



Evaluation Report

Overview

The 3-day virtual SWEEP Expo, 20-22nd Oct 2020, showcased the results and successes achieved by the SWEEP team and our partners to date. SWEEP focuses on **placing Natural Capital at the heart of decision making**, and co-delivering the information and tools needed by our partners to enable this.

We welcomed keynote presentations from Tony Juniper, Dieter Helm and Luke Pollard MP, as well as a presentation from Steve Double MP.

The Expo kicked-off by exploring what the Natural Capital Approach is, and how SWEEP is working to embed this into decision making with our partners in the South West. A short film was shown which explores how SWEEP is putting the Natural Capital Approach into practice, through the voices of our Impact Fellows. See the film [here](#).

“The environmental argument often doesn't work, so placing benefits in terms of natural capital is a big leap forward.”
– Expo attendee

“The Expo showed such a wide range of natural capital approaches from many partners, great to see this making a difference in projects.” - Expo attendee

Themed Expo sessions focused on Natural Capital approaches for marine, land, coastal change and whole-catchment settings. A fascinating range of presentations, workshops and demonstrations of tools and approaches were delivered by 70 different speakers and panelists. Full details of the Expo programme can be found [here](#).

The Expo showcased a range of new environmental management information and decision support tools developed by the SWEEP team. From ground-breaking marine Natural Capital approaches, to online information hubs and valuation tools, to flooding planning and catchment management and modelling tools, as well as novel satellite habitat mapping tools, wave forecasting, coastal change modelling, Natural Capital accounting and pollinator management tools.

The Expo concluded with a session on the **importance of Natural Capital for a Green Recovery** post-Covid 19. We heard from a range of speakers, including the Shadow Secretary for the Environment, Luke Pollard MP, the Wildlife Trusts and two banks who all agree that we must champion new ways of working, that enable the true value of the environment to be recognised, as it is key to economic and social wellbeing. The Expo also discussed the value and benefits of nature during lockdown, and how the relationship between the environment and health-inequalities should be considered for a green, and equitable, recovery.

“The sessions gave me a greater understanding and ideas of how to explain natural capital to the economic sector (e.g. LEP) to engage them in investing in natural capital.”

– Expo attendee

Interest and attendance

We were overwhelmed with the massive interest in the Expo. Of the 758 individuals who registered, 41% were from the public sector, 19% from private sector, 12% from charities and 25% academic. Across the 3 days we recorded 1,086 session attendees, comprising 535 individuals, representing 9 different countries. At the time of writing the post-event Expo film material has had 359 views on YouTube, and new (first time) SWEEP website visitors were up 186%, when comparing October 2020 with the previous month.



Attendee feedback

A post-event follow-up survey of 49 people confirmed that 96% rated the Expo as ‘good’, ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’, and 88% said they would make further use of the ideas or information presented (see pie chart, page 3). 87% of the survey respondents also reported they were ‘very likely’ to recommend SWEEP’s work, and 95% felt that SWEEP is achieving its ambition of being a regional exemplar for the adoption of Natural Capital led strategies and investments in the South West and beyond.

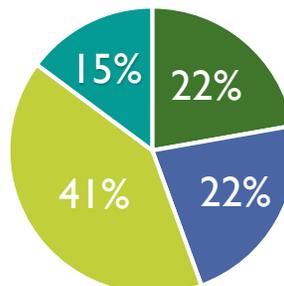
“Great event showcasing the work that has been undertaken. Thought provoking and now considering how it can inform our work” – Expo attendee

“Clearly doing a lot of industry leading research in this area and well communicated by this expo.” – Expo attendee

“I’m not aware of other regions holding similar events or having such a diverse and proactive partnership/network in place.”
– Expo attendee

Breakdown of how survey respondents plan to make further use of the ideas or information gained from the Expo

- For day to day work
- For future work
- For general info and education
- To help influence decision-makers



What is next?

At the Expo we discussed the **huge demand for Natural Capital work across a vast array of contexts and environments**. Whether it be supporting policies to address the climate and ecological emergencies, or the Government’s 25 Year Environment plan, to supporting the targeting of investments and resources, it is clear that the adoption of Natural Capital approaches are critical at this time.

SWEEP is only just past its halfway point and we are continuing work on a wide variety of exciting projects with our business, policy and community partners to build on our successes so far. However the key now is make sure what we have learned in the South West on **SWEEP acts as an exemplar for the rest of the country**, and we are very interested to discuss and explore new opportunities and collaborations to deliver this objective.

A comprehensive set of recordings, presentations and other resources from the Expo are available: https://sweep.ac.uk/sweep_expo/

Please contact sweep@exeter.ac.uk in the first instance for any enquiries.



Mindfully Wired Communications provided professional digital event technology support throughout the SWEEP Expo.

About SWEEP

Funded by NERC, the South West Partnership for Environment and Economic Prosperity (SWEEP) is a 5-year collaboration between the Universities of Exeter, Plymouth and Plymouth Marine Laboratory with a large group of highly-engaged businesses, policy makers, NGOs, environmental charities and community partners. We work together to champion the inclusion of the natural environment at the heart of economic and policy decision-making, and support the region’s decision-makers adopt a Natural Capital approach through the development of bespoke guidance, modelling and mapping tools. SWEEP is facilitating changes to our partners’ decision-making culture and capabilities, contributing to the improvement of policies and management plans, and influencing significant regional investments for the good of both the environment and the economy.

