Clyde 2020 - Joint Steering Group and Research Advisory Group meeting

Facilitated by the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership
22nd October 2021, online meeting
9:30 – 12:00

Chair	Anthony Gallagher
Steering Group Attendees	Alex Watson-Crook (AWC) (SIFT), Elaine Whyte (EW) (CFA), Harry Wick (HW) (NIFPO), Howard Wood (HWood) (COAST), Anneli Hill (AH) (Crowne Estate Scotland), Robert Younger (RY) (SCFF), Lucy Kay (LK) (COAST), Penny Hawdon (PH) (The Scottish Salmon Company), Michael Hill (MH) (The Scottish Salmon Company), Bernadette Butfield (BB) (Scottish Environment LINK), Willie Kennedy (WK) (SSACN),
Research Advisory Group attendees	Tanja Miethe (TM), Bryce Stewart (BS), Mike Heath (MH), Mhairi Alexander (MA), Sally Campbell (SC)
Also Attending	Chris Cutts (CC) (CMPP), Sam McFarlane (SM) (CMPP), Josh Lawrence (JL) (University of Aberdeen)
Apologies	Calum Duncan (Scottish Environment LINK), Alexander Downie (SEPA), David Bailey (RAG), Fiona Munro (Marine Scotland), Scot Mathieson (RAG), Lorraine Holdstock (Argyll and Bute Council), David Donnan (NatureScot)

Agenda

	Item	Time	Lead
	Virtual tea and coffee	**9:15-9:30**	
1.	**Welcome and Apologies**	9:30-9:35	Chair
2.	**Chair's Brief/New team introductions**	9:35-9:40	Chair
3.	**Actions from last meeting**	9:40-9:45	Chair
4.	**CMPP update** • Clyde Regional Marine Plan • CMPP Governance discussions, including considerations of the future of Clyde 2020	9:45-10:15	Chris Cutts
5.	**Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources**	10:15-10:30	Mike Heath
6.	**CMPP Research list**	10:30-10:40	Chris Cutts
7.	**Presentation – "A switch in species dominance of a recovering pelagic ecosystem" ***	10:40-11:20	Joshua Lawrence
8.	**Research Advisory Group update ****	11:20-11:50	Mike Heath & RAG
9.	**AOB**	11:50-11:55	All
10.	**DONM** - Proposed date – morning of Thursday 24th February 2022	11:55-12:00	Chair
11.	**Close**	12:00	Chair

* Presentation slides shared with minutes

** Updated research document prepared by Mike Heath shared with minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees and provided an overview of the agenda. Apologies were listed as above.

2. Chairman's Report/New team introductions

The Chair introduced the new CMPP team to the members – CC as the new CMPP Project Officer (previously the manager of the Forth Estuary Forum) and SM as the new CMPP Co-ordinator (previously the CMPP EMFF public engagement officer). Changes have also been made to the Marine Scotland team with Fiona Munro replacing Iain Black in the Marine Planning and Strategy team as the senior policy officer. Fiona will attend future meetings.

The Chair detailed the areas of work that the new CMPP team have been working on such as the response to Marine Scotland's comments to the Draft CRMP and considerations around the future governance of the CMPP and Clyde 2020.

3. Actions from the last meeting

The Chair provided the following updates on the actions from the last meeting:

Reference	Summary	Lead & Status
01/08/12/2020	Mike Heath to coordinate RAG review of the research priorities identified in 2016	MH/Ongoing

4. CMPP Update

<u>Clyde Regional Marine Plan</u>

CC informed the group that Marine Scotland had returned their comments to the Draft Clyde Regional Marine Plan in May this year. Comments were categorised as minor comments: (name changes, typos and clarity or information update), broader comments, and then feedback by chapter / policy area. Broader comments fell under the headings of: Issues of proportionality / applicability / too inflexible; Practicalities of Operationalising (controlling / licensing); and Competition for space and conflict.

Following on from the June 2021 CMPP meeting, CC worked to address the above comments and presented an amended draft Plan at the September CMPP meeting.

During the meeting it was highlighted by some members that the text surrounding the "ENCA" (energy chapter) policies was not suitable and looked to be in support of future oil and gas exploration within the Clyde. There was also comment on the policies surrounding buffer zones with regards to PMF's in the Natural Heritage chapter. CC is currently working on final changes to the plan before submission to Marine Scotland.

SMcF is working on the final changes to the maps which will be submitted with the second iteration of the draft Plan and will begin work on a consultation plan for the 12 week statutory consultation.

CMPP Governance discussions, including considerations of the future of Clyde 2020

CC provided a brief run-through of the Future Governance and Legal Structure paper that was submitted to members before the meeting. It was also highlighted to members that there will be a series of Future Governance and Legal Structure workshops to be held in January 2022.

Regarding legal structure, members were updated that NatureScot have agreed to house the CMPP until March 2023. CC explained that during the last CMPP meeting, members expressed that they were keen for this relationship to continue beyond this date. Although the NatureScot CMPP representative has agreed to ask the question, we must start to discuss alternative legal structures for the CMPP moving forward.

The governance structure will also need to change as we move from plan creation to plan implementation. CC provided a run-through of potential governance options, all of which require the partnership to become more streamlined and for the Clyde 2020 group to be formalised within the CMPP structure. It was noted that as part of Marine Scotland's grant letter for this year, we have an objective to draft a proposal on how Clyde 2020 will evolve, contribute and support the Clyde marine planning process.

The Chair opened the floor to discussion and asked the members for comment on how they see Clyde 2020 integrating into the CMPP.

No initial comments were made but there was a general agreement that there was a willingness for the Clyde 2020 members to be part of the process going forward – we just need to find a way to make the most of their input.

SC requested that whichever way we choose to go forward we must have a more democratic mix of people within the partnership – especially surrounding the issue of community involvement.

The Chair agreed and confirmed that we will be extending an invitation to the Clyde Coastal Community Council to join the governance workshops in January.

A point was raised regarding the structure of a future CMPP. If we are going to have an umbrella group representing the community councils then it needs to be representative of the region not just a certain sector.

It was noted that going forward the CMPP will require the involvement of the research community around the Clyde in order to provide foundation and evidence for policies and decision making. Until now the input to Clyde 2020 from researchers has been quite low key and there has been no formal recognition of that process from their respective universities etc. The process is more voluntary. If the work of the research and advisory group was to become more formal within the new structure of the CMPP then it may become an issue.

It was asked if we had been involved in any conversations with Marine Scotland about the legislative underpinning of Clyde 2020 and if we had a case for making it a more formal group of the CMPP.

The Chair clarified that we have indeed been in discussion with Marine Scotland and they are aware of the process we are proposing.

Members highlighted that in the initial creation of Clyde 2020, the "2020" referred specifically to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive's Achievement of Good Environmental Status. We have not achieved good environmental status at Firth of Clyde level and not at Scottish marine level. Thus, during the re-interpretation of Clyde 2020 into the CMPP, we need to hold on to those elements of what we need to achieve good environmental status and look at the specific descriptors that were used and apply them at Firth of Clyde level. The achievement of good environmental status should not be lost.

Members also noted that during previous workshops on specific topic areas the question was asked, "What are we using as a measure to determine the success of the plan?" This was a question that was never really resolved so it may be worth keeping those objectives to reach good environmental status within our sights.

5. **Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources**

The proposal submitted to the NERC / ESRC funding programme Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources (SMMR) entitled "Co-creating a multi-value approach to sustainable governance (MarCo)" was unfortunately not funded.

6. CMPP Research List

CC explained that this document was initially created by the RAG in 2016 and contains a list of significant research gaps that were identified during the drafting of the Clyde Marine Region Assessment. RAG members were reminded that if they haven't done so already, to please contribute to the document with any updates for the region.*

*This section is expanded in agenda item 8.

7. Presentation - A switch in species dominance of a recovering pelagic ecosystem

Dr Josh Lawrence presented the methodology and results of his most recent paper "A switch in species dominance of a recovering pelagic ecosystem"*

*Presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes.

Key discussion points following the presentation:

- It was questioned what could be causing such a phenomenon and could it be linked to similar events in the Atlantic with oscillations between pilchards and anchovies? Comparisons have been made to a few different systems in which oscillations of species have been recorded and some parallels have been identified but it's hard to hypothesise what might come next. It may be that sprat have exploited the vacant niche after the collapse of herring.
- Could it be down to disturbance of herring spawning grounds rather than bycatch specifically? It's a possibility, although the majority of herring found during the study

were juveniles which suggests that there isn't a significant spawning population in the Clyde (at least when the surveys were being conducted).

- It was suggested that the biggest influence on herring populations in the Irish Sea is actually how strong the sprat population is as a competitor species. Could this be a suggestion for the Clyde? Unsure about the inverse relationship between sprat and herring. The faster maturation and shorter generation time of sprat could contribute to their ability to exploit the vacant niche once the herring numbers have dropped.
- It was noted that fishermen in the Clyde have indeed seen marks of herring around the region and larger adult fish are being found although they are not pursuing it as a market.
- Regarding the spawning times of herring, during the 1980's acoustic surveys there was two clear groups of herring – larger fish that were spring spawners and smaller fish that had been spawned in the autumn. It was assumed that autumn spawned fish were actually from the Irish Sea whilst the spring spawned fish were probably resident all the time in the Clyde. Unsure what the fate of the local spring spawning stock will be.
- If the option was available what would you do next in the Clyde? The team worked with local fishing fleets to obtain data on where larger herring could be detected but unfortunately none of this came through for the survey and it was mainly juveniles. It could be that larger herring where present in the shallows where the research boat couldn't access. This would be an interesting area to do further research. Also comparisons between surveying at day and night.
- The use of the word "recovering" was question as it suggests that the ecosystem is returning to a previous state, when in fact it is morphing into a completely different state. It was explained that the function of herring and sprat in an ecosystem is relatively comparable as they are both foraged fish thus the results are seen as a recovery towards a more functional ecosystem where top predators will return to the area due to the abundance of sprat.

7. Research and Advisory Group Update

MH explained that the original CMPP Research List document (2016) was out of date and had become so degraded with comments due to updates over the years that he decided to start again. A presentation was shown to the members of the revised research document.*

*A Word Document of the presentation will be shared with the minutes.

Going forward MH requested that ALL members of Clyde 2020 (not just the RAG) should be encouraged to leave comment.

Action – Any member who wishes to comment on the research document please send your responses to MH.

Item 9. AOB

A reminder that the Clyde Cod Spawning Closure 2023 consultation will continue online for a further 2 weeks until the 3rd November 2021.

10. DONM

Proposed date at the meeting was the morning of Thursday 24th February 2022. However, due to the closeness of the Governance Workshops on the 20th and 26TH January we would suggest an amended date of Tuesday 29th March.