



Meeting: Conservation Services Programme Research Advisory Group

Date: 28 February 2018

Time: 12:40 pm – 4:15 pm

Place: Conservation House, 18-32 Manners Street, Wellington

Chair: Kris Ramm (kramm@doc.govt.nz)

Attendance: Sharleen Gargiulo (DWG), Oliver Wilson (FINZ), Richard Ford, Jo Lambie, Jenny Oliver, Ben Sharp, Nathan Walker (MPI), Janice Molloy (SSST), Johanna Pierre (JPEC ltd.), Jingjing Zhang, Malcom Francis, Brent Wood, David Thompson, Giacomo Giorli, Di Tracey, Krista Hupman, Jim Roberts (NIWA), Karen Baird (Forest & Bird). Dave Goad (Vita Maris), Laws Lawson, Tamar Wells (Te Ohu Kaimoana), Morgan Riding, Ryan Hughes (MARICO), Barry Weeber (ECOWatch), Amanda Leathers (WWF), Kris Ramm, Igor Debski, Freya Hjorvarsdottir, Rebecca Isaacs, Graeme Taylor, Enrique Pardo (DOC).

Apologies: Ian Angus (DOC), Tom Clark (FINZ), Richard Wells (DWG), Anton VanHelden (Forest & Bird), Trudi Webster (YEPT)

Introduction

KR General reminder of the purpose, scope, vision, objectives and the specifics around medium term research plans.

Note that research proposals were developed based on feedback from previous meetings.

- **JM** Are you open to new proposals?
 - **KR** The period over which we were actively seeking proposals has now finished, however recommendations around the scope of current proposals are welcome at this stage.
- **OW** Highlighted FINZ concern around the scope of CSP, and the definition of adverse effects used by CSP and the need for proof of adverse effects when a project is proposed. Concerns about the projects being out of CSP scope. Will submit written feedback.
 - **SG** DWG expresses the same concerns.

Update on medium term research plans

ID Presents overview of medium term research plans, explains the update to reflect the change in seabird assessment.

- **NW** The 2006–07 to 2014–15 seabird risk assessment is now available on the MPI website.

Discussion on Prioritisation process

An overview of the prioritisation scoring used to determine the initial prioritisation was presented for consideration by the Group.

- **OW** Highlights that access to the matrix and increased transparency would be beneficial to stakeholders and would inform discussions.
 - **KR** We have tried this, and we aren't hiding any of the scorings. The reason why we don't have a breakdown here is because we want to focus a useful and efficient conversation on the overall priorities rather than the detail of scoring individual criteria.
 - **Agreed that CSP will send around the scoring matrix after the meeting.**

Discussion and scoring of projects

Project proposals for 2018/19 and comments from the Group are summarised in the table below. Ongoing projects are included first in each project category (interactions population and mitigation) for completeness.

Final comments

- **JM** We discussed the trialling of the Kellian line setter on the last meeting. Is it worth getting it over the line or just killing it?
 - **DG** Would be a research effort to refine the machine
- **KH** How much funding will there be in any given year, and how do we know if projects make it through or not?
 - The quantum of projects approved is as agreed between the Minister and DOC's DG. Previous plans give a good idea of historic funding levels, but this is always subject to change going forward.
- **KB** Hoiho at Campbell Island might increase in priority if they can leverage on other proposed research at the island and is vital for better understanding the population dynamics of the entire species population.
 - Noted
- **JM** Can you provide a spreadsheet with all current MPI and DOC projects and what the status is, final date and provider – supported by **BW**
 - **KR** We provide an annual report with updates on all of our projects, final date and providers. MPI does a similar thing.

Further feedback

The Chair called for any additional feedback, in writing to csp@doc.govt.nz, by **14 March 2017**.

| CSP RAG Proposal | | Comments from CSP RAG 28 Feb 2016 |
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| INT-5 | Trialling innovative Electronic Monitoring (EM) systems for small vessels | Generally agreed high priority – Discussion around the importance of being able to observe small vessels as well, and the value of providing other methods of doing so. FINZ noted that these trials would be through a voluntary participation of operators. FINZ suggested that this project should be lower on the priority list. |
| INT-3 | Development of observer photograph protocols and curation | Generally agreed – FINZ expressed concerns that the project doesn't fall under the scope of CSP. Agreement that collection of images used as data would be useful at a wider scale, and that this project will make observer collected data more usable, thus increase the value of it. |
| INT-2 | Improving the collection of data and samples from bycaught basking sharks | Generally agreed – FINZ & DWG raised concerns about the alignment of this project with CSP objective C. Discussion around the methods that will be used. |
| INT-6 | Updated analysis of Spine-tailed devil ray post release survival | Agreed high priority – Suggestion to correlate the survival of ray capture and how they're hauled onto the boat, including collection of information on methods and handling. |
| INT-7 | Feasibility of estimating cryptic mortality rates of warp strikes | It was identified that MPI are planning a similar project, if the MPI project progresses this proposal will not be advanced. It was also noted that the description of the project lacks detail, and a suggestion was made that using cameras such as GoPro's might increase the likelihood of observing a warp strike. |
| INT-4 | Characterisation of marine mammal interactions | Generally agreed – FINZ and DWG had concerns with the project being management focused rather than research focused. |
| POP-9 | Improving distribution maps of protected cold-water corals in New Zealand | Discussion on the minimal change that has happened in the trawl footprint in the past years, and if this would actually provide any more information from the last one. Clarified that it would support prediction models and include additional shallow water datasets where they are being impacted by fishing, as well as recent biodiversity trawl surveys. |
| POP-12 | Hoiho population and tracking project | Agreed high priority – Discussion on how the project would be used from a TMP (or similar management structure) perspective, and how this project would address the lack of fine scale data that would inform management solutions under a TMP. Suggestion on linking with the Campbell Island project to determine population trends and demographics across all locations. |
| POP-6 | New Zealand Sea Lion: Auckland Islands Pup count | Agreed high priority – Discussion around the collection of demographic parameters and how that work now falls under the sea lion TMP, not CSP. |
| POP-11 | Flesh-footed shearwater: Population project | Agreed high priority – Discussion on captures in the vicinity of Sugarloaf colony but little was known about the behaviour of these birds. It was noted that further research at Kariwa was not of highest priority. |
| POP-3 | Westland petrel population estimate | |

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| POP-8 | Cold-water coral connectivity in New Zealand | Discussion about using samples from biodiversity surveys, not just from samples biased by fisheries. |
| POP-13 | The relative abundance and distribution of Odontocete species in the Cook Strait region from passive acoustic data | Generally agreed a lower priority |
| POP-5 | Southern Buller's albatross: Snares/Tini Heke population project | Agreed high priority – it was clarified that a MPI project is planned for the current year, not future years. |
| POP-1 | Campbell Island seabird research | Generally agreed – FINZ and DWG considered that work grey-headed albatross should not be levied from industry, as they are don't face a high risk from fisheries. Suggested that this does fall under the scope of CSP, however they are included in the CSP seabird medium term research plan. It was further noted that for practicality reasons all of the albatrosses in colonies (including grey-headed) need to be counted to get a census of the Campbell Island albatross population. Suggested that there could be a third objective on white-chinned petrels to refine population size and potentially collect tracking data from this population. |
| POP-2 | Antipodes Island seabirds research | Agreed high priority – Suggested industry should be levied for the work as part of CSP, as this is a high priority species that is known to be bycaught in NZ. |
| POP-7 | New Zealand fur seal: Cook Strait habitat use assessment | Suggested that characterisation of existing tags on the west coast may be useful to add into the habitat use assessment MPI plans to do. |
| POP-4 | Spotted shag population review | Recognised as a lower priority |
| POP-10 | Leopard seal: New Zealand distribution and occurrence assessment | Agreed a lower priority – Agreed that the risk assessment on the species would depend on the outcome of this kind of work, but that doesn't require it to be conducted under CSP. Suggestion that the IUCN species ranking is added as currently only the NZ threat status is given as comparison. DWG noted that the only observed captures were recorded in a fishery that had 100% observer coverage. |
| MIT-3 | Protected species bycatch media | Split views – FINZ and DWG expressed concerns that the guiding objective is not research but engagement and doesn't sit under the scope CSP. Others expressed support for increased engagement with fishermen, particularly those who are not covered by the liaison project. |
| MIT-1 | Haul mitigation for small longline vessels | Agreed high priority – Discussion on the idea of including mitigation devices on boats to show fishers the benefits, including elements on how to collect data on how the device is working. Discussion on comparing the effectiveness of mitigation devices to the effectiveness of not discarding from the boat. |
| MIT-2 | Options for Temporal and Spatial management of key fisheries to reduce risk | Generally agreed high priority – Suggested looking at the environmental effects of switching from setnetting to longlining on the west coast. It was noted that this project would use the |

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| | of interactions with protected species | results of the spatially explicit risk assessment. |
| MIT-5 | Development of modified fishing gear to reduce the effects of inshore trawling | Split views –Discussion on the importance of doing this literature review project before conducting the trials (MIT-4). Related industry initiatives in FMA2 were referred to. |
| MIT-4 | Development of modified fishing gear to reduce the effects of inshore trawling | Split views –Discussion on trawl not being the one of the fisheries affecting YEP directly, but rather indirectly through habitat modifications. Agreement on using existing methods instead of trying to reinvent the wheel. Suggested that opening sentence is adapted to: “trawl induced habitat modifications have been suggested to negatively affect.”. |