

## Scottish Forum on Marine Natural Capital – Meeting minutes

### Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 10:00 – 12:30

#### Agenda

	Item
1.	Introductions
2.	Updates from Forum members
3.	Blue Economy 2023 event – planning update
4.	Chairing arrangements for future meetings
5.	Following-up on discussions from the last meeting: Considering activities/actions to be taken forward by the Forum and future topics to discuss. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update on latest Blue Economy publication (IC)</li> <li>- Overview of actions identified last time (SS)</li> </ul>
6.	AOB
7.	Date of next meeting
8.	Close

#### Attendees:

Chris Leakey (Chair - CL, NatureScot), Phil Boulcott (PB, Marine Scotland), Iona Campbell (IC, Marine Scotland), Sally Rouse (SR, Marine Scotland), Emma Hedley (EH, Marine Scotland), Daniella Laing (D, Marine Scotland), Nicola Melville (NM, SEPA), Marion Harrald (MH, SEPA), Janet Khan (JK, SEPA), Vicky Morgan (VM, JNCC), Jennifer McNulty (JM, JNCC), Sinead Sheridan (SS, NatureScot), Lucian Fernandez Slade (LFS, NatureScot), Tavis Potts (TP, University of Aberdeen), Calum Duncan (CD, Scottish Environment Link), Hannah Rudman (HR, SRUC), Adele Shaw (AS, CES), Jessica Jones (JJ, SWT), Julia Clough (JC, SWT)

#### Apologies:

Bill Austin, Annie Breaden, Amy McQueen, Ed Noble, Hannah Grist and Cathy Tilbrook.

#### Summary of actions from the meeting:

Action	Lead
Add content and refresh the marine natural capital forum webpage before the Blue Economy event in February.	JJ
Create a list of Forum core members for future chairing.	JJ/LFS
Send poll for next meeting date	LFS

#### Update on Actions from the previous meeting:

All actions from the previous meeting are completed.

#### 1. Updates from Forum members

##### Marine Scotland

The latest Blue Economy publication **Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy approach** has been launched. The Blue Economy team have been considering what is already being done across Scottish Government to deliver the Blue Economy approach. This will help identify focused areas for delivery for future work. There will be workshops held during the summer to help develop this understanding.

The latest round of **CivTech** challenges were launched at the end of November, this included one on marine natural capital. This programme represents an opportunity to bring investment into the natural capital space. The challenge is now closed, and submissions are being reviewed.

### **JNCC**

The mNCEA programme is ongoing and JNCC are currently submitting bids for Year two. Work on benthic monitoring indicators, Volunteer Seabirds Surveys at Sea and development of an Asset Services Matrix is ongoing. The mNCEA programme is also carrying out user research to gain insight into what data accessibility tools could be useful to facilitate the implementation of natural capital approaches.

### **Hannah Rudman**

HR noted that she is currently involved in developing a natural capital toolkit for businesses. She is also involved in the Investment Ready Nature Scotland grant scheme (IRNS) and the soon to be launched Finance Ready Nature Scotland grant scheme (FRNS).

### **Tavis Potts**

The NERC and ISRC economics of biodiversity funded project - Sea the Value, is now underway. One of the case study areas is the Moray Firth. The objective is to advance understanding the socio-economic values of biodiversity. The focus will be on three key areas:

- Providing more granular information between biodiversity natural capital and ecosystem services related to quantity, extent, condition and resilience.
- Carbon sequestration and bioremediation of waste.
- Stakeholder focussed methodology:
  - Use of place-based participatory mapping.
  - Focus on how benefits are dispersed and developing further understanding of access to ecosystem services and who is benefitting from them.
  - Development of a 10-step process for community based methodology.

TP is also involved in delivering a citizen assembly type process at the university. This will be a permanent series of events and the first is related to Cop15 and how the campus can be a more sustainable and biodiversity positive place.

### **SEPA**

SEPA have been considering how to include natural capital within decision making on existing partnerships and process, such as river basin management and flood risk assessments. For example at the coastal strip, considering how we apply terrestrial thinking through the Riverwoods project (which extends out to 3nm).

Considerations are also being given to using existing ecosystem services estimates for mapping natural capital and ecosystem service provision. This would be useful to bring into marine spatial planning and aquaculture casework work that SEPA delivers. In addition, having a valuation of habitats that provide coastal protection (e.g. mussels, oysters, and seagrass) would also be useful.

MH noted a CREW funded project of interest that has now gone out to contract. This is looking at the effect of marine habitats such as kelp, seagrass, oyster and blue mussels on flood and erosion risk, and estimating a value for those habitats. It is also of interest to note that Bristol and Avon riverside network has been given some funding to build a freshwater biodiversity code.

### **Scottish Wildlife Trust**

The community voice method element of the Orkney Oceans of Value project is nearly concluded and the final report and video will be released in March 2023.

### **NatureScot**

SS noted that LFS has recently started in post on a Marine Natural Capital project placement, and is considering various pilot approaches to progress, to test the application of a natural capital approach. Currently, the main option that is being considered and is likely to be taken forward is the development of a Natural Capital Protocol for a coastal and marine industry. This will involve working with the sector identified to develop this. SEPA noted they would put in a request to see if any funding can be contributed to contribute towards the protocol. They welcomed that the sector itself contribute funding towards the process to increase buy-in to this approach.

CL noted that NatureScot are PhD intern will be starting soon. They will undertake a project on the coherence of policy and legislation across terrestrial and marine ecosystem interface.

### **Scottish Environment LINK**

Sea Scotland will be going ahead as an in person event this year, and the theme will be *Land to Sea*.

## **2. Blue Economy February 2023 event – planning update**

JC provided an update on the planning for this event, and the format and theme of each of the sessions planned. It will be an in-person event in St. Andrews. A summary note will be produced, which can be shared afterwards.

JC also noted that she plans to update the MNCF webpage, on the SFNC website ahead of the event in Feb. The page will be enhanced by including more information on the Forum and how to become a member and other resources such as meeting minutes, live project list and a list of current members. JJ offered to help coordinate this. Howell Marine Consulting are kindly sponsoring the event, and as part of the sponsorship package, have been invited to attend a meeting of the Forum. A member of HMC will attend the next Forum meeting.

HR noted that SRUC could offer a talk on the saltmarsh code, and how to govern ecosystem markets with codes and principles.

Members discussed the benefits of the event and noted that the SFNC has been so effective because of the way it brings experts and industry together. Therefore it has been highlighted that we need to improve communication from this Forum accessible to a wider audience. It is important for sectors to see how the approaches can have value. We must also keep in mind how project experiences and learnings can be communicated to gain the interest from industry and how to involve community in order to progress effective decision making.

One of the main values the event will have is that it will bring industry members into the natural capital conversation. It can help develop understanding about what a natural capital approach means for them on the ground, and how policy can integrate natural capital approaches for better decision making. This information could also go on the website.

There was a suggestion to make a deliberate offer to incentivise interested parties to get involved in the forum, rather than waiting for them to get in touch following the event. Such an offer could be

raised at the end of the event. The scope of this could even include another event or activity that brings in those parties with a definite contact point.

### **3. Chairing arrangements for future meetings**

CL noted that currently a Chair for these meetings is identified by requesting a volunteer for this from amongst the membership by the Forum's coordinators. It would be more effective to develop a list of Forum members and select Chair for this on a rolling/rotating basis. This process could be trialled and reviewed in future if necessary.

### **4. Following-up on discussions from the last meeting: Considering activities/actions to be taken forward by the Forum and future topics to discuss**

IC provided an update on work related to the Blue Economy work since the last meeting. The team and wider work is now focused on identifying feasible actions for the next year. Three main areas of work include:

1. Developing internal guidelines for blue economy policy integration, for example considering the links with the blue economy and Transport policy.
2. Pilot project on regional scale - How we take the enablers from the Blue Economy Vision to the real world and integrate their implementation with work on the ground with stakeholders. We would welcome alignment with projects and techniques that are ongoing and already being used. It was raised that it is worth thinking about the links to Regional Land Use Partnerships (RLUPs), which are applying natural capital on the ground in the terrestrial environment.
3. Strategic engagement with industry members - bringing the industry perspective into the conversation and promote engagement.

The group discussed the timescale of this approach. Marine Scotland will focus on testing this approach over the next 12 months and seeing how it works internally. Taking this external to Marine Scotland will happen in 2-3 years. It needs to work effectively internally first.

Comparisons were made with this pace compared to the pace of development of offshore wind projects, which is moving very quickly. The increased time and effort needed to integrate a natural capital approach could be seen as a barrier by the industry to these projects. However, it was noted **that natural capital doesn't necessarily add another layer to existing regulation**. If done correctly, natural capital can facilitate faster implementation, as it can provide an overall framework to set out how decisions are made and be more specific than current processes. This needs to be framed correctly for the industry.

**Forum members then discussed examples of where natural capital approaches have been integrated within decision-making.** Adaptation and appraisal guidance for flood risk has built natural capital into the decision from the Green Book. This helps make decisions on outcome and place-based approaches aligning with Scottish Government principles. This will be launched at the Flood Risk Management conference in February for wider consultation. It aims at making links with Dynamic Coast and is a systems-based approach to appraisal. It would be worth exploring how thinking around this can help to be translated into the Blue Economy approach and marine natural capital considerations.

### **Other examples included:**

**Medin** are developing their business plan and would like to shape it to help it deliver on the blue economy and natural capital. This is well-funded data infrastructure that is well established – it could be worth joining up?

**Historic Environment Scotland pilot project on the A9.** Consideration of the historic environment can be a gap, and it is not generally brought into natural capital considerations, but work was done with Transport Scotland to include it in this project. This was done through the Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **5. AOB**

Nothing was raised.

### **6. Date of next meeting**

A poll will be circulated to confirm a date for the next meeting in March. This will allow for a de-brief discussion following the event in February.

### **Links and resources shared during the meeting:**

- **UoAberdeen:** Communities, Biodiversity & Natural Capital - Understanding our Relationship with Nature. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/events/18069/>
- **Scot Gov:** Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy approach. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/delivering-scotlands-blue-economy-approach/#:~:text=Sets%20out%20the%20first%20phase,a%20collaborative%20approach%20in%20Scotland.>
- **Civtech Challenge 8.4:** How can technology help us better assess and identify projects and opportunities that will improve and increase investment in Scotland's marine natural capital? <https://www.civtech.scot/civtech-8-challenge-4-protecting-and-enhancing-marine-natural-capital>
- **Crown Estate Scotland:** blue economy opportunities for Scottish farmed salmon. <https://www.crownestatescotland.com/resources/documents/blue-economy-opportunities-for-scottish-farmed-shellfish>
- **Green Finance Institute:** Launch of new investment toolkit to create investment ready nature projects and mobilise private finance into nature restoration. <https://www.greenfinanceinstitute.co.uk/news-and-insights/launch-of-new-investment-toolkit-to-create-investment-ready-nature-projects-and-mobilise-private-finance-into-nature-restoration/>
- **NatureScot:** investment ready nature Scotland grant scheme, successful projects. <https://www.nature.scot/doc/investment-ready-nature-scotland-irns-grant-scheme-successful-projects>
- **UK Research and Innovation (UKRI):** research to better understand the economic value of biodiversity. <https://www.ukri.org/news/research-to-better-understand-the-economic-value-of-biodiversity/>
- **Scottish Wildlife Trust:** Orkney Oceans of Value Community Voice Method video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtpIpdjD6ps>
- **Marine Natural Capital Forum Scotland website (MNCFS).** <https://naturalcapitalscotland.com/project/the-marine-natural-capital-forum-scotland-mncfs/>
- **Marine Conservation Society:** Community Voice Method. <https://www.mcsuk.org/ocean-emergency/people-and-the-sea/community-voice-method/>

- **JNCC:** Natural capital seminar series – Marine.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLIGimPdYqI&list=PLXWmDvs2csGNsQuXqB1zrMyLbMf7EeBTp&index=4>
- **CIRIA website:** <https://www.ciria.org/>
- **Papers of interest:**
  - Unlocking the blueprint for native oyster restoration in Europe.  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/10990755/2020/30/11>
  - What are heritage values? Integrating natural and cultural heritage into environmental valuation.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362368793\\_What\\_are\\_heritage\\_values\\_Integrating\\_natural\\_and\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_into\\_environmental\\_valuation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362368793_What_are_heritage_values_Integrating_natural_and_cultural_heritage_into_environmental_valuation)
  - **Historic Environment Scotland:** Consultation for Scotland's new historic environment strategy. <https://haveyoursay.historicenvironment.scot/development-partnership/our-place-in-time-refresh-consultation/>