



Diverse Marine Values
Integrating Diverse Values into Marine Management

Integrating Diverse Values into Marine Management in Wales

23rd October 2023

Workshop Report

A project being delivered by:



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1 Background

Funded by the Sustainable Management of Marine Resources (SMMR) Research Programme¹, the 'Diverse Marine Values' project is driving an innovative agenda of transdisciplinary research to advance our understanding of values-informed marine management. Through the project, we are exploring marine decision making in a system-based way, and trialling innovative approaches to engagement across three case study areas - the Shetland Islands (Scotland), Upper Severn Estuary (Wales) and Portsmouth (England).

Building on the learning so far, Work Package 5 of the project aims to enhance national approaches by working with marine management institutions and stakeholders in Wales, Scotland and England to develop understanding around the change that is needed, along with practical actions which could help to better incorporate values into decision making.

Our Wales workshop was held on Monday 23rd October 2023 (virtually), and working with the Welsh Government, NRW, TCE and other stakeholders, we reflected on the work undertaken as part of the Diverse Values project, including experience of arts-based methods (ABM) across the case study areas, and explored key decision-making processes to identify challenges and consider opportunities to better reflect diverse values in marine management. The sections below provide a summary of the workshop discussions which will be considered through on-going work with key institutions.

2 Speaker session

From the Diverse Values Project Team, **Lucy Greenhill, HMC** provided an overview of the SMMR Diverse Values Project and the way in which our team is aiming to support a step-change in institutional capacity to incorporate diverse values into marine management in the UK. **Alison Fairbrass, UCL** presented on the 'Myths, Barriers & Opportunities of Diverse Values in Marine Management & Research', looking at the obstacles which are perceived in relation to incorporating values into decision-making, as well as identifying potential entry points and actions to facilitate greater collaboration. **Victoria Leslie, University of Portsmouth** gave an overview of the 'Suite of Arts-based approaches' applied in the project, including Photo Essay, Community Voice Method, Digital Storytelling and Techniques from

¹ <https://www.smmr.org.uk/>

Theatre, with insights into the challenges and advantages of arts-based methods (ABM). **Kathryn Fradera, UHI Shetland**, presented on 'Decisions and Values', including her work analysing the decision-making processes in Scotland, Wales and England, along with important insights into the definitions of key terms (decisions, entry points and values). Slides were also presented on behalf of **Emma McKinley, Cardiff University**, on her work on Ocean Literacy in Work Package 2 of the Diverse Values Project and opportunities to align with CaSP going forward.

In the next session, **Caryn Le Roux, Head of Marine Resilience and Climate Change at Welsh Government** provided an overview of the activities of the Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership (CaSP Cymru). CaSP is an important forum which is supporting activity in key areas relating to the integration of values in marine decision-making in Wales, including strategic objectives of *Building Coastal Community Capacity*, *Ocean Literacy* and *Sustainable Finance*. The Wales Ocean Literacy Strategy is currently being developed and is due to be published in June 2024. Under Sustainable finance, development of a Blue Investment Fund is looking at how to build a sustainable delivery model for nature recovery; and for Building Capacity, bids are being received including for strategic projects looking at how to bring communities into decision-making. Details on information and progress can be found on the [CaSP website](#).

Lucie Skates, Senior Marine Planning Implementation Advisor, NRW updated us on the progress with the Three-Year Review of the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP), which introduces a new plan-led system for Welsh Seas. Guided by the High Level Marine Objectives (HLMO) including 'Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society', social policies are a key section of the WNMP and address a range of social issues including coastal communities, heritage, coastal change and flooding and climate change. To inform the review, a [Monitoring Report for the period 2019-2022](#) was prepared, as required by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and identifies progress against key objectives including Well-being of coastal communities; Designated landscapes; Access to the marine environment; and Welsh language and culture. Some challenges reflected included:

- Who are our consultees for social values?
- How to better engage the public and help them to become "intelligent consultees"?
- Challenges with the evidence base – this is patchy for social aspects e.g. there is good data on tourism and recreation in Pembrokeshire, but less elsewhere.

- There is a lack of awareness of the WMNP outside of marine licensing, e.g. in Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).
- There were attempts to engage people through outreach events during consultation on the WNMP but there was limited uptake
- How to ensure robustness of decisions based on social values when compared with environmental assessment / legislation.
- There are importance differences between marine licensing decisions and development planning decisions – marine licensing is ‘behind closed doors’ compared to land planning which is a more open process.
- How to address competing governmental aspirations

The Marine Historic Environment Working Group is supporting the WNMP process including [The Marine Historic and Natural Environment Marine Area Statement](#)².

Tristan Bromley, Whole of Seabed Programme Manager, the Crown Estate (TCE) presented on the ‘Whole of Seabed’ programme (WoSP) and reflections on social value creation. TCE play an important role in marine development as they undertake large-scale planning for sectors which relate to the seabed, such as offshore wind. As custodians of the marine environment, TCE work with partners across the UK to support more integrated, cross-sectoral planning to support management of the seabed, particularly considering the goals of nature recovery and net zero, and the ‘spatial squeeze’ implications. TCE bring specific capabilities in taking a long-term view, across sectors, across the UK and with the power to convene and partner with a range of stakeholders. TCE are looking to evolve their role including looking beyond emphasis on value creation in terms of financial revenue, to bring in wider social values, and propose the WOSP and evolving spatial analysis as a key entry point. Key questions and challenges to social value creation posed for discussion were:

- What metrics best indicate potential for social value creation?
- What does ‘prosperity’ mean in terms of social values?
- How do we link the location of offshore activities to value creation in communities onshore?
- How do we ensure the value flow from spatial planning, through leasing, tendering and on to operation of offshore activities.
- How do we best collaborate on social value creation between organisations?

² [Yr Amgylchedd Hanesyddol Morol a Naturiol Datganiad Ardal Forol](#)

3 Entry points and Opportunities

In the break-out session, participants reflected on entry points and opportunities which are / could be a focus to develop or enhance approaches to inclusion of values in decision-making:

- Through CasP, the Building Coastal Capacity Fund provides opportunities for further partnership working and bringing in local community engagement and voices (and evidence building)
- Strategic planning (advising and our own plans) and associated processes including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, etc.
- Important to work with established forums/groups with existing networks and connections with communities or stakeholder groups that are currently not engaged in decision-making processes.
- TCE are bringing in social/cultural values via the WoS programme, so that they can be integrated into leasing programmes from the start. Opportunities to consider a broader range of marine sectors together to take a holistic approach.
- Look for examples internationally where diverse values have been successfully incorporated into decision-making in the marine space.
- Wellbeing Plans, and the Public Services Boards³ who are responsible for preparing them every 5 years under the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), provides a process of establishing social benefits across land and marine planning, particularly as they relate to Local Development Plans. Existing work is available on how the marine and coastal environment was integrated into objectives, including baseline criteria, but the plans could go further.
- Coproduction and shared responsibility for evidence creation is needed to support decision making.
- We need to look more broadly at enhancing democratic processes.
- Awareness raising needed WITHIN decision making organisations.
- Signposting to the right people to deal with queries to direct / support engagement.
- Building a repository of broader community perspectives which can be referred to at the earlier stages of decision-making. Participants could be invited back for further and more specific consultation through a longer term process.

³ <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/work/public-service-boards/>

- Are mechanisms already in place for this, such as the Wellbeing Plans? Do we need to revise them to better incorporate coastal and marine relevance? Or do we need new mechanisms that can do this?
- Looking beyond decision-making, there is a need to look across the broader processes of different organisations to identify where institutions are/can open up the space for values integration.
- We need to demonstrate how these methods can address some key challenges, e.g. that there is a lack of (diverse) public engagement because people might feel their views are not worthwhile
- Good example of community engagement by the heritage sector in Wales: [Prosiect Llongau-U 1914-18 | U-boat Project Wales 1914-18 \(uboatproject.wales\)](https://uboatproject.wales/)
- Opportunities to learn from and share experience on these developments and progress at the UK level, including with Scotland.
- What is the link between social values in this context, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)?

4 Challenges

A number of challenges were raised around changing how we do things to better capture values, and generally fall under the following themes:

Evidence and data

- Access to data/evidence is limited, and limited resources in organisation to engage with and understand opportunities.
- Data and knowledge sharing across sectors/industry and others.
- No clear metrics to assess social value, with a bias towards economic value.
- Lack of streamlined or consistent information flows.
- Standardisation of data collection methodology needed (where feasible) to enable comparative analyses. Or the use of recognised techniques across different sectors/ users/ activities.
- There is a need for clear, consistent terminology and definitions, e.g., there is currently no agreed definition of what a "coastal community" is – could look at work by the Environment Agency on this based on the smallest unit of the Deprivation Index.
- The question remains of how to utilise/ input evidence into traditional decision-making pathways.

- How to represent social / cultural evidence alongside more quantitative or map based evidence?

Implementation

- Need to recognise the distinction between marine licensing and development planning decision-making. Marine licensing is not set up to incorporate values into decision making (legislation doesn't function in that way), but is also subject to the MCAA and should be influenced by the WNMP.
- How do we evolve marine licensing to operate in a plan-led way? Developments elsewhere are relevant – i.e. the recent Jurisdictional Review of a marine licensing decision in Scotland, which raised issues on the strength of marine planning policy and wording, e.g. 'having regard to' 'should', which provides flexibility for interpretation at a particular point in time.
- How do we improve understanding of process and policies amongst the public to help them become more informed consultees?
- Lack of capacity and capability in key organisations to work with unfamiliar methods.
- How do we address the "so what" question of why should we use ABM? Putting these in place requires resources and the benefits need to be justified.
- These methods are 'out of the comfort zone' for bureaucratic processes.
- Lack of resources – there is a need for sufficient funding for appropriate data collection/ monitoring.
- Does including more values slow down decision processes? There is pressure on NRW not to 'hold up decision-making'.

Overcoming barriers and conflict

- There is a tension between macro level problems (e.g. energy transition) and social values. Where do social values line up with big system thinking?
- There are conflicts with Local Authority priorities under growth plans & available associated funding that those generate and other expressed views.
- Lack of trust – we need to get to a place where local communities are already set up so that trust and engagement is there prior to consultation.
- Has fisheries dominated the public discourse too much when it comes to coastal matters?

5 Enabling Actions

Specific ways forward considered were:

- Using the People and Nature survey to gather information on diverse values.
- Mechanisms to engage local voices and communities in long-term: sustainable funding for coastal partnerships, organisations: CaSP? Are there other opportunities to further support or develop collaborative working fora?
- Building local/regional networks. Do these already exist? Is it a matter of building capacity, resources and legitimacy of existing groups? Do housing associations or other types of local representation provide forums for engagement that go out of the 'usual suspects'?
- NRW and WG hoping to get the planning inspectorate (Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW)) to talk to ML about plan led decision making.
- Pilots, e.g. through CaSP - are there opportunities to pilot integrating diverse values and gather evidence on how these methods can be used?
- Building social science capacity and encouraging transdisciplinary community and working groups.
- Use learnings from examples of community engagement at coast (adaptation) e.g. Fairbourne.
- Work to embed action around enabling a Just Transition to Net Zero.
- Arts and other outreach needs to be bilingual.
- Seek funding to help build an appropriate evidence base on diverse values.

6 Summary

This discussion between decision-makers, inter-disciplinary researchers and other participants, gave insight into the decision-making processes and techniques to reconsider how values are addressed within them. It is clear that key organisations are aware of the need and challenge of integrating wider values into the decision-making process, to ensure benefits to society. A number of initiatives are underway in Wales (and beyond), with more to explore in relation to the activities of CaSP, the developing approach to the WoSP by TCE and the on-going implementation of marine planning in Wales. Existing drivers, particularly the MCAA and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act provide cornerstone legislation for steering focus on social values, and the mechanisms and processes already established under this Act

(including Wellbeing Plans) provide opportunity to explore the links to 'marine' in more detail. TCE's unique role and focus on a broader approach to understanding and enhancing social value provides another important and evolving process with relevance across the UK. Capacity building needs are evident, including around how we enable people to understand the complex processes of marine decision-making, and where and how they might influence these. The on-going development of the Ocean Literacy Strategy in Wales can address some of these, particularly if 'process literacy' can form part of this, and literacy around values needs an institutional focus, on the decision-makers too.

Creating change in long-standing processes, when resources are limited, is challenging and will take time, and collaboration across the marine community is needed to develop our understanding of the problems, what is needed and how they can be addressed. This workshop will be followed by engagement with decision-makers and stakeholders, to develop more specific understanding of the potential for change and the capacity building needs to support it.

7 Participants

Helen Bloomfield, NRW

Lucie Skates, NRW

Ceri Benyon-Davies, NRW

Caryn Le Roux, Welsh Government

Elen King, Welsh Government

Samuel Dorrington, Welsh Government

Julian Whitewright, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales

Tristan Bromley, The Crown Estate

Emma Harrison, The Crown Estate

Charlotte Brill, Cefas

Louise Martin, Natural England

Laura Parry, Wildlife Trusts Wales

Flo Taylor, Project Seagrass

Kathryn Fradera, UHI Shetland / HMC

Beth Siddons, HMC

Lucy Greenhill, HMC

Alison Fairbrass, UCL

Fernanda Balata, New Economics Foundation

Victoria Leslie, University of Portsmouth

Sayyidah Salam, University of Portsmouth