Annual Conference 2009
'Marine Planning: from global origins to local reality'

19th November, St Andrews in the Square, Glasgow

Workshop Output

WORKSHOPS A & B

Implementation of the SSMEI Marine Spatial Plan – Buy-in and Communication

Background

The Marine (Scotland) Bill provides for a statutory marine planning system, however, this will not be in place until 2011 at the earliest. The Firth of Clyde Marine Spatial Plan is therefore currently voluntary, not statutory, and its implementation requires buy-in from stakeholders and recognition by local authorities and public agencies.

Q1: How can we get the Policies in the Plan recognised by local authorities and public agencies for planning purposes?

- Agree the language. Put things in terms understood by those with whom you want to engage
- Engage with local authorities and planners on what development is desirable: don't just be seen as negative on things that will cause ecological problems
- Be positive about development
- Get policies formally adopted by local authorities
- Communicate through local groups and with their local councillors: don't swamp local people with the whole plan! Rely on local groups to pick up locally relevant issues
- Noted conflicts between sea anglers and nephrops fisheries, and the difficulties of resolving such issues through a voluntary plan
- Need top down AND bottom up approach
- We need to understand the channels used locally by community groups to communicate with local authorities
- Make it simple for local authorities to adopt policies (Ruth Brennan had some interesting insights from the Principles and Processes used in Australia)
- Get Scottish Government to include in Planning Guidance
- Demonstrate links with other strategies of local authorities
- Include in LBAP (local biodiversity action plan)
- Recognise the variety of interests relevant in different local authority areas, e.g. Glasgow vs Argyll
- Focus on buy-in for the output of actions and not necessarily the policies
- Requirement for training of LA planners in marine planning?
- Use new Community Planning Partnerships – don't replicate existing groups. Can be a group to tackle local issues
- Keep pressure on organisations to maintain involvement
- Ensure clear link with national Marine Policy Statement
- Role for local residents in flagging up importance of plan to local authorities
- Use local press to engage people and raise profile, eg local authority papers and website

Q2: How can we ensure sectoral stakeholders, eg businesses and recreation groups, are engaged with the Plan?

- Remove any apparent bias within the plan, i.e. any opportunities for people to dismiss the plan as being irrelevant
- Identify the hard-to-reach groups. On social issues these are thought of as 'women and children'
- Work through schools, e.g. get them involved in eco projects relevant to their area. Work with Eco Schools.
- Go to where the audience is! Avoid jargon and consider use of You Tube, Flicker, Twitter, etc.
- Don't raise unrealistic expectations
- You can't force people to get involved – but make sure we give them the opportunity
- People need to feel ownership of implementation process – stewards of the marine environment
- Reassessment of which stakeholders should be involved now and from time to time
- Invite wider participation in workshops, eg community groups should be involved
- Undertake a study into communities in the Clyde, their relationship to the marine environment and aspirations
- Need both long-term implementation strategy and short-term tactics so that there are quick wins to keep people engaged
- Get local groups and businesses to write their own articles for Clyde Breakers newsletter
- Include 'passive' recreation, eg birdwatching, walking
- Regularly re-identify stakeholders, especially in local communities. Who are the councillors and community councillors? Are there new marine related businesses? Etc
- Use the pattern of the Scottish Government 'Social Return on Investment' toolkit
- Go to where the people are!
- Piggy back on consultations on other related issues to minimise costs in reaching stakeholders

Q3: How can we communicate the Plan and progress on the Plan more widely to communities and how can we best involve them in the process? Who should be involved?

- Use website to communicate detail, but in bite size chunks. Interactive web-based forum, but needs monitoring
- Leaflets are expensive and often ineffective
- Timing is crucial (but we had no guidance from the group on how to select timing)
- Think local, and use the local press and radio as appropriate. Involve prominent local people to get news items into the local media – no need to advertise
- Centrally issued press release is a waste of time for local media: must be locally relevant.
- Use Clyde Breakers newsletter
- Combination of general awareness raising (non-technical jargon), and in-depth communication
- Regular status report identifying those involved, and those who are not prepared to get involved
- Communicate clear vision of where Clyde will be in the future – what does success look like?
- Recognise progress might not be perfect but will show forward movement

WORKSHOPS C & D

Implementation of the SSMEI Marine Spatial Plan – Action Plan

Background

The Action Plan is an integral part of the Firth of Clyde Marine Spatial Plan and lays out key initiatives to move marine planning in the Clyde on to the next stage. A summary of the Action Plan is attached for delegates to read through for a few minutes at the start of the workshop. Before commencing implementation, the Plan needs to be developed into a work programme for the next couple of years. This workshop is designed to obtain views from delegates that will help to prioritise the work programme.

Q1: What are the priorities for you and your organisation?

- Develop data gathering & recording strategy. Include mobile seabirds and changes in distribution, historical trends. Start with an overview of what exists, building on review of biodiversity and maps in the plan as this would have wider uses including SEA and EIA needs
- Marine litter strategy – community interests
- Socioeconomic studies of key sectors to prioritise spending for LAs and government
- Study to assess impacts of fishing – will aid planning. Should include scientists. Regeneration of fish stocks and ecosystems generally required.
- Identification of important species & habitats and sensitivities to marine activities
- Link to shoreside access and infrastructure – importance of high quality amenity
- Indicative mariculture strategy including salmonids (lack of District Salmon Board on the Clyde)
- Communications strategy missing from proposals – this could be undertaken by FoCForum
- Access to infrastructure and new infrastructure

Q2: Are there any short-term actions, ie quick-wins or low hanging fruit on this list that you would like to see implemented?

- Develop data gathering & recording strat – see SNH as lead
- Non-native Species Framework is already being worked on by SNH and SEPA. Should communicate with local authorities on this
- Look for win-wins on survey, eg can seabed survey boats also take ornithologists?
- Landscape/seascape with LA support – required for planning decisions
- Litter proposals – initiatives carried out in the past have now lapsed due to lack of resources
- Develop voluntary codes of conduct – at least generic aspects – and make available on web
- Link to existing work – what are others already doing? – eg LBAPs include actions on coastal litter etc
- Link to research institutes and link research findings to policy
- Use MASTS – Marine Alliance for Science & Technology Scotland
- Use community volunteers in research projects
- Lifestyle and wellbeing factors – recreation and tourism
- Expansion of yachting
- Impact of fishing – capitalise on good will of fishermen

Q3: Are there any action points that you and your organisation can contribute to?

- Scottish Ornithologists' Club data sets on seabird distribution
- Marine Conservation Society to marine litter proposals

Q4: Are there any immediate local issues you are aware of that relate to any of the actions?

- Fishing boats & feeding seabirds, changes in bird distribution
- Hunterston power station, concern re fly ash in-fill
- Changes to estuary benthic invertebrates – research into declines and disturbance effects of contaminated sediment (P. Tatner - University of West Scotland)
- Public information and awareness of fish
- Litter issues at angling locations
- Certain stakeholders feel excluded from the process of managing the marine resource – they need appropriate forum to feed in to, such as the fishermen have with IFGs