

NE ATLANTIC MARINE BIOLOGICAL AQC SCHEME COMMITTEE MEETING
Meeting Agenda – 24th of November 2021 10.00-12.30

<https://zoom.us/j/97703547810?pwd=UUozVDA5ZHpBM1B2QlY3Ym42Tltdz09>

Meeting ID: 977 0354 7810

Passcode: 188563

Confirmed Attendees: David Johns (DJ, MBA, Chair), Graham Phillips (GP, Finance Manager, Environment Agency), Claire Mason (CM, CEFAS, PSA Technical Manager), Jim Ellis (JE, CEFAS, Fish Technical Manager), Myles O'Reilly (MoR, SEPA, Invertebrates Technical Manager), Claire Taylor (CT, MBA, Technical Secretary), David Hall (DH, Benthic Invertebrates, APEM Ltd), Søren Pears (SP, APEM, Senior Marine Taxonomist), Joey O'Connor (JOC, Epibiota Technical Manager, JNCC), Ross Griffin (RG, Ocean Ecology, Contractors rep), Matthew Green (MG, NRW, Marine Monitoring Ecologist) and Debbie Walsh (DW, Senior Scientist, APEM).

Invited attendee: Aaron Buck (AB, IT, Cefas) and Yessica Griffiths (YG, JNCC) to attend website demo

Apologies: Paul McIlwaine and Claire Young

1. Last Meetings Actions (summarised below on the agenda)		ALL
2. New Website Demonstration		Cefas/CT/CM
3. Minutes of the last meeting		CT
Approval of August meeting minutes		DJ/CM
4. Epibiota update/JNCC Microsoft teams test		JOC
5. Phytoplankton update		RS
6. Priorities to HBDSEG		DJ
7. PSA Update		CM/SP
8. Benthic Invertebrates update		DH/MoR
9. Macroalgae		CY
10. Fish update		JE/DH
11. Zooplankton update		DJ/CT
12. AOB – website update		ALL
13. Finance update* Confidential		GP

1. Actions Arising from Previous Meeting (ALL)

Carried Forward:

CM to make document outputs from PSA workshops available (originally circulated to workshop participants). CM to put these together and send to CO for website. Guide for Asbestos will be made available for end of May as part of the updated NMBAQC PSA guidance (see above) **Action: CM – include workshop notes and Guide for Asbestos in NMBAQC PSA guidance as part of update for completion by the end of May. Updated PSA guidance will be circulated to committee for comment before being finalised and being made available on the website.** Update: CM currently updating general text, with MG, JOC, MoR, TM and GP involved in reviewing. Further action: CM to set up meeting with what she is planning.

RG advised the committee of the merits of using Microsoft team to track actions, alerts maybe participant's area etc. RG is now looking to this. After discussions around setting up private areas, access rights, SharePoint etc. it was agreed that this could be valuable to us once up and running. **Action: JOC to look into setting up a test site Completed - JOC invited all those interested to be sent info and will provide demo at the meeting.**

Epibiota:

Big Picture Epibiota QA Framework live on NMBAQC website and being adopted by JNCC for imagery analysis contracts run this FY. JNCC have bid for funds from Defra to progress epibiota QAF work this FY (e.g. to further develop the EIP), decision expected by Autumn.

Action: JOC to look at adding results/reports onto the website. JOC has started to put this together.

JOC advised of sample storage problems, as many places aren't interested in taking them. NRW are reviewing the situation. **Action: PB to talk to MG to look at protocols/contracts. There is a very good reason to keep everything and perhaps a financial incentive to museums is a possibility.**

In addition, JE advised must also consider the area where the survey has occurred – do we need everything kept from the same area? JOC advised JNCC send samples to Scottish and Welsh museums but there is nothing similar for samples from English waters.

Further action: MG/RG to arrange separate meeting, and with wider community to discuss, possibly inviting museum collection managers. MG to chat with DJ to see how this can be progressed.

Action: CM to raise this within Cefas to see if this can be looked at. Could also work together with NRW.

HBDSEG:

DJ attended the last HBDSEG in July where he provided an update on NMBAQC activities. One of the actions from this was to discuss at the next NMBAQC committee meeting, a call for R&D proposal which would then be taken to their next meeting in October 2021.

Action: JOC to contact Karen Webb to see if eDNA aspect is applicable. Update - funding wasn't successful so this has been paused for now.

PSA:

Unusualness Statistic paper hoping to be finally accepted. **Action: CM to send link to group- paper has been published.**

JOC asked about freezing samples re Particle Size – some organisations have said that samples should now be stored in the refrigerator. CM advised it was agreed freezing does change particle size but if freezers have been used previously then this should remain. **Action: CM to raise this with NOC. Further action: JOC to confirm that this is included within the guidance.**

Fish:

SDS advised that always looking for specimens from trawls, especially rarer species – needs at least 15 of similar size and condition – **Action: DJ to ask MBA. Update: DJ has asked and although rarer species are found, the quantity needed has not been achievable.** JE has now provided fish specimens to DW .

Benthic Invertebrates:

There was also an action for Tim in previous meeting to compile a ‘dummies guide for invertebrates’. **Action: CT to follow up with TM - TM emailed but no reply as yet.**

AOB:

Website: (CM/CT) We are hoping for a demo of the website to be available imminently with CT being able to populate in due course once Cefas are ready to go. **Action: All component managers to send through their updated website content asap. CM to set up committee meeting in September once some content has been received for demo (and after CT has had some training). CT also needs account setting up. Any areas which haven't been looked over may get transferred to the new website but it is preferable that reviewed areas are carried across. Test website ready – CT has received training and to be demonstrated by Cefas IT at our meeting.**

RG is to send through summary of proposed development requirements (API for IQI workbooks; Teams link for committee to use). Noted any developments new to original request will need costing and agreed with Cefas Principal Investigator before confirming go ahead. Costs for hosting may be increased for example if teams link added, which may be disproportionate to the added functionality given.

Tim (Cefas) is to investigate whether old website can be archived so content is kept and let us know how we will be able to access this.

RG discussed the addition of the most up to date IQI taxon list to the NMBAQC website. This could be added onto the new website once up and running. GP OK with this and would need reviewing once a year. **Action: CT/CM to chat to developers, making sure previous version can be archived. Cefas to investigate whether this can be sent to the National Archives.**

Actions from Contractor Questions:

The second contractor question was regarding the level of participation of each laboratory for the Invertebrates component - using the NMBAQC as a rubber stamp when they have only participated in the ring test module. Laboratories must participate in the OS audit modules in order to state that they have participated in the NMBAQC scheme. **Action: RG/CT/MoR to compile a response via and a clear statement to be added to next year's application form (GP) – Completed**

Finance:

A decision upon the renewal of the macroalgae contract/rockyshore contract is imminent (deadline was second week in August to send in requests) **Action: GP/CY to make decision – see Finance section.**

2. Website Demonstration

CT presented attendees with a quick demonstration of the new website. Much of the content still needs adding and the aim is to move across to the new website by the end of January 2022. The website will have links to Twitter and use the same http address as previous. The old website is hoped to be housed within the National Archives, something that IT at Cefas are looking into.

Action: Please could all send your thoughts to CT with any updated content asap, also what you think it should look like, could add join the scheme in bold on the home page, is it too wordy?, could the news be moved to a tab down the side etc. along with any useable images asap. It also needs linking to HBDSEG.

Action: CM to ask Cefas if we could get any analytical stats i.e. what pages are the most popular?

3. Approval of April Meeting Minutes (DJ/CT) – approved

4. Epibiota update (JOC)

- Epibiota eQA exercises summary
 - I have begun collating summary information about epibiota imagery eQA exercises JNCC have run since 2014
 - Once this is completed I suggest adding a page to the NMBAQC website under the Epibiota section with table and links to reports
- Big Picture funding FY21/22
 - JNCC have secured funding from Defra to progress aspects of the Big Picture action plan.
 - The funding this year will be used to;
 1. continue the JNCC coordination of the Big Picture group,
 2. hold workshops in the new year to further develop the EIP,
 3. hold a workshop in January to develop/agree a standard for sharing and archiving marine image annotations.
 - This will result in updates to products already hosted on the NMBAQC website.
 - There will likely be some updates to the [Benthic Imagery Action Plan tracker](#).
 - Most significant updates expected this financial year will be to the EIP, these updates will consist of new taxa added to the current list of ~300 taxa. The EIP spreadsheet on the NMBAQC website will need to be replaced with the new version and the list of taxa referenced by the QAF tool will also need to be updated. We don't plan on reformatting the EIP, we will just be adding to its contents.
- JNCC eDNA update
 - There is no progress this year on the eDNA work as we secured no additional funding and we are not intending at this point to submit a proposal to HBDSEG.

JOC has set up a Microsoft teams test account with JNCC for the committee to use as a tool for communication within the group. We could use this as a sharepoint facility, adding meeting notes etc. There is the option to have two channels, one private i.e. could contain financial info and another visible to all. We need to be aware, however, of any secure/commercially sensitive content. **Action: Next meeting to be on Microsoft teams (CT) and RG to liaise with JOC re ideas.**

5. Phytoplankton update (RS)

The programme is running to schedule and participants are sending their results this week. The final date for this is the 30th November. The Oceanteacher deadline is on the same date.

Next is crunching numbers and writing the report for the exercise. Hopefully, for the end of December.

The workshop has not been scheduled yet as we are debating about a presential one rather than online. Our workshop is quite practical, and it makes sense for it to be presential but the situation regarding COVID keeps us from making a decision. It is likely to be scheduled for February.

We have 125 participants this year spread across 67 laboratories. The highest participation yet for and IPI exercise.

6. **Priorities to HBDSEG (DJ) – next meeting March 2022.** DJ highlighted the DEFRA NCEA bid.

7. **PSA update (CM/SP)**

PARTICLE SIZE ANALYSIS COMPONENT PROGRESS REPORT

2021-22, Year 28

7.1 Subscriptions

LabCode	PS80/81	PS82/83	PS-OS22/23/24
PSA_2701	1	1	1
PSA_2702	1	1	1
PSA_2703	1	1	1
PSA_2704	1	1	1
PSA_2705	1	1	1
PSA_2706	1	1	1
PSA_2707	1	1	1
PSA_2708	1	1	1
PSA_2709	1	1	-
PSA_2710	1	1	-
PSA_2711	1	1	-
PSA_2712	1	1	-
PSA_2713	1	1	-
PSA_2714	1	1	-
PSA_2715	1	1	-
PSA_2716	-	-	1
PSA_2717	-	-	1

PSA_2718	1*	1*	1*
PSA_2719	-	-	1*
PSA_2720	-	-	1*
PSA_2721	-	-	1*
PSA_2722	-	-	1*
PSA_2723	-	-	1*
PSA_2724	-	-	1*
PSA_2725	-	-	1*
PSA_2726	-	-	1*
PSA_2727	-	-	1*
PSA_2728	-	-	1*
Total			
	16 * (-1)	16(-1)	21(+8)
(change from last year)	*This is now 18		

*TBC

7.2 2021-2022, Year 28 Operations

All circulations of PS exercises will be distributed in line with the 2021-2022 timetable (available below). Returns and results are summarised in the table below.

Exercise	Status	Returns / Comments
PS81	<p>Samples distributed: 08/10/2021</p> <p>Sample deadline: 03/12/2021</p> <p>Interim reports issued: 10/12/2021</p> <p>Final reports issued: 24/12/2021</p> <p>Exercise in progress</p>	<p>Fines Test</p> <p>1 out of 16 returned results</p>
PS82	<p>Samples distributed: 08/10/2021</p> <p>Sample deadline: 03/12/2021</p> <p>Interim reports issued: 10/12/2021</p> <p>Final reports issued: 24/12/2021</p> <p>Exercise in progress</p>	<p>Diamicton Test</p> <p>1 out of 16 returned results</p>
PS83	<p>Samples distributed: 19/11/2021</p> <p>Sample deadline: 14/01/2022</p> <p>Interim reports issued: 28/01/2022</p> <p>Final reports issued: 25/02/2022</p> <p>Exercise in progress</p>	<p>Mud/sand Test</p>
PS84	<p>Samples distributed: 19/11/2021</p> <p>Sample deadline: 14/01/2022</p> <p>Interim reports issued: 28/01/2022</p> <p>Final reports issued: 25/02/2022</p> <p>Exercise in progress</p>	<p>Gravel Test</p>
PS-OS22-24	<p>Samples request sent: 08/10/2021</p>	

<p><u>Batch 1</u></p> <p>Data submission deadline: 05/11/2021</p> <p>Sample submission deadline: 10/12/2021</p> <p>Reports Issued: 25/03/2022</p> <p>Exercise in progress</p> <p><u>Batch 2</u></p> <p>Data submission deadline: 25/03/2022</p> <p>Sample submission deadline: 15/04/2022</p> <p>Reports issued: 01/07/2022</p> <p>Exercise not yet started</p>	<p>3 out of 21 data sets submitted</p> <p>9 out of 63 samples selected</p> <p>0 out of 63 samples received</p> <p>0 out of 21 reports sent</p>
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7.3 Issues arising

I am currently looking after the PS component whilst Lydia McIntyre-Brown is on maternity leave.

As with year 27, two submission/reporting deadlines (“Batches”) for the PS-OS component have been provided in Year 28 to allow participants to send data later in the Scheme year if needed.



NMBAQC

NE Atlantic Marine Biological Analytical Quality Control Scheme

Particle Size Component 2021-2022 Timetable (Scheme Year 28)

Module / Exercise	Event	Date
PS80 & PS81	Samples distributed	08/10/2021
	Results deadline	03/12/2021

	Interim reporting deadline	10/12/2021
	Final report deadline	24/12/2021
PS82 & PS83	Samples distributed	19/11/2021
	Results deadline	14/01/2022
	Interim reporting deadline	28/01/2022
	Final report deadline	25/02/2022
PS-OS22–24	Request for sample data distributed	08/10/2021
Batch 1	Data submission deadline for sample selection	05/11/2021
	Selected samples submission deadline	10/12/2021
	Interim report final deadline (for samples received before 10 December 2021)	25/03/2022
Batch 2	Data submission deadline for sample selection	25/03/2022
	Selected samples submission deadline	15/04/2022
	Interim report final deadline	01/07/2022
Annual Report	Annual report deadline	29/07/2022
Workshop		TBC

After the PSA update, Blue Carbon measurements were discussed. Could this be incorporated into the PSA component? **Action: CM to look into – may already be a scheme up and running, could we link to this on our website?**

8. Benthic Invertebrate update (DH/MOR)

2021-22, Year 28

8.1 Subscriptions

LabCode	RT61/62	LR26	OS77/78/79
BI_2801	1	1	1
BI_2802	1	1	1
BI_2803	1	1	1
BI_2804	1	-	1
BI_2805	1	-	1
BI_2806	1	1	-
BI_2807	1	1	-
BI_2808	1	-	1
BI_2809	1	1	-
BI_2810	1	-	1
BI_2811	1	-	1
BI_2812	1	-	1
BI_2813	1	-	-
BI_2814	1	-	-
BI_2815	1	-	-
BI_2816	1	-	-
BI_2817	1	-	-
BI_2818	1	-	-
BI_2819	1	-	-
BI_2820	1	-	-
BI_2821	1	-	-
BI_2822	1	-	-
BI_2825	-	-	1

BI_2826	-	-	1
BI_2827	-	-	1
BI_2828	-	-	1
BI_2829	-	-	1
BI_2830	-	-	1
BI_2831	-	-	1
BI_2832	-	-	1
BI_2833	-	-	1
BI_2834	-	-	1
BI_2835	-	-	1
BI_2836	-	-	1
BI_2837	-	-	1
BI_2838	-	-	1
BI_2839	-	-	1
BI_2840	-	-	1
BI_2841	-	1	1
BI_2842	-	-	1
BI_2843	-	-	1
BI_2844	-	-	1
BI_2845	-	-	1
BI_2846	-	-	1
BI_2847	-	-	1
BI_2848	-	-	1
BI_2849	-	-	1
° (change from 2021/22)	22 (-)	this is now 23 – up one from update	7 (+1)
			34 (+6)

8.2 2021-2022, Year 28 Operations

Benthic Invertebrate exercises are being distributed in line with the 2021-2022 timetable (available below). Returns, results and exercise status details are summarised in the table below.

Exercise	Status	Returns / Comments
RT61	Specimens distributed 08/10/21; Submission deadline 03/12/21; Interim reports deadline 10/12/21; Ring Test Bulletin deadline 24/12/21; Exercise in progress	General Ring Test; No results received to date
RT62	Specimens distributed 19/11/21; Submission deadline 14/01/22; Interim reports deadline 28/01/22; Ring test Bulletin deadline 25/02/22; Exercise in progress	Targeted Ring Test – Gastropoda No results received to date
LR26	Request for specimens distributed 08/10/21; Submission deadline 28/01/22; Interim reports issued 18/03/22; LR Module Summary Report issued 25/03/22; Exercise in progress	No sets of specimens received to date
OS77- 79	Sample data requested 08/10/21; Data submission deadline Batch 1 05/11/21; Sample submission deadline Batch 1 10/12/21; Interim report final deadline Batch 1 25/03/22; Data submission deadline Batch 2 25/03/22; Sample submission deadline Batch 2 15/04/22; Interim report final deadline Batch 2 01/07/22;	5 out of 24 datasets received; 6 out of 15 requested samples received, including 3 samples for external audit; no samples complete/reported to date

OS Module Summary Report deadline 15/07/22;

Exercises in progress

8.3 2020-2021, Year 27 Operations (outgoing scheme year)

Statement of Performance documents issued to all participants except two awaiting external Own Sample audit results. Annual and Own Sample Summary reports in advanced draft version for completion as soon as the external OS audit data are available.

8.4 Issues arising

Sample Distribution Issues

Some participants experienced delays to the delivery of their ring test specimens, due to new VAT/EORI and custom controls. All RT61 specimens have now been received and deadline extensions provided where appropriate.

Taxonomic Discrimination Protocol (TDP) Development

TDP development draft version (and TDP spreadsheet) has been circulated to the scheme participants and appropriate Committee members for comment (16/11/21). We hope to add a finalised Version 1 to the scheme website in January 2022, and continue the development according to the following milestones:

- first draft shared with NMBAQC Scheme participants and initial comments requested before 2021 year end
Action: DH asked if anyone else who like to have it then please let him know
- publication of first draft TDP (overview, family level, one family to species level) on Scheme website;
- workshop to agree family level TDP;
- completion of provisional TDP to species level for all groups;
- circulation of each provisional species level TDP for participant feedback;
- workshops or feedback to resolve species level TDP for each group;
- publication of full TDP (overview and all taxa) on Scheme website.

Ring Test Bulletins going forwards (RT61 onwards) will include notes regarding the TDP, where relevant.

DH advised new starters may find it easier (and cost effective) to join in with other beginners for any training. This may also fit in with APEM in house training and in turn, could open up to others such as those working at Ocean Ecology. **Action: CM to discuss with DH to see if live guidance could be used on the PSA component.**

8.5 Outstanding issues

No items to report for this meeting.



NMBAQC

NE Atlantic Marine Biological Analytical Quality Control Scheme

Invertebrate Component 2021-2022 Timetable (Scheme Year 28)

Module / Exercise	Event	Date
RT61 - General	Samples distributed	08/10/21
	Results deadline	03/12/21
	Interim reporting deadline	10/12/21
	Final report deadline	24/12/21
RT62 - Targeted	Samples distributed	19/11/21
	Results deadline	14/01/22
	Interim reporting deadline	28/01/22
	Final report deadline	25/02/22
LR26	Protocol and request for specimens distributed	08/10/21
	Specimen submission deadline	28/01/22
	Interim reports deadline	18/03/22
	LR summary report deadline	25/03/22
OS77-79	Request for sample data distributed	08/10/21

Batch 1	Data submission deadline for sample selection	05/11/21
	Selected samples submission deadline	10/12/21
	Interim report final deadline (for samples received before 22 October 2021)	25/03/22
Batch 2	Data submission deadline for sample selection	25/03/22
	Selected samples submission deadline	15/04/22
	Interim report final deadline	01/07/22
	OS summary report deadline	15/07/22
Annual Report	Annual report deadline	29/07/22
Workshop – experts	Venue TBC	TBC
Workshop – beginners	TBC – subject to demand	TBC

9. Macroalgae update (CY) – no update provided. APEM will be taking on the Opportunistic Macroalgae from Wells Marine.

10. Fish update (JE/DW)

The reports for the 2020/2021 year were all completed earlier this year and are available online (Fish RT, Fish RRT and Annual report).

Specimens of various fish species for the upcoming Ring Test for the current year have been sourced from selected trawl surveys that have recently been undertaken.

Stephen Duncombe-Smith, who was doing the various fish reports etc., has now left APEM. David welcomed Debbie Walsh from APEM who provided us with the fish reports.

FISH COMPONENT PROGRESS REPORT

2021-22, Year 28

10.1 Subscriptions

LabCode	F-RT15	F-RRT13
F_2801	1	-
F_2802	1	-
F_2803	1	-
F_2804	1	1
F_2805	1	1
F_2806	1	-
F_2807	1	-
F_2809	1	1
F_2810	-	1
F_2811	-	1
F_2812	-	1
F_2813	-	1
F_2814	-	1
F_2816	-	1
F_2817	-	1
F_2818	-	1
Total (change from last year)	8 (0)	11 (+2)

10.2 2021-2022, Year 28 Operations

2021-2022 timetable for fish exercises created, as summarised in the table below.

Exercise	Status	Returns / Comments
F-RT15	Specimens and images to be distributed 22/11/21; Results deadline 26/01/22; Interim reports due 18/02/22; Final report due 11/03/22 Exercise in preparation	Specimens sent
F-RRT13	Protocol and request for specimens to be distributed 08/10/21; Specimen submission deadline 03/12/21; Final report due 21/01/22 Exercise in preparation	Request for specimens sent 1 out of 11 submitted

10.3 Issues arising

N/A

10.4 Taxonomic Workshop

Currently no taxonomic workshop is planned for fish. A targeted workshop can be developed if sufficient interest is shown.

10.5 Outstanding Issues

N/A

11. Zooplankton Update (DJ/CT)

An online results workshop was held at the end of September, this was very successful. We organised taxonomic training sessions for the participants: Introduction to copepod nauplii identification (Dave Conway, Marine Biological Association), Paracalanidae: characteristics and phylogenetic relationships, Biological and ecological information; morphological and molecular taxonomy (Astrid Cornils, Alfred Wegener Institute) and Introduction to decapod larvae identification (Antonina dos Santos, Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera).

The next ring test will be sent out Autumn 2022 and we hope to return to a face to face meeting wash up meeting early in 2023.

12. AOB

From RG : It was suggested that a box for key contact email address was added to the application form a few years ago but this item may have dropped off the committee meeting agenda. GP advised that this has already been implemented. **Action: GP to add VAT/EORI numbers to next application form.**

GP discussed whether we should focus on particular avenues in terms of having a twitter account/mailchimp/website/teams and is there a need for them all/do they duplicate roles? DJ advised these all serve different purposes. Could we put mailchimp into a teams channel and also have a feedback channel for participants? Teams itself could take over emails/mailchimp in time and twitter is to feature on the home page of our new website.

DW asked if anyone is collecting fish samples, please keep her in mind.

RG discussed contractor questions, which he had received. Participants in due course will be given access to a new teams channel and mailchimp/website/twitter is currently being used to receive NMBAQC updates.

An updated UKTAG IQI workbook for use in fish farm industry is almost available. It is hoped to be signed off in early December after an advisory group water framework meeting. **Action: GP to issue once available.** MoR advised there will still be limitations. **Action: MoR to consult with RG/GP.**

One point raised last year concerned Solenogastres ID guidance. This has now been expanded in TDP. **Action: RG to update those who originally raised this.**

CM is attending a N Sea meeting in mid-December, this will either be online or face-to-face. CM asked if there were Benthic Ecologists available to present. JNCC will be in attendance – could use the NMBAQC flyer which CT has updated on website.

DW has received a request from the EA to send pictures this year. DW is looking into the Oceanteacher platform <https://classroom.oceanteacher.org/> to see if this is appropriate. **Action: DW to contact RS and Mike Fraser from EA.**

MoR discussed a wish to develop a standardised species list to go onto the website. It would be useful to have and update it yearly in conjunction with WoRMS. MG advised WoRMS can only sort out taxa taxonomically – he advised flexibility would be beneficial.

DONM : tba – likely Feb/March 2022

