

**SWNB Marine Resources Initiative
Steering Committee Meeting
Coast Guard Base, Saint John, New Brunswick
February 14, 2012**

Steering Committee Members present

Jessie Davies
Rob Stephenson
Tim Paul
Mike Rouse
Greg Thompson
Dave Giddens
Klaus Sonnenberg

Absent

Bob Sweeney
Phillip Ells
William Hanley
Kim McKinley

Government members present

Harvey Millar
Russell Henry
Joseph Labelle
Loretta McAleenan
Heather Breeze
Jane Tims
Karen Coombs
Aaron Bennett

Co-chairs

Jean-Marc Dupuis, DM Agriculture,
Aquaculture & Fisheries

Faith Scattolon, RDG DFO Maritimes

Welcome:

Faith Scattolon welcomed everyone and thanked them for being there. She stated that over the past several months, government had been reviewing the report that was developed by the Steering Committee (SC) and having discussions among federal and provincial departments. Faith stated that the primary purpose of the session was to discuss the outcome of the federal/provincial review and what government is proposing as the next steps forward.

Jean-Marc Dupuis welcomed everyone. He stated that coming into this process at the tail end; he was very impressed with what he saw of the work done by the committee. He thanked them for their involvement in this process. Jean-Marc stated that community involvement and participation in processes is critical and something that he values tremendously. He looks forward to ongoing discussions on the MRP process.

Presentation: Results of Government Review of Phase III Recommendations (Russell Henry)

Russell thanked each of the Steering Committee members for their hard work during Phase III and gave a special thank you to the co-chairs, Jessie Davies and Harvey Millar.

Russell presented the results of the government review and proposed next steps (presentation sent after the meeting).

Jean-Marc discussed government renewal from a provincial perspective. There is an ongoing exercise in terms of reviewing all programs and services that are delivered on a provincial basis to ensure that government is delivering programs and services that are

core to its roles and responsibilities and that are critical to its stakeholders. Part of the path going forward is recognizing the importance and the need to continue having a community focused approach to marine planning but to do it within the confines of the fiscal environment that we find ourselves in today.

Faith stated that she hoped what is presented today strikes a useful balance between some of the things that Jean-Marc has alluded to and that apply in the federal context as well, but also allows us to have continued input that is so valuable from the stakeholders in the Bay of Fundy.

Next Steps

- Select names and appoint Marine Advisory Committee members
- Develop list of high priority issues on which the government wants community input (e.g. a new site allocation policy and a new bay management regime may be developed; a new Department of Environment land/management framework might be brought to this table for review and recommendation). Committee members could also identify relevant issues.
- Set agenda and date for first meeting (tentatively May 2012).

Role of Phase III Steering Committee

- The current Steering Committee will end.
- Members are invited to put their name forward for the Marine Advisory Committee by **March 7, 2012** to Loretta McAleenan.
- Members are invited to nominate others for the Marine Advisory Committee by **March 7, 2012**. Nominations can be sent to Loretta McAleenan.

Overview of Proposed New Terms of Reference (Heather Breeze)

Heather guided the committee through each section of the proposed TOR and compared them to the previous TOR proposed by the Steering Committee (document sent out after the meeting).

Questions and Comments from the SC members

Jessie, on behalf of the SC, thanked both the provincial and federal governments for their commitment over the past few years. She stated that in times of fiscal restraint it is good to see the support from government for this process. Jessie stressed that her immediate reaction to this proposal was that the Communications Strategy was one of the most important parts of what the SC proposed and its functions are exceedingly important. Jessie also stated that perhaps the SC had not articulated as well as they could have that it is not one homogeneous community and that there is a diversity of communities within the planning area. That has to be respected if this initiative goes forward.

Klaus stated his concern with not knowing some of the topics that the committee would be discussing. He stated that one of the items he would see as being very important to this committee is the future chemical use in the bay. Klaus expressed concern that there was only one designated representative from the commercial fishing sector for the Advisory Committee listed in the TOR. Klaus stated that he thought there needed to be two representatives for the commercial fishing sector as well as the aquaculture sector.

He also expressed his uncertainty regarding representation from the energy sector and who that might be, or if the energy or transportation sectors needed to be represented. He also expressed that he did not understand why local government representation and community representation has been separated.

Russell stated that the TOR is “draft” and open for discussion. It is not set in stone.

Heather stated that local government would be represented by perhaps someone from a town council or employed by a local government organization where the community aspect was intended to get citizen representation from the islands as well as the entire area.

Klaus stated that there are areas (e.g. energy) where experts could be brought in.

Jean-Marc stated that he would like there to be a good cross representation from the local communities that have the expertise and experience of certain sectors but would not wear the hat of that sector around the table. The Deputy also agreed that we need to bring in the experts when required. Jean-Marc stated that from his perspective the 15 members were open to discussion and feels that a smaller group would have better discussion and input.

Rob Stephenson also thanked government for their support and positive response to this initiative. Rob mentioned that during deliberations through the various phases of this initiative there was concern about not duplicating existing processes or adding another layer. He brought up the issue that there are a few things that the current system seems not able to do. One of these is applying a broad enough set of objectives or criteria across all activities. The federal government seems to be emphasizing conservation and some economic aspects in decision-making, but not social and institutional aspects. There doesn't seem to be a system in place that does this. Rob stated that he feels this is what sets this initiative apart from existing processes.

Jean-Marc stated that the reason government wants to go to the next step in this process is for those reasons and they do see some added value in what is being done. At the same time, there are concerns of some government colleagues. The Deputy stated that if government did not see any value added to this committee they would not have proposed going ahead in structuring an advisory committee to look at these issues.

Dave Giddens reiterated the importance of the Communications Strategy and even though there are fiscal restraints within government there are still things that can be done (i.e. community meetings, perhaps one larger venue once a year to update where we are with the initiative).

Jessie stated that she felt it was very important that the new TOR and presentation be sent to those who were not able to attend the meeting, along with the invitation to put their name forward to sit on the new committee. She also felt it very important to make sure they were made fully aware of what was being proposed as it is only about 10% of what the SC asked for. In her view, there is a point where it may not be worth going ahead if

the committee can't do what the Steering Committee really intended for it to do. The people who are making a decision on whether to participate need to be fully aware of that.

In response to Jessie, Jean-Marc said he realized that the government response was not what was requested by the SC. However from the government's perspective, they recognize the importance and the intent of engaging communities in decisions that have great bearing on the marine area in those communities. Government looked at how it could maintain this engagement in the current tough economic times. The Deputy stated that the level of financial commitment is not a sign of not valuing the process. He would like to see it go forward. The Deputy stated that this is the reason he and Faith have committed to sitting at each meeting of this committee and talking about key issues of the bay. They wished to maintain the spirit of what the SC was trying to do as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Greg stated that he echoed Klaus's concern with respect to the lack of representation from the commercial fishery and aquaculture sector. He stated that he feels the fishing industry has more knowledge of the 5600 km² area than many of the other sectors listed in the TOR. For example, the Bay of Fundy is targeted for a Marine Protected Area¹ and the fishing industry is going to have a different perspective on an MPA than the Department of Tourism. In his view, there needs to be a sharing of knowledge but the knowledge the fishing industry would have on the Bay of Fundy would be more important than tourism. The fishing industry needs some assurance that they are important to this process and that they are not just one of 15 people that are represented. Greg stated that he might be willing to come to a few meetings per year as a committee member, but would be very reluctant to go out and consult in the community when it was entirely on a volunteer basis. He felt it might be hard to find other people who would be willing to do that.

Faith stated that she felt the role of the Advisory Committee was not to consult with the fishing industry on matters for which DFO would have established consultation processes (e.g. on MPA development), but rather bring their ideas to a broader table, such as this Advisory Committee.

Jean-Marc brought up what was said about not duplicating current processes. The Department does have processes where they consult with agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors. What we need to continue doing and improve on is consulting with the community and hearing from this group what government is doing well and not so well. Jean-Marc stated that he wants to hear the views and perception from the communities on what is working and what is not and how government can improve on that.

Heather stated that one of the things government hopes to get from this process is the interaction from people from the different backgrounds and sectors as these discussions

¹ Clarification: Parks Canada is assessing the Bay of Fundy to look for a potential site for a National Marine Conservation Area. The Steering Committee had a presentation on this work last year.

often present government with different options or solutions that they might not have come up with otherwise.

Tim Paul stated that we need to include everyone in the community aspect of what we are doing as the future of the Bay of Fundy is changing and everyone has to be prepared for those changes. Tim stated that this is a good committee to sit and try to figure out how we can all work together in the best interest of the Bay of Fundy.

Mike Rouse stated that he is pleased to see that government is in favour of moving forward with this initiative.

Jessie reiterated her concerns about the Communications Strategy. This initiative was supposed to be community driven and not government driven. The committee would decide what issues were important to the communities then provide advice to the government on those issues. She felt a Communications Strategy needed to be more than an existing website that doesn't give people information on what is coming up. Jessie expressed her concern that this has been shrunken down so that it will be a forum for discussing upcoming government policies. This may be a fine thing to do but it was not what the SC was talking about. How can this proposed committee listen to and hear what the concerns of the community are? Is this now so small that it isn't going to be meaningful? Will there be a Communications Strategy and can it be at zero cost? Where will it be (i.e. Enterprise Charlotte)? How will the public get information and express their concerns?

Jean-Marc stated that if he and Faith gave the impression that this was a "top down" approach, this was not their intent. From a government perspective, there is interest in having a community represented group where government can bring some policies and strategies to get feedback. However, a lot of the issues for discussion have to be "bottom up." The DM agreed with Jessie in the importance of the Communication Strategy.

Russell stated that the Communication Strategy received a lot of discussion during the government review. He stated that the existing MRP website would be maintained and updated to include as much information as possible (i.e. agenda items, documents, etc.). Perhaps there could be an e-mail address to a co-chair or committee representative for the broader community to contact them directly.

Jean-Marc reiterated that the Communication Strategy is an essential part of this process. Once the committee was established and underway there would be time to discuss the tools that could be used to engage the public. The DM stated that government believes that there is tremendous value in this process and is trying to move forward in the most economical and efficient way possible.

Other Comments

Kim McKinley was unable to attend the meeting, but called Loretta to express that she would like to see one on- and one off-reserve representative for Aboriginal representation on the Advisory Committee.