

Scientific Stakeholder Meetings, December 2013 Record of Discussion – Telephone Meetings



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These notes seek to summarise Scientific Stakeholder discussions held by telephone with two stakeholders in the first week of December 2013.

They should be read in conjunction with other documents available on this website from the 'downloads' section including the record of other discussion sessions held on 3 December at the Geological Society and also:

- The December 2013 Stakeholder Meetings Powerpoint Presentation
- The INSITE Scope Framework pre-read document provided in advance of the meetings to stakeholder participants

A collated list of all those who took part in either these telephone discussions or the related London meetings as well as the full list of organisations invited to take part is also reproduced in the 'downloads' section.

The notes have been circulated to stakeholders who took part in the discussions for their verification. No comments or requests for change were received back for those with whom telephone discussions were held.

Introduction

As with the London meetings, Dr Graham Shimmield introduced himself and gave an introductory overview. He explained the objectives of the discussion, namely:

Primary Objective:

- To facilitate a scientific discussion around the proposed INSITE programme to inform ISAB members of areas or issues within the INSITE scope which are considered a priority by the wider stakeholder community.

Other objectives:

- To provide a briefing on the origins of the programme and its proposed execution plan.
- To ensure organisations and individuals who may be key to delivering the programme's objectives are aware of the forthcoming Request for Proposals (RfP).

He then explained the importance of seeking the input of stakeholders at an early stage as well as the desire to raise awareness of the INSITE project.

Discussions would be held on the basis of the Chatham House Rule, with discussion recorded without attribution of external stakeholder comments.

He then gave an overview of the INSITE initiative covering the rationale for the project, phasing, funding expectations, governance and independent audit plans, and arrangements for the RfP for which the research objective is:

'To provide stakeholders with the independent scientific evidence base needed to better understand the influence of man-made structures on the ecosystem of the North Sea.'

The RfP will consist of an initial call for pre-proposal summaries (a 'pre-RfP'), following which a shortlist will be produced and invitations made through the main RfP to submit a full proposal. Dr Shimmield explained that INSITE is a scientific programme designed to provide scientific knowledge for use across the wider community. While the research results would have relevance to decommissioning, its uses would not be restricted to this area.

General discussion then followed, with questions raised and answers. The key points emerging from each of these conversations were as follows:

Telephone Discussion 1

- Industry workers offshore could/should play more of a role in data gathering, e.g. subsea engineers when doing surveys and observation of birds by deck personnel.
- General approval of INSITE's approach but would like to see hypotheses phrased as questions.
- Emphasis is needed on the cumulative effects of the 'influence'.
- NGOs are supportive of INSITE from our perspective.
- Would like to be kept in touch with the initiative as it progresses.
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Telephone Discussion 2

- General approval of the INSITE approach but would like to see the hypotheses phrased as questions.
 - Transparency is vital – the track record of prior work by industry is not good.
 - INSITE will have to work hard to not say it is set up to influence OSPAR 98/3 which we would be strongly opposed to if this is the case.
 - INSITE must be distanced from the LiNSI initiative.
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- Send documents two weeks in advance of meetings.
 - Do not have too many meetings – one or two per annum max.
 - Expand ISAB carefully with well vetted individuals for which this stakeholder would like to suggest some names.
 - Overall very happy with the start which has been made.