



# VALUING NATURE

Investigation of marine natural capital approaches (indicators/metrics) with applicability in England

Wrap Up Meeting– 08/03/2018

# Motivation for placement

- How science can/should best inform on policy decision/development?
  - *Improve the accessibility of my science*
- The requirements of policy
  - *How/what data is required*
  - *What guides development?*
- How evidence is used?
  - *Assessment*
  - *Integration*
  - *Quality assurance*
- To gain an insight into the policy making environment

# Placement in a nutshell

Identify and compile examples of Marine Natural Capital approaches (metrics/indicators) and potential data availability to inform on potential application in England

# Natural capital.....



Natural capital is our 'stock' of waters, land, air, species, minerals and oceans. This stock underpins our economy by producing value for people, both directly and indirectly.

*Natural Capital Committee*

# Placement objectives

- Investigate current marine natural capital thinking
  - England, UK, abroad
- Identify potential indicators or metrics of marine natural capital - with applicability in England
  - Use in the 25 year environment plan
  - Help evaluate choice/use of natural capital metrics
  - Possibility to test in the Marine Pioneers
- Identify data sets available related to marine natural capital
  - Potential limitations or gaps

# Main activities

- Reviewing various literary sources
  - Academic – primary research and reviews
    - Natural capital, Ecosystem services, environmental valuation
  - Government reports
- Discussion with various government department/teams/individuals
  - Gather broad information base
  - Inform on the current state of work in this area
- Compilation of existing work
  - Consolidate previous completed and continuing projects
  - Build upon existing efforts
- Linking of existing obligations and Natural capital indicators
  - Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, OSPAR convention etc

# Other activities

- Assisting on the 25 YEP metrics development project
  - Recently established
  - Compiling views from across departments
  - Establishing criteria for indicators
- Assistance within EAU
  - Feedback on the evidence report to the 25 year environment plan

# Learning

- Enhanced understanding of Natural capital
  - In the general sense
    - Appreciation of the scope of work being done
  - Its perception by others
  - Its role as a tool in future monitoring
- Gained insight into the evidence/policy setting and the way in which it functions
  - Gathering different types of evidence
  - Use of workshops and expert inputs
  - Application of evidence to policy design



# Personal challenges

- Initial development of the placement scope required consolidation of views as to its direction
  - Differing opinions, differing perspectives, etc
- Pulling relevant information from literature
  - Understanding how they might be relevant
  - Keeping in mind the requirements of indicators
  - Just too big!!
- Keeping in mind the need to indicators to be 'useful' from a policy perspective
  - Actionable, scalable, data availability, efficient....

# VN challenges

- The marine natural capital setting requires development but policy action is required now
  - Difficult to design best practice approaches
- The transitional nature of the marine/coastal zone makes it challenging to classify it out into a separate 'box'

# Personal opportunities

- Network development
  - Beyond typical academic circle
  - New broader discussions with different objectives and drivers
- Enhanced my understanding of the potential role of natural capital
- Valuable insight into the way in which research can be used in the natural capital approach

# VN opportunities

- There is clear drive to integrate and utilise the natural capital approach
  - Development of how this will be done and measured is happening now
- Strong steer to think long term
  - Monitoring system should be robust into the future

# Output progress

- Continued collation of current marine natural capital indicators/metrics
  - Mapping onto ecosystem service provision
  - Information sources
  - Commonality with other obligations
- Identify current marine natural capital metric data
  - Availability
  - Spatial extent
  - Potential requirements for the future

# Thank you



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



University of  
St Andrews

[Benjamin.taylor@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Benjamin.taylor@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

[bt34@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:bt34@st-andrews.ac.uk)

