

## Marine Natural Capital Navigators: Meeting Minutes

25<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 10:00-11:30

**Chairing Organisation: JNCC, Chair: Vicky Morgan**

### Agenda:

	Item	Lead	Time
1.	Introductions and updates	Chair	10:00-10:30
2.	Cathy – FIRNS summary	CT	10:30-10:45
3.	How can we collaborate with other SFNC hubs?	JC	10:45-11:00
4.	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we incorporate MNC thinking into MD workstreams update.</li> <li>Updated mailing list.</li> <li>Historic Environment Scotland membership (AS secondment to CES finished).</li> <li>Putting minutes on microsite.</li> </ul>	JJ	11:00-11:15

### Actions from previous meeting:

	Action	Lead	Status
1	Consider, if possible, to move date of next meeting from end of March to mid-April to avoid end of financial year	JJ	Complete
2	Coordinate a survey to gather feedback from group members	CL	Complete
3	Ask Marine Directorate about link with this group and contributing to marine natural capital related workstreams.	CL	Blue economy team dispersed, specify to connecting with national marine plan team.
4	Table FIRNS project update for a future meeting	CT	Complete
5	Add JM to mailing list for future meetings, and to the Basecamp group	SS/JJ	Complete

<b>Ongoing from previous meetings</b>			
6	Organising blue carbon webinar with Scottish Blue Carbon Forum (late autumn)	JJ/Bill Austin (SBCF)	Ongoing
7	Potential presentation on mNCEA (DEFRA) for next meeting	AS	Scheduled
8	Organise Marine Nature Enhancement Team (MD) re-scheduled presentation	JJ	Removed from actions
9	Check on status/timings of Finance Earth/Crown Estate consultation on High integrity marine natural capital markets report – potential presentation	AS	Progress for next meeting – Report to be launched imminently

#### **Attendees:**

Vicky Morgan (Chair, JNCC)  
 Julia Clough -JC (SWT)  
 Rebecca Crawford - RC (SWT)  
 Jessica Jones - JJ (SWT)  
 Marion Harrald - MH (SEPA)  
 Janet Khan – JK (SEPA)

Cathy Tilbrook -CT (NatureScot)  
 Sinead Sheridan - SS (NatureScot)  
 Sarah Marley – SM (SRUC)  
 James Merchant - JM (MCS)  
 Mark Barnett – MB (Binnies UK)

#### **Apologies:**

Nicola Melville (SEPA)  
 Chris Leakey (NatureScot)  
 Annie Breaden (CES)  
 Tavis Potts (UoA)  
 Sam Collin (HMC)  
 Jennifer McNulty (JNCC)

## Item 1: Introductions and updates

### JNCC

- VM works a lot with DEFRA's marine natural capital ecosystem assessment.

### SWT

- JC project development officer for Scottish Forum on Natural Capital (SFNC).
- JJ living seas manager, both sit in the policy and advocacy team, co-coordinate SFNC hub with SS and CL (NatureScot).
- RC Marine Policy Officer also in policy and advocacy team.

### SRUC

- SM – new member, senior lecturer based in Aberdeen. Research interests of marine mammals, marine megafauna, and human impacts in the marine environment. Replacement for Hannah Grist.

### SEPA

- JK – Senior specialist scientist in the Marine Analytical Unit. Coastal and marine focus and more recently a source to sea approach for river basin management planning.
- MH – Work with JK as a senior specialist scientist in the marine ecology team. Primary role is looking at development of underwater video techniques for regulation of aquaculture.

### NatureScot

- SS – marine planning and policy advisor within the sustainable coast and seas team, providing input into the National Marine Plan 2, developing and engaging with regional marine planning and developing marine natural capital approaches for the marine and coastal environment.
- CT – Lead sustainable coast and seas team, providing advice on a range of activities from marine energy and aquaculture to fisheries and coastal change, blue carbon and marine planning. Also host the SMEEF programme.

### Binnies UK

- MB – Technical director for natural capital and catchment services. Supported natural capital assessment of Orkney Islands as an independent expert.

### MCS

- JM – Lead natural capital work. Research and advocacy around natural capital and work on blue finance and sustainable blue economy.

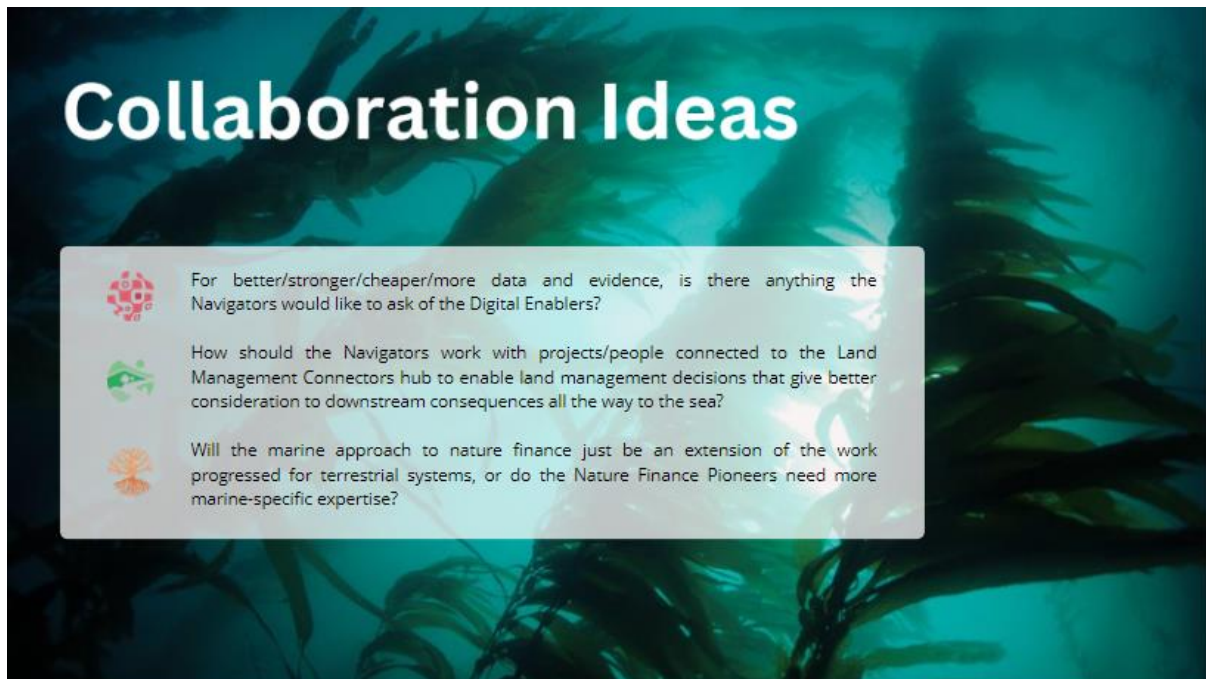
## Item 2: FIRNS summary

- Completed by end of March. Final report just out, might want to talk about it in a bit more detail once we've had a chance to digest recommendations and next steps.
- Two parts: scaling up SMEEF. Currently some very large donations have come in or are planned to come in and this has led to considering if the way SMEEF is set up at the minute is the best way to cope with large contributions.
- This is especially relevant as marine related nature finance markets become established or net gain approaches are formalised.
- The other part of the FIRNS project looked at options for setting up a new river/catchment restoration fund and whether/how this could fit alongside SMEEF.
- Contracted Finance Earth and Howell Marine Consulting to look at governance structures. E.g. Combine or have a separate fund? Still have SMEEF sat within NatureScot? Move to another public body like CES or Scottish Water who have fewer financial constraints? Set up a place-based trust? Had a workshop on these options in Edinburgh.
- Benefits and disbenefits to different approaches. Also including expense of setting up a new structure.
- Not something that can be looked at in the short term. Considerations for long term.
- Return on investment – considered, but not looked at yet as not mature enough. Nature positive net gain is a bit closer and realistic to being implemented. Not paying investors a return but are looking to demonstrate outcomes. If going down this route will need much more rigorous reporting, metrics etc.
- Also had an intern who did some focus work on the community benefits side of the fund and how we make sure we are involving communities and are responsive to the needs of communities.
- SMEEF have just advertised for a grants officer role – will lead on developing the monitoring and reporting strategy and grant strategy going forward. Will be linking everything into the Scottish biodiversity strategy delivery plan and some of these big strategic outcomes that government wants to see.
- One of the things that helped with reputational integrity of SMEEF is the work done on due diligence and ethical contributions – checking ownership chain to ensure companies are reducing emissions.
- Question: When engaging with the private sector, is their main motivation from a net positive perspective or investment returns? Yes, the former corporate social responsibility and also want to be ahead of the game to pilot and trial interventions that might be applicable when net gain or other compensation measures become formalised.
- Fisheries Management Scotland has bid for further FIRNS funding on 'Developing a portfolio of river restoration investment packages and delivery support measures for the Source to Sea Fund'. Announcement expected soon.

- **ACTION – CT checked to see if the community benefits report can be shared. After final comments a final version can be circulated soon.**

## Item 3: How can we collaborate with other SFNC hubs?

Background: CL represents MNCN on the SFNC steering group. It was agreed to add an objective to the SFNC steering group on facilitating stronger links and collaboration across the hubs. Teaser questions to start the conversation provided by CL:



**First point** – potential linkages with FIRNS source to sea data monitoring elements?

**Second point** – Source to Sea or catchment level interventions? The Hydro Nation chair Deryck Irving (University of Stirling) is keen to connect on catchment initiatives, and there is a water series happening in the Pioneers hub at the moment:

- [☑ Summary of Water Series Session: Developing a Woodland Water Code - What do buyers and investors want from water credits? \(basecamp.com\)](#)
- [Recording and summary of Water Series: US Water Markets - Perspectives from across the pond \(USA\) \(basecamp.com\)](#)
- [☑ Recording available - Water Series Session: Fishery Management Plans for Scotland - Opportunities for Nature Finance Investment \(basecamp.com\)](#)

**Third point** – Maybe the Finance Earth event that is happening in London or the report that has just been produced could be a way of addressing this?

### Some options for engaging:

1. Having a general webinar around a topic.
2. Starting a discussion on basecamp and bringing in other hubs in.
3. “Exploration zones” – Pulling a topic out and creating another mini work stream or basecamp channel.

MB – Advocate of the source to sea approach and catchment and landscape level so would be great to collaborate. First two points are interlinked but the evidence must come first. Need everything visible at a catchment scale but expand it to include the coast and marine environments which we haven't seen anyone do yet. Especially important for species like eel and lamprey, need to link what we are doing in the marine environment to what work they are doing at the top of the catchment.

Start with the data and evidence to enable everyone to see the links between cause and effect that will make the second point easier. Can join the dots between actions and outcomes and who are the key stakeholders. If you're getting third party investment, they might be able to tie activities to what they want, or their customers.

JC – need a focus to pull everyone into. Stirling university – local policy innovation plan looking at the Forth river basin: [University of Stirling to promote better outcomes from water resources for Scottish businesses and communities | About | University of Stirling](#).

JJ – How big are the different hubs?

JC - ~100 for land management, Digital enablers around 50-60, pioneers is 700+ individuals.

JK – Think its great thinking about existing coastal groups, and thinking about Riverwoods as an existing ready-made community there which looked at the river and try and see if there is an opportunity to extend that into marine interests? Also downriver projects in the Forth.

CT – Restoration forth mentioned as another example of an active project in the Forth Estuary.

JK – Another project in the area was initially looking at the black devon catchment, not as big as the restoration forth project but it would be a situation where you have readymade communities on land who are very much active so how do we connect those with the coastal communities.

JC – Definitely got the players just need the reason. What MB said, we pose a question and a potential outcome.

CT – Lots of the FIRNS projects that have just completed would come under the third point. Know there was an idea to have a feedback community of practice/lessons learned within the FIRNS network but involving the hubs might get this learning out further.

➤ **ACTION – JC to follow up with Patrick Jean-Martel on FIRNS lessons learned.**

In conclusion, collaborating with several hubs, around a particular problem.

CT – Work NatureScot did last year with the source to sea focus deserves a bit more emphasis. Use the report as a lens to focus this conversation – get CL to pull a few things out of the report.

➤ **ACTION – CL to pull out strands from source to sea report to use as a focus for cross-hub discussion.**

MB – Communities aspect interesting particularly when scaling up. Theoretically have a town at the top of the catchment could be twinned with the town at the mouth of the river because they're impacting on each other but are geographically split to most likely never interact.

## Item 4: AOB

JJ – Anyone missing from group membership/changed roles please inform JJ.

MNCN members happy with membership for Historic Environment Scotland to be extended and minutes to be made available on the microsite.

JJ – If any members have specific resources they would like to put on the microsite share with JJ.

VM – query about marine directorate membership as no one on the call.

General discussion on blue economy vision being implemented now through NMP2, but NMP2 meeting clashed this time. Potentially extending invitation to marine nature enhancement team.

MH – had workshop with NMP2 team and SEPA colleagues involved in flood risk mitigation – discussion on nature based solutions and value of habitats in terms of reducing flood risk, CREW project (kelp, seagrass, mussel beds) – positive conversation, keen to bring in policies on protecting these habitats/compensatory measures/ensuring space was set aside for these habitats.

SS – Survey responses – one raised a request for more information around the JNCC universal asset matrix tool. Lauren and Vicky have shared previously recorded webinar – explainer of ASM.

<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/asm>

➤ **ACTION – SS to share ASM tool webinar on Basecamp.**

SS – Scottish Government have developed a [market framework engagement paper](#) – a follow up to the natural capital market principals work.

**JJ – 31<sup>st</sup> May deadline for survey responses on future focus of group.**

### Date of next meeting

In July, doodle poll to be sent around. It was noted that the first week of July should be avoided as there would be a potential clash with other activities for members.

➤ **ACTION – All members to fill out Doodle poll.**

**Summary of actions from the meeting:**

Action	Lead
1. Contact marine directorate NMP2 team - organise discussion on how the group can support the development of NMP2 (underpinned by blue economy vision) and what natural capital approaches may apply to this workstream.	SS
2. Check, if possible, to share community benefits report from FMS.	CT
3. Lessons learned session from FIRNS to encourage collaborative working between hubs.	JC
4. Pull out opportunities for hub collaboration and discussion from NatureScot 2023 source to sea report – circulate around the groups before taking it to other hubs.	CT/CL
5. Share JNCC asset matrix tool webinar on Basecamp.	SS
<b>Ongoing from previous meetings:</b>	
6. Organising blue carbon webinar with Scottish Blue Carbon Forum (late autumn)	JJ/Bill Austin (SBCF)
7. Organise presentation on mNCEA (DEFRA) for next meeting	VM
8. Finance Earth/CES - High integrity marine natural capital markets report launched imminently – organise presentation	JJ