

## Oamaru Penguin Symposium 2014

### Workshop 2 - Achieving priority actions for penguins

July 10<sup>th</sup> 2014

Facilitator – Helen Otley

Minutes – Inger Perkins

#### Abstract

The aim of this workshop is to start a conversation among penguin researchers and managers as to how to achieve those top priorities identified in Workshop 1. With today's greater reliance on community groups, the universities emphasis on theoretical rather than applied research, and recent staff and funding cuts at DOC, addressing conservation and management needs for penguins is more challenging than ever before. The community of penguin researchers and managers need to work collaboratively. In this workshop we aim to identify ways this could occur, and how current collaborations could be enhanced.

Duration – 1.5hrs

#### Questions posed

To address all the management & research needs, the penguin community needs to work collaboratively

Penguin community = us, people who work on penguins

Collaborate = share, co-operate, exchange, support, partner

How can we work better together?

Who else needs to be part of our penguin community?

Wide support for proposition that collaboration is the key to achieve more for penguin conservation than we do now.

To collaborate effectively, this group needs funding sources and the former biodiversity funds allocation.

#### What does collaboration look like?

Sue Murray: YEP – consultation group – an independent body, facilitated by DOC with Phil in the Chair. They meet 4 x p.a. and meetings are open to all with an interest in YEP. It provides a forum for discussion, development, research and vision. They hold an annual symposium, which this year is on 2 August. The symposium will be focussed on where to next – the purpose of the group, frequency of meetings, target audience/membership. It has been very successful with 90 on the mailing list. 5-15 people attend meetings. Minutes are disseminated to all – “big value”.

Phil Seddon - the general principle of communication is key, keeping lines of communication open, allowing groups to get together, ensuring all voices are heard.

Personal collaboration is effective – Rosalie Goldsworthy and Massey University oil rescue team – it's important to maintain connections over a long period. When relationships aren't going well, follow them up, even when conversations are tricky. It's the conversations that maintain relationships through tricky times and over long periods.

Kyle Morrison – Masters/PhD students often partner successfully with CRIs and community groups, often providing multiple years of dedicated effort – so use students. Universities often provide students to do projects and learn more about local penguins; they can provide marvellous data.

DaveMcFarlane – relationships with other conservation groups are important. The YEPT collaborates every day with other conservation trusts, F&B etc.

### **Weaknesses or problems of collaboration**

Problems with student research – only in Dept for short term and after they leave it can be difficult to follow up, e.g. trying to find samples again. It's important to set up contracts or clear understanding through written agreements from the start to agree storage and access to samples etc.

Kerry-Jayne Wilson – the partnership needs to be with the student's supervisor, not the student to ensure collaboration continues beyond the departure of the student. Also, collaboration with Lincoln for the WCPT has faded as the main link (KJ) had less to do with the University. Personal relationships are essential.

Chris Challies - a link to the supervisor is essential with broad rules of engagement. Also need assurance that students are well informed and have integrity.

Sue Murray - the success of community groups is based on collaboration and individuals are the key to collaboration.

Collaboration has been key to the YEPT's application to the Next Foundation for \$2.5m for 7 research projects related to the marine ecology of YEPs, to be undertaken by Massey and Otago scientists over 5 years. It is a huge collaboration, which is essential for a big ticket item such as this project.

Phil Seddon - none of our work can happen in isolation, e.g. DOC permits are required, land owner access is required. The terrestrial side of the work is relatively low cost. In the marine environment, costs have escalated. E.g. a TDR (Time Depth Recorder) costs \$3000 and there is always the risk of losing them before data can be collected. They must almost be seen as consumable items.

Discussions among the YEP group and Phil's students following the last two year's major concerns (disease and starvation) highlighted the questions that are always underlying our understanding – what we don't know, and this has led to the collaboration on the research proposal and funding application.

### **What is missing?**

The pathology side of Massey University's work is not well understood and it would be helpful to be clear on what they do and how they can assist.

NIWA are also doing seabird research.

The tourism community are worried about the impact of reductions in the penguin populations on their business but are not always connected to the solution (though some are).

MPI – fishing industry groups. YEPT has recently collaborated on a video with this group “Southern Seabird Solutions” to make connections with the fishing industry and get past real or perceived conflict.

Local Councils.

Funders – who could have been listening to ideas about collaboration.

More DOC people who have an interest in penguin conservation than those present.

DOC Conservation Services Programme – also links to fisheries and the by-catch issue.

This group needs to look at opportunities to connect with others to strengthen the collaborative approach, while also targeting priorities discussed earlier.

KJW sent notices regarding the Seabird Priorities workshop to MPI, fishing industry and DOC Conservation Services Programme fisheries people. DOC and MPI representatives attended most for only part of the workshop but no one from fisheries attended. DOC Conservation Services and MPI were invited to the Penguin Workshops but only Andy Roberts from Conservation Services attended. It has been very hard to connect to these groups.

Succession planning is needed for the people involved.

The success of long term progress with DOC is generally anchored around individual relationships and quite a bit of effort on both sides. There needs to be good trust between the organisations, which needs time and effort to achieve. It can come unstuck with over commitment and too much going on.

Conservation Inc. conference – lessons learned: don’t look at collaborative relationships as something finite or closed. They must be allowed to evolve and develop, e.g. with DOC, Universities. Avoid being tied to a written document and allow others to join in.

### **When collaboration isn’t the answer**

Rosalie Goldsworthy - It’s important to identify when collaboration is needed, which may be a few steps down the road. You need to decide what you’re trying to achieve, then look at ways to achieve it, one of which may be collaboration. For her project, obstructions were placed in the way by others in the penguin community, so they pulled their heads in and got on with the work in hand.

In order to organise collaboration with volunteers, staff are needed, as it can be time-consuming, and therefore costly.

Shireen Helps - you need to see the problem, then just get on with dealing with it. But they have a wonderful relationship with DOC, which is very important to them.

### **Funding sources**

Phil Seddon - How are current penguin collaborations funded or resourced? There is lots of competition for limited amount of funds. There is a danger that penguin conservation groups are competing with each other. Ideally, we would work as one community, rather than individual researchers and community groups. Working collaboratively may lead to greater access to bigger funds. There may be greater power for the group to access other funds if they were more coordinated in their approach.

Sue Murray- they have come across one group that is interested in funding a survey of a variety of penguins, not just YEP. We need to find the right button for funders.

Grant applications take a lot of time and are often unsuccessful.

There are a limited number of places to apply to and each will have specific priorities and conditions.

The application needs to be tailored to fit the criteria, which can be very time consuming.

We need to education the penguin community in the subject of fund-raising, and education New Zealanders about philanthropy.

Mainland, YEPTs founding sponsor, saw an increase in sales with the link to the Trust and didn't want to throw that collaboration away during bad times. Lots of time is spent on the relationship and reassurance that each is important to the other.

This community could do with more opportunities to hear from people like the Mainland Marketing Manager who spoke at Conservation Inc. [Can the Mainland presentation from Conservation Inc. be shared? Powerpoint? Notes?]

Those in the commercial environment receive requests for funding all the time. We need to justify – what's in it for the business? We need to find a contact and then provide them with ammunition to sell the idea to their bosses and reasons to present our proposal.

The penguin community needs to upskill in this area. We need to know what we can offer the business. We need to learn the right language and have corporate skills among our Trustees. Andy Roberts (DOC Conservation Services Director): Kakapo Recovery project – Aluminium smelter sponsorship – 23 years, \$300k pa. Two main drivers – (a) the company wanted to demonstrate to their shareholders that they cared for the environment and that they had an ethic of action. They were predominantly North American and the messages they wished to present were “we care” and “we are supporting this project”. And (b), they wanted to go to the NZ government and present the company as a good corporate citizen. They also provided staff with conservation experience with the kakapo. Then the recovery team asked whether the smelter company could help in other ways. They asked if the smelter business planning framework could work for the recovery project. They sat down with managers, who brought new problem solving solutions from a business management perspective.

Message - when the pressure is on, explore what a partner or sponsor could bring in other services, that may be no cost to them, but provide huge value to you.

e.g. YEPT working with organisations to provide services: Vodafone loaned staff for 3 months to work on adverts, website etc. Local council helped with a large waste collection. Look for opportunities and promote partnerships.

Jo Hiscock - seeking basic level quantitative monitoring and research in the subantarctics. MPA boundaries are often defined without knowledge of foraging areas. Penguin research is essential to provide valid information to the MPF for Otago.

CCPFund – complex application, took a long time and a degree of expertise. Volunteers volunteer for the project, not for form filling, so please make it simpler and understand the needs of Trusts. Andy pledged to take this message to DOC's DG.

Sue Murray - she has received a note from the funds people advising that the Minister determined both the process and the complexity of this funding application round.

Andy Roberts - DOC is failing if it does not make it easy for volunteer groups to complete the forms.

Sue Murray - This fund supports salaries. 70% of YEPT annual expenditure comprises salaries. Many funds don't cover salaries but the conservation outcomes are greater if you have staff.

### **Penguin Forum**

Dave Houston set up a website 4 years ago but it was not used. Various people agreed that on line data sharing and a bibliography would be useful.

Birdlife International provides an opportunity to share penguin tracking data.

Ideally there will be an opportunity to connect the NZ penguin community.

Note – Helen Otley and Kerry-Jayne Wilson proposed the workshops for the symposium. Members of this community can direct content for future symposia – discuss with Philippa Agnew.

It may be useful to have a little/blue penguin group/contact list.

Philippa Agnew suggested using the symposium website.

Others suggested setting up a google or yahoo or yammer group where questions and comments could be posted and occasional emails will alert members to a post.

Contact that is little and often would help with sharing and collaborating.

Stefanie Grosser suggested that equipment may also be made available for sharing, e.g. GPS units and cameras may have been purchased for a specific project that has ended.

Comment was invited – how often should this group meet? Should it be linked to the YEP symposium? (probably not) Is timing of this symposium at every other year OK? Yes.