

## Inter-Agency Committee on Marine Science and Technology

### Confirmed Minutes

**Forty-eighth Plenary Meeting held on Thursday 31 January 2008 from 10.30 at Defra, Nobel House, London.**

<p><b>Present:</b> Paul Canham, UKHO Jane Hawkridge, JNCC Ed Hill, Oceans 2025 Joe Horwood, Cefas John Lock, Defra Bev Mackenzie, IMarEST David Milroy, DfT Kevin O'Carroll, DBERR Havard Prosser, Welsh Assembly Lesley Rickards, MEDAG Matt Service, DARDNI Bill Turrell, FRS Jon Turton, Met Office Malcom Vincent, JNCC Mike Webb, NERC Andrew Wither, EA</p> <p><b>Independent Members:</b> Peter Liss Graham Shimmield Ian Townend</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> Trevor Guymer</p>	<p><b>Apologies:</b> Liz Bentley, MOD Mike Bell, Met Office Robin Cook, FRS Theresa Crossley, DfT Neil MacPherson, DfID Stephen Malcolm, Cefas Mark Reed, MOD Andrew Tate, FCO Nick Grout, DIUS</p>
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#### Opening remarks

The meeting was chaired by Ian Townend following the death on 12 January 2008 of Professor Sir Howard Dalton. Chair opened the meeting by paying tribute to the considerable impact Howard had had on IACMST in his five years as Chairman. His enthusiasm had been infectious and he had provided leadership to the wider UK marine science community at a time when it was much needed. [Post meeting note: Secretary wrote to Lady Dalton expressing the condolences of the Committee.]

#### Welcome and apologies

Chairman welcomed Professor Ed Hill to his first meeting. Apologies were as noted above.

#### 1.0 Forty-seventh Plenary Meeting held on 13 September 2007

1.1 The minutes of the Forty-seventh Plenary were approved for display on the IACMST website.

1.2 Review of Actions

1.2.1 All items had been completed or would be dealt with under following agenda items. Changes to plans for the IACMST presence at Oceanology International 08 were noted. There would be no lunchtime event and no specific departmental displays on the stand. This had reduced costs to a level that could be met from existing IACMST budgets so additional contributions were no longer sought.

1.3 Matters arising

1.3.1 IACMST 2007 Retreat. This had been held successfully at Dartington Hall, Devon and had focused much of its attention on the Select Committee inquiry into marine science. A report of the Retreat had been circulated to members, including (as an annex) the agreed record of conclusions, which had been sent to ministers, chief scientific advisers and other selected individuals ahead of publication of the Select Committee report. Thanks were expressed to the Secretariat, particularly Anne Brazier, for the smooth organization.

**Action: Secretary to pass on thanks to Anne Brazier.**

**2.0 MEDAG/MDIP**

2.1 Peter Liss, joint chair of MEDAG and MDIP, made a short presentation highlighting points from the annual MEDAG report and the outcome of the joint Sponsors' Board meeting of 9 December 2007. The latter had agreed that MEDAG and MDIP should be merged and a joint programme had been discussed with an action on members of the Board to identify their organisation's intended financial commitment by 29 February. Several sponsors had yet to reply and if the £690K required was not forthcoming then the programme would have to be descoped. The name of the merged entity had been left to a later stage. Peter Liss's proposal was that it should be Marine Environmental Data and Information Network (MEDIN) and this new name was later approved by IACMST.

2.2 Chairman commented that, if IACMST were to be disbanded (see Item 5) then a satisfactory reporting structure would need to be put in place for MEDIN. He noted the role played by IACMST in bringing about the merger. In response to questions, Peter Liss explained that the proposal had been fully costed and these figures had been carefully examined by the Sponsors. They did not, however, take account of any changes in requirements that might result from the Marine Bill, e.g. establishment of Marine Management Organisations. The overheads were those necessary for the coordination to be hosted by POL and conformed to standard NERC procedures. (In phase 1, FEC was not fully applied; in effect this implied that the host organisation had subsidised the work, a situation which needed to be rectified in Phase 2.) Although MEDIN was not formally part of UKMMAS it was a vital contributor to it. It was proposed that the MMOs should use MEDIN. IACMST approved the MEDAG annual report.

**Action: John Lock to feed back to the Marine Bill Team the proposal that the MMOs should use MEDIN.**

### **3.0 UK Marine Monitoring & Assessment Strategy**

#### **3.1 MAPC meeting (9/10 January)**

3.1.1 Secretary reported on two items of relevance to IACMST. Firstly, the strategy document had been revised in the light of comments made, particularly at the UKMMAS Workshop in September 2007. Of particular note was the improved text on non-obligatory monitoring and the data required as input to operational ocean forecasting. Secondly, MAPC had been asked by MARG to address the problem of short-term funding for marine monitoring programmes. Two specific projects were considered by way of example – Argo and CO2 monitoring – and MAPC had been requested to provide endorsement. The result of the ensuing discussion was inconclusive. MAPC did not feel able to comment on whether either programme was a priority in relation to other monitoring programmes. Reference was also made to ERFF's work programme on funding for sustained measurements and it was agreed that a small group of MAPC members should work with the Secretariat to devise a way of handling non-mandatory monitoring. Secretary was not optimistic there would be any change in the mechanism for funding Argo in the near future.

3.1.2 Chairman noted that the IACMST study on economic benefits provided a framework which might help MAPC when examining individual components of marine observing systems but the general case for sustained funding was straightforward. A number of members pointed out that with the assumption that there was a fixed budget, MAPC itself did not provide funds but relied on what departments chose to fund, and that whilst statutory requirements would always continue to take precedent the outcome, it left us no further forward. Jon Turton stated that the UK Argo programme was continuing but at a reduced level, the original agreements between Defra, MoD and NERC on the level of contribution having appeared to have lapsed. EuroArgo had recently been initiated which would help with some infrastructure aspects. He noted that the number of floats being purchased by the UK fell short of EU expectations.

#### **3.2 Transfer of GOOS activities to UKMMAS structure**

3.2.1 Jane Hawkrige, Chair of HBDSEG, had been invited to report on progress, it having been decided in 2007 that HBDSEG was the most appropriate vehicle for taking forward the responsibilities of GOOSAG. In order to understand GOOS better, she had participated in the I-GOOS meeting held in June 2007 as a member of the UK delegation. It had since become apparent that there was a need to embrace the marine components of GMES as well as GOOS and she had set up an ad hoc working group (WG) to consider whether modifications to the UKMMAS structure were needed. IACMST had assisted with the group by providing funding for consultants. Having considered several options the WG had proposed that a fourth Tier-3 group be established called the Dynamic Seas Evidence Group. It was recognised that linkages with the other groups were essential and it was therefore suggested that mini-MARG should take on responsibility for coordinating this and other cross-cutting issues that have

emerged. Although this proposal would have to be considered by HBDSEG, MARG and MAPC, the views of IACMST were also sought.

- 3.2.2 In the following discussion, it was suggested that the addition of another evidence group not directly linked to the drivers clearly identified in the UKMMAS vision statement would be a backward step and lead to confusion. However, this exposed a lack of agreement among members on the scope of MAPC, in particular whether it included monitoring not undertaken for assessment purposes, e.g. providing inputs to UNFCCC. If so, then the vision statement may be too limiting. Summarising, the Chairman said there was a need to reconfirm the remit of UKMMAS – was it only State of the Seas or broader? If it were the former then broadening the number of groups was inappropriate. If the latter, then IACMST believes there are limitations to the present structure and would endorse the need for change, leaving the details to be worked out by those already engaged in the process.

**Action: Jane Hawkrige to pass on to HBDSEG IACMST’s request for the remit of UKMMAS to be clarified.**

#### **4.0 EUROPEAN MATTERS**

##### **4.1 Update on EU Maritime Policy (“Blue Book”)**

- 4.1.1 An oral update had been requested from DfT, the lead department for the UK Government on the Maritime Policy, following IACMST’s input to the consultation in June 2007. David Milroy began by saying that the Marine Policy recognized that there were several individual related policies which needed to be better integrated, whilst also being consistent with the principle of subsidiarity. The Blue Book had been published in October 2007 together with other relevant documents including an Action Plan. It included sections on the roadmap to spatial planning, impact of climate change on coastal states, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and bottom trawling. The UK’s view was that the document was too broad and it was pressing for a greater focus. This had been accepted by the EU and attention was being placed on those areas in which it was easier to make progress. DfT was retaining the cross-government lead but increasing its involvement of other departments/agencies. The UK continued to have reservations about the need for EMODNet.
- 4.1.2 In response to concern over potential overlaps with other programmes such as GMES and INSPIRE, David Milroy said it was too early to see what they were and how they might be addressed. Ed Hill mentioned the consensus reached by the European research community in the Aberdeen Declaration; he also noted that the ESF MB had been active in trying to ensure that coordination bodies could be set up, one mechanism being a network of networks under the FP7 Environment and Transport call. Joe Horwood observed that securing long-term datasets was not clearly addressed in the Blue Book.

#### 4.2 Progress on EU Marine Strategy Directive

John Lock spoke of his previously-circulated paper, reminding members of the Directive's aim – to protect and conserve the marine environment by achieving Good Ecological Status of EU marine waters by 2020. The draft directive is expected to be adopted by March 2008. It will be a requirement on Member States that they develop strategies for managing marine waters. However, this is all consistent with UK's vision in 'Safeguarding our Seas'. He then outlined the anticipated timetable, which included an initial assessment of current environmental status (2012). It was interesting to note that the draft reflected concerns that some factors were outside the control of individual states, e.g. climate change, and that some exceptions may be allowed where the costs of carrying out actions are disproportionate to the benefits. Another change was that the establishment of MPAs will now be obligatory.

#### 5.0 **House of Commons Science & Technology Report On Oceans: Government Response**

5.1 Chairman reminded members that the report had been published in October, just after the IACMST Retreat, that the then chairman of IACMST had made a presentation at the Foundation for Science and Technology meeting and that the Government response had been published in early January. However, this was the first time that members had been able to discuss the report and response. It was an opportunity to see how to take things forward in the most constructive way for the benefit of UK Marine Science.

5.2 John Lock explained that Defra had coordinated the Government response. Given that it had had to be compiled in two months and the complexities of dealing with 59 recommendations, there were a number of areas lacking definition and where IACMST could help. Issues raised could be discussed at a first meeting of the group planning the implementation of the Government response later that day. The Government view was that a new agency was not the answer and that continuing with IACMST was not an option. It therefore proposed a new committee and accepted the need for a Marine Science strategy.

There was extensive discussion aimed at clarifying what was intended and the reasoning behind it. It was agreed that, owing to the nature of the business, none of the discussion would be attributable. The main points to emerge were:

- i) Difference between proposed Marine Science Coordination Committee and IACMST. It would be composed of funders and working groups would be set up for specific tasks. Increased resources for the running of the committee would result from collaborative agreements between the funders. There would be no independent members but there might be scope for co-opting them. Continuing with IACMST was not considered to be a viable option in the Government response. However, there were differing views on how different from IACMST the new committee would be perceived to be and indeed how important it was to have a new structure.

- ii) Transition process. It was envisaged that many of the activities hosted by IACMST would need to continue as before, e.g. the international sub-committee. It would be important not to drop any of the balls.
  - iii) Strategy. This would be a priority for the MSCC and suggestions as to what its focus might be were made, e.g. building on the existing departmental strategies, working out how to fill gaps, identifying challenges and how to develop organically. It was also pointed out that unless MSCC had a strong remit for coordination there would be little point to the strategy as it would be difficult to implement. Links between the strategy and policy would be important.
  - iv) Reporting lines/chairmanship/level of representation. It was noted that by restricting membership to central government funding departments this precluded representation of other important contributors, including universities and industry. If a national strategy was to be constructed then their inputs would be needed. It was stressed that reporting should be for a purpose rather than being seen merely as identifying a destination for regular reports. The problems encountered with IACMST in this respect were noted. Several thought that reporting should be to a minister.
- 5.3 The independent members of IACMST stated that they had responded to the Select Committee's invitation for comments on the government response. They had pointed out their own concerns over the reduced independent voice and how they saw IACMST being able to lead on the development of the strategy. They were of the view that the best way ahead was by strengthening IACMST, given that further changes would probably be necessary associated with the Marine Bill.
- 5.4 Chairman summarized the discussion as follows. A number of issues had been raised for clarification: reporting lines and purpose; composition of top-level committee and the level of representation at this and the working group level; scope of new structure; the extent of synergies between departments; continuation of IACMST (including its Secretariat) during the development process; how societal needs would be delivered. It was then agreed by attendees that MSCC would need considerable help in its work, much of it from IACMST so it should be kept functioning until at least the May plenary.  
**Action: John Lock and Secretariat to feed views expressed into group planning the MSCC.**

**Action: Ian Townend and Secretariat to consider agenda for May Plenary in the light of developments in establishing MSCC.**

## 7.0 Any Other Business

- 7.1 Jon Turton announced that the Met Office marine engineers were relocating from Watnall to NOCS. This would be accompanied by additional investment in the moored buoy capability. He also reported that in early December the Met Office's K3 buoy had recorded a significant wave height of >16m and it was believed this was the highest ever value recorded by a buoy. Ironically, the buoy

had been due for removal with no replacement planned but this operation had been postponed.

## IACMST Forty-Eighth Plenary Meeting Action List

<b>Action No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action by</b>
<b>1</b>	Pass on thanks to Anne Brazier for organization of IACMST Retreat.	<b>1</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>2</b>	Feed back to Marine Bill Team proposal that MMOs should use MEDIN.	<b>2</b>	<b>John Lock</b>
<b>3</b>	Remit of UKMMAS to be clarified.	<b>3</b>	<b>Jane Hawkrige</b>
<b>4</b>	Feed views expressed by Plenary to MSCC planning group.	<b>5</b>	<b>John Lock Secretariat</b>
<b>5</b>	Consider agenda for May Plenary in light of developments in establishing MSCC.	<b>5</b>	<b>Ian Townend Secretariat</b>

### List of Abbreviations

<b>Cefas</b>	<b>Centre for Environment, Fisheries &amp; Aquaculture Science</b>
<b>DARDNI</b>	<b>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland</b>
<b>DBERR</b>	<b>Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform</b>
<b>Defra</b>	<b>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</b>
<b>DfID</b>	<b>Department for International Development</b>
<b>DfT</b>	<b>Department for Transport</b>
<b>DIUS</b>	<b>Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills</b>
<b>EA</b>	<b>Environment Agency</b>
<b>EMODNet</b>	<b>European Marine Observation and Data Network</b>
<b>ERFF</b>	<b>Environment Research Funders Forum</b>
<b>ESF MB</b>	<b>European Science Foundation Marine Board</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office</b>
<b>FEC</b>	<b>Full Economic Costing</b>
<b>FP</b>	<b>Framework Programme</b>
<b>FRS</b>	<b>Fisheries Research Services</b>
<b>GMES</b>	<b>Global Monitoring for Environment and Security</b>
<b>GOOS</b>	<b>Global Ocean Observing System</b>
<b>GOOSAG</b>	<b>Global Ocean Observing System Action Group</b>
<b>I-GOOS</b>	<b>Intergovernmental Committee for Global Ocean Observing System</b>
<b>HBDSEG</b>	<b>Healthy &amp; Biologically Diverse Seas Evidence group</b>
<b>IACMST</b>	<b>Inter-Agency Committee on Marine Science and Technology</b>
<b>IMarEST</b>	<b>Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology</b>
<b>INSPIRE</b>	<b>Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe</b>
<b>JNCC</b>	<b>Joint Nature Conservation Committee</b>
<b>MAPC</b>	<b>Marine Assessment Policy Committee</b>

<b>MARG</b>	<b>Marine Assessment and Reporting Group</b>
<b>MDIP</b>	<b>Marine Data Information Partnership</b>
<b>MEDAG</b>	<b>Marine Environment Data Action Group</b>
<b>MEDIN</b>	<b>Marine Environmental Data and Information Network</b>
<b>MMOs</b>	<b>Marine Management Organisations</b>
<b>MOD</b>	<b>Ministry of Defence</b>
<b>MPAs</b>	<b>Marine Protected Areas</b>
<b>MSCC</b>	<b>Marine Science Coordinating Committee</b>
<b>NERC</b>	<b>Natural Environment Research Council</b>
<b>NOCS</b>	<b>National Oceanography Centre, Southampton</b>
<b>POL</b>	<b>Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory</b>
<b>UKHO</b>	<b>United Kingdom Hydrographic Office</b>
<b>UKMMAS</b>	<b>United Kingdom Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy</b>
<b>UNFCCC</b>	<b>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</b>