

Scottish Forum on Marine Natural Capital – Meeting Notes
Tuesday 22nd February 2022, 14:00 – 15:30

Attendees

Name	Initials	Organisation
Sam Collin	SC	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Esther Whitford	EW	NatureScot
Cathy Tilbrook	CT	NatureScot
Chris Leakey	CT	NatureScot
Vicky Morgan	VM	JNCC
Lucy Law	LL	Marine Scotland
Ed Noble	EN	Marine Scotland
Kate Bellew	KB	Crown Estate Scotland
Bill Austin	BA	Blue Carbon Forum
Tavis Potts	TP	University of Aberdeen
Rory McLeod	RM	Scottish Wildlife Trust

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Phil Boulcott	Marine Scotland
Sinead Sheridan	NatureScot
Hannah Grist	SRUC
Mike Palmer	Marine Scotland
Mark Bennett	Independent

Actions from Meeting

Action	Person
Send CL link to Basecamp group	SC
Invite representative of SEPA to next forum meeting - Contact Nicola Melville	SC
Invite stakeholders and any other interested parties to the online Basecamp network	Everyone
Arrange second meeting in 3 months	SC, EW

Update on Forum (SC)

- EW has started in role as co-coordinator of the forum, points of contact will be SC and EW.

- The goal of the forum will be to discuss marine natural capital work in Scotland, aiming to advance marine natural capital and ecosystem service thinking, research and practical implementation in Scotland.

Basecamp Network

- This will be an online platform for discussion around natural capital work, allowing members to share ideas, information, funding opportunities etc.
- It is separate to the forum and will be open to anyone who wants to contribute, although on an invite only basis for now.
- Discussion from the Basecamp network will feed back into the forum and help guide discussion and further work.

Roundtable

Update from each member on their area of work/organisation and interest in marine natural capital.

CT, CL, EW (NatureScot update)

- NatureScot has been working on natural capital (NC) more broadly, publishing an annual NC asset index which primarily covers terrestrial habitats.
- Commissioned a feasibility study into the possibility of a marine NC asset index which concluded it would be feasible but there are issues around execution e.g. data limitations.
- Currently working with organisations like JNCC and advising on pilot studies like Orkney Oceans of Value and Borderlands.
 - Development of a common framework
- Also advise on Blue Economy work and the National Marine Plan and how to integrate NC into this.
- Will need to consider resourcing in the future to help further work on marine NC.
- EW's graduate placement is a 2 year project which has been part funded by Marine Scotland and Crown Estate Scotland. It aims to help develop tools and techniques to allow application of marine NC approaches in Scotland. Currently working on a broad-scale literature review around the difficulties in applying marine NC and the potential solutions to this. Also hopes to create a communications plan to help raise awareness of marine NC.

EN

- As an economist, is interested in the valuation side of marine NC and how Marine Scotland can incorporate NC into their economic work.
- Currently waiting to hear about a proposal for a seagrass valuation study.
 - The aim of this will be to try and produce a monetary valuation of seagrass in Scotland. If the proposal is successful then the aim will be to finish this work in the next 9 – 12 months.
 - Both JNCC and Blue Carbon Forum have potential resources for EN.
 - Area/scale for project no yet refined, but Orkney a consideration

KB

- Crown Estate Scotland has focused largely on terrestrial natural capital but are now working to increase efforts on marine NC.
- Assist with funding for a number of projects:
 - Project officer in the Solway Firth
 - NatureScot Graduate Placement
 - SMEEF work at NatureScot
- Board are keen to help fund marine restoration work that supports communities.
 - Sustainable Communities Fund which has funded at least 1 project so far.

LL

- Focusing on Blue Economy work, hoping to publish the Blue Economy Strategy in March which will reveal Marine Scotland's high level objectives up to March 2045.
 - The focus of this will be on embedding the economy and society into nature.
 - Hope to use this to drive the use of marine NC as a decision making tool and help integrate it into planning.
 - Funding may follow this to help push NC work.
- Marine Fund Scotland: broader funding for blue economy work.
- Q. around spatial mapping of opportunities for restoration. CT mentioned that this could be a key role for SMEEF.
 - BA – highlighted need to build and understand an evidence base

TP

- Working on NC at a local, community scale.
- Has pushed the participatory mapping technique which works closely with local communities and stakeholders to map and ID features. This has allowed them to create refined local maps and then unpack the benefits provided by local features.
 - Have used this work to produce tools for community groups, for example maps that they can use when applying for funding.
 - Have also done work to see how these benefits will change under a number of scenarios, as well as looking at how these benefits flow to different groups of society.
 - Highlights the importance of linking NC to societal developments and the role it can play in improving the condition of communities.
 - Coastal community revitalisation
- Submitted funding proposal to Horizon Europe for project looking at NC benefits of offshore floating wind developments.
- Proposal also to NERC on Economics of Biodiversity

VM

- Marine NC Ecosystem Assessment (Funded by DEFRA)

- SWOT Analysis on NC approaches, hoping to publish by beginning of March. Focused on 35 NC projects within the UK. Carried out a scoping review of the evidence, with the final question being: *“What evidence exists to understand the distribution of benefits of marine and coastal ecosystem services to different beneficiary groups?”*
- Offshore East England Planning Area: mapped ecosystem services and pressures and linked this to the marine plan for the area.
- Volunteer Seabirds and Sea Scheme
- Seabed Maps
- CEFAS survey
- Although work funded by DEFRA, there is interest in a UK-wide approach.
- Have a new economic director who is pushing more conceptual work around a Sustainable Blue Economy.
 - Carried out work on blue-green finances and links to restoration work.
- Proposal to NERC on different pathways to net zero modelling impacts on natural capital
- DEFRA currently working on Marine Spatial Prioritisation (England focus)
- Keen to expand work across UK, and streamline NC work across the four nations to reduce duplication of efforts.

BA

- Chairs the Blue Carbon Forum and advises the government
- The BC Forum has a number of roles:
 - Training early career researchers – keen to discuss more joint funding opportunities for students.
 - Habitat specific blue carbon assessments.
 - Work is driven by the need for net zero and the need to include blue carbon habitats in the UK Greenhouse Gas inventory.
 - Looking at the challenges of increased pressures, particularly bottom trawling on shelf areas.
 - Working with DEFRA to set up a UK blue carbon network.
- Successful COP26 and now the 50th member of the International Partnership for Blue Carbon

SC

- Orkney Oceans of Value
 - Now online: <https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/living-seas/oceans-of-value/>
 - The second half of this project is focused on community/stakeholder valuations. Have employed a full time staff member to help complete this stakeholder engagement work, which should be completed in the next 12 months.