

UKMMAS News

...updates from the United Kingdom Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy

No. 2 – Winter 2006

WHAT A DIFFERENCE THREE MONTHS MAKES!

Since our first Newsletter in September things have moved on somewhat.

We are now entering a period of change. Between now and January 2008, we will be embarking on a significant restructuring of the system by which monitoring data are collected, collated and interpreted. To steer us through this period of change, or 'transition', we have put together a Transitional Phase Document; which outlines what we need to deliver and key questions we need to address between now and January 2008, if we are to successfully integrate the Strategy into core business. Once this document has been formally agreed, it will be available to download from the Defra website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/science/monitoring.htm>

Rationalising and co-ordinating the UK programmes of Monitoring and Assessment was never going to be an easy task however the Evidence Collection Groups (outlined below) have been working hard to engage with key Agencies and Industry to ensure their involvement in the process. They have recently drafted their ambitious work plans leading up to 2010 and are in the process of pulling together a complete picture of the monitoring activity currently being undertaken in the UK. It is envisaged this information will be made available to all through a searchable metadata database.

We will shortly be drafting a Implementation Plan to take us beyond January 2008. This will provide us with a roadmap for delivering the UK's Integrated Assessment requirements up to 2010 i.e. Charting Progress 2 and the OSPAR Quality Status Report. (See back page.)

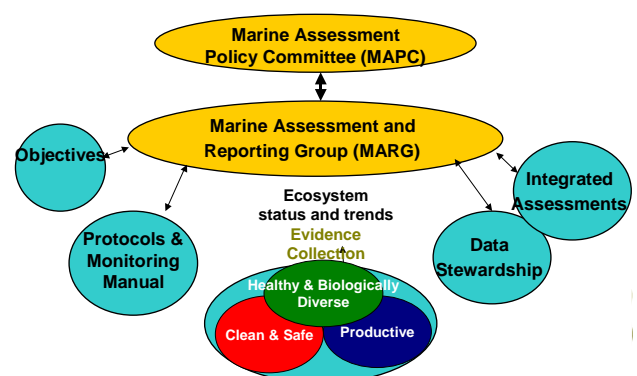
Support for the Strategy is strong but there is still much to do. The next few months will be about delivering those key commitments laid out in the Transition Plan; whilst working hard to instil a better understanding within the monitoring community of what we are trying to achieve and why.

We have taken our first few steps towards realising our vision, so far, so good!



(Photo: Beth Greenaway)

The new structure



For further details on the UKMMAS – see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/science/monitoring.htm>

MARG has been tasked with implementing the Strategy

Clean and Safe Seas Evidence Group

Healthy and Biologically Diverse Seas Evidence Group



Mike Waldock

Mike Waldock
Chair

Judy Dobson
Secretary

Jane Hawkrige
Chair

Amanda Prior
Secretary



Jane Hawkrige

The **Clean and Safe Seas Evidence Group (CSSEG)** particularly focuses on the direct effect of chemicals and pathogens on the marine environment and their likely impact on human health. The new arrangement brings together the grouping dealing with chemical pollution with those measuring microbiology, natural toxins, radioactivity, litter, oil & chemical spills and legacy issues from munitions. A high priority will be integrating effort to meet the needs of new and future drivers such as the Water Framework Directive and European Marine Strategy Directive.

The **Healthy and Biologically Diverse Seas Evidence Group (HBDSEG)** will be responsible for implementing monitoring and observation programmes, covering health, biodiversity and oceanographic processes. These programmes will facilitate delivery of ecosystem-based assessments and management of the UK's marine environment.

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MERMAN

CSSEG also has responsibility for overseeing the **Marine Environment Monitoring and Assessment National (MERMAN)** database which went 'live' in 2006. **MERMAN** replaces the old NMMP database and will be the 'storehouse' for data on contaminants, biology and biological effects. (see the [MERMAN](#) webpage)

(<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/science/merman.htm>)

Where are they now?

The adoption of the UKMMAS has led to changes to a number of former marine monitoring groups. For example, the work of the **Marine Monitoring Co-ordination Group** is now undertaken by MARG. Other examples are:

Marine Environment Management Group:- the role of MEMG is now split between MARG and CSSEG.

National Marine Monitoring Programme – Working Group:- NMMP-WG now forms the core of CSSEG.

Group Co-ordinating Sea Disposal Monitoring:- the work of GCSDM is now undertaken by PSEG.

It will rely on the following groups...

Productive Seas Evidence Group

Jim McKie
Chair

Bernadette Eldridge
Secretary



Jim McKie

The **Productive Seas Evidence Group (PSEG)** will ensure that appropriate monitoring programmes are in place to produce periodic assessments to identify the nature and influences that human activities have on the socio-economic uses of the marine environment.

The responsibilities of PSEG will enable the UK to determine whether the available scientific and commercial data provide a reasonable scientific basis to conclude that the UK seas are productive, i.e. we have sustainable development of the seas.

Work is already underway to gather evidence that will describe the trends in the utilisation of the marine environment and in the context of all of the sustainable development principles. The PSEG will then identify and quantify the pressures that human physical activities (e.g. marine construction, oil and gas, renewable energy, shipping (including dredging and disposal of dredged material), fisheries and leisure industries) are exerting on the marine environment whilst recognising that we require sufficient access to suitable long-term resources to meet fluctuating demands. We also aim to have sufficient confidence that these activities are undertaken in a manner that for example a) causes minimal harm to the marine environment and b) do not unacceptably affect other legitimate uses and users of the sea.

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Marine Objectives

The UK has signed up to the vision of '*...clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and sea... and ...within one generation to make a real difference.*' We also have 5 strategic goals. To achieve these, there are already many policy instruments and management measures in place.

An initiative is underway to develop a series of Marine Objectives (MOs) within a framework that captures all existing Marine policy objectives and translates these into measurable management targets. To demonstrate achievement of these objectives, and hence the vision, requires monitoring a series of indicators which, taken as a package, describe the state of our seas. This work will be reported to MAPC during its development and implementation phase to ensure close alignment and uptake within the UKMMAS groups.

Marine Protocols Group

Steve Hull (ABPMer) has taken on the role of Chair of the Marine Protocols Group (MPG); its membership will include representatives of the Analytical Quality Control Groups. The Group's full Terms of Reference is currently being drafted but one of its responsibilities will be to steer a research project, designed to create a Marine Monitoring Manual; which is soon to be let by Defra. The development of the Manual will be an important step in promoting consistency in marine sampling, improving comparability of data and underpinning data quality. The first meeting of MPG is due to be held in December 2006.

Data Stewardship

Fundamental to the UKMMAS is the handling of data, There are two types:

a) **knowledge of who is monitoring what, where, why and how often.** Metadata will be collected and submitted to a metadata base; which will be available to be searchable on the internet. This will act as a discovery resource for the wider marine community and serve specific functions under UKMMAS such as linking monitoring programs to protocols.

(see: <http://www.oceannet.org/medag/>)

and

b) **the actual results of the monitoring which are used for scientific assessments and reporting against objectives.** MARG will use the Marine Data and Information Partnership (MDIP) to enable more efficient stewardship of marine data to allow 'use many times'.

(see: <http://www.oceannet.org/mdip/>)

UKMMAS Timeline and Diary Dates

Key Deliverables

November 2006

- MAPC agreement of the UKMMAS Transition Plan and timetable.

May 2007

- Draft Thematic Monitoring Programmes for 2008 to MARG.

November 2007

- Final co-ordinated Monitoring Plans for 2008 to MAPC for approval.
- Adoption of the Monitoring Manual.
- MAPC approval of Marine Objective recommendations.
- MAPC approval of UKMMAS Implementation Phase 2008-2013.

January 2008

- End of Transitional Phase – Business As Usual.

2010

- Charting Progress 2
- OSPAR QSR
- GOOS Observing System

2015

- Charting Progress 3

2021

- EU Marine Thematic Strategy Good Environmental Status Assessments

2012

- EU Thematic Strategy Characterisation Report

2020

- Charting Progress 4
- EU Water Framework Directive
- Good Environmental Status Assessments

Diary Dates

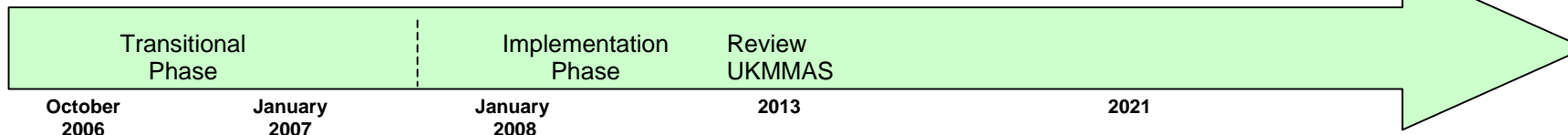
2006:

- 7th November - MAPC
- 21st November - PSEG
- 29th November - HBDSEG
- 29th November - MCCIP ARC Launch
- 7th December - CSSEG
- 19th December - Mini MARG
- 20th December – Protocols Group

2007:

- ? January – Marine Objectives Workshop
- 23rd/24th January – Review of Defra Monitoring R&D
- 7th March - MARG
- 29th March - CSSEG.
- 16th May - MAPC
- 7th June - CSSEG
- 14th June - Mini MARG
- 12th September - MARG
- 20th September - CSSEG
- 6th December – CSSEG

(Correct on 29th November 2006)



Next issue of UKMMAS News – Spring 2007

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