

Stanton Banks Site of Community Importance (SCI) Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) MAIA¹ fisheries management workshop minutes

20 October 2011- Europa Building, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow, G2 8LG

JNCC – 11th November 2011

A total of 19 people attended the workshop including nine fishermen and fisheries representatives, one of whom represented the North West Waters Regional Advisory Council (NWWRAC).

The meeting commenced with a brief description of the site and its [conservation objectives](#)², followed by a summary of fishing activity³ on the site based on 2006-2009 VMS data provided by Defra's MB106 contract and processed log book data from 2008-2009 provided by Marine Scotland.

The Scottish Fisherman's Federation (SFF) provided a brief overview of the joint scientific work which has taken place with JNCC to derive at the current Stanton Bank SCI boundaries. Marine Scotland then presented possible management options⁴ for discussion:

1. No additional management;
2. Total closure;
3. No fishing except pelagic;
4. No fishing except pelagic and static demersal; and
5. A zoned proposal.

There was a brief discussion around the possibility of dropping the warp length to depth ratio proposed within the [site selection assessment document](#) for protection around the feature from 3:1 (which was proposed by JNCC following guidance outlined within the [UK guidance on defining boundaries for marine SACs for annex I habitat sites](#)) to 2:1. The boundary of the

¹ Marine Protected Areas in the Atlantic Arc (MAIA) EU Interreg IVb project – www.maia-network.org

² Refer to JNCC Stanton Banks SCI summary description of the site and conservation objectives and full site selection document and Conservation objectives and advice on operations document provided before the meeting - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4534>.

³ Refer to JNCC's Stanton Banks SCI description of known fishing activity in the period 2006 to 2009 document provided before the meeting.

⁴ Refer to Marine Scotland and JNCC Stanton Banks SCI possible CFP management measures document provided before the meeting.

site will not be changed on this basis, but the issue will be looked into for potential use for site designation in future.

There were also discussions around the damage potting activity can cause to rocky reefs. There is evidence from a study by [Eno et al. \(2001\)](#) highlighting that low-medium intensity does not damage experimented rocky substrates, however this study was undertaken in a certain number inshore locations within Great Britain⁵ and habitat vulnerability within the region of Stanton Banks may be different.

ACTION: JNCC to examine whether it is possible to define the upper limits of medium intensity of potting on rocky reefs, after which the habitat may become affected by the activity.

It was recognised that the data JNCC currently hold was not very high resolution (0.05 degrees) meaning that precision of activity can be lost. More detailed information provided by Marine Scotland (UK VMS position [ping] data) and SFF plus some further information provided by fishers on the day led to more detailed discussion regarding possible management boundaries.

It was agreed that pelagic fisheries and semi-pelagic (Danish fisheries for pout that can occur in the area) would not touch the seabed within the site and thus would be compatible with the sites conservation objectives and therefore need not be managed.

It was agreed that management measures for demersal trawling may be needed to ensure that the parts of the site that are reef cannot be impacted. The precise boundary between the reef and the surrounding habitats does not follow the boundary of the site precisely. The three main areas where towed fisheries occur within the site, but over habitats other than reef were discussed (please note these coordinates are approximate, precise coordinates will be defined using data from fishermen - see below):

- **1** – An area in the south-west of the main (eastern) part of the site (ICES rectangle 41 E1), at approximately:
 - 56° 20' 42" N, 7° 43' 59" W
 - 56° 21' 54" N, 7° 46' 19" W
 - 56° 21' 13" N, 7° 47' 38" W
 - 56° 20' 6" N, 7° 44' 58" W
- **2** – A channel in the north of the eastern part of the site (ICES rectangle 41 E2) at 150m in depth. It was noted that a detached part of the reef habitat extends northwards from the current boundary in the area:
 - 56° 3' 39" N, 8° 10' 40"W
 - 56° 4' 30" N, 8° 7' 34"W
 - 56° 3' 6" N, 8° 4' 37"W
- **3** – Two small areas on the eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the western part of the site (ICES rectangle 41 E1).
 - 56° 20' 6" N, 8° 6' 32"W
 - 56° 18' 59" N, 8° 5' 18"W

⁵ Note – within this study it was noted that fairly intensive fishing within Welsh inshore waters did have an effect on certain habitats (ross coral).

- 56° 17' 23" N, 8° 9' 0" W
- 56° 18' 58" N, 8° 9' 0" W
- 56° 18' 58" N, 8° 7' 5" W

See annex 1 below for a map of the above points discussed.

In the third area, more detailed evidence for the exact area of reef has been acquired since the site boundary was set; this could be used to set a boundary for management measures. The other two areas lack such detailed evidence and it was suggested that the 150m depth contours could be investigated for use as possible management boundaries.

The fishermen in the room agreed to provide JNCC with Olex and Sodena data they hold to enable JNCC to better understand where the reef boundaries may lie to support the identification of possible management boundaries.

ACTION: Fishermen to provide JNCC with detailed activity data they hold by the end of the month.

ACTION: As soon as time permits, JNCC to process this data so to be able to overlay this with current information.

The possibility of site boundary modification was discussed and it was decided that if management boundaries were set that differed from the site boundary, then the possibility of modifying the site boundary would be considered. This would however carry significant risk due to re-opening the discussion to wider participants in consultation. Furthermore, it was decided that the consideration of whether a CFP management measure or a voluntary measure should be used was a debate for later consideration.

The main fishery occurring on the reef habitat is a pot fishery, undertaken by fishers from a range of ports. In the absence of such fishers, there could be no discussion of possible management measures.

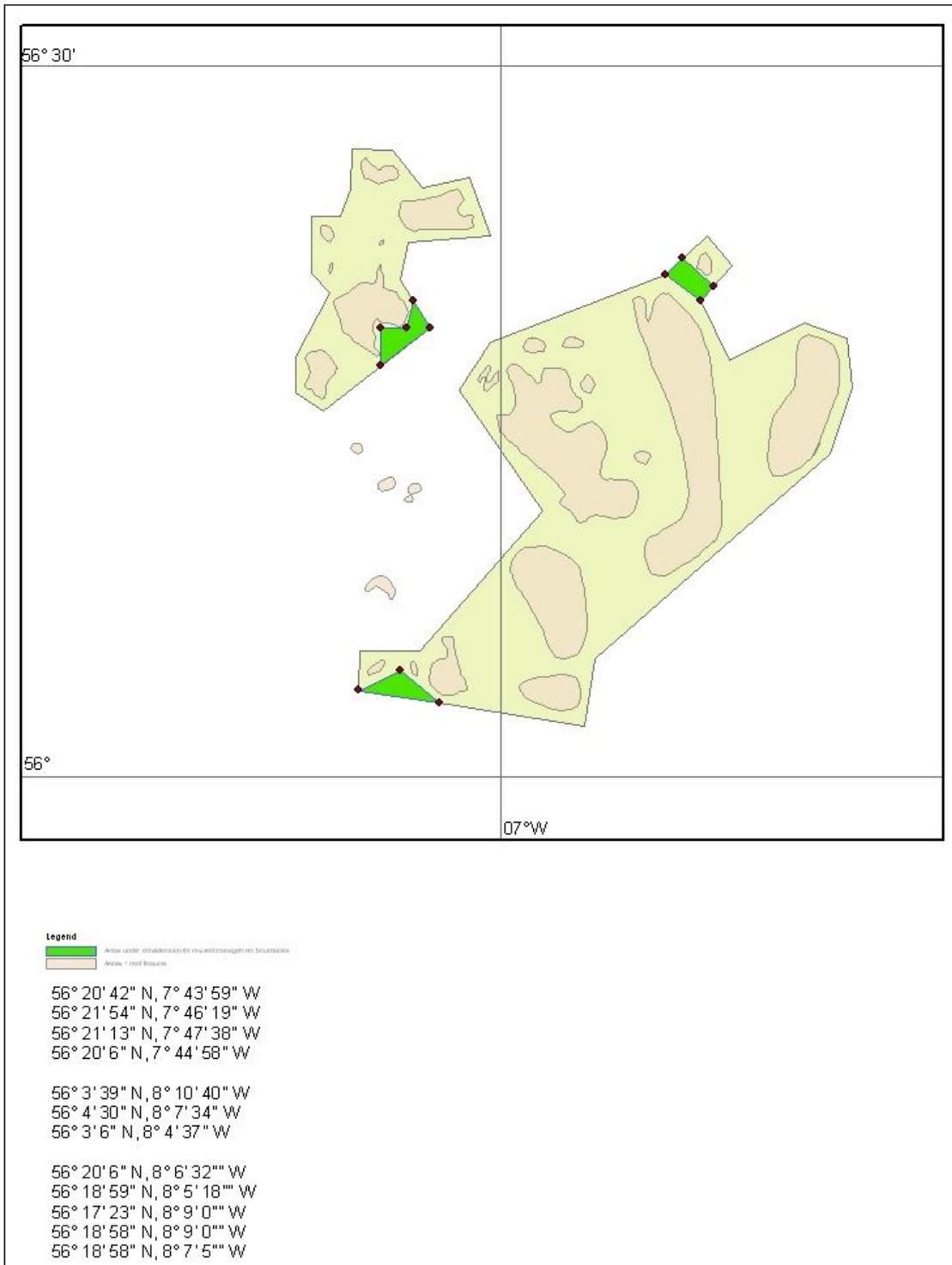
ACTION: Fishermen in the room to provide JNCC with Cornish, West coast and Irish potter contacts to allow such a discussion to occur.

All those present at the meeting agreed that the discussions were useful. An interactive mapping tool would have facilitated the discussion of the precise area of non-reef habitat.

The next steps would include investigation of new data provided by fishers; examination of evidence that might support an upper limit of potting activity and discussion of any management needs with potters. Once this has occurred, further discussions would occur with the industry. Should it be decided that a CFP management measure was appropriate, then this might take some time to request from the European process due to the high level of marine activities occurring in EU waters and the number of Natura 2000 sites being brought forward over the next year there may be slow progress.

Annex 1

Map of Stanton Banks with possible differential fisheries management boundaries discussed highlighted



Annex 2

Attendees

Amandine Eynaudi	Agence des aires marines protégées – MAIA
Billy Gatt	Fisherman
Cara Rawdon	Fisherman
Catherine Ross	JNCC
Charlotte Johnston	JNCC
David Mallon	Marine Scotland
Davy Hill	Fisherman
Iain McSween	Pelagic RAC
Jane Goodwin	Defra
John Ward	Irish Fish Producers' Organisation
Mark Tasker	JNCC
Michael McLeod	Marine Scotland
Kara Brydson	NWWRAC – RSPB
Kenny Coull	SFF
Sophie Elliott	JNCC
Ted Breslin	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation
Tom Blasdale	JNCC
Tommy Finn	Fisherman
Kevin Brady	Marine Scotland

Apologies

Alan McCulla	Anglo-North Irish Fish Producers Organisation
Barrie Deas	NFFO
Dick James	Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation
Duncan McInnis	Scottish Western Isles Fisheries Association
Francis Neat	Marine Scotland Science
John Hermes	Mallaig and Northwest Fishermen's Association
Paul Connolly	Marine Institute – Ireland
Peter Finney	Fisherman
Peter Wright	Marine Scotland Science
Stephen Lockwood	Marine Protected Areas Fishing Coalition
Walter Crozier	Department of Environment for Northern Ireland