



SOUTH ATLANTIC ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

MINUTES OF the third STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING for the Dolphins of the kelp project (DOKE)

**HELD IN STANLEY – SAERI OFFICE
ON MONDAY THE 13TH OF FEBRUATY 2017 AT 12PM**

PRESENT:

Dr. Paul Brickle
Ms. Teresa McNeill
Dr. Marina Costa
Dr. Maria I Garcia Rojas
Dr. Paul Brewin
Dr. Andrew Stanworth
Mr. Grant Munro

Chaired by Dr. Paul Brickle

1. WELCOME

Dr Paul Brickle welcomed all attendees.

2. CONSTITUTION

There being a quorum present, Dr Paul Brickle declared the meeting duly constituted. Tara Pelembe, Dr Sonja Heinrich, and Dr Scott Baker sent their apologies as they could not attend the meeting. The agenda and the document presented during the meeting were sent to those who could not attend the meeting for feedback.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Recruitment update

All DOKE team members have arrived to Stanley.
Dr Marina Costa (project manager), arrived on the 20th of October 2016.
Dr Maria Isabel Garcia Rojas (project officer) arrived on the 26th of November 2016.
Lorna Hamilton and Connor Bamford (interns) arrived on the 19th of January 2017 and will remain until the 11th of April 2017.

3.2 Brief update on project activities in the last quarter

October

- Focal surveys were planned.
- The budget was structured and amended.
- Equipment lists were prepared and the chosen equipment was purchase and shipped.

November

- Focal surveys commenced on the 21st of November.
- Commerson's dolphins matching commenced.

December

- The first focal survey out of the four planned was successfully completed on the 22nd of December 2016 in the three areas identified (Stanley-Port Williams-Berkeley Sound / Choiseul Sound / Port Howard). There were a total of 13-survey days of effort for this research component over three sampling areas.
- Dr Scott Baker arrived to Stanley on the 31st of December 2016 to carry out genetic sampling.
- Peale's dolphins matching commenced.

January

- Genetic sampling was conducted throughout all three focal areas from the 2nd to the 14th of January 2017.
- All 60 Commerson's dolphin's samples provided in our research permit were collected over the three focal survey areas.
- Thirty genetic samples were collected for Peale's dolphins. These accounted for half of this species quota provided under our research permit. Peale's dolphin's samples was collected throughout one focal study area (Port Williams and adjacent waters) as these animals are usually absent in the other two focal study areas.
- The project manager and the project officer conducted a visual cetacean survey between the Falkland Island and South Georgia from the 21st of to the 30th of January 2017, onboard the Royal British Navy Ship 'H88 Enterprise'.
- Lorna and Connor carried on the Commerson's dolphins matching.

February

- West Falkland Focal Surveys onboard of the fishing vessel 'The Condor' planned and equipment was bought/built.
- Interns were inducted and trained for fieldwork.

3.3 Consideration and decision on recommendations to change survey platform

The following points were made when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of conducting island-wide surveys using a bubble window airplane or a vessel to estimate dolphin abundance.

- There is some potential to miss sighting during aerial surveys when dolphins are swimming inside the Kelp.
- Aerial surveys cover a large area during windows of suitable weather.
- There is a high likelihood that the vessel will be unable to work and remain stationary for long period of bad weather.
- Dolphins are highly attracted to vessel thus encounter rates and abundance estimates might

be positively biased, if vessel is used as observation platform.

- The use of airplanes might negatively bias the abundance estimate if dolphin availability is not taken into account. The use of land and/or helicopter observations of dive cycles and circle-back redetection during aerial survey might be used to account for the availability bias.

All partners agreed on the benefits to change island-wide survey platform from vessel to airplane.

Approval was also given prior to this meeting via email from Dr Scott Baker and Dr Sonja Heinrich.

3.4 **Budget amendment proposal**

A shift of 6 months for the commencement of the project was requested and as consequence the budget was re-allocated over a larger period between financial years. This did not take into account that the field work was planned in the earliest months of the 2017. The project is seasonally critical and field work cannot shift. In this meeting the request to bring the expenditure back into the surveying season was proposed and accepted (see table: Re-allocation between financial years).

Furthermore, a re-allocation of the budget between Darwin lines due to survey plan adjustment was proposed and accepted by the committee (see table: Re-allocation between lines).

A decision was made to accept the budget amendment.

<u>Re-allocation between financial years</u>				
Budget	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Start/end dates
Old	£137,966.00	£104,273.00	£27,675.00	Start:: 1 st April 2016 End: 30 th September 2018
Accepted	£167,966.00	£74,273.00	£27,675.00	Start:: 1 st April 2016 End: 30 th September 2018

<u>Re-allocation between lines</u>			
Budget Line	Old	Accepted	%
Staff Costs	126,998.00	117,107.34	-8%
Consultancy Costs	-	-	-
Overhead costs	26,536.00	30,650.60	+16%
Travel & Subsistence	29,480.00	17,338.44	-41%
Operating costs	72,000.00	80,315.83	+12%
Capital Equipment	8,100.00	8,685.87	+22%
Monitoring & Evaluation	-	0.00	-
Other costs	6,800.00	8,252.64	+21%

4. MATTERS ARISING

ACTION

- 4.1** The possibility to look into isotopes analysis in the future was brought forward by Paul Brickle. There is a need to discuss potential collaborators for this research component. Some of which may be generated by pre-established links SAERI was been building with partner universities such as Universidad Antofagasta in Chile (i.e. Dr Chris Harrod).
- Dr Paul Brickle and Dr Marina Costa will follow up
- 4.2** Online available resources that could complement prey isotope signatures were suggested.
- Dr Marina Costa and Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas will investigate
- 4.3** The possibility to collect feces samples was discussed.
- The appropriate net will be acquire and brought from Europe in April.
- 4.4** It was proposed that Dr Eli Poulin should be approached to provide logistic support and advice on the mailing of the samples via DHL.
- Dr Marina Costa and will contact Dr Poulin
- 4.5** The need to work on a media release to promote project progress was highlighted.
- Dr Marina Costa and Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas will prepare the media release
- 4.6** MOU templates are still to be sent to the partners to formalize deliverables and solidify the respective agreements, expectations and collaborations.
- Dr Marina Costa and Teresa McNeill will draft these documents
- 4.7** Monthly email updates will be sent to inform partners of the projects progress on a regular basis.
- Dr Marina Costa and Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas will send such updates once a month

5. NEXT QUARTER ACTIVITIES PROJECT

ACTION

- 5.1** Focal survey on board of the vessel “Condor” will be carried out covering the waters off the West Falklands, from the 21st of February to the 1st of March.
- Dr Marina Costa, Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas, Lorna Hamilton and Connor Bamford.
- 5.2** During the “Condor” survey, biopsy sampling will be carried out in the attempt to collect 30 samples of Peale’s dolphin.
- Dr Marina Costa, Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas, Lorna Hamilton and Connor Bamford.
- 5.3** Acoustic monitoring objectives and sampling design will be consolidated, and C-pods deployed to commence acoustic monitoring.
- Grant Munro, Dr Marina Costa and Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas will consult experts and design the sampling scheme

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| 5.4 | Aerial-based island-wide survey will be designed and carried out in March 2017. | Dr Marina Costa, Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas, Lorna Hamilton and Connor Bamford. |
| 5.5 | Matching for the first focal survey will be completed and preliminary analyses carried out. | Dr Marina Costa, Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas, Lorna Hamilton and Connor Bamford. |
| 5.6 | The Cetacean awareness day will be planned and delivered to the community. | Dr Marina Costa, Dr Maria I Garcia-Rojas, and Dr Caroline Weir (Falklands Conservation) |
| 5.7 | Genetic samples will be sent to Oregon State University for analysis. | Dr Marina Costa |

6. **GENERAL**

The first fieldwork season is being successfully undertaken despite the challenges imposed by the changes in survey design and short time to plan and carry out the field activities for this summer season.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is in three months on a date to be decided.

8. **CLOSURE**

There being no further business, Dr. Paul Brickle declared the meeting closed.

Signed as a correct record



Chairman