

NATIONAL
MARINE
SCIENCE
COMMITTEE

Meeting Report – 13 April 2016

INTRODUCTION

Meetings of both the National Marine Science Committee (NMSC) and its Executive Committee were held in Canberra on Wednesday 13 April, at the Bureau of Meteorology.

While all NMSC members have access to agendas, papers and minutes, this Meeting Report has been prepared for much wider distribution within the national marine science community. Its purpose is to ensure that the broader community is informed about the NMSC's action agenda, and has the opportunity to provide comment and input.

ISSUES DISCUSSED AND ACTIONS AGREED

NMSC welcomed the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) as member no. 24. Professor Gavin Begg will be the member representative, with Dr Tim Ward his alternate. It is great to see new members joining, and we see this as a vote of confidence in our National Marine Science Plan 2015-25.

The major topic of discussion at the meeting was implementation of the Plan.

Action agendas are being developed for the [eight high level recommendations](#) in the Plan, noting that not all recommendations will move forward at the same time and with the same intensity. Key points to note are as follows:

1. A working group will be established to develop a position paper on the national research vessel fleet as a contribution to the 2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap. The paper will cover full utilisation of *RV Investigator* for marine science, the marine science requirements for AAD's replacement for *Aurora Australis*, planned replacement of shelf/coastal research vessels, and other relevant issues.
2. The ongoing commitment to NCRIS and development of the research infrastructure roadmap provides an opportunity to sustain and expand the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS). This priority is being led by the IMOS Office and the IMOS Advisory Board (which includes a number of NMSC member representatives).
3. Sabine Dittmann (AMSA/Flinders) has undertaken the first draft of a discussion paper on developing marine science research training that is more quantitative, cross-disciplinary and congruent with industry and government needs. This will be developed into a more advanced draft and discussed at the next meeting.

4. John Gunn (AIMS) agreed to lead discussion on establishing and supporting a National Marine Baselines and Long-term Monitoring Program.
5. Rick Fletcher (AFMF/WA Fisheries) agreed to lead discussion on developing a dedicated and coordinated science program to support decision-making by policymakers and marine industry.
6. Tim Moltmann (IMOS/FOO) agreed to lead discussion on creating a national ocean modelling system to supply defence, industry and government with accurate, detailed knowledge and predictions of ocean state.
7. Peter Steinberg (SIMS) agree to lead discussion on facilitating coordination of national studies on marine ecosystem processes and resilience.
8. The eighth recommendation about creating an explicit focus on a sustainable blue economy throughout the marine science system will be further discussed in the context of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (see below)

Updates on progress in implementing these recommendations will be provided at future meetings.

It was also recognised that, as important as these recommendations are, they can't consume 100% of the NMSC agenda. We will leave some bandwidth for other significant issues. One example is the development of a [National Marine Technology Roadmap](#), being led by Dr Lyndon Llewellyn (AIMS). We also discussed the [Australian Ocean Data Network](#), and this will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Another pleasing development at this meeting was a presentation and a series of discussions on topical issues:

- Dr Steve Lapidge (SARDI) gave a presentation on the [Great Australian Bight Research Program](#) as a case study in collaborative research with industry.
- Mr Patrick Seares (WAMSI CEO) spoke about the [WA Blueprint for Marine Science 2050](#) and the high-level government/business round table that is considering its findings. There is strong alignment between the WA Blueprint and the NMSC Plan and it makes a lot of sense to coordinate around implementation.
- Tim Moltmann (NMSC Chair) led a discussion about the [National Innovation and Science Agenda](#) and what it means for marine science. Member representatives from the (Federal) Industry and Education Departments provided additional information which was very informative. A small number of initiatives in the Innovation Agenda are particularly significant and need to stay on the Committee's agenda.
- Dr Ray Canterford (Bureau of Meteorology) is Australia's representative to the [Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#) (IOC) of UNESCO. He spoke to the Committee about the 49th session of the IOC Executive Council which will be held in Paris on 7-10 June. An update was provided on the provisional agenda and points of contact within NMSC identified.
- An update was provided on the [International Ocean Discovery Program](#) (IODP) by Dr Neville Exon (ANU), Australian IODP Program Scientist. The IODP community is particularly interested in being involved with NSMC work on the national research vessel fleet.

The approach of including a presentation on a topic of interest worked well. It was agreed that member representatives from the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG) would present on the Defence White Paper at the next meeting.

REGULAR COMMUNICATION

Quarterly email updates are now being provided to the community, and these will be timed to include the Meeting Reports.

The Website has captured all of our existing material and made it readily accessible and identifiable with NMSC. It will be regularly updated with relevant information about priority issues.

Member reports provided to the Committee are an excellent source of information. We discussed the possibility of making these available to the community and this will be put in place after the next meeting.

A paper entitled “The National Marine Science Plan informing Australia’s Future Ocean policy” has been accepted in the Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs and will be published shortly. An Occasional Paper is also under development with the Office of the Australian Chief Scientist.

NEXT MEETING

The next NMSC meeting will be held in Canberra on Thursday 23 June.

NMSC Chair, on behalf of the Committee

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