Regional MCZ Projects - Named Consultative Stakeholders

What is a Named Consultative Stakeholder?
Named Consultative Stakeholder (NCS) status has been set up by the regional Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) projects to allow regional, national or international stakeholders who may not be able to resource attendance at Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG)[1] meetings to play a less intensive role in the development of MCZ recommendations.

At key stages they will be asked for their views on the MCZ recommendations being developed by the RSG and their comments will be recorded and fed into the planning process. However, the stakeholders in this category would be giving up their direct role in the development of MCZ recommendations.

Status of NCS
NCSs will have a formalised status, and are acknowledged as being a key maritime stakeholder in the development of MCZ recommendations. They will be able to provide information to the RSG in relation to their specialised knowledge and comment on work emerging from the RSG.

How do you become an NCS?
Any stakeholder can apply for NCS status on a RSG, but there is a formal application process.[2] The application process is designed to ensure that any organisation granted this status is genuine, that new memberships can be formally recorded and that there is a clear understanding of the role that they will play. NCSs will be required to show that they are a representative of a stakeholder group with an interest in a particular region that does not have representation on the RSG already. If an NCS wishes to become a full RSG member, they would be required to make a formal application through the Project Manager.

Communications
NCSs will be given a briefing of their role and will be given copies of the Ecological Network Guidance Summary, stakeholder handbook or manual and a link to appropriate online resources. They will be offered the opportunity of an induction session to ensure that they have a complete understanding of the MCZ recommendation process and their role in it. NCSs will be sent copies of the RSG meeting reports, but would not be invited to comment on the contents. Communications between NCSs and the RSG will be handled through the Regional Project Teams.

Role of NCSs in the planning process
NCSs would be asked to respond, within a specific time scale, by a specific request from the RSG that will be sent through by the Regional Project Team. At a minimum this would happen at the three points (July 2010, November 2010, March 2011) at which a set of draft sites (an iteration) are sent through to the Science Advisory Panel (SAP)[3]. NCSs would not be able to lobby or present their thoughts to the RSG in their own time and way.

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[1] In Finding Sanctuary, the RSG is known as the Steering Group and detailed planning is undertaken by an Offshore and an Inshore Working Group made up of members from the Steering Group. In Net Gain, there are 4 Regional Hubs that undertake planning, with a Stakeholder Advisory Panel (StAP) which approves all recommendations. Balanced Seas and ISCZ project have RSGs. See regional project websites for more information.
[2] Applications to the four regional projects should be made through the Project Managers who will process applications according to the procedure used by each project.
[3] See Project Delivery Guidance for more information

NCSs will have the opportunity to comment on the iterations, either on specific sites and/or whole network options. All responses will be sent to the Project Teams who will process, collate and structure them for the next RSG meeting. All NCS responses will also be made available in their entirety for the next RSG. The NCS responses will be considered by the RSG to see if the NCS's comments can and/or should be accommodated. If not, the NCSs will be offered the opportunity to record their disagreement, and at the appropriate time they will be asked whether they can approve or live with a particular site (or network), and if not to explain why. These comments will be recorded in the final report, along with equivalent objections from any members of the RSG for a particular site or network option.

There are two mechanisms by which an NCS can comment on the iterations:

1. Through a template (see example below); and
2. Through the MCZ Project interactive map[4]

The template form will be used to help structure the responses from NCSs. An example is provided below, but it is expected that this will be adapted by the Regional Projects as the process moves forward, to ensure that the questions that need answering at a particular point in the project are addressed.

Due to the large number of inputs that are coming to the Project Teams it will not be possible to provide a tailored narrative for each NCS as to how their responses were used. However since all of the deliberations undertaken by the RSG are made available in a detailed report; these will be sent to NCSs so that they can see how their responses were used at subsequent meetings.

Site name or no	General opinion of NCS (tick)			Comments / assumptions	Suggested Adjustments	Expected impacts on NCS
	Negative	Neutral	Positive			

[4] Further explanation of the MCZ Interactive Map will be in the Regional Project information pack provided to NCSs.

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For further information on the marine conservation work of JNCC, Natural England and Defra, please visit our websites:

JNCC
W: www.jncc.gov.uk/marineprotectedsites

Natural England
W: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Defra
W: www.defra.gov.uk/marine/biodiversity