

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Abstract - The Continental Shelf as a Successful Project.

The Continental Shelf Project set up within LINZ has been a successful project in more ways than one. The Project has been budgeted at \$44 million over a seven-year timeframe. The area of extended continental shelf beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) will be up to 1.5 million square kilometres, or approximately six times the land area of New Zealand. The Crown already receives over \$100 million per annum from royalties and energy levies relating to seabed resources within the EEZ.

The presentation will describe the setting up of the Project by LINZ after it was transferred to LINZ from the then Ministry of Commerce.

The challenge that was part of the Project included robust risk management, fixed budget constraints and a fixed deadline of 2006. All the essentials were present for the project to fail.

Part of the process was to engage New Zealand's Crown Research Institutes (CRI's) of NIWA and GNS to work in a Co-operative atmosphere for the benefit of NZ and not just for their individual benefits. One of the greatest challenges was the need for cross government department Co-operation. There will be significant long-term benefits to NZ arising from research undertaken by CRI's and the ongoing management of seabed resources by the Crown.

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The project is set up within LINZ as a small specialist team attached to the Contracts Group. This allows synergies with the philosophy of contracting out the services required by the project.

It was recognised early on that both major CRI's (NIWA and GNS) were capable of competing for some of the services. However, the NZCSP also recognised that in the best interests of the country it would be far better to have the CRI's work together as a Joint Venture to provide Quality Assurance and scientific advice. This allowed the NZCSP to tender services such as Deep High Fold Seismic to experts in the field with international experience and capability. One of the more positive outcomes of the Joint Venture is the ability of the CRI's to work closer together than had been possible in the past.

By clearly spelling out the roles of each organisation, contracts for CRI's, Memoranda of Understandings with other Government departments, many conflicts and misunderstandings were averted.

Memoranda of Understandings were used to clarify the roles of MFAT, who are responsible for presenting the completed Submission Report to the United Nations and for maritime boundary negotiation with our neighbours. Crown Minerals Division of Ministry of Economic Development is looking after the long term storage and management of NZCSP related data.

By utilising the Advisory Committee and Technical Experts Working Group NZCSP was able to provide information to the Governments control agencies of Treasury and the State Services Commission.

The NZCSP is entering the third and final stage of the project. The Desktop Study and data gathering phases were completed with the voyage in November last year by the RV Sonne.

The final phase is the data analysis, reporting and presentation stage of the data in a format that is suitable to be given to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf by MFAT.

It is here that the true worth of NZ's science organisations are readily gauged. Article 76 is by its very nature open to interpretation and complemented by the Commission's Guidelines of 1999 has meant that the Joint Venture partners (NIWA and GNS) have had to extend the skills of their scientists in interpreting the data. They have built on their knowledge base of New Zealand geology and bathymetry to interpret where the Extended Continental Shelf boundary lies. The science collected from the NZCSP data will be used to refine geomorphology models of New Zealand and possibly help with our economic future.

Some of the interpretations made by New Zealand may turn out to be controversial, but with only one Submission to the United Nations made so far, then precedents have not been set in concrete. The NZCSP has an obligation to the Government and the people of New Zealand to extend the limit as far as legally possible and legally defensibly.

With a clear specification for the interpretations and a template for formatting the Submission Reports, the Joint Venture has produced the first of 6 Regional Submission Reports. These reports will be revisited closer to the Submission date to reflect the latest interpretations and guidance from the Commission.

The NZCSP has made significant contributions to international conferences and the Commission.... with the interpretations templates that we have made. Papers on interpretative nature....desktop study approach....