

A Fisherman's Perspective of Marine Protected Areas

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The Scottish Fishermen's Federation



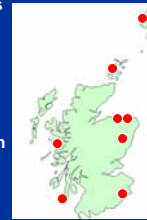
Formed in 1973 to 'preserve and promote the collective interests of local Fishermen's Associations'

Shetland Fishermen's
Association

Orkney Fisheries
Association

Mallaig & North-West
Fishermen's Association

Clyde Fishermen's
Association



Scottish Pelagic
Fishermen's Association

Scottish White Fish
Producer's Association

Fishsalesmen's
Association (Scotland)

Anglo-Scottish
Fishermen's Association

MPAs

- The Scottish fishing industry first heard about MPAs in the late 90's
- NEAFC close seamounts on the mid-Atlantic Ridge at the 2004 AGM
- MPAs at first seemed a distant reality to our fishing fleet
- Following the Mid Atlantic closures there were proposals for closures on Hatton Bank and Rockall
- The proposals for Rockall confirmed that MPAs were on our doorstep and were a reality for our fleet

What are Fishermen's First Reaction to MPAs?

- Uncertainty - how will it affect me?
 - Loss of revenue
 - Loss of fishing grounds
 - Disruption of fishing pattern
- Reasoning? - what is the purpose of the MPA?
 - What are the benefits for designation?
 - What is the MPA trying to protect?

What do we do next?

- Do nothing and hope it goes away?
- Or engage in the debate?
- In the case of the Rockall proposed MPA the SFF contacted WWF
- WWF agree to meet
- The first meeting sets out a clear set of shared objectives

The SFF/WWF Rockall MPA Objectives

- To protect the lophellia coral beds found at the NW of the Rockall Bank
- To accurately define and map the areas of coral
- To avoid closing areas of NW Rockall to fishing where there are no coral present
- To prohibit bottom trawling or bottom set fishing gear in the defined area of coral

Data Used to Define Rockall MPA

- VMS Data (provided by Jason Hall-Spencer)
- Fishermen's Charts and knowledge
- Scientific survey data provided by FRS, JNCC and other bodies
- Geological data from the BGS and other institutes



What made the Rockall MPA Work

- Joint co-operation
- Willingness to work together for a common goal
- Concessions by all parties
 - Site boundary
 - Press release
- Site boundaries do not have to be simple polygon shapes

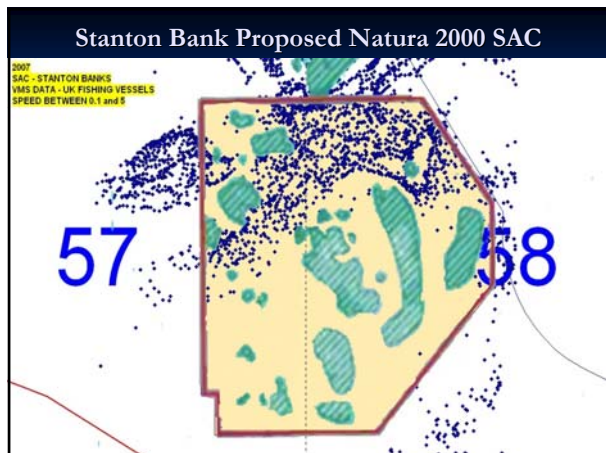
Empress of Britain Bank

- NEAFC asks ICES in 2007 for advice on coral distribution on the Empress of Britain Bank
- The ICES group ACE (Advisory Committee on Ecosystems) deal with such requests
- The NWWRAC are invited by ACE to participate in the advisory process
- Problems with site boundaries can arise through lack of information



Stanton Bank Proposed Natura 2000 SAC

- No input from the fishing industry
- Site selection should have robust scientific justification.
- The site boundary should encompass the feature it's intended to protect
- The Stanton designation is intended to protect a bedrock reef
- Muddy substrate is present in much of the site



Stanton Bank Proposed Natura 2000 SAC



Stanton Bank Proposed Natura 2000 SAC

- The previous 2 slides clearly demonstrates that this proposed site is covering more than it was designed to protect
- What is the benefit of protecting an area of the seabed which has been fished for decades and is not part of the conservation objectives of the proposed site?
- Had the fishing industry been involved at an earlier stage potential conflict could have been avoided and a more sensible solution put in place

An Alternative Way Forward?

- Scottish VMS Data 2005 Speed less than 4Kts



Conclusion

- Fishermen are not against MPAs
- There needs to be the right scientific justification and evidence for MPAs
- The fishing industry needs to be involved from the start of any process to designate any MPAs
- Site boundaries need to fit the purpose they were designed for
- We believe it would be better to look for MPA sites in areas where there is little or no activity taking place
- Pelagic fisheries must not be caught up in any MPA regulations

Home Sweet Home!

