

write-round. The Ministerial write-round will refer to the outcomes of this first meeting. The draft write-round will first be cleared with the DA officials.

ACTION: Secretariat to organize a Ministerial write-round, in consultation with Martyn Cox, Havard Prosser and Liam McKibben

(Secretaries note: Although not discussed specifically at the meeting, actions for the MSCC listed in these minutes will be taken forward by the new Secretariat once it has been established.)

2.2 Terms of Reference

2.2.1 It was agreed that the Committee's primary purpose was as set out in the Planning Group paper – to develop and implement the UK Marine Science Strategy, and to improve UK marine science co-ordination. It was agreed that the main focus for the Committee over the coming year would be the development and adoption of the Strategy. As the Strategy developed other priorities for the Committee's attention would emerge. For example access to information and communication are important aspects of co-ordination and will need to be included in the Committee's work plan. Co-ordination with other groups was also an important issue. For example MAPC is developing its own strategy and MSCC would need to avoid duplicating this work.

ACTION: MSCC to develop and adopt a five year business plan.

2.3 MSCC Structure and Membership

2.3.1 The Committee endorsed the proposed structure for the MSCC. There was general agreement regarding proposed departmental and non-departmental membership. DIUS noted that their investment in science funding is made through NERC, on their behalf.

2.3.3 The role of independent members, as drafted in the paper, was thought to be ambiguous. It was queried whether it was possible to be both independent and represent an agency or stakeholder group. Also whether anyone could really have an "independent" view? On the issue of wider participation, it was emphasized that the views of NGOs, academia and industry need to be fed into MSCC. The question was how could this be achieved if not through independent membership? There was a concern that MSCC membership could become over-large and as a result lose focus. However it was felt that without the engagement of stakeholders, MSCC's credibility will suffer, and MSCC will not understand the bigger picture. The following scenarios were proposed:

(i) Do not have independent membership as a category, and do not attempt to obtain membership from all parties that are engaged in UK marine science. Expertise, if required outside of MSCC membership should be sought via ad hoc consultations and form part of the Working Groups.

(ii) Non-government members, perhaps three, who would perform the role of non-executives.

(iii) Up to three non-executive members but with additional roles to help ensure delivery of UK Marine Science Strategy.

Summarising, the Chair said that in developing the Strategy the secretariat should draw up the MSCC business plan. This should specify the role of independents as non executives. At the appropriate time in the future the Secretariat should identify an appropriate appointment mechanism for non-execs and the constituency from which they would be drawn.

ACTION: MSCC Secretariat to consider the non executive member issue and how stakeholders should be consulted as part of the MSCC Business Plan.

2.4 Chairmanship and Meeting Frequency

2.4.1 It was agreed that Chairmanship of MSCC would be held jointly between Scottish Government and Defra with full MSCC meetings held as required, probably twice a year. A project plan for future meetings to be drawn up and circulated.

ACTION: MSCC Secretariat to draw up a plan for future MSCC meetings

2.5 Secretariat

2.5.1 In discussing the shape of the MSCC Secretariat it was agreed that it will need to fulfill a function that is broader than that of administration. It therefore required a team with key skills such as customer engagement, project management, science and policy writing as well as organisational ability. It will require strong leadership and the head will preferably be someone who has gained relevant experience within different government departments, and has strategy development and programme management skills. It was noted that the IACMST Secretariat will be available to continue contributing its expertise. NERC, who have funded and housed the IACMST Secretariat for many years, would be willing to contribute this resource to the MSCC secretariat.

In summary, it was agreed that the secretariat would be policy led. MSCC would take up NERC's offer for the IACMST secretariat to form part of the new secretariat. There is some urgency in setting up the Secretariat as it

will be responsible for developing the Strategy and taking forward other actions as they emerge.

2.5.2 Budgetary requirements for the MSCC secretariat will be higher than for the IACMST Secretariat (which consists of two 0.5 FTEs) and funding contributions will need to be sought from the MSCC membership. DEFRA will circulate plans for the proposed Secretariat with an indication of costs, and proposed funding arrangements.

ACTION: Defra's Marine Directorate to develop the business case and budget requirements for the secretariat and circulate for comment.

2.6 Working Groups and Wider Involvement

2.6.1 It was agreed that the need for working groups would emerge during the Strategy process. Paper 2, which lists the tasks relevant to MSCC from HoC S&T report, provides a checklist. An issue that needed to be resolved related to the current IACMST working groups and whether they should continue as normal in during the interim period before the secretariat was established. The following was decided:

The Marine Environmental Data and Information Network (MEDIN) will be migrated over to MSCC and continue unchanged for the foreseeable future.

The Underwater Sound Forum to be migrated to MSCC but information to be sought on its short and long term aims and proposed life span.

The International Sub-Committee. Whilst the UK does need a coordinated mechanism for collating and responding to international issues, it was felt the continuation of the current International Sub-Committee was not the best way forward. NERC formally represents the UK at IOC and there are similar representational arrangements for other committees. One suggestion was that a "virtual group" could be established, under the auspices of MSCC, perhaps based on the International Good Practice Committee of Australia.

2.6.2 Members were aware of many other existing bi-lateral groups that may seek affiliation or integration with MSCC. Consideration would only be given to those groups whose *raison d'être* links directly to the UK Marine Science Strategy.

ACTION: MSCC Secretariat to develop Working Groups as agreed by the MSCC.

2.7 Relationship between MSCC, MAPC and MMO

2.7.1 The proposed arrangements as set out in the Planning Group paper were accepted. This issue will be considered further when appropriate.

2.8 Implementation Timetable

2.8.1 The Implementation schedule is demanding, with the Strategy due to be published in the second half of 2009. Little progress can be made until the secretariat has been established, although it may be possible to start gathering factual material for the Strategy, such as on policy drivers and departmental and agency science strategies, using the services of the current IACMST secretariat.

3.0 UK Marine Science Strategy

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Ed Hill introduced the strategy task group's paper (Attachment 1 to the Planning Group paper). The Chair thanked Ed and MSCC Planning Group for this very helpful paper.

3.2 Scope and structure of the Strategy

3.2.1 In discussion it was agreed that the Strategy should;

- Be short, sharply focused and have impact. No longer than twenty pages, plus a two page executive summary.
- Encompass marine science not just marine research.
- Include proposals to improve the communication of and access to scientific information.
- Provide clear 'signposts' as to where other more detailed departmental and agency marine strategies can be accessed
- Identify overlaps and gaps rather than trying to comprehensively cover all aspects of marine science
- High level and addressing cross-cutting issues.
- Make a difference and influence thinking. Have an impact
- Not be over-constrained and should be forward looking
- Be seen as 'the best available work in progress'.
- Explicitly state what will be achieved from better coordination of science within the marine sector. For this reason, it is vitally important to identify the Strategy's target audience from ministerial level down

Its preparation will be the responsibility of a Strategy Working Group, led by the head of the secretariat. Phase 1 should be a fact finding and scoping exercise. At the start of Phase 2 the structure will be developed in detail. There was some discussion on whether the strategy should be based on societal themes, or on cross-cutting drivers. If based on societal themes, heritage should be included. If cross-cutting, it could be based on clean, healthy, safe etc seas. The Working Group will need to consider what 'marine' encompasses. For example will it

include ports, harbours, and shipping, and large scale issues such as the oceans/atmosphere interface.

ACTION: Secretariat to propose terms of reference and membership of a small strategy sub-group to drive the work forward, to be agreed by the MSCC.

4. Concluding Statement

4.1 The Chair summed up as follows:

- The draft minutes will be circulated for comment
- A draft of the ministerial write-round will be sent to departmental officials
- Defra Minister to write to other ministers seeking to agree the reporting arrangements.
- A business case will be drafted for the Secretariat, including the budgetary implications.

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their contributions.