

# Minutes

**Date:** 09/12/2020

**Location:** Teams

**Subject:** Forth and Tay Regional Advisory Group – Main Group Meeting (FTRAG)

**Attendees:** Benjamin King (BK; **ICOL**), Catherine Kelham (CK; **RSPB**), Claire Gilchrist (CG; **NnG**), David Summers (DS; **TDSFB**), Erica Knott (EK; **NatureScot**), Gayle Holland (GH; **MS-LOT**), Janelle Braithwaite (JB; **MSS**), Jared Wilson (JW; **MSS**), Karen Taylor (KT; **NatureScot**), Kirsty Wright (KW; **MSS**), Lorraine Hawkins (LH; **DDSFb**), Marion Harrauld (MH; **MSS**), Nick Brockie (NB; **Seagreen/SSE**), Polly Tarrant (PT; **NnG**), Ross Gardiner (RG; **MSS**), Sarah Arthur (SA; **ICOL/RRPL**), Sarah Canning (SC; **JNCC**), Stuart McCallum (SM; **ICOL/Natural Power**).

**Apologies:** Alan Wells (**FMS**), Annie Breaden (**CES**), Charles Nathan (**RSPB**), Karen Hall (**JNCC**), Sarah Dolman (**WDC**).

ITEM	SPEAKERS	MINUTE
1.0: Introductions and Apologies (Chair)	EK	<p>Introductions from all</p> <p>Apologies: Annie Breaden, CES (EK standing in as chair), Charles Nathan, RSPB (CK standing in). Alan Wells, FMS (LH standing in), Karen Hall (JNCC, SC standing in), Sarah Dolman.</p>
2.0: Previous meeting minutes/actions	JB, MH, GH, EK, JW	<p><b>MSS national information sharing process to be discussed at ScotMER – was raised but no conclusion reached.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is currently being discussed and will likely be a topic at the next coordination meeting in January 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>GH to update FTRAG ToR and distribute – action closed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some comments to address but all are finalised and on website.</li> <li>Agreed Berwick Bank and Marr Bank (MB&amp;BB) are participating in the ornithology group and therefore it would be preferable for them to be involved in all FTRAG groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>-Action: GH and NB to contact BB&amp;MB re attending.</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding KOWLs interest in the puffin monitoring and smaller schemes generally, agreed to wait until there is substantial overlap before they were involved in the main FTRAG.</li> </ul> <p><b>MSS to develop broad project outline - Diadromous fish project.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 to 4 potential projects, with emphasis on the importance of the cross receptor projects (predator prey interactions).</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion between MS and CES on management and access (on agenda).</b></p> <p><b>Standard item to add data reporting and management on agenda platform for info sharing (on agenda) – complete.</b></p> <p><b>Items to be added to agenda to cover ScotMer symposium – to be covered under data management and reporting.</b></p> <p><b>Response requested on March symposium –closed.</b></p> <p><b>Marine Scotland and developers to contact Scottish Renewables to discuss the future engagement with ScotMER. Ben Miller’s (BM) presentation indicates greater involvement. It has been agreed if BM cannot attend, another developer will attend to represent whole industry.</b></p>
<b>3.0:</b> Project updates	NB, MH, PT, BK	<p>Update provided by all developers (see presentation).</p> <p>Q/A</p> <p>Re. Seagreen1A cable route benthic survey: MH asked whether additional DDV locations will be included in the MPA area. NB confirmed that these were included in the agreed survey scope.</p>
<b>4.0:</b> Updates on Monitoring proposals (Developers)	NB, PT, KW, EK, GH, LH, JW	<p>Update provided by all developers (see presentation).</p> <p>Q/A</p> <p><b>Re. NNG: Commercial fisheries monitoring processes accepted including the provision of reports to MSS and SFF for comment as these were the parties who were consulted on the PEMP, and once finalised they will also be issued to the F&amp;T CFWG for information.</b></p> <p><b>Discussion that quarterly updates of surveys planned are expected.</b></p> <p><b>Discussion on planned diadromous fish monitoring FT projects. These are not project specific but contribute to a strategic DM fish study. Further discussed in item 6.</b></p>
<b>5.0:</b> High level ornithology/MM updates	PT, JB, NB, DS	<p><b>Timelines discussed for seabird interaction study.</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational study for 2023, and 2 years (breeding), outputs will be in 2025. Interim/annual reports assumed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine Mammals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BND photo id survey outcomes for 2020 summarised.</li> <li>Discussion on why surveys were inshore, away from OWF sites. BND are primarily a coastal (waters &lt;20m) species, hence survey coverage. Sound propagation modelling indicated this extended to inshore waters, hence BND surveys of interest in this area.</li> <li>PAM deployments in Seagreen and NNG provide data for offshore area</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.0:</b> Strategic Monitoring Updates (MSS)</p>	<p>JW, JB, EK, MH, KW, NB, RG, PT, SA</p>	<p><b>Update on progress of ScotMer projects.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website displays update of ongoing projects.</li> <li>EMF project for guidance on fisheries development – this is about to start and continue for 5 months.</li> </ul> <p><b>ScotMER Fish/fisheries literature review and program of work.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish/fisheries evidence map to outline evidence gaps.</li> <li>Stakeholder engagement to see what initiatives are filling the gaps. If gaps still exist, develop programme of work.</li> <li>Contracted for Scotland but TCE on board to extend to whole of UK.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further development to marine dynamic energy models</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMRU consulting project completed last year and this builds on that to parametrising models for key marine mammal species. Due to be delivered in March.</li> <li>Element in exploring spatial models for MM and how to incorporate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cumulative effects framework (EMFF Funded) led by CEH.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed to look at consented UK and cumulative effects, and develop a tool to add new projects to assess – covers ornithology and marine mammals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sectoral marine plan road map of actions and compensation – contracting process ongoing. contracting either side of Christmas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncertainties and evidence gaps as ID'd by SMP - Roadmap of strategic work to fill evidence gaps</li> <li>Compensatory measures for IROPI applications. develop framework to assess compensation measures and monitor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategic review of migration routes and stochastic CR modelling tool for plan option areas.</b></p> <p><b>MSS collecting seabird flight height using LIDAR.</b></p>

		<p><b>Seabird behaviour at sea to improve CR parameters (BTO).</b></p> <p><b>Study on climate change on seabird species.</b></p> <p><b>Bird sensitivity mapping tool to be made public.</b></p> <p><b>MSS completed at sea surveys of seabirds.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One more survey to complete – report due at the end of March.</li> </ul> <p><b>Socioeconomics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MS guidance to support socio economic assessments. Contracting to put together a method tool kit. Due at the end March.</li> </ul> <p><b>NatureScot/MSS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study to look at how OWF perceptions change and what influences in coastal communities. Due the end March.</li> <li>• Discussions including the progression of funding. Some projects are generic therefore can be applied anywhere in the UK, but some in Scotland. TCE buy in is helping push projects out to whole UK context, e.g. bird migration study.</li> <li>• There is to be a monthly coordination meeting with MS, TCE, CES, ORJIP, BEIS, to discuss link up for wider UK.</li> <li>• SOEC sub-group also joining up with ScotMER. e.g. compensatory project – therefore not duplicating effort. UK wide SOEC (pathway to growth growth) may be a further link to be made.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p><b>Additional items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenders submitted for automated video analysis tool. Mostly for salmon, but will test on benthic video. Contact has been made to share GBS footage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Action: Anyone with video footage to share this soon (contract to start in January). MH to do a summary to be incorporated into minutes.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Floating wind workshop.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High academic involvement. ScotMER directory of people/specialism/data/questions raised to assist with forming collaborative research projects. Participants agree this would be a good idea for the RAG group once data collection has advanced.</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaboration between NatureScot, MSS and a MSc Erasmus student.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To begin a project starting in Feb next year to review good practice for understanding EMF effects, particularly comparing and contrasting fixed and floating. Method to standardise method to assess EMF will be reviewed. Contact will be made between developers consultants / engineers.</li> <li>• <b>Action – Developers to provide contact for most appropriate person to contact re EMF.</b></li> </ul>
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		<p><b>Successful fish and benthic session at ScotMER.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presentations should be able to be produced</b></li> <li>• Also have results on genetic work to assign smolts sampled in 2019. This displays regions and in some cases rivers smolt are from. Few Forth fish – suggesting fish may take time to transit through the tidal River and Firth of Forth. New methodology should allow separation between rivers to allow old samples to be revisited. The new genetic assignment project has begun and should report in summer 2021.</li> <li>• Automated identification project – Craig Robinson of Montrose salmon lab, particularly in connection with automated identification of salmon in video for salmon counting.</li> <li>• Following previous actions to determine diadromous fish projects – Most popular project proposed involves predator prey interactions and changes in that resulting from OWF infrastructure. Hope to integrate with other studies e.g bird behaviours with NatureScot and Aberdeen University, put out an outline project. Sent to Moray Firth and Forth &amp; Tay projects a couple weeks ago. Summary included some initial questions for developers to get initial feedback to see if questions were of relevance/importance, any obvious gaps, and to gauge level of interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Action: Respond in full by end of January, include proper review and addition of data sources. Send by the 11<sup>th</sup>.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Project Puffin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beatrice windfarm condition, proof of concept, want to do field trials which will be undertaken on Isle of May next year. *Covid-19 resulted in restricted access – such issues will not be further encountered. Only severe travel restrictions will be affected – bubbles/accommodation are in place. Does lead to another set of people on the island, but will work with CEH, and don't think Project Puffin staff will stay overnight.</li> <li>• Contract due to go out and PHD student for Isle of May. Wider increase in flex as a result of lack of recognition that ML conditions were connected with some of the work. New measures should cover everyone. BTO uni student details confirmed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Action: UHIO project to be investigated and checked.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Future project ideas we would like to progress – looking for data or expertise.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to asses scale of projects re. benthic ecology – more relevant with BB/MB projects. Want to know how to advise and accept levels of habitat loss. Looking for background data for whole region.</li> </ol>
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		<p>Developers willing to share benthic data, however some should be public information in EIA's.</p> <p>2. Project looking at particle motion from installation/construction noise on benthic inverts. Looking for opportunities to look at particle motion from noise activities. NnG had been engaging with MH on this but timing and HSE issues led to it being unachievable. EK suggested MH undertakes earlier engagement with Developers so that HSE issues can be resolved to ensure a project design that is compatible with installation works.</p>
<p><b>7.0:</b> Data Reporting and Management (MS)</p>	<p>JB, JW, PT, EK</p>	<p><b>Ongoing work with CES to conduct gap analysis.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research into funding options and working with CES to produce guidance on how to store and manage data.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cumulative effects project.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seabird data needs to be in a consistent format. This will not be linked to this study. Ornithology at sea survey data has a standard ESAS template so that is used. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action: JW to ensure we are not adding an additional layer of complexity.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>Reports outputs are adequate, raw and processed data that underly these reports overlap in terms of what MS and CES require so objective is to reduce duplication and allow easy data sharing.</li> <li>Timescale will be long running – 2021. Aiming to conduct case study using existing project (Beatrice). Agree that it will be useful to track new/emerging project to see how process can be managed in real time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8.0:</b> AOB</p>	<p>EK, JW, BK, PT, JB, GH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub groups in discussion about lessons learned. Discussion regarding overlap from subgroups and receptors. Agreed more thought needs to be taken regarding the renaming of this group to “other receptors” to give clear purpose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action: GH/JB/EK to think about RAG structure and process and bring proposal to next meeting</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>Discussion surrounding developers feeding into ScotMER evidence gaps and keen for this to be recorded in PEMPS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Action: developers to provide quarterly updates, GH/JB to provide feedback</b></li> <li><b>Action: GH/JB to look for guidance on content of quarterly report</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>8.0:</b> Any other business</p>	<p>EK, NB, BK</p>	<p><b>Action: Seagreen to organise next meeting (anticipated to be June).</b></p>