

SWEEP Expo Marine Natural Capital Q&A - 20 Oct 2020

Questions	Answers	Person Answering
1 What language resonated best with the Pioneer stakeholders? Natural Capital? Ecosystem Services? Natural Resources? Nature? Was it different for different groups? Do we need to flex our language according to the audience (and how)?	live answered	
2 How can the example risk register be adapted to incorporate new / adapted policy targets?	Yes it can Joe. Thanks for the question. New policy targets would change our parameters for risk e.g. more% of MPAs The best way to assess new or proposed policy targets is through the sustainability appraisal process.	
3 Was there a 'sense check' on the 'abrasion pressure' assessment/map? A habitat (for instance infralittoral and circalittoral rock off the west coast of Lundy) may be high or moderate sensitivity but if there is no demersal fishing, that assessment is 'not relevant'. Will the system be more developed?	Yes always working to improve this approach. I will check with Matt as to why this is the case. Thank you for all your photos! I worked on Sian's team to assess this, so may be able to help, A map layer with sensitivity to each habitat pressure was overlaid with spatial intensity of different fishing pressures to assess area of each habitat likely to be degraded and produce a 'modelled relative condition' output. Weaknesses were that availability of spatial fishing activity data were limited, the best available source without access to VMS and logbooks was the (dated) aggregated fishermap layers. In future iterations, better fishing activity data (or access to data) would be beneficial and potentially also checking on current condition of reef habitats with dive clubs and sea search where divers have visited sites recently. regards, Matthew Ashley The 'sensitivity assessment' approach is good to use with level 4/5 biotopes and that fits-in with 'environmental impact assessment' which also looks for rare, scarce and sensitive species present in an area. Bottom line is the 'will it matter if?' question.	
4 Do you need specialist modelling programmes to carry out the risk analysis? Could this methodology be transferable to all around the country?	live answered	
5 If you could collect new data to inform the Natural Capital approach, what would be top priority?	live answered	
6 really interesting to see how the approach is applied — how is this approach done in areas outside of UK/EU without major existing sources of monitoring and other local data?	live answered	
7 How does natural capital approach track to human health and wellbeing direct/indirect impacts both positive and negative?	live answered	
8 How much does the NC asset register in North Devon confirm stakeholder opinion and understanding? How do you think this allows for social buy in to NC in North Devon? Thank you!! So much great research feeding into the asset!	live answered	
9 Sian, your assessment seems to have been on impacts rather than potential for development of habitat?	Correct Joe. The risk process focusses on impacts. However more habitat in improved condition reduces the risk (of loss of benefits)	
10 If the approach was followed, do you see any particular challenges with scaling up to a national scale asset and risk register?	Some data will fit better at a national scale. I think scaling up would provide a very coarse overview of risk (of loss of ecosystem services). The benefit of a more localised approach is that maps and data can be sense checked - management can be more targeted	
11 To what extent was Earth Observation and remote sensing data a part of the Marine Pioneer research and to what extent do you see it as a tool for natural capital management as a decision-making tool for the marine sector? Moreover, what barriers have you faced with regard to obtaining marine and interfacing terrestrial datasets?	Remote sensing was not used - but it should be and we would be open to discussion on how to include this. No particular barriers to obtaining marine and interfacing terrestrial data sets for this approach, Fine scale data on fishing activity would improve this decision support.	

12	It is interesting to see how the Natural Capital Approach is applied to planning and local management - has the panel any experience of using it directly to justify specific and new legislative proposals for the control of operations in the marine environment?	live answered
13	Have you considered using DNA-based technologies for monitoring whole-community biodiversity, rather than relying on a handful of species?	No we haven't - though open to this idea. We aimed to use data that was already available.
	FYI, DNA-based approaches can provide indicators of intraspecific genetic variation which is arguably of greater value than abundance measures because genetic diversity is a more direct indicator of population health and resilience.	
14	Now that we have our risk register, and we have identified the pools of natural capital and their associated ecosystem services and flows, how do we attract private sector investment into marine habitat restoration to broaden the sources of funding? There will be private entities who want to invest in marine habitat restoration but are struggling to see where they can deploy their capital for a return. Can we use a natural capital approach to identify/develop opportunities for these investors where they can secure a return while at the same time, increasing habitat restoration/biodiversity/human health and wellbeing etc, etc at scale.	Certainly, in looking at integration with FCERM investment there is still and very sectorial / siloed approach. We also need to develop investment ready projects and start to test these out.
15	The marine - terrestrial ecotone has been lost in lowland areas due to urbanisation, coastal management and presence of flood defences. Does Eunis (BNG 2.0 uses this) or natural capital categorisations assign sufficient importance to ecotones. Or are ecotones irrelevant?	We don't use ecotones - or even discuss these. We are always open to discussion about how broader thinking can inform the natural capital approach
16	Tara, in talking just about ecosystems services (i.e. flows), how do we capture critical baseline Natural Capital as in the fundamental existence of a habitat (i.e. sustainability). How also do you capture the interaction or interdependencies between habitats – i.e. loss of freshwater marsh compared to allowing the natural retreat of a dune.	The more detailed methods can be found here under the Natural Capital, Sustainability Appraisal and Net Gain - SWEEP section. https://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/mplibrary.html . Identifying the interdependence or interaction between habitats has not been part of our methods development but definitely something we should consider moving forward.
17	Was this approach completed for all three counties within the North Devon Marine Pioneer (North Cornwall - West Somerset) or just focused on North Devon?	We mainly focussed on North Devon and the small overlap into North Cornwall. Limited - yes! We hope to expand further to the SW
18	Excellent Framework Tara. Just wondering about 2 aspects 1)how are issues of Climate change brought into the process - are there levels of uncertainty being incorporated? And 2) how does spatial scale effect final assessments?	Q18 (1) – it is proposed to identify different degrees of certainty or consensus regarding the information being used. Q18 (2) – the sustainability appraisal needs to be designed to reflect different spatial scales; at a local scale, to consider and differentiate between alternative housing site options around a settlement, but also at a strategic scale, to consider alternative distribution options across a district or wider plan area. The latter can be undertaken at a coarser resolution.
19	For marine assets, the ones you listed were at a relatively high level (i.e. sublittoral rock or sediment). can I confirm that the detailed analyses underpinning the NC assessments will be done at higher Eunis level. sublittoral mud presumably delivers different NC outputs to sublittoral coarse sand. apologies if mentioned earlier - joined late.	When we developed these assessments we worked at the EUNIS level of three or higher due to the confidence in the underpinning 'extent' of habitat data. When considering the literature linked to the ecosystem services across different habitats we worked at higher eunis levels. See page 19 https://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/uploads/1/5/4/4/15448192/5.b_report_1_links_between_the_ecosystem_2c_ecosystem_services_and_stakeholders_in_ndmp.pdf

Andrew

<p>20 Is the current regulatory SEA /EIA process, assessing the impacts of “developer led” proposals, focusing on delivery of the “least harmful” outcomes, constraining our thought process? How do we develop a more forward looking “greatest benefit” approach within the development of a vision.</p>	<p>In theory the strategy will come first. Local Plans and Nature Recovery Strategies can plan in a positive way as to the preferred or optimal locations for development and delivery of natural capital enhancements. Visions and proposals can aim for greatest benefit, however it needs to be recognised that there is also a need for local Plans to balance this with a range of other competing objectives and priorities. When local plans are being prepared, the identification of sites can start to address natural capital considerations through the Sustainability Appraisal initiatives outlined.</p> <p>There is still a need to determine all planning applications submitted and if proposed development is in accordance with relevant policies then it will still be appropriate to avoid, minimise and mitigate any harm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Andrew</p>
<p>21 What are the barriers to embedding a Natural Capital approach to planning marine activities? With the government’s intention for a green recovery it would appear this approach is urgently needed.</p>	<p>live answered</p>
<p>22 Where can I access the recordings after the panels are over?</p>	<p>Hi Alex. The recordings will be available on the SWEEP Expo website by the end of this week.</p>
<p>23 What role (if any) does the panel feel The Crown Estate has in regard to implementing Marine (and land based) Natural Capital approaches as the large scale seabed owner?</p>	<p>Potentially a very important role and an avenue that should be further explored.</p>
<p>24 Can the Panellists highlight the key focus areas that have been identified through this project which they are looking forward to delivering projects to deliver enhancements and monitor the impact of?</p>	<p>I think all the panellists would have different answers for this from my perspective (Sian) I am looking forward to projects the can reduce pressures on marine systems and enable restoration/recovery - then linking these to social and economic impacts</p>
<p>25 Based on the panels experiences in the SWEEP project, where do they think funding for incentives to implement marine natural capital management measures should come from? I'd assume stakeholders say 'government' but perhaps private sector funded models may be suitable too</p>	<p>Green Finance requires a minimum investable proposition of c£100m -£1bn. This discussion is nowhere near even appreciating these institutional investment scales.</p>
<p>26 What collective ambition is there now to move on the next steps (saw panel furiously nodding along) Sarah Young talks about in terms of benefits, disbenefits and fairness / social capital. How might that work happen in a people powered way? There’s been very little public participation to date (so Marine Pioneers / SWEEP’s work welcome here).</p>	<p>Democratising public participation in marine management is a huge challenge. At the moment the primary entry points (at a national scale) are formal consultation responses or being pro-active enough to find opportunities. In the UK we have a very centralised policy system, which is where you would expect benefits, disbenefits etc., to be considered, but the only information usually taken into that equation is low resolution habitat and financial cost data. There is big collective ambition to be more ‘people orientated’. It’s a growing movement in both the third sector and I would say, given examples like SWEEP, the academic community. We just need to crack the enormously politically thorny issue of devolved decision making (power) so that our people-cantered approach doesn’t lead to frustration and waste time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Sarah</p>
<p>27 As an SA practitioner working on terrestrial and marine plans I think developing central databases is a really good idea. We have successfully used such a database in the marine plan SAs we have undertaken over the last few years. A reliable and transparent evidence base is essential for plan makers and assessors. A central database increases co-ordination between parallel processes and could also reduce the cost of collating data in an assessment. However, databases would require ownership and regular updating and would need to cover the range of data required for assessments and plan making - needs and objectives can sometimes differ. Does Andrew Austen (and other panel members) think that local authorities would have capacity to maintain such databases?</p>	<p>The database is being designed to use publicly available environmental data from freely available sources (including the Natural Capital Atlas) which will be updated periodically. This will enable data to be updated relatively easily when it becomes available. No primary research will be required, which will enable it to be used by other local authorities. Adequate capacity is always an issue for local authorities, but it is being designed to make it as user-friendly as possible.</p> <p>The biggest obstacle is the White Paper’s (Planning for the Future) proposal to abolish sustainability appraisals and replace them with a new ‘sustainable development’ test, the scope of which is unspecified. Is it currently unclear how the database will help to facilitate this.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Andrew</p>

28	Are there any silos that the Natural Capital / Marine Pioneer approach has yet to break down?	Yes plenty! The dominant one is to break down the siloes between marine and terrestrial agencies that have rights and responsibilities to manage aspects of natural capital.	
29	Following Aisling's reference to the shift in ambition from protection to recovery, can natural capital approach help prioritise where to best seek recovery – would you expect that to be just in MPAs?	Yes it can help prioritise areas for recovery. No, we would expect this to be inside and outside of MPAs and across land/sea/	
30	What are the key changes to marine management practices that the SWEEP project recommends? e.g. increased regulation of fishing activity in certain habitats/target species? promotion of multi-species aquaculture along coasts? More balanced coastal planning processes than favour environment more than before?	<p>Setting management priorities that will rapidly enable 'recovery' of habitats where this conservation objective exists within MPAs.</p> <p>Identify habitats which have potential for 'recovery' and 'renewal' beyond the delineated boundaries of features of conservation interest (the whole site approach).</p> <p>To support the implementation of management measures that can reduce pressure across subtidal sediments.</p> <p>Link fisheries management with conservation and support low impact fisheries.</p> <p>Seek investment in upstream habitats, water and sewerage infrastructure</p> <p>Trial natural capital approaches that support waste remediation (e.g. saltmarsh restoration, mussel beds).</p>	
31	How do we improve the integration of nat cap/ecosystem services into legislation and regulation e.g. Marine Strategy, Marine and Coastal Access Act; how can we cope better with data uncertainty?	the proposed 'sustainable development' test could and should include consideration of natural capital issues, as part of helping to address climate and biodiversity emergencies and the objectives underpinning the 25 year environment plan.	Andrew
32	what's the difference between NC and Ecosystem Service approaches? Isn't NC the natural assets and ES is the services these assets provide? They are part of the same thing?	We use the Natural Capital Committee (2017) definition. Natural capital: The elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions. Assets: a distinctive component of natural capital as determined by the functions it performs, e.g. soils, freshwater, species. Ecosystem services: Functions and products from nature that can be turned into benefits with varying degrees of human input. Benefits: Changes in human welfare (or well-being) that result from the use or consumption of goods, or from the knowledge that something exists.	