This Discussion Forum was held to allow RFDCs, Coastal Groups, the EA and other key stakeholders to consider and express views as part of the Defra consultation on the EA Strategic Overview (EASO) role for sea flooding and coastal erosion. The slides used on the day are attached at Annex A and are referred to below in relation to the relevant sessions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DAY

Sarah Nason opened by welcoming all present. She described the EASO objectives in the consultation paper, its background and context by reference to slides 2-4. She emphasised that Defra were undertaking a genuine consultation and wanted to listen to all the views expressed on the day and in formal response to the consultation in order to help Ministers to decide upon the best model.

CLARIFICATION OF THE MODELS DESCRIBED AND FIRST REACTIONS (SLIDES 5-10)

David Wright set out briefly the Government’s proposed model as summarised in the slides 5-10.

Ron Eckersley said that he was offering an essentially personal view “from the heart” that:

- The coastal groups model in the consultation paper does not reflect what was intended (see further comment from Steve McFarland below).
- Coastal groups welcome and embrace appropriate change but they did not feature in the consultation document which was a mistake; they should be included in any future model.
- SMPs should not be decoupled from other LA responsibilities, including planning control.
- Do not diminish the local democratic framework. Democracy can take some time to deliver, but it is desirable including in SMP delivery (on which we need to learn lessons).
- He welcomed the role of RFDCs but they needed to be linked to the coastal groups model.
- CGs might be reduced in number to become more regional, maybe linked to RFDC areas.
- Local knowledge is important in delivery and understanding issues.
- LAs need a vision and confidence for their future involvement.

Steve McFarland said that the consultation paper did not properly describe the intention of the coastal groups model. It was not intended that sea flooding responsibilities would be taken away from the EA, but they would be considered by the coastal groups (along with coastal erosion); RFDCs would retain responsibility for fluvial flooding only. Delivery of sea flooding and coastal erosion works would be by the existing delivery bodies ie EA and LAs as appropriate. There was a need to capture the best skills and capacity where they existed. He added that there was considerable concern that a lot of the skills in LAs would be lost under the Government’s proposed model. He also considered that local
people tended to know who was responsible for what on the coast and their supposed confusion with the present arrangements was often overstated (though there was more confusion about responsibility for rivers). *(Sarah Nason welcomed clarification on the Coastal Groups model but added that Ministers might find it hard to accept fluvial and sea flooding being managed in separate administrative frameworks given the emphasis placed in Making Space for Water on the need for a holistic approach to flood and coastal erosion risk management.)*

In discussion the following points were made:

**Local levy/funding**

- Concern that Government funding for coastal erosion will reduce or disappear.
- We should not rely on local levy funding. It has worked reasonably well for local flooding activity but, as levy is not matched by RSG, LAs will be unable to find more for coastal erosion.
- National funding was needed, via EA.
- Recent Government cuts in EA funding will impact on LAs’ willingness to pay local levy.
- The decision to remove LFDCs meant councils’ say had reduced and they were more remote from the decision making process.
- Local funding does not encourage the necessary strategic approach (evidence cited of a non-strategic approach in North Normandy).

*(In response to these points Sarah Nason emphasised that the core programme of funding for coastal erosion works would remain. At issue was simply whether councils on RFDCs should be able to agree local levy to fund minor coast protection works (as they can now for flooding), to supplement the main programme of Government funded works. This would need to be agreed with DCLG who were concerned about breaching the principle of “no unfunded new burdens”).*

**Roles and responsibilities of LAs and EA**

- N Devon and Somerset CG recognised that LAs had lost engineering expertise and were content for EA to take the lead in the CG.
- It is important that LAs play a leading role in engagement and intelligent client role.
- The consultation document is unnecessarily critical of LAs in delivery and financial management as compared to EA; need to work together and give LAs long-term confidence of continued involvement in partnership with EA and Defra.
- Active LAs, and expenditure patterns, show where the work has most needed to be done.
- Concerns re “contracting back” of coastal erosion work – COWs cited as and example where there had been a lack of continuity and agreements to contract back had been withdrawn with little notice. *(In response Sarah Nason said that provided LAs retained coast protection responsibilities concurrently with EA, they would be doing the work under these powers, not under contract. COWs had been re-classified as main river and so became solely an EA responsibility and therefore any work done by LAs had to be under contract to the EA, which was subject to EU procurement rules.) [David Rooke echoed this view in a later comment]*
- Concern that split responsibilities for sea flooding and coastal erosion would lead to many changes over small areas of coastline (13 in Canterbury CC area). Goes against idea of clarification.
- East Lindsey DC had paid EA to take on its sea defence responsibilities; same approach could be applied elsewhere with EA taking on all LA responsibilities.
• There are complex technical issues in managing coastal assets and need to ensure this is adequately resourced in any transfer of responsibility – consultants not always well placed to understand local issues.

Relationships between coastal groups and RFDCs/EA
• Coastal groups should be retained perhaps under the RFDCs as both need to work together.
• Need for formal links between RFDCs and coastal groups.

David Rooke said EA:
• Welcome the direction of travel in the consultation document, including the Government’s proposed model (subject to some minor points).
• Model is a clear and logical approach for delivering a sustainable coastline and is in line with EA’s existing flood defence Supervisory duty and their Flood Risk Management Strategy.
• Support the coastal groups work (EA staff and RFDC members generally sit on them) and that they have a future role to play in coastal management.
• Want to take on a lead role for SMPs and consider that making them statutory documents would give them greater status in coastal management.
• Need new enforcement powers in legislation (and funding) to deliver the EASO.
• Recognise the crucial importance of stakeholder and community engagement – LAs have a key role to play in helping to achieve this.
• Want to work in partnership with LAs in delivery, within the strategic framework set by EA.
• EA has capacity and procurement skills and can use these to work in partnership with LAs and key stakeholders in better delivery.
• Recognise need for consultants, and for expert clients to challenge and oversee them.
• Procurement practices had been praised in the Defra ZBR and would plan to share these with LAs (some of whom already use similar approaches).
• Had some coastal expertise but needed to develop more in some areas.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The Role and Production of Shoreline Management Plans (slide 12 refers)

David Wright opened the discussion by referring to slide 12 as issues for consideration in relation to SMPs. The key question was the last point on the slide; whether in order to do all that Defra considered SMPs should achieve in terms of a long term, sustainable vision for the coast, the EA needed to lead in production of all of them.

Steve McFarland responded by reference to the SMPs with which he had been involved. He agreed with Ron Eckersley that it would be a mistake to decouple them from other LA responsibilities. He added that there were limited numbers of people around who could lead on SMPs and that consultants, while understanding the procedural guidance, often did not understand local issues. LAs had a vital input here, and also in actively engaging local communities in the impacts for them of the SMP; it was not just about agreeing the technical aspects. It was also important to understand that SMPs are produced by a Steering Group comprising all key players including EA and English Nature – LA planners are also included as well as an EA planning representative. It made sense for this Steering Group arrangement to continue with EA or LA as lead authority, whoever was
best placed in the area concerned. However, EA could help ensure better consistency of SMPs with EA also playing a fuller role in coastal groups and SMP delivery.

Jim Hutchison commented that the guidance on Second Generation SMPs sought to address the deficiencies identified in the first round (including some of the issues identified in slide 12). He recognised that better links to the planning process were needed along with better links to delivering nature conservation interests. Effective (and resourced) stakeholder engagement was also needed especially where the coastline was likely to change. And the affordability of an SMP is critical to its delivery. These lessons had been learned and picked up in the new procedural guidance.

The following further points were made in discussion:

**Communication and engagement**
- SMPs can lead to fear and concern meaning that proper stakeholder engagement, and it was vital to understand people issues as well as coastal processes.
- It was also necessary to engage and communicate at the right time; if done prematurely (eg with managed retreat) this could create unnecessary worry.
- CFMPs had lower levels of public and council engagement than SMPs; important to retain democratic input into SMPs.
- LA, being closely connected to their communities, can play a vital role in SMP communication strategies.
- A national policy on adaptation to change is needed, tools had to be provided along with guidance on how to engage with people affected.

**Role of SMPs in the planning process**
- SMPs need to a key building block and a material consideration in statutory local and regional planning documents (LDFs and RSSs).
- Making SMPs statutory would be difficult, given the potential for them to say different things from the LDFs and RSSs.
- It was important for SMPs to be good quality documents for them to be properly embedded in the planning process, perhaps as supplementary planning guidance.

**Responsibility for producing SMPs**
- The new procedural guidance note does not specify which authority (EA or LA) should lead on SMPs, but it was agreed that the best equipped authority should lead, as they do now. However, consistency of approach is vital and the EA could help ensure this.
- The proposed non-statutory map of who does what would be useful and should be produced early on. It might incorporate information regarding other statutory undertakers and bodies such as highways authorities and Railtrack.
- Blackpool Council intends to act as SMP lead authority for the whole of the North West [5 SMPs]. This demonstrates that effective partnership arrangements are already in place, that skills already exist in some LAs, and these need to be captured in any future arrangement.
- EA’s ability to produce SMPs was demonstrated in their Anglian region where EA led on 3/6 SMP1s in full partnership and they expect to lead on the same number of SMP2s.
Affordability

- How would affordability be determined? (In response Sarah Nason said that it would be necessary to make reasonable assumptions of future funding levels over the 20 year epoch, taking account of priorities across the country.)

Phil Rothwell closed the discussion for the EA, saying that:

- SMPs were key to long term strategic planning on the coast.
- EA would prefer them to be statutory to ensure that they played a major role in the planning process. He recognised the need to persuade Government, and perhaps there could be other approaches to making them statutory.
- Consistency of approach was important. EA could ensure this by scrutinising and signing off every SMP, even if they did not write them all.
- EA welcomed the coastline maps, which would provide clarity on who was responsible for frontages.
- CFMPs had not excited the public as much as SMPs as there was more natural affinity to the coast. CFMPs also tend to be less prescriptive about outcomes than SMPs.
- Stakeholder dialogue was important – those explaining SMPs need to understand both the coast and people.
- It was also important that SMPs achieved desired outcomes; different approaches may work in different areas (eg that cited by Blackpool).
- He had identified no show-stoppers regarding SMPs in the discussion and thought that agreement on the way forward could be reached.

Procurement, delivery and maintenance

David Wright opened the discussion by referring to slide 13 as issues for consideration in relation to procurement, delivery and maintenance.

Ted Edwards responded by expressing disappointment that LAs were poorly represented in the consultation paper. He highlighted in particular what he considered to be defects in the data on project cost increases. Some data were anomalous or missing and there seemed to be basic clerical errors in the spreadsheets. Procurement was improving in both LAs and EA and scheme development costs were similar in both types of organisation. LAs combined all the scheme delivery roles and can project manage schemes on the ground. He hoped that EA would not insist on doing all the procurement, especially when LAs have strong in-house skills. He also pointed out that LAs already have good and effective relationships with small, local contactors and that these should continue as appropriate. He was also concerned that EA would ensure that there were effective partnership arrangements (agreed COWs responsibilities had been withdrawn with little notice).

Tim Griffiths (EA) said it was good to see the Environment Agency’s approach to construction procurement commended but it had to be appreciated that this had taken some time to achieve and further improvements needed to be delivered. He believed there also must be some scope for LAs to improve so there was potential for the EA and the LAs working together with effective programming and co-ordination of procurement to achieve savings. He considered the general direction of the consultation document to be correct.

He added that the devil really was in the detail with roles and responsibilities needing to be clearly defined. It was not simply a case of LAs tapping into EA national frameworks - they
were not appropriate in all instances and in any event LAs could not directly legally utilise them as they stood at present. Timescales and savings targets needed to be realistic - those suggested in the consultation document were over-optimistic.

The following further points were made in discussion:

**Works programmes and funding**
- There was no point in having a multi-year works programmes without a multi-year funding settlement, as it would raise expectations which were not delivered (*in response, Sarah Nason said that this would be considered in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007*).
- There may be a tendency among consultants and contractors to “over-design” to cover themselves against possible litigation; it was necessary to employ good people who as intelligent clients can perform challenge function and ensure vfm.
- Will cuts exercise form the new baseline in CSR07? (*Sarah Nason said that Defra would need to consider priorities with the Department when it received its settlement. There were also issues to be considered regarding the classification of capital and maintenance expenditure.*)
- It was necessary to have consistent standards and clear responsibilities with money being spent where risk was highest (not where the most vociferous people lived).

**Distinctions between capital and maintenance work**
- It would be necessary to have a clear understanding about what is meant by “major” and “minor” maintenance.
- Potential confusion for the public if there are mixed responsibilities for capital and maintenance works.
- Need a programme for capital and maintenance work, especially where these are linked – need also to examine the current separate funding streams.
- Some councils already spent more on maintenance than they received in RSG, the rest being found from the local purse.
- RSG was used both for maintenance and for employing staff in LAs, including those in the offices and some on site working on coastal defences. (*In response to these points Sarah Nason said that more thought was needed on capital and maintenance work, and its funding.*)

**Responsibilities of EA and LAs**
- There was no straightforward model and it was necessary to take decisions based on the circumstances eg engineering expertise available in LAs which we must be careful not to lose. Work could often be done more effectively by LAs than EA.
- Could EA cope with the additional workloads – they already find it hard to deal with planning applications? (*David Rooke said that EA were planning to recruit and train more staff of the right calibre but there are budget issues to resolve. Sarah Nason added that resources would be an issue for consideration in relation to the EA Strategic Overview.*)
- LAs have good relations with local contractors and need to have access to contractors in an emergency.

**Governance and role of RFDCs in coastal erosion risk management**

David Wright introduced this topic by reference to slide 14.
Brian Curtis responded by saying that coastal groups and the EA had met and generally agreed all the issues in the consultation paper in relation to "governance" with the exception of RFDCs being extended to cover coast protection. He pointed out that whilst agreement hadn't been reached he could see the possibility of agreement. His concerns at the moment were the transparency in the process, membership of the committee, best value and sustainability of delivery. He went on to confirm that with the EA, coastal groups and Defra working together on this a palatable solution could be achieved.

Frank Major added that:
- RFDC chairs fully supported of the strategic thrust in the consultation document, including EA becoming lead authority on the coast and combining sea and fluvial flooding and coastal erosion.
- It provided a great opportunity to provide an holistic approach, enabling economies of scale by using a national procurement policy via NCPMS as a best value model.
- Delivery would be more consistent and coherent, avoiding fragmentation of responsibilities and with greater clarity of who is responsible for what.
- The proposed model would allow a more co-ordinated approach to allow greater biodiversity on the coast.
- He originally thought SMPs should be statutory documents but was prepared to reconsider in the light of today’s discussion. They must play an important role in planning.
- EA have major role to play in SMPs as they are driven by good science.
- RFDCs provide an appropriate vehicle for coastal management, being statutory and executive committees of the EA and having public, open and transparent debates. They are a democratic fora with an LA majority and other appointees.
- Consultation and joint working with maritime DCs was essential given their local knowledge and this needed to be brought onto the RFDCs.
- RFDCs have made good use of local levy programmes in partnership with LAs.

The following further points were made in discussion:

**RFDC membership and links with coastal groups (CGs)**
- CGs were performing a vital role and cross-over membership links were needed between RFDCs and CGs.
- CG chairs might sit on RFDCs (and possibly elected members too) – facilitated by reducing numbers of CGs to make them more regional.
- RFDCs are not the only place where excellence is delivered.
- DCs not represented on RFDCs and sometimes a struggle to get appropriate local representation.
- RFDCs are not as democratic as portrayed – RFDC chairs are appointed and, unlike councillors, are not subject to election.
- Important not to attack local democracy.

**Levies and other funding issues**
- Levy funding should be shared between flooding and erosion, but no additional funding quantum was likely to be available.
- Levies are useful but should remain at low levels and not relied on for the main programme.
- Levies are bitterly argued over in some RFDCs with councils preferring to spend money on other services.
- Need for Government to provide certainty of funding.
- Autumn 2000 floods were necessary to create interest and commitment in relation to fluvial flooding.
- The ABI’s pressure on government about flood insurance has had a major impact on funding levels.
- Keep the funding simple.

**Other RFDC issues**

- Need more (and geographically smaller) RFDCs if their role is to be widened to ensure proper knowledge and understanding of all the local issues (call for two RFDCs in Southern Region).
- Retain title of “Regional Flood Defence Committees” just widen their role to coastal erosion eg by altering their terms of reference or standing orders.
- RFDCs have an important role to play in ensuring SMP delivery, but not in individual scheme design and delivery especially where LA doing a good job.
- RFDCs meetings are not held proximate to the issue under discussion – you cannot get more proximate than a district council who know the issues.
- LAAs do see flooding and coastal erosion as core services and want to retain – in Canterbury CC it was regarded as the 3rd highest priority (after waste/recycling and highways/footpaths).

**OTHER STAKEHOLDERS’ VIEWS**

**Martin Coulson (Ministry of Defence):** MoD own 180 sites on the UK coast and are critical to capability. They supported a long term vision and want to see a consistent and holistic approach and long term partnership which recognises the importance of sites. They supported the Government’s proposed model.

**Andrew St Joseph (NFU):** There is much concern about coastal erosion and flooding and there is a need to ensure issues are properly explained and discussed. The effect on individuals of loss of home, property and livelihood should be regarded as something more important than an unfortunate byproduct of making space for water. For those involved, the effect can be disastrous and the idea of managing space for water is a better concept.

In Essex, if people whose homes and property were protected by sea defences each contributed £10 per annum, it would more than double the present maintenance budget. So things are currently affordable. That said, the NFU does not stand for ‘defend everything’. The logic of some managed re-alignment is understood, but this should be properly designed and have local input. It is necessary to put messages across properly, recognising public concern because the losses due to human induced global warming are, by this policy, being visited on by relatively few individuals.

Time horizons need to be on a human scale, adopting shorter epochs than 100 years.

He added that the EA needed to consult better. For example only seven out of 100 coastal owners were allowed by the EA to attend a recent stakeholder meeting organised for farmers. It was necessary to adopt face to face contact rather than just writing to people. He concluded by regretting the loss of local accountability that previously existed in LFDCs.

The NFU reported concerns that many people found it difficult to comprehend that wildlife sites have legal protection from flooding and people and property did not. He welcomed some of the recent reassessment of the UK Habitats Regulations. A means of adopting
land use to predicted changes was required, but the present reductions in the HLS budget suggested this had too low a priority. (In response Rob Cunningham said RSPB owned reserves at risk of flooding and coastal squeeze so wish to ensure effective defences as well as adaptation to manage the rate of change. Tim Collins added that very few schemes just protect Natura 2000 sites; more often the benefits are incidental. Defra research had shown that it was 3-4 times cheaper to relocate wildlife sites than to protect them in-situ; EN favoured working with natural processes wherever possible.)

Rob Cunningham (RSPB): RSPB broadly supported option 2 in the consultation paper (EA takes full control) as it was likely to lead to more strategic planning and delivering on nature conservation interests. He added that national funding and prioritisation systems created a tension with a system that also tried to ensure local democracy. RSPB saw strategic planning and SMP delivery as critical for nature conservation interests. The Water Framework Directive will affect all activity, and EA are the only competent authority under the Directive which extends one nautical mile out to sea. This aligns well with the EA’s supervisory duty. The EU Flooding Directive is also relevant, including its requirement for risk assessments and plans which might be relevant to the debate about statutory SMPs. (Sarah Nason said that while assessments and plans would be required under the Directive they would probably not be classed as statutory plans within the planning system.)

Tim Collins (EN): The system needs streamlining and, with some minor quibbles, EN broadly supported the Government’s proposed approach. The test is what system will deliver best future coastal management and there should be no distinction between flooding and erosion. EN saw big challenges ahead including climate change and getting SMPs agreed in face of possible abandonment. They supported community engagement and involvement in the SMP process and adaptation to climate change. EN wanted SMPs to be made statutory, but the key issue is that they are properly embraced in the planning system. EN saw a need to review PPG20 (planning on the coast) and this might avoid the need for statutory SMPs. (Sarah Nason said that DCLG were alive to the need to review PPG20, but felt that this would be better done when the EA had produced their coastal erosion maps).

Alan Gairns (ABI): Coastal erosion is not an insurable risk. The need was to minimise flood risk through maintenance and building new defences for which adequate funding provision was necessary. Insurers wanted a consistent approach to planning and implementation of defences based on flood risk and priorities with efficiency of spend. Multi-year funding and programmes were necessary with no increased bureaucracy. LA expertise should be used especially where EA lacked resources.

NEXT STEPS

David Wright explained the next steps by reference to slide 16.

WASH-UP AND CLOSING REMARKS

Saran Nason said that she was grateful for the frank and open way that everyone had contributed to the debate, and also listened to what others had to say. The main messages coming from the day were:
• Defra must work up the whole issue of coastal groups and their role. There was lots of enthusiasm in retaining them and how they would participate within the EASO.
• Lots of willingness to share understanding and expertise, to work in partnership and make it happen.
• No-one has the monopoly of wisdom; all have a perspective, knowledge and expertise that they can contribute in coastal management planning and we need a process to deliver this.
• Reservations about way EA has previously engaged with stakeholders in some areas; EA (and Defra) acknowledge that this has to go up the agenda generally to get buy in from people; this possibly requires cultural change.
• We face a very challenging future, eg climate change, a need to adapt to and work with natural processes, sustainability and affordability of defences and we need to plan strategically and long term. This makes it necessary to engage with people properly if this is to have any buy in from communities.
• More thinking is needed re capital and maintenance and links to local government funding streams.
• Need to think carefully about all the comments on the proposed approaches including discussions with the EA Board who will be required to deliver. Options will then be put to Defra Ministers.

Steve McFarland added the following points:
• He would like to see how capital and maintenance (major and minor) would work in relation to whole asset management.
• A continued role of coastal groups was important and might be enhanced. Some are stronger than others and need to change; he would welcome more EA involvement and better links to RFDCs.
• Coastal maps issue needs to be explored with EA at early stage.
• Skills is a key issue for LAs and they need confidence of a long term role to recruit new people.
• Keen on better procurement and delivery, including sharing of experience and whether more collective procurement could work better; there was a need to recognise much good experience in LAs
• Southern regional coastal monitoring works well in partnership with EA and could be explored for more general application.
• The balance of the consultation document was wrong in places and those who were not at the discussion forum would not have had the benefit of the helpful discussions and clarification; this may affect their consultation responses.

Other points raised were:
• Climate change will be a strategic aim for all Maritime DCs.
• Welcome the discussion today; evidence that Defra was prepared to listen.
• Want to work in partnership with EA and Defra in long term partnership, but need to be confidence for investment in coastal issues for 5-10 years
• Aggregate dredging is a concern re coastal erosion (John Horne replied that dredging from immobile offshore deposits at depths of more than 20m, is unlikely to be an issue but could be in near- shore and shallower waters eg near harbour entrances)
• Need continued involvement from coastal groups in the South East, but variable solutions may be necessary around the country – one size won’t fit all.
SLIDES PRESENTED AT THE DISCUSSION FORUM (SLIDE NUMBERS HIGHLIGHTED)

1 Environment Agency Strategic Overview
   Sea flooding and coastal erosion
   Discussion Forum
   19 September 2006

2 SESSION 1 - OBJECTIVES FOR THE DAY

3 Objectives for the day
   • Consultation paper puts forward a proposed model to meet the objectives and
discusses other models.
   • Genuine consultation, want to ensure that all options and views are fully understood and
considered.
   • Today’s open discussion forum will help in this process.
   • No-one will have all the answers but…
   • the questions arising and debate today, and other responses to consultation, will help
develop our thinking and shape the final model we recommend to Ministers to best meet
our objectives.

4 Context
   • Making Space for Water consultation supported Strategic Overview role for EA.
   • Intention for EASO announced in First Government Response to MSW – March 2005.
   • Project Board (Defra, EA, LGA) has taken forward since then.
   • Separately, the FM review has led to changes in responsibilities between Defra and EA
(eg delegation of approvals and financial management)
   • Corporate Plan governs Defra/EA relationship – Outcome Measures to replace current
targets being developed to cover whole programme.

5 SESSION 2 - CLARIFICATION OF THE MODELS DESCRIBED

6 Clarification of the Models Described
   • Consultation paper models amplified by Defra and LA reps.
   • Open discussion forum will seek to answer any questions on assumptions lying behind
models or how it is thought they might work.

7 Government's proposed model
   EA Lead Authority for the coast, ie working with LAs and other partners they would be
responsible for:
   ➢ Managing all sea flooding risk
   ➢ Ensuring coastal erosion is managed strategically (EA given powers to undertake
   coast protection works)
   ➢ Leading all SMPs, agreeing risk management vision, establishing priorities and
   affordability
   ➢ Developing, managing and funding multi-year works programmes (capital and major
   maintenance)
Ensuring effective procurement and delivery of all works

8 **Crucially important**
- All EA functions performed with full engagement by LAs ie:
  - Drawing up SMPs
  - Establishing short and long-term priorities for works
  - Procurement and delivery (EA and LAs will work together to determine roles locally).

9 **Governance**
- RFDCs widened to cover coastal erosion.
- Major role in shaping strategic direction, priorities and works programme for region.
- Raise levies for locally important flooding, and possibly coastal erosion, activity.
- Engagement between the maritime councils and the county/unitary authorities on the RFDC.

10 **Other models discussed in Consultation Paper**
- Minimum change
- EA sole responsibility
- Coastal groups model

11 **SESSION 4 – DISCUSSION TOPICS**

12 **Discussion Topic - SMPs**
- Fundamental in determining truly sustainable approaches, consistently along all English coastline
- Up to 100 year timeframe
- Affordability
- Underpin prioritised works programmes
- EA lead necessary to ensure this, in full partnership with LAs (ie consistency, national prioritisation/affordability, long term vision/sustainability)?

13 **Discussion topic – Procurement, delivery and maintenance**
- EA produce multi-year works programmes taking account of SMP priorities, Defra outcome measures and targets and available funding?
- Capital and major maintenance managed holistically?
- EA ensure effective procurement and delivery ie:
  - Use EA procurement framework for all works?
  - Work with LAs in determining who is best placed to deliver what, where and how?
- Shoreline maps to show responsibilities?

14 **Discussion topic – Governance and role of RFDCs in coastal erosion risk management**
- RFDC role in shaping the programme?
- RFDCs widened to embrace coastal erosion?
- How best to capture coastal erosion issues – membership, maritime district council input?
- Title – Regional Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Committees?
- Levies for locally important coastal erosion works?
Next Steps

- Will absorb and write up the messages from today
- Consultation responses in by end October please
- Develop final proposals and put to Ministers (by end of the year?)
- Implementation plan produced in full consultation with EA, LAs and others (by Spring 07?)
- Timing of implementation will depend on eg approach adopted, what legislative change needed and vehicles available.
- Some changes may be introduced ahead of others.