

# Ocean Values Roundtable:

a social science perspective on the  
value of the marine environment

Marine Pioneer (Partnership project led by the Marine Management Organisation) in association with The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch) and the Marine Conservation Society



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# Introduction

## **What values should be considered when making decisions about the marine environment?**

This is a key question for many people who are working to improve marine environmental outcomes through protection and management.

Often only a narrow range of values shapes decision-making. If a wider range of values were represented, perhaps better decisions would be made: decisions that are better understood and supported, more equitable, which ensure social as well as environmental justice, and ultimately lead to more sustainable management.

Globally, there has been significant decline in the health of the marine and coastal environment. To rectify this, we need to inspire behaviour changes and adapt our approach to decision-making. A range of social science techniques are currently being used by organisations and projects across the UK to help to make this possible.

## The roundtable

In 2019, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch), the Marine Conservation Society, and the Marine Pioneer led by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), which is testing delivery of the 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) in marine and coastal management for Defra, held an ocean values roundtable.

The roundtable brought together a range of experts (marine social scientists, practitioners, decision-makers, and policy-makers) to a) explore the many ways in which people value the marine and coastal environment and b) identify ways to incorporate a broader range of values into decision-making processes.



## Why now?

There is an appetite for improved use of social science information in government and the marine science community (Mapping and Prioritising Marine and Fisheries Social Research, Defra 2020).

The UK government's *A Green Future: our 25-year plan to improve the environment (25YEP)*, 2018, sets out the ambition to improve the environment within a generation. It calls for the application of a natural capital approach as a tool in decision-making to “take into account the often-hidden additional benefits in every aspect of the environment for national wellbeing, health and economic prosperity, with scientific and economic evidence to the fore” (HM Government, 2018 p.9).

To indicate the environment's value, some people refer to nature and its processes as ‘natural capital’. This is an economic frame, but nature can – and should – be considered in a range of frames to achieve the best outcomes for nature and people.

Defra set up four Pioneer Projects: Catchment; Urban; Landscape; and the Marine Pioneer, to test ways to deliver the 25YEP and share lessons learned. Alongside the other Pioneers, the Marine Pioneer will deliver a ‘lessons learned’ package at the end of the programme.

As part of these lessons, the Marine Pioneer wanted to understand, and where possible demonstrate, how to include diverse values from multiple perspectives into decision-making about the natural environment to achieve the ambitions of the 25YEP. The Marine Pioneer sought further input from social scientists and organisations working within the field of ocean values. This roundtable provided additional, collective thinking and evidence towards all the different ways to value the marine and coastal environment, and in doing so illuminated values-based decision-making.

## This report

This report initially introduces a short film developed by the Marine Conservation Society, which was showcased at the roundtable. The film highlights what the marine and coastal environment means to different people. The report then discusses the key themes that were raised at the roundtable. These themes are further illuminated through related case studies that were highlighted by participants and discussed on the day. The report goes on to explore the impact of the roundtable session on the Marine Pioneer thinking. From this, conclusions and recommendations are made.

*(The roundtable was held on the 31 January 2019. This report was updated one year on, on 31 January 2020)*

# 'Our Blue Heart', Marine Conservation Society

To set the context for the day and get people thinking about different values, the session began by screening 'Our Blue Heart'. The film highlights what the sea means to different people, how they use it, and the interactions between people and place. Importantly, it showcases values and voices from diverse individuals who may not be present in typical decision-making consultations. The values that were surfaced in the film included references to spirituality and heritage, which can often be overlooked or undervalued when decisions are made about the marine environment.

'Our Blue Heart' builds on the Marine Conservation Society's Common Ground work, which has used the Community Voice Method (CVM). CVM is a more inclusive and in-depth method of public engagement which aims to provide a more accurate understanding of local issues and views. Engagement processes like CVM can facilitate a transparent and participative conversation about how the environment is managed and the trade-offs that are involved. 'Our Blue Heart' helps to make visible the diversity and nuance of people's views and the many benefits they share from the marine and coastal environment.



# Themes from the Roundtable

**Throughout the day discussion sessions were held on the following topics:**

- What is happening and working already?
- What could we do differently?
- What opportunities could we seize?
- What could we try out over the next 18 months?

**An analysis of the discussions brought out the following key themes:**

- 1) developing governance structures to incorporate different people's values, and where needed, creating more equitable power distribution;
- 2) using the right language for the right audience to encourage sharing and understanding of different values;
- 3) understanding the benefits and challenges of using a natural capital approach to incorporate a wide range of values;
- 4) building on work that has occurred already, rather than 'reinventing the wheel'.

These themes are now discussed in more detail, with insights from the roundtable and supporting case studies which highlight notable work that is contributing towards more inclusive outcomes. Case studies are chosen and described here as a result of their involvement with the Marine Pioneer or participants of the roundtable.

# Theme one: Power

Throughout the discussions the theme of power kept emerging. This raised the question of a) how to understand power in governance frameworks, and b) how to shift power relationships to incorporate different people's values.

The issue of transparency was also raised. Influencing decisions with a wider set of values is difficult if it is unclear how decisions are made or who is making them. The discussion highlighted the importance of improving transparency at all levels of decision-making, so that people understand what is happening, why it is happening, and how they can be involved.

Social justice was a recurrent theme. Often people are affected by the economic and/or development system(s) in a given place, but are not involved in the conversation when decisions are made. There is a need to balance growth without pushing or pricing people out of their localities.

Roundtable participants argued that although many communities are organised and focused on this issue, they do not feel that this is welcomed by local government. A campaign to connect different communities could be highly beneficial. Any such campaign should include a focus on 'inland communities' alongside the coastal ones so everyone is able to access and relate to the sea. There need to be routes to power for all communities.

There was also a discussion on what it takes to shift power into the hands of local communities, both in terms of governance and communication. It was suggested that there is a need to create the conditions for communities to feel a sense of agency. For example, individuals and communities may not currently feel empowered to take part in influencing activities such as writing to their MP. Facilitating local communities to surface and reflect on all the ocean does for them could be a way to ensure they are both more able and more motivated to articulate the value of their ocean as an asset.

These ideas are further illuminated through examples from the following:

- WWF-UK (which mapped stakeholders and their perceived influence to establish who holds the power in decision-making for North Devon MPAs).
- The Marine Conservation Society together with the Southern and Eastern IFCAs (which carried out a CVM project to give voice to different members of society in the East of England).
- The Marine CoLABoration Group's 'Agents of Change' project (an initiative to encourage new advocates for marine conservation beyond the 'usual suspects').
- COAST (a community-led example of marine conservation in Scotland).

The case studies are explored in more depth on the following pages.

# WWF-UK MPA Governance

WWF collected information on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the North Devon Marine Pioneer region to generate knowledge on decision-making structures and identify options for improved MPA governance. The issues raised are not specific to North Devon; governance issues of scale, leadership, resource to support engagement, communication, and access to information are seen across the UK.

The impetus to do the research derived from an increase in the number of MPAs, combined with reduced capacity and resource across public bodies to coordinate and contribute to MPA effectiveness. Overall, the UK has designated 293 MPAs – 23% of UK waters. Yet many of these do not have ongoing management, funding, or governance arrangements.

The work by WWF shows:

- There has been a focus on designation of MPAs to create an ecologically coherent network. However, aspects of effective, equitable and integrated governance and management have not yet been properly considered.
- MPAs have no coordinated governance. There is no legal requirement to establish local coordination groups.
- Information about MPAs is centrally held and technical, making it difficult for the local stakeholders to engage. Decision-making is often through irregular, formal opportunities.
- MPAs have a focus on conservation objectives to maintain or recover specific habitats or features. This may be valid to achieve their stated aims to protect the natural environment, but in doing so MPA objectives do not always reflect the breadth of societal interests or adhere to the principle of ecosystem-based management.

Recommendations from the report are (see decision-making page 8):

- 1) combination of local led, regional, and nation-wide MPA governance strategies;
- 2) effective leadership;
- 3) specialist facilitators;
- 4) single scheme of management leading to partnership approaches.



# Community Voice Method – Common Ground

The Community Voice Method (CVM) is an innovative approach to revealing the breadth of people's views and values on contentious issues relating to marine management. Developed in the USA to build consensus on land management controversies, CVM has been piloted in the UK by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and the Southern and Eastern IFCAs with notable success.

CVM involves in-depth, filmed interviews with 30-40 people with different perspectives across an issue and different roles and interests in the community. Hours of film are analysed and condensed into one short documentary which accurately reflects all the views expressed. People are invited to a workshop where they watch the film and then discuss the issues at hand. Understanding the range of people's views and values and seeing 'opponents' speaking from the heart (often about their love for the sea) helps transform the discussion from polarised debate into something more constructive and paves the way for finding common ground.

Over the last four years, the CVM project has focused on management of local marine conservation zones and resulted in the first measures to be agreed with wide community support. Additionally, the project has aimed to explore the values that connect people to place and develop management approaches in response.

Six priority categories were identified through the project, including the need for fair and effective regulation, monitoring and enforcement, and improved communication and trust. These have informed a framework that the Eastern IFCA can draw upon, grounded in a shared understanding of the multiple ways that local people use and value their marine and coastal assets.

The success of these pilots has encouraged others to try the approach, with agencies including Natural England commissioning MCS to undertake CVM work in a number of locations in the UK.



# Agents of Change

Developed by the Marine CoLABoration group, 'Agents of Change' is encouraging new advocates for marine conservation beyond the 'usual suspects'. It aims to improve the image of MPAs and highlight their value to local people.

MPAs can be an important tool for marine recovery, but many people have either never heard of them or fear MPAs will impose restrictions without providing any benefits. Research from around the world suggests that MPAs are more likely to be effective when local people support them.

Working with active and informed individuals at selected MPA sites, Agents of Change hopes to grow community understanding and increase stewardship of protected areas. As more enthused people and businesses come aboard, and local Agents of Change networks grow, it will help realise the benefits of well-managed sites, to marine biodiversity, local economies, and health and wellbeing.

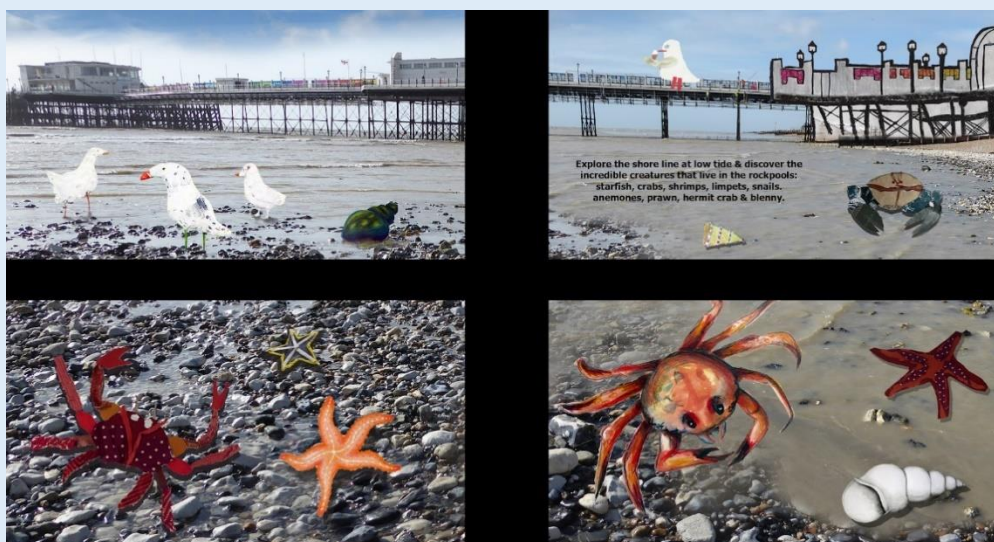
Agents of Change experiments with a values based approach to connect people to the beauty and benefits of their local MPA. Led by MCS in partnership with the New Economics Foundation (NEF) and Flora and Fauna International (FFI), it builds on the success of Community Voice, the Blue New Deal approach, and FFI's work with coastal communities in Scotland.

The project is piloting in Sussex and North Norfolk, exciting people of all ages and walks of life with the treasure they have offshore and inspiring them to get involved in its promotion and protection.

Examples of successes in Norfolk include:

- Agents of Change has supported Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) in new ways of communicating resulting in local shops celebrating their nearby MCZ.
- Agents of Change was recognised as a trusted convenor to convene a workshop between Eastern IFCA, fishers and Natural England to begin discussing MCZ management measures.
- A unique, locally driven education programme that has seen fishers in classrooms talking about the uses of the Cromer Shoal Chalk Bed within the context of it being an MCZ.

Agents of Change has revealed that existing decision-making structures – not a lack of willingness from communities to engage – are the biggest barrier to engagement.



# COAST (Community of Arran Seabed Trust)

COAST builds local capacity and awareness for community-led marine conservation by using participatory marine education and communications on the Isle of Arran in Scotland.

COAST aims to:

- improve the local marine environment for the benefit of everyone;
- ensure coastal communities have a say in the decisions that affect their seas;
- work to sustain the livelihood of those dependent on fishing and tourism;
- increase the popularity of Arran and the Clyde as a diving, water sports and tourist destination;
- educate future generations on the need for marine conservation.

To share power, include multiple values, and help achieve its aims, COAST works within networks like the Coastal Communities Network, and partnerships like the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership, through which it is heavily involved with consultations and campaigns. It also works with scientists, fishermen, and the community to facilitate research that develops the knowledge base for the Isle of Arran marine ecosystem, for effective decision-making to protect and restore valuable marine habitats and species.

For the past three decades, the people of Arran have campaigned to stop mobile fishing that damages the seabed in Lamlash Bay. The community achieved protection in 2008 for the first community-led No Take Zone – a type of MPA permanently set aside from direct human disturbance. In 2018 Scotland's first MPA Visitor Centre was opened. It is led by the community to engage people in coastal and marine activities and learning.

COAST has made documentaries, such as 'Caught in Time', and continues to produce short videos to raise awareness of the diversity of sea life around Arran and the impacts of destructive fishing in the Clyde. Using different media and language for different audiences ensures it reaches as many people as possible.



# Theme two: Language

A recurring topic at the roundtable was the importance of understanding the right language to use for the right audience.

Specialist scientific language is a problem if we want a wider range of audiences and values to be included in decision-making as 'jargon puts people off'. People may disengage if they don't understand buzzwords or think that they must use technical language to be taken seriously. Terms can mean different things to different people, even among experts.

There is a need for campaigning and lobbying to ensure that a wider range of views are considered, with a move towards engagement influencing more policy and decision-making. Greater ocean literacy is a necessary first step. Involving more diverse people and encouraging 'ocean optimism' are both important, and including 'future generations' in conversations about marine protection.

The language used around 'social net gain' and 'trade-offs' was discussed. Local people may use other terms, so capturing the language that they use already would be useful. Is 'social net gain' the same as 'wellbeing' or 'social value'? Would it be better to refer to 'net gain plus', incorporating the many dimensions (environmental, social, economic) as this is more holistic? It was suggested that net gain is about enhancing and improving, not just maintaining. Therefore, there is a need to raise social net gain/net gain-plus as a concept to enhance and improve societal as well as environmental outcomes. And this should be accompanied by a more robust framework.

Two relevant initiatives were highlighted by the group. The first was a glossary of definitions for the marine social science sector that is being developed by the Marine Social Sciences Network. The second was the FrameWorks Institute's research on how to communicate to the public about the ocean and marine conservation. More details of these two initiatives now follow.

# Marine Social Sciences Network

The Marine Social Sciences Network facilitates knowledge exchange between diverse stakeholders to establish an active community of interdisciplinary researchers, policy makers and practitioners from across the marine and coastal sector. Its ambition is to increase awareness and understanding of the integral role that social sciences can have in management and decision-making for our global seas and coastline. The network builds on shared language and creating a dialogue between both marine social and natural science, the arts, and humanities to facilitate collaboration.

The network aims to:

- provide a home for a growing online community of marine social science researchers, representing a range of disciplines and nations, feed into growing areas of research;
- provide a platform for dialogue, discussion and collaboration; promote social science as the gateway to embedding wider societal views and values into policy and management, and look at mapping social sciences against the global challenges;
- provide a role for marine social sciences as science and evidence across policy and management processes;
- and position marine social sciences alongside natural and physical sciences, demonstrating the social value of marine systems and use it to support communication and articulation of the complex and complicated relationship between society and the global seas and coasts.

# FrameWorks Institute

The stories people tell and the way they frame messages can fundamentally change how people think about issues and influence their behaviour. Research from the [FrameWorks Institute](#) seeks to understand how the UK public thinks about the ocean to identify how best to communicate effectively on marine issues. The aim is to increase ocean literacy and grow support for system solutions to protect our blue spaces.

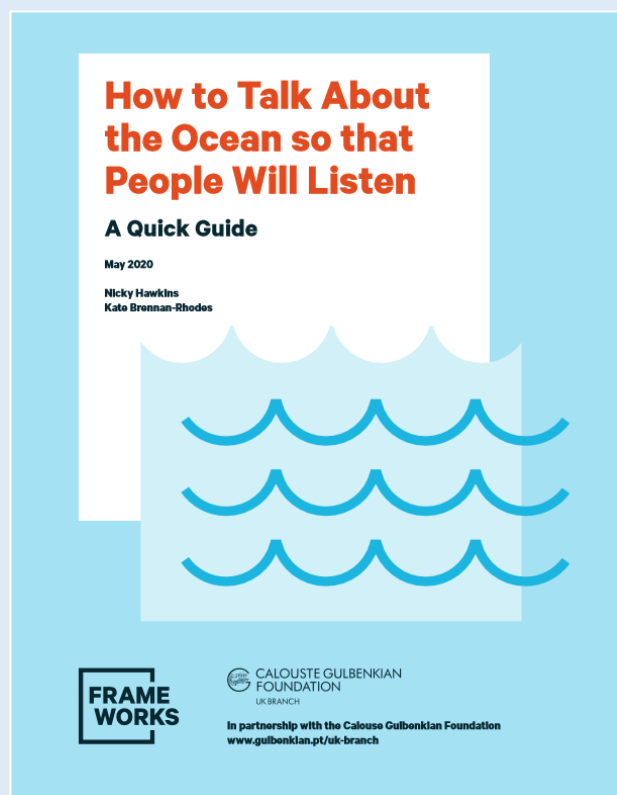
[Getting below the Surface](#) (2017) maps the gaps between the expert and public understandings of marine conservation. The report confirms that the people in the UK have a limited understanding of why a healthy ocean matters and what action is needed for marine protection. It makes a series of recommendations for more effective communications. These include the need to use solution-focused messaging and avoid crisis language, which often triggers apathy rather than action.

Storytelling specialists Dancing Fox turned the findings into a free illustrative guide for communications professionals, titled [‘Top Ten Tricks for Giving the Ocean a Voice’](#). The guide is available to download as a poster and slide deck.

The next phase of this research was published in 2019. ‘Turning the Tide’ builds on insights from ‘Getting Below the Surface’ and on new research to provide a ‘first aid kit’ for ocean reframing. It sets out strategies to deepen public understanding of ocean health and build support for the systemic solutions that can aid its recovery. The report recommends focusing on the concept of ocean health combined with an emphasis on temporal change – the ways in which the ocean was different in the past and will change in the future. A companion [framing guide](#) helps turn the report findings into clear communications dos and don’ts.

‘How to talk about the ocean so that people will listen’ distils the research findings into a handy toolkit.

Workshops and tailored support for NGOs are planned to help spread the learning and encourage its uptake across the sector.



# Theme three: The Benefits and Challenges of using a Natural Capital Approach

Participants deliberated the benefits and challenges of using a Natural Capital Approach (NCA). People argued that the major benefit of the NCA is in providing a framework for considering environmental, social and economic values, and connecting nature and human wellbeing. This means ensuring the NCA is not focused on monetary values alone, but on the full range of values across the three domains.

There was concern from some participants that the policy of austerity has been the driver for the NCA, with natural capital language used to provide a 'convincing case to fund environmental management at a time of heavy cuts. Some fear that it will be used to 'find ways to pay for nature' and in doing so prioritise the immediate economic value of resources over wider considerations for the long-term. In using this language or approach, decision-makers may no longer be driven by core objectives to save, conserve, and restore the environment for purely intrinsic values. Some argued that an NCA assumes market forces will drive and deliver successful implementation, but that this is an assumption that ignores possible market failures.

Participants agreed that fundamentally the NCA recognises the contribution of nature to human wellbeing, which could help improve the way the natural environment is considered in decision-making. And while the concept of value is central to the NCA, this does not necessarily mean monetary value.

However, a concern was raised that the assumptions embedded in terms like 'natural capital' may reinforce economic value as a priority above all else. It was argued that monetary valuation is a tool, but often monetary values fail to capture the full range of benefits we receive from the environment. Even where monetary value would be an appropriate metric in theory, in practice it may be impractical or un cost effective to collect valuation data. Economic decision-making tools such as cost benefit analysis fit within, but are not the ultimate objective of, the NCA.

It is possible to transcend a monetary focus in the NCA and supplement it with aspects that improve social justice and consider wider values and implications, but this requires significant input from social science sectors. While the NCA comes with challenges, it is necessary to be involved in the conversation to ensure it is driven in the right direction to achieve the ambitions of the 25YEP.

The importance of social values and values-based decision-making should not be underestimated or under-represented when using an NCA.

# Natural Capital in the Marine Pioneer

A fundamental ask of the Marine Pioneer was to test the application of the NCA. The Marine Pioneer has been working with local partnerships of academics, agencies, and stakeholders to test the practical application of an NCA in marine and coastal environments via targeted pilot work in North Devon and Suffolk.

The NCA, as the Marine Pioneer views it, is a broad term that includes assessment of the quantity, quality, function (including processes), and value of environmental assets and the ecosystem goods and services that flow from them, with the aim of ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources (Hooper et al., 2019). The Marine Pioneer views values as including mainly non-monetary information that comes from a variety of people and includes themes such as culture, heritage, use, and aesthetics. The NCA seeks to better integrate environmental information into decision-making to rectify the historic trend in which natural capital and ecosystem services are undervalued and overexploited.

Therefore, understanding multiple values and how to include them is essential. Natural capital accounts using non-monetary metrics have considerable power (Hooper et al., 2019) and should have equal weighting in policy and decision-making. It is not always possible to monetise natural capital. One element of the NCA is to try to determine value in monetary terms, as a universal metric allows diverse services and benefits to be better compared with each other and with the wider economy.





**Within the Marine Pioneer programme, two examples of work to establish a practical applicability of the NCA are those from:**

- 1) SWEEP (South West Partnership for Environment and Economic Prosperity) created a North Devon Marine Natural Capital Asset and Risk Register. This records the extent, condition, and spatial configuration of natural capital assets, as well as the current risks to the continued delivery of benefits from them. To support local and regional planning, these registers, and the wider information required on ecosystem services and benefits, can be compiled according to a consistent, systematic, and hierarchical framework, which allows integration between assessments for different spatial resolutions and decision contexts.  
  
SWEEP researchers found that environmental and social information is currently treated with less rigour and value than economic data in contexts such as policy making. They highlight that the availability of monetary values for aspects of the environment can be increased, however, these will never be fully comprehensive. Instead, the NCA can and should offer a framework for environmental, social, and economic values to be presented with equal weighting. They also propose that infusion of these values should be via existing assessments such as sustainability appraisal, environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental impact assessment.
- 2) The Suffolk Marine Pioneer developed natural capital asset information for the saltmarsh in the Deben Estuary. Participatory mapping was used to explore the assets, benefits and risks with local stakeholders and decision-makers. Knowledge exchange between the project and local authority planners and environment managers has supported integration of the information and approach into developing plans. In addition, the Marine Pioneer engaged with local people about the assets, benefits, and services by inviting them to enter photos into a competition on the value of nature in the area.

# Theme four: Don't 'Reinvent the Wheel'

Threaded through discussions at the roundtable was a wariness of 'reinventing the wheel'.

One of the benefits of collaboration is more collective knowledge of what is already going on and what works. Two key questions were asked:

- 1) What time or resource is given to reflecting on the outcomes of past decisions to inform the present?
- 2) What reflection is there on the effectiveness of a process and the assumptions that underpin it, for example, who *actually* bears the cost and who benefits?

Too often past mistakes are repeated because those in power "latch onto 'new' initiatives", and money and focus follow. However, no time is spent in interrogating what has previously worked well. There is not an effective process in place to analyse, reflect, and evaluate actions and decisions and then use this to iterate and adapt actions.

It is important that we embed a reflective approach to audit and evaluate process and outcomes, and include the resource needed to sustain this in practice and decision-making for the future.

Reflecting on the outcome of a decision – for example, understanding what benefits/impacts were assumed originally and what the actual outcomes had been – would be hugely beneficial in making future decisions.

It was suggested that a way to do this would be to revisit the policy, programme, project, or plan five years on, for example, and do a proper assessment of outcomes. This would provide a useful feedback mechanism to inform future decisions and an evidence base for social and environmental net gain.

There is a real need to reframe 'failure' as a learning opportunity, with the overall aim of improving decision-making.

# Roundtable Retrospective

In considering the value of a reflective approach, it is important to look at how bringing together diverse social scientists to discuss different ocean values shaped the Marine Pioneer programme. These are listed below.

## **The framing of the NCA**

There has been concern that some decision-makers intend to use the NCA through a purely economic lens. In the Marine Pioneer learning summary and recommendations (which will be shared with Defra, government agencies, delivery organisations and stakeholders), it is important for messaging about the NCA to be clear – that the NCA needs to be used as a holistic framework to include environmental, social and economic values, and used to highlight the benefits and role of the marine and coastal area so that everyone understands what is at stake in terms of the policy and decision-making. Additionally, an NCA should be used to bring the environment, including social factors, into decision-making structures where previously economic outcomes might have been favoured.

## **Benefits of social science perspective**

The roundtable highlighted the importance of involving social scientists in ongoing partnership working – bringing benefits including social science terminology and using social science methods to enrich data sets and build understanding of the social dimensions of environmental trade-offs. Throughout the Marine Pioneer local stakeholders and local decision-makers were engaged through multiple social science methods, including workshops and semi-structured interviews, to explore areas such as governance and decision-making, sustainable finance methods, and the feasibility and usability of natural capital thinking.

The Roundtable raised the importance of building in social capital so that a range of values from multiple perspectives are included in policy and decision-making. This has been demonstrated in follow-on work in the Suffolk Marine Pioneer area – [Using Participatory Mapping](#) (Burden et al., 2020), a stakeholder driven approach to mapping natural capital and ecosystem services.

Additionally, the Marine Pioneer, in collaboration with the New Economics Foundation's 'People, nature and the coast' project, has been carrying out work to understand how nature-based solutions for coastal management can also help deliver for the local community, local deprivation and inequity. Establishing how regeneration of the environment can also be part of the social and economic regeneration of coastal communities.

## **Building and strengthening relationships**

Of key importance is the relationships that form from workshops such as the Ocean Values roundtable. Sessions such as those importantly make time and space for exploratory research and collaboration. Soon after the workshop a [blog](#) detailing the main takeaways was published, and a survey was conducted for participants to agree actions and next steps.

# Conclusions

Identifying how to better incorporate a wide range of values into decision-making was the focal point of the 2019 Ocean Values roundtable.

Elements of social justice underpin all the key areas discussed at the roundtable, highlighting the benefits of applying a social science lens.

Throughout the day, discussions explored the many interpretations of 'value', recognising the wider benefits the ocean provides to society. Understanding and using these values in decision-making can be achieved through methods such as those featured in the case studies. This includes the approaches deployed by The Marine Conservation Society and the Community Voice Method; Agents for Change; FrameWorks Institute; and the further inclusion of local communities and social science in practice and decision-making.

## **Conversations throughout the day highlighted the importance of understanding:**

- **Power dynamics**, as influencing decisions with a wider set of values is difficult if it is unclear how decisions are made or who is making them. It is important to incorporate a wide range of views and include local knowledge, but existing structures can hinder this.
- **Selecting appropriate language for the right audience**, as the way messages are framed can change how people think and behave.
- **The benefits and challenges of using an NCA**. The NCA provides a useful framework for integration of environmental, social, and economic information, if multiple values are included in the policies and decision-making process.
- **Not 'reinventing the wheel'**, as reflecting and evaluating the outcomes of past decisions can usefully inform present or future decisions and actions.

# Recommendations

**From the collective of those at the roundtable, recommended actions include:**

- 1) **Map decision-making processes at different levels** to show sources of power. Build further understanding of what, or whose, values hold sway in decisions about the marine and coastal environment and ensure effective decision-making is underpinned by principles of social justice.
- 2) **Raising awareness of the risk of social injustice** resulting from improper use and application of the NCA. Ensure an economic bias does not favour some groups over others.
- 3) The generation of a **formalised process to reflect effectively on the outcomes of past decisions.**
- 4) **Further campaigns to empower and celebrate coastal communities**, linking communities through overarching programmes or initiatives.
- 5) Development of an **overarching glossary of terms** to improve communication, use of solution-focused messaging, and development of a social science communication hierarchy.
- 6) **Joined up working at government and non-government level**, stating a clear, collective message (that has been decided upon through an inclusive process).