreation), Dick Appleton (Poole Harbour Commissioners, Commercial), Jim Masters (Devon Maritime Forum, Local Groups).
- From the Project Team the membership consisted of: Tom Hooper (Project Manager), Louise Lieberknecht (MPA Planner), David Murphy (Devon Liaison Officer)
- From RKP: Rob Angell.

There were some changes to this membership: in January 2010 Spike Searle replaced David Murphy, in July 2010 Rick Parker replaced Andy Green, and Dave Cuthbert joined in July 2010 to shadow Dick Appleton who left in October.

Process Group meetings were held on 18th January 2010, 19th April 2010, 9th July 2010, 17th September 2010, 17th January 2011, and 5th April 2011.

I.3.6 Local Groups

Role of Local Groups

Local MCZ Groups were set up to ensure that Finding Sanctuary was able to operate effectively and engage at a scale that was meaningful to local stakeholders, and to ensure that local perspectives could be heard when the regional network was being shaped. They were also intended to help ensure that Finding Sanctuary had access to local ecological data, and other spatial data where relevant, such as estuary management plans.

Local Groups operated in both a proactive and reactive capacity: They provided site suggestions to the regional Steering Group, and they also reviewed the regional Steering Group's progress and provided feedback on the developing recommendations from a local perspective. Each local group was managed by a co-ordinator who worked in close collaboration with the Finding Sanctuary project team to organise meetings. The Local Group co-ordinators also sat on the regional Steering Group, to ensure effective two-way communications between the local and regional levels. Process

consultants R K Partnership joined the project after the role of the Local Groups had already been established. Their advice was that the role of the Local Groups should have been better defined to ensure it was crystal clear that the Steering Group was the decision taker and that the Local Groups could feed back on the Steering Group's work, but could not override it.

Formation of Local Groups

There were five Local Groups in total: Dorset, Devon, Somerset, Cornwall, and the Isles of Scilly. With the exception of Cornwall which already had an MPA group in existence, the groups were set up by Finding Sanctuary in collaboration with a local partner. Financial, administrative and technical support was provided by Finding Sanctuary. A planning meeting was organised with co-ordinators in November 2009 and a two-day training course in organising and running stakeholder meetings was designed and run by R K Partnership in February 2010. The purpose was to support the LG coordinators run more participative meetings and help them with approaches to group decision making so that the LGs were mirroring what was being done at the regional level.

The Cornwall MPA group was co-ordinated by Sam Davis at the Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee. The remaining Local Groups were set up through autumn 2009 and were organised and co-ordinated as follows:

- Devon: co-ordinated by Jim Masters, Devon Maritime Forum
- Dorset: co-ordinated by Bridget Betts, Dorset Coast Forum
- Isles of Scilly: co-ordinated by Steve Watt, Isles of Scilly Sea Fisheries Committee
- Somerset: co-ordinated by Martin Syvret, Finding Sanctuary (on behalf of Jim Barnard)

A Terms of Reference for the Local Groups was written by Finding Sanctuary which set explained the role of the groups and how they should operate. In terms of membership, the aim was to establish a balanced and representative membership of stakeholders who have excellent knowledge of their sector and area. When Local Group membership was considered, the presumption was one of inclusion, since the aim was to bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to the group, in order to achieve a better outcome both from a local and a regional perspective. Public calls were made within the Devon Maritime Forum and Dorset Coast Forum and local media for stakeholders to join the Local Groups, and membership selection was undertaken jointly by each co-ordinator and the respective Finding Sanctuary liaison officer to ensure that all sectors and associations were adequately represented.

The Dorset Local Group

The Dorset MCZ Group was co-ordinated and managed by the Dorset Coast Forum through their permanent co-ordinator, Bridget Betts with support from the Finding Sanctuary Dorset Liaison Officer John Weinberg and GIS and Planning Specialist Alana Murphy. The group was set up in September 2009, specifically to carry out the MCZ work under Finding Sanctuary. New members were allowed to join half way through when there was not sufficient representation on the group to reflect these new members' concerns. The full membership list and organisations involved is detailed in Appendix 2

Meeting dates: 7th December 2009, 27th January 2010, 13th May 2010, 30th September 2010, 25th January 2011 and 17th February 2011

The Devon Local Group

The Devon MCZ Group was co-ordinated and managed by the Devon Maritime Forum through their permanent co-ordinator, Jim Masters with support from the Finding Sanctuary Devon Liaison Officer David Murphy and GIS and Planning Specialist Alana Murphy. The group was set up in September 2009 specifically to carry out the MCZ work under Finding Sanctuary. The full membership list and organisations involved is detailed in Appendix 2.

Meeting dates: 7th December 2009, 26th February 2010, 5th July 2010, 28th September 2010 and 1st February 2011

The Cornwall Local Group

The Cornwall MPA Group was first formed in 2004, although the membership at this stage was predominantly from the conservation sectors. The group was organised and hosted through the Environment Service of Cornwall County Council. The group was reconstituted in January 2007 and hosted by Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee (later to become Cornwall IFCA). The membership was further expanded in March 2009 in recognition of the need to involve a wider range of sectors in the Finding Sanctuary process. The group was chaired by County Councillor, Nigel Walker and the co-ordinator and Steering Group representative was Sam Davis. Support was provided by Finding Sanctuary Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Liaison Officer Spike Searle and GIS and Planning Specialist Alana Murphy. The full membership list and organisations involved is detailed in Appendix 2.

Meeting dates: 13th April 2010, 8th July 2010, 29th September 2010, 10th November 2010, 20th January 2011 and 17th February 2011

The Isles of Scilly Local Group

The Isles of Scilly MCZ group was set up on 8th October 2009 and the first meeting was on the 11th January 2010. The group was hosted by the Isles of Scilly Sea Fisheries committee (later to become the Isles of Scilly IFCA). The group is co-ordinated by Chief Fisheries Officer Steve Watt and Chaired by Mike Hicks. The membership was selected by Steve Watt based on the criteria established by Finding Sanctuary. Support was provided by Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Liaison Officer Spike Searle and GIS and Planning Specialist Alana Murphy. The Isles of Scilly had previously been a member of the Cornwall MPA group, although attendance had always proved problematic because of the travel involved. The full membership list and organisations involved is detailed in Appendix 2.

Meeting dates: 11th January 2010, 26th March 2010, 16th June 2010, 4th August 2010, 16th November 2010, 26th January 2011, 13th April 2011, 27th April 2011

Somerset

The Somerset MCZ Group was set up and co-ordinated by Finding Sanctuary liaison officer, Martin Syvret with assistance from Finding Sanctuary GIS and Planning Specialist Alana Murphy. The full membership list and organisations involved is detailed in Appendix 2.

Meeting dates: 1st February 2010, 22nd April 2010, 29th Jul 2010, 27th Sep 2010, 12th Jan 2011

I.3.7 Project Team

The Project Team provided support to the decision-making process through the provision of data, communications and stakeholder outreach. The team was built up through the process as the need arose, and as funds were secured. The team (detailed in Appendix 3) remained in place through the formal phase of the project, and roles they were provided were as follows:

Stakeholder support

- Organising and preparing for planning meetings
- Responding to general process enquiries,
- Managing criticism and other feedback for the process
- Organising membership changes
- Supporting sector specific meetings such as those run by the South West fishing industry for which tables and maps were produced.

GIS and planning support:

- Sourcing and processing of relevant spatial data,
- Support of the FisherMap (Fishing activity mapping) and StakMap (Leisure activity mapping) projects (see section I.5.4),
- Development and management of stakeholder databases linked to the FisherMap and StakMap projects
- Preparation of a regional profile showing maps of ecological and socio-economic information for the region
- Preparation of hard copy and interactive maps for stakeholders to use during planning meetings
- Preparation of initial MCZ site options (referred to as focus areas and building blocks) in line with the ENG
- Digitising stakeholder site suggestions and updating maps of the developing network configuration following planning meetings
- Writing up of meeting records, development of network statistics and data reporting
- Development of ENG-related statistical feedback tools for use during planning meetings
- Preparation of progress reports, final report and presentations to the SAP

Liaison

- Collecting spatial activity data from fishing and recreational stakeholders at a club and individual level (FisherMap and StakMap – see section I.5.4)
- Communicating with stakeholders to ensure they were aware of the project and its progress, feeding back communications to the project team, supporting local and regional stakeholder group work

Communications

- Using web sites, forums and news media to ensure awareness of the project
- Help stakeholders communicate with their constituents
- Ensure co-ordination between other regional MCZ projects and within the national MCZ project

Impact Assessment

- Development of the Impact Assessment to communicate what the likely economic, environmental and social consequences of the recommended MCZs will be
- Development of financial models for fisheries impacts
- Meetings with stakeholders to check facts and figures

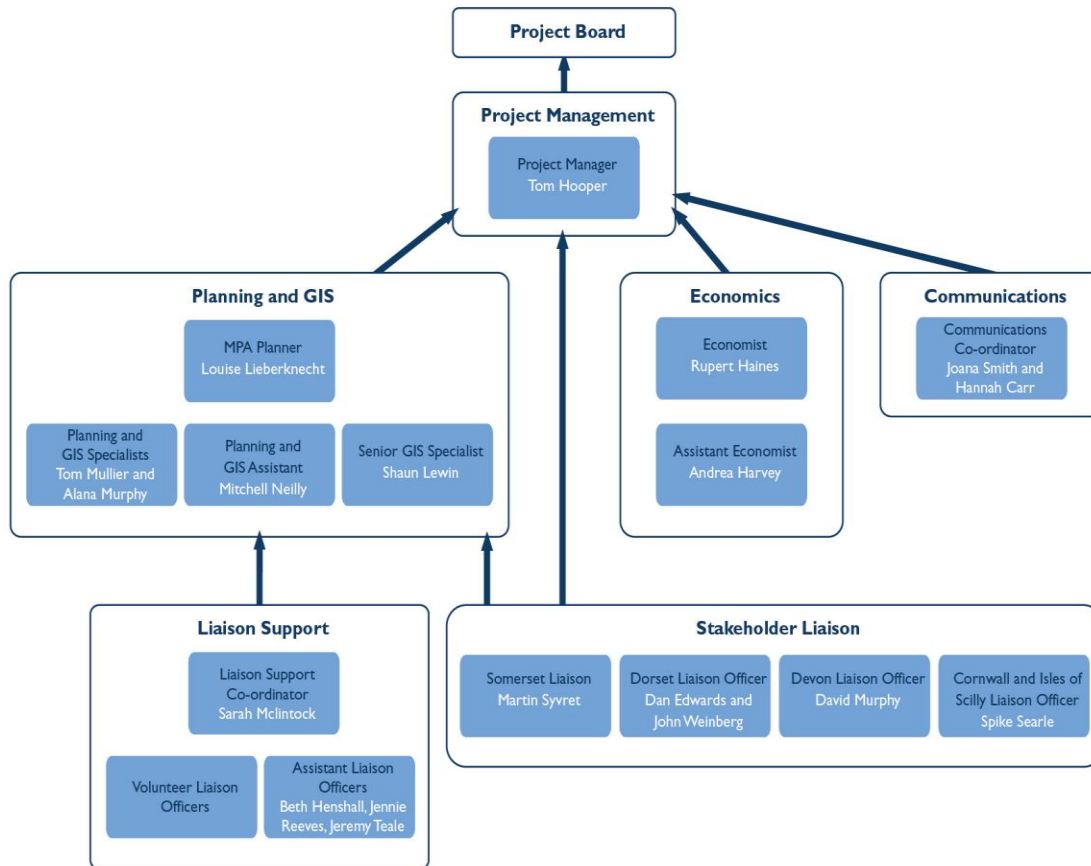


Figure 3: The Finding Sanctuary Project Team

1.3.8 Facilitators

Rob Angell from R K Partnership, together with two associates, Lynn Wetenhall and Jim Welch provided professional advice on the organisation and management of the overall process, to enable stakeholders to work effectively. This included providing advice on the sequence, number, participation and style of meetings to ensure that the work was completed on time. For each planning meeting (i.e. Working Group and Steering Group meeting), the facilitator worked in collaboration with the project team to design the agenda, to define the main tasks of the meeting, and determine the materials that would be needed to achieve the task.

The facilitator designed each stakeholder planning meeting in detail and then facilitated each of these deliberative sessions. His responsibility was to help stakeholders achieve the objectives of the meeting, guiding participants through the agenda, facilitating discussions and negotiations, and helping to ensure that any issues that arose were dealt with collaboratively and constructively.

The facilitator provided advice on process issues that arose within the project, to ensure that it maintained its integrity and impartiality. For example, there were questions over how to address specific dilemmas / disagreements that arose during the process, such as that of locating MCZs with offshore wind farms. The facilitator’s advice meant that this was tackled both within and outside the deliberative sessions. Other examples included when to pass on information to stakeholders; and what information they would need in order to consider the issues at hand and therefore make informed choices or recommendations and; how to deal with the need for expert input to the deliberative sessions.



Figure 4: The relationships and role of the key regional stakeholder groups

I.4 Finding Sanctuary's remit, deliverables and key milestones

I.4.1 The Project Remit

When Finding Sanctuary was formalised through 2009, the national project partners drafted the Project Delivery Guidance (PDG), which set out the formal requirements of the project. A draft of the Project Delivery Guidance was initially released to the MCZ Technical Support Group in March 2009 and an updated working draft in September 2009. The final draft was produced in March 2010 and the final document published in July 2010. At that stage, the regional projects were required to develop and submit:

- recommendations for the locations and boundaries of MCZs, in line with the Ecological Network Guidance (which was yet to be written, a draft was available to stakeholders from March 2010 and final version signed off in June 2010), and
- recommendations for MCZ conservation objectives, in line with the Conservation Objective Guidance (which was yet to be written, a draft was initially released to the regional projects in September 2010 and the final version signed off in January 2011).

Regional projects were, at that stage, not to have any role in recommending or defining the management of human activities within recommended MCZs. The definition of management measures was to be the sole remit of responsible authorities (such as the Marine Management Organisation which was to be established in April 2010 and the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities which were to be established in April 2011), with advice from the SNCBs on which activities would require management in order to achieve the conservation objectives. The SNCBs were to work on their management advice in parallel to the work of the regional projects.

The requirement for an Impact Assessment to be delivered on the regional MCZ recommendations was made clear during the formalisation of the project in 2009. The Impact Assessment is an analysis of the likely costs and benefits of putting the MCZ recommendations in place. At the time of writing, the project plan foresees the impact assessment to be delivered as a separate report in January 2012. It is not possible to write a meaningful Impact Assessment without having a clear understanding of which activities will need to be restricted in what ways within MCZs. Stakeholder representatives had also been seeking clarity on this same issue, right from their earliest involvement in the project.

In May 2010, the remit of the projects was extended, allowing the regional projects to submit recommendations for management measures within MCZs (this is reflected in the final version of the Process Delivery Guidance, published in June 2010). The term 'management measures' strictly referred to the mechanism by which activity restrictions would be put in place, e.g. voluntary measures or byelaws (see appendix 12). In order to develop recommendations for management measures, as a preceding step it would have been necessary to clarify which activities would need restricting in what ways. However, it was not possible to reach clarity on what activities would need restricting within the time available, in part due to the complexities of the vulnerability assessment process required in the COG (see section I.9). Therefore, at the time of writing this report, Finding Sanctuary has not made specific recommendations for management measures. For a small number of sites, specific recommendations are made on what activities should be restricted in what ways, and in some cases, stakeholders have commented on what measures they consider might be appropriate (this is detailed in the site reports in part II, e.g. for Skerries Bank and surrounds rMCZ, Bideford to Foreland Point rMCZ, Isles of Scilly Sites rMCZ, and Torbay rMCZ).

Finding Sanctuary did, however, successfully complete its original remit, which was to recommend MCZ locations, boundaries and draft conservation objectives (see part II).

Several national MCZ project guidance documents were provided to regional projects, some of which were keys to achieving progress. In particular, the Ecological Network Guidance was of fundamental importance in the planning process, because it defined the task of the regional stakeholder groups in a manner that was clear and unambiguous. The stakeholder process would not have been able to function without the ENG and its simple, pragmatic, quantitative rules. Another guidance document referred to throughout this report is the Conservation Objective Guidance or COG (see section I.9.1). Some of the most important national guidance documents are discussed in a bit more detail in section I.7 and I.9 in the context of the timing of their delivery and how that affected planning, but no exhaustive list is provided in this report (an inventory completed by the national MCZ project partners in spring 2011 listed 59 different guidance documents and factsheets).

I.4.2 The Finding Sanctuary planning region

The Project Delivery Guidance states that ‘the scale of all four regional projects was chosen to reflect the ecological, social, economic and political differences between regional seas in England.’

At the start of the project’s pilot phase, Finding Sanctuary’s planning region (often referred to as ‘study area’) was defined to include coastline of the counties of Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, the surrounding territorial sea, and the UK Continental Shelf area beyond the 12 nautical mile limit, as far as the continental shelf break. The northern limit was drawn at the boundary between two JNCC regional seas, The Western Channel and Celtic Sea, and the Irish Sea. The north-western boundary was defined along the Welsh 12 nautical mile limit, and median line in the Bristol Channel.

When the project was formalised, and the partnership expanded, the project planning area was extended in the north-east, to include the shoreline of Somerset and North Somerset as far as Avonmouth, and the sea beyond as far as the median line with Wales. The Severn Estuary beyond Avonmouth was not included, as it is already protected under several designations.

During the project pilot phase, the landward baseline was defined as the high water mark (i.e. intertidal areas were included in the planning region). For practical purposes, the Ordnance Survey Boundary-Line mean high water mark was used to map the landward boundary, as this is a detailed coastline suitable for mapping at relatively close scale (1:10,000). At the time, a key consideration was that the licence fee for this GIS baseline was affordable, compared to purchasing a licence for OS MasterMap (Boundary-Line is now freely available as part of the OS OpenData products).

The requirements under the Marine Act are that the potential areas for MCZs extend up to the limit of saline intrusion. However, for all practical purposes, OS Boundary-Line mean high water continued to be used as the project’s GIS baseline.

The final planning area covered a total area of 93,000km², abutting the Balanced Seas MCZ project on the Hampshire border, and the Irish Sea Conservation Zones Project in the north.

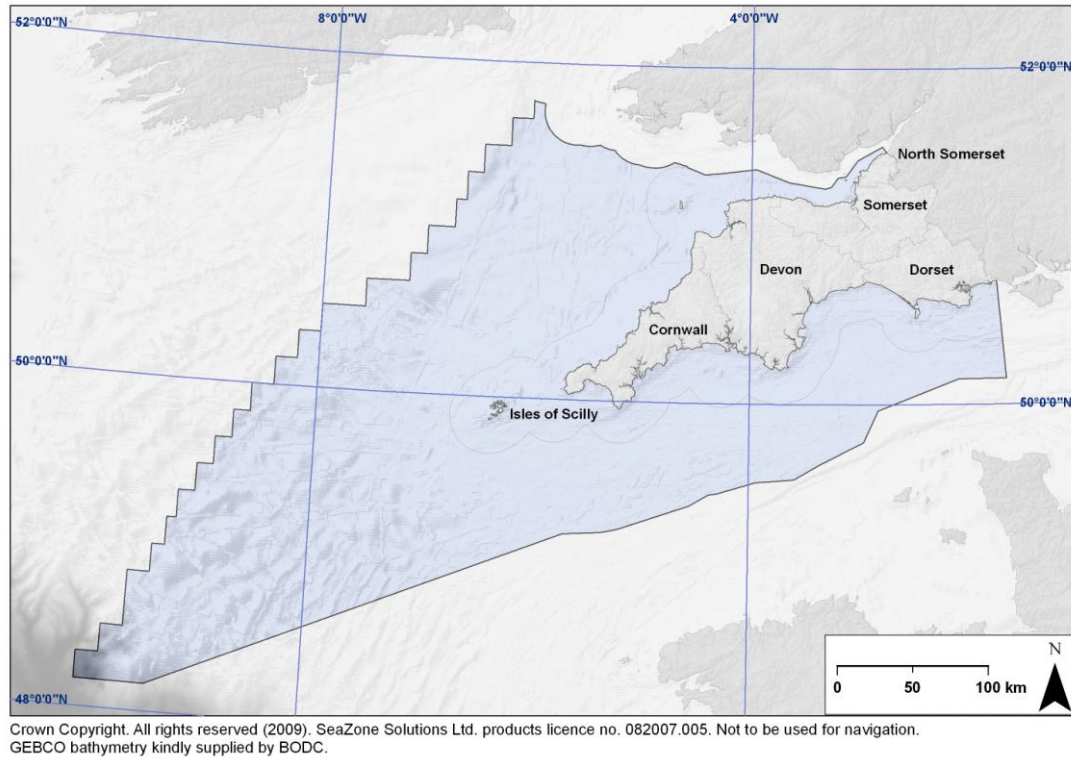


Figure 5: The Finding Sanctuary planning area

The area covered is a shallow productive shelf sea, with depths generally no deeper than 200m. Most of the offshore seafloor is covered in sediments, ranging from areas of coarse gravel and sand to muddy sediment, with some notable areas of rocky reef outcrops, such as Haig Fras.

There is a diverse and complex coastline of approximately 1500km. The southern coast is deeply indented, with numerous shallow, sheltered estuaries and mudflats, including many areas of importance for birds. There are different types of estuaries present, including shallow sandy estuaries and deep rias (drowned river valleys) with rocky shorelines. The northern coastline is more exposed, with rocky cliffs and sandy surf beaches. In the west and north, the coastline is exposed to the full force of Atlantic swells.

In the Atlantic Ocean, the tidal streams are very weak, but as they reach the shallower areas of the European continental shelf, their magnitude increases greatly. The coastline of the planning area is macrotidal, with strong tidal streams in many areas. Most of the area is characterised by well-mixed waters, due to shallow waters and tidal mixing. Seasonal tidal fronts form between tidally mixed and thermally stratified waters in the summer months, these frontal systems run through the study region from north to south and are characterised by high pelagic productivity.

The waters off south west England are strongly influenced by the North Atlantic Drift, which starts out as the Gulf Stream in the Caribbean, and brings warm waters and oceanic species to the study region. Lying at the junction of the English Channel, Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, the seas off South West England straddle a biogeographic boundary, with both cold water Boreal species, and warmer water Lusitanian species present. As such, this region is of exceptional natural biodiversity, and is therefore considered a marine biodiversity hotspot.

Many species of conservation importance use this area for part or all of their life, including a number of cetacean species and rare and vulnerable invertebrates. The varied coastline provides nesting habitat for a number of seabird species. There are also areas of rare and important habitats such as maërl and seagrass beds, as well as excellent examples of broad-scale habitats representative of the UK seas, such as submerged rocky reefs supporting rich epifaunal communities, sand banks and gravel patches.

I.4.3 Key Milestones: Planning Iterations

The planning process of all four regional projects was iterative, with three main planning iterations. At the end of each planning iteration, regional projects produced a progress report to the Science Advisory Panel (SAP). The SAP provided feedback to the regional projects following each progress report, and this feedback was integrated into subsequent planning discussions with stakeholder representatives. The aim of this iterative planning approach was to allow iterative improvements to be made to the design of the network, through the integration of regular scientific review and feedback.

The iteration deadlines were as follows:

- Progress report 1: June 30th, 2010
- Progress report 2: October 29th, 2010
- Progress report 3: February 28th, 2011

Finding Sanctuary delivered all three progress reports on time, and made them all publically available via the project's website. This helped ensure transparency, as the progress reports presented a comprehensive overview of the work done by Finding Sanctuary up to those points in time. Named Consultative Stakeholders had the opportunity to feed back after each progress report.

As the deadlines for the progress report were the same for all four projects, it allowed a national-scale review of the developing recommendations to be undertaken by the SAP, as well as giving an opportunity for national stakeholders, national project partners, and Government departments (Defra and DECC) to review progress and provide feedback.

Following the three progress reports, all four projects were required to submit draft final recommendations to the SAP on June 1st, 2011. The work period between the third progress report and the draft final recommendations was regarded by some as a fourth planning iteration, because as with the progress reports, the SAP reviewed the draft final reports and provided feedback to the regional projects. However, it was not intended to be a fourth iteration, as the aim was to complete the planning of the network configuration in time for the draft final report. Finding Sanctuary published its draft final report on time, and did not carry out further boundary modifications after June 2011 (although a boundary modification was still discussed at this stage for one site, Skerries Bank and Surrounds rMCZ).

When the iterative process was initially planned, the intention was for the iterations to run in sequence, i.e. for each regional project to hold a series of stakeholder planning meetings, followed by the writing of the progress report, followed by SAP feedback, followed by another round of stakeholder meetings in the run-up to the next progress report. However, the three planning iterations got compressed into a short space of time at the end of the national MCZ project, in part due to delays in the delivery of key datasets, and key guidance such as the ENG.

Within Finding Sanctuary, each iteration consisted of a series of Working Group meetings, followed by a full Steering Group meeting at which the Steering Group reviewed and commented on the Working Group's progress. Because the project team needed time to write up the progress reports, we scheduled the Steering Group meetings to be at least three weeks before each SAP submission deadline. Following

the SAP deadlines, the SAP then needed a month to review the material and provide feedback to all four regional projects.

If the iterations were to have run in sequence, we would have needed to allow almost two months of time following each Steering Group meeting before starting the next round of Working Group meetings, as that is how long it took before the SAP feedback from the previous iteration became available. Given that the SAP deadlines were only 4 months apart, and we needed time to write up in advance of each deadline, running the iterations in sequence would only have left us with about a month's worth of time per iteration for stakeholder meetings. This would not have given stakeholders nearly enough time to complete their task, so the only way to get the work done was to allow the iterations to overlap in time. As a consequence, at the same time that each iteration was being written up into a progress report, the first Working Group meetings for the subsequent planning iteration were already taking place. This meant that the progress reports lagged behind the stakeholder work, and that SAP feedback from the previous iteration became available towards the end of the meeting series for the next iteration.

This put a lot of pressure on the project team, who had to support an ongoing series of planning meetings in parallel to producing progress reports of increasing length and complexity as the iterations progressed towards the draft final recommendations in June 2011. The top priority was always to support the ongoing planning meetings with stakeholders, in order to maximise the progress in each individual planning meeting, and achieve the best quality outcome possible at the end of the project.

Following the submission of each progress report, the MPA planner presented the project's progress directly to the SAP, which was an opportunity to provide a verbal update on initial progress that had already been made within the next planning iteration that had started while the progress report was being written.

I.4.4 Format of deliverables

At the start of the first planning iteration, cross-regional discussions were held to ensure some basic consistency in the format and content of the four projects' progress reports, especially with respect to the ENG-related statistics presented for the developing network configurations. These discussions continued through the second and third planning iterations, aiming to ensure basic consistency in content of the progress reports between the four regional projects, if not identical format.

In September 2010, the Finding Sanctuary Project Team and facilitator introduced a framework for what the materials in the project's final submission would look like, including the elements covered in this final report. It set out the two main parts of the final recommendations, the network report and the site report series (which are now both in part II). It highlighted the structure of the stakeholder narrative that would accompany the final recommendations (assumptions, implications, uncertainties etc. – see section I.8), as well as the content in terms of reporting ENG-related statistics (based on the cross-regional discussions for the progress reports). The aim was to deliver a final report that would build on the progress reports, so that there would be a clear thread running through the successive progress reports, the draft final report, to the final report, both in terms of the format and the content. The thinking was that this would help build ownership of the final product, as stakeholders would have a chance to become familiar with the structure and content over successive progress reports.

The project team faced a challenge when, late in the process, the SNCBs provided the regional projects with a standardised template for 'Selection Assessment Documents' (SADs), to be written up for each site in the recommendations. A draft SAD template was circulated in April 2011, and a final version on June 21st, 2011. The national SAD template required a much higher level of detail on some aspects of the

sites than we had envisaged or planned for (ecological information and scientific literature review in particular).

At the same time, the SAD structure did not encompass key aspects of our existing site reports, in particular, the stakeholder narrative. Finding Sanctuary gave stakeholders a central role in designing MCZ recommendations. This meant that it was important to capture the commentary that stakeholders provided throughout their planning discussions, and integrate it into the final recommendations. We have done this for the network and for the site reports in part II, which record assumptions, implications, uncertainties and additional comments highlighted by stakeholders.

For this reason, we did not adopt the SAD structure as a wholesale replacement of our existing site report structure, which had evolved over the course of the progress reports. Instead, we adapted the structure of our existing site reports to integrate the additional sections required in the national template, in as much as we were able to supply the extra information requested within the time available.

In order to be able to deliver the 'detailed site description', we employed a researcher at the Marine Biological Association (Esther Hughes), for a seven-week period prior to the deadline for this final report. She had access to scientific literature, and conducted a series of site-specific literature searches to write up this section for each site.

Another reason for not adopting the SAD wholesale was that we did not want to completely break the continuity with our previous reports so late in the process, although the integration of extra SAD sections made the site reports much longer and more detailed. The structure of the site reports has evolved over the course of the project. This evolution can be traced through the progress reports (published in June 2010, October 2010, and February 2011), and the draft final recommendations (published in June 2011).

I.5 Information Underpinning MCZ Planning

I.5.1 Accessing, using and presenting best available information

Having access to the best available spatial data on the region's ecology, environment, and human uses was a vital pre-requisite to being able to make good MPA network recommendations. The information presented here (and in appendix 8) is an overview of the key data that was used during the project, including a comprehensive description of the ecological data used to generate the ENG-related figures presented in part II. However, it is not a full description of every single dataset the project had access to and used over 4 ½ years. At the time of writing, the work plan for the project's wrap-up phase (following the submission of this final report) included the creation of a full project data inventory, to be supplied to the SNCBs by the end of October 2011.

The spatial information used by Finding Sanctuary came from a wide range of sources: national data gathering contracts, national stakeholders and project partners, regional stakeholders and data holders, publications, online resources, licensed data packages (e.g. SeaZone Hydrospatial), and Finding Sanctuary's own research (FisherMap and StakMap).

In the early stages of the formal phase, the project team created a regional profile of maps and accompanying notes, aiming to display all spatial datasets the project team had access to. The regional profile was created to be much more than a data inventory. Its purpose was to make the process transparent, and to enable people coming into the process with different knowledge bases to have access to the same information. It was intended to be a resource that stakeholders could refer to

throughout their work, a folder of good-quality, visually intuitive maps with explanatory notes that would make the information accessible to the stakeholders who participated in the planning process.

However, keeping the regional profile fully updated throughout the process ultimately proved to be a task that would have placed too large workload on the project team, due to the volume of information available, the frequency of data updates, the variation in spatial scales between individual data sets, and the sheer number of maps that had to be created in order to present the information clearly (the last version of the regional profile, produced in June 2010, filled an A4 lever arch file to the point of structural failure). More importantly, it became clear that a huge lever arch file was not the most practical tool for stakeholder representatives to use during their meetings.

The regional profile was, therefore, no longer updated after June 2010. Instead, the project team switched to creating large (A2-format) hard-copy maps, as well as on-screen interactive PDF maps, for use during stakeholder meetings. Instead of attempting to map out a full inventory of all information held by the project team, the mapping work was prioritised, based on what key data updates were available at each point, the overall significance of datasets to the ENG and to stakeholder interests, and the importance of a given dataset to the specific tasks carried out at each meeting. Keeping to our principle of transparency, the maps created for each meeting were made available to stakeholder representatives and the Science Advisory Panel, in electronic form for download. When it was reasonably within the project team's capacity to do so, hard copy maps were also provided – in some cases, with bespoke modifications (e.g. displaying a specific combination of datasets) carried out for particular groups or individuals.

I.5.2 Ecological and Environmental Data

At the beginning of the pilot phase, the MPA planner devoted time and effort to accessing and collating environmental spatial information, from regional and national stakeholders and data holders. Some key datasets were accessed at the time, such as UKSeaMap modelled seabed habitat data, and the Marine Recorder benthic survey database, both supplied by the JNCC. Some regional datasets (from local records centres, amongst others) were also obtained.

However, initial data gathering proved difficult, due in part to the fact that the project was new at the time, and had no official mandate (which made it harder to approach data owners for access to their information). These difficulties were not unique to Finding Sanctuary: it has been widely recognised for some time that it can be difficult to gain access to comprehensive marine spatial datasets, as they are held by a large number of different organisations, often subject to costly licensing, and are not always well organised or have clear metadata. Over recent years efforts have been made to make marine data more accessible, e.g. through [MEDIN](#)¹⁰.

In late 2008, it was becoming clear that Finding Sanctuary was heading towards being given a formal role in developing MCZ recommendations. The Marine and Coastal Access Act (then referred to as the Marine Bill, as it had not yet been enacted) was under discussion and development, including its provisions for MCZs and wider marine spatial planning (MSP) – both of which would rely on spatial data being available. There was a recognition within Defra and the SNCBs that efforts to collect existing spatial datasets would most efficiently be carried out nationally, not only to support MPA planning, but also to support wider MSP under the new legislation.

As a result, several national data gathering contracts were funded by Defra. The aim was to deliver consistent, quality assured, best available information to all four regional projects. The main biophysical data layers contract was contract MB102, which was delivered by a consortium of organisations

¹⁰ <http://www.oceannet.org/>

managed by ABPmer. MB102 ran from October 2008 through to 2011, delivering data on geological and geomorphological features, biodiversity, and the distribution of habitats and species of conservation importance. It also delivered the sensitivity matrices referred to in section I.9. Full details of the contract, and the information it delivered at what points, can be found on Defra's website (here is a [direct link](#)¹¹).

There were two additional national environmental data gathering contracts. One was contract MB103, through which the British Geological Survey were tasked with updating their information on the distribution of rocky seafloor habitat. The updated rocky seafloor information was delivered early in 2009, and fed into subsequent updates of the JNCC's EUNIS level 3 habitat data (see paragraph below). The second was contract MB5301, which gathered data on spawning areas and nursery grounds for mobile species (including commercial fish). The final information was delivered in July 2010, and was very coarse-scale, so it had no direct bearing on the planning of the MCZ recommendations.

In order to avoid duplication of effort, Finding Sanctuary's project team scaled down its efforts to collate existing ecological datasets, while the national data layers work was ongoing. Once some of the key datasets had been delivered, these were cross-referenced with the information on the distribution of features of conservation importance that had already been collected during the pilot stage. Towards the end of 2010, additional information was provided regionally by Local Records Centres, local stakeholders, and the Wildlife Trusts. Our final datasets on species and habitats of conservation importance therefore consisted of an amalgamation of MB102 data and regional data, although most of it came from MB102. Appendix 8 gives a detailed account of the data sources used during the planning discussions, and to calculate the ENG-related statistics in part II.

One dataset that has been of key importance in Finding Sanctuary's planning work has been the EUNIS level 3 broad-scale habitats dataset. Most of this did not come from MB102, but was instead provided directly by the JNCC to all four regional projects. This initially consisted of survey data from the MESH project¹², and modelled data from the JNCC's UKSeaMap project, covering the entire study region except for the intertidal area. Later, data for the intertidal area was added, and this did come through MB102. Over the course of the project (from the pilot stage onwards), the combined EUNIS level 3 dataset underwent several updates and reviews, with improvements made to the UKSeaMap model and its underlying data - this meant that the final version of the data was much improved from the data that we initially had available in 2007. The final combined MESH / UKSeaMap dataset was made available by the JNCC in December 2010. Finding Sanctuary obtained additional high-quality intertidal survey data from the Environment Agency. This information was better quality than the intertidal data supplied through MB102, so we amalgamated the EA data with the combined data provided by the JNCC. Appendix 8 gives more details.

I.5.3 Existing socio-economic spatial data

Finding Sanctuary gathered existing socio-economic datasets from a range of sources. The following list gives examples, but is not exhaustive:

- At the start of the pilot phase, a licence for the SeaZone Hydrospatial data package was acquired, which gave us access to UKHO chart data in a GIS vector format. This provided us with our necessary base map information, including some information on human activities and their existing spatial management (e.g. shipping lanes, anchorages, danger areas, licensed disposal areas, MoD practice and exercise areas, Harbour authority jurisdictions). These data sets often

¹¹

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&ProjectID=16368&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=accessing&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

¹² Mapping European Seabed Habitats –see <http://www.searchmesh.net/>

provided the basis for further research; for example, the MoD data supplied by the UKHO was used to define the spatial extent of MoD activities – information that had been collected in collaboration with the MoD.

- Boundaries of existing protected areas were obtained from the SNCBs, including via their websites.
- Data on protected wrecks was compiled from data supplied by English Heritage and data on the Maritime and Coastguard Agency website.
- Boundaries of existing fisheries byelaws and voluntary fishing agreements were compiled from information in the 2009 NFFO yearbook, information on Sea Fisheries Committee (now IFCA) websites, and personal communications with the SFCs, Environment Agency and the North Devon Fishermen's Association.
- The location of submarine cable routes was supplied by Kingfisher as part of the Kingfisher Cable Awareness (KIS-CA) charts, with additional information provided directly by The Crown Estate.
- Renewable energy resource distribution information from the Atlas of UK Marine Renewable Energy Resources¹³, and ORRAD indicative potential development areas (PMSS, 2010).
- License areas for renewable power generation, aggregate extraction and aquaculture supplied by The Crown Estate.
- Coastal defence and consented discharge locations supplied by the Environment Agency.

There was also a national contract (MB106) set up to collect socio-economic data layers, alongside the contracts that delivered environmental data which are described above. The most significant data layers that this contract delivered were offshore fishing activity maps produced from Vessel Monitoring (VMS) data, for UK and EU fishing vessels.

I.5.4 Gathering human activity data from stakeholders: FisherMap and StakMap

FisherMap

The project identified a gap in the availability of spatial activity data for fishing and recreational activities. This gave rise to the FisherMap project, and, subsequently, the StakMap project, which set out to collect and map this information through carrying out interviews with fishermen and recreational stakeholders.

Gathering information about human use of the sea directly from stakeholders is an approach that has been used in the context of MPA planning in North America (see Ecotrust's work with Open OceanMap¹⁴). Finding Sanctuary developed the FisherMap project, based on a similar concept of interviewing fishermen about which areas they use, getting them to draw those areas on charts, for digitisation and subsequent GIS analysis.

Work on FisherMap began in October 2007, initially funded by the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIG, now the European Fisheries Fund), the Defra Challenge Fund, the South West RDA, Natural England and Cornwall Council. It focussed on mapping fishing activity in Dorset and North Devon. A consultant from University College London, Dr Sophie des Clers was contracted to advise on the design of the research, including the design of the questionnaire. Liaison officers with a fishing background were recruited to build up links with the fishing industry and to collect information using the questionnaire and base maps. A GIS officer was also recruited to support this work through the production of maps, the digitising of the information provided by interviewees, and the design of a

¹³ <http://www.renewables-atlas.info/>

¹⁴ <http://www.ecotrust.org/ocean/OpenOceanMap.html>

database that could act both as a storage medium and as a data capture tool. A report on the initial work in Devon and Dorset was published in November 2008 (*des Clers et al., 2008*).

The report marked the end of an initial phase of the work, during which the technique was piloted and demonstrated to be effective. Following the publication of the report, the FisherMap questionnaire was modified, with an improved fishing gear classification system. The work continued in Devon and Dorset, using the updated questionnaire, until February 2010.

At the end of 2009, the other three regional projects had become established, and Finding Sanctuary's stakeholder mapping work was adopted nationally. This led to a series of discussions about how the existing technique might be improved and standardised across the regions. These discussions continued until February 2010, when a standardised questionnaire was implemented across all four projects. Over this transition period, Finding Sanctuary's GIS officer supported the national process through the creation of a national data collection tool and database structure for use by all four regional projects.

The standardised national FisherMap questionnaire included questions about earnings, as well as Finding Sanctuary's original questions, which were solely aimed at mapping the spatial footprints of inshore gear types, and relative intensities of usage. These new economic questions were never used by Finding Sanctuary, because the liaison officers considered them to be off-putting to interviewees, and did not trust that the information that might be received would be any more reliable than existing economic figures (landings statistics) held by the MFA (now MMO). Instead, the liaison officers continued to focus on the questions that had previously been included on the FisherMap questionnaires. The other three regional projects had mixed experiences with the economics questions. Ultimately, Defra gave a steer to regional project economists to use official MMO landings statistics for their Impact Assessment.

FisherMap interviews continued until October 2010. A total of 262 interviews were held, representing 320 fishing vessels number of vessels (approximately 30% of the Devon and Dorset fleet under 15m LOA).

Fisheries data in Cornwall was collected by the CFPO as part of a Defra funded project that mirrored FisherMap. The approach in Cornwall was more rudimentary and did not allow for mapping of activity and gear type, was of a coarser scale and only included the inshore area. Although Finding Sanctuary's Cornwall Liaison Officer worked with the CFPO to gather this information, on the basis that the data would be shared with Finding Sanctuary, data was not handed over until July 2010. It was limited to three classes of activity: static, mobile and all. There was no information on individual boat activity or home ports surveyed. This provided a challenge when it came to integrating the Cornish inshore fishing activity data into the MCZ planning process, as it could not be broken down into the same fine-scale categories as the FisherMap data in Devon and Dorset, so it was hard to represent consistent information at a regional scale.

At the time of writing this report, further work is underway using the FisherMap data, in combination with the VMS data supplied as part of MB106, to carry out spatial economic modelling of commercial fishing within the region for use in the Impact Assessment (due to be finished in January 2012). The project team is also planning to write a full technical report on the FisherMap (and StakMap) research, after the deadline for hand-in of the project's MCZ recommendations.

StakMap

In August 2008, the FisherMap approach was rolled out to recreational sectors, in a project that became known as StakMap (short for 'stakeholder mapping'). Questionnaires and explanatory brochures for

recreational boating, sea angling, charter boats, wildlife watching and recreational diving sectors were developed. The approach was piloted in North Devon and expanded from early 2009.

Given the very large number of target stakeholders within the recreational sector, clubs and organisations were targeted as a way of obtaining a representative sample of interviewees. Interviews were carried out on an individual, group or club basis which allowed us to cover large proportions of the region. The project recruited Volunteer Liaison Officers, who were trained in the basic techniques of the questionnaires, and who worked closely with the recreational representatives on the Finding Sanctuary Steering Group to target recreational sea users in an efficient way. From May 2009 until the completion of the StakMap project in October 2010, there were over 30 different Volunteer Liaison Officers based across the region. In addition, three assistant liaison officers were recruited in October 2009 to spend six months contacting and interviewing divers, anglers, sailors and watersports enthusiasts across the region. All of this work was led by a permanent member of staff, who ensured that the work was co-ordinated, properly recorded and supported.

Like the FisherMap project, StakMap was adopted by the other three regional projects when they became established in late 2009. At the same time as the discussions on the standardisation of the FisherMap questionnaire were held (late 2009 – February 2010), the same was done for the StakMap questionnaires. This resulted in the questionnaires being updated, but did not substantially alter the questions that were being asked.

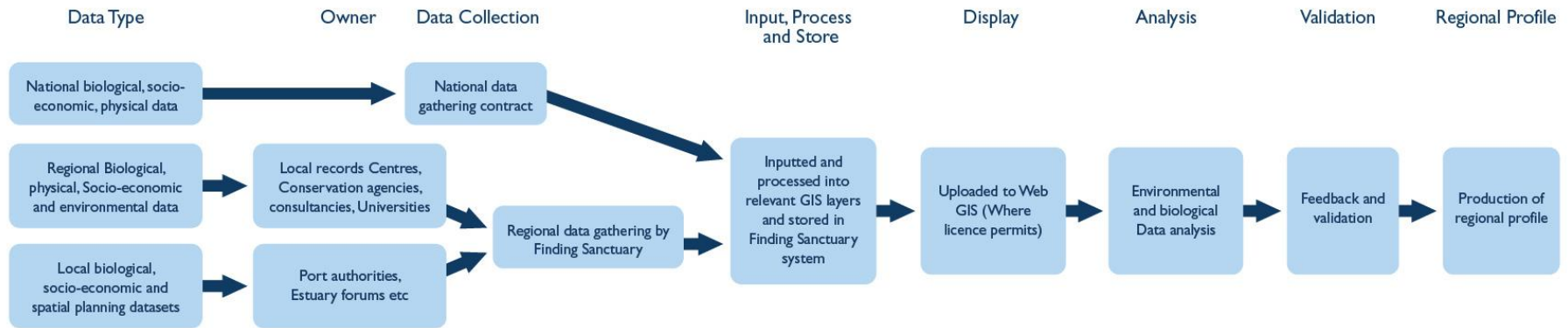
The StakMap interviews continued until October 2010. A total of 639 interviews were conducted. Many of those interviews were of club representatives, and if club membership is taken into consideration, the interviews represent 247,382 sea users.

Drop in Days took place throughout the region in which members of the Project Team held an open surgery at a particular venue from morning until evening. These were advertised locally, and allowed stakeholders to visit during or outside their working hours. Displays were provided to show particular information about the project, and liaison officers were on hand to explain the project and carry out a mapping interview. Drop in Days took place as follows:

- Exmouth, 18th December 2010
- Totnes, 2nd December 2009
- Weymouth, 11th January 2010
- Plymouth, 19th January 2010
- Bude, 25th February 2010
- Newlyn, 1st March 2010
- Instow, 10th March 2010
- Poole, 18th March 2010
- Bristol, 23rd March 2010

A workshop for leisure stakeholders was also held on the 23rd June 2010. The objective was to show and validate the outputs for the leisure maps and to ensure Steering Group members had an opportunity for feedback from their sector on the developing network and the activity maps being used.

Ecological Data Collection Process



Socio-economic Data Collection Process

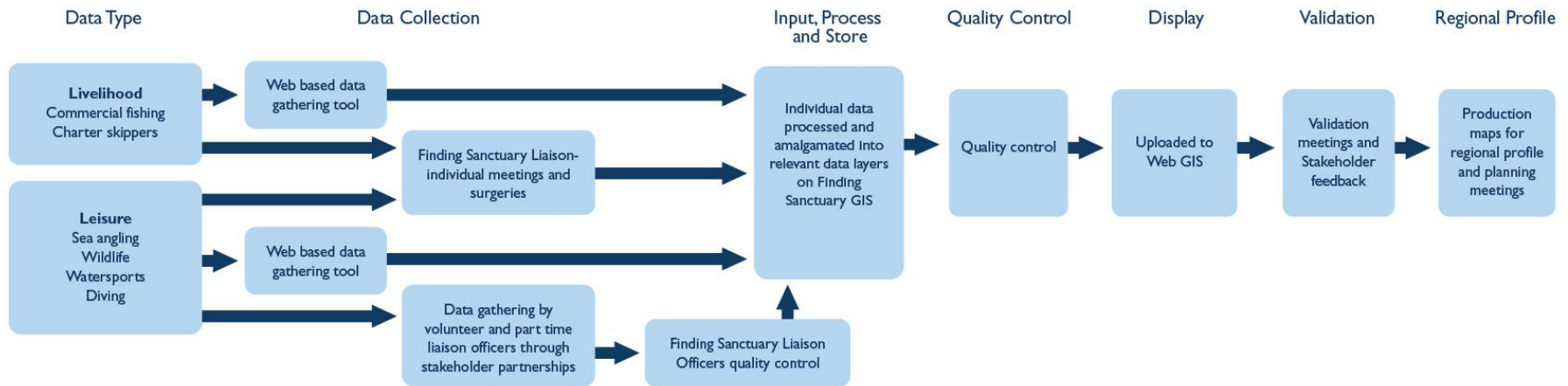


Figure 6: Flow diagram for data socio-economic and environmental data collection

I.6 Summary of planning meetings

I.6.1 Introduction to section 1.6

This section of the report sets out in chronological order all the stakeholder meetings that took place through the formal planning phase, beginning with the Steering Group meeting in September 2009. It provides a brief summary of the discussions that took place as the recommendations were being developed. This summary is necessarily brief, and should not be viewed as a replacement for the full report of each meeting (meeting reports are provided in the additional materials, listed in appendix 14).

I.6.2 Chronological list of all regional stakeholder meetings from September 2009

The following list includes the dates of all regional stakeholder meetings from September 2009 onwards, including regular planning meetings, Process Group meetings, and one-off events such as expert days. Brief notes on what each of these meetings covered are included in the section I.6.2.

Local Group meetings are listed separately, in section I.6.5

September 28 th , 2009	Steering Group induction meeting
October 15 th , 2009	Process Group meeting
November 24 th , 2009	Steering Group meeting
January 18 th , 2010	Process Group meeting
February 11 th , 2010	Steering Group meeting
April 7 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group meeting
April 19 th , 2010	Process Group meeting
April 27 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group meeting
May 6 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group meeting
June 9 th , 2010	Steering Group
June 17 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group
June 28 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
July 9 th , 2010	Process Group
July 21 st , 2010	Offshore Working Group
July 27 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
September 8 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group
September 9 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
September 17 th , 2010	Process Group
October 7 th , 2010	Steering Group
October 14 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group
October 20 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
November 18 th , 2010	Offshore Working Group
November 22 nd , 2010	Inshore Working Group expert workshop
November 24 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
December 8 th , 2010	Inshore Working Group
December 15 th , 2010	Joint Working Group
January 6 th , 2011	Estuaries meeting
January 13 th , 2011	Joint Working Group
January 17 th , 2011	Process group
February 10 th , 2011	Steering Group

March 3 rd , 2011	Estuaries meeting
March 9 th and 10 th , 2011	Joint Working Group
April 5 th	Process Group
April 6 th and 7 th , 2011	Joint Working Group
May 5 th , 2011	Joint Working Group
May 24 th , 2011	Steering Group Drop-in day
June 14 th , 2011	Joint Working Group
July 26 th , 2011	Steering Group

I.6.3 Regional stakeholder meeting summaries from September 2009

The following sections provide a brief summary of Steering Group, Working Group and Process Group meetings from September 2009 onwards. Full meeting reports are available as additional materials (listed in appendix 14).

Steering Group Meeting, September 28th 2009

- **Agenda:** Introduction to MCZs, the project team, the project context, the timescales and the role of the Steering Group.
- **Information input:** Presentations to illustrate the above.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The discussions at the meeting highlighted the need for Ecological Network Guidance (which was not yet available at the time), and the role of the other participants in the process, such as the SAP and Local Groups. The Steering Group asked for a letter to be sent to the National Board emphasising the need for the ecological guidance.

Process Group Meeting, October 15th, 2009

- **Meeting summary:** Considered some of the fundamental requirements about what the Steering Group was tasked to do. They also established some of the key principles of how the Process Group would operate. The Steering Group Protocol was updated and agreed to be submitted to the Steering Group for approval, and the role of Local Groups was discussed.

Steering Group Meeting, November 24th, 2009

- **Agenda:** Introduction to the key concepts and terminology; the interim Ecological Network Guidance (ENG) and Marxan decision support software. Selection of priority factors to input into Marxan.
- **Information input:** Process Group summary note, Interim Guidance, Regional Profile, Steering Group protocol
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The Steering Group identified 'Reviewing existing marine protected areas' and 'avoiding economic costs and impacts' as the most important areas for the Project Team to focus on. The Steering Group agreed updates to the terms of reference and a process to be followed regarding new applications to the Steering Group.

Process Group Meeting, January 18th, 2010

- A stakeholder identification and analysis exercise was carried out (see section 1.3.2). The Process Group also agreed to the introduction of the Named Consultative Stakeholder status. The operation of the Working Groups (as subsets of the Steering Group) was discussed, and the plans for the 11th February 2010 Steering Group meeting were prepared.



Figure 7: Steering Group meeting, February 2011

Steering Group Meeting, February 11th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Identifying potential MCZs on a large format map, identifying areas which should be excluded from the network, discussion on process Governance and membership, introduction of Named Consultative Stakeholders and setting up Working Groups.
- **Information input:** Large format map (A0) to record suggestions for potential MCZs, Medium format maps (A2) showing relevant ecological and socio-economic information; information on Named Consultative Stakeholders (NCS), Presentation of Marxan outputs showing areas of high fishing importance; Process Group report.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Steering Group members gained an understanding of the importance of having clarity on activity restrictions before choices could be made on MCZ locations. An action was given to communicate to the National Board that the Steering Group will need to recommend levels of protection. Agreement was reached to create a category of Named Consultative Stakeholders and to set up an Inshore and Offshore Working Group.

Offshore Working Group meeting, April 7th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Introducing the Working Group steps and ways of working, look at sites that need to be included in the network and have limited or no flexibility; identify sites that feel most contentious; identify sites that have the most advantages.
- **Information input:** A paper introducing the working approach and concepts such as the use of assumptions, uncertainties and implications; Interim Ecological Network Guidance; A set of focus areas for where broadscale habitat targets could be met avoiding highest impact on commercial fishing and building blocks that could be used for planning.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Sites around the shelf break are ecologically important and uncontentious and will be considered further in the next meeting. A number of sites were identified as being contentious.

Process Group meeting, April 19th, 2010

- **Meeting summary:** The Steering Group membership was reviewed. A discussion was held on the conduct of Steering Group members regarding press, but at this stage it was not felt necessary to introduce any particular rules or sanctions. Further work took place on the planning of upcoming Working Group meetings, and the work to be undertaken by Named Consultative Stakeholders.

Inshore Working Group meeting, April 27th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Introducing the Working Group steps and ways of working, look at sites that need to be included in the network and have limited or no flexibility; identify sites that feel most contentious; identify sites that have the most advantages.
- **Information input:** A paper introducing the working approach and concepts such as the use of assumptions, uncertainties and implications; Interim Ecological Network Guidance; A set of focus areas for where broadscale habitat targets could be met avoiding highest impact on commercial fishing and building blocks that could be used for planning.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** To consider reference areas once inshore MCZs have been decided.

Offshore Working Group meeting, May 6th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Feedback from constituencies, Applying protection levels framework.
- **Information input:** Map of modified sites based on discussions from April meeting, protection levels framework, National Ecological Network Guidance, A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The group also recognised how much the broad scale habitats influenced their work since data offshore was sparse. The group also used the Finding Sanctuary compatibility matrix for the first time and began to determine how this information would change a particular site.

Steering Group meeting, June 9th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Project Update, Process Governance and membership, Introduction to building blocks, Update on Working Groups, Feedback for Working Group members, and Introduction to progress report.
- **Information input:** Process Group report; Working Group reports; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.

Offshore Working Group meeting, June 17th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Feedback from constituencies, Consideration of feedback from Steering Group, Overview of Impact Assessment, Network options, Compatibility matrices.
- **Information input:** Feedback from Steering Group; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Areas outside building blocks could be brought back into consideration when necessary.

Inshore Working Group meeting, June 28th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Feedback from constituencies, Consideration of feedback from Steering Group, Overview of Impact Assessment, Dorset Local Group input, FOCI and broad scale habitats, Areas of focus, compatibility matrix.

- **Information input:** Feedback from Steering Group, Comments from Dorset Local Group, Summed solutions from Marxan showing areas that were most frequently selected for meeting ENG targets; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** A nascent network or 'array' emerged from considering suggestions from Local Groups and building block options. Feedback was requested on what percentage of ENG targets had been met.

Process Group meeting, July 9th, 2010

- **Meeting summary:** The previous Steering Group meeting was evaluated, and it was noted that there was a problem with substitutes and new members who were not fully briefed on the project and its progress. As a result, a proper system for named Steering Group member substitutes was put in place. The group reviewed the schedule of meetings and the key milestones for the project. At this stage, there was no clarity over the need for formal organisational 'sign-off' of the final recommendations by Steering Group members, so the Process Group spent time discussing how this might happen. The need was subsequently discounted. The agenda for the October Steering Group meeting was discussed.

Offshore Working Group meeting, July 21st, 2010

- **Agenda:** Updates and Constituency feedback; Working Group outputs; Selection of Building blocks.
- **Information input:** Briefing paper for what Working Group output might look like; Excel planning tool that allowed members to select building blocks and see how different combinations affect the percentages of targets met for each of the broad scale habitats and FOCI; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** Sub-groups detailed the implications that would result from particular site selections to their sector. They also detailed the assumption that fixed gear and charter anchoring would be allowed and that renewables are not expected to choose rocky sea beds for development.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Working in two groups to identify a potential network; one group opted to build up sites from zero and the other removing sites from having all selected. The group became more confident with adding new building blocks or redesigning existing ones. Back together, both groups looked at sites that they had in common and habitats for which there was still a shortfall. A need was identified at the OWG for a table which provides more of a succinct rationale for why a building block was selected and its development in subsequent meetings.

Inshore Working Group meeting, July 27th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Updates and Constituency feedback; Working Group outputs; Selection of Building blocks.
- **Information input:** Briefing paper for what Working Group output might look like; Excel planning tool that allowed members to select building blocks and see how different combinations affect the percentages of targets met for each of the broad scale habitats and FOCI; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** Sub groups stated a number of assumptions during their discussion, in particular that static gear fishing and cabling will be allowed in MCZs. They also detailed the implications that would result to particular sectors.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** This meeting marked the point at which more substantive decisions started to be taken and Working Group members began to voice assumptions. Co-location of MCZs and renewables was introduced since renewable companies could not rule out co-location without knowing the management measures. The group agreed that pursuing both options is

the only way to progress until national guidance is available. The table in the report detailing the % targets reached, highlights the value of the spreadsheet tool (building block statistics calculator) and identifies that broad scale habitats which were falling short of targets. Both groups had quite a large shortfall for sublittoral sand and sublittoral coarse sediment and the role of the fishing industry in guiding the group towards areas of least contention was highlighted. A number of building blocks were selected by both groups.

Offshore Working Group meeting, September 8th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Updates; Framework for recommendations; Choosing building blocks; Preparing for Steering Group and agree protocol for substitutes and experts.
- **Information input:** Excel spreadsheet that allowed members to select building blocks and see how different combinations affect the percentages of targets met for each of the broad scale habitats and FOCI; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; summary table showing evolution of sites; Framework for submission; inputs from SAP, NCS and Local Groups; A0 planning map.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** A number of options had information detailing that there was no mandate from the fishing industry; that were contentious to the fishing industry; have additional value for seabirds and mobile species and helps to meet other targets. The group also noted that decisions are based on fishing data that is not complete or verified.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The group decided to work on a single network option with co-location assumed possible, and to explore other options later if necessary. The group spent some time talking about uncertainties and options for how to approach the task. They built on an existing set of building blocks and trialed a broad range of options to meet the targets. At the end of the meeting, all targets have been met or exceeded with the exception of moderate energy circalittoral rock, sublittoral coarse sediment and low energy circalittoral rock. The group agreed on the new protocol for the use of substitutes and experts.



Figure 8: Offshore Working Group meeting October 2010

Inshore Working Group meeting, September 9th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Introducing new information; Choosing Building Blocks; Preparing for Steering Group
- **Information input:** Excel planning tool that allowed members to select building blocks and see how different combinations affect the percentages of targets met for each of the broad scale habitats and FOCI; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; summary table showing evolution of sites; A0 planning map; Framework for submission; inputs from SAP, NCS and Local Groups; Update on compatibility matrices; Proposed sites from Environment Agency.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** Some sites selected on the assumption that current management can continue; implications noted that more ground will be opened up for static gear fishing, that trawlers may be forced into MCZ to avoid traffic, that there is disproportionate economic impact on north coast.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The use of two network options was causing concern amongst some members of the IWG. Although it was previously understood that co-location would be beneficial for the fishing industry there is also a concern that the presence of an MCZ within the Atlantic Array site could lead to loss of compensation from the wind farm developers. However, this view was not shared by other fishing representatives. Both options were therefore continued to be discussed. Local Group submissions were given particularly high profile at this meeting, and suggestions from Dorset and North Devon were considered, and a number of new sites were adopted. The IWG decided not to include any Cornwall site suggestions as there were no fishing representatives at the meeting. By the end of the meeting, the table shows that all except two BSH targets are met.

Process Group meeting, September 17th, 2010

- **Meeting summary:** A brief teleconference meeting on the 17th September 2010 looked at new NCS membership, and a new protocol for substitutes to attend Working Group meetings. The group also looked at the agenda for the October Steering Group meeting.

Offshore Working Group meeting, October 14th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Input from Steering Group, New compatibility matrix tool, refining the network, Reference Areas.
- **Information input:** Results of the Offshore Renewables Resource Assessment and Development (ORRAD) report which detailed the areas in the region which were likely to be developed for each renewable technology; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; Work being undertaken to identify an offshore SAC on the Wight Barfleur reef.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** Fishing industry had concerns about the use of the matrix and uncertainty over the management implications. A change was made on sites in the canyons on the assumption was compatible.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Discussion focused on trying to ensure that areas of high productivity were included within the network in response to feedback from the SAP. New sites were identified for benthic and water column protection and gaps identified from VMS and shipping lane information. A requirement was given to the project team to ensure that minimum size and connectivity guidelines are met.

Inshore Working Group meeting, October 21st, 2010

- **Agenda:** Input from the Steering Group, Introduction to compatibility matrix tool, Refining the MPA network, Input from Environment Agency, Reference Areas
- **Information input:** Steering Group report, A more formalised feedback form was introduced at this point to request feedback from the Steering Group following the October meeting. Responses were received from The Crown Estate, BMAPA, SWRDA, Poole Harbour Commissioners, Dorset fishermen and Environment Agency, New data layers showing areas of

high biodiversity and species richness were presented to the Group. Results of the Offshore Renewables Resource Assessment and Development (ORRAD) report which detailed the areas in the region which were likely to be developed for each renewable technology; A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; Cetacean data from a report by the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society; Access databases (PRISM and PISA).

- Conclusions and decisions:** A specific point from Cornwall Local Group recorded at the Steering Group meeting was that they felt their input had not been given enough consideration. The IWG wanted to reinforce that Cornwall LG suggestions were not taken into account as there were no fishing representatives at their last meeting. The IWG paid particular attention to feedback from the Local Groups during this meeting. Feedback from the ports and harbours sector was also considered following a report which was submitted showing concerns about locating MCZs in port authority areas. However, the group decided that it needed further clarification on which ports could be affected and further clarification was requested from the project team and the experts session. Further feedback was also received from The Crown Estate, and the IWG first recognised the need for a table to summarise these inputs since they were becoming quite overwhelming to deal with. During a session with the Environment Agency representative the IWG focussed on the estuaries and tried to determine the particular priorities and threats to those suggestions put forward. The EA were still keen to ensure that estuaries were protected as a whole. The EA were asked once more to provide a list of priority estuaries together with a rationale for why they have been selected. The PRISM and PISA databases and spreadsheets are obviously very complex and the IWG felt that the best way to use the tool would be to check the assumptions that have been made about activities, once the network is refined.



Figure 9: Inshore Working Group July 2010

Offshore Working Group meeting, November 18th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Refining the network based on biodiversity layers; amalgamating and naming building blocks; discussing expert input; Further work on narrative; Reference areas.
- **Information input:** A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; Outputs from PRISM and PISA to come up with assumed management within MCZs.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** New assumptions at a network level were that MCZs will not affect existence or maintenance of existing cables. A number of implications were detailed for areas where MCZs co-locate with renewable sites: less attractive to funders, additional mitigation costs, delays to construction and additional monitoring costs. Uncertainties related to the impacts of bottom trawling on offshore habitats; changes to density of shipping lanes and compatibility of renewable activities were stated.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Amalgamation and naming of several areas of building blocks was carried out and refinements were made to a number of sites.

Inshore Working Group expert workshop, November 22nd, 2010

- **Agenda:** This meeting was organised on the 22nd November for certain sectors to bring information for the Inshore Working Group. Presentations and Question were provided from ports and harbours, commercial fishing, the Crown Estate, Environment Agency and two offshore wind developers.

Inshore Working Group meeting, November 24th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Refining the MPA network based on inputs from experts, ensuring highly biodiverse areas and FOCI are included, amalgamating and naming building blocks, further development of narrative.
- **Information input:** A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; updates were provided on discussions taking place with the Atlantic Array developers and Eneco wind park developers together with Natural England. Review of how the developing network configuration fared against the ENG targets.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** The need for reality checking from Natural England was also introduced at this point by the Project Manager. A general assumption was made that handlining could continue in all MCZs.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** A request was also made to gain feedback from those ports that had MCZs in their vicinity and this exercise was carried out in co-ordination with sector representative, Sandie Wilson. At this stage, some estuaries were already included as they had minimal port activity, but none had yet been ruled out. The lack of enforcement around Berry Head was also noted for the first time. Two sites were created to provide an alternative for the Atlantic Array if co-location proved to be impossible (although contentious for the fishing industry). Changes were made to the Hartland Point site to reduce impact to trawling grounds, although the area is also important for renewables. The Skerries site was requested to follow the Inshore Potting Agreement (IPA) boundary.

Inshore Working Group meeting, December 8th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Progress on meeting the ENG, key areas of SAP feedback, Fishing sector feedback, review of estuaries, Review of network to see if FOCI targets are met, Areas of Additional Ecological Importance, Refining site boundaries, Reference Areas.
- **Information input:** A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; Overview of where IWG has got to so far in reaching ENG targets; Interactive pdf showing new FOCI data; SAP feedback from second progress report.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Changes to the following sites were made to incorporate fishing requirements: West of Portland and the Fleet, a trawl corridor in Hartland Point to Tintagel site,

extend the Padstow Bay site, remove the trawling corridor from Skerries Bank and surrounds. Refinements were made to South of the Shambles to incorporate renewable interests.

Joint Working Group Meeting, December 15th, 2010

- **Agenda:** Refining the network based on progress to meet ENG targets, input from Steering Group and input from NCS; options for Reference Areas; Agree what to put forward to Steering Group.
- **Information input:** A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; interactive PDF of draft network configuration; Progress towards meeting ENG targets; input from Named Consultative stakeholders; input from Steering Group members.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** South West Deep sites were amalgamated with a corridor between them and refined by the project team based on ENG targets and VMS data. Sites created as an alternative to the Atlantic Array were removed. The Celtic Deep site was moved. The Manacles site was brought closer to the feature. Considered suggestions for reference areas and drew some suggestions.

Estuaries meeting, January 6th, 2010

- A meeting was organised on the 6th January to bring together the Ports sector and the Environment Agency. It was facilitated by two members of the Inshore Working Group from the recreational boating sector and Natural England. The aim of the meeting was to select estuaries to take to the Joint Working Group by identifying intertidal FOCI species and habitats as well as areas of additional ecological importance for protection whilst considering areas of concern to Ports and Harbour Authorities and the Environment Agency. From this meeting, a table was created which showed the features of conservation importance, local group comments, port issues and overall comments. An initial agreement was reached regarding whether it should be taken forward to the Joint Working Group for inclusion as a potential MCZ in the developing network configuration. This information was provided as an update for the Joint Working Group in January 2011 and at this stage the Gannel, Otter, Erme and Axe were included in the DNC.

Joint Working Group Meeting, January 13th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Reference Area and Estuary planning.
- **Information input:** Large format maps showing broad areas of search for reference areas and potential reference area options, reference area checklist, zoomed in maps showing FOCI, FOCI key.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** Following the update from the Estuaries meeting, the JWG agreed to include the Otter, Erme, Gannel and Axe. Before making decisions on other estuaries the group agreed to wait for the outcome from the next Estuaries meeting on March 3rd. The fishing industry made a statement that they will not be proactively involved in proposing or supporting reference areas. A number of reference area suggestions were produced as work in progress.

Process Group Meeting, January 17th, 2011

- **Meeting summary:** The group reviewed problems that had been encountered with decisions over estuaries, and came up with some proposed solutions. The main focus of the meeting was a review of the sequence of meetings, and the new requirement to develop options for management measures within MCZs. The group considered how this work could be achieved, who should be involved and what the outcomes were likely to be. The group were also updated on the work that was planned for vulnerability assessments.

Steering Group Meeting, February 10th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Updates on: The timeline and final products, Working Groups and progress against ENG; Improving the supporting narrative; Feedback on reference areas.
- **Information input:** A2 ecological and socio-economic maps on the wall; Working Group reports, Reference Areas list and map; A3 tables of narrative for each site and blanks; Framework document, Management measures briefing, Process Group notes.
- **Assumptions, implications and uncertainties:** Recorded on the tables.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** New input to the narrative was recorded and incorporated into the 3rd Progress Report. A commentary on reference area options was provided.

Estuaries Meeting, March 3rd, 2011

- The Environment Agency and Ports sector both had an opportunity to summarise their current positions and issues. Further progress was made on each site with regards to whether it should be recommended for inclusion, not recommended or requiring further discussion. The group agreed at this stage only to put forward those estuaries that had been recommended for inclusion.

Joint Working Group Meeting, March 9th and 10th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Planning estuaries, Areas of Additional Ecological Importance and planning reference areas
- **Information input:** Proposed list of estuaries, work on estuaries carried out by Local Groups, suggestions from work carried out with individual ports and outputs from Ports/Environment Agency meeting; Interactive pdfs, 80 options for reference areas, inshore and offshore scale map of the network, a list of 21 reference areas as a starting point, zooms of the reference area options, reference area planning tool, printed matrix to help the groups identify which habitats and FOCI are present in each option. A presentation on some changes to help meet more Areas of Additional Ecological Importance.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The group wanted to have further discussions on the location of MCZs based on input from conservation, renewables, fishing and some amendments from the project team. No agreement was reached on estuaries, and this discussion was postponed until April. 12 reference area options were agreed to go forward as recommendations, together with a non disturbance area in the Tean.

Process Group Meeting April 5th, 2011

- **Meeting summary:** The Group looked at a proposed extension to the originally planned series of Working Group meetings through May and June 2011, and the postponing of the final Steering Group meeting until the end of July. There was recognition that the site identification work had greater importance than the management measure work, particularly since the latter had limited choice about the available options. Since the decision was taken to extend the Working Group meetings, a Drop in Day for Steering Group members was planned, to ensure that they were not left behind. During this meeting the facilitator brought up two further points that needed to be shared and discussed-The first concerned an accusation that the facilitator was biased against the fishing industry. The group felt that this was more of a reflection of vulnerability felt by this particular sector and didn't think that the accusation bore any credibility. The second issue focused on feedback from the previous Joint Working Group meeting, in which participants felt that they could benefit from more flexibility in the way that the meetings were run.

Joint Working Group Meeting, April 6th and 7th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Network changes based on proposed changes and inputs from commercial fishing, renewables, Local Groups, Conservation, Estuary meetings, Project Team, SAP and NCS.
- **Information input:** Changes to timeline, SAP feedback, Interactive PDFs, Booklets detailing recommended changes, reference area planning tool
- **Conclusions and decisions:** A statement was read on behalf of RWE npower informing the group that they propose the Atlantic Array offshore renewable development can be co-located with a rMCZ with the caveat that other areas proposed as rMCZs in the no co-location network are removed from the final recommendations to minimise the socio-economic impacts. A number of sites modifications and removals were approved. The Fowey, Taw/Torridge and parts of the Camel, Dart and Tamar estuaries were added to the network.

Joint Working Group Meeting, May 5th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Finalise the network, Updates on work on Conservation Objectives and reality checking for assumptions; Review and improve implications in the narrative.
- **Information input:** Update on how network met ENG targets; Work carried out by the project team on Conservation Objectives through the vulnerability assessment.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** A number of network changes were made. Working Group were unhappy that they had not been able to engage in the work to develop Conservation Objectives. The Working Group were not able to agree whether to include Conservation Objectives for seabirds and cetaceans in the offshore areas.

Steering Group Drop in Day, May 24th, 2011

- **Agenda:** The agenda was developed by the attendees based on what items they want to discuss. Agenda items were: Overview of the network; Estuaries; Reference Areas; Co-location and SACs; Management Implications; Management Measures and Cross-Boundary interactions.
- **Summary:** The meeting was designed to ensure that Steering Group members and Named Consultative Stakeholders were brought up to date on progress since February. The meeting broadly consisted of Steering Group members and Named Consultative Stakeholders asking questions from Working Group members. Recreational users were encouraged to pass on information such as codes of conduct to help inform Vulnerability Assessment discussions.

Joint Working Group Meeting, June 14th and 15th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Update on the draft final recommendations, Vulnerability Assessment and boundary tidy-ups; FOCI in Conservation Objectives; Activity Restrictions; Preparing for the Steering Group.
- **Information input:** Map showing broad outcomes from Vulnerability Assessment meetings; Medium format (A2) zooms for sub-region and narrative for each MCZ; Potential fisheries management in MCZs with a summary matrix.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** It was agreed to keep Conservation Objectives for non ENG species included for inshore sites; with it noted that some of the group did not want these included. The group (except for the NFFO representative) agreed a statement which reflected their dissatisfaction with the way that the Conservation Objectives had been developed and how the outcomes undermined their work. The group were given a selection of materials showing likely management outcomes from the Vulnerability Assessment and asked to update the site level narrative with implications and benefits.

Steering Group Meeting, July 26th, 2011

- **Agenda:** Updates on changes to the network since February; Presentations from four Working Group members; Finalising the narrative.

- **Information input:** Statement from commercial fishing; narrative forms; update on the network and progress since February; presentations from Working Group.
- **Conclusions and decisions:** The group developed and agreed a final statement relating to the outcomes from the Vulnerability Assessment and the use of assumptions in the development of the network. An evaluation of their satisfaction with the network and narrative was carried out using dots on a scale and a brief discussion. Evaluation of the process was carried out using forms.

I.6.4 Chronological list of all Local Group meetings

December 7 th , 2009	Devon	September 27 th , 2010	Somerset
December 7 th , 2009	Dorset	September 28 th , 2010	Devon
January 11 th , 2010	Isles of Scilly	September 29 th , 2010	Cornwall
January 27 th , 2010	Dorset	September 30 th , 2010	Dorset
February 1 st , 2010	Somerset	November 10 th , 2010	Cornwall
February 26 th , 2010	Devon	November 16 th , 2010	Isles of Scilly
March 26 th , 2010	Isles of Scilly	January 10 th , 2011	Somerset
April 13 th , 2010	Cornwall	January 20 th , 2011	Cornwall
April 22 nd , 2010	Somerset	January 25 th , 2011	Dorset
May 13 th , 2010	Dorset	January 26 th , 2011	Isles of Scilly
June 16 th , 2010	Isles of Scilly	February 17 th , 2011	Devon
July 5 th , 2010	Devon	February 17 th , 2011	Dorset
July 8 th , 2010	Cornwall	April 13 th , 2011	Isles of Scilly
July 29 th , 2010	Somerset	April 27 th , 2011	Isles of Scilly
August 4 th , 2010	Isles of Scilly		

I.6.5 Summary of Local Group meetings from September 2009

In their first mapping meetings, Local Groups were tasked with suggesting areas that should be included and those that should be excluded from consideration as MCZs. They were also asked to comment on their reasons for site selection and what activities should be allowed or restricted within them. All outputs from the Local Groups were digitised and presented on the wall during Working and Steering Group meetings, however it was also acknowledged that some suggestions couldn't be taken forward as views within the Local Group were conflicting. The exception was the Isles of Scilly Local Group which developed a network of sites that had been agreed across all sectors within the group.

Feedback was received in May 2010 that it was felt the Local Group views were not being fed into the Working Groups effectively. As a result, a session was allocated in each meeting for the Project Team to present the outputs from the various Local Groups and highlight sites with particularly strong support and similarly, those with particularly strong opposition.

In their second mapping meetings, the Local Groups were asked to work together on a more consensus-based approach, discussing areas for their ecological merit and in terms of the socio-economic costs and benefits. The outputs from these meetings were much more focused, and this coupled with the time allocated specifically for discussion at Working Group meetings resulted in a much greater uptake of Local Group ideas into the developing network configuration.

As Local Group work progressed, they commented on building blocks that were in the developing network configuration (by summarising their level of support/contention for each) and they continued to suggest amendments to the network, including boundary changes to make sites more practical at a local level. The focus of Local Group work was mostly concentrated on inshore sites which were being developed by the Inshore Working Group, as this was where the local interest lay.

By November 2010, inputs from Local Groups became more specific and consensual and maps and tables were used to show this feedback more clearly. The November report, in particular, shows how the IWG responded to local feedback and acted to move, remove or add sites accordingly. Notably, a new building block iQ6 (Morte Platform) was added, building blocks (iS1 and iS2) in the Severn Estuary were removed and changes were made to iH16 (The Manacles).

Local Group work culminated in the consideration of Reference Areas and where these should be cited. This was a difficult task and all Local Groups found that they struggled to put forward sites with consensus amongst a range of stakeholders groups. As a result, ideas were passed forward to the Working Group who also found meeting ENG targets for Reference Areas incredibly difficult.

Devon Local Group, 7th December 2009

Meeting summary: A question and answer session on the role of the groups and the information and support that would be provided. The Group agreed how meetings should be organised, chaired and administered. They also agreed to find out how the sea is used by their sector and how aware they are of MCZ plans.

Dorset Local Group, 7th December 2009

Meeting summary: The Finding Sanctuary project was introduced including the role of the Steering Group and Local Group. Issues were raised regarding policing, use of economic information, the make-up of the groups and how decisions would be reached. The group were then given a general introduction to Marine Protected Areas and the interim Ecological Network Guidance.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 11th January 2010

Meeting summary: The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were elected and an explanation was given to the group about their role by the Finding Sanctuary liaison officer. In particular he stressed that the project was not about no-take zones and that the approach was 'bottom up'.

Dorset Local Group, 27th January 2010

Meeting summary: Seabed maps from the DORIS project were introduced to the group. Working in sub-groups the exercise for this meeting was to use medium format (A2) maps of the Dorset area and acetate overlays to identify areas around Dorset where an MCZ should be located and inshore areas where an MCZ should not be located.

Somerset Local Group, 1st February 2010

Meeting summary: The meeting introduced the Finding Sanctuary project, Marine Conservation Zones and the role of Local Groups in the planning process. Following a number of questions and general discussion, the group also agreed the practicalities of how the group would meet and work.

Devon Local Group, 26th February 2010

Meeting summary: The Group were given an update on project progress and an introduction to the base maps. Working in sub groups, the exercise for this meeting was to identify areas that were wanted as MCZs and areas where no restrictions on activities were wanted.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 26th March 2010

Meeting summary: The Ecological Network Guidance was introduced. The group also had an update on progress within the Steering Group and the iterative planning approach that was being used. 12 sites were put forward and agreed by the group. A decision was taken to join some together to make larger zones to meet minimum viable sizes and to extend one of the sites over a seagrass bed. They proposed to restrict mobile gear within these sites.

Cornwall Local Group, 13th April 2010

Meeting summary: Using medium format (A2) maps and acetates the Group identified sites that should be included for protection together with a rationale and details of the activities allowed or restricted. An exercise was also carried out to identify areas that should not be included.

Somerset Local Group, 22nd April 2010

Meeting summary: The group were given an update of progress at a regional level and the formation of the new Working Groups. In the mapping exercise, sub-groups used medium format (A2) base maps, acetates and printed forms to record areas that they felt should be designated as an MCZ and areas where activity should not be limited. Polygons were drawn and digitised and the rationale was recorded in a table.

Dorset Local Group, 13th May 2010

Meeting summary: Working in sub-groups, the exercise for this meeting was to provide comments on building blocks in the Dorset area that had been generated by the Working Groups. There was also an opportunity to draw on the maps to change the size, shape or position of the building blocks. Comments were recorded in the form of negative, positive or neutral responses reached. These were qualified with a reason and a note for how it could be changed. Suggestions for further areas for potential MCZs were also identified.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 16th June 2010

Meeting summary: Broad scale habitat building blocks outside the 6nm area were introduced and a decision was made to take these to fishing representatives outside of the meeting. The group were unanimous in their opposition to Reference Areas because of the scale of the islands and their potential impact on existing activities. They noted that goodwill for existing agreements would be lost if Reference Areas were imposed.

Devon Local Group, 5th July 2010

Meeting summary: There was a large group of stakeholders from North Devon attending this group; and sub groups were split for North and South interests. The sub groups provided commentary on building blocks generated by the Working Groups. They also had the opportunity to use the maps to change the size, shape and position of the building blocks. The North Devon group drew their proposed areas directly on to the map. The opinions are recorded and colour coded as positive, neutral or negative together with recommended changes.

Cornwall Local Group, 8th July 2010

Meeting summary: Working in four sub-groups, two tasks were carried out. Firstly to provide opinion on the building blocks which are currently under consideration together with a rationale and any recommended changes. Secondly the group were asked to discuss and put forward any new suggestions and detail their reasons. Medium format (A2) maps, acetates and printed tables were used to record the outputs. Fishing and port representatives were absent from this meeting, which meant that additional data had to be provided later.

Somerset Local Group, 29th July 2010

Meeting summary: Feedback was provided on how the previous meeting's mapped outputs had been used within the Working Groups. Working in three sub-groups, comments were provided on those building blocks that were relevant to Somerset. New suggestions were also recorded. The groups used medium format (A2) maps showing the building blocks and acetates to record changes. Tables were used and the outputs are colour coded to show where comments are positive and neutral.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 4th August 2010

Meeting summary: The main discussion point at this meeting was feedback from the SAP following the second progress report. The SAP questioned the use of the 50m contour and that further discussion was needed for Reference Areas. The group felt that the 50m contour was the limit of precise knowledge. They also agreed that the current level of management and protection was generally sufficient.

Somerset Local Group, 27th September 2010

Meeting summary: The group were told how outputs from the previous meeting had been used at previous Working Group meetings. Key facts about the Impact Assessment were provided to the group and there was an opportunity for them to ask further questions. The Environment Agency had put forward suggestions for estuarine MCZs, but the group felt that these were too general and that the Severn Estuary already had sufficient protection. Further discussion was held on building blocks to provide reasons why sites should or shouldn't go forward as MCZs and to use the narrative headings to record assumptions and implications. These outputs are detailed and colour coded in the report.

Devon Local Group, 28th September 2010

Meeting summary: The group were told how their outputs had been used and adopted by the Working Groups and the current selection of building blocks was presented. Information on areas that were important for seabirds was presented which prompted a discussion on whether changes were necessary to the current building blocks. The Impact Assessment (IA) was introduced, followed by a lengthy discussion about how information for the IA would be gathered and used. Working in sub-groups and using basemaps, acetates and printed tables, the group gave further opinion on sites that should and should not go forward as MCZs together with assumptions and implications that they are making.

Cornwall Local Group, 29th September 2010

Meeting summary: The RSPB presented areas of high sea bird activity with a request for the group to use in further discussion for the building blocks. Data was also provided from the Identifying Significant Areas project. After having worked in small groups, feedback on building blocks around the Cornwall coast was gathered in a plenary group.

Dorset Local Group, 30th September 2010

Meeting summary: The group were given an update for how their outputs had been used and incorporated into the most recent developing network configuration. Updates were also provided on co-location with renewables, changes to broadscale habitat data and the SAP commentary on the 2nd Progress Report. The Impact Assessment was introduced and a number of questions were asked about how data would be collected and used. The mapping exercise was carried out in three sub groups using medium format (A2) base maps, acetates and a printed questionnaire. The groups recorded their reasons for why sites should and should not go forward as MCSs together with a narrative detailing their assumptions and the implications. The report details the commentary on building blocks in a colour-coded format.

Cornwall Local Group, 10th November 2010

Meeting summary: This additional meeting had been called to continue discussions about building blocks. No personnel from Finding Sanctuary were present, although maps and supporting information were provided. Further commentary was recorded for those sites that had not been included at the September meeting. Following the recommendation from the Environment Agency that all estuaries should be included in the Building Blocks; a general discussion took place, but no specific agreement was reached. The outputs have been colour coded, together with detail for how the responses were used by the Working Group.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 16th November 2010

Meeting summary: Discussions at this meeting focused on a building block (iL16) just outside of the 6nm limit. With the Natural England Working Group representative present, a particular focus at this meeting was Reference Areas although the position remained that the Scillies would lose more than gain through creating them.

Somerset Local Group, 12th January 2011

Meeting summary: Updates were provided on the timeframes, current network recommendations and the status of reference areas. A presentation was given by the Environment Agency to highlight the importance of the Severn Estuary. Working in three sub-groups an exercise was carried out to look at a focus area for Reference Areas. Two groups presented a suggestion for a possible Reference Area together with a rationale; one group felt that there was insufficient time.

Cornwall Local Group, 20th January 2011

Meeting summary: Changes to the timeline and clarifications over activity restrictions and management measures were presented to the group. The main changes to the Developing Network Configuration (DNC) were highlighted. The group worked methodically through all estuaries in the County providing an opinion on whether they recommend it for inclusion, together with a rationale and a narrative for assumptions and implications.

Dorset Local Group, 25th January 2011:

Meeting summary: An update of the project timeline was presented to the group together with new details on the requirement to put forward management measures. A presentation was also given to the group on how the Developing Network Configuration had changed since the last meeting in September 2010. The group initially worked in plenary to focus on the Poole Bay and subsequently in six sub-groups to provide suggestions to the Inshore Working Group. A presentation was given on Reference Areas and discussion took place on those four focus areas (Lyme Bay, Chesil and the Fleet, Kimmeridge and Studland Bay) that were under consideration in Dorset.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 26th January 2011

Meeting summary: An update was provided on the project timeline and an explanation of how assumptions that had been made for potential management are being reality checked. The group remained robust in their refusal to contemplate any Reference Areas.

Devon Local Group, 1st February 2011

Meeting summary: A general update was given to the group, focusing in particular on what the group had done and how their work will be taken forward in the future, since this was their last meeting. General points were gathered for the Developing Network Configuration with a number of specific recommendations made. An introduction was given to the group on reference areas and working in four sub groups an exercise was carried out to look at the focus areas and suggested reference areas to provide general feedback. A presentation on the need for Estuary MCZs was given by the Environment Agency representative; however the exercise to complete flip top style forms after the meeting was not carried out.

Cornwall Local Group, 17th February 2011

Meeting summary: The group worked around the whole coast to consider and agree any final changes that they wanted to put forward to the March Joint Working Group meeting. Natural England presented data showing areas of additional ecological importance using benthic and pelagic biodiversity maps. It

was noted that many of these hotspots are already within MCZs and that this data is appearing too late. General recommendations were made for a number of potential MCZs. The group discussed Reference Area options and put forward some suggestions of their own.

Dorset Local Group, 17th February 2011

Meeting summary: A presentation was given on the timeline and progress that is being made regionally towards meeting the ENG targets. An exercise was carried out in four sub-groups to decide what the group wanted to recommend for the Poole Bay site. A number of comments were recorded, and ultimately it was decided to reduce the site and to include just Poole rocks and Studland Bay. In the same groups, an exercise was also carried out to look at focus areas and suggested Reference Areas for Dorset and to provide advice back from the whole Local Group to the Working Group. A number of other suggested Reference Areas were also put forward.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 13th April 2011

Meeting summary: The group had some initial discussions about extensions to two 'non disturbance areas' to meet minimum size criteria. Decision was postponed until local stakeholders had time to study the implications.

Isles of Scilly Local Group, 27th April 2011

Meeting summary: An extension to two non-disturbance areas was agreed and the planning work of the group was concluded.

1.6.6 Named Consultative Stakeholder feedback

1st Progress Report

- NCS were asked to comment on the 1st Progress Report between the 27th July and the 28th August 2010. There was no feedback from NCS on the first progress report.

2nd Progress Report

- NCS were invited to comment on the 2nd Progress Report on the 8th November 2010, with a request for feedback to be received by the 1st December so that it could be prepared for the Joint Working Group meeting on the 15th December. They were given links to all the relevant reports and documentation through an internet download site.
- Responses were received from Rederscentrale, EDF Energy, Pelagic RAC, Plymouth University School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins and Pêcheurs de Manche et d'Atlantique.
- Responses were collated together with all relevant stakeholder feedback and taken to the Joint Working Group meeting in December.
- The NCS feedback questioned the rationale for MCZs and expressed concerns for a number of sites in the network, but did not provide any alternative suggestions for MCZ locations.
- At the meeting on the 15th December, the Joint Working Group therefore concluded that it was difficult to deal with the NCS responses, since no alternatives were proposed. The group did, however, agree to change and re-orientate the South West Deeps site so that it was better able to accommodate European fishing interests.

3rd Progress Report

- For the 3rd Progress Report, Named Consultative Stakeholders were asked on the 4th March to provide feedback by the 24th March 2011. Once again, materials were made available on the internet download site and members were given a feedback form.

- Only the CNP-MEM and Pelagic RAC responded by the deadline, and their responses were collated and presented to the Joint Working Group meeting on the 6th and 7th April.
- The Working Group noted that changes they had agreed within the meeting went some way towards accommodating NCS comments.
- A further letter was subsequently received from SAS with concerns over restrictions to recreational activities in Kimmeridge Bay.
- Other responses were dealt with on an individual basis by the Project Manager, particularly since many potential MCZs or Reference Areas of concern had already been removed from the network.

Drop in Day

- Named Consultative Stakeholders were invited to the Steering Group Drop in Day on the 24th May 2011. The Drop in Day was an opportunity for the NCS to meet with members of the Working Group, ask questions and be guided through changes in the network since the last Steering Group meeting in February 2011.
- The following NCS attended: CNP-MEM, SAS, Angling Trust, Plymouth University School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences.

Summary of Feedback

November 2010

Rederscentrale-All sites have implications, cumulative impact of blocks, massive economic impact on Belgian fishing fleet, loss of important fishing grounds specific to D2, D3, D6, D8, P3, P4, G3, J1, J2.

EDF Energy-iS1 identified as a potential issue, depending on what restrictions are put in place
PMA-Not sure about the nature of impact; but identifying that many of the blocks are important for the French fleet and in particular Haig Fras.

CNP-MEM-Lack of time, lack of information about the French fleet, uncertainties about about management, fishing vessels from Brittany and Normandy would be particularly affected. Identifying in particular Clusters A, B, C, D, J, M, N, P and H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, G1, G2, G3, G4, IA4, IA5, IA6, IL12, IL16, IL17, IL13, IL18, IK3, IK4. No alternatives offered.

Pelagic RAC-Concerns about potential unnecessary consequences for pelagic fisheries in particular for reference areas 9-16.

Malcolm Hart-General geomorphological information.

March 2011

Pelagic RAC-Expectation that pelagic fisheries would not be affected and preference to respond at 4th iteration.

CNP-MEM-Identifying sites with high levels of activity and detailing numbers, gear types and seasons of fishing vessels. In particular IA4, IA5, IA6, iH14 and reference areas 9, 17, 18, 19 and 29

Rederscentrale-Late submission (15th April) - General concerns about implications of all site, cumulative impact, reduced flexibility of fishing. Identifying sections of report II.3.7, 3.8, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 3.14, 3.15, 3.18, 3.32 as particular problematic for loss of fishing grounds and problems with lack of knowledge over management measures.

Surfers Against Sewage-Concerns over limits on recreational activities for Kimmeridge Bay.

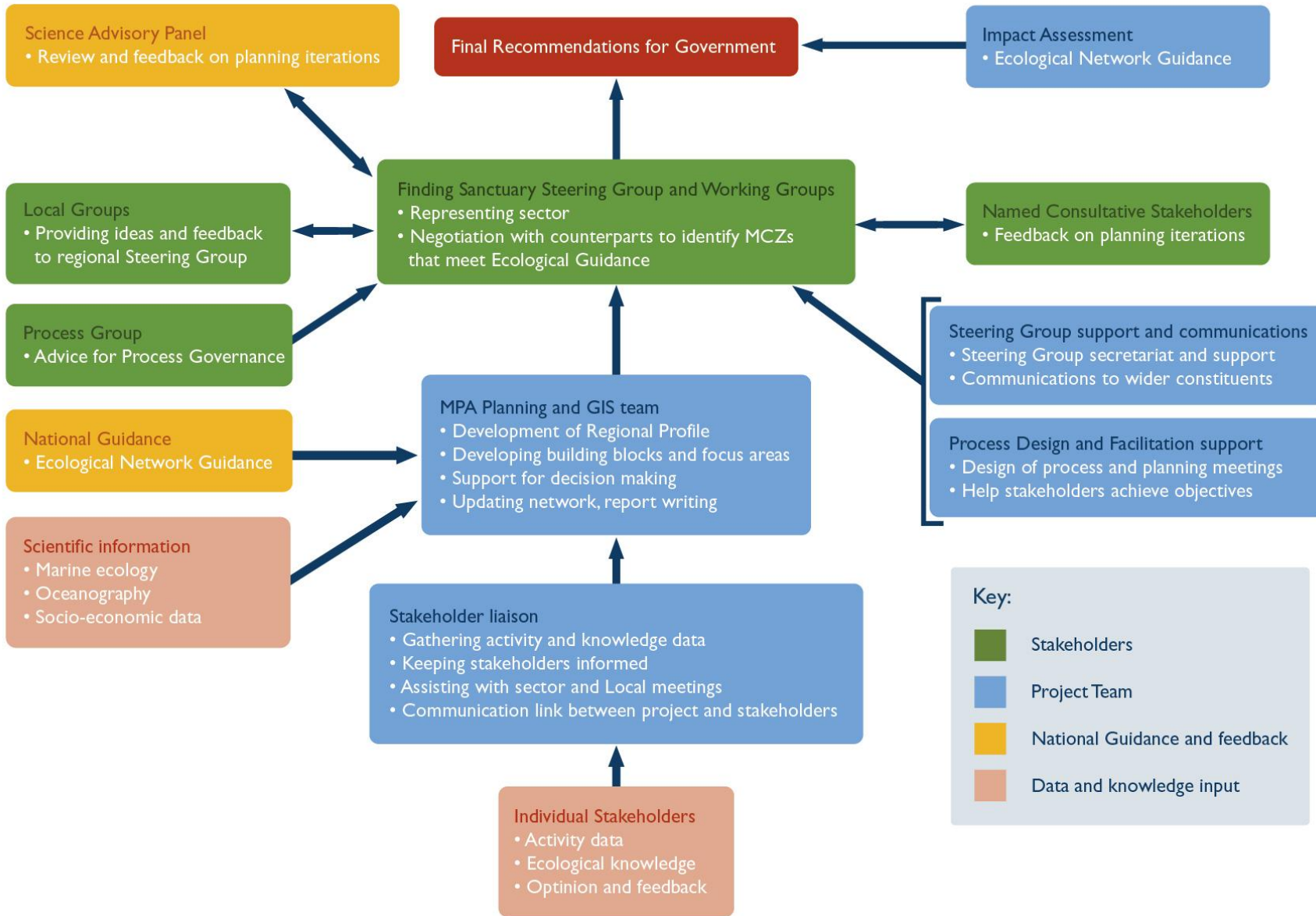


Figure 11: Key National and Regional project components and the flow of information and feedback between them.

I.7 Discussion of key emerging themes in MCZ planning

I.7.1 Introduction to section I.7

This section discusses some of the key themes that emerged during the MCZ planning process in a bit more detail, including technical aspects and process aspects (which were often interlinked). This section is not an exhaustive description of the whole process and the technical work carried out to support it, but it aims to provide an insight into some of the most prominent themes and issues dealt with.

It discusses some of the project's key guidance documents and datasets, and how the timing of their delivery influenced the planning process and the order in which specific aspects of the ENG were addressed. It discusses SAP feedback, and the way in which estuaries and reference areas were integrated into the network.

I.7.2 Guidance documents and datasets: impacts of delivery timing on planning

Ecological Network Guidance

The UK Government is committed to establishing an ecologically coherent network of MPAs under several agreements, including the OSPAR Convention, World Summit on Sustainable Development, and Convention on Biological Diversity. The regional project's task, therefore, was to develop MCZ recommendations in such a way that the configuration of MCZs, when combined with other types of MPA, would form an ecologically coherent MPA network. [The regional projects often used the term 'MCZ network' as a shorthand – technically, the term is misleading, as it is *MCZs plus other MPA designations for which regional projects had no responsibility* which will form the network. The shorthand reflected the fact that the regional projects planned MCZs in a systematic way, at a regional network scale, whereas other types of MPA designations had been planned more on a site-by-site basis.]

The Ecological Network Guidance (ENG), written by Natural England and the JNCC, was a document of key importance for the regional projects and their stakeholder groups, as it provided a translation of the term 'ecologically coherent MPA network' into a set of practical design guidelines that were based on the best data available at a regional level. It set out spatial design criteria, including quantitative targets for amounts and replicates of broad-scale habitats and features of conservation importance to be represented within the network, and guidance on the spacing between sites. Without this document, it was not possible for the Steering Group to embark on their task, as they did not know the 'rules of the game' which they needed to adhere to in their deliberations and negotiations.

There was a significant delay in the publication of the ENG. We had initially expected and planned for the ENG to be available in early 2009. A draft was made available to regional stakeholders in March 2010, and the final document was published in June 2010 (with some minor changes to habitat targets from the draft). At the time, the deadline for submission of the final recommendations was June 2011, so this only left a year within which to carry out the MCZ planning work. The (then still draft) national ENG were first used in the Inshore and Offshore Working Group meetings in April 2010.

The long delay to the publication of the national ENG caused a sense of frustration within the Steering Group, who felt that they were being asked to participate in a task without that task being defined in any practical sense. In order to overcome that sense of frustration and allow some degree of progress to be made, the Finding Sanctuary planner drafted an unofficial, interim set of ecological guidelines, prior to the release of the draft national ENG in March 2010. The interim guidelines were based on common protected area network principles, to enable some initial constructive and focussed discussions to take place in late 2009. This meant that when the official guidance became available, stakeholders had

already had an opportunity to understand basic network design principles, and were better placed to begin their planning work.

Nevertheless, the late publication of the ENG was one of the key reasons why the planning process was very much compressed in time, with the planning iterations overlapping rather than being run in sequence.

Conservation Objective Guidance

In addition to the ENG, the Conservation Objective Guidance (COG) was another document of key importance to the regional projects, as it defined the format in which conservation objectives had to be written in the final recommendations, and set out a process for defining them. The recommendation of conservation objectives was part of the regional project's remit from the beginning of the formal project phase (see section I.9.1).

The delivery of the COG came very late in the planning process: a first draft was circulated to regional project teams in September 2010, and the final version was officially published in January 2011. The process for defining conservation objectives laid out in the COG was highly laborious, and the project team considered it to be not realistically workable within stakeholder meetings, especially given that the guidance came so late in the process, and the large number of sites. Section I.9 goes into details on how this aspect of our work was completed.

Other national guidance

Over the course of the formal project phase, a total of 59 pieces of guidance and advice were issued by the SNCBs to the regional projects, as counted in a national inventory supplied to regional projects in spring 2011. They included relatively short documents such as factsheets and FAQs, as well as a number of long and complex documents, such as advice on management of MCZs (received through 2011) and national sensitivity matrices (see below). Many of these national guidance documents were made publically available by the SNCBs, others were made available only to project teams.

Of these guidance documents, there are two that had a really significant bearing on the recommendations in part II (in addition to the ENG and COG). The first is the draft reference area guidance produced in October 2010, and the second is the set of national sensitivity matrices produced in September 2010.

The draft reference area guidance was useful to stakeholders in that it was relatively unambiguous, with clear statements over which activities will be impacted in reference areas and which won't, giving stakeholder representatives a much firmer basis for their contribution to the planning than they had for MCZs in general. This meant that, during the difficult discussions around reference areas, much less time was spent discussing what activities may / will / could be impacted, and much more time was focussed on where reference area might be located. Given the contentious nature of the reference areas, it was important to have this clear guidance.

The sensitivity matrices were a series of tables developed by Defra, Natural England and the JNCC, and supplied to the regional MCZ projects in September 2010. The information in these tables was required in order to be able to apply the COG. One set of tables indicated levels of sensitivity of individual seafloor habitats and species to a range of pressures at defined benchmarks. Another table indicated which human activities cause what pressures. The information was highly complex, and ultimately did not provide the clarity that stakeholders were asking for from the beginning of the process, i.e. clarity on how MCZs would impact on human activities, which activities would be allowed within the sites, and

which ones would not be allowed. More details on how the COG was applied, and on how the information in the sensitivity matrices was used, are outlined in section I.9.

Key datasets

There were two spatial datasets that were so fundamentally important to the planning process and the ENG, that planning could not realistically begin without them being available. The most significant was the EUNIS level 3 broad-scale habitats dataset. The second was spatial information on the distribution of FOCI species and habitats.

The EUNIS level 3 broad-scale habitat data was provided directly to the project by the JNCC, and was updated several times over the course of the project, including with additional data supplied by the Environment Agency and from national data contract MB102. Appendix 8 gives more details. The fact that the broad-scale habitat was updated over the course of the planning period posed some challenges, as it affected the performance of the developing network configuration against ENG targets. However, these challenges were manageable, because the changes that affected our region were planned, predictable to some extent, and well communicated to the project team in advance. The broad-scale habitat layer being available early in the process (even in draft form and subject to subsequent updates) was important, as it allowed progress to be made towards meeting key representativity targets in the ENG, at a stage when other biophysical datasets were not yet available.

There were several delays to the delivery of the datasets from MB102, compared to the original planned timescale in the project specification. The delays ranged from one or two months to over a year. Data on benthic biodiversity, for example, was only delivered late in 2010, though it had been planned to be ready in September 2009 (it was delayed as a result of delays to preceding parts of MB102, which it was dependent upon). The final delivery of data on features of conservation importance (FOCI), without which it was not possible to address much of the ENG, was also delayed by almost a year (final versions were delivered in June 2010, when the initial plan stated a delivery date of September 2009). Several drafts of the FOCI datasets were made available before the delivery of the final product, and these drafts were vital in order to allow regional projects to make some progress, but the early drafts had not undergone the same quality assurance as the final product.

These delays posed some practical difficulties. The project had to proceed with the MCZ planning task based on the most up-to-date information we had available at any given time, and review the configuration of the network when new information became available. It is impossible to say how much of a bearing this had on the shape of the final network, but it is likely that it did have some impact, i.e. that the network may have looked different in some places if all the information that was available at the end of the process had been available at the outset.

Another data layer of ecological significance, which became available late in the process, was the outcome of an analysis of pelagic interest referred to as the pelagic 'APEI' dataset in appendix 8. Although information on seasonal fronts and sightings of megafauna (cetaceans, basking sharks, offshore birds) was available from early in the process, the combined 'APEI' dataset provided a more comprehensive picture that may have had an influence on the early shaping of the network if it had been available earlier in the process.

Information on existing protected areas: the gap analysis

Finding Sanctuary was not planning a protected area network from nothing. Several protected areas have been in place within the project's planning region for a number of years: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs), and

Ramsar sites. Over the course of the project, additional SACs were being planned (in a process separate from Finding Sanctuary's stakeholder process). MCZs had to be planned within the context of other types of MPA. In order to assess how well our developing network configuration performed against the targets set out in the ENG, we needed to understand how much the existing sites already contributed towards meeting the ENG targets.

This information on the existing protected areas was supplied to us by the SNCBs, referred to as the 'gap analysis'. There were several technical hitches with a GIS gap analysis tool that was developed nationally, and difficulties within the SNCBs in collating information about the conservation objectives of existing sites and translating these into contributions towards protecting ENG-listed features. This led to serious delays to the delivery of the gap analysis, which posed significant practical challenges to Finding Sanctuary. Without a definitive gap analysis, the project faced difficulty in reporting progress on the network configuration to stakeholders and to the Science Advisory Panel. The third progress report discusses this problem in some detail.

The final version of the gap analysis was received in May 2011, i.e. at the end of the planning process. Prior to that, the Finding Sanctuary project team carried out their own GIS-based analyses on the existing sites, based on interim advice. This added a great deal of uncertainty to the process, and it increased the workload of the project team, but it was a pragmatic solution that allowed the project to make progress.

1.7.3 SAP feedback

The Science Advisory Panel provided feedback to the project following each progress report, and following the submission of the draft final recommendations report. SAP feedback was received within a month of the submission date for each report. Because the planning iterations overlapped in time (see section 1.4.3), by the time SAP feedback was available, the first round of planning meetings for the subsequent iteration had usually already taken place, but we planned the second round of meetings for each iteration with SAP feedback dates in mind. SAP feedback was made available directly to the project Steering Group following its receipt by the project team, and also published on the project website.

Following the first iteration SAP feedback (received July 31st, 2010), the project team wrote a detailed document highlighting how the SAP feedback was being addressed in the planning process. This was made available on the project website in September 2010. The project team had planned to do the same following the SAP feedback for the second and third iterations, but because of the team's intense workload and limited time, this was de-prioritised (with preparation of stakeholder meetings given a higher priority). Instead, some of the key issues raised by the SAP feedback were referred to in subsequent progress reports and the draft final recommendations report, highlighting how they had been addressed or were going to be addressed.

Following each iteration, the SAP was discussed within the project team, who considered how best to address the issues raised. Key points were discussed with the project facilitators during the preparation for the stakeholder meetings, and this influenced how tasks were designed, and the materials prepared. In addition, time was made on meeting agendas for the planner to highlight key aspects of the SAP feedback to the Working Groups, to ensure the feedback was understood, and to give stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions.

Much of the SAP feedback was positive, recognising the efforts made by the stakeholder group and the project team to ensure best available information was used, and the ENG met. However, there were also several points of criticism, with constructive comments on how specific issues might be addressed. The issues raised in SAP feedback over the course of the project, and the ways in which they were

addressed, are too large in number and too complex to cover in full here. For details, please refer to the SAP feedback documents, the progress reports, and Finding Sanctuary's reaction to the first iteration SAP feedback. These documents have all been made available on the project's website, and are supplied in the additional materials (listed in appendix 14).

Following the draft final recommendations report, a final set of SAP feedback was received in July 2011, and circulated to the Steering Group. This no longer had the same degree of influence on the network as previous feedback, because by the time it was received, the planning process was complete. The network configuration did not change following the publication of the draft final recommendations, so this set of SAP feedback, in effect, provides an initial commentary on the final network. The next few paragraphs discuss some of this final set of SAP feedback, with a project team's perspective on the issues raised.

For the network as a whole, the final SAP feedback considered the key ENG criteria to be met, in as much as it is possible with the available information and biogeographic distribution of species and habitats in the planning region.

For the principle of representativity, the SAP note that many of the offshore rMCZs are located at or near the outer borders of the planning region. This is largely a result of a greater diversity of socio-economic interests (fisheries in particular) in the areas that were avoided (see the map series in the network report, section II.2). The SAP highlighted a concern that the avoidance of socio-economic costs took precedence over meeting the ENG. However, during stakeholder discussions, the ENG were always at the forefront, i.e. a lot of effort was spent on finding ways of meeting the ENG whilst minimising negative socio-economic impacts (the ENG come first in the statement). During the initial shaping of the network, much of the ENG-related effort focussed on benthic broad-scale habitats, many of which are widespread in the offshore.

For single biggest shortfall in meeting the ENG, as identified by the SAP following the draft final recommendations, is with respect to reference areas. This shortfall was recognised and acknowledged by the stakeholder group as well (this is commented on in the network report in part II). The SAP raised particular concerns over the very small size of a lot of the reference areas, many of which do not meet minimum viable size guidelines for some of the features contained within them. This is acknowledged, and reflected in the conservation objective summary table in section II.2.6.

The SAP acknowledged the efforts put in by the project team to identify and provide stakeholders with the best available evidence for the distribution of ENG-listed features within the planning region, and consider that the use of best available evidence has been achieved as effectively as possible for these features. This is a reflection not just of project team efforts, but also of the efforts of national project partners, and a large number of regional stakeholders who have provided information to the project (see appendix 8). The Isles of Scilly Local Group and the North Devon Biosphere Reserve Marine Working Group deserve particular acknowledgement, as do the Wildlife Trusts and the Environment Agency.

The SAP commented that in the site descriptions of the progress reports and the draft final recommendations, a great deal of detail on socio-economic aspects was provided, with a lot of rationale in terms of boundaries having been drawn to avoid specific impacts. Relatively speaking, less text was devoted to explaining efforts made to maximise the ecological benefits of the sites. To some extent, this is still the case in this final report. It is a reflection of the fact that much of the content of the site reports is a stakeholder narrative, reflecting the concerns of stakeholders who participated in the process – many of those concerns centred on possible negative socio-economic impacts. However, the finalised site reports in part II also contain new sections, the site summaries and detailed site descriptions, which

now contain much more detailed information on the ecology of each site, and the reasons why each site was included in the recommendations.

With respect to the areas of additional importance (AAEI) guidelines in the ENG, the SAP commented that Finding Sanctuary did not use the available information in the manner required by the ENG. They note that much of the area highlighted as having high pelagic interest (the pelagic 'APEI' layer referred to above) falls outside the network configuration (much of this area correlates with areas of particularly high interest to the fishing industry). Nevertheless, a lot of time and effort was spent on ensuring that areas of additional ecological importance were prioritised in the creation of the network, which is reflected in the effort made on estuaries (covered separately below).

1.7.4 Integrating estuaries into the developing network

Early scientific feedback highlighted the importance of estuaries as areas of high natural productivity, and areas that provide important spawning area and nursery grounds for many fish species. Within the ENG, there is no specification for how many estuaries to include, nor for representation of different types of estuary (e.g. ria, bar-built etc). However, given their importance in terms of productivity, and their spawning and nursery function, estuaries can be classified as areas of additional ecological importance (AAEI).

Two key stakeholders initially took polarised positions on making estuaries part of the network, which contributed to the difficulty of this aspect of the planning. The Environment Agency advocated the inclusion of all estuaries in the network, and provided supporting evidence for their ecological importance (see appendix 8, and the additional materials listed in appendix 14). The ports sector, on the other hand, did not want to include any estuaries where there were port activities. Given that most of the estuaries have ports in them, that excluded almost all of them, except for some very small estuaries on the south coast which were included in the network at a relatively early stage (see progress report 3). A great deal of work occurred (including outside of the formal Working Group meetings) to try and resolve this impasse. This began in September 2010, and reached a conclusion in April 2011.

At the expert workshop in November 2010, the ports sector explained that estuaries are already protected by a number of existing designations and highlighted the value of port operations. The ports sector has found it challenging to engage on a regional level and individual port authorities did not grasp the concept of using working assumptions to help overcome the lack of definition on activity restrictions. At the same meeting the Environment Agency reinforced the ecological importance of estuaries as fish nursery grounds and the need to provide better protection to meet some aspects of the Water Framework Directive.

There was further discussion around estuaries at the IWG meeting in November 2010. At this stage, the ports and harbourmasters did not want any estuaries to be included in the network recommendations, and the Environment Agency wanted all estuaries to be included. The Environment Agency had been requested to prioritise estuaries for inclusion, but had been unable to do so at that stage. It was acknowledged in the group that the lack of clarity on activity restrictions in MCZs could mean that the conflict was perceived rather than real. Discussions focused on potential restrictions to leisure activities. There was also a lot of discussion about the ecological rationale for inclusion of estuaries, and the potential for including parts of estuaries rather than whole estuaries was discussed. An agreement was reached at this meeting for ports and Environment Agency to meet separately, outside the Working Group meetings, to try and resolve this conflict.

A meeting was organised on the 6th January (postponed from December) to bring together the Ports sector and the Environment Agency. It was facilitated by two members of the Inshore Working Group,

from the recreational boating sector and Natural England. The aim of the meeting was to select estuaries to take to back to the Joint Working Group for inclusion in the network, by identifying FOCI species and habitats, and considering the additional ecological importance of specific estuaries, whilst also considering areas of concern to ports and harbour authorities. From this meeting, estuaries were listed in a table, showing the features of conservation importance, local group comments, port issues and overall comments. Initial agreement was reached on a small number of estuaries to take back to the Joint Working Group for inclusion in the developing network configuration. This information was provided to the Joint Working Group in January 2011. As a result, the Devon Avon, Otter, Erme and Axe were included in the developing network configuration (see progress report 3). The Gannel was also part of the network at that stage, as part of the Newquay and the Gannel site.

Cornwall Local Group spent a meeting looking at all Cornish estuaries in February 2011, with the objective of trying to determine which estuaries/parts of estuaries were most appropriate to be put forward for inclusion in the network. Previously, over the course of 2010, other Local Groups had considered estuaries and put various suggestions forward to the Inshore Working Group, but none of the other Local Groups went into the same amount of detail as the Cornwall Local Group.

In the meantime, the ports representative had requested specific feedback from individual harbour masters and port authorities to inform a subsequent meeting. Responses were received from Christchurch, Teignmouth, Dartmouth, Salcombe, Yealm, Plymouth, Fowey, Looe, Falmouth, St. Mawes, Truro, Hayle, St Ives, Nequay, Padstow, Torridge and Severn. A summary table was produced along with a comprehensive dossier of their feedback, to inform another estuaries meeting on March 3rd, 2011. The majority of responses stated that there were significant concerns over any possible MCZ designation, and that further dialogue was required. Many questioned the need for further protection in estuaries where existing protected areas have already been designated. Another common feature of dialogue with the ports sector during this period was their request for direct consultation, and criticism that they were not aware what activity restrictions would result from MCZ designation. On the other hand, Fowey were supportive of MCZ designation.

A further meeting between the ports sector, Environment Agency and representatives from the Joint Working Group was held on the 3rd March 2011. The Environment Agency and Ports sector both had an opportunity to summarise their current positions and issues. Further progress was made on each site with regards to whether it should be recommended for inclusion, not recommended, or whether it required further discussion.

Estuaries were one of the key agenda items for the Joint Working Group meeting on the 9th and 10th March 2011. In the plenary session, five estuaries were considered by the group: Tamar, Salcombe and Kingsbridge, Camel, Upper Fal and Restronguet, and Fowey and Pont Pill. The time for discussion ran out before definitive conclusions could be reached. The two Working Group members from Natural England and recreational boating sector were tasked with carrying out further individual meetings with seven specific ports, and reporting back to the Joint Working Group in April 2011. This session had been made particularly complex by the different inputs that had been made by Local Groups and port consultations.

Meetings took place between Working Group members Roger Covey and Rick Parker and Harbour masters from Fowey; Taw/Torridge; Camel; Dart; Salcombe and Kingsbridge and Tamar during the last two weeks of March 2011. The Working Group were particularly interested in establishing where rMCZs might be located in less contentious parts of a given estuary. The outcome of these meetings was presented to the Working Group at their meeting on the 6th and 7th April 2011. In addition to the Axe, Otter, Devon Avon, Erme and Gannel, the following estuaries were included in the network: Upper

Fowey and Pont Pill, Dart, and Taw Torridge. Further clarification how a suitable site boundary might be drawn for a site in the upper Tamar was requested from the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF), and a final confirmation was requested for the Camel Estuary at the meeting on 5th May, 2011. The estuaries that were ultimately included in the final recommendations are the Axe, Otter, Dart, Devon Avon, Erme, Tamar, Upper Fowey and Pont Pill, Gannel, Camel, and the Taw/Torridge.

I.7.5 Reference Areas

At the planning meetings early in the process, both the Inshore and Offshore Working Groups agreed to address reference areas later in the planning process. They considered it most logical to have the remainder of the network in place first, so they could plan reference areas within that context. The main reason, however, was that they felt reference areas were going to be difficult and contentious to address, so it would be best to focus on the less contentious aspects of the work first, in order to be able to make progress and reach some agreement.

In October and November 2010, both Working Groups discussed how to address the outstanding work on reference areas, and it was agreed that these should be addressed jointly within the Joint Working Group, starting at the meeting in December 2010. The project team were tasked with developing some options as initial starting points for the reference area discussion. These options were developed and presented to the JWG at the December 2010 meeting. Working in sub-groups, the Joint Working Group considered which of these they wanted to take forward. A small number of sites (e.g. Canyons and Haig Fras) were agreed as options to take forward to the next meeting. There was originally no Joint Working Group meeting planned for January 2011, but the group requested that this extra meeting be scheduled in order to allow them to carry out some more work on reference areas in advance of the February 2011 Steering Group meeting. The project team provided tools and materials to aid the task, but the exercise still proved challenging with a great deal of technical input to absorb in the decision-making.

The Fishing Industry stated that they would not be proactively involved in proposing or supporting reference areas. However, fishing representatives remained present during the reference area discussions, and had the opportunity to participate at any stage. Some input was made, centred on highlighting impacts that sites might have on the fishing sector.

At the time of the February 2011, Steering Group meeting, a large number of area options were still under discussion by the Joint Working Group. Each Steering Group member was provided with a list of options and a booklet of maps. The Steering Group was asked to work through the list of options to provide a commentary on each option, to help provide a further basis for the Joint Working Group to discuss during their meetings in spring 2011. The commentary is recorded as a table within the meeting report.

Further work on reference areas took place at the March 2011 Joint Working Group meeting. In addition to the options that had previously been generated and discussed in January and February, a further 50 options were created by the project team. The group was asked to consider these options and was given the following materials: An inshore and offshore scale map of the network, a series of close-up maps of the 80 reference area options, and interactive PDF maps showing ecological and socio-economic information. A matrix was provided to help the groups quickly identify which habitats and FOCI were present in each reference area option.

It was recognised that it may be difficult to meet the size criteria for broad-scale habitats in the inshore areas and estuaries, so the group were advised to work on the assumption that the size criteria need not apply for intertidal broad-scale habitats. The number of options under discussion was narrowed down

significantly during this meeting, to a total of 12. The option to locate a reference area in Studland Bay was considered, recognising that this location is ecologically very important, but also that a reference area there would prove highly controversial. The decision was taken to seek further input from the local MMO stakeholder group, but ultimately this did not happen, because at the subsequent meeting in April 2011, a decision was taken to put forward a reference area in the Fal instead, where seagrass bed habitat is also present.

With 12 reference areas selected in the March 2011 Working Group, the April 2011 Working Group meeting finalised the selection. The group was given a further set of options that would fully meet habitat and species targets. There was an uncomfortable feeling about the reality of recommending further reference areas and some felt that there was a lack of time for this task, and by including these further sites the project risked losing support for the network. The SNCB representatives proposed a way forward to prioritise the ENG requirements for reference areas, starting with representing each broad-scale habitat within a set of recommended site, then FOCI habitats, with FOCI species given lowest priority. This pragmatic advice made a big difference to the way the discussions went, meaning that progress was made more easily.

At both the March and April 2011 meetings, the group discussed whether or not to include the Tean 'non-disturbance area' (put forward as part of the Isles of Scilly Local Group proposals) within the set of recommended reference areas. The SAP had highlighted that there ought to be a reference area within the Isles of Scilly, because of the ecological richness of the area, and the high quality of habitat present. However, the Local Group have been strongly opposed to reference areas throughout the process, and the 'non-disturbance area' was put forward on the basis that handlining would be allowed to continue (this would contravene the draft reference area guidance, which allows no extractive activities in reference areas). The Working Group faced a dilemma in that they did not wish to turn the 'non-disturbance area' into a recommended reference area, thereby undermining the support of the Local Group. Ultimately, a decision was taken not to put forward any recommended reference areas in the Isles of Scilly, but to maintain the Tean 'non-disturbance area' (and another similar area) as a zone within the Isles of Scilly rMCZ proposal (see the site report in part II).

The Working Group and Steering Group recognised that the recommended set of reference areas falls short of meeting the ENG requirements, but they felt that the group had gone as far as they were able to within the time available.

I.8 Addressing uncertainty: the stakeholder narrative

I.8.1 Uncertainty over human activity restrictions in MCZs

From the point that it became clear to stakeholder representatives that they were being asked to actively participate in planning marine protected areas, two key questions were asked repeatedly from across the spectrum of interests. Essentially, they boiled down to:

- What do you want?
- What does it mean for me?

The answer to the first question was (eventually) provided, in the shape of the national ENG.

The answer to the second question was never provided to stakeholders within the timescale of the MCZ project, as there never was any unambiguous guidance or answer on what activities will be restricted within MCZs. This posed the single most significant obstacle to constructive discussions throughout the duration of the project. Most participants in the process found it very difficult to be faced with the task

of designing a network when they did not know what restrictions would be put in place, and how the sites would impact on themselves or others.

The uncertainty also posed a challenge for the project economist, tasked with writing an Impact Assessment without having clarity on what to assess. It also proved to be the key obstacle that prevented constructive discussions to take place over what management measures (as defined in appendix 12) might be put in place in order to achieve the activity restrictions necessary to meet conservation objectives (see section I.9.3).

I.8.2 The stakeholder narrative

One of the ways in which we addressed this uncertainty was to put time and effort into discussing and formulating a stakeholder narrative to accompany the final recommendations, which includes working assumptions on management implications of sites, additional uncertainties and comments.

Because of the lack of clear guidance on what activities will be restricted in MCZs, it was inevitable that planning discussions were going to be based on people's assumptions (and, predictably, 'worst-case-scenario' fears which meant that many stakeholders had a strong preference for MCZs to be located away from their areas of interest). These assumptions would have been made by participants in the process, irrespective of whether we had gone to the effort of getting people to articulate and discuss them in order to record them. The advantage of making this effort was that it brought issues out into the open, e.g. where different representatives were making different assumptions, or where people had particular wishes and fears about what MCZs might mean for them.

For recommended reference areas, much less time was spent on the narrative, as the draft reference area guidance greatly reduced the uncertainties around management, and there was no need to formulate detailed management assumptions.

The full set of rMCZ working assumptions on management were formulated in a joint effort by the stakeholder groups, with significant support from the project team. The project team input was requested by stakeholder representatives, who felt they needed advice on what activity restrictions were likely to be put in place. The project team input was based on information available at the time in draft national sensitivity matrices (see section I.8.3), and on the project team's own experience and expertise (the meeting reports from late 2010 contain further details). Not every stakeholder representative agreed with or supported every one of the working assumptions that were recorded, because in some cases, the assumptions went against people's interests and wishes. However, the criticisms were limited to a relatively small number of cases, and these are highlighted in part II. Broadly speaking, the assumptions were supported (in the sense that they were seen as realistic), and all stakeholder representatives agreed to work with them, which means that they were the assumptions that ultimately shaped the network configuration.

The basic configuration of the network was fundamentally in place by the time the third progress report was being written (early 2011), with later meetings carrying out modifications rather than whole-sale redesigns. The evolution of the network can be followed in a PowerPoint animation supplied with the additional materials (see appendix 14). Most of the final rMCZs had essentially been part of the developing recommendations for several months before the end of the project. The main work on developing the stakeholder narrative was carried out at the same time as the planning took place, which means that the working assumptions for most rMCZs are the product of several meetings worth of work. The way in which these working assumptions evolved through the process is traceable through the full series of meeting reports and progress reports, within some initial assumptions and implications recorded in the second progress report in October 2010.

However, a small number of new sites were added to the network configuration late in the planning process. These were mainly estuarine rMCZs, which were discussed in parallel to the main Working Group meetings, with the decision on which ones to add taken relatively late (see I.7.5). For the late additions, the project did not spend the same amount of time formulating and recording detailed assumption and implications, nor can their narrative be traced back through previous reports in the same way as for the other sites.

Nevertheless, implicit assumptions were made during the discussions around whether or not to include these late additions in the recommendations (which were basically the generic assumptions that are presented in the network report, part II.2). The project team made a judgement on what to include in the narrative of the site reports for the late additions, based on what had previously been recorded for the network as a whole, for sites nearby, or for precursors to the final sites in the same area (this is highlighted on a case-by-case basis in the site reports). The narratives for the late additions also reflect comments made in the final stakeholder meetings, when the network was no longer being modified.

I.8.3 Compatibility and sensitivity matrices

One of the ways in which the project team tried to provide stakeholders with more clarity on possible activity restrictions within MCZs was through the development of an interim compatibility matrix, in May 2010 (the Working Group meeting reports from May and June 2010 contain further details). The matrix considered the compatibility of ENG features with activities occurring or likely to occur in the future. It set out whether an activity would be likely to be able to continue whilst still protecting the feature in question. On one axis, the matrix listed marine activities, and along the other axis, it listed marine species and habitats to be protected in MCZs. It used a simple red/amber/green colour scheme to highlight which activities the project team considered to be incompatible with the protection of each feature (red), which activities might need mitigation (amber), and which activities would in all likelihood not have negative impacts on the protection of the feature.

It was intended to be used to help define the protection levels necessary to meet the conservation objectives of sites. The stakeholder representatives felt that it was suitable to use as a tool to help inform decision-making. However, they felt that it could not be formally used for decision-making until it had a full evidence-base and was supported by national partners.

The project team suggested the development of an 'official' national compatibility matrix to national project partners. The idea was that it would have a similar format to the interim matrix developed by Finding Sanctuary, and provide a practical tool for stakeholders to refer to during their planning discussions, giving them clarity on likely activity restrictions needed in the MCZs they were being asked to design and recommend. In order to be useful, the project team were keen for such a tool to be developed as quickly as possible, so that stakeholders would have the clarity they were seeking at the beginning of their task.

After a considerable amount of discussion, national data contract MB102 was extended to create national sensitivity matrices. A combination of the MB102 contract extension, and work carried out by the SNCBs, eventually developed three separate matrices:

Activities/pressures: this shows what pressures are caused by what activities (published in draft form in May 2010).

Pressures/sensitivities matrix: this shows which features (including ENG-listed features) are sensitive to which pressures.

Activities/features matrix: this is a combination of the above two matrices, setting out activities against features.

The final sensitivity matrices were delivered through September and October 2010. The activities / features matrix was not equivalent to the Finding Sanctuary compatibility matrix, as it makes no direct statement over whether a given activity will be deemed compatible with the protection of a given feature within an MCZ. The advice provided by the national project partners along with the national sensitivity matrices stated that the compatibility or incompatibility of features with activities will depend on a wide range of site-specific variables, such as location, intensity (frequency and duration), and current management of activity. They considered that using a matrix approach for predicting 'compatibility' would give spurious and in many cases misleading answers. They stated that the activities/features tables provided an initial indication of which activities are associated with pressures that can impact certain features. Decisions on management would ultimately require expert judgement on a case-by-case basis.

In late 2010, the Working Groups were presented with the national matrices, in the form of PRISM /PISA (MS Access-based versions of the matrices, developed by Steve Barnard of the Net Gain project). The feedback from stakeholders was that the information in the matrices did not provide the clarity they were seeking, and that they were too complex to be useful as a practical tool to refer to during the planning meetings. It was this discussion that led to a direct request from the stakeholders for the project team to use the guidance in the national sensitivity matrices to help elaborate a more comprehensive set of working assumptions, building on the narrative work the stakeholder groups had already started in the meantime.

I.9 Conservation objectives and management discussions

I.9.1 Developing conservation objectives

From the beginning of the formal phase, the remit of the project included developing recommendations for MCZ conservation objectives, as well as for the location and boundaries of MCZs. The national MCZ project Conservation Objective Guidance (COG) defined the format in which conservation objectives had to be written in the recommendations, and set out a process for defining them. It was officially published in January 2011, although a first draft was circulated to regional project teams for discussion in September 2010.

Prior to the publication of the COG, developing conservation objectives were loosely defined as the contribution each site made towards meeting the ENG. During stakeholder discussions, sites were drawn based on two considerations. One was to find locations that contained the broad-scale habitats and FOCI records needed to meet the ENG (the other was to minimise negative socio-economic impacts). Therefore, the features contained within each site were always a key part of the discussion – without the right features present, sites would not have been included in the recommendations. From the second progress report onwards, the site reports contained a heading entitled 'developing conservation objectives', which highlighted the reasons why the site was selected as part of the developing network, and the ENG features it contained and would therefore serve to protect.

I.9.2 The vulnerability assessment meetings

When the COG became available, it became clear that the definition and writing of draft conservation objectives was going to be a much more laborious process than originally expected by the project team. The COG required a condition assessment to be carried out on each feature in each rMCZ, in order to determine whether or not the feature is currently in 'favourable condition'. On the basis of that assessment, the COG required the conservation objective to be either to 'maintain' the feature in

‘favourable condition’, or ‘recover’ it to ‘favourable condition’. For reference areas, the COG requires all conservation objectives to be ‘recover to reference condition’.

A condition assessment would require recent survey data, which was not available for virtually all of the features in any of the sites. In the absence of direct survey-based evidence, the COG set out an alternative ‘vulnerability assessment’ process, to be carried out for each seafloor feature in each site. The vulnerability assessment required the use of the national sensitivity matrices (described in section I.8.3). The process is described more fully in the COG.

For each feature in each site, the vulnerability assessment had to define whether or not the feature was likely to be in favourable condition based on best available evidence on human activities present in the site, the distribution and intensity of those activities, the individual and cumulative pressures of each activity, whether the pressure benchmarks defined in the national sensitivity matrices are likely to be reached as a result of the activities, and the sensitivity of each feature to each pressure.

This process had to be carried out for 478 combinations of seafloor features and rMCZs, a task that could not feasibly be carried out within stakeholder meetings, because of its complexity, inherent uncertainties, and time required. Many broad-scale habitats and FOCI are listed for multiple rMCZs and recommended reference areas, with each occurrence needing to be individually assessed.

The above figure (478) does not count draft conservation objectives for mobile FOCI or for non-ENG listed species, for which no guidance was contained in the national sensitivity matrices or the COG. It also does not count conservation objectives for features in recommended reference areas, for which the COG advises a draft conservation objective of ‘recover to reference condition’.

Because it was not possible to carry out vulnerability assessments and define draft conservation objectives during stakeholder meetings, a separate set of meetings was set up between SNCB staff, project team, and public authority representatives (IFCA, MMO, EA). Public Authorities were invited to attend in order to provide advice on the intensity of activities present, and on appropriate management. SNCBs attended in order to provide advice on feature sensitivity and draw conclusions on feature condition. Project Team members were present to facilitate and record the meeting, and to provide the necessary materials and data. The aim of the vulnerability assessment meetings was twofold:

- To define draft conservation objectives for ENG-listed features in rMCZs, i.e. decide between ‘recover’ and ‘maintain’ objectives for the features listed.
- To discuss the likely activity restrictions needed in order to achieve the conservation objectives.

Feature lists for each rMCZ were defined in the same way as feature lists for the developing conservation objectives had previously been defined, based on an analysis of the GIS datasets for ENG features present in the site, and site-specific additional knowledge in some instances (as highlighted in site reports).

The second objective (the discussion of activity restrictions) was included because the vulnerability assessment required a review of human activities causing pressures in each site, which goes hand-in-hand with considerations over what activities will need restricting. It was envisaged that these discussions would provide better clarity on this matter. Although the timing of the vulnerability assessment discussions was too late for the outcome of the second objective to have a direct bearing on the shaping of the network by stakeholders, it would have at least provided better clarity for the Impact Assessment, and for the expanded remit of the project on management measures (as defined in appendix 12, and discussed in more detail in section I.9.3).

For offshore rMCZs, vulnerability assessments were completed in a two-day meeting on April 12th and 13th 2011, between project staff and JNCC advisers (Beth Stoker, Declan Tobin and Laura Cornick). An MMO representative was invited but unable to attend.

For inshore rMCZs, meetings were grouped by county. A preparatory meeting was held for each county, between Natural England regional advisers and project staff. This was followed by a main meeting for each county, where public authority staff were also present. Rhiannon Pipkin from Natural England (Truro office) attended all inshore meetings, to provide a degree of consistency in the format and content of advice provided. Regional project staff present at the meetings were Rupert Haines (all meetings), Louise Lieberknecht (most meetings) and Shaun Lewin (most meetings). Meeting dates were as follows:

- April 18th, 2011: General preparatory meeting for inshore vulnerability assessments; project staff, Sarah Wiggins and Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England regional and national).
- April 28th, 2011: Dorset preparatory meeting, project staff and Rhiannon Pipkin, Natural England
- May 5th, 2011: Dorset main meeting; project staff and Simon Pengelly (southern IFCA), Neil Watson (Environment Agency), Alex MacKenzie (MMO Southern District), Rachel Waldock, Fiona McNie, Susan Burton, Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England)
- May 6th, 2011: Devon preparatory meeting, project staff and Rhiannon Pipkin, Natural England
- May 9th, 2011: Devon main meeting, project staff and Sarah Clarke, Bill Lawrence (Devon & Severn IFCA), Jay Rowntree (EA), Nick Wright (MMO South Western District), Andrew Knight, Gavin Black, Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England)
- May 11th, 2011: Cornwall preparatory meeting, project staff and Rhiannon Pipkin, Natural England
- May 16th, 2011: Cornwall main meeting, project staff and Simon Cadman (Cornwall IFCA), Simon Toms (Environment Agency), Justin Williams (MMO Western District), Sangeeta McNair, Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England)
- May 26th, 2011: Regional review meeting of inshore work, project staff, Roger Covey and Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England)
- May 31st, 2011: Isles of Scilly preparatory meeting, regional project staff and Rhiannon Pipkin, Natural England
- June 2nd, 2011: Isles of Scilly main meeting, project staff and Steve Watt (IoS IFCA), Sangeeta McNair, Rhiannon Pipkin (Natural England)

Because of the complexity of the vulnerability assessment process, and the complexity and inherent uncertainty within the sensitivity matrices, the discussions on activity restrictions did not have any clearly defined outcomes, in terms of any definitive management proposals. At the time of writing this report, it is clear that the process of defining activity restrictions and site management within MCZs will continue beyond the end of the Finding Sanctuary project, and that the vulnerability assessment meetings might be seen as a first step in that process. At the time of writing, it is not clear what role (if any) the regional stakeholder groups will be given in this process.

Nevertheless, the outcome of the discussions on activity restrictions and site management from the vulnerability assessment meetings was written up and shared with stakeholders (in addition to the draft conservation objectives) – this is the ‘VA snapshot’ referred to throughout part II of this report. The VA snapshot consists of a short table for each site, summarising the outcome of the activity restriction and site management discussions held during the vulnerability assessment meetings, and a visual representation of the same information on maps in appendix 13.

The project team considered it important to include a record of the VA snapshot in this report, even though it is clear that the discussions will be ongoing, because it provides a record of the point that the process had reached at the time that the stakeholder groups provided their final comments for the stakeholder narrative in this report. The VA snapshot information and the draft conservation objectives in this report reflect the status of the discussions at the time of the final Joint Working Group meetings in June 2011. Any subsequent amendments discussed since then by SNCBs or other bodies are not included, since there was no time for stakeholder representatives to see and comment on them. A full audit trail of the discussions held at the regional vulnerability assessment meetings is provided in the additional materials (see appendix 14).

1.9.3 Impact Assessment and future work on management

The Finding Sanctuary economist, Rupert Haines, joined the project in March 2010 with the role of leading the development of the Impact Assessment. It was introduced to the Steering Group and Working Groups for the first time in June 2010. The first two iterations of the impact assessment in June and October were generally quite contextual, but there was still an expectation that the impacts would start to be described by the third iteration in February. The Project Delivery Guidance equally expected that the IA would allow iterative development of policy costs to stakeholders and would be a component that would inform the revision and refinement of sites. However, because the location of sites in the developing network configuration was subject to change, the production of an Impact Assessment that provided costs to stakeholders was not possible.

Work has been ongoing between the regional projects to ensure that the methodology used for describing and costing different activities were consistent. A model was developed by Finding Sanctuary to use VMS, Fishemap data and landings records to model the value of fishing grounds and to record the value of landings affected within the recommended MCZs. At the time of writing, work is focussing on obtaining quantitative and qualitative information of the impacts to all sectors potentially affected by the recommended MCZs. Those stakeholders who have been involved in this process are expected to have the opportunity to review and feedback on a draft of the Impact Assessment.

The vulnerability assessment process between April and June 2011 attempted to define the likely management restrictions within recommended MCZs. The outputs from this were not definitive and were disputed by a number of stakeholders. Therefore, the Impact Assessment reverted back to making management assumptions in order to provide illustrative costs of MCZs based on the outputs from the vulnerability assessment and additional advice from the JNCC and Natural England. At the time of writing, discussions about the management assumptions are still ongoing for some sectors. The Impact Assessment will not be making any management recommendations.

The project's remit was extended late in the process, to produce recommendations for management measures (e.g. byelaws, voluntary measures). This was not achieved, partly because the uncertainty around what activities would need restricting was not resolved within the timeframe of the project. At the time the MCZ recommendations are being submitted and the project is coming to its end, the uncertainty around management therefore persists.

1.10 Stakeholder commitment in the process

Between September 2009 and July 2011 stakeholders participated in 41 regional and 29 local meetings. This represents an enormous commitment on behalf of those stakeholder representatives to ensure that the task was carried out properly. The importance of these planning decisions was very evident from the time committed. On a number of occasions stakeholders requested extra meetings be organised; for example Cornwall Local Group in November 2010, Dorset Local Group in February 2011,

the Inshore Working Group in December 2010 and the Joint Working Group in January, May and June 2011. The time spent attending and travelling to meetings was only a small part of the total stakeholder commitment to the process, since a great deal of work took place outside of meetings, in numerous sector meetings or discussions and correspondence with constituents.

To gain an estimate of the total time involved, a calculation has been made of the total number of hours spent, based on an average of 8 hours per meeting (except Local Groups) and not including travel time or time spent with sector constituents or external meetings:

- Steering Group: 7 meetings with an estimate of 30 people on average: 1680 hours
- Inshore Working Group: 7 meetings with an estimate of 9 people attending on average: 504
- Process Group meetings: 7 meetings with an estimate of 4 people attending on average: 63
- Offshore Working Group: 7 meetings with an estimate of 5 people attending on average: 280
- Joint Working Group: 9 days of meetings with an estimate of 13 people attending on average: 936
- Local Groups: 30 meetings with an estimated duration of four hours and an estimated average of 25 people attending: 3000 hours

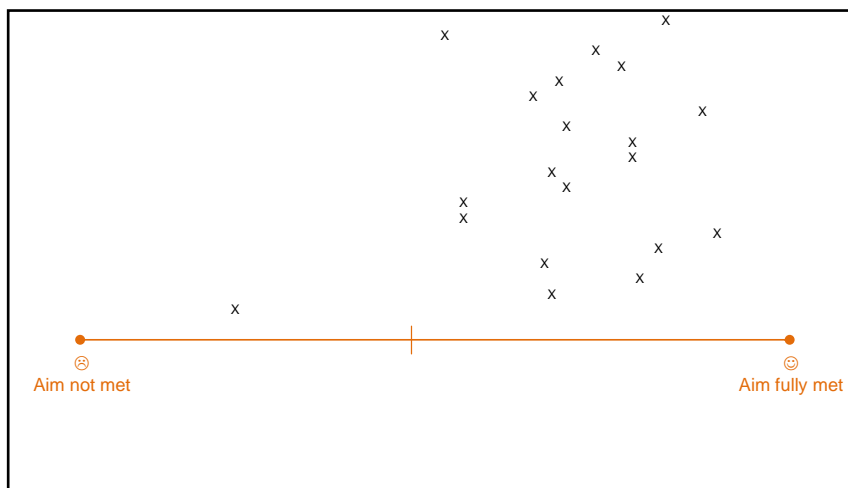
Total: **6488 person hours** or **811 person days**

I.11 Evaluating Success

I.11.1 Process

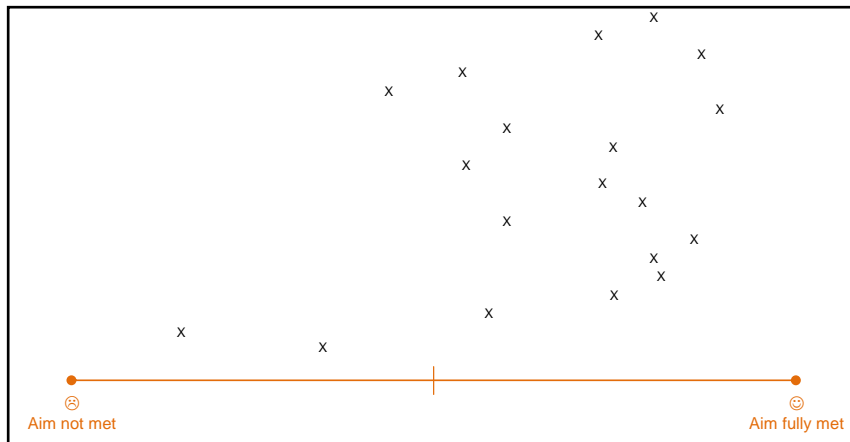
At the final meeting in July 2011, Steering Group members were given an opportunity to provide feedback on the process considered against the original parameters and aims for the process. The full results are shown in the July 2011 report and a summary of the responses is shown below:

A representative group of regional stakeholders drew up proposals for a regional MCZ network, following a set of ecological design guidelines signed off by Government.



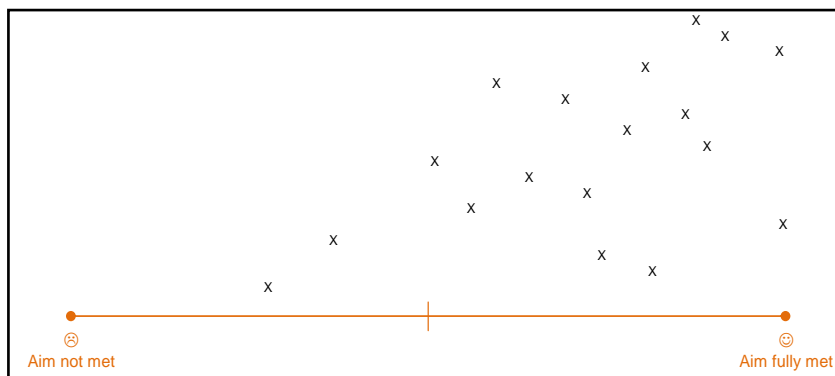
The results show a skew towards the upper half for this aim being met. Further comments highlighted that good progress has been made despite the difficulties and uncertainties encountered. Generally the comments seem to reflect that the Steering Group and Working Groups have done a good job in challenging circumstances.

There was a structured, coherent and transparent process that allowed the Steering Group to build up a knowledge base and an understanding of the issues, the data used and the guidance guidelines; explore potential solutions to these issues; have a central role in planning and have a process of negotiation and resolution of conflict between differing needs and interests.



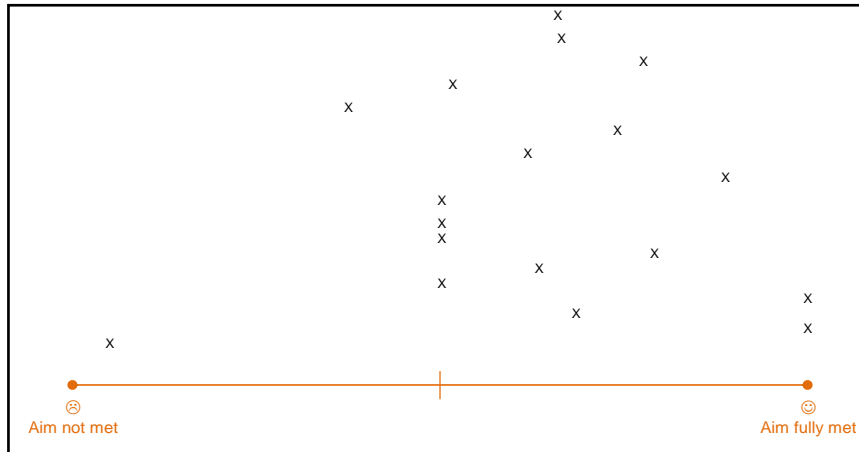
The distribution on the scale again shows the majority of responses in the upper half of the scale, but with a wider scatter and slight skew towards the median line. Two responses are in the lower half. Further comments highlighted problems with the large volume of information and delayed guidance; and that there was some initial mistrust amongst certain sectors but this improved as the project developed. There was a general desire to get the task done and stakeholders worked with integrity and respect for others.

There was good decision making to identify the location for MCZs and the decisions were taken by stakeholders



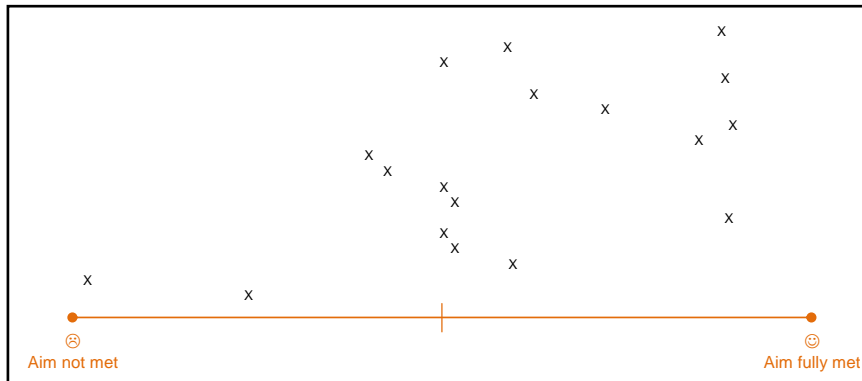
The distribution on the scale is much the same as above, with the majority of marks on the upper end of the scale, split between the 50% and 100% brackets. There is a slight skew towards the upper end of the scale, although two marks remain in the 30%-40% bracket. Some felt that the approach had not been consistent and that decisions have been flawed by lack of time and knowledge. Others noted that decisions were generally taken within Working Groups. Two Steering Group members emphasised the role of Local Group members.

The process and final recommendations are understood by a wide range of stakeholders, especially those who will, or are likely to be impacted by the advent of an MCZ network. This includes stakeholders who have national, regional and local interests.



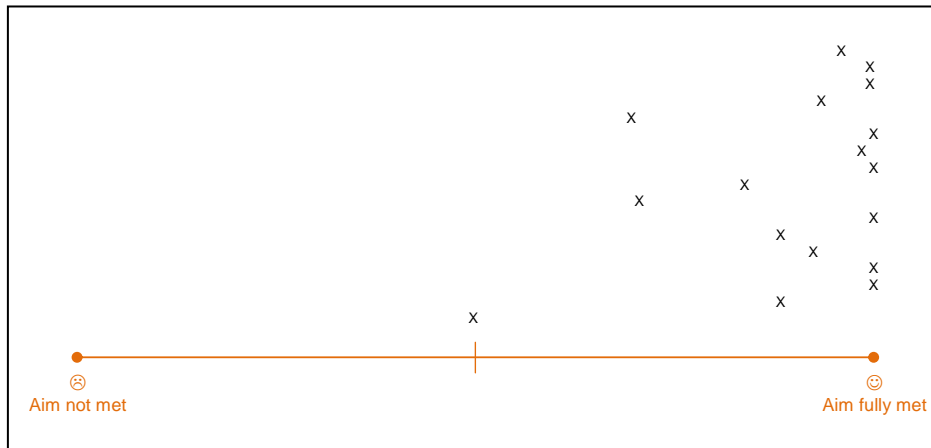
The distribution is skewed towards the middle of the scale, but with a very wide distribution of response. Comments noted that there are still many assumptions and uncertainties and that the process remains poorly understood by those people not directly involved in the SG process. In contrast, others noted that the process was transparent and easy to follow, although communication with some more diverse sectors was challenging.

The best available data was used



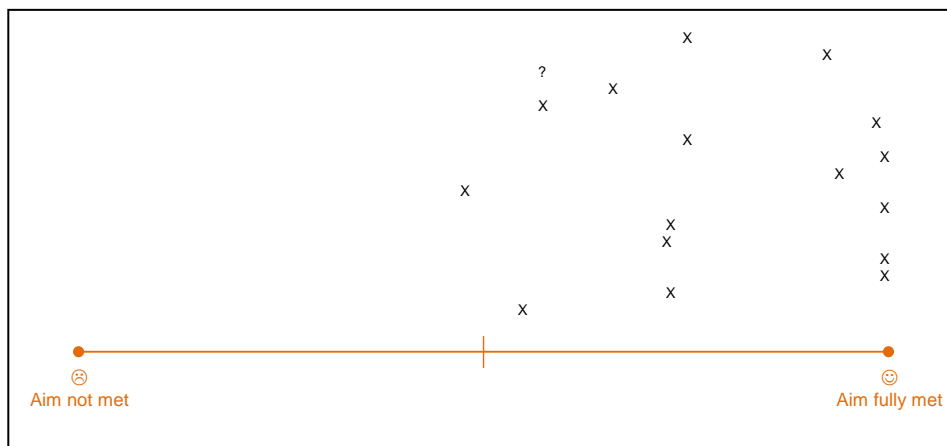
The distribution is skewed towards the middle of the scale, but with a wide distribution of responses. Commentary noted that socio-economic data is lacking and that there was too much reliance on non-peer reviewed anecdotal information on economic value. Others noted that data arrived late and that there was too much; however one comment states that the best available data was used, but many gaps still exist.

How do you rate the support given to you as stakeholders by the Project Team?



The responses show a skew towards the higher end of the scale, with one response on the median line. Further comments were that the support from the project team had been exceptional, professional and clear.

How do you rate the value to the process of the facilitation and process design?



The responses show a scattering of responses within the upper half of the scale. Further comments include that it would not have been achievable without this support and it was an essential part of the process. However, others felt that too much time was spent on trivial issues or that did not reflect the true priorities of stakeholders.

General comments on the process

In making further more general comments, Steering Group members stated that the project was delivered well and in a really tight time scale and that there was good utilisation of local partnerships. Others felt that the process has been very complicated and that large issues remain to be answered and that the efforts to understand, recognise and accommodate the needs of others is the real achievement of the process. One member stated that the stakeholder driven proves was a brave, visionary and challenging way forward to produce a network of MCZs and the result is a network that could be supported and lived with.

I.11.2 Stakeholder Support for Recommendations

In this final report, the project team were requested by Defra to provide information on 'levels of support' for the site recommendations.

Finding Sanctuary's task was to deliver recommendations for MCZs, with draft conservation objectives. In addition, the project was asked by Defra to report on 'levels of stakeholder support' for individual sites in the final report (see section I.11.2 below). There was no formal requirement to develop a more detailed stakeholder narrative. However, the narrative is an integral part of the recommendations, as it reflects the context within which stakeholders took certain decisions, and the nature of stakeholders' concerns about particular sites and the recommendations as a whole. By providing detail on the nature of stakeholder concerns, the narrative provides decision-makers with more useful information than would be contained within a simple score of 'levels of support'.

Towards the later stages of the process, the national MCZ project discussed the possibility of using a consistent 'scoring' system to assess levels of stakeholder support for individual rMCZs in all four regional projects, and to present these scores in a standardised fashion. Ultimately, we did not do this, because of the potential risks inherent in this simplified approach: Not only would it have run the danger of 'pulling apart' the recommendations, which are for a whole network and not for individual sites – it would also have tended to elicit a retreat to positional statements, giving outcomes that are predictable, based on the interests of the different sectors involved in the process.

If asked to 'score' their support for each individual site in the network, some of the commercial sector representatives would, in all likelihood, never be able to state a 'high' score, not least because of the way that might impact on their reputation within the sector they represent.

On the other hand, if conservation representatives were asked to 'score' support for the recommendations, it is possible that they would either state 'high' across the board, or give lower scores on the basis that they think a lot more could and should have been achieved for biodiversity conservation.

Positional 'scores' of support might very well mask the reality that, despite the fundamental differences between the sectors represented on the stakeholder group, representatives from these sectors have ultimately been able to work together constructively throughout the process. This has resulted in some sense of collective ownership by a group of representatives from across a diverse spectrum of interests.

Finally, a score from 'high' to 'low' would, in itself, not provide any understanding about the reasons why a particular score was given, i.e. the underlying nature of concerns that stakeholders have. By spending a lot of effort on recording a stakeholder narrative as part of the final recommendations, we have aimed to provide an insight into the nature of these concerns, thereby providing a much richer (albeit more complex) source of information for decision-makers.

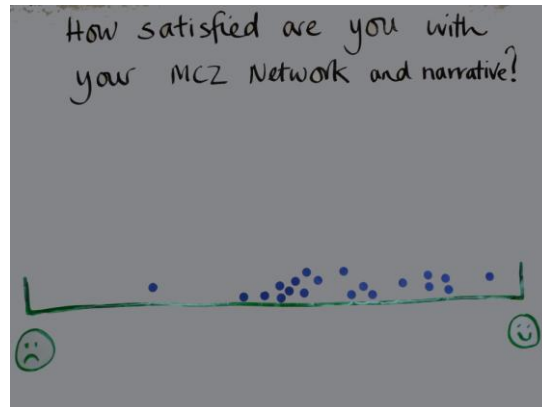


Figure 12: Photo showing response from Steering Group on 27th July 2011

An evaluation was undertaken at the Steering Group meeting on the 26th July 2011 to determine how satisfied the group was with their network. The group used sticky dots on a flip-chart (see figure 12). In discussion, those Steering Group members who had been particularly positive elaborated that they were happy because the conclusions 'far oustripped original expectations'. Those with more of a median point of view explained that they were pleased with the outcomes, but the success of the process will depend on how the uncertainties play out. A more negative point of view highlighted that there was too much uncertainty around management and that stronger guidance and greater certainty about implementation was needed. Not all Steering Group members attended this last meeting or were present at the end when this exercise was carried out.

I.12 Beyond the Regional Project Recommendations

Finding Sanctuary submitted its final report to the SAP and the Government Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies, NE and the JNCC on the 7th September. By the beginning of October, the SAP will provide their final assessment of the extent to which the Regional Project recommendations meet the ENG.

On 16th January 2012, JNCC and NE will provide their statutory advice to Government. This advice will contain:

- Advice on the creation of an ecologically-coherent network of MPAs
- An overview of the Regional Project process used to identify possible MCZs
- JNCC and NE's view of the Regional Project recommendations
- An assessment of the most at risk sites/priority sites for protection
- An assessment of the scientific certainty of the Regional Project recommendations.

The Regional Projects will continue to work with the JNCC and NE to deliver an Impact Assessment on the 16th January 2012.

I.12.1 Public Consultation and Designation

Once the regional project recommendations, the Impact Assessment, and the SNCB statutory advice has been received, ministers will consider the supporting evidence and potential environmental, social and

economic impacts, before deciding sites to take forward for designation in 2012. The factors considered in reaching the Government's decisions will be clearly stated in the public consultation documentation, alongside the sites Government proposes to designate in 2012. Public consultation is expected to take place during summer 2012, and will be an opportunity for stakeholders to review, comment and provide feedback to Government on the proposed designations before they are finalised.

I.12.2 Management and Enforcement

From a very early stage, stakeholders have stated how important it is for them to understand what the management implications would be for a site. The lack of some basic management frameworks has been one of the biggest failings of this process. It has meant that stakeholders have operated in uncertainty about what restrictions might be introduced. They have overcome this void, by stating their own assumptions about what restrictions might take place, and have generally tried to make these as realistic as possible.

The danger with this approach was always that once the level of management was decided, any disjoint between the stakeholder assumptions and the outcomes from the vulnerability assessment could lead to an undermining of the stakeholder ownership of the work if stakeholders didn't have time to review their work in the light of decisions on activity restrictions. This became a reality in June 2011, when the outcomes from the vulnerability assessment showed that many inshore sites might restrict mobile fishing gear. Working Group members were frustrated to find that their work had apparently been undermined and criticised the way in which these top-down decisions had been made.

I.12.3 Monitoring

No details are available at this time on the methodology and timescales for monitoring. At the time of writing, the JNCC are implementing a project to start a monitoring project in 2014. At the Joint Working Group meeting in June 2011 a brief discussion took place about monitoring and made a number of observations. These included ensuring that monitoring take place at a site based and a network level. It was also suggested that existing monitoring is utilised with cross over between ecological and socio-economic monitoring.

I.12.4 Review Process

Reviews of the network will take place, but the process and timescales through which these occur is currently uncertain.

I.12.5 Future Role of Stakeholders / Regional Stakeholder Groups

There is currently no clarity on how individual stakeholders or Regional Stakeholder Groups will be involved in any future developments of the network. Following the delivery of the final report, the Regional Stakeholder Group will be given an opportunity to review and comment on the Impact Assessment in October.

During the Steering Group meeting on 26th July 2011 a brief session was held to determine stakeholder's own views on the role that they should have. They stated that the group represented a particularly valuable resource of knowledgeable people, who had developed particular experience of working together and using maps and technical guidance. Although they were keen to be proactive in putting themselves forward for subsequent parts of the process, they also noted that someone would be required to manage and co-ordinate their work. It was also noted that their role could evolve from MCZs to becoming more involved in Marine Spatial Planning.

Future involvement in the short term would include an ability to provide further narrative once the management implications had been completed, to input ideas for management measures (as was originally intended during the process) and to provide feedback on the Impact Assessment. Post

designation, Steering Group members could prove to be valuable in being given responsibility to ensure that the management is effective and enforced.

Since the management implications and management measures remain to be defined, the Steering Group also emphasised that they want to be involved in a review of the management implications following the completion of the sense-checked vulnerability assessment.

The overriding message therefore is that the group are keen to maintain their role in the MCZ network, but Defra, as the overall owner of the project would have to define what that role would be, and to create a secretariat for it.