



Response of Oceans 2025 Executive board to the recommendations of the Programme Advisory Board made at its first meeting May 2008.

October 2008

Recommendation

1. To address with NERC concerns regarding transition to NERC's FAB regime, including securing national marine capability and the desirability of maintaining sufficient budget and close coordination across the marine community of marine research programme activities within the new NERC themes.

Response

- 1.1. The Executive Board now has a greater understanding of the FAB transition process which has been in development this year. The financial transition curves are known, the first theme action plans exist and calls are in planning.
- 1.2. The issue is how to maintain the spirit of cooperation and community coherence around Oceans 2025 and the profile for the science. The Executive Board will engage as a group with the theme leaders in a proactive way to enable a vision of the totality of Oceans 2025 to be presented. Jointly we need to identify existing relevant RP and NC investments and the contribution of these to the proposed actions or strategy challenges in the next round of Theme Action planning. The Centres must also prepare rolling work plans for their RP transition funding which will be reflected and funded through their centre activity resource plan (CARP) and approved annually by Chief Executive NERC.

Recommendation

2. To establish a clearer understanding of how NERC expects to review the science undertaken in the Oceans 2025 programme and evaluate the programmes impact – and hence establish appropriate performance indicators and information gathering. The PAB noted that it was not the role for PAB to review the science.

Response

- 2.1. NERC is now rolling out its new evaluation processes, which do not anticipate a formal review of Oceans 2025 per se. However the Executive board will seek to

be proactive in steering the process and will seek further assurances from NERC in Autumn 2008 regarding the process to be adopted.

- 2.2. The Executive Board captures the achievements of Oceans 2025 on a rolling basis within existing NERC reporting processes, including the NERC Research Outputs Database (ROD). ROD provides a means to record activities at the Oceans 2025 theme level, including research achievements, publications, science to policy and outreach measures.

Recommendation

3. To give attention to risk management and the updating of the programmes' risk register with particular attention to staff changes, ship reliability and availability, and the scope to direct spend according to programme developments.

Response

- 3.1. The Executive Board will develop a risk register at programme level in a similar format to that used by NERC, thus enabling key risks to feed directly into the NERC risk management system. The register will be formally reviewed quarterly.
- 3.2. Financial accountability is accorded vertically between NERC and individual Centres and that at the time of peer review the moderating panel was explicit that funding had been allocated in relation to science quality, and that transfers between themes were not permitted. However the Board will take action to map critical cross programme dependencies before 2012, taking account of the ramp down process and any opportunities for some themes to ramp more quickly than others if bid opportunities arise in the TAPs.

Recommendation

4. To clarify and highlight the international dimension of Oceans 2025, emphasizing links and leverage.

Response

- 4.1. The international links and leverage of Oceans 2025 is considerable and effective. The Board will take steps to emphasize this throughout the implementation process and in programme documentation, in particular through the knowledge exchange plan.

Recommendation

5. To develop a coherent communications strategy for Oceans 2025 that clearly sets out the questions to be addressed the key messages and the main audiences.

Response

- 5.1. The Executive Board agrees that a strong and coherent communication strategy is necessary. A draft knowledge exchange and communications strategy has been formulated for including in the Implementation plan. The Programme Advisory Board's views on this document will be invited during autumn 2008.

Recommendation

6. To consider new outreach mechanisms and tools to communicate Oceans 2025 to the widest range of key audiences, in particular to explore the opportunity to develop tools based on Google Earth.

Response

- 6.1. New approaches for outreach will be considered in the development and implementation of the communications strategy. Centres are also responsible for developing their own outreach activities taking account of international, national and regional initiatives.
- 6.2. An Oceans 2025 workshop to address coastal web portals and web data visualization (including Google Earth) will be held in October 2008.

Recommendation

7. To address the scope for further cross theme interactions and linkages – esp. coastal observatories and data interpretation and modeling.

Response

- 7.1. The Executive Board agrees the importance of addressing such linkages; programme wide events such as the annual science meeting provide one mechanism to enable the community to interact and identify synergies and opportunities.
- 7.2. The representatives of coastal observatories met in June 2008 to determine how to link into the UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy (UKMMAS). A further workshop planned in October. Efforts will also be made to investigate the scope for interaction on technological and procurement activities of coastal observatories.
- 7.3. The scope for additional workshops is also under consideration.

Recommendation

8. To consider options to access bathymetric data requirements where currently held in trading fund status organizations.

Response

- 8.1. This issue should be addressed primarily by the Government's Marine Science Coordination Committee MSCC

Recommendation

9. To encourage theme meetings using SOFI funding where appropriate and to consider whether the criteria for the use of these funds might be made more flexible to facilitate cross programme and programme/NERC theme interactions.

Response

- 9.1. Agreed, actions are in hand in discussion with NERC

Recommendation

10. To consider holding a meeting between the NERC theme leaders and key Oceans 2025 leaders.

Response

- 10.1. Agreed – see response at 1.2 above. In addition the Oceans 2025 community endeavors to engage proactively with the theme leaders at events, through consultations, discussion and bilateral interactions on an ongoing basis.