

## NATIONAL MARINE BIOLOGICAL AQC SCHEME

31<sup>st</sup> January 2008, 10:00 am  
SEPA, Riccarton

Present:

T. Mackie (TM)	EHS (DOENI)	(Chair)
M. O'Reilly (MOR)	SEPA S-W Area	(Contract Manager)
P. Pizzolla (PP)	JNCC	(Secretary)
A. Miles (AM)	EA	
L. Oliver (LO)	EA/CCW	
D. Hall (DH)	Unicomarine	
C. Milner (CM)	SEPA N Area	
K. Cooper (KC)	CEFAS	
M. Charlesworth (MC)	BODC	

Apologies:

S. Coates (SC)	EA
M. Robertson (MR)	FRS

### 1. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes agreed

### 2. Matters arising

- TM discuss with JH – done
- Beginners workshop – went ahead
- MOR – station names not done all
- DH – sent monthly report
- AM – contacted Claire mason
- TM – sample timing – done
- Merman – see below
- MC has minutes of focus group if need to see
- Epibiota – see below
- Fish – see below
- Macroalgae – see below
- Phytoplankton – see below
- Last actions on AM not done

### 3. UKMMAS

NMBAQC received a letter from Jane Hawkrige (Chair of the UKMMAS Healthy and Biodiverse Seas Evidence Group (HBDSEG)). NMBAQC were invited to respond to HBDSEG on the areas of AQC that they felt they were currently responsible for and those which it was felt the group could expand into.

The spreadsheet of ecological parameters was run through and those areas that were NMBAQC competencies highlighted and suggestions given for who may have the appropriate competency for other areas.

The key decisions made were that

- NMBAQC should look at WFD, HD, CSEMP (essentially benthic habitats QA). The components therefore include: Epibiota, infauna, fish, phyto, PSA, macroalgae, habitats, opportunistic macroalgae (spatial extent QA), angiosperms (saltmarsh)
- the NMBAQC committee should remain technical – inclusion of mammals, birds etc would morph the group into a more policy oriented committee
- It was felt that the role of NMBAQC should be to liaise with other ecological component groups and provide a potential model for RT and training – audit – advice, learn from the experience of infauna (in terms of taxon lists, enumeration etc) - one off meetings with other groups (mammals, birds etc) would be considered as opposed to more formal arrangement
- NMBAQC should provide more steer on advising on internal QA procedures
- New ToR for the committee are required – this is a work in progress

**ACTION** – TM will draft ToR and Response to HBDSEG and circulate

#### 4. Circulation list

See appendix for new list

#### 5. Contractor Feedback – Reports, Tests, workshops

Interim Report #41 (Contractors Report - Benthic Inverts, Fish & PSA)

Yr13 – one set outstanding OS

External audit samples left

Annual report can go ahead as soon as above come in

Yr14 tests

Standard RT 32

- Many literature problems

Fish RT 33

- 17 lots of fish went out
- multiple submission per lab with shared samples so 52 data submissions
- results slightly worse than last test, young specimens particularly difficult to ID

PSA 30 – muddy

- laser lab for rep analysis – data failed (different method)

**ACTION** – need too get a note on the website regarding the skewness issue with Malvern laser – **need to decide who will do this**

Tests pending

- Lab Ref – 9 come in so far
- Own Sample – 63 in and more coming in
- Macrobenthic – 9 in and more coming in

Upcoming Tests

- Targetted Ring Test - bivalves
- PSA – artificial substrate

## Workshops

- Beginners - 8 attended 5 day course and there was good feedback
- Expert workshop – will be on annelids and planned for Scarborough

**ACTION** – DH to chase Scarborough to confirm venue

### 6. Literature database –will there be regular updates?

Original contract to do review and then get feedback (little actually received)  
There is no funding for a next literature database

Need to get updates sent to website through new secretary

**ACTION** – April deadline for submissions of any new literature

### 7. MERMAN Database

- Station dictionary – Merman can accommodate data that has been taken from ‘one of surveys’ by considering these stations as ‘opportunistic’
- Taxon dictionary moving over to ERMS – JNCC doing this amongst others, it would be ideal to do this with the Unicorn list as well. Need to find point of contact in UK for ERMS

**ACTION** – MC to ask Unico to cost Unicorn/ERMS alignment – this to then feed into other lists and enable export of data (ICES)

**ACTION** – TM need to take this work then to HBDSEG to enable reporting

Data – MC has sent round a list of which data are in Merman at the moment,

**ACTION** – AM wants a reporting tool to look at large (truncated) data sets – TM to highlight to HBDSEG

- PSA data are in Merman for 05/06 – legacy data – chemical data has been submitted (after extraction from ICES data) need to get PSA in before March 08
- *Data flags MoR comment*

The current rule is clear - if any sample fails then all samples for that lab for that year are flagged until remedial action is completed. However this does raise some odd situations where some individual samples pass an AQC audit but are still flagged because another sample has failed! Also there are no easily accessible records of historically flagged data sets or which individual samples have failed! I don't think flags were actually present on the old database and I am not sure if any flagging of benthic data is currently shown on the new Merman database. This is something we should address!

- CMAs to work out 2006 data flags – each CMA passes/fails own data – MC then presents to group once a year – data suppliers and the sample need to be flagged

AM made the point that there no action if CSEMP is not undertaken but infraction will result if WFD assessments are not made

### 8. Epibiota –update

Contract let to Envision – Matt Service is meeting with Ian Sotheran soon  
Funding has come from JNCC, EHS, CCW – there is also a possibility of funds from the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund.

**ACTION** – PP to chase Zoe Crutchfield at JNCC re ALSF funds

## 9. Fish

- Reverse Lab Test Trial Plans  
The plan is to alternate Ring Tests and reverse test each year  
EA to trial reverse lab test this year – (this will not be included in general scheme numbering)  
If anyone else is interested then the reverse test could be extended, otherwise will remain EA only  
SEPA/EHS would like to participate – start in spring
- Fish Taxonomic Key – SC meeting on Weds 6th Feb with the design team, aiming for an April print run **BUT** this is dependant upon any issues that may arise between now & end of March.

**ACTION** - all the contributing Agencies (that's those that have paid money) send their most up to date & correct logo's to SC for the design team

**ACTION** - All to suggest how many copies your Agencies/Companies etc may wish to purchase. This is important as the print run dictates the cost & the design.

**ACTION** Can each Agency provide a single point of contact to SC to discuss any issues regarding the production of the key over the next 2 months.

## 10. Fish farm fauna

DH looked at samples from fish farms and other sites (see attached spreadsheet)

## 11. Macroalgae

- Emma Wells said that the images used for the RT were not the same ones from the Reduced species List Guide, they just look alike
- There is still have cash in the Macroalgae pot, enough to run another RT or try to develop reverse test

**ACTION** - Highlight the workshops on website (job for new EA/JNCC joint post)

## 12. Phytoplankton –

- EA will trial an audit of WFD phytoplankton samples
- Need audit not just RT
- Truncation list will be produced for phytoplankton
- Lots of variation coming out of this in terms of enumeration and methods

## 13. PSA - issues and protocols

AM has spoken to Claire Mason this piece of work will be followed up by the new QA post

**ACTION** – TM to take PSA protocol issue to HBDSEG and ask for cash to produce protocol Claire suggested 10 K for this

**ACTION** – Claire breaks the 10 K down into work chunks

#### **14. QA post**

- There will be a new post funded jointly by EA and JNCC
- This person will undertake the secretariat of NMBAQC and follow up on possible AQC schemes that have not been followed up as yet
- Should start in 08/09 – initially 1 year of funding

#### **15. Review of benthic infaunal scheme modules**

- There was a discussion of how to re-prioritise the benthic component of the scheme in response to the concerns of some of the contractors
- Committee acknowledged that the RT is a training exercise, but with the additional potential of alerting participants to the presence of taxa appearing outside of their assumed biogeographic distributions. The move toward OS audit as the sole requirement was discussed, the potential issue being the potting to species level. Suggested workaround was that 10% of all samples are potted to lowest identifiable taxon and that data presented for QA sample selection. This would enable the practice of 10% internal QA to be achieved too.
- Transparent costings need to be made for each module while ensuring that core administration costs are still met
- In response to the contractor issues raised by Garwood et al it was decided that complainants need to be referred to the higher policy direction – NMBAQC is not responsible for the requirement for QA.

**ACTION** CM to write up a piece on lab ref tests explaining why they are useful, then pass to KC for any additions

**ACTION** Provide clarifying explanations on the NMBAQC website and in particular on SEPA's web based Fish Farm Manual regarding QA requirements

#### **16. Communications**

- Website updates - how and when, a counter and the image library – not discussed

**ACTION** - Need to take PP name off website

#### **17. Small companies**

- Clarifying statement on website? – not discussed

#### **18. Date and place of next meeting – not discussed**

## Appendix

### List Of Contacts for NMBAQC

<b>Committee</b>	
Tim Mackie	EHS - Chair
Alison Miles	EA - finance
Myles O'Reilly	SEPA – contract manager
AN Other	JNCC
Mike Robertson	FRS
Keith Cooper	CEFAS
Carol Milner	SEPA
Matt Service	AFBI (former chair, still involved with Epibiota QA)
Steve Coates	EA
Lucie Oliver	EA/CCW
<b>Non-committee – on minutes circulation list</b>	
Joe Silke	Marine Institute (runs phytoplankton module)
Mandy Prior	EA
Mark Charlesworth	BODC
David Hall	Unico Marine – contractor rep
Nigel Grist	Unico Marine