



Stakeholder Engagement, Facilitation & Mediation

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Finding Sanctuary: Offshore Working Group

REPORT

Meeting: 7th April 2010

Report: 15th April 2010

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Working Group Attendees

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Beth Stoker | Statutory conservation |
| 2. Dale Rodmell | Commercial Fishing |
| 3. John Butterwith | Commercial Fishing |
| 4. Paul St. Pierre | Conservation NGOs |
| 5. Peter MacConnell | Leisure |
| 6. Colin Cornish | Renewable Energy |

Project Team

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 7. Louise Lieberknecht | Finding Sanctuary |
| 8. Shaun Lewin | |
| 9. Tom Mullier | |
| 10. Alana Murphy | |

Agenda

09.45	Arrivals & refreshments	<i>Supporting paper</i>
10.00	Review & Agree Agenda With any additional (substantial) items to be programmed for future meetings.	
	The Working Group's Steps A discussion of the steps the working group will need to take to develop its proposals for a MCZ network. This will also include a look at some of the approaches that may need to be used to help at various steps.	<i>A working approach</i>
	Suggested Sites / Network 1 The project team will table suggestions for sites that could contribute to a MCZ network. The group will need to develop a common understanding of the proposed sites and why they have been put forward. The first task will be to look at sites that can't be changed / have to be included in a network because of the features / species they are covering.	<i>Ecological network guidance summary</i> <i>Protection Levels framework</i>
11.30	Break	
	Suggested Sites / Network 2 The next step will be to see which of the suggested sites have the most advantages and why. There will be an opportunity to propose additional sites.	
13.00	Lunch	
	Suggested Sites / Network 3 The group will identify which of the sites it feels are the most contentious and to explain to each other why this is.	
15.00	Break	
	Focus for the Next meeting / next detailed work The group will weight the contentious sites so that the project team can look to see if they need to be included in a network or not and / or to give a focus for the work at the next meeting. The next meeting should concentrate on how any contentious sites can be made less contentious.	
	Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree actions and review all decisions made • Decide what to report to the SG, LGs; and how • What to tell / feedback to your constituency • Next meeting date(s) 	
	Reflection and evaluation On how the meeting has gone	
17.00	Close	

Working Group Steps

RKP talked through the steps / sequence that the Offshore Working Group (OWG) will need to progress through.

1. Finding Sanctuary Project Team (PT) to present the OWG with maps showing:
 - aggregate sites, wind farms sites, existing protected sites
 - where the features and species listed in the draft Ecological Network Guidance (ENG) occur in the region
 - “unique” sites in the region that have to be included in the MPA network
2. Project Team to present one or more possible MPA networks comprising several possible MCZ sites
3. WG to look at and discuss proposed networks and sites; to include discussion of:
 - which sites can and can't be moved / changed
 - which sites have most advantages and why
 - which sites are most contentious and why
 - how can any contentious sites be made more acceptable e.g. by proposing protection levels for sites
4. WG to construct a possible MPA network as a result of step 3
5. Re-visit / re-do any of the above in the light of input from the Steering Group, Science Advisory Panel (SAP), the National Stakeholder Forum, International observations, the Local Groups etc
6. To agree at each appropriate step what to feed back to and ask input on from the Steering Group and the Local Groups

Discussion

- The OWG will have the opportunity to hold additional meetings if needed so they are able to come to a decision/agreement rather than put forward the results of unfinished discussions on site suggestions. The frequency and focus of meetings is up to the OWG to decide.
- There will need to be time allocated at the start of each meeting to react to the views/concerns of the wider stakeholders as this may affect the suggestions that have been agreed. The OWG would like the opportunity to return to topics discussed during the meeting once they have had a chance to feedback to their constituents.
- The question was raised as to the different roles of members of the Steering Group; some members are here to ensure the conservation objectives set in the March 2010 draft ENG are met and others to protect the interests of their sector. It was clear that the people around the table are not joined in a common interest, but a common task.

It was **AGREED**:

- To progress through these steps, noting that the work may be cyclical and not only linear.

Working Approach

RKP talked through some of the terminology and concepts that may be helpful to use as the working group does its work:

1. Acknowledge, list and openly talk about assumptions being made / used
2. Acknowledge, list and openly talk about uncertainties (e.g. data gaps)
3. Understand how to manage uncertainty (in order to be able to do the work in the given timeframe)
4. Understand that the solution being sought is a viable MPA network that meets the ENG but that there may be more than one possible network option
5. Develop a narrative to accompany their MPA network option; to include for e.g.
 - if you go for this option it has these implications for fishing / kayaking etc.
 - if you go for this option it meets this % of the ENG targets but has this implication
 - suggestions on when any option should be reviewed to see if it is working or when it should be reviewed because new information becomes available that we can predict will change our views on the option / the base from which we are working + who should do any reviews

Discussion

- There is a general frustration within the OWG due to the inability to gain access to existing data and also the lack of data available.
- It is recognised that we will never have a complete set of data to work with and therefore we will have to make assumptions based on the data that exists and be clear about what those assumptions are. There may be a need to make contingency plans in the event that assumptions turn out to be wrong. We will have to acknowledge the uncertainties, but work with what we have in order to make progress.

It was **AGREED** that:

- These were useful concepts to be aware of and the OWG will continue to work with the information available to them.

Possible Building Blocks for MCZs Offshore

Louise presented the parts of the Ecological Network Guidance (ENG) the OWG would be working with in the meeting and the limitations, due to a lack of information in some cases, which we will need to deal with. This was presented as a map showing possible building blocks from which offshore MCZ sites may be created; the map is included in this report on page 14.

A key area for focus highlighted by Louise was on sites where there is limited flexibility for meeting the ENG. Ecological offshore habitats with limited distribution and sites necessary for reasons of connectivity were highlighted as areas where MCZs would be necessary in order to meet the ENG. In particular:

- The A blocks are the only areas where we can meet the ENG targets for “Deep Sea”.
- The eastern G blocks are the only offshore area where “high energy circalittoral rock” occurs, so in order to meet the ENG target for that, we would need to build areas of G3 or G4 into the network.
- The J block has been drawn because it covers an area of “sublittoral mixed sediment”, which has a limited distribution, and this area would also provide a useful stepping stone to help meet connectivity guidelines for sediment habitat.
- The E block contains seafloor features of interest (deep mud habitat) as well as water column features of interest (bird aggregations and productive frontal regions).

The building blocks for discussion were presented as potential sites to work with in this meeting. The sites presented, apart from those covering habitats of limited distribution, can be modified or moved as needed as long as they meet the guidance.

One example of a network that meets the guidance was presented.

Sites with Limited Distribution

Following the presentation the OWG spent time sharing their reactions and thoughts; and in particular around the sites with limited opportunities for change. The following notes capture these.

- Three sites with limited distribution of the EUNIS Level 3 habitats that occur there were identified as relatively unmovable (blocks A, J and parts of G), though it was made clear that boundaries could be altered if needed.
- There is the ability for the Finding Sanctuary recommendations to include timeframes for when the MCZs should be reviewed. There is a fear that by the time any review takes place, restrictions will have already made an impact on the current activities which may not be reversible.
- It was noted that G3/4 is particularly contentious as it is a tidal stream area with potential for tidal energy devices. It may also be difficult from a fishing perspective due to the issues surrounding the displacement from Lyme Bay and the wind farm to the east.
- The A block has been identified because it is important due to the upwelling around the break which is the most important area ecologically. This was not contentious for any particular sector due to the vast bottom depth and distance from the shoreline.
- The J block is a difficult area as it is in a high activity area for fishing, however it may be important for connectivity reasons. Though it is unlikely that it will have a tidal implication, it may be used in the future for wind and wave energy.
- The E block is an interesting area ecologically with bird aggregations, mobile pelagic species and frontal features. There is flexibility in how the boundaries are drawn and the current boundaries drawn are simply to get the discussions started.
- The OWG asked how much of a buffer zone will be allowed / needed around the features we being protected? The ENG provides the following guidance on this:

Table 7.11 taken from Annex 11 of the March 2010 draft Ecological Network Guidance: Appropriate distance to extend the site boundary at the sea surface beyond MCZ habitat. This is based on generalised trawl warp lengths (SERAD 2001) (JNCC MNPG 2008).

Water depth	Ratio warp length: depth	Approx. length of trawl warp	Boundary extension to be added to the habitat area of interest
Shallow waters ($\leq 25\text{m}$)	4:1	100m at 25m depth	4 x actual depth
Continental shelf (25-100m)	3:1	600m at 200m depth	3 x actual depth
Deep waters (200 to over 1000m)	2:1	2000m at 1000m depth	2 x actual depth

OWG Discussion and Observations

- A number of suggested sites are over the Trevoise Box and unless MCZs are protected EU-wide, the sites will be fished heavily from April 1st when the Trevoise Box opens each year.
- Management measures for European vessels will be sought through the Common Fisheries Policy, but these measures will take time to come into place. It is anticipated that restrictions for both UK and European activity will be brought into action at the same time. This process is outside of the Finding Sanctuary process and agreement will be sought from international stakeholders. There are several options for the involvement of international stakeholders and a decision will be made by late summer 2010 as to how they will work with the regional projects.
- The OWG reacted positively to the site and network suggestions supplied by the PT and would like time to discuss these with their wider stakeholder groups.
- It was raised that offshore renewables will potentially be competing with the fishing industry for space in the future when development occurs around 2020-2030. It was pointed out that the Government has stated where the conservation objectives of MPAs would not be compromised, it would be preferential to situate offshore renewable sites within MPAs. It is still an uncertainty where the offshore renewables will be situated and which conservation objectives they will be compatible with.
- It was clarified that the proposed building blocks are mainly possible sea floor protection sites, therefore fishing activity may be allowed to continue in many sites and therefore the MCZs will not necessarily cause displacement of all activity. Reference was made to the protection levels framework circulated prior to the meeting, and the map of building blocks needs to be understood within that framework.
- A question was raised whether we would be able to include habitat outside the project boundary in our proposed sites if they contributed to the ENG targets. We are not able to do this as we only have the power recommend MCZs in our project region.
- About 30% of the Bristol Channel round 3 wind farm licensed area is being developed in the near future, but there is the opportunity to develop the rest in the future.

It was **AGREED** that:

- The OWG members would take the map of building blocks back to their constituents and explore possibilities to work with in the next OWG meeting in May.
- Discussing each site within the protection level framework is essential for agreement amongst different stakeholder groups.
- The A block, particularly around the shelf break, is ecologically important and uncontentious to stakeholders and will be considered further in the next meeting as a potential MCZ site.

Advantageous Sites

The group discussed which of the identified sites had any advantages and if so, what they were.

The OWG were given the opportunity to mark which of the identified sites had advantages from a personal perspective, However, OWG members felt it was hard to be certain that areas are not contentious within their sector without first talking to them. Therefore to attribute sites with a “yes” or “no” would be relying on guesswork at the moment. It was discussed whether it was possible to identify advantageous sites based on current knowledge, accepting that they will be investigated further.

The reason for the exercise was to see if it would help focus the OWG discussions at the next meeting.

The group felt that sites ticked at this stage may be put forward as recommendations; it was clarified that this would not be the case unless explicitly stated in the notes accompanying the site suggestion.

- The group would like to be able to take the site suggestions to their sectors in order to ensure there are no major issues which need to be brought up within the OWG. It was highlighted that it is the OWG members’ responsibility to take this information to their constituents to shape further discussions. The group feels that it will take a long time to discuss these suggestions with their sectors, before ticking sites which they feel are possibilities.
- There remains a suspicion by some that the FS process is more of a consultation and that we are “going through the motions” after which Defra will have the opportunity to change any recommendations as they wish. It was pointed out to the group that participants in the FS process have been given the opportunity to draw lines on maps, but that so far, this has not been taken. Now suggestions have been offered for the OWG to make comments on. So, this is definitely not a “normal consultation”, it is a deliberative process with opportunities to collectively develop suggestions.
- It would be useful to have the Admiralty Wreck Chart on the base maps in order to look at where the angling charters are going.
- There is possibly beam trawling activity in the B and M blocks which is being investigated by the PT.

It was **AGREED** that:

- OWG members will show the site suggestions to their sectors in order to know if there are any major issues which need to be brought up for discussion within the OWG.
- It is the OWG members’ responsibility to take this information to their constituents to shape further discussions.

Contentious Sites

The group discussed which of the identified sites were contentious and if so, why.

- G block sites would be the most contentious due to the displacement of the fishing activity which will now have to find new grounds. It was pointed out that static gear can remain within Lyme Bay, so the displacement will only be applicable to mobile fishing. From a tidal perspective, the G block is contentious, particularly the eastern sites. G1 could be contentious in terms of offshore wind.
- B, D, F and M blocks appear to be areas of low/no fishing activity, but may be lacking in data now.

- G, H, I and J if chosen would be bound to affect charter skippers taking recreational anglers out. For example a ban on anchoring or water column fishing restrictions would be a problem. Therefore, defining the activities within these areas would help to make the sites less contentious.
- Knowing the lat/long and the wrecks that fall within the sites drawn would help in going back to the constituents for feedback.
- The H block which covers much of the mid channel potting agreements has the potential to create conflict within the fishing industry if handled badly. Conservation objectives of the site may work together with the agreement, allowing the current fishing methods to occur. This would however mean that bottom trawling gear would not be able to be used any other time of the year, or it could be a seasonal MCZ with the same seasons as the voluntary agreements.
- Stipulating a seasonal restriction could work, so is a possibility. Further guidance will be coming from JNCC/NE to help define this. This is most likely to be relevant for pelagic features and not seabed features.
- H1, J1, I1, D block and F block have potential to be contentious with respect to their proximity to shore. Looking at the traffic separation zones will help to look at areas which may not be viable for use for renewables, but these will need to be looked into before a decision can be reached.

It was **AGREED** that:

- OWG members will return to their constituents to explore further which building blocks could be used as MCZs in the building of the MPA network.

Further Discussion

The next meeting will focus on areas of contention as a starting point. We will also look at a compatibility matrix (a matrix that will describe what activities are compatible / incompatible with protection of features listed in the ENG; this will probably be an unofficial “ghost matrix” while we await official guidance) to start looking at protection levels for particular sites. It was reiterated that levels of protection have to be discussed and put forward hand in hand with site suggestions for us to make any progress at all.

The FS economist will be looking at socio-economic impacts of closing different sites, and not just on the basis of pound and pence value of sites. The economists and Defra are looking into the level of detail which is necessary for the impact assessment within the regional project areas.

JNCC, NE, etc are building up a monitoring strategy so they are able to monitor the MCZs for their effectiveness. It is proposed that there will be a 6 year reporting cycle about the MPA network as a whole, making a series of recommendations in order to react to change.

Certain areas may be able to be proposed such as the ray box where there is already voluntary exclusion which will be compatible with protecting bottom sediment.

The OWG may not want to report back on precisely what came back to them from the stakeholders, but instead use this information to better inform themselves of the position of their stakeholder constituency.

It was **AGREED** that the next OWG meeting will:

- Focus on proposed MCZ sites which members of the working group feel are contentious.
- Start looking at protection levels for particular sites, using a “compatibility matrix” at the next meeting.

Information to pass on / questions to raise with the Steering, Local and Inshore Working Groups

There was discussion about how much of the information (maps & site suggestions) presented to OWG should be shared with the SG at this stage. One option was not to share them as it may stall the progress of the OWG. However, it was also noted that the SG should be kept in the loop the whole way through this process, for information and not feedback, so that they have less of a jump to make when it comes to the OWG presenting their work at the next SG meeting in June.

- **Questions to raise for feedback:**
 - Shape of the suggested sites, case by case.
 - Practicalities of policing sites (though this is not within our remit, it is a worthwhile consideration).
 - Are there any new areas stakeholders want to propose for consideration?
 - Is it possible to get access to have maps of traffic separation zones for use within future meetings?
 - Will the carbon reduction impact of renewables be taken into account in the socio-economic analysis by Finding Sanctuary's economist?
 - Is Finding Sanctuary going to take into account habitats that store carbon?
 - What's the value of the natural environment's contribution to the economy (e.g. tourism) and will this be taken into account when designating MCZs?
 - Will the Steering Group take into account the salt displacement, and therefore ecological impacts, which will occur if the salt caverns (proposed in the Bristol Channel and off Portland) are hollowed and used to store natural gas, in the event that Russia may not continue to provide this to us?

It was **AGREED** to share:

- The report from this meeting with the Steering, Local and Inshore Working Groups.

What to share with our constituents / colleagues

- Map of envelope blocks of proposed site areas. There are concerns that this map looks like a substantial MCZ network at first glance and that people may not be able to get their heads around how many blocks may be needed to make a network. (It is recognised that depending on which building blocks are used and what percentages of the guidance they meet, different numbers of blocks will have to be selected).
- Map of individual building blocks and example network for OWG members to use to work with stakeholder groups.
- Marxan output of fishing activity with proposed sites overlaid.
- Maps "OWG_01 Socio-economic layers, geological feature and mud habitats", "OWG_08 EUNIS Level 3" and "OWG_09 Marxan analysis - identifying areas of high fishing utility" (one each with and without site suggestions), "OWG_17 Possible building blocks for an MPA network (offshore)" and "OWG_18 Possible building blocks for an MPA network (offshore), with one network option highlighted" will be provided in a PowerPoint compatible form.
- All wall maps will be available for download by OWG members from an FTP site.

The Group **AGREED** to share:

- The meeting report and any maps provided to them with their constituents. The agreement was on the understanding that OWG members explained the context of the building blocks and the dynamic nature of the possible network with the people they shared it with.

Agreements and Decisions - Summary

Working Group Steps

- It was agreed to progress through these steps, noting that the work may be cyclical and not only linear.

Working Approach

- It was agreed that these were useful concepts to be aware of and the OWG will continue to work with the information available to them.

Sites with Limited Distribution

- It was agreed that the OWG members would take the map of building blocks back to their constituents and explore possibilities to work with in the next OWG meeting in May.
- It was agreed that discussing each site within the protection level framework is essential for agreement amongst different stakeholder groups.
- It was agreed that the A block, particularly around the shelf break, is ecologically important and uncontentious to stakeholders and will be considered further in the next meeting as a potential MCZ site.

Advantageous Sites

- It was agreed that OWG members will show the site suggestions to their sectors in order to know if there are any major issues which need to be brought up for discussion within the OWG.
- It was agreed that the OWG members' responsibility to take this information to their constituents to shape further discussions.

Contentious Sites

- It was agreed that OWG members will return to their constituents to explore further which building blocks could be used as MCZs in the building of the MPA network.

Further Discussion

- It was agreed that the next OWG meeting will focus on proposed MCZ sites which members of the working group feel are contentious.
- It was agreed the group will start looking at protection levels for particular sites, using a "compatibility matrix" at the next meeting.

Information to pass on or questions to raise with the Steering, Local and Inshore Working Groups

- It was agreed to share the report from this meeting with the Steering, Local and Inshore Working Groups.

What to share with Stakeholders

- The Group agreed to share the meeting report and any maps provided to them with their constituents. The agreement was on the understanding that OWG members explained the context of the building blocks and the dynamic nature of the possible network with the people they shared it with.

Actions

Action	Who	By When
Send Peter MacConnell a list of the wreck sites (which are encompassed within the suggested building blocks).	Shaun Lewin	April 9 th
Feed wreck information to constituents so they can gauge how the site possibilities may affect them.	Peter MacConnell	Next OWG meeting
The renewables sector to provide their economic impact assessment data.	Colin Cornish	As it becomes available
Separate the fishing data into static and mobile gears in order to make the data more clear and usable in terms of defining protection levels for proposed sites.	Louise Lieberknecht	Next OWG meeting
Follow up on the Fugro offshore survey boat which is conducting a hydrographic survey which includes locating wrecks in the Bristol channel.	Shaun Lewin	
Compile maps used in the meeting electronically (PDF and PowerPoint) and textual commentary	PT	April 9 th
Feedback to constituencies using the above maps	All	Before next OWG meeting
Check whether licensing will prevent us from passing on any of this data in mapped format.	PT	
Send OWG Meeting report to LGs and ask them to comment on the suggested sites by asking "What activities are taking place and what issues can you foresee?"	PT	
Send meeting report to OWG	RKP	14 th April
Look into what information we have for fishing vessels outside the 12 mile limit	Louise Lieberknecht	Next OWG meeting
Take the site suggestions to their constituents for further discussion.	All	Next OWG meeting
Calculate how much of the overall Finding Sanctuary project area is being covered by the proposed network example	Louise Lieberknecht	Next OWG meeting
Investigate the possibility of beam trawling activity in B and M blocks	PT	
Agenda and supporting papers for 6 May meeting to WG	RKP	30 April
Put "Protection Levels" on next meeting agenda	RKP	30 April
There is possibly beam trawling activity in the B and M blocks which is being investigated by the PT.	PT	Next OWG meeting

Offshore Working Group meeting dates

Working Group meetings were set for 2010:

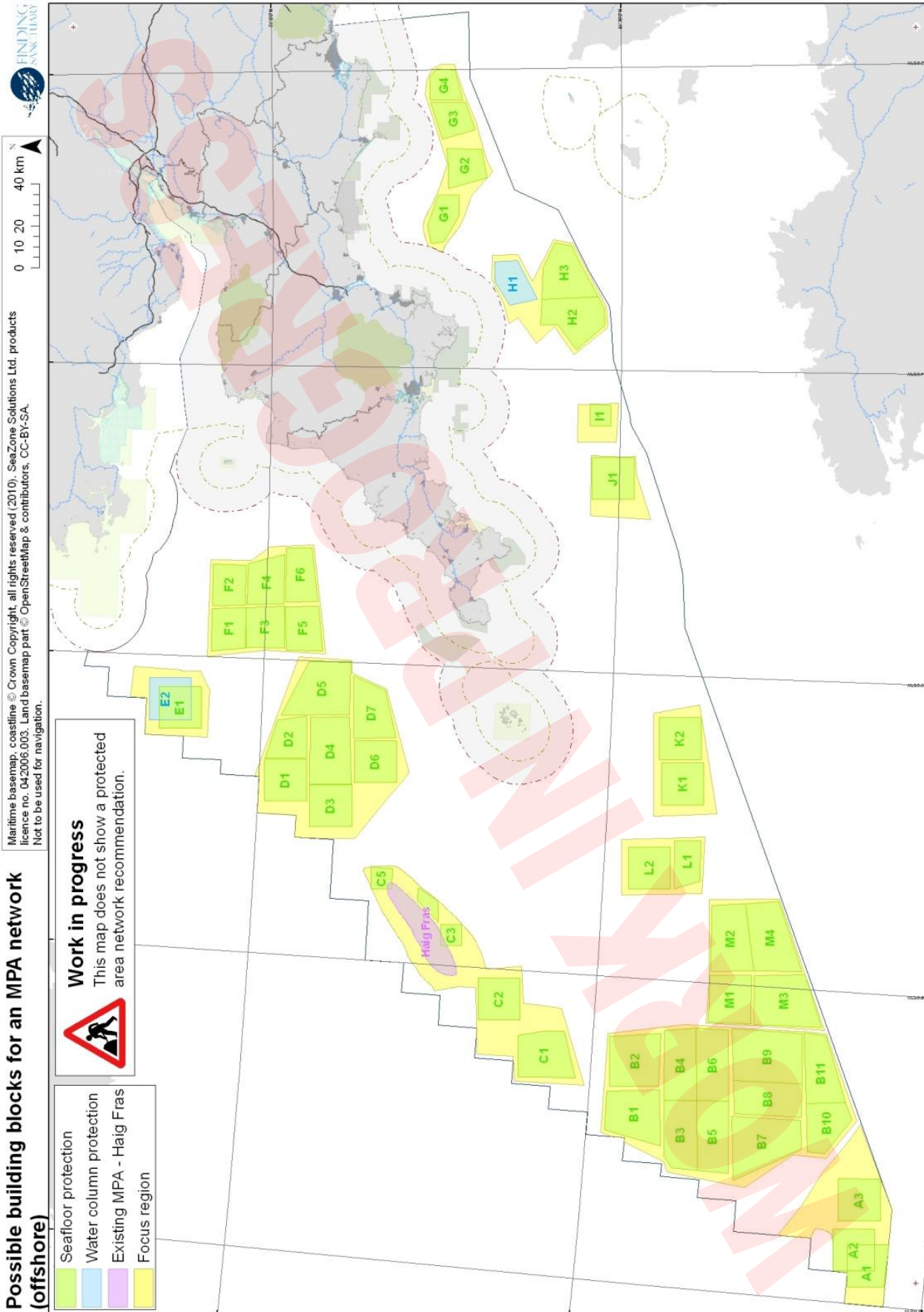
- 6th May
- 17th June
- 22nd July
- 6th September
- 14th October
- 18th November

Evaluation

The general feedback at the end of the meeting was that people felt positive that progress was being made. Having some site options mapped out for them by the PT was seen as helpful and will enable participants to take something tangible back to their constituencies to help generate feedback which we can use to narrow down options in the future.

Some specific comments:

- Something to take away at last
- Very good by the end of today
- Tense early on, relaxed later and people became more liberal with their thinking
- Enjoyed today, small group more productive than larger SG
- “crossed the line” in progress
- Useful, moving forward



These areas have been drawn to move forward the discussion about MCZs in our offshore area (beyond the 12nm limit, which has been greyed out here). The green and blue areas represent possible building blocks for a protected area network - a subset of these could be used to meet ENG targets. The building blocks are grouped into 'Focus regions' (shown in yellow), areas where we can meet ENG targets while attempting to minimise the negative impact on economic interests. This is presented to narrow down options, but these regions are not fixed, i.e. other areas could also be considered if the Steering Group wishes. Existing MPAs are also shown; Haig Fras (in pink) is the only offshore one.

Possible building blocks for an MPA network (offshore)

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Not to be used for navigation.



Work in progress

This map does not show a protected area network recommendation.

- Seafloor protection
- Water column protection
- Existing MPA - Haig Fras
- Focus region