

NMBAQC Committee Teleconference Meeting Minutes
Final – Minus Finances
13th April 2010

Present:

Tim Mackie (TM)	NIEA	(Chair)
Myles O'Reilly (MOR)	SEPA	(Invert/PSA Contract Manager)
Prue Addison (PA)	EA/JNCC	(Technical Secretary)
Carol Milner (CM)	APEM	(Contractors Representative)
Steve Coates (SC)	EA	(Fish Contract Manager)
Clare Scanlan (CS)	SEPA	(Macroalgae Contract Manager)
James Strong (JSt)	AFBI	(Epibiota Contract Manager)
Amanda Prior (AP)	EA	(Finance Manager)
Lucie Skates (LS)	EA/CCW	

Apologies:

Keith Cooper (KC)	CEFAS	
Mike Robertson (MR)	MSS	(Marine Science Scotland)
Joe Silke (JS)	MI	(Phytoplankton Contract Manager)
David Hall (DH)	Unicomarine	(Invert/PSA Contract Administrator)

1 General

1.1 BEQUALM

PA to add Tom Fisher (BEQUALM) to NMBAQC email list.

☆ **ACTION:** PA to re-circulate NMBAQC email list with Tom Fisher included in cc list.

1.2 Annual Reports

Carried over from last meeting:

☆ **ACTION:** TM still to scan in one annual report (out of Yrs 1-10) and send to the committee for approval (of text and image quality).

MOR and PA are working on writing the Annual Reports 13 – 16. The aim is that Annual Reports 14-16 will be more brief than previous Annual Reports. Unicomarine have now submitted their contractor reports for Yrs 13-15, with Yr 16 expected at on 30th June.

☆ **ACTION:** MOR and PA to write Annual Reports 13-15 and have finalised by July.

1.3 NMBAQC's compliance with CEN 230 (BS 16101) – Interlaboratory Comparison Studies for Ecological Assessment

See: CEN 230 Interlab Comparison.doc

We discussed whether all of our component administrators (e.g. Unicomarine for Benthic Invs) should be accredited in running inter-laboratory comparison: CEN/TC

230/WG 2/TG 6: N 59 (*Working document*). Title: Water Quality – Guidance standard on the design and analysis of interlaboratory comparison studies for ecological assessment.

We would not be getting our contract administrators to become UKAS accredited in this standard. The NMBAQC and its contractors should however state that we comply with the CEN 230 (BS 16101) standard (once it is published).

- ☆ **ACTION:** PA to send committee CEN 230 (BS 16101) once it has been published (likely to be 6 months -1 year) and a proposal of the text that we will use in our communications about complying with the CEN standard (Info notes, contracts, website etc..).

1.4 QA in marine monitoring

PA is continuing work with HBDSEG on assessing the current level of QA in their biological elements, through sending out a QA spreadsheet. PA would also like the NMBAQC committee to fill this out.

- ☆ **ACTION:** PA to send out spreadsheet to NMBAQC committee to fill out by May 28.

PA has written a document which outlines the some generic QA text which Agencies could use for contracted marine work (see: *NMBAQC Best Practice for QA in contracts_Draft Feb2010*). ALL are asked to read this and provide comments to PA.

- ☆ **ACTION:** PA to send QA text in contracts to ALL for comments by 30 April.

1.5 NMBAQC Website

PA suggested all meeting documents be held on the NMBAQC forum, where committee members will be given a login and password to access. Prior to the meeting all documents will still be emailed to the committee, so the forum will more be a historic record of all meeting documents.

- ☆ **ACTION:** PA to arrange passwords for committee to access the NMBAQC forum, and put meeting documents from 2008 onwards onto the forum.
- ☆ **ACTION:** PA to create a standard front page for all meeting documents to explain what the committee need to do with the documents (e.g. give comments, for information only etc..).
- ☆ **ACTION:** ALL committee to send PA European News items (anything considered of interest to our participants) for the website (European news now on the home page).

1.6 CSEMP

Tim forwarded Rob Fryer's paper on the re-design of the CSEMP monitoring program to the benthic invertebrate NMBAQC committee members on 8 April, 2010. Rob's re-design is based on analysis of contaminant from Scotland and not biological data. This paper has sparked a lot of discussion by the biologists on the future of the CSEMP monitoring programme.

LS concerned that the long-term CSEMP dataset will not continue beyond the re-design (de-clustering of samples). LS also suggested that maybe JNCC should consider taking ownership of the CSEMP monitoring programme through their new monitoring programme for the MSFD.

TM mentioned that Ali Miles had investigated the potential of the redirecting of funds from DEFRA to data analysis (with a view to suspending monitoring for a year), but she couldn't follow the money. ALL think that resource (other than that which is allocated to CMAs for CSEMP monitoring) should come from Defra to fund a few PhD students/consultants to conduct a UK level (big picture) analysis of all of biological and contaminant data and determine what temporal patterns have come out after 10 years. The CSEMP program could then be reviewed and the key aims of the CSEMP monitoring programme re-defined (including potential methodological changes such as dropping sites or replicates).

☆ **ACTION:** TM to communicate (to HBDSEG and CSEG) the NMBAQC's view of Defra funding a few PhD students/consultants to analyse all of the biological and contaminant data and determine what temporal patterns have come out after 10 years.

☆ **ACTION:** TM also needs to push to get representation on the CSEG group

1.7 HBDSEG Update

See: NMBAQC Progress Report Apr 2010.doc

TM is due to deliver the NMBAQC progress report (Yr 16 summary and forward look to Yr 17) to the HBDSEG group on 14 April.

1.8 WoRMS

See email: RE WoRMS UK species

PA alerted the committee to work being done by PESI (Pan-European Species directories Infrastructure - <http://www.eu-nomen.eu/pesi/>). PESI aims to standardise and harmonise taxonomic information systems across Europe and across the marine and terrestrial environments. Obviously WoRMS is the standard being used for the marine community, but part of the work is to define national lists and to tag the taxonomic information with additional information (protected status, biological traits etc).

SC asked whether PESI were aware of the work done by WISER and particularly their Taxa Entry Tool (<http://www.wiser.eu/results/>), which may overlap with PESI's freshwater work.

☆ **ACTION:** PA to alert PESI about the WISER work.

2 Macroalgae

2.1 Rockyshore and Opportunistic Macroalgae Ring Tests

The Rockyshore Macroalgae RT (RM-RT04) and Opp MA RT (% cover: OMC-RT01, and biomass: OMB-RT01) were advertised on the website and in an email sent out on 10/03/10. Close of applications was 30/04/10. Uptake was as follows:

RM-RT04: 6 participants (a minimum of 15 were expected – therefore EA will make a loss on this RT).

OMC-RT01: 10 participants (a minimum of 10 were expected).

OMB-RT01: 9 participants (a minimum of 10 were expected).

Samples for all RTs will be distributed on 26/04/2010.

CM's (APEM) application for the RM-RT04 was not taken into account. AP will rectify this!

Issues with OMB-RT01 (j-cloth) have been raised by an EA staff member - j-cloths are not a realistic representation of measuring the biomass of Opp MA. The OMB-RT01 will go ahead this year, but a questionnaire should go out with the test to gather participants feedback on the test and whether they can think of another test which would be more realistic. CS will have to assess participant feedback and if required, develop a new RT/workshop which could address testing biomass methodology.

☆ **ACTION:** CS to make sure a questionnaire goes out with at the OMB-RT01 to assess what participants think of the j-cloth test. CS will have to assess participant feedback and if required, develop a new RT/workshop which could address testing biomass methodology.

2.2 Taxonomic Literature

Carried over from last meeting: CS to investigate compiling a list of macroalgae taxonomic literature which can be listed on the NMBAQC website. This work could be contracted out. This idea came up in response to the Benthic Invertebrate Taxonomic Literature Database.

☆ **ACTION:** CS to investigate compiling a list of macroalgae taxonomic literature which can be listed on the NMBAQC website.

3 Benthic Invertebrates

3.1 Benthic Invertebrate, PSA and Fish Contractors Update

See: MtgRpt_13_04_2010.pdf

Yr 15 OS38-40 have been reported in an interim report on the website.

All Yr 16 modules are running to schedule with the following reported on the website: RT37, RT38, PS34, PS35, Fish RRT01, and MB17. Analysis is underway for LR14 and OS41-43.

Annual Reports: Yr 13 final draft given to MOR (12/01). Yr 14 slimmed down draft given to MOR (19/02) and revised draft re-submitted 15/03. Yr 15 slimmed down draft given to MOR (12/03). Yr 16 draft is due to MOR on 30/06.

Statements of Performance for Yr 14 and 15 have been given to MOR.

The current four year contract with Unicmarine has come to an end (March 2010).

3.2 PRP

Myles is still working on Unicomarine's Processing Requirements Protocol. Myles aims to finish editing this by 30 April and will send it to LS for final formatting and read through.

☆ **ACTION:** MOR to send completed PRP to LS for final formatting by 30 April.

3.3 Taxonomic Literature Database

DH emailed the database to participants on 15/12/09. ALL were interested whether it is possible to get a quote from Unicomarine for ongoing updates.

☆ **ACTION:** MOR to request a quote from DH for the ongoing update of the taxonomic literature database (once the new contract has commenced in May).

3.4 Sample flagging in MERMAN

MOR sent 2000 data to MC to trial sample flagging (benthic data) in the MERMAN database. PS data is going to be more difficult as there are multiple flags for a sample.

☆ **ACTION:** MOR to continue work with MC in the flagging of the 2000 data.

4 PSA

4.1 NMBAQC Best Practice Guidance

Claire Mason (Cefas) is behind on work on the PSA best practice guidance. A new timeline has been agreed by the PSA sub-group and a final version of the guidance is due on 24/09/2010.

There has still been disagreement about whether the PSA sample should be taken from the biology vs separate grab. The experiments done by NIEA and Cefas support the decision to collect PSA from a separate grab. We know that Cefas want to continue collecting their PSA samples from the biology grab and this is why they are reluctant to support collecting PSA from a separate grab (along with the lack of experimental evidence from all sediment types). ALL agreed that as this is best practice we can just say people 'should' collect PSA from a separate grab - we are merely recommending a best practice protocol.

☆ **ACTION:** PA to communicate to Claire Mason the NMBAQC's stance on PSA sample collection from biology vs separate grab.

5 Epibiota

5.1 Review of current video/stills analysis methods

PA has collated the majority of questionnaires now and will begin to write a review of the current state of video/stills analysis techniques in the UK and will provide QA recommendations (due end of April).

Henk Van Rein (Ulster Uni) and Chris Richardson (Bangor – LS has contact details) were mentioned as two additional people who should be sent the questionnaire.

TM said that Annika Clements has looked at in-house QC, and she may be a good person to consider writing some standards. AFBI could also contribute to this.

☆ **ACTION:** PA send questionnaire to Henk Van Rein and Chris Richardson.

☆ **ACTION:** PA to look into Annika Clements work on in-house QC.

5.2 Trial Ring Test

Rohan Holt wrote to PA expressing his disappointment in the Epibiota trial (he believes it is following the model of the benthic invert component too much).

JSt and TM still plan on running a trial RT in Autumn. This will be using video clips collected by TM and will have no charge for participants.

JSt has clarified that the Trial Epibiota RT website content is owned by Envision. But Envision have offered to bundle up the website contents and give it to AFBI. JSt is inclined to wait to deal with the website contents until it is decided what data will be requested from the new RT in Autumn. PA also stressed it may be easier just to start again with our Cefas webmaster (David Lees), as the code used by Envision may be different to that used on the Cefas website.

☆ **ACTION:** JSt and TM to meet and discuss running the trial RT in Autumn.

6 Yr 17 Information Note

Fish – need to mention that a workshop (which will be on id and methodology) is planned for April 2011, and expressions of interest will be collected by AP.

Epibiota – ongoing trial during Autumn 2010, current pilot participants will be contacted only.

PSA – details of this will have to be sorted ASAP with the contractors in order to include details in the information note

Benthic Invertebrate workshop – details of this will have to be sorted ASAP with the contractors in order to include details in the information note. Consultants' rep raised earlier in meeting that sabellids is a particular area requested.

7 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be a short teleconference on 29 June, 2010. A full face to face meeting will be held in September (date TBC).