

Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari

Third Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) meeting summary

9.00, 26 February 2014 at University of Auckland, Owen Glenn building

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting commenced with a mihi and karakia followed by introductions from project representatives attending their first meeting.

The meeting summary from the second meeting was approved as were the final amendments to the terms of reference (to be submitted to the Project Steering Group, the vision and the protocols documents.

The vision and protocols document are no longer drafts and become working documents. It was agreed they will be made available on the website.

There were no other matters arising so most of the rest of the day will be dedicated to four technical presentations.

The presentations are available on the website. These brief annotations reflect some of the key points.

Andrew Jeffs, University of Auckland

Marine Resource Management Issues for the Hauraki Gulf

- Fishing
- Once the mussel bed was ripped out, it never regenerated even once fishing ended.
- Sediment - historically most of the bed of the Hauraki Gulf was sand / shell, but is now thick anoxic mud come from the land. Sedimentation run off is a major issue in New Zealand, 230M tonnes discharged every year, but that figure is slightly inflated for some areas e.g. Canterbury – more statistics requested for the non inflated areas, in particular the Hauraki Gulf. NZ has much higher run off than other countries, but this is due to higher rainfall, hilly country, types of soil, deforestation, farming land. And it is worse in areas where there is high rainfall, steep land, poor loose soils and intensive farming. The South Island is also geologically young country; volcanic soils are a lot more mobile.
- Prevention would be better than cure, it would be better for farmers as well as they're losing the soil which makes them their money, along with the marine environmental benefits from not having it deposited in the sea. Raglan has active farmers groups that are preventing the sediment getting into the harbour and are noticing impacts already.
- Water clarity, is affected by sediment and productivity, difficult to reverse sedimentation effects
- Toxic pollutants –there's not a lot of industry contaminants, mostly associated w urban heavy metals, mining, copper and zinc from cars, corrugated iron roof runoff. The second highest contributor after mining is urban contamination, marinas, storm water outfalls etc.
- Nutrients - it's hard to give a clear answer as to whether it's good, changes the whole ecosystem from what it should be and increased chance of toxic phytoplankton
- Microbial pollution - septic tanks, along with stormwater discharges, can be a common cause
- Introduced marine species and noxious species
- Litter
- Protecting biodiversity
- Coastal development

- Vessel underwater noise

When looking at the issues it is important to think about

- Cumulative effects
- How permanent are effects
- The scale of effects

Trawling is just another impact that fishing has. Removes habitats, sponge beds; there isn't enough information on how much of an important factor this is but sure that it will be significant to fish recruitment

The most important issues are – sediments, invasive species, impacts of fishing on ecosystems, protecting biodiversity

John Zeldis, NIWA

Hauraki Gulf Ecosystem Function: Productivity, Drivers and Stressors

The presentation took the SWG through some of the ecological drivers of the gulf, current up swelling and down swelling and the impact on phytoplankton growth. There is still scientific uncertainty and debate about the impacts of some of the major oceanic systems (e.g. el Nino la Ninia)

The fundamental equation is the balance between the inorganic material, carbon dioxide and sunlight creating oxygen and organic material and organic material absorbing oxygen and producing inorganic material. In the latter case the seabed becomes poorer.

Sediment effects could be seen as a cycle, it goes both ways, sediment consumes organic matter and create nutrients which are used by organisms. Sediment deposition can occur hundreds of kilometres away from the source, a lot will circulate, and some will escape, depending on grade of sediment. There's a map of where the sediment ends up under development; suggests a lot of sediment due to re-suspension, gets cleared out of the firth. You don't see a lot of signal of the rivers as you get out towards the continental shelf, but can trace the chemical signals of land sediment all the way out to the continental shelf

The firth is providing a lot of carbon dioxide, dissolved inorganic carbon into the water, a lot of which will escape to the atmosphere

Not a lot of work done on the benthic population but it's obviously an issue

Peter Singleton – Waikato Regional Council

What an MSP could look like

A brief summary of how collaborative processes are effective in getting MSPs in place and the range and nature of contents

Simon Thrush – Auckland University

Ecosystem Services and Marine Spatial Management of the Gulf

Focus on – disturbances in the gulf, problems that are occurring in a large portion of the gulf, areas where service delivery is likely to be higher, understanding value of different habitats in the gulf – much more multi-dimensional problems

Worry about commercial fishing, sediment and nutrient run off from land, and recreational fishing

In terms of places focus on areas of intense human use, coastal areas, areas that have particular importance culturally, more generically on the middle to outer gulf sandy sediment areas

Next steps and likely information needs

We are starting to get a consensus on the really important issues now we have focussed on the Gulf ecosystem as a whole. The SWG is now in a state to start to think about how to break it down into topics for working groups but we want to be investigating the right things, and the right types of topics

It is important the SWG reaches out to the stakeholders that they represent to take them on the journey. We need to start identifying and introducing groups that we need to collaborate with and build relationships at the same time as we are information gathering and analysing. There are gaps in the interest groups representation so we need to engage to compensate – for example we don't directly have any boat users, or quota fishermen;

The listening posts will continue and the Sea Sketch based survey is launched during the next month which will provide further information about what people see as important.

After discussion it was decided to keep the ecosystem of the Gulf as an issue the SWG as a whole would continue with. It is the binding issue for all the others. Future presentations could include:

- Habitat in the gulf and habitat pressures
- Fishing
- Biosecurity
- MBIE sustainable seas work

The first issue to be looked at by a Round Table will be water quality.

Sediment and nutrients coming into the firth needs to be a key area to focus on – what are the implications of it, where's it coming from. A briefing note will be developed.

The SWG members on this Round Table will be those on the earlier water quality group: Conall, Lucy, Alison, Callum, Jake, Raewyn, Alan, Dirk supported by Emily, Scott, Peter.

The second Round Table will look at fisheries and fishing to determine the strategy and way forward (scoping and design)

They will take a broad integrated system view looking at the productivity of the fish system, at fishing and other factors impacting the system. They will propose how we approach commercial fishers, quota owners and iwi among others. A briefing note will be developed

The SWG members on this Round Table will be: Laurie, Dave, Alan, Raewyn, supported by Kaaren, Laura,

A key design principle for the Round Tables will be to start engaging with a broader group of stakeholders. All SWG members should let the support team know of any gaps in the groups we are collaborating with.

The next meeting will include Sea Sketch presentation and training

The meeting closed with a Karakia