

## Marine Natural Capital Navigators: Meeting Minutes

14<sup>th</sup> March 2025, 2pm-3pm

**Chairing Organisation: NatureScot, Chair: Jessica Jones**

### Agenda:

	Item
1.	Introductions/updates
2.	Presentation + Q&A - Sea the Value
3.	Presentation + Q&A – Marine Natural Capital Markets – Towards a Framework

### Actions from previous meeting:

	Action	Lead
1.	Organising blue carbon webinar with Scottish Blue Carbon Forum	JJ, SS, CL
2.	Check if NMP2 team is considering UASM in natural capital methodology	CL
3.	CL to invite himself to other hub meetings and discuss collaboration, and potentially start threads on different basecamp groups to open this conversation up	CL

### Attendees:

Jessica Jones - JJ (SWT)

Tavis Potts – TP (UoA)

Sam Collin – SC (HMC)

Calum Duncan – CD (MCS)

Hannah Rudman – HR (HR)

Belinda Bramley – BB (BE)

Daryl Burdon - DB (DB)

Janet Khan – JK (SEPA)

Katherine Simpson – JS (UoG)

Mike Spain – MS (CES)

Marion Harrauld – MH (SEPA)

Chris Perkins – CP (SMEFF)

Tavis Potts - LA (UoA)

### Apologies:

Sally Matchett – SM (SWT)

Chris Leakey – CL (NS)

### Item 1: General updates

- JK - provided an update on current work at SEPA, primarily focusing on future regulatory opportunities within the context of source-to-sea and river basin planning. She also mentioned exploring potential offsetting mechanisms but emphasised that they are still in the early stages of investigation.

- TP – provided update on work ongoing at Just Transitions Lab, that focuses on the social and community aspects of natural capital and ecosystem services. Emphasised the role of natural capital in the just transition debates and mentioned ongoing work with Darrell on participatory approaches to natural capital mapping in UK communities.
- DB – recently completed project with Tavis and Emma McKinley for Natural England. The project examined how natural capital approaches are applied to MPA management globally (rapid evidence assessment). DB also noted their ongoing work on participatory mapping, which is being presented during meeting
- MS – update provided on Crown Estate Scotland's role in managing the seabed and their increased focus on ecosystem services and natural capital projects across Scotland. Highlighted the importance of ensuring these projects are implemented responsibly and appropriately for the specific environments in which they are planned.
- MH - provided an update on a CREW-funded project, which examines the effects of marine habitats on wave height and their influence on flood risk and coastal erosion. The project has produced large-scale modelling results showing substantial effects, with the next step being to explore how this can be linked to natural capital.
- CD - update on the Marine Conservation Society's policy and advocacy efforts, highlighting a dedicated workstream led by James Merchant on blended finance, blue bonds, and advocating for a sustainable ocean investment strategy.
- SC – provided update on the creation of a new portfolio at Helmarin Consulting focused on nature and society, with an emphasis on managing the marine environment and its connections with coastal communities. SC noted ongoing support for the National Marine Plan team in assessing community engagement related to well-being and accessibility, as well as a review of the MPA network in England and Northern Ireland.
- CP - launch of the Seagrass Planting Fund, which has allocated £2.4 million to plant 14 hectares of seagrass around the coast of Scotland.
- HR – Update on a blue restoration project, focusing on biogenic oyster reefs. This project is struggling to regenerate due to local community overharvesting, and they are working with C Wilding to improve community engagement and behaviour change. She also shared that Finance Earth is optimistic about the emergence of nature funds and aims to improve the Blue Impact Fund this year.
- KS - Katherine shared that her recent work involves natural capital and ecosystem service valuation, with a focus on biodiversity offsets and net gains. She is beginning new research in coastal and marine environments. Additionally, she is involved in a project examining the impacts of legacy waste and eroding landfill sites in coastal regions, particularly in relation to coastal resilience, climate change, and natural capital valuation.
- BB - Belinda works on a Horizon-funded project mapping blue carbon and marine protected areas across Europe. She is also co-founding a charity focused on supporting community management of MPAs in the UK, starting with Scotland and England. The charity's aim is to help communities actively manage designated sites, contributing to the 30 by 30 conservation goal.

## Item 2: Presentation from Tavis Potts, Supporting Coastal Communities 'Sea the Value' of Marine Restoration Initiative (19:35)

Tavis Potts (TP) attended the meeting to provide an update of the "See the Value" project, which Daryl and Tavis have been working on for the past 2 to 2.5 years.

### The project has three aims

1. Quantify the interlinkages between marine biodiversity, natural capital and ecosystem services taking quantity and quality into consideration
2. Determine the economic and social values associated with the benefits of carbon sequestration and bioremediation of waste and apply these values to support natural capital accounting and community benefits
3. Connect the ecological, economic and social values of biodiversity to decision-making, through co-design and supporting of green investment to enhance biodiversity

### Case studies:

- The project includes two case studies: Cromarty (Scotland) and the Solent (South of England). Project partners include Aberdeen, Portsmouth, PML, FTech, and coastal partnership networks like the Morrison Partnership.

### Methodology:

- The project uses [Participatory Mapping approach](#), engaging stakeholders at every stage of the process.
- Participatory mapping workshops were conducted in both locations over the past 12 months.
- The approach includes three workshops:
  1. First workshop: Identifies natural and modified features in the seascape and landscape.
  2. Second workshop: Explores trade-offs and scenarios about the benefits provided by these features.
  3. Third workshop: Focuses on stakeholders (beneficiaries) and how they relate to natural capital processes.

### Participatory Mapping Outputs

- The project develops feature-benefit matrices, mapping out how natural features (e.g., beaches, seagrasses) provide a range of benefits such as recreation, tourism, carbon sequestration, and erosion control. These matrices offer insights as to how features of a specific site deliver a range of benefits.
- The data can be used to explore how different groups rely on these benefits, examining how stakeholders (e.g., boat club or coastal partnership) depend on natural capital features for livelihood, regulation, and recreation.
- The data can be used to evaluate different scenarios, such as managed realignment and oyster restoration, through participatory dialogue to understand how changes in features like saltmarsh extent impact associated benefits like carbon sequestration and bioremediation.
- Participatory workshops and mapping processes helped clarify how the local environment responds to interventions, with overall positive changes noted in scenarios such as managed realignment.

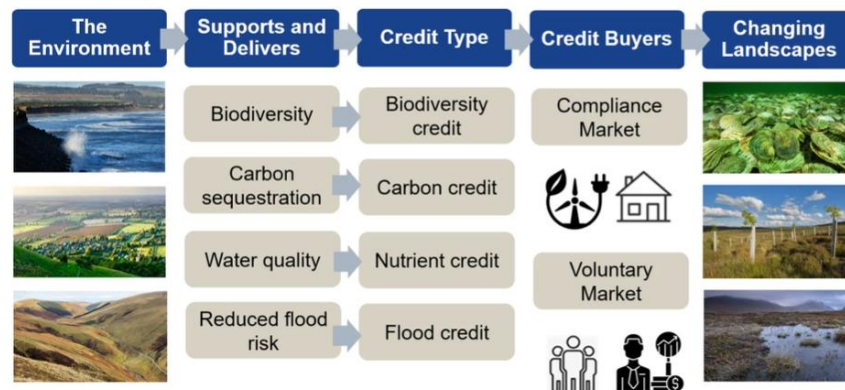
- The project produces valuable outputs, including mapping tools and reports, that can be used for planning and communicating the role of natural capital in coastal communities.

### Why use Participatory Approaches in Estuarine and Coastal Restoration Projects?

- Stakeholder-driven process, creating a shared common language
- Captures local knowledge and generates digital data for coastal communities
- Enhances understanding of links between natural features and benefits
- Allows organisations to assess their reliance on natural capital features
- Identifies shared reliance on natural capital features and their benefits

### Item 3: Presentation from Katherine Simpson, Marine and Coastal Natural Capital Markets

#### What are capital markets?



#### Key concerns

- Scale and rate of market development
- Suboptimal allocation of funds with limited environmental benefits
- Worst-case scenario would see irreversibly detrimental environmental effects
- Impact on communities
- Greenwashing
- A lot of lessons learnt so far are coming from the terrestrial environment, and can these lessons translate across into the new nascent marine and coastal markets?

#### The current Landscape (state of play)

There are already various policies that are operating in the finance space:

Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy 2022-2045	Scotland's Natural Capital Market Framework (Nov 2024)
Financing Investment Ready Nature in Scotland (FIRNS)	Scotland's Marine Environment Enhancement Fund (SMEEF)
Saltmarsh Code (led by CEH)	Wilder Carbon Standard
Compliance: National Planning Framework (NPF4)	Compliance: Nature Positive Development and Use in Scotland

#### Project

Is to **develop a draft framework for translating Scotland Natural Capital Market Principles into the coastal and marine context**

#### The objectives

- To provide evidence on if and how natural capital markets can prove to be an ecologically and economically cost effective enhancement mechanism in the coastal and marine environment (drawing on evidence from the terrestrial and marine based markets)
- Provide evidence on the barriers to success of such markets: design, implementation, monitoring and enforcement (is it theoretical or practical?)

- To provide evidence on how markets and nature finance can better adopt a natural capital approach across the terrestrial and marine environment to maximise ecological, social and economic benefits across these interconnected environments

#### Methodology

- Undertaking a literature review process, focusing on academic sources and the grey literature, with the second phase addressing policy and practice publications.
- The review covers ecological effectiveness, restoration outcomes, habitat improvement, environmental integrity, and social aspects, such as community benefits, stakeholder participation, and decision-making models.
- The economic side focuses on cost-effectiveness, investment mechanisms, and green/blue bonds, as well as credit pricing, demand, and supply.
- The screening of ~19,000 articles is ongoing, with 614 duplicates removed. Some articles were irrelevant to the natural capital markets.

#### Expected outcome

- framework for designing ecologically, socially, and economically effective coastal and marine natural capital markets – bridging the gap with terrestrial markets for greater integration and impact with a [workshop scheduled for the end of May to refine this framework](#).
- A final report is expected by July.

#### Summary of Actions:

Ongoing from Previous meeting	
1. Organising blue carbon webinar/s	JJ, CL, SM
New Actions	
1. Create a blog post for the Marine Natural Capital Navigators website	SM
2. CL to invite himself to other hub meetings and discuss collaboration, and potentially start threads on different basecamp groups to open this conversation up	CL