



Governance structures and guiding principles

Scope

This governance structures and guiding principles document is for the UK Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP). It should be treated as a live document, which will need reviewing annually.

Governance structures

A key factor in the success of the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP) is the role, standing and commitment of the Steering Group, Management Group and Working Groups, which together ensure that MCCIP achieves its overall aim. A dedicated, funded secretariat engages with all groups, and is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the work programme.

Steering Group (SG)

The primary function of the steering group is to provide a mechanism to deliver the MCCIP aim and objectives. The groups role is to own MCCIP and direct the work of partners, and the secretariat. All MCCIP partners are entitled to participate in the SG's work.

Management Group (MG)

The primary aim of the management group is to oversee the operational delivery of MCCIP, including finance and risk. The group works to ensure that the strategic direction of the partnership, as mandated by the SG through the business plan and steering group decisions, is adhered to.

Secretariat

MCCIP is supported by a permanent funded secretariat, which acts as a central source of information and focal point for MCCIP activities. The MCCIP Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the work programme, gathering information and producing a clear overview of effort and outcomes.

There are three MCCIP working groups:

Report Card Working Group (RC-WG)

A permanent group that delivers MCCIP marine climate change impacts updates, which have previously included full, and special topic, report cards.

Communication and Outreach Working Group (OAC-WG)

The aim of the Communication and Outreach working group is to develop a communication strategy for the MCCIP work programme and drive forward the dissemination and uptake of MCCIP outputs. The OAC-WG is a newly formed, permanent group, in response to recommendations from the MCCIP Phase III review.

Climate Smart Adaptation Group (CS-WG)

The group actively engages with marine and coastal stakeholders (e.g. conservation agencies or industry trade associations), to support adaptation and resilience building, and publish guidance documents. The group is convened on ad-hoc basis in response to specific needs from the user community.

Full terms of reference for the MCCIP Steering Group, Management Group and Working Groups are available in annex 1, along with a description of work undertaken by the Secretariat.

MCCIP guiding principles


Since 2005, MCCIP has been the primary independent provider of evidence and adaptation advice on marine climate change in the UK. The “Scientific Integrity and Independence Risk Management Scheme (SIIRMS)” formally describes MCCIP’s guiding principles for reporting on marine climate change impacts, and adaptation.

To mark 10 years of reporting at the science to policy interface, MCCIP published its four-step SIIRMS process that ensures scientific integrity, and independence, in its products.


Step 1: Information identification

	Risk Selection bias: ‘cherry-picking’ topics or research areas that support pre-held opinions	Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint setting of ‘information agenda’ • Transparent decisions 	MCCIP approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCCIP Steering Group, comprising 26 partners, identify the information need • Scope of information need is then refined through audited discussions with policy customers and science community
---	--	--	--

Step 2: Expert identification

	Risk Expert bias: selecting a narrow group of experts known for promoting certain views or hypotheses	Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive expert involvement • Clear instruction to authors to include representative range of opinion • Independent peer review process 	MCCIP approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional lead authors identified and approached • Lead authors are required to represent and work with community of experts in their field regardless of individuals’ opinions • Materials produced by authors are anonymously and independently peer reviewed and revised accordingly
---	--	--	---

Step 3: Information translation

	Risk Interpretation bias: those responsible for translating the information can introduce their own bias and opinion	Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear terms of reference and accountability • Scientists cross-check • Information and data audit 	MCCIP approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Card Working Group established - individuals mandated as experts, not representatives of their organisations • All summary information to be published shared with lead authors for cross-checking • All information and data made publically available (online) and any publications provided as open access in journals
---	---	---	--

Step 4: Information communication

	Risk Evidence ‘weighting’ bias: evidence or advice may be given too much credence or credibility	Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence assessment 	MCCIP approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead authors provide confidence rating as indication of uncertainty around topic • Simple language used to avoid ambiguity
---	---	---	---

Modified from Frost et al. 2017, "[Reporting marine climate change impacts: lessons from the science – policy interface.](#)"

The SIIRMS model will continue to underpin the delivery of independent, quality assured scientific outputs from MCCIP.

Annex 1: Steering Group, Management Group and Working Group ToRs and description of work undertaken by the secretariat.

Steering Group (SG) ToRs

1. Purpose

The primary function of the steering group is to provide a mechanism to deliver the MCCIP aim and objectives. The groups role is to own MCCIP and direct the work of partners and secretariat. All MCCIP partners are entitled to participate in the SG's work.

2. Steering Group Objectives

The objectives of the Steering Group are to:

- Oversee the development of the Partnership.
- Receive progress updates on MCCIP activities.
- Provide feedback on the performance of the MCCIP Secretariat as part of the review process.
- Delegate tasks to working groups as appropriate.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of the Business Plan.
- Provide sign-off for updates in the Business Plan and annexes.
- Communicate MCCIP messages to their respective organisations.
- Promote the value of MCCIP to relevant stakeholders and wider networks.
- Provide sign off for budget and deliverables, as proposed by the management group.
- Contribute to MCCIP working groups.

3. Membership

Each Partner organisation is entitled to be represented on the Steering Group. Partners comprise those stakeholders who have contributed financially to the partnership and/or are committed to providing a contribution "in kind".

Each member should be able to commit long-term the necessary time to Steering Group activities to maintain stability and functionality. In the event of a member not being available for a meeting, they may nominate one deputy who will have full delegation for the meeting.

Current MCCIP partners (as of 17/01/2020) are:

Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute; Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science; Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland; Environment Agency; Isle of Man Government; International Union for Conservation of Nature; Joint Nature Conservation Committee; Marine Institute, Ireland; Marine Biological Association and Marine Environmental Change Network; Marine Management Organisation; Marine Scotland; Met Office; National Environment Research Council; National Oceanography Centre; Natural England; Natural Resources Wales; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Scottish Environment Protection Agency; Scottish Natural Heritage; States of Guernsey; States of Jersey; and Welsh Government.

4. Reporting arrangements

The SG will report to policy and decision makers across their organisations, including reporting to relevant external bodies such as the Marine Science Co-ordination Committee (MSCC).

5. Meetings

Steering Group Meetings will typically be held twice per year. The Spring meeting will be to consider priorities for the coming FY, and an Autumn meeting for reviewing progress and forward planning. Meetings may be hosted by one or more members at different venues across the UK. Meeting papers will be co-ordinated by the MCCIP Secretariat and sent to members at least one week in advance of the meeting where possible.

Management group (MG) ToRs

1. Aim

The primary aim of the management group is to oversee the operational delivery of MCCIP.

The group will work to ensure that the strategic direction of the partnership, as mandated by the SG through the business plan and steering group decisions, is adhered to.

2. Objectives

The management group is tasked with:

- Overseeing the smooth operational delivery of the MCCIP work programme (note that the ARC / CSW groups will still have responsibility for *delivering* report cards and CSW outputs).
- Receiving progress updates on deliverables and outreach activities.
- Responding to ad-hoc requests emerging from full SG meetings.
- Finances and risk management.
- Overseeing programme reviews and the development of future business plans.

3. Membership

The Management Group (MG) includes the MCCIP and WG chairs, along with the secretariat as ex-officio members. A small number of additional volunteers, on a rotating basis, will be asked to support the activities of the Management Group.

4. Reporting arrangements

The management group will report back to the SG as an agenda item at every SG meeting.

5. Meetings

The management group will meet remotely 4 times a year (within a month before and after each SG meeting). This will help ensure that the secretariat has access to guidance and support at regular intervals.

Report Card Working Group (RC-WG) ToRs

1. Aim

The primary aim of the Report Card Working Group (RC-WG) is to oversee the operational delivery of MCCIP report cards, which have previously included full, and special topic report cards.

2. Objectives

The RC-WG oversees the technical delivery of MCCIP report cards in accordance with the MCCIP 'Scientific Integrity and Independence Risk Management Scheme' (SIIRMS).

Specific objectives are as follows:

- Contribute to the development of the new platform for MCCIP evidence base updates.
- Oversee the production of MCCIP special topic report cards, in accordance with the stated information need identified by the SG and consulted stakeholders.
- Identify scientific experts to provide the scientific evidence base for MCCIP report cards (authors and reviewers).
- Translate the evidence provided by scientific experts into concise, un-biased messages that can be readily understood by non-technical audiences.
- Develop concepts for the format and style of printed and online report cards.
- Liaise with the MCCIP communications group to plan launch activities.

3. Reporting arrangements

The RC-WG will report back to the SG as an agenda item at every SG meeting. For all report cards, the RCWG will present a production plan for sign off by the SG. Once the production process is completed, the MCCIP chair will be requested to sign off final products for launch.

4. Membership

Each member should be able to commit long-term the necessary time to RC-WG activities to maintain stability and functionality. The expectation is that members will sign up to complete one delivery cycle for a card.

Membership is limited to 6 members in total (including chair) and individuals are mandated based on their relevant expertise, not to act as representatives for their organisations. This limit on numbers and the focus on expertise is intended to help ensure that the working group is functional and stable and operates as a neutral clearing house for the evidence base.

5. Meetings

Meetings will principally be held remotely, and the total time commitment by partners is estimated to be approximately 5-10 days per year.

Meeting papers will be co-ordinated by the MCCIP secretariat in consultation with the RCWG chair.

Climate Smart Working Group (CSW-WG) ToRs

1. Aim

The aim of the Climate Smart Adaptation WG (CSW-WG) is to deliver MCCIP CSW deliverables, principally through a climate smart report card (or similar related product).

The group will actively engage with identified 'communities of interest' at the coast or at sea, to support adaptation and resilience building. 'Communities of interest' could be focussed around traditional industry sectors (e.g. ports or fisheries), or to support marine and coastal planning and conservation.

CSW activities will be initiated on an ad-hoc basis, in response to emerging needs from user communities.

2. Objectives

- Planning and delivery of CSW outputs
- Engaging with communities of interest, including through facilitation of stakeholder workshops.
- Provision of expert advice on relevant climate change impacts and adaptation responses.
- Distillation of key issues into sector guidance documents.
- Promotion of outputs.

3. Membership

The CSW-WG will consist of the Secretariat, and other members drawn from the SG on an ad-hoc basis, depending on their relevant interests, and expertise, for the topic or sector being explored.

4. Reporting arrangements

The CSW-WG will report back to the SG as an agenda item at every SG meeting. For all report cards, the CSW-WG will present a production plan for sign off by the SG. Once the production process is completed, the MCCIP chair will be requested to sign off final products for launch.

5. Meetings

Meetings will principally be held remotely, and the total time commitment by partners is estimated to be approximately 5-10 days per year.

Communication Working Group (CWG) ToRs

1. Aim

The aim of the Communication working group (CWG) will be to promote the MCCIP, drive the dissemination of MCCIP products and evaluate each products impact and use.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the CWG are to:

- Develop and deliver the MCCIP communication strategy.
- Identify MCCIP's key stakeholders to guide targeted dissemination activities.
- Work in a timely manner to promote the work of MCCIP using appropriate communication methods including social media, newsletters and the website.
- Work alongside the MCCIP Secretariat to oversee the launch of major MCCIP outputs (i.e. Annual Report Cards and Special Topic Cards).
- Evaluate the WG's activities on an annual basis and provide feedback on how messages for MCCIP are being received and acted upon by the marine stakeholder community.
- Explore additional methods for communicating MCCIP work, for example infographics or blog posts.

3. Reporting arrangements

The CWG will report back to the MCCIP Steering Group (SG) as an agenda item at every SG meeting.

4. Membership

Membership of the CWG is expected to be provided 'in kind' and individuals are mandated based on their relevant expertise, not to act as representatives for their organisations.

Each member should be able to commit long-term the necessary time to CWG activities to maintain stability and functionality. Time commitment from members is anticipated to be around 5-10 days per annum.

The CWG chair will be required to commit up to 5 additional days per year to assist with planning meetings and supporting the secretariat.

5. Meetings

Meetings will be held approximately four times a year, remotely or face to face as decided by the chair and will be used to set out the communications agenda for the year and to finalise the launch plans for upcoming MCCIP products. Most meetings will be done remotely, with face-to-face meetings less regular or likely attached to Steering Group meetings where possible.

Meeting papers will be co-ordinated by the MCCIP secretariat in consultation with the CWG chair.

General description of work undertaken by the secretariat

MCCIP is supported by a dedicated Secretariat, which is responsible for the daily running of MCCIP, gathering information and producing a clear overview of effort and outcomes. The permanent Secretariat began 1st December 2005 and in Phase IV will continue from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2025.

Activities that the Secretariat leads on:

- Service SG: Co-ordinate planning of meetings, production of minutes, key documents.
- Report on finances, planning and risk.
- Support and co-ordinate the delivery of agreed products.
- Dissemination of key documents and associated social media activity.
- Updating / maintaining the MCCIP website.
- Production of newsletters and updating / maintaining contact lists.
- Promotion of MCCIP, through contributions to articles, conferences and workshops and representation as marine climate change experts in related initiatives, as agreed with the SG e.g. UKCP / CCRA / NAP groups.
- Collating evidence for evaluation reports and Phase IV review.
- Project management

Activities that are out of scope of the Secretariat are:

- The secretariat cannot operate outside of the costed work programme (for example, to produce ad-hoc reports).
- The secretariat is not the decision maker body for e.g. dates / venues for launch of products, initiation/cessation of products, direction of MCCIP, who attends meetings, who joins Partnership, who are on the WGs.
- The secretariat is not the sole / principal fundraiser.
- The secretariat does not provide data or additional research.
- The secretariat is not an external lobbying group.

As requirements from the Secretariat change over time, resources will need to respond flexibly as determined by regular reviews of staffing profile.