

APPENDIX 3 – STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

A stakeholder workshop meeting for SEA 5 was held in Aberdeen on 29 June 2004, facilitated by independent facilitators, People=Positive™, on behalf of the DTI. A wide variety of potential stakeholders drawn from UK and other regulators, government advisers, local authorities, other industry representatives, academics and NGOs were invited to the session.

The workshop aimed to fulfil a variety of functions including:

- Updating stakeholders on SEA 5 progress and issues including the outcomes of “scoping” consultation and an assessment workshop.
- Gathering stakeholder input to and comments on the information and analysis on which SEA 5 will be based.
- Seeking suggestions on ways to further improve future DTI SEAs of other areas of the UKCS prior to decisions on further large scale licensing.

The workshop commenced with introductions and discussion and agreement of the ground rules for the day. The working part of the day was split into three sessions:

Session 1 – Issues and information base

Short presentations covering SEA 5 Process and Context, DTI Role and Context, SEA 5 Socio-economics and SEA 5 Area Overview.

Session 2 – Update on progress

Short presentations providing updates on Scoping, Studies, the Expert Assessment Workshop and how the Stakeholder Workshop fits in.

Clarifications, questions and responses during Sessions 1 and 2 were summarised.

Session 3 – Issues and information base

Structured interactive group sessions to consider strategic issues for SEA 5, the information base and gaps and ways to further strengthen the SEA process. Discussion and issue capture was facilitated by five poster based information stations.

Station 1 – Background & Process

Station 2 – SEA 5 Environment

Station 3 – SEA 5 Assessment Issues

Station 4 – Re-offer of previously SEAed Blocks

Station 5 – Renewables

Each station was attended by a facilitator and a member of the SEA assessment team. Groups visited all five of the stations during the afternoon and *key issues, new information sources* and *future (SEA) process improvements* were summarised and captured on cards – and recorded in a Learning Portfolio for the meeting available on the SEA website.

The day ended with a plenary session where all participants had the opportunity to review the issues recorded by all groups during Session 3 and to amend or add additional feedback where appropriate. The next steps for SEA 5 were outlined.

A digest of the main issues raised, information sources and suggestions for future SEA process improvements are given below:

SEA 5 Background & process

*Suggestion for “Joined up” SEAs for all industries.
More information on extreme (environmental) conditions required.
What is the timescale for designation of offshore Natura 2000 sites?*

Environment

*Suggestion to include description of how different elements of environment fit together.
SEA should examine sustainable development issues.
Inclusion of renewables in a combined assessment will shift focus of assessment closer to shore.
Information on scale of designated area and how different designations relate to each other.
Is data being collected with sufficient rigour?
Is there sufficient information on whale movements in SEA 5 area?
DEFRA information portal.
Beatrice Demonstrator Project data.*

SEA 5 Assessment issues

*How to balance conflicting interests of different stakeholders?
How to measure cumulative effects? JNCC to produce information shortly.
How will the information in the assessment document be used?
How to assess SEA data – is it tested? Monitored? Revisited?
Transparency of assessment process.
Activity scenarios needed for renewable SEA.
Data available from military sources.*

Re-offer of previously SEAed blocks

*When to revisit SEA areas to test quality of predictions?
What would trigger a new SEA of a previously SEAed area?
How does assessment of effects feed back into future SEA processes?
Reassess level of activity within previously SEAed blocks and any relevant new information.
How to monitor impact post-SEA predictions? Regional surveys.
Do development scenarios reflect changing industry?
Impact of promote licences on activity levels?
Should existing licence holders be subject to new SEA outcomes?
SEAs concern large areas but activity more specific – focus effort?*

Renewables

*How will turbines/structures affect water currents/sediment transport? How will seabed affect structures?
Long term environmental monitoring required.
Impact on birds.
More pro-active regarding impact/data collection for wet renewables.
What is the best use of a particular marine area/resource?
Need to fully understand benefits and impacts of renewables. Benefits for remote communities? Cumulative impacts?
SEA needs to safeguard and take account of all marine users.*

Viability of renewable energy?

Multi-purpose structures – using existing platforms for renewables.

Future process improvements

Stakeholder workshop

Publish underpinning technical reports earlier to allow more time for consideration.

Non-technical summary circulated to stakeholders prior to meeting.

Information on presentations to be added to Learning Portfolio.

Information availability and feedback

Continuous review of information and monitoring to inform future SEAs.

Better feedback mechanisms on outcomes of SEA process.

SEA website to be made more interactive and user friendly. Use of GIS format.

Clearer signposting to supporting data and associated documents.

Portal for offshore renewables data.

Assessment process

Take into account climate change effects.

Mechanisms to prioritise issues/concerns?

Need to ensure data is up to date and accurate.

Receptor-based assessment?

Integrated marine planning system required.

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