

Marine Natural Capital Forum Scotland: Meeting Minutes

11th October 2023

Agenda:

	Item	Lead	Time
1.	Presentation of new logo, how it fits in to the re-design of the Scottish Forum of Natural Capital and feedback on design preferences (logo has been professionally designed)	Jessica Jones and Julia Clough	13:00-13:20
2.	Updates from Forum members	All	13:20-13:50
3.	Presentation – Marine Conservation Society: The natural capital value of the MPA network (+ questions)	James Merchant, Marine Conservation Society	13:50-14:20
4.	Next meeting – topic/speaker suggestions welcome.	Jessica Jones	14:20-14:30

Attendees

Chris Leakey (CL, Chair, NatureScot), Adele Shaw (AS, Crown Estate Scotland), Rebecca Crawford (RC, Scottish Wildlife Trust), Marion Harrald (MH, SEPA), Hannah Rudman (HR, SRUC), Cathy Tilbrook (CT, NatureScot), Reme Diaz (RD, covering for Amy McQueen, Marine Directorate), Julia Clough (JC, Scottish Wildlife Trust), James Merchant (JM, Marine Conservation Society), Tavis Potts (TP, University of Aberdeen), Lily Braid (LB, Marine Directorate), Sally Rouse (SR, Marine Directorate, now moved over to MPA work), Jessica Jones (JJ, Scottish Wildlife Trust)

Apologies

Sophie Sellers, Sinead Sheridan, Vicky Morgan, Nicola Melville, Sam Collin, Calum Duncan, Ness Smith

Summary of actions from the meeting

Action	Lead
Organising blue carbon webinar with Scottish Blue Carbon Forum (late autumn)	JJ/Bill Austin (SBCF)
Potential presentation on mNCEA (DEFRA) for next meeting	JM
Organise Marine Nature Enhancement Team (MD) re-scheduled presentation	JJ
Check on status/timings of Finance Earth/Crown Estate consultation on High integrity marine natural capital markets report – potential presentation	AS
Work with designer to focus on compass alternatives (with clear marine theme) followed by group vote to select logo	SS/JC/CL/JJ
Send poll for next January meeting date – all to inform of potential clashes with events/conferences	JJ/ all members

1. Presentation of new logo and 'hub of hubs' concept

Slides provided for anyone unable to attend.

- HR – we should decide now which direction the logo is going (shell, compass, octopus, other), feed this back to the designer then put out to the wider group different versions of the selected logo to see what design within that category people choose.
- CL in favour of compass design, agreement from HR, JJ, RC, JC.
- CT – when viewing the four hubs in a row, navigator comes out strongly but marine does not. Maybe the pictorial logo may be something more marine or word marine needs to be emphasized. Picture should convey marine more.
- CT – more explicitly nautical compass which have a particular look.
- RC – wave behind the compass.
- HR – compass on sea map (old nautical chart).
- JC – words marine/land/finance could be more prominent.
- RC cautioned use of octopus as it is commonly used in other marine-related organisations (BSAC, Arran's COAST).
- HR – liked the idea of each of the action names.
- **Above feedback to be conveyed to designer.**
- HR - Potential distinction between three of the groups being working groups and the pioneers being a large network in its own right.
- JC – Julia sees the groups as discussion networks and actions that come out of the groups tend to extend beyond the Scottish forum, delivered through specific organisations or collaborations.
- HR – previously known as working groups, so its whether those names are retired now with an aspiration for all of the groups now being action oriented.
- JC – thinks there is a consensus around retiring the 'working group' concept and calling them hubs. Hub would energise and generate collaboration and sub-projects that deliver action. SFNC can host events, opening discussion, hold webinars but there is a limit to the role that can be played based on capacity.
- CL – highlighting how active and energised the conversation is on basecamp for pioneers, can aspire to this.
- **CL volunteered to represent MNCFS on the SFNC steering group (with one representative per hub). Bill Austin also sits on the steering group so there is good marine representation.**
- JC – Recruitment round for expansion of SFNC steering group members TBC. Work alongside brand refresh, launch of sub-domains and launch of digital enablers to keep us relevant and current.

2. Updates from forum members

Jessica Jones (SWT)

- From Sinead: MASTS annual science meeting has a workshop on natural capital "How can research help progress implementation of marine natural capital approaches and the mainstreaming of Scotland's Blue Economy Vision?" <https://masts.ac.uk/annual-science->

[meeting/](#) - Full programme released on 13th October. This is a joint workshop MD and NatureScot.

Successful FIRNS bid – 6-month feasibility project for a community benefits standard (October 23-March 24). Finance earth to lead engagement with corporate and financial organisations to understand demand and appetite for standard. A ‘community inclusion toolkit for community benefits’ to be produced in November, using one-to-one interviews with project test-case partners. Marine partners are Solway Coast & Marine Project and Kaly. A draft toolkit will be available by February 2024. **If forum members would like to join the ‘Advisory Group’ to help provide critical feedback to the draft contact JJ.** University of Strathclyde about to undertake a desktop review of existing evidence – **can any forum members signpost to best practice/standards documents?**

Members signposted in chat:

<https://www.scdi.org.uk/news-item/naturalcapital/>

<https://3.basecamp.com/4322753/projects/29290228>

- JC noted that there is a communities’ and nature-based solutions basecamp to re-purpose and direct conversations around this FIRNS bid to that basecamp.
- CT checked Coastal Communities’ Network is being brought into this conversation.

Hannah Rudman (SRUC)

Other marine FIRNS projects that have been offered a grant (dependent on contractual elements):

- Centre for Hydrology and Ecology potential saltmarsh code project.
- Dumfries and Galloway work on the Solway Firth project.
- Fisheries Management Scotland offer on developing a green finance model.

Cathy Tilbrook (NS)

FIRNS bids:

- NatureScot co-leading on bid with FMS (HR mentioned above).
- First part of bid is looking at options for setting up a new river catchment restoration fund alongside SMEEF, the synergies between those two funds and how they can build them close together to facilitate source to sea investment in nature restoration.
- The second part is looking at new funding streams that are related to net gain, strategic compensation, potentially biodiversity and carbon credits down the line, as well as the more formal outcomes-based investment that companies are wanting to see. SMEEF exploring the ways in which they can get involved with this kind of financing, balancing the liabilities involved. Constraints with SMEEF currently sitting within NatureScot. Using FIRNS funding to get external technical support to explore the long-term sustainability of these options.
- **Looking for help with this work if members know anyone interested in a short-term internship (October 23-March 24).**
- SMEEF marine enhancement toolkit is about to be launched on website to help marine and coastal restoration projects navigate their way through the complex processes.

SMEEF newsletter has more information about this FIRNS bid:

<https://mailchi.mp/d1b1be380a00/smeef-newsletter-autumn-2023?e=1c35024b28>

SMEEF impact report:

https://smeef.scot/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/SMEEF-Impact-Report-Final-08-June-2023_w.pdf

- Another FIRNS bid: Kaly – payment for ecosystem services.
- Some others with marine elements – Highland’s rewilding bid.
- RD asking if this can link up to national marine plan. Planning team are interesting in implementing a natural capital approach.
- CT – CL working with NMP2 team on policy framework for enhancement restoration and this is creating a mechanism to obtain the finance to do that work, but how its steered and the incentives will be an important part of the plan. Lots of MD on steering group for the project.

Reme Diaz (MD)

- Waiting to publish report “how much the people in Scotland value characteristics of the marine coastal areas” – hoping to present this at the MASTS ASM.

Adele Shaw (CES)

- Soon to publish report on how crown estate Scotland can better support community led natural capital projects (will be shared on basecamp when released).
- Working with crown estate on the blue carbon and natural capital markets piece that JC had posted about on basecamp. They will be contributing to the second phase.

Tavis Potts (UoA)

- Sea the Value project – ran first workshop in Cromarty Firth (case study site) during June. Used community participatory mapping methodology to map the natural capital features of the Cromarty Firth and align those with what different stakeholders perceive as the benefits.
- Finishing the first community driven natural capital map identifying a range of natural, modified, and human features in the seascape and how they provide different benefits.
- Preparing for 2nd workshop – 15th November looking at scenarios for changing natural capital (enhancement) working closely with people from the green freeport, highland council, community councils etc.
- Next year 3rd workshop – how natural capital benefits are distributed amongst different societal groups.

Rebecca Crawford (SWT)

- New natural capital policy document in progress.
- Organising a parliamentary event on Oceans of Value (which assessed the natural capital value of Orkney marine area in part) underway.

Chris Leahey (NS)

- Lucian, who was previously helping to coordinate MNCFS has moved to JNCC. Role was funded collaboratively by NS, CES and MD – would love to find a relevant natural capital project for these funds that could be delivered quickly or potential contribution to a project where there is added value (subject to approval from funders). **Please send in suggestions if you think you have a potential project to Chris or Sinead.**

3. Presentation: “A socio-economic analysis of a bottom-contact fishing ban” – James Merchant (Marine Conservation Society)

Slides kindly provided by James for members who could not attend.

- JM confirmed that offshore constituted 12-200 nm.
- CT - does JM know what ecosystem services are contributing most to the valuation figures – particularly interested in blue carbon partly due to contested science in relation to impacts of fishing activity on offshore shelf sediments, the distinction between organic and inorganic carbon in sediments and the susceptibility to remineralise and contribute to atmospheric carbon.
- JM – yes carbon sequestration is a big part of the valuation, as the third biggest contributor. Number one was bioremediation of waste and then nutrient cycling. Leisure and recreation were also included which can be contested as to what impact that really has in offshore MPAs. Carbon sequestration is a very technical area – they took financial valuations from about a decade ago and it takes one figure and applies it to the whole area and in reality, there are so many different variables. So not perfect but gives us an indication of the value to be gained. You can contest the overall figures but it shows over time you will gain more than you lose.
- SR – Appreciate that the study has limitations but they have been trying to understand the socio-economic impacts beyond marine (in terms of value chain) – assumed a reduction in fishing of 25% in this study, assume this doesn’t include processing impacts etc.?
- JM – yes that was outside the scope but would be good to include.
- JC – could you use the model to show what would happen if you continued fishing at the same rate. Exploring with steering group how to measure the cost of inaction against the value of investment.
- JM – yes that’s possible just need a reliable estimate to use, can be a bit contentious.
- CT - Assume the costs of implementing the ban include costs of compliance monitoring for a ban? JM needs to check.
- CT - But need to bear in mind that work happening now on introducing further MPA fisheries management measures so will be further changes.
- HR – Is new offshore wind infrastructure considered and at what rate of growth?
- JM – not considered in detail but definitely flagged, installing infrastructure for net zero targets could be eroding value elsewhere.
- CT - most offshore wind will be floating, so little impact on benthic, constraints on fishing – de facto MPA. Impacts on other feature i.e., birds which it will have an impact on.
- CL – do you intend to update this analysis in the future?

- JM – yes quite a few ideas on how it will be updated. Analysis one sided, bottom contact fishing = livelihoods and so looking at an analysis with the scenario of compensating fishermen for lost value. Financial values could be made more accurate and could include some more ecosystem services.
- CL – do you have any intention of doing the same analysis for the inshore MPAs?
- JM – would like to if there is appetite for it.

4. Next meeting – topic/speaker suggestions welcome

List of potential presentations:

- mNCEA (DEFRA)
- Marine Nature Enhancement Team (MD)
- UK Blue carbon mapping project (the Wildlife Trusts/SAMS)
- Mark Reed (SRUC) – saltmarsh code and high integrity nature markets
- High integrity marine natural capital markets report (Finance Earth/Crown Estate)
- Science based targets initiative (SBTi) and beyond value chain mitigation (BVCM) to close the gap between ambition and action (UK Blue Carbon Forum speaker)
- FIRNS project outcomes (for the April meeting)