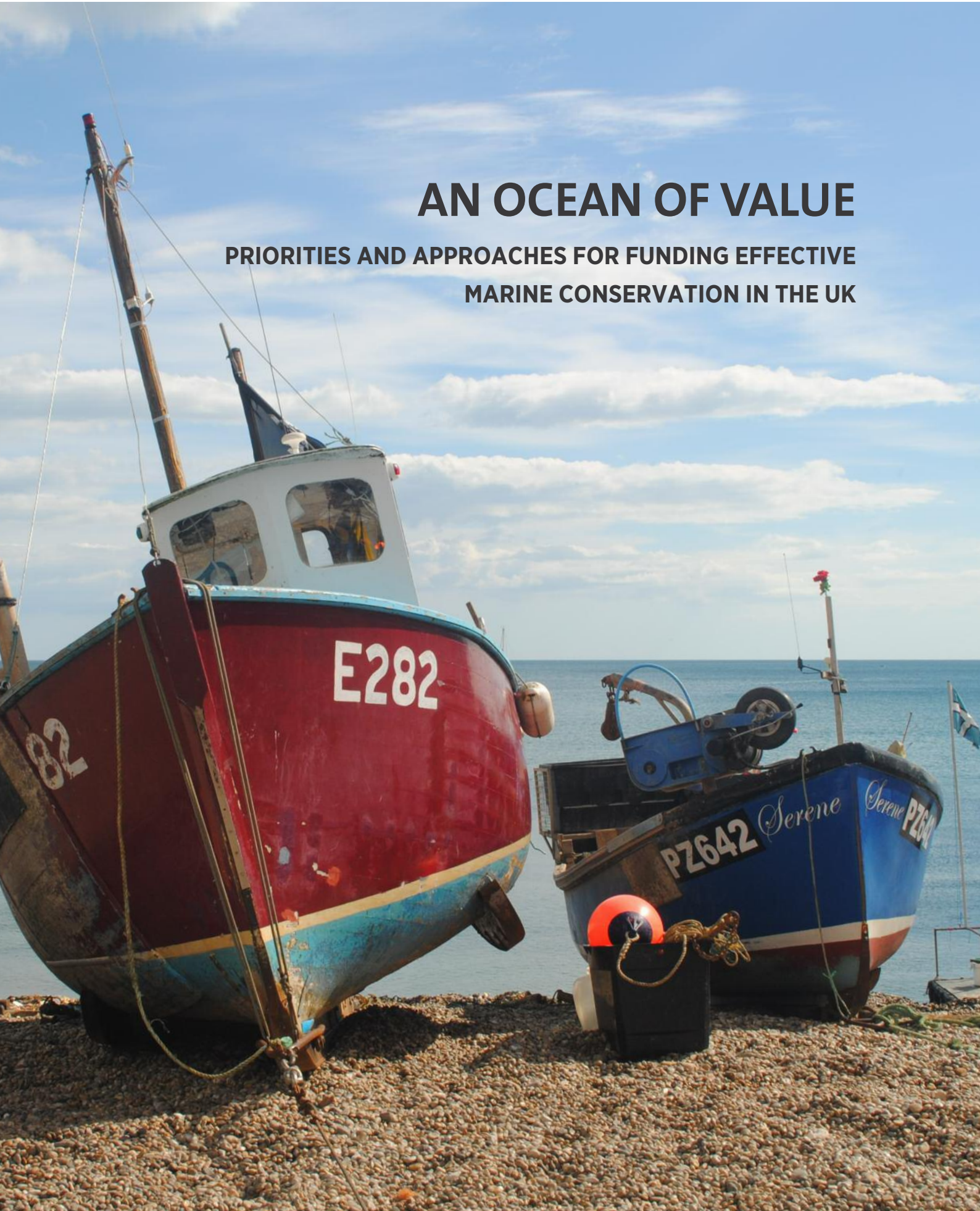
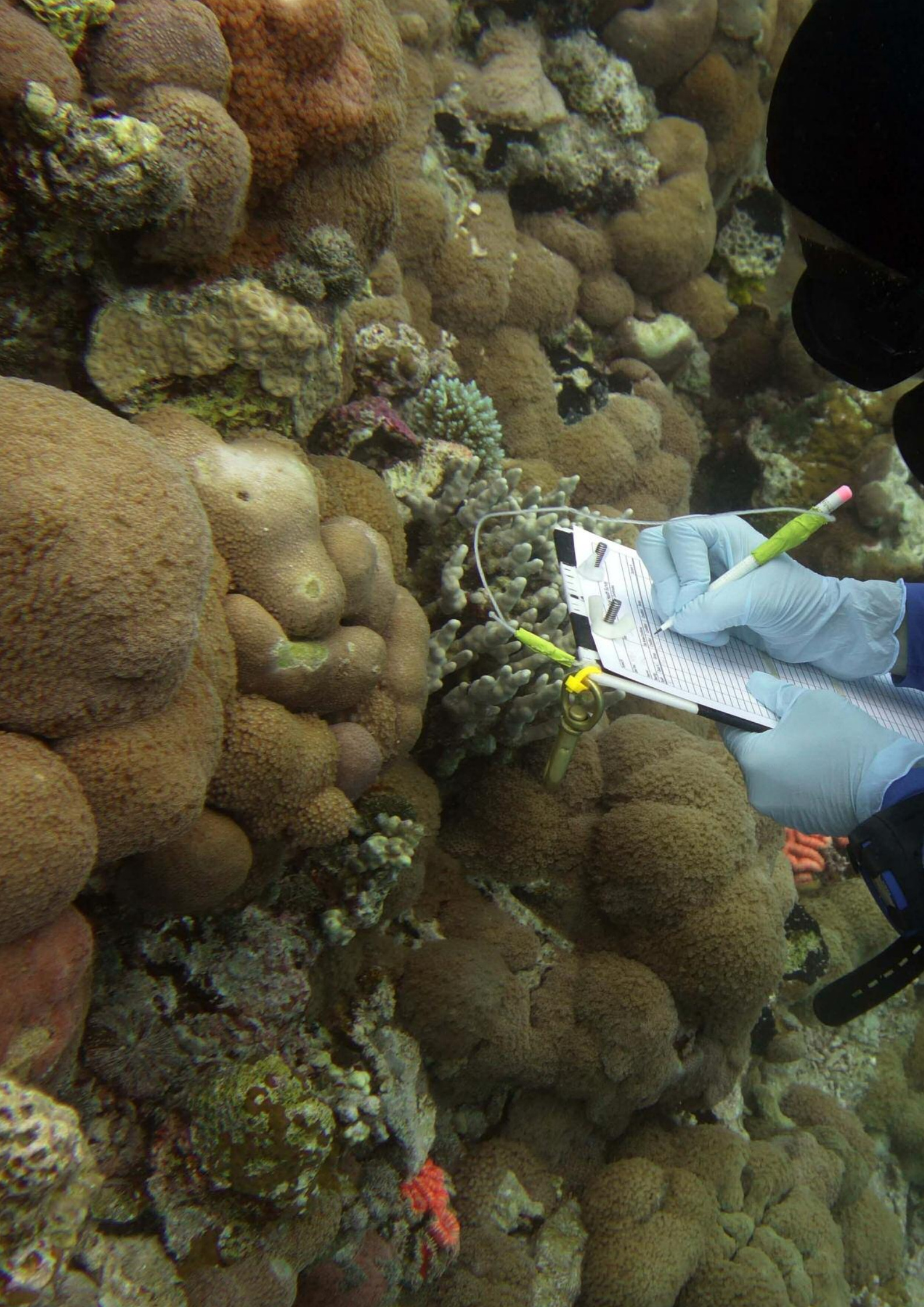


AN OCEAN OF VALUE

PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES FOR FUNDING EFFECTIVE
MARINE CONSERVATION IN THE UK





AN OCEAN OF VALUE

PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES FOR FUNDING EFFECTIVE MARINE CONSERVATION IN THE UK

The healthy functioning of the ocean is critical to life as we know it. Three foundations – the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch) – share a commitment to supporting projects that promote sustainable management and protection of the ocean.

We wanted to explore how we might work together to be more effective in funding marine protection in the UK. To do so, we surveyed leading non-governmental organisations (NGOs), practitioners and funders working on the UK marine environment, then invited 25 people from this survey group to a one-day workshop to discuss the challenges, opportunities and priorities.

We left the workshop looking forward to a better future for the ocean, with renewed enthusiasm and a vision for the next ten years. There is much detail still to think through and the three funders are considering how best to move this on. This report summarises our discussion about next steps, both now and in the longer term.

Front cover: Lyme Bay. Photo © Blue Marine Foundation

Inside front cover: Salomon Atoll Ile de la Passe. Chagos Conservation Trust. Photo © Jon Slayer

Back cover: St Helena. Blue Marine Foundation. Photo © Attila Frigyesi

An Ocean of Value: Priorities and approaches for funding effective marine conservation in the UK
Published in 2018 by
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellermann Foundation
and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch)

What is the vision for 2028?

We want to see the full value of the ocean understood and reflected in everything we do, its role in all our lives appreciated, and the ocean cherished by the UK population.

What would this look like?

A healthy ocean, free from pollution and over-fishing, rich in varied species, and protected through a network of marine recovery areas, with people in the UK understanding and supporting the need for such protection.

How will we get there?

Through collaborative working that is non-competitive, long-term and communicated under a shared strategy with a common purpose. The workshop highlighted the priorities as developing:

- a simple, shared vision;
- an overarching framework to support collaborative working;
- the agility to raise awareness as and when opportunities arise;
- funding that supports collaboration and long-term impact;
- action to ensure that protections already in place are implemented effectively; and
- recognition of the need for an integrated approach that goes beyond the UK.

Introduction

The Environmental Funders Network (EFN) report, *What the Green Groups Said*, recommended that funders should work together to understand the combined effects of their funding criteria and ensure gaps are filled. Three foundations – the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (UK Branch) – are together exploring more effective funding of UK marine conservation work. We are keen to understand the priorities for action and what opportunities exist to address these in coherent and effective ways to secure a healthy marine environment.

Addressing complex environmental challenges requires collaboration and strong relationships. Our first step was to get relevant NGOs together. As funders, we each already expect the organisations we support to work with others. *What the Green Groups Said* shows that environmental NGOs also believe that the most effective organisations are those that collaborate.

We set up a workshop for 25 practitioners working across multiple fields in leading UK marine conservation organisations. To help us plan the day, we commissioned a survey to find out what concerns NGOs have and what they are already doing. The survey confirmed greater collaboration is a priority for the marine environmental sector.

The objectives for the workshop were to:

- pinpoint challenges and solutions, now and in the future;
- build a collective understanding of the range of approaches being used to influence change and how to make these more effective;
- understand where collaboration is already working well and why; and
- strengthen relationships between people and organisations interested in marine conservation.

We wanted to identify what positive change might look like in ten years' time. We also hoped to identify some quick wins along the way.

Skegness. Photo © Steven Feather





“There seems to be an opportunity to build on the groundswell of awareness around plastic pollution.”

Survey respondent

The #OneLess campaign, embodying collective and individual action. Photo © Commsinc

Why the ocean matters

A healthy ocean is fundamental to life itself and to supporting humanity's health, wellbeing and prosperity. The ocean is a global ecosystem, playing a critical role in our physical environment and economy, as well as having an intrinsic and aesthetic value which enhances our culture and wellbeing in other ways. In the UK, we are never more than 70 miles from the coast and we have a rich maritime heritage.

But the pressures on the ocean are immense, and growing. In many countries, people have lost their sense of connection to the ocean and its value to their wellbeing. In the UK, coastal communities face significant challenges, some of which are widespread, some more specific to a location. Deprivation levels tend to be high and past interventions to try and improve communities have too often fallen flat.

The ocean is under threat

The fate of the ocean lies in our hands: it is our actions that cause harm and we drive the measures of protection. Immediate threats include over-fishing, pollution and climate change. New threats are emerging, such as deep-sea mining and pollution from chemicals in personal care products.

Recognition of the ocean's vulnerability is growing, but we have scant grasp of the scale of action required to protect it. There is little sustained governmental commitment to marine conservation in most countries and the issue remains low on many political agendas.

The UK faces specific challenges. Brexit is the most immediate: 80 per cent of our environmental legislation comes from the European Union (EU). Statutory bodies

concerned with marine protection, such as Natural England, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities, and the Marine Management Organisation, have experienced the effects of austerity in recent years. In turn, this has led to additional pressures on the NGO sector. Though excellent work happens in specific regions or on specific issues, no coherent overarching framework exists within the NGO sector and beyond.

Nevertheless, there is positive action on which to build. Internationally, there is movement towards greater protection. The ocean has been included in the UN Sustainable Development Goals and, in 2017, the UN held its first Ocean Conference. There is growing awareness that discussion and planning around climate change must incorporate the ocean and its role as a global system.

In the UK, we cannot separate the health of our domestic waters from that of the whole ocean. It is heartening that awareness has risen to unprecedented levels in both public opinion and on the political agenda. The UK has played a global leadership role in climate change policy and there is an opportunity for the government to play a similar role for the ocean. The threat of plastic pollution in particular has created a wave of public concern following the broadcasting of the BBC's influential *Blue Planet II* series, in which Sir David Attenborough highlighted the issue. This, in turn, has given impetus to targeted projects such as the #OneLess campaign to reduce the prevalence of single-use plastic bottles. Government has also made plastic a national concern, vowing to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042.

Where are we now?

Ahead of the workshop, we asked invitees to contribute their perspectives and knowledge on key strategic questions. Twenty out of 30 people responded, 60 per cent from NGOs and 40 per cent representing funders or other enablers. The survey results informed the workshop design.

What are the marine sector's priorities?

The survey asked each respondent to list their priorities. Collated in order of the weight of responses, these were:

1: Marine ecosystem conservation

Several organisations are looking to develop a deeper understanding of the marine ecosystem. This includes expanding scientific evidence to inform management and policy, and looking at historical change, losses and damage so that these can be incorporated into conservation targets.

A large number of respondents are working to support and develop Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in particular. A cluster are concerned with the implementation and management of MPAs. This includes activity aimed at reinforcing policy on marine conservation, including after Brexit. Others are focusing on the 'high seas', looking to protect biodiversity in the 'last ocean wilderness areas' which fall outside national waters.

“We are seeking to help the ocean recover through improving marine management, securing well-managed marine protected areas which will aim to recover, nurture and protect marine species and track ocean recovery.”

Survey respondent

2: Sustainable fisheries

This work covers a broad geographical spread from work with UK coastal communities to sustainable fishing across Europe. Areas include:

- ensuring fisheries are healthy ecosystems, managed sustainably to support the global ocean ecosystem;
- influencing both individuals and businesses to make more responsible choices about buying seafood;
- promoting equitable distribution of fishing rights between smaller and larger vessels and operations;
- cutting back hard on destructive fishing methods;
- reducing over-fishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated ('IUU') fishing;
- working to ensure fisheries management policies are properly enforced.

A good deal is being done on fisheries regulation, in particular achieving a 'fair and sustainable fisheries policy' post-Brexit. Other areas of concern include: by-catch, the position of mobile species in UK waters, supporting the government's global anti-whaling stance, and providing 'a single inclusive voice for the 80 per cent of the EU fleet that is deemed small-scale'. A particular problem was the perceived power imbalance between smaller fishing enterprises and big organisations, such as markets, retailers and large fishing fleets. These larger institutions were seen as causing greater environmental harm but having more political and commercial influence.

3: Pollution

For many respondents, the focus is reducing pollution. This ranges from specific action to reduce 'the flow of plastic into the ocean' to more holistic tracking of the health of the seas: 'identifying key sources of pollution, preventing it and ultimately cleaning it up'.

“We are getting marine conservation and stewardship firmly on the political agenda.”

Survey respondent

4: Community involvement

Several respondents said they are 'engaging society and key economic sectors in developing marine conservation'. This includes raising community awareness and identifying 'solutions to poverty through marine biodiversity in developing countries'.

5: Strengthening skills and building collaboration

Increasing collaboration was given as one of the most effective ways to identify solutions to systemic problems in the marine environment. Several respondents are looking at building capacity to engage with those within and outside the sector more effectively, either for their own organisation or for their member organisations.

Lyme Bay. Photo © Blue Marine Foundation



“Systemic change in marine protection needs an ecosystem of skills and approaches to effect change.”

Survey respondent



What are the most significant challenges for the sector?

We asked respondents to identify what they see as their biggest challenges. Unsurprisingly, these overlap with their priorities. Whatever the challenge, it was striking how often respondents identified private sector activity as both a cause of and solution to problems.

In order of importance, these challenges included:

1: Poor implementation and management of MPAs

Some areas of the ocean are at risk of degrading beyond repair due to human behaviour and the ineffectiveness of MPAs. Maintaining consistency of legislation after Brexit also loomed large here: one respondent said, 'The challenge is to ensure the government improves protection'.

2: Overfishing

Frontier and distant water fishing are expanding to meet our growing demand for seafood. Particular challenges in the UK include the need for management to be consistent all around the coast and finding ways to enable small-scale, low-impact operators to have sustainable livelihoods.

3: Pollution

Reducing the flow of plastics and other pollutants into the ocean is a clear priority. This goes hand in hand with the need to establish proper infrastructure for waste management on land. Underwater noise pollution is also emerging as a marine conservation issue.

4: Climate change

The multiple impacts of climate change are becoming more prominent. These include mass coral bleaching, species invasion into new habitats, ocean warming and acidification, and the impact of sea level rise on coastal wetland habitats.

5: Lack of political will

Historically, there has been little governmental commitment to marine conservation, though in recent years policy announcements – such as on MPAs in the UK Overseas Territories – show some positive signs this may be changing. Not only has it been low on political agendas, but sometimes political changes have resulted in marine conservation commitments being ignored or even reversed. Some respondents ascribed this to vested and competing interests. Others remarked that policy development and funding programmes tend to be too short-term, out of step with the longer timescales required for environmental or behavioural change.

6: Brexit

Brexit will have a huge impact on the marine environment in the UK: 80 per cent of environmental legislation comes from the EU and will need to be transposed effectively. Brexit is also soaking up time and energy across political decision-making and for NGOs. One respondent noted the 'sheer distraction of Brexit from existing concerns such as designating and implementing management plans for MPAs'.

7: Lack of strategy and resources

Funding shortfalls are affecting the sector's capacity to deal with emerging issues (such as deep sea mining and personal care product (PCP) pollution) and also to address necessities, such as the need for a High Seas Treaty to protect international waters. Budget cuts for the key UK statutory bodies leading on marine legislation have knock-on financial pressures on national NGOs. Despite this, it is still unusual for organisations to share approaches to communication.

Opposite page and below:
Lyme Bay. Photos © Blue Marine Foundation

8: Lack of public awareness

There is little public awareness of the importance of the ocean to all our lives. On top of this, marine issues compete with other more apparently immediate societal pressures, such as economic and security concerns. Despite their location and historic reliance on the ocean, coastal communities are often excluded from consultation on marine protection measures. Some are among the most deprived areas in the UK. More needs to be done to engage these communities in discussion and action on how to improve their local marine environment in ways that enhance both the local economy and people's wellbeing.



“It is a challenge to move marine conservation up the agenda when there are so many other things to worry about.”

Survey respondent



The Effective Marine Funding workshop

Making change happen

Given these challenges, it felt useful to ask respondents to reflect on their main approaches to influencing change. The replies uncovered a mix of strategies, including:

- *Changing how information is presented ('framed') to influence values and behaviours:* this was grounded in the belief that when people better understand the value of the ocean to them, they will take action to protect it.
- *Aligning people around a common purpose:* this included helping diverse stakeholders see they share a common purpose and bringing together relevant individuals or groups who wouldn't normally talk to each other.
- *Awareness raising and research:* this involved explaining scientific evidence more clearly to policy-makers and the public.
- *Increasing collaboration and demonstrating solutions:* for example, pooling skills and approaches, boosting capacity through joint working, increasing impact through coordinated effort, and co-developing work plans.
- *Advocacy and campaigning.* Many felt policy and advocacy work hand in hand to enable change. One organisation had a five-step process to campaigning: investigating, documenting, exposing, acting and lobbying. Others spoke of a portfolio of approaches: for example, using science to influence both public behaviour and policy-making, public awareness campaigns, education, working with coastal communities, citizen science projects, and legal action where necessary.

WHAT THE THREE FOUNDATIONS CURRENTLY SUPPORT

John Ellerman Foundation has historically targeted funding in this area on marine protection and reducing overfishing. It makes grants for work with 'national significance', primarily across the UK but also in the UK Overseas Territories. The Foundation recognises that often it is the system that has to change, so will support those working to influence government and the market. The workshop discussions also contributed to the Foundation's new strategy, which extends the scope of its funding to work which tackles the harmful effects of human activity on the sea.

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation supports marine work across a breadth of issues but rooted in a belief that while people and their behaviours are at the core of environmental challenges, they also hold the potential for solutions. The Foundation supports under-represented people and issues.

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch focuses on building collaboration, identifying and supporting 'changemakers', and increasing NGOs' capacity to communicate why the ocean matters more effectively. The UK Branch is an early stage funder, providing the resources and support for organisations to develop and test new approaches to secure systemic change.

"Fundors will be key in helping us advocate and campaign for the realisation of our vision at this critical time."

Survey respondent

The workshop

Participants reflected on their current practice and shared experiences of what was working well and what they thought should be done differently in future. The top four priorities from the survey – marine ecosystem conservation, fisheries management, pollution, and community involvement – then informed the choice of themes for focused discussion groups. The fifth priority, strengthening skills and collaboration, was already embedded in the concept of the workshop. We also allowed space for another theme to arise through discussion on the day. The need for a High Seas Treaty emerged as a pressing additional issue; currently two-thirds of the global ocean – the ‘high seas’ – falls largely outside the rule of law.

Reflecting on these priorities, workshop participants developed visions for change, identifying what gaps we need to fill in our approach and practice, and where the opportunities lie to make change happen.

The gaps in action

Our discussions brought to the surface challenges not only in what we are working on but in the way we work and our organisational approaches to marine protection. We must address these if we are to achieve our ambition to create a flourishing marine environment.

No shared, positive vision

We are missing a positive vision of the place of marine conservation in promoting a healthy, prosperous, progressive society. We need more spokespeople beyond NGOs to champion marine conservation.

Separate working

There is no overarching framework which brings together the range of work of NGOs focusing on marine protection. Often they are working in silos, with their own agendas and remits. Like NGOs, funders tend to collaborate on an ad hoc basis. There is no shared overall approach to addressing critical gaps or harnessing efforts for maximum impact.

Workshop
participants

A lack of public understanding

The drivers of ocean degradation are complex, and therefore complex to communicate clearly. There is a lack of robust data on:

- the value and role of the ocean to all our wellbeing;
- distribution of marine biodiversity, and links between loss of biodiversity and ecosystem function;
- pollution from domestic and agricultural sources;
- clear information for consumers on pollution, sustainable seafood, toxins, and the impact of the supply chain, waste management and carbon emissions.

What scientific evidence we do have is often ignored. The public remain confused about the implications for their lives and what they can or should do. We need to be more effective about communicating findings clearly to policy-makers and presenting messages to the public.

“I’d like to see a new ‘sea story’ for the UK, which includes a strong link in people’s minds between the ocean and physical and mental health.”

Survey respondent



Short-term and limited funding

There is a limited pool of marine conservation funding and funders. NGOs therefore compete rather than collaborate according to their comparative strengths. Funders tend to support work with near-term and achievable goals, but such short-term funding hampers many conservation projects. Several respondents felt funders could do more to enable innovative thinking and support demonstration projects to showcase alternative approaches, for example, that sustainable fishing can be financially viable.

Blenheim Reef. Chagos Conservation Trust. Photo © Jon Slayer



“The average one- to three-year funding for applied conservation science projects is a significant limitation when faced with such large gaps in knowledge.”

Survey respondent



Grampond School, Ocean Camp 2018. Photo © Surfers Against Sewage

What are the opportunities for change?

The survey and workshop discussions identified a number of openings for positive change.

Enhancing existing policies and frameworks

Participants emphasised the need for ensuring existing policies and frameworks are implemented. Strengthening MPA management and monitoring is a significant opportunity. Participants wanted to see a move from simply *creating* MPAs to their active and effective management. They also felt it was important to show that MPAs can benefit many different players, from fishing workers to tourists. Globally, there is potential in campaigning for higher UN protection targets, once its agreed objective of protecting 10 per cent of the ocean by 2020 has been met.

With so much environmental legislation embedded in the EU, Brexit presents obvious problems. But it also 'harbours a wealth of opportunities to build *better* protections for the marine environment'. Participants felt we could use this moment to tighten marine management and improve the way our sea is managed and regulated.

“Ensuring Marine Protected Areas are well-managed and not just ‘paper parks’ takes innovative ideas, financing mechanisms and stakeholder support.”

Survey respondent

“A post-Brexit fisheries policy could be world leading in its approach to sustainability and equity.”

Survey respondent

INSPIRING INITIATIVES

Participants cited a number of projects that are already making waves.

The **Blue New Deal** (bluenewdeal.org) creates a new narrative around marine conservation that puts coastal communities at its heart. The economic modelling also by the New Economics Foundation demonstrates the positive impact of effective evidence.

Projects giving a platform to new voices are making their presence felt, including the Marine Conservation Society's **Community Voice Method** (mcsuk.org) and **Low Impact Fishers of Europe** (lifeplatform.eu) which represents small scale and static fishers.

Net-Works (net-works.com) is a market solution bringing sustainable business models into marine conservation that address community needs and support conservation.

Campaigns such as the **Great British Oceans Coalition** (greatbritishoceans.org) have brought tangible policy commitments and the designation of large MPAs in the waters around the UK Overseas Territories.

The **Marine CoLABoration** (marinecolab.org) supports complementary collaboration across NGOs, and a new approach to solving ocean issues.

Pew – Satellite Applications Catapult – Eyes on the Seas (catapult.org.uk) is unlocking technology to help with large-scale marine surveillance and enforcement.

Powerful **collaborations between NGOs**, which play to each participating organisation's strengths, have seen successes in the introduction of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and action to tackle marine plastic pollution (including microbeads).

Creating new narratives and increasing public awareness

Public awareness is growing but we must do more to improve 'ocean literacy': that is, increase public understanding of our impact on the ocean and its impact on us, and frame issues in ways that connect better with people. This feels like a good moment to build further on increased media coverage of ocean stories and greater public attention on ocean conservation.

Workshop participants believed that people will back change if they understand the many ways in which the ocean supports their quality of life. Shifting perceptions in this way relies on messages being positive and solution-focused. Ideas included creating new narratives grounded in shared values, such as the ways in which the sea underpins prosperity and the concept of the ocean as a public space, not one belonging to certain sectors. Some suggested that the movement could take advantage of increasing market demand, for example, encouraging supermarkets and restaurants to compete as to which sell the most sustainable fish. Others felt that messages about the decline of species and habitats are beginning to be heard; these negative impacts could be turned to positive effect as a driver for behaviour.

Increasing collaboration

There is much scope for greater collaboration between NGOs, funders and others in agreement over key marine conservation issues. A big plus point was seen to be that: 'there are some truly inspiring and clever people working in the sector'. There is also an opportunity for 'closer working relationships between NGOs and small-scale fishing sector working together for mutual benefit'.

“The impacts of climate change are finally beginning to make the wider public aware of what is coming.”

Survey respondent

Creating new economic models

Several saw scope for new economic models. Suggestions included innovative finance mechanisms for ocean conservation and sustainability initiatives, and the establishment of an Ocean Fund, supported by governments and others, to address conservation and sustainable 'blue growth'.

Local engagement

At the local level, several felt there was untapped potential in engaging more with volunteers and local communities and increasing community involvement in planning.

Using technology

Technological advances offer better monitoring and control, including of overfishing and illegal fishing. Another example given was using aerial monitoring to better predict the state of the intertidal environment.

The 2017 Big Bottle Count found 40% of plastic bottles washed up by the Thames were single-use. Photo © ZSL



What next?

Workshop attendees strongly agreed on the need for collaborative action. There was a clear belief that a collective strategy is not only possible but would add value to organisations' immediate work and our long-term vision. Such goodwill makes this ambitious goal feel achievable. We identified a number of immediate actions and outlined longer-term steps to make collaboration happen.

Immediate actions

The workshop was primarily a starting point for discussion and planning. But we did highlight immediate actions from the day.

- Leverage the impact of the BBC series *Blue Planet II* through a joint letter to governments and the public, showing that NGOs are aligned (this has been done: see box right).
- The potential of reconvening this group to create an action plan and to explore the idea of developing an overarching framework (see more in the next section). The aim would be to help organisations identify a simple vision and the three top priorities in external communication over the next five years. The three foundations are considering how best to resource this, including providing finance, meeting space and facilitation.
- For the three foundations:
 - enthuse other funders about supporting marine protection work through wider funding networks and staff and trustees' personal contacts;
 - talk to other environmental organisations we fund about how marine protection can be strengthened within their work and about their future involvement as stakeholders within the wider group.

COLLABORATION BEGINS

As a direct result of the workshop, 37 marine and related NGOs signed a joint letter to UK governments, published in *The Telegraph*, calling for a list of jointly agreed ocean protection measures. A short life #BluePlanetChampion campaign ran in print and social media.

An open letter to the Governments of the UK

Calling BLUE PLANET Champions

"Blue Planet II" brought the ocean into our homes, revealing more than ever before about this extraordinary life force at the heart of our planet and the amazing creatures that make their home there. No one can have failed to be moved by its beauty or by the seriousness of its plight. Human impacts are taking their toll, even on the deepest ocean depths and most distant seas.

Not only is our ocean home to amazing wildlife, it provides us with livelihoods, food and every second breath we take. As this inspirational series ends we have an obligation to think about how we can all help to protect our ocean, personally through our own actions and as global citizens.

Our ocean needs urgent action

The UK, with our proud sea-faring traditions, can become champions for the whole ocean, both internationally and in our own waters, with bold and ambitious policies tailored to protect our marine life at home and all around the world.

On behalf of the billions of people inspired by Blue Planet II and the millions our organisations represent, we ask you to:

- Become a global BLUE PLANET Champion to protect marine life
- Support proper protection for our ocean including at least 30% of the global ocean becoming protected ocean sanctuaries
- Take a global lead on tackling ocean pollution, including the urgent problem of plastic waste

Life on Earth is simply not possible without a healthy and thriving ocean. Thank you for doing more in its defence.





Sea kayaking in Norfolk. Photo © Povl Abrahamsen

What should we be working towards?

Achieving a significant shift towards our vision for the ocean in 2028 needs more than one-off and ad hoc actions. We must address a series of longer-term strategic needs.

An overarching framework

- We need a determined and system-wide alignment of effort so as to:
- provide a shared vision;
- identify priorities for action;
- uncover opportunities to amplify and aggregate work within the sector;
- highlight opportunities for collaboration with other sectors dealing with different parts of the environmental system, such as climate change, and with sectors beyond conservation.

Many questions still need unpicking here: can NGOs and funders align to achieve this, and who holds the overview? How do we get the majority to collaborate? How do we attract attention to less obviously appealing, but equally important, issues?

A High Seas Treaty to protect the whole ocean

The ocean is an interlinked and global system, but most funders and NGOs have a domestic focus. We urgently need a UN treaty to protect the biodiversity of the high seas. Two-thirds of the global ocean falls under the high seas – marine areas beyond national jurisdiction and essentially outside the rule of law. The remote high seas also fall outside the remit of most funders and NGOs. These have been fundamental challenges in our efforts to save the ocean. An effective High Seas Treaty at the UN level would underpin conservation efforts everywhere.

Shaping and amplifying the ocean story

We must appeal to hearts as well as minds through a positive vision. This should communicate the value of the whole ocean, underpin all our work and inspire others to follow. A whole ocean story would:

- integrate and leverage actions across ocean conservation, connecting high seas to coastline, local projects to national action;
- avoid ‘reinventing the wheel’ because there is insufficient time to understand the issue fully or an aversion to risk;
- achieve greater resonance: each voice supports the work as a whole, making the message ‘stickier’ with different audiences.

Reaching out

To achieve the level of engagement and popular support for ocean protection we envisage, we must reach beyond committed audiences and engage unusual suspects, such as business people, health professionals, artists and residents from coastal communities.



Surfing on Fistral Beach, Cornwall. Photo © A R Leach

Make the most of existing legislation

The UK has a good existing framework for marine management, but we do not use this effectively and consistently. We need to ensure legislation is implemented properly to eliminate weak or destructive practice. We should also look for ways to leverage global frameworks in support of UK targets. For example, a campaign for '30x30' (30 per cent of the world ocean protected by 2030) could build on the UN protection target for protecting 10 per cent of the ocean by 2020.

Seize opportunities

We need the structure and ability to cooperate around – and often respond rapidly to – opportunities to deliver a cohesive and aligned message about the ocean. For example, a surge in interest around single-use plastic can be a gateway to highlight other forms of ocean concern. Setting up a communications consortium to act around short-range opportunities with aligned messages could be one way to do this.

What should funders do?

The workshop has already influenced the priorities of the three sponsoring foundations. Esmée Fairbairn has given 'grants plus' funding to enable a facilitated gathering of Scottish organisations that have current marine grants through the Foundation. There was also a high marine representation in the gathering of 40 environment practitioners in Norfolk in June 2018 which enabled greater networking and has led to follow-on visits and conversations between marine-focused NGOs. Esmée Fairbairn will have a new strategy to commence in 2020. Should there be a renewed commitment to Environment/Food priorities within the strategy, marine work is likely to feature. John Ellerman Foundation has extended its funding approach to a

wider interest in 'Protecting the seas', beyond conservation to also tackling the harmful effects of human activity. It is also looking at how it might support work in the high seas. Calouste Gulbenkian is strengthening the focus on ocean literacy in its new five-year plan and on the links between local, national and international strategy. And the funders are looking at furthering other specific and immediate steps. But the workshops highlighted more general process actions for all funders:

- Collaborate more as funders and in signposting organisations to the most effective funding partner for their work. This would reduce competition between potentially complementary initiatives and allow organisations to spend less of their valuable time on administration and preparing applications.
- Provide longer term funding that allows projects to work to the longer timescales needed to effect environmental and behavioural change.
- Review their processes, so as to: introduce easier application procedures that minimise the administrative burden on environmental organisations; provide core funding for coordination roles and coalitions; reduce the 'reinvention of the wheel' through risk-averse funding.
- Facilitate the possibility of building a movement of active citizens who support marine conservation.
- Help organisations build their own capacity and share learning, facilitating training and the exchange of ideas and best practice.

Conclusion

The key takeaway from the workshop is that, in order to achieve a fully protected ocean, we need an overarching framework underpinned by a simple, shared vision. This would drive a cross-sector general awareness campaign designed to tell a whole ocean story. The aim of this campaign would be to see the UK population better understanding and so fully supporting the need for ocean protection.

This is an ambitious approach, but the aspirations revealed by the survey and the energy and enthusiasm within the workshop discussions suggest it is achievable. We need more thinking on how to break down this process into constructive and manageable steps, but the result would amplify and add value to all our collective work, in both the immediate and longer term.

The Solent. Blue Marine Foundation. Photo © Peter Barritt



“My vision is for people to be immensely proud of UK seas and hungry for more positive change.”

Survey respondent

About this project

The survey was carried out in summer 2017. The findings informed the design of the workshop, which was held in October 2017. The three foundations met again in November 2017 to discuss next steps.

This paper draws on a report of the survey findings by Jen Morgan and additional material from Mirella von Lindenfels. This summary has been prepared by freelance writer, Sharon Telfer.

Find out more

To download the survey report, go to bit.ly/effectivemarinefundingsurvey

Community-led conservation in Ulster.
Photo © New Economics Foundation



Appendix 1

VISION AND IDEAS DISCUSSED IN DETAIL AT THE WORKSHOP

| | Vision for 2028 | Priorities to achieve it | Ideas, opportunities and enablers |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Marine Protected Areas | <p>Our vision is to have a network of marine recovery areas around the UK supported by all sectors of society.</p> <p>We want people to know about them and value them in the same way as national parks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensuring significance of a healthy ocean recognised and reflected in policy and practice across society ● Helping government take pride in ocean recovery leadership as an island nation ● Encouraging a range of actors to get involved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human health-based campaign ● Ocean literacy ● Responsible ocean tourism ● Blue Planet II ● Novel messaging ● Socio-economic evidence ● Brave legislator |
| Eliminate/reduce pollution | <p>Our vision is for the ocean to be free of all types of pollution, enabled through prevention and removal.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Influencing public opinion ● Making the economic case and demonstrating viable alternatives ● Changing legislation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence public health impact ● Build on plastic awareness ● Millennials who are solutions focused ● Cross-sector collaborations |
| High seas protection | <p>Our vision is for effective governance of the high sea through a robust UN Treaty, enabling a network of high seas MPAs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong outcome from treaty negotiations commencing 2018 ● Developing high seas and 'whole ocean' science to increase evidence ● Increasing NGO capacity to engage with UN and national governments ● Funding ● More NGO engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Linking security and humanitarian issues ● Remote sensing technology ● Joined up science funding model ● More funder collaboration ● High seas to coastal impact messaging |
| Valuing the ocean | <p>Our vision is that all of society understands the role of the ocean at an earth system (global) level and recognises its value.</p> <p>The full value of the ocean is integrated into everything we do and this leads to sustainable management decisions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improving ocean literacy – the understanding of our influence on the ocean and the ocean's influence on us ● Value of the ocean is linked to human values ● Better storytelling – reframing narratives for different issues and audiences ● Increasing communications capacity ● Triggering investor pressure on marine business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Global strategy for the ocean ● National Minister for the Ocean ● Broadening the agenda – through the arts and with health, inequality ● Post-Brexit vision ● Marine Natural Capital handbook ● Valuing the Ocean consortium |
| Sustainable fishing | <p>Our vision is for healthy seas where there are more and more varied fish and cetaceans.</p> <p>We want to see respected fishermen who are financially viable.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ecosystem based management ● Equitable quota access and allocation for wild fish ● Transparency – Full Disclosure Fisheries ● Science and technology enabling a quota holding register and supply chain transparency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Localised and recognised labelling ● Landing regulation enforcement ● Brexit – threat and opportunity ● Consumer pressure |

Appendix 2

LIST OF WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Organisation

Blue Marine Foundation
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
Environmental Funders Network
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Fauna & Flora International
Fishmongers' Hall
Funding Fish
Greenpeace
International Programme on the State of the Ocean (IPSO)
John Ellerman Foundation
John Ellerman Foundation
John Ellerman Foundation
Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE)
Marilles Foundation
Marine Conservation Society
Open Seas
Scottish Wildlife Trust
University of Oxford
Wildlife and Countryside Link
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Zoological Society of London

Name

Clare Brook
Andrew Barnett
Louisa Hooper
Florence Miller
Jenny Dadd
Sharon Shea
Nicola Frost
Alison Freeman
Tristram Lewis
Will McCallum
Mirella Von Lindenfels
Dorothee Irving
Nicola Pollock
Hugh Raven
Jeremy Percy
Aniol Esteban
Sandy Luk
Nick Underdown
Jonathan Hughes
Alex Rogers
Elaine King
James Wood
Fiona Llewellyn
Jen Morgan

Title

Chief Executive
Director
Environment Programme Manager
Director
Grants Manager
Director of Funding
Head of Marine
Fisheries Programme Manager
Director
Political Adviser
Director
Head of Grants
Director
Trustee
Executive Director
Director
Chief Executive
Director
Chief Executive
Professor of Conservation Biology
Director
Living Seas Manager
Marine Project Manager
Facilitator



Bexhill, East Sussex. Photo © Leonard Bentley



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