Pre- and post-consenting environmental surveys

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• Introducing Adaptive Management
• Pre-consent surveys
• Post-consent surveys
• Lessons learned by the RiCORE project
Adaptive Management

• Reducing uncertainty

• Improving confidence in assessments

• Tolerance thresholds of impact

• Avoid DRIPy monitoring

• Affordable
Learning by Doing

The Adaptive Management Cycle applied to MRE projects

Pre-consent surveys, impact assessment & consent decision

Post-consent surveys, planning & data collection

Learning to either inform future plans or adjust measures at existing projects.
MRE projects’ pre-consenting stage includes

- Preliminary site characterisation
- EIA scoping exercise

What is currently required?
How to improve pre-consenting efficiency?

- Workshop
- Discussion of existing methodologies and practices

Review of survey methodologies
- Listing innovative technologies
- Cost analysis

Guidance
Advice on the scope and intensity of monitoring / data collation
Pre-consent legal requirements in EU Member States

- Tend to be established on a case-by-case basis
- More projects installed imply more prescriptive requirements
- For some receptors, monitoring duration is the only prescriptive requirement

Discussion on the need for more than one year data vs data representativeness

RiCORE 1st workshop - Bilbao
Potential for using emerging and innovative monitoring technologies

- High-Definition photography and video
- Unmanned Aerial Systems
- Remotely Operated Vehicles
- High-frequency sonar
- The FLOW, Water column and Benthic Ecology 4-D (FLOWBEC-4D)
- Telemetry and other remote transmitters
- PAM devices
- VMS to monitor vessel traffic and fishing activity
- RADAR

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Standardised costs of visual and acoustic cetacean survey methods

Seabirds and marine mammals are often the most challenging and controversial of the several receptors to overcome
Pre-consent surveys

Guidance: assumptions

- Pre-consent data: to inform a decision about the acceptability of a project
- Site characterisation data: unlikely to provide a baseline for assessing post-consent change
- Prescribing the survey duration unable to meaningfully improve confidence in data
- One year of data (or none at all) can be proportionate depending on context

Guidance: contents

- Analysis of existing data and survey planning
- Survey periods and spatial coverage
- Efficient methodologies and sampling frequency
- Data analysis
Technical solutions for turning off the DRIP

• Question led approach

• Study design

• Risk appetite informed by rates for false results

• Meta-analysis can provide cost savings
Wider solutions for turning off the DRIP

• risk-averse institutional cultures
• technical knowledge/skills
• overly precautionary assessments
• coherence with N2k

Policies that promote an Adaptive Management approach (e.g. S, D&M)
Lessons learned

• Pre-consent a flexible and proportionate approach can be both informative and more cost-effective

Post-consent ‘learning by doing’
• co-ordinated monitoring programmes to focus on key scientific uncertainties
• demonstration studies
• technical skills needed
• risk-appetite