We are now into the last three months of the project before we submit our final report to Natural England and the JNCC on the 31st August. Having just submitted our draft final report to the Science Advisory Panel on the 1st June, we know that we are in good position to meet this final deadline. Since our winter newsletter our Steering Group, Working Group and Local Groups have been focused on finalising the network. Our focus is now on completing the work on conservation objectives and likely management measures.

Submission of the Draft Final Report

After months of hard work by our stakeholders and project team, the Draft Final Report was submitted to the Science Advisory Panel (SAP) on the 1st of June. This report showcases a single network in a near final state as the project progresses into its final months.

The network contains 58 potential MCZs (pMCZs) in total consisting of:
- 13 pMCZs in the offshore (outside the 12 nautical miles)
- 32 pMCZs in the inshore (inside the 12 nautical miles) (The Isles of Scilly MCZ consists of 11 separate components and two non-disturbance areas)
- 3 Reference Areas in the offshore area
- 10 Reference Areas in the inshore area

The network meets the minimum viable size and connectivity guidelines and broadly meets all sub-tidal and intertidal broad-scale habitats listed in national targets. For species and habitats of conservation importance that occur in the region, the network achieves the target amount of replicates required and for all but two of the habitats of conservation importance. A few of the habitats and species of conservation importance are not represented within the Reference Areas selected. All three geological and geomorphological features of importance that fall within our region are represented within the DNC.

The network is now a single network rather than there being a separate co-location and non-co-location network (see article ‘Atlantic Array Co-location’).

The draft final report is available now on our website and the Impact Assessment will follow shortly.
Ministers Visit to Finding Sanctuary

During a visit to Devon in April, UK Fisheries Minister Richard Benyon met some of the Finding Sanctuary Steering Group representatives and members of the project team.

The Minister first met with the project team to discuss their work, see maps of the network and some of the data used by the stakeholders for planning. He was particularly interested in the evolution of the sites over the last year and the economic modelling of fishing activity that has been recently produced for the region.

Representatives from a broad spectrum of sectors were then able to meet the Minister. This time was spent in the form of a question and answer session allowing stakeholders to talk about their experience of the process so far and their aspirations and concerns for the future of the network.

Following the meeting, Richard Benyon said: “From what I’ve learned today, I recognise the huge amount of effort the sea user representatives have put into this work and I am encouraged that this is the right process to produce an outcome which is both credible and workable. I want this process to be part of a wider vision to make our seas healthier for future generations and positive for all those who rely on this ecosystem.”

Planning for the Final Months of the Project

With only three months left of the project the main focus is working on the supporting narrative for the network, possible management measures and levels of support.

Over the past month, the project team commenced work with Natural England, the Marine Management Organisation, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee to determine the likely activity restrictions and possible management measures within each of our sites.

Between June and August the role of the Joint Working Group will be primarily to finalise the network and supporting narrative in preparation for the final recommendation. The Steering Group will then meet for the final time in July to review and sign off the final recommendations produced by the Joint Working Group.

The final recommendation from Finding Sanctuary will then be submitted on 31st August and will be followed shortly by the submission of the project Impact Assessment.

Natural England and the JNCC will then combine the four regional MCZ project outputs into one recommendation to Defra, prior to public consultation in 2012.
Atlantic Array Co-Location

A statement from RWE npower was brought to the April Joint Working Group meeting to inform the group that they had come to an agreement regarding the possible co-location between a potential MCZ (pMCZ) and the Atlantic Array offshore renewable development.

After lengthy discussions with Natural England, they proposed that the development can be co-located with a pMCZ with the caveat that other areas proposed as pMCZs in the no co-location network are removed from the final recommendations to minimise the socio-economic impacts.

Changes to the Project Team and Steering Group

There have been a number of changes within both the Steering Group and the project team since the start of the year. Finding Sanctuary would like to thank all those leaving the project for their hard work and to welcome all those joining us.

Steering Group

- Keith Bower representing the Sea Fisheries Committees has been replaced by Tim Robbins, Chief Officer of the Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA).
- Peter Bartlett representing recreational boating has been replaced by Royal Yachting Association Planning and Environment Officer, Caroline Price.
- Tom Pickerell from the Shellfish Association of Great Britain has left the Steering Group and the association has become a Named Consultative Stakeholder.

Project Team

- Dorset liaison officer John Weinberg and Somerset liaison officer Martin Syvret have now left the team as the project comes into its final months.
- Mitchell Neilly has joined the team on secondment from the UK Hydrographic Office to provide GIS and planning support.

Named Consultative Stakeholders

New additions — The Angling Trust, Cruising Association, Shellfish Association of Great Britain, Surfers Against Sewage, Pelagic Regional Advisory Council, Cornwall Council. This now makes a total of nineteen NCS including five of which represent international commercial fishing interests.

European Event Comes to the South West

Finding Sanctuary continues its participation in the MAIA project during 2011 and is working with the JNCC to organise an international workshop in September.

The MAIA workshop will take place at Dartington Hall, Totnes from the 26th - 30th September and delegates are expected from Portugal, France and Spain.

This workshop will provide a unique opportunity for stakeholders from partner countries to talk to each other about their experiences in planning and working around MPAs with simultaneous translation into Portuguese, French and Spanish. It will also focus on some of the more technical aspects of stakeholder involvement in planning and managing MPAs.

Spanning four days, delegates will actively participate in helping to identify best practice and key lessons from their own experiences in the following themes:

- Stakeholder involvement in planning and managing MPAs - Experiences and lessons learned
- Stakeholder involvement in planning and managing MPAs - Tools and Techniques
- Technical Workshop for GIS and MPA planning specialists
- Site visit to the Dart Estuary and Brixham with talks from local experts
Meet a Steering Group member - Mike Bailey

**What sector do you represent?**
Recreational Sea Angling

**How has your sector responded to your role?**
I have had positive comments from many of the clubs, organisations and individuals, however, a lot of anglers totally misunderstand the nature of the Finding Sanctuary project. They understand it to be a fisheries management tool and as a result, it is true to say some have totally unrealistic expectations of what might occur when the network is in place.

**How do you think the work on the network is progressing?**
In general, it has made quite remarkable progress. There are some very big players as stakeholders, often with widely different interests, but there has been a collective desire to get things done within the challenging deadlines. I can only comment about the Inshore Working Group, but the dynamics of this group have been excellent. People have respected others views, and there has been real give and take. The inshore area is heavily utilised by all stakeholders, but, after numerous alterations to take into account local groups, and various other inputs, the majority of the network now appears to be stabilised.

**What is your message to your sector?**
Get involved, read the FS web site for developments, feed information into your clubs, the local groups, or to me directly. Look at the positive benefits that might result from this network in the long term. Talk to others and spread the word. Try to understand what the process means and see it in relation to the forthcoming reforms in the Common Fisheries Policy.

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**Diary Dates**

**June**
14th & 15th June: Joint Working Group meeting

**July**
26th July: Final Steering Group meeting

**August**
31st August: Final submission of recommendations to Government

**Useful Links**

- Finding Sanctuary draft final report
- Previous Finding Sanctuary Progress reports
- Reports from Finding Sanctuary Steering Group, Working Group and Local Group meetings
- Finding Sanctuary timeline and meetings calendar
- Finding Sanctuary summary of Ecological Network Guidance
- Ecological Network Guidance (NE & JNCC)
- Draft Guidance on Reference Areas (NE & JNCC)
- Advice with regards to fisheries impacts on Marine Conservation Zone habitat features (NE & JNCC)

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**PROJECT PARTNERS**

- Natural England
- JNCC
- South West Food & Drink
- South West Reserves
- RSPB
- Cornwall County Council
- Dorset County Council
- Devon County Council
- National Trust

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**Links to Regional Projects**

- Balanced Seas
- Irish Sea Conservation Zones
- Net Gain