



ISMF Newsletter Summer 2018

Senator Gerry Horkan continues as ISMF Chair

We are very pleased that Senator Gerry Horkan of the Irish Seanad has agreed to continue as Chair of the ISMF for a second term running from 2018 – 2020. Gerry has been a great supporter of ISMF activities since taking up the role of chair in 2016. He has made much appreciated contributions to the ISMF Biennial Conference in Dún Laoghaire in summer 2016, chairing ISMF Steering Group meetings and workshops and championing ISMF interests at the final conference of the SIMCELT (Supporting Implementation of Marine Spatial Planning in the Celtic Seas) project which was held in Liverpool in November 2017. The ISMF Steering Group has warmly welcomed Gerry's continued leadership of the ISMF.

Future Celtic Seas Collaboration Workshop

In July 2017 the ISMF hosted a *Future Celtic Seas Collaboration Workshop* which was funded by the Liverpool Institute for Sustainable Coasts and Oceans. This brought together stakeholders involved in the PICSES, TPEA and Celtic Seas Partnership and SIMCelt projects and in Irish Sea Maritime Forum activities to discuss future collaboration at the Celtic Seas scale. The workshop concluded that much had been achieved by these initiatives and there was support for maintaining the momentum of past efforts. It also recommended that further investigations should be undertaken exploring:

- Whether there is interest from the formal marine planning and management mechanism in the Celtic Seas region in maintaining and developing links with a regional sea stakeholder platform such as the ISMF;
- If so what form such links might usefully take;
- Whether some redrawing of the geographical coverage and operational structure of the ISMF would help to facilitate connections; and
- Ideas about possible sources of funding for future activities

ISMF Key Stakeholder Review

In autumn 2017, the ISMF Secretariat undertook a Key Stakeholder Review in response to the recommendations from the Future Celtic Seas Collaboration Workshop. The review provided very helpful findings to guiding the future directions of ISMF activities. All stakeholders contacted expressed interest in continuing or developing links with the ISMF and encouraged ISMF activities focussed around issues of direct/common concern including Marine Spatial Planning, maritime ecology, blue growth/economy; and delivery of ecosystem based management in Irish Sea region. The Review also highlighted possible funding opportunities to extend the scope of ISMF activities which currently operate on a voluntary/sponsorship basis. In the short term, funding under European Maritime and Fisheries Fund emerged as a particular source that was worth further investigation.

EMFF Applications

Following up the findings of the ISMF Key Stakeholder Review three applications are currently being developed by the ISMF Secretariat in collaboration with the Severn Estuary Partnership, Cardiff University and the University of Ulster, targeted at EMFF funding in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The applications aim to extend the knowledge exchange and capacity building activities of the ISMF by drawing together and disseminating via the ISMF website key outputs from OSPAR, MSFD etc and recent Irish Sea related projects, hosting a series of Irish Sea CPD workshops and collating stakeholder views in order to update the Irish Seas Issues and Opportunities Report which was published by the ISMF in 2013.

2018 ISMF Biennial Conference

Initial preparations are also being made for the ISMF Biennial Conference that will take place in autumn 2018 in Cardiff. This will be the first ISMF Biennial Conference to be held in Wales. The objectives of the event are being devised to tie into key areas of Welsh Government activity that are also of significant interest to other Irish Sea jurisdictions and in particular Marine Planning, the development of a network of Marine protected areas and the well-being plans that are being developed by coastal authorities in Wales in response to the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. Details of the event will be posted on the ISMF website and circulated via the ISMF mailing list.

Please contact info@irishseamaritimeforum.org if you would like to receive details of the 2018 ISMF Biennial Conference and other updates on ISMF activities.

ISMF Secretariat

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