

Upper Gulf St Vincent
MARINE PARK LOCAL ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES

The fifth meeting of the Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park Local Advisory Group (MPLAG) was held at 3pm on Thursday, 5 May 2011, in the Port Parham Sports and Social Club, Parham.

We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians whose lands we are meeting upon today. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to country. We also pay respect to the cultural authority of Aboriginal people visiting/attending from other areas of South Australia/Australia present here.

Members Present: Brenton Schahinger (Chair), Bart Butson, Barbara Reid, John Walker, Ian Telfer, Anne Picard, Stephen Jones, Luke Wilson (proxy for Maurice Manners) and Shane Storm (proxy for David Backen).

DENR Staff: David Pearce, Sheralee Cox, Yvette Eglinton, Amanda Gaetjens and Craig Nixon.

Gallery: 30 people present in the gallery.

1. Welcome

Brenton Schahinger welcomed MPLAG and gallery members to the meeting.

2. Apologies/absent, correspondence and other business

Apologies: Maurice Manners, David Backen, Robin Crowell and Barry Stringer.

Absent: Ernest Wilson.

Correspondence:

The following correspondence was tabled for member's information:

- Letter from the Minister for Environment and Conservation (MEC) to the MPLAG Chair.
- Conservation Council SA letter dated 29 April 2011 – *Open letter to all Marine Park Local Advisory Group Members*. The MPLAG Chair summarised the letter to the members.
- Email regarding *MPA boundaries Upper Gulf Saint Vincent* received 5/5/2011 regarding extending Sanctuary Zone B and supporting the importance of protecting the Light River Estuary (Zone D).
- Email to MPLAG Chair dated 4 May 2011, regarding alternate zoning proposal for at the top of the Gulf.
- Members were provided a copy of the 'A review by the Scientific Working Group of Professor Robert Kearney's document 'Comments on the document "Science shows marine park benefits' (*Marine Parks, Government of South Australia, undated as requested by David Hall*".

Other business

- None discussed.

Minutes and actions arising from Meeting 4

- Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2011 were accepted by the membership without amendment, supported all by the MPLAG members.

3. Today's meeting and Minister's advice to MPLAG members

- The MPLAG Chair referred to the Minister for Environment and Conservation's (MEC) letter and indicated the need for a balanced and competent proposal for sanctuary zones for the marine park.

MPLAG Executive Officer, David Pearce, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) gave a short presentation which included:

- Mention that this is the last formal meeting of the MPLAG, and their opportunity to finalise their zoning advice before Government produces the draft management plans for public consultation later in 2011.
- A summary of the marine parks Implementation process timeline. Individuals will be able to submit a response to the draft management plans with zoning when they are released in late 2011 for the public consultation period.
- Peak stakeholders are yet to provide zoning advice.
- A review of the zoning options, based on the zoning advice received from the MPLAG at meeting 4 was provided.

During the presentation, MPLAG members asked the following question:

- When does the public consultation for the placement of the zones end? David Pearce indicated the formal public consultation period on the draft management plans with zoning will begin at the end of 2011, for a period of three months.

4. MPLAG zoning discussion

MPLAG Chair asked the members to share the feedback they had received from the community.

- A MPLAG member (John Walker) indicated that he had spoken to people at Thompson Beach and there was much misinformation in the community. A meeting was held at Thompson Beach recently and people seemed happy with the current map as proposed by MPLAG members at meeting 4.
- The MPLAG Chair asked about the inclusion of the defence area towards the total sanctuary zone percentage within the marine park. David Pearce indicated that the defence prohibited area is about 9% of the marine park and it will remain a defence prohibited area, closed to public access and fishing. The details of how the area will be zoned are still being finalised between the Department of Defence and DENR.

Discussion regarding Zone D

- Member Bart Butson shared his view about alternative zones D1 and D2. He indicated that depending on which zone was selected, it may cause some concern. Feedback from commercial fishers has also indicated that A1 could be moved westerly to minimise impact.
- Question: has there been any feedback from the people from Price or Ardrossan? David shared that people from Clinton and Price had been in contact with him regularly but since meeting 4 they seem to be happier with the zoning.

- MPLAG member shared that the District Council of Mallala had recently received a presentation from DENR (David Pearce) and indicated their only concern was how the park was going to be policed. They also asked whether funding would be available for land areas of the park, particularly for land based monitoring. MPLAG member (Anne Picard) had received feedback from the recreational fishers in the community and they would like a section at the end of Light Beach Rd available so they can fish. This road has been closed by DC Mallala due to liability issues for the Council and damage that was occurring to the beach. They also shared that there was support by conservationists for D1. Anne asked if any research had been done on the Light River Beach. In response, the area had received a Ramsar wetland nomination, is an important site for coastal migratory shorebirds and there have been a number of environmental studies in the area.
- MPLAG members indicated that D2 is a good option to include as a sanctuary zone due to the problematic off road vehicle usage in the area and damage to the site. It was recommended that the area should be closed to vehicle access.
- A MPLAG member indicated that they should only include one proposal, either D1 or D2. The MPLAG Chair asked the commercial fishers about the impact that D1 would have on the fishers using the area.
- A MPLAG member (Ian Telfer) indicated that as a compromise between D1 and D2, D2 could be extended to include additional mangroves and seagrass as it is an important nursery area, particularly important for juvenile species.
- There was some support for the 'new zone D' only if the commercial fishers are fairly and reasonably compensated as the zone would cause some displacement of commercial activity.
- David Pearce referred to the letter from the Minister to the commercial fishing bodies and the process for managing displacement and compensation. Details can be found at: <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/7583ca42-d1dd-4a62-ac40-9ed9010d5708/mp-gen-displacedeffortpolicyframework-april2011.pdf>

Note: MPLAG members would like included as part of any zoning suggestion that all proposals are conditional on commercial fishers receiving fair and reasonable compensation. They also shared their concern regarding the need for recognition of the real effort being displaced, the true value of areas, not just percentages of waters removed.

- MPLAG member (Barbara Reid) indicated that one of the stumbling blocks for the process was the displaced effort process.
- The MPLAG Chair suggested that the Government would not go into this process if they did not have the funds to compensate displaced fishers.
- A member suggested that marine parks are about looking after the environment and the size of Zone D is not likely to be large enough to be adequate as recommended within the guidelines but recognises the need to consider the users. There was discussion regarding the need for zones to be no more than 20km apart to be effective.
- MPLAG member (Anne Picard) indicated that there needs to be a compromise regarding Zone D otherwise the government will come back with a bigger zone because of the value of the area.

- There was a question regarding who is advising the MEC about where the zones will be placed. In response, David indicated that many stakeholders, including the peak stakeholders, as identified in the *Marine Parks Act 2007*, would also provide advice to the MEC about the size and location of zones. The MPLAG advice represents input from the community and would be highly regarded by the MEC.
- Discussion for Zone D was summarised as follows: this zone is not supported by industry but as a compromise would accept D2 or the purple line (see map). Further negotiations are required with industry regarding this zone. Conservationists would support the orange zone (refer to map), which would be closer to the adequacy guidelines.
- The membership identified that there needed to be a compromise between the two opposing view points otherwise the Government would make the final decision.

Outcome for Zone D: The membership voted on the two proposals put forward for Zone D. Both proposals have some support from some members. Two members chose to not vote as they were not happy with either proposal for the area. Industry members on the MPLAG would support D2 only; other MPLAG members supported the new orange zone only. It was identified that:

- D2 is a commercial compromise.
- Both proposals have some support.
- The proposal is conditional on commercial fishers receiving fair and reasonable compensation.

Discussion regarding Zone B

- MPLAG Chair referred to the email that had been received and tabled in the correspondence. The letter referred to the one species that was mentioned in the letter and marine parks are not about single species management. The membership indicated that this option was worse and was not supported. B2 was a compromise.
- A commercial fisher from the gallery indicated that having B2 in place would have a 100% impact on his business and hopes that fair compensation would be paid. Another fisher in the gallery indicated that this would also greatly impact on his business. Net fishers only have a small area in which to fish and this would limit the area available to them and push others into the same area. David Pearce referred to the letter sent to industry regarding the compensation for commercial fishers and the commitment that a disadvantaged licence holder would be fairly and reasonably compensated.
- B2 is a compromise that was offered at the last meeting and would have less displacement than other areas suggested. However some commercial fishers would be significantly impacted by B2 and still would not support it.

Outcome for Zone B: B2 has partial support from the membership. Commercial fishers did not support it due to the potential impact to netters. This proposal is conditional on commercial fishers receiving fair and reasonable compensation. It was re-iterated that compensation should recognise the real value of effort being displaced in these key areas.

Discussion regarding Zone A

- Zone A1 – moved westerly. This was supported by commercial fishers. This would also include the *Zanoni*, located outside of the marine park.

Outcome for Zone A: Unanimous support by membership for this zone if it was moved westerly. This proposal is conditional on commercial fishers receiving fair and reasonable compensation.

Discussion regarding Zone C

- **Outcome for Zone C:** Zone C1- unanimously supported by the membership.
- MPLAG member (Stephen Jones) questioned whether anyone had been caught fishing in the defence restricted area. It was suggested that there had been limited enforcement by the defence department. However it was noted that the area is policed and that people have been prosecuted for fishing in the area.

Additional questions/statements asked by the MPLAG members and gallery:

- A MPLAG member questioned whether there would be any restricted access zones within the marine park? In response, other than the proof range, there are no restricted access zones currently suggested for this park, and if there were they would usually be embedded within a sanctuary zone – so no further grounds would be lost to fishers.
- MPLAG member (Stephen Jones) indicated his concern for the possible impacts of the salt works that are located along the Mallala coastline. The pipelines that draw in seawater should be located further offshore rather than its current placement, where numerous fish and eggs are extracted. He requested that an independent study should be undertaken in this area. It was suggested this issue be included in the management plan for the marine park.
- Also identified as management issues for the park were:
 - The freshwater intake and redistribution from Buckland Park and its possible outflows into the marine park.
 - Off-road vehicle use, particularly along the Mallala coastline.
- Will wind farm development be stopped in sanctuary zones? David Pearce replied yes, as per the Marine Parks Activities and Use matrix, such developments are not allowed. The matrix was in the mail-out to members and can be found on the marine parks website at: <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/2969e704-b0e6-42ed-8691-9ec3010c10e5/mp-gen-marineparksactivitiesuses.pdf>
- A gallery and a MPLAG member indicated that the western side of the gulf hasn't been impacted at all by sanctuary zones and the majority of the zones have been moved eastward.
- A MPLAG member suggested that the government's 30 year plan for the area will increase the population, particularly in the north of the gulf putting further pressure on the region.
- There was concern from a gallery member that the government would review the zoning plan in ten years and increase the size of the zones. David Pearce responded that changes to zones involves a lengthy public process and will need to go back through parliament.

5. Record of Meeting

- A brief summary of key meeting points was displayed, discussed and agreed upon by the Group.
- The Record of the Meeting is available on the Marine Parks website.

6. Next steps

David Pearce thanked the Group for their efforts as volunteers: the numerous hours spent attending meetings; gathering information from community members and working to improve the Marine Parks design to better meet the needs of local users while still meeting the environmental objectives. Although the formal MPLAG process has been completed, David indicated that the local connections made through the MPLAG process would be remembered if further specific advice was required.

The MPLAG Chair thanked David for his support during the process and then closed the meeting.

Meeting Closed at 6.00 pm.

Chair

Date