



# Developing a participatory approach to the management of fishing activity in UK Marine Protected Areas

WORKSHOP 2A - OUTPUTS

INFORMING POSITIVE CHANGE

# NFFO/JNCC

Developing a participatory approach to the management of fishing activity in UK Marine Protected Areas

## Workshop 2a - Outputs

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# CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Our approach.....	1
1.2	Report structure.....	1
2	Workshop participants.....	2
3	Consensus building .....	3
3.1	Why are we here?.....	3
3.2	Key issues affecting a participatory approach to MPA management.....	4
4	Management toolkit .....	7
4.1	General Comments.....	8
4.2	Roles and responsibility document.....	8
4.3	Legislation Summary.....	10
4.4	Key themes .....	11
5	Considering data for a management plan .....	12
5.1	What's missing? .....	13
5.2	Limitations .....	14
5.3	Key themes .....	14
6	Ecological Modelling .....	16
6.1	Scenario planning .....	16

# 1 Introduction

A multi stakeholder workshop was held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Lancaster to bring together the project partners and West of Walney regional stakeholders to further the project process.

The primary aims of the workshop were:

- To bring regional stakeholders together to further explore the participatory management of fisheries in marine protected areas;
- To further develop the proposed MPA management toolkit;
- To explore data requirements for MPA management;
- To develop the first set of management scenarios for ecological modelling.

## 1.1 Our approach

The outputs were gained through a series of presentations that were followed by discussion sessions, whereby questions were posed and discussed in detail, led by independent facilitators. Representatives from the project partners were part of the discussion groups, available to answer project specific and regulation questions.

The outputs of the workshop are summarised in this report. They will be used in the development of the next set of workshops, in the project itself and to inform the wider process in developing participatory management of MPAs.

## 1.2 Report structure

Section 2 of this report provides details of the workshop participants. The remainder of the report is set out according to the workshop sessions and specific questions asked and presents key discussion points. This report is not an analysis of the outputs but a representation of everyone's input to the discussion, whilst also highlighting key themes that arose from those discussions.

## 2 Workshop participants

**Figure 1 Workshop participants**

Name	Organisation	Stakeholder category				
		Fishing industry	Conservation / NGO	Scientific / research	Other industry	Regulator
Project partners						
Alice Cornthwaite	JNCC					X
Lowri Evans	Bangor University			X		
Jan Hiddink	Bangor University			X		
Victoria Morgan	Marine Management Organisation					X
Mike Quigley	Natural England					X
Dale Rodmell	NFFO	X				
Declan Tobin	JNCC					X
Project Advisory Group						
Edward Hind-Ozan	DEFRA					X
Rowland Sharp	Natural Resources Wales					X
Regional Experts						
Lawrence Browning	Natural England					X
Mark Johnston	Natural England					X
Stakeholders						
Emily Baxter	North West Wildlife Trusts		X			
Huw James	IFCA (North Western)					X
Sander Meyns	Reders centrale	X				
Alan McCulla	Anglo Northern Irish Fish Producers Organisation / Seasource	X				X
Harry Wick	Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation	X				

### 3 Consensus building

A presentation was given on the meaning of consensus building and decision making and with this in mind participants explored some of the key issues that can cause barriers to effective participatory management of MPAs.

#### Consensus decision making

Consensus decision making aims to reach agreement through **collaboration, cooperation, inclusivity** and **participation**. Group decisions made by consensus seek resolutions that are satisfactory to all group members and meet all of their concerns. Consensus decision making is not adversarial or competitive, but rather seeks to do what is best for the group.

#### 3.1 Why are we here?

Participants discussed in pairs why they had come to the workshop, as a means to understanding the motivation of stakeholders and to identify commonalities between stakeholders. The following is a summary of the responses given:

- Protection of the marine environment;
- Interest in how to tackle difficult problems and disagreements;
- To explore the role of modelling in decision making;
- To explore measures which take the stakeholders into account;
- To represent our members, particularly smaller members (fishermen);
- To represent the conservation sector;
- To ensure protection of MPAs;
- To understand all stakeholder views;
- To represent the fishing industry – we are concerned about increasing regulation;
- To understand the aims and objectives of the project;
- To better understand how to involve stakeholders in decision making;
- To pick up on new ideas and learning that might be applied in own work;
- To represent the fishing industry;
- To understand how management decisions are made and to ensure they are proportionate.

Figure 2, below, presents these reasons in a word cloud, highlighting the most prominent themes.

Resolve  
Ensure marine  
protection Tackle  
members ideas project  
Involve stakeholders  
making  
decision  
fishing  
new  
Protect aims  
MPAs  
Understand  
difficult conservation  
Proportionate  
stakeholder  
views Learning  
Modelling  
disagreements  
environment  
problems industry  
Represent

Throughout the process to date we have recorded key issues that have been voiced by stakeholders, and which are potential barriers to the effective participatory management of MPAs. These issues were presented to the participants, who then added to, sought clarification on and discussed them together.

- Lack of monitoring in MPAs is a huge concern - we need to properly understand the condition and sensitivity of a site.
- Restrictions create more competition for space (no-one wants restrictions in their location).
- Clarity is needed as to what marine conservation zones are.
- Interpretation of evidence is an issue – there are different approaches.
- It's important to distinguish the arrangements for taking socio-economic factors into account.
- Fishermen feel they share their views but nothing changes.
- Fishermen want to maintain access to sustainable fishing in non-feature habits or even wider where activity would not impact on features.
- Communication - there is often a lag in the conversation.
- For many MPAs management measures still haven't been implemented.

- Pressure from NGOs means activity is very restricted in MPAs so fishermen have to travel further.
- Adaptive management must take into account the appropriate legislation.
- For some sites regulatory bodies are not aware of all the activities happening, so then don't know if they are having an impact on designated features.
- Sites that require management continue to be damaged by certain activities.
- Access to information is an issue –information needs to be kept simple.
- Brexit.

Key points that arose from the discussion were

- Management must take into account all applicable regulation (not just Habitats Directive).
- Clarity is needed regarding the role of an MPZ - why they are designated and how.
- It would be useful for stakeholders to understand how MPZs were developed (the process involved).
- It can be challenging to communicate legislation owing to the complex nature of it.
- Perhaps we need to consider 'better' ways of communicating the concept of MPZs with the aim of communicating with stakeholders, e.g. industry and public - not just regulators.
- Fishermen don't feel listened to; they talk but their views don't seem to be taken into account.
- Perhaps insufficient consideration is given as to how best to integrate human activity within the context of pursuing conservation objectives.
- The implications of Brexit on regulations is still a big unknown.

From the perspective of fishermen...

- An example was given of where removing fishing had caused a decline in the species that their removal was intended to protect. The fishermen believe they know what happens when you do/don't fish a given site, however, knowledge of this type is not taken into account.
- The act of trawling can have a positive effect upon certain species. Within West of Walney there is a complex set of system dynamics within the site.
- Some habitats/biomes are there **because** of fishing activity.
- It is important to understand the interactions between species and fishermen.
- It is very important to value **all** views and give a place to this information within the management process – otherwise you risk a drop in participation.
- The view of Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies (SNCBs) is believed to carry more weight than that of other stakeholders.



From the perspective of conservation...

- Protection is important in terms of the specific species and/or site being managed but also because it has much wider benefits to the marine environment as a whole and for everyone. Perhaps the conservation sector could be better at communicating this.
- Communicating the point of a designated site could certainly be done better by the SNCBs in order to clearly set out the benefits, etc. For example, just because few species may be present as a result of the management measures this is not necessarily negative, as the intrinsic value and benefit to the ecosystem of the (fewer) protected species is greater.
- A 'barren' environment (to a fisherman) may host few species but they may be of high conservation value.

Communication/engagement

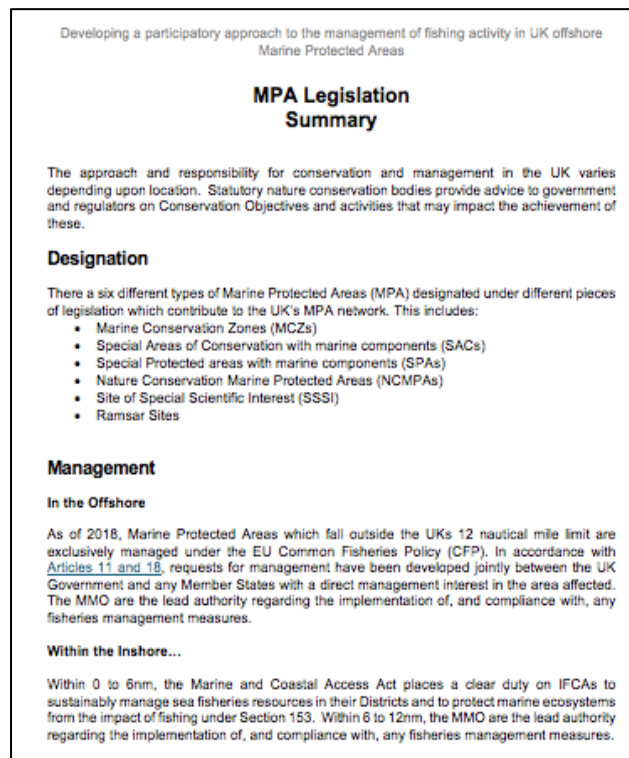
- There are differing levels of engagement regionally - IFCA relationships can be particularly strong but when moving to the national level this can be lost.
- It is important that scientists discuss current situations (fishing grounds, etc.) with fishermen as scientific publications are very quickly out of date due to time-lags with publication.
- Language can be a barrier and this should be considered.
- There is insufficient effective dialogue between industry and the scientists. Perhaps there is insufficient respect on both sides and this creates barriers.
- There are opportunities for and value in regulators and fishermen engaging with each other. For example, fishermen have up to date knowledge on the condition in the 'field'.
- There is a need to explore how to engage more effectively.
- There are differing interpretations of the evidence – how can we ensure a common understanding?
- There are many factors that fishermen have to navigate already, such as 'discards requirements'. There is a lot of information, which needs to be accessible.
- Consideration of foreign flag vessels is needed, as it is much harder to engage with them.

## 4 Management toolkit

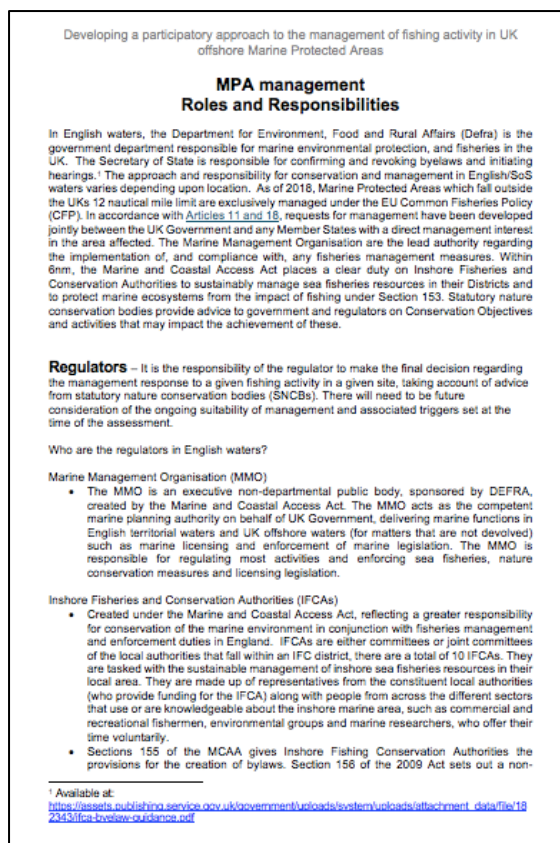
The participants were given a presentation on the purpose and structure of the management toolkit and then asked to feedback on the documents (which will form part of the toolkit) that had been sent out ahead of the workshop. These documents were created upon request by stakeholders at the first workshop and included:

- MPA Management – Roles and Responsibilities
- MPA Legislation Summary
- Acronym Buster

**Figure 3 – Document setting out roles and responsibilities relating to MPA management**



**Figure 4 – Document setting out legislation relating to MPAs**



## 4.1 General Comments

- Map representation should be provided.
- Use graphics to aid understanding.
- Expansion on the designation – what are the sites/designation types intended to do? Also, what is the designation not doing?
- We need to consider the accessibility of all the material. Not everyone will have, or choose to use, online access. All material should therefore be easy to download.
- We need to consider other forms of engagement (e.g. mind rewired and community voice).

## 4.2 Roles and responsibility document

### Presentation/accessibility

- The use of infographics would be helpful.
- There is a need not to oversimplify material, but it is recognised that language and presentation are important.

- There may be a need to reconsider whether there is a role for non-written material, e.g. videos. The South East ICFA were reported as having developed some apparently effective non-written communication materials.
- Given the use of fisheries in British waters by non-English speakers it was suggested that in the future (it was not considered initially necessary) material should be provided in other languages.
- Present it as a hierarchy with the ability to drill further into the detail of the system.
- We could potentially provide some choice regarding the level of information available – a brief summary and a more detailed overview.

## **Content**

- It is useful, but it still requires the reader to have a degree of background knowledge.
- Stakeholders need clarity but the current use of language is quite technical and requires a level of prior knowledge that some readers may not possess.
- It could be improved by the inclusion of a simple, clear and succinct summary.
- Caution on over simplification as too much could cause confusion.
- Some of the existing language may need to be adjusted to ensure it is not perceived as too focused on English fisheries, i.e. it should acknowledge that some fishing fleets will be based in Northern Ireland or other parts of the UK.
- There was some confusion with regard to devolved administrations – it was clarified that this just intends to cover English waters specific to the project for now.
- It was noted that there is currently a lack of reference to NGOs.

## **Proposed audience**

- It was also suggested that consideration should be given to the possible use of the material by wider stakeholders, for example the offshore energy industry. In response, it was stated that the material needed to focus initially on the fishing community, but it was acknowledged that there may be a need to accommodate a wider readership in the future.
- Conservation bodies felt the information would be very useful to them.

## 4.3 Legislation Summary

### Presentation/accessibility

- The document is uninviting. It could be improved through the use of visual material and more colour.
- A diagram that depicts the extent of the different legislation types would be useful.
- As with the role and responsibilities section some potential users (fishermen) would be unlikely to refer to written documents and the use of other forms of media might be more appealing.
- The fishing community are generally only interested in the mechanics of legislation where it directly impacts upon them. In response, it was noted that the section was meant to be a resource which could be 'dipped into', but it was accepted that if it was perceived as unattractive it may not be used. There may be something to learn from the 'community voice' approach.
- Accessibility to offline material? Use of social media? The infographic could be made available on a Facebook page. However, small fleet vessels often don't have internet access.

### Content

- It would benefit from more explanation of the purpose of MPAs.
- There is a need to ensure that all relevant legislation is accounted for. For example, it was noted that some Welsh specific legislation was missing.
- The inclusion of references to SSSIs legislation in 0-12nm was felt to be confusing.
- There was some discussion regarding whether reference should be made to voluntary measures. It was agreed that this should only occur if such measures are HRA compliant.
- The documents currently reference European marine sites and CFP – this may change depending upon Brexit. These will be live document so can be adapted accordingly
- It could include marine nature reserves and voluntary no take zones and/or fisheries restrictions.
- MPAs originated from fishers actions of management – in Australia, etc. The history and development of MPAs may be important information.

### Proposed Audience

- A question was posed to Harry Wick (Northern Ireland Fish Producers' Organisation) as follows: *would your members be interested in this material?*

- Unless it is an issue that directly effects his members, then probably not.  
There is an expectation from members that Harry and colleagues as reps would fulfil this role – particularly for complex matters.
- Realistically a large proportion of stakeholders will not routinely review such information, but it is still felt that this information should be available (there was some disagreement with this point).
- We need to ask: what information and for who?
- It is still important to have material for a wider understanding.

#### 4.4 Key themes

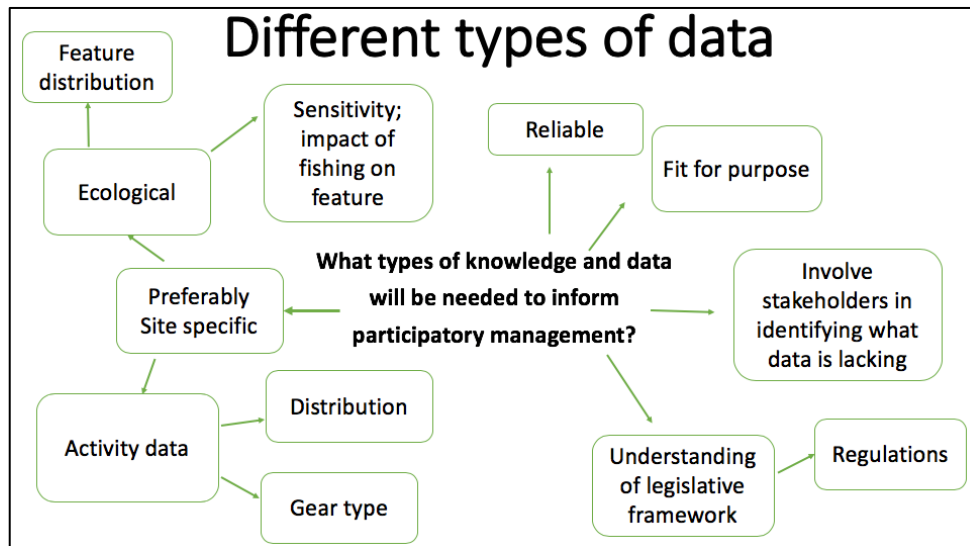
The key themes from the discussion were as follows:

- The documents need to provide both a summary and a more detailed version.
- The documents need to be much more visual and inviting to the reader.
- The documents should use infographics to present information wherever possible.
- The intended audience is primarily the fishing industry, though there was some discussion on who would realistically use it.
- It is recognised that the documents will also be useful to other stakeholders, including conservation bodies.
- The language needs to be as precise as possible without being overly technical.
- The material needs to be as accessible as possible; this could include providing summaries and providing it in different formats, including visual and spoken.
- The toolkit will be a live resource, which will be adapted as policy context and needs change.

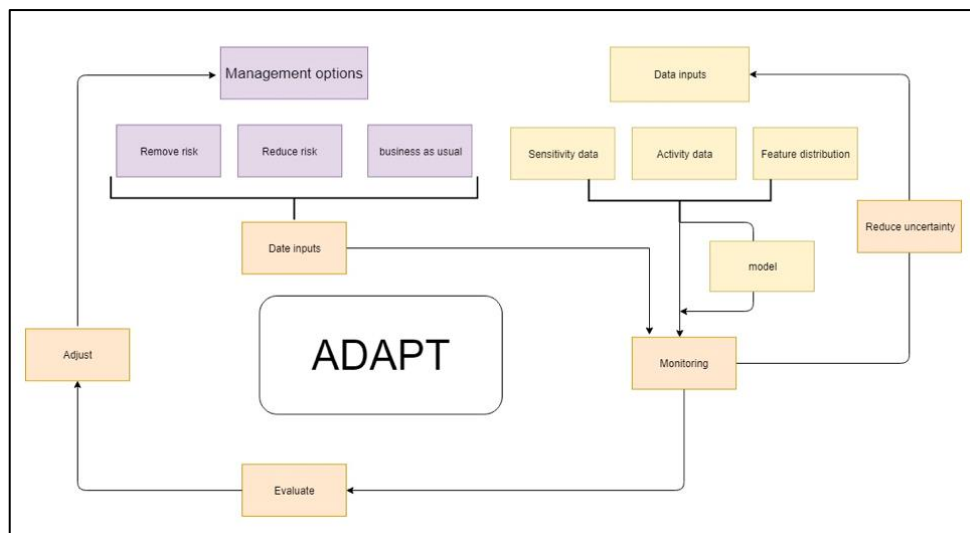
## 5 Considering data for a management plan

A presentation on different types of data within the management cycle was given. Participants were asked how stakeholder information can better be included within the management process. This session focussed on types of data and how/when this should be used.

**Figure 5 – Different types of data that might be considered in MPA management**



**Figure 6 – MPA data flow chart**



## 5.1 What's missing?

Participants were asked what they felt was missing from the types of data presented. They responded as follows:

### General comments

- In terms of essential fish habitats – other activities could be impacting upon life stages of that species.
- MPAs are not for the management of fisheries stocks.
- An example was provided of Northern Ireland fisheries - prawns will increase because of El Nino, and we will see an increase in other species – but in the following years the species will decrease but this will not be tracked back to climatic effects.
- SNCB are pushed into taking a more precautionary approach because of lack of information.
- There is a frustration (within the fishing industry) that only the impacts of fisheries are considered and no other factors.
- Climate change and salinity are dealt with by other mechanisms – there is a perception that this is focused on fisheries.
- West of Walney is a particularly data rich site – although, less so on ecology and distribution.

### What's missing?

- There is missing evidence from the fisheries industry due to the levels of evidence requirements.
- Anecdotal fishermen's' information.
- More economic/natural capital information.
- Cultural ecosystems data – covers historic fisher grounds.
- There is a need to consider long-term data, trends, and cycles.
- We are missing pre-fisheries impact information for current sites.
- Fish data provides an understanding of patterns of fishing.
- Example of Potter data which identified other vessels and provided a good picture of activity within this area, e.g. dredge lines.

### Evidence requirements

- There are issues with the format of evidence.
- There is a feeling that the evidence bar isn't equal between industry development (windfarms, etc.) and fisheries.

### Potential solutions



- I-VMS introduction may assist in terms of known smaller vessel data. Further adoptive management should incorporate this new level of effort data.
- In Scotland scientists are embedded within the fisheries industry – addressing gaps in knowledge and evidence of sites – a point was made that these producer organisations have funding to facilitate this. It was noted that a Northern Ireland producer organisation employed scientists in this way but found that evidence was considered biased.
- Co-management is happening on smaller scale fleets in the Scottish Isles.
- Adaptive management can perhaps assist the focus in data gaps.
- Valuable information can be gained from the fisher's community – how do we access? There is a trust issue.
- Usefulness of data – increasing our understating of the response to management (if monitored correctly).
- Resource implications – which sites to invest in? Or could the fishing industry assist with this? Considerations should be feature based, as some sites are more dynamic than others.
- Stakeholders should be involved in evaluation of the process to look at management measures – ensuring social evaluations.

## 5.2 Limitations

Participants were asked to consider the limitations of data.

- Data format – consistent parameters of measurements (e.g. IFCA potting measurement differ around coast) – standardisation is required (Redmap).
- Policy affects what and how you manage – you need to manage expectations and ensure understanding of the groups Terms of Reference.
- Ensure transparency with the linkages re: policy.
- Understanding commercial sensitivities / ownership of data.
- We should agree resolutions of data to be used.
- Longevity/sustainability of this project – core funding of surveys.
- Changing evidence standards.
- Often scientific material is out of date – resources/funding are not available to update this site information.
- Science needs to win back the confidence of fishers.

## 5.3 Key themes

The key themes that arose in the discussion were as follows:

- There is significant distrust in the industry about the data collection process, and how data is used. In particular, there is a perception that the impacts of other activities are not subject to the same scrutiny.

- There is potential for the fishing industry to have a greater role in collecting data, but evidence requirements are seen as a barrier
- There are funding implications to improving data quality
- Data is important for the participatory management process, but the purpose and use of data collection must be transparent and agreed within the process. The ARM process can help identify data gaps.

## 6 Ecological Modelling

Mark Johnston (Natural England) gave a presentation on the current management of West of Walney MPA, providing spatial and historical context. This was followed by a presentation by Lowri Evans (Bangor University) on the Relative Benthic Status (RBS) ecological model and its application to this project and the potential future management decisions regarding fishing activity in MPAs.

### 6.1 Scenario planning

Participants then discussed various (hypothetical) management scenarios which could be applied to West of Walney, and their subsequent potential implications.

The following hypothetical management scenarios were agreed upon for modelling:

- 1. Complete spatial/temporal closure** (as real proposal)
- 2. Closed area**
  - a. Lowest fishing activity (by %) with and without displacement of fishing activity
  - b. Highest fishing activity (by %) with and without displacement of fishing activity
- 3. Closed areas where sea pens occur** (with and without displacement)
- 4. Gear modification** (remove sweeps)

These scenarios will be modelled by Bangor University and the results shared at the next set of workshops.



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