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Enhancing stakeholder engagement: Analysis of experiences and insights (MMO1152)



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Enhancing stakeholder engagement: Analysis of experiences and insights (MMO1152)

October 2019



Report prepared by: Nomensa

For: Marine Management Organisation – Marine Planning Team

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Information about this publication and further copies are available from:

Marine Management Organisation
Lancaster House
Hampshire Court
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 7YH

Tel: 0300 123 1032
Email: info@marinemanagement.org.uk
Website: www.gov.uk/mmo

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Executive summary

Nomensa carried out a programme of work with stakeholders with interests in England's eleven marine plan areas to gain insights into experiences, attitudes and behaviour toward engagement with the marine planning process.

We were commissioned by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to investigate stakeholders' awareness, understanding, experience and views of past communications and engagement in marine planning in England. In addition, we were also briefed to investigate stakeholders' drivers, motivations and general ability to engage in marine planning in both current and future contexts.

In this report we present the insights gained from stakeholders, the challenges to enhancing engagement that present themselves as a result, and the recommendations we have formulated informed by our analysis.

We also present a set of principles that can be used as a checklist when designing future engagement activity in the English marine planning process.

Fieldwork

Working closely with the MMO's project team and using their stakeholder contact database¹, mapping and analysis participants were recruited to take part in a set of interviews. The participants were drawn from a cross-section of sectors, all with an vested interest in one or more of the eleven English marine planning areas, and with different degrees of prior engagement with English marine plan development. A total of 39 interviews were carried out by telephone, between the 4th and the 13th of December 2017. Each interview lasted up to an hour and was guided by a script of questions designed to elicit the most insightful responses from each interviewee.

A second phase of research was carried out using an online survey. This survey ran from the 10th to the 21st January 2018 inclusive. There were 32 complete survey responses and 2 incomplete responses. The survey was designed to deepen the insights already gained from the interviews and add a degree of quantitative insight to the findings captured at interview stage.

Main findings

There was a great range and variety in stakeholder attitudes and behaviours with regards to engagement in the marine planning process. These attitudes and behaviours, and the ramifications of them for the MMO's planning process and stakeholder engagement are set out in detail in [section 3](#) of this report.

We found several themes by which insights into behaviour could be analysed and differentiated across stakeholder groups.

The themes, set out in [section 3.2](#), relate to:

¹ This project was conducted before the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation in May (2018)

- Varying perceptions of the relevance of the planning process. This has a profound effect on the value attached to engagement, and so greatly affects the drivers and motivation to engage.
- Misunderstanding of the marine plans and their purpose. Confusion and misconceptions were common across all sectors. The resulting uncertainty is creating a level of anxiety for some stakeholders who perceive the plans as a potential threat to their plans and activities.
- A desire for better transparency and feedback from engagement. Stakeholders who had contributed to workshops and submitted evidence expressed frustration that they could not see, or demonstrate to others, the value of their contribution.
- A desire for better communication with the MMO on marine planning matters. Both in written communication (emails, newsletters) and in meetings (at workshops, in local MMO offices and on other committees), there are calls for communication to be tailored to better suit the context and people involved.

Under these themes we set out many insights into the motivations, drivers and ability to engage, as well as showing how understanding and experience contribute to the different attitudes and expectations stakeholders bring to engagement with the planning process.

We reframe these insights as a list of challenges that can be addressed to better engage stakeholders in the future.

Recommendations

In [section 4](#) of the report we set out a list of detailed recommendations that are informed by the insights and challenges set out in [section 3](#) of the report.

These recommendations aim to do two things:

- Broaden engagement to new contacts. These describe mechanisms that can be used to widen the reach of the engagement process, involving more stakeholders in the planning process.
- Deepening the engagement of all contacts. These are intended to make the experience more meaningful to the stakeholders and, in turn, bring an enhanced quality of contributions to the engagement activities undertaken by the MMO.

Quantifying success can be particularly challenging, especially in measuring depth of engagement, as this is essentially a qualitative judgement on the part of the stakeholder. However, Nomensa have recommended a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) that can be used to support all the recommendations we set out.

Principles

In the final section of the report we give a list of principles that could be used as a guide for designing future engagement activity. The principles we set out have the following headings:

- P1. Creating a two-way sense of dialogue
- P2. Informing timely action
- P3. Demonstrate balance, integrity and objectivity
- P4. Delivering transparency and accessibility
- P5. Giving due recognition
- P6. Engendering a sense of equality and inclusivity
- P7. Giving clear explanation of how this activity fits into the planning cycle

Next steps

Once reviewed, assessed and prioritised the recommendations detailed in the report should be used to inform future, or any existing, stakeholder engagement plans.

Some recommendations involve a greater investment of resources, and some carry a higher potential financial or reputational risk. In these cases, we recommend that a ‘test, learn, iterate’ approach be considered, trialling the ideas with controlled cross-sections of the stakeholders. Then successful improvements can then be rolled out to the wider audience.

Nomensa would like to highlight the positive backdrop to the engagement activity that has been clear throughout the gathering of stakeholder opinion. This is illustrated clearly in the responses to the online survey to the questions of relevance, knowledge and support for marine planning. With respondents giving high value to “relevance” and “support” for marine planning, the lower score for “knowledge” of marine plans can be viewed as an opportunity to better engage a willing cohort of stakeholder groups.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This report is one part of a body of work carried out by Nomensa for the Marine Management Organisation, in response to the invitation to tender from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), tender reference 24612, for this commission within the larger Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement project.

Nomensa were selected to carry out an analysis of the experiences and insights of a representative sample of stakeholders (external to the MMO) as to their engagement in marine planning in England.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives for this project were set out in the invitation to tender mentioned above. The objectives were listed as follows (number references are from the invitation to tender document):

3.1.1. A brief literature review of published analyses of behaviour of similar stakeholder groups to those sought to be engaged in marine planning;

3.1.2. A programme of fieldwork with stakeholders who had a vested interest in one of more of the eleven marine plan areas to gain insights from a sample of stakeholders of their awareness, understanding, experience and views of past communications and engagement in marine planning in the six marine plan areas to date. The fieldwork will also investigate stakeholders' behaviours including their drivers, motivations and general ability to engage in marine planning. The focus to be particularly (although not solely) on "hard-to-reach" groups who are not considered to have been effectively engaged in the marine planning process to date. In order to maximise the benefits of the Analysis details need to be provided of ways to ensure as broad a representation as possible across the wide range of stakeholder groups;

3.1.3. An analysis of the data gathered through the fieldwork disaggregated by stakeholder group and by marine plan area as far as possible;

3.1.4. A documented review of the MMO's past practice for marine planning stakeholder communications and engagement;

3.1.5. Documentation in a first draft report of interim findings, on completion of the fieldwork, including the Analysis of stakeholders' experience and behaviours and draft recommendations on actions to enhance stakeholder engagement in marine planning (referring where possible to the review of MMO's past practice);

3.1.6. Implementation of one or more mechanisms to present the interim findings of the Analysis to a cross-section of the stakeholders engaged in the fieldwork and the MMO. This to allow validation of the findings and identification of actions to address them in order to enhance stakeholder engagement in marine planning;

3.1.7. Documentation in a final report of the Analysis findings and recommendations on actions to enhance stakeholder engagement in marine planning;

3.1.8. A presentation to the MMO of the final report of the Analysis: its findings and recommendations.

Nomensa carried out a programme of fieldwork in the Englands marine plan areas to gain insights from a sample of stakeholders of their awareness, understanding, experience and views of past communications and engagement in marine planning to date. The fieldwork also investigated stakeholders' drivers, motivations and general ability to engage in marine planning.

Particular effort was made to engage "hard to reach" groups as identified in the MMO's stakeholder analysis. These are not considered to have been as effectively engaged in the marine planning process to date as other groups. The knowledge of the marine planning process and participation in previous engagement opportunities by hard to reach groups, has also been less than the MMO considers appropriate.

While priority was given to the north west, north east, south west and south east marine plan areas, where the plans are the least progressed, and therefore regions where engagement can be most influenced, the south and east marine plan areas were included too. This would give insight for the future for the engagement of stakeholders in the reviews of the plans for those regions.

It should be noted that, in discussion with the MMO, it was decided not to carry out objective 3.1.6. This was to facilitate design and delivery of the on-line survey as an addition to objective 3.1.2.

2. Method

2.1 Overview of approach and stages

To collate stakeholder experiences and insights with marine planning to date, the project adopted a three phase approach;

- Literature review – to prepare for further activity including identification of target groups and cohort sizes, relevant subject matter topics and best practice etc.
- Stakeholder telephone interviews - to explore the experiences of individuals
- Online stakeholder survey - to broaden data collection including to stakeholders not covered at interview

Stages are described in more detail in the following sections.

2.2 Literature review

A short, non-systematic literature review was conducted by Nomensa's research team following formal project initiation. This encompassed a review of previous reports from the MMO and also reports into stakeholder engagement by other relevant organisations.

The purpose of the literature review was to:

- identify appropriate audience groups and cohort sizes for recruitment for in depth external stakeholder interviews
- highlight relevant subject matter topics for further exploration and discussion in the stakeholder interviews; these formed the bulk of the primary research activity
- discover any potential points of best practice used by similar bodies and authorities both in the UK and internationally.

A range of reference sources was used to inform the literature review. They include reports and outputs produced as a result of the MMO's previous stakeholder engagement activities and their analysis of them:

- User Story Analysis report (May 2017)
- Marine Planning - Stakeholder Mapping Iteration 2 incorporating stakeholder analysis spreadsheet (October 2017)
- Marine Planning Summer Engagement Feedback Summary (Summer 2017)
- Marine Planning and Stakeholder Engagement Presentation (October 2017)
- Marine Planning Comms and Engagement Plan Iteration 2 – National (November 2017)
- East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans Executive Summary (April 2014)
- Three Year report on East Marine Plans 2014-2017 (April 2017).

These reports and presentations were particularly valuable in helping to inform recruitment of stakeholders for interview in this project and set the context for marine planning activities conducted by the MMO to date.

In addition to the above reports and presentations, a range of websites and digital resources of other bodies of relevance to marine planning and stakeholder engagement were also reviewed. These include sources from;

The Welsh Government

- <https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/draft-welsh-national-marine-plan>
- <http://lle.gov.wales/apps/marineportal/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7i30DT9ffg>
(Comprising a five minute video commissioned by the Welsh Government to outline the goals and intended impacts of marine planning for Wales.)

The Scottish Government

- <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/seamanagement>
- <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00498039.pdf>
(Lessons learnt from Scottish marine planning consultation activities.)

North America case studies

- http://www.marineplanning.org/Policy/USA_National.html
- <http://msp.ioc-unesco.org/world-applications/americas/canada/pacific-coast/>

Australia

- <http://www.environment.gov.au/marine/marine-bioregional-plans>

2.3 Stakeholder interviews

A target of 48 interviews was agreed with the MMO with interviewees to be drawn from across stakeholder sectors. Interviewees were geographically spread across all regional marine plan areas, but more weight was given to the north west, north east, south west and south east marine plan areas which are still in development.

Potential interviewees were identified by seeking contacts from sectors that had low engagement with an earlier marine planning report [User Story Analysis Report](#) (MMO, 2017) that was to inform on what users sought from marine plans. Nomensa and the MMO together then developed a list of priority sectors that would guide the selection of participants for the current research.

Sector contacts were identified by Nomensa from two MMO contact lists², the Mailchimp list used to disseminate newsletters and a Coastal Partnerships list. Nomensa selected from these lists those stakeholders that fell into the target sectors agreed with the MMO across all the regions, aiming for an even spread of sectors by region, and regions overall.

² This project was conducted before the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation in May (2018)

In total, the project recruited 39 participants for interview. The spread of interviewees across regions and sectors is given in [Annex 1](#): Telephone interviewee numbers by sector and region. Despite the south east marine plan areas being one of the priority areas, recruiting participants from this region was challenging and four interviews were secured. Six interviews were targeted for the east marine plan region but only two interviews were obtained. As the east region is the most advanced in the marine plan process and the main focus of this project was to inform stakeholder engagement in the development of the remaining marine plans, it was not a priority area.

Telephone interviews followed a semi-structured format based on a discussion script developed working closely with the MMO team. This script was used to guide the interviews and is included in Annex 2: Interview discussion plan.

The varied nature of the participants' involvement and their different knowledge of marine planning necessitated that the interview script had to be adapted in response to each individual, with the interviewer focussing on the most relevant questions and discussion prompts. This flexible approach allowed for greater depth of insight, especially for interviewees with a very specific type of involvement in planning and the work of the MMO.

Interview responses were entered into a database and tagged with categories to aid analysis of such a large data set. Themes were identified where we discovered repeated similar comments from several interviewees.

The insights gained from the telephone interviews are described in [sections 3.2](#) and [3.3](#) of this report.

2.4 Online survey

The online survey supported interviewees by adding quantitative data to the qualitative results captured from our previous stakeholder interviews and expanding the stakeholder pool from which data was collected.

The survey was then carried out using the SurveyGizmo tool. Invitations to participate were emailed to selected stakeholders using an MMO list of Coastal Partnerships contacts. Contacts from the Mailchimp list (used to identify interviewees) were excluded to avoid communications fatigue.

The online survey ran from the 10th to 21st January 2018 inclusive. Survey questions are provided in [Annex 3](#): Online survey plan. The survey was also promoted by the MMO at the Coastal Futures Partnership Conference held in mid-January 2018. Coastal Futures exceeds 300 delegates and 140 organisations with a wide cross section of coastal and marine practitioners to raise awareness and encourage further response.

The objectives for the survey were specifically to:

- provide insights into the drivers and motivations as to why stakeholders were engaging or not engaging fully in the marine planning process

- inform recommendations on how to enhance engagement with current and potential future stakeholders
- identify opportunities to increase the stakeholder spread, both in numbers as well as geographically, with a particular emphasis on ‘hard to reach’ groups.

In addition to capturing further insights from our initial qualitative research through interviews, the survey was also used to invite interested parties to opt-in to receive marine planning newsletter communications, resulting in 25 (potential new) sign-ups. Of these, four individuals were pre-existing recipients, leaving the MMO with 21 new contacts to engage with digitally in the future. This duplication, whilst expected, provides an opportunity to re-engage participants and remind them of their existing communication channels with the MMO to help re-familiarise and re-engage stakeholders with existing channels and reference sources.

On implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation all MMO contacts were asked to opt-in again to receive marine planning communications.

The survey responses are examined in detail in [section 3.4](#) of this report.

3. Insights

3.1 Insights from literature review

Based on review of non-MMO resources it was apparent to Nomensa that differing governmental bodies/agencies have adopted a variety of different approaches towards addressing the challenges relating to marine planning and what specifically is contained under the banner of marine planning. Those most closely aligned to the MMO's current engagement approach and scope are those of the Welsh and Scottish governments.

Notable approaches considered by Nomensa's research team to be of particular potential value in helping to widen and inform the engagement process were identified as follows:

Welsh government

The inclusion of a publically accessible digitally based geo-mapping and data slicing application allows interested stakeholders to view scope and current points of issue for marine planning cut by a range of different attributes (economic, social, environmental etc.). The MMO has an equivalent, Marine Information System. Such geo-mapping tools helps to bring the plans to life, making them highly interactive and engaging as a result: <http://lle.gov.wales/apps/marineportal/>.

The research team also found the framing and presentation approach to [the short video introducing the marine plans](#) to be particularly engaging and accessible, in the same way as the [MMO's planning animation](#). Most notably, the Welsh Government video focused on the interaction of the sea and coastal areas, thereby highlighting the importance the marine plans have in the relation to coastal communities, economies and shorelines. This approach was felt by Nomensa's research team to underline the fact that marine planning has a direct impact on land close to the sea and dependent upon it.

Scottish government

The '[Lessons Learnt](#)' document produced by the Scottish government was felt to summarise well the learnings from previous consultation activities and thinking. The Nomensa research team particularly liked the open and candid tone adopted by the authorities in describing areas for future improvement. Notably, these included references to increasing accessibility of plans to the wider public as a whole and on the issue of needing to improve transparency of process and decision-making to external stakeholders. This openness of expression is therefore likely to encourage and increase engagement from stakeholders who feel their issues and concerns and inputs are being listened to, not just to inform the outcomes of the marine planning process, but also the route by which these outcomes are realised.

Other government administrations

The broadly equivalent plans produced by the North American and Australian government agencies appeared to be targeted almost exclusively at informed stakeholder groups. There was a [‘Key Elements’](#) summary for the Canadian North Pacific Coast plan. While information may be available for more lay reader audiences, such information was not readily apparent during Nomensa’s review of the most prominent public-facing aspects of the digital resources produced by these agencies.

This snapshot provides an easily scanned view of the most salient points relating to the scope, structure and activities within this geographic region’s planning process. This enables less engaged or time-poor stakeholders to get an immediately accessible view of the purpose, extent and objectives of the planning process.

Meanwhile, the Australian government appears to take an almost exclusively environmental-led focus to its marine planning programme. Notable points of interest with respect to outputs of their consultation process related to the production of a series of summary reports or ‘Report cards’ available in a PDF format and focused around a specific species type (e.g. Bony Fish, Seabirds, Marine Reptiles etc.)

This very detailed, focussed approach is likely to appeal well to those with specific technical or personal interests in given aspects of the marine ecosystem. Although it is inevitably costly to take this approach across a wide marine planning remit, this more specific and detailed technical approach should not be discounted in its entirety.

The Nomensa research team strongly recommend that this approach be reviewed in further detail with a view towards potentially using certain aspects to inform future outcomes around specific topic areas (e.g. coastal commerce, coastal heritage), to ensure sustained engagement both pre- and post-planning implementation stages (included in recommendation B2 in [section 4.2](#) of this report).

While the exact details may differ, it is important to note that the MMO has utilised many of these approaches. Report cards were used to make Sustainability Appraisals more accessible, story maps were used as part of iterative engagement, summary consultation reports published for the South and East Marine Plans as well as modifications reports.

3.2 Insights from stakeholder interviews

3.2.1 Stakeholder groups

Interview enabled the gathering of insights across a range of variables including stakeholders’ awareness, understanding, experience and views of communications and engagements with the marine planning activity. Drivers, motivations and the ability of the stakeholders to engage with the MMO’s marine planning activity were also identified.

Whilst the experiences and attitudes of the interviewees varied widely within sectors and within regions, it was possible to identify four common groupings. These groups gather together insights that were often closely associated. Groups represent differences in the degree of engagement, motivation for engaging and the level of understanding of the marine plan development process.

Groupings are not an attempt to represent the entirety of current (and future) stakeholders. Rather, they are a representation of the most commonly expressed experiences, and so useful as a guide to strategic planning for better stakeholder engagement. It is hoped that when considering the four most easily identified groups engagement strategy can anticipate potential barriers and mitigate against them. The groups are a high level first step in differentiating the stakeholder audience.

Groups will be useful when thinking about the context of any individual stakeholder, when outreach and communications to engage them are being planned. As the recommendations of this report will describe, engaging stakeholders will be more successful when their particular circumstances, drivers and barriers are considered. As these insights are based on a relatively small sample size, we would be wary of strong quantitative extrapolations from these into the stakeholder population in general. However, groups give good qualitative insight into attitudes and behaviours commonly expressed by those within this research about marine planning.

3.2.2 Commercial SME stakeholder type

The first group is made up of stakeholders in small and medium-sized enterprises (SME). They have commercial interests, such as fishing, harbour management and port authorities. Typical behaviours and attitudes of the groups are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Attitudes typical of commercial stakeholders

Commercial SME group	
Drivers to engage	Very driven to know if their commercial interests will be affected by the marine plans.
Motivation to engage	Highly motivated to engage, but in a limited way. They want to be involved when there will be discussion of specific plan detail that they can contribute to. Uncertainty around detail causes frustration, anxiety and dissatisfaction with the planning process. They are also very keen to have their voice heard and interests acknowledged.
Ability to engage	Typically, time-poor with very limited capacity to engage. Time away from work needs to be justified in business terms.
Knowledge of the planning process	The planning processes are understood in a narrow way. The stakeholders in this group do not differentiate clearly between the planning process, which is slow and gradual, and the specificity of licensing and permissions. These stakeholders are focussed entirely on what the end results and consequences of the plans will be.
Support for the planning	There is some doubt about how the plans will be

Commercial SME group	
process	used when implemented and how they will work alongside other plans from other government agencies. The planning is perceived as having a strong bias towards conservation and environmental protection, at the detriment of commercial activity.

3.2.3 Environmental stakeholder type

The “Environmental” grouping is made up of stakeholders with conservation and environmental interests, such as River Trusts and ecology experts.

Table 2: Attitudes typical of environmental stakeholders

Environmental group	
Drivers to engage	Highly engaged to see that environmental protection will be included in the marine plans.
Motivation to engage	This group generally takes a more passive role. They want to observe the process and be informed as the plans develop, while making sure their voice is heard. Motivation is moderate-to-high, depending on how relevant marine planning is perceived to be to the stakeholder’s interests.
Ability to engage	Typically, time-poor with very limited financial and staff resources. Time away from work needs to be justified in business and budget terms. Some groups self-organise to represent each other at engagements and report back to the group.
Knowledge of the planning process	The majority of this group are optimistic about the plans. The planning is perceived as having a strong theme of conservation and environmental protection. There are however some environmental stakeholders, in particular situations such as operating near a port, with the opposite view. They see their conservation work at the mercy of strong commercial interests. This minority of conservationists have a pessimistic view that the marine plans will avoid limiting commercial interests.
Support for the planning process	There is general satisfaction with the way that the plans are developing by the majority in this group.

3.2.4 Planning sector stakeholder type

The third group is made up of stakeholders who work in planning in some capacity, such as at local planning authorities.

Table 3: Attitudes typical of planning sector stakeholders

Planning sector group	
Drivers to engage	Highly willing to be informed throughout the development of the marine plans. They have a

	business need to engage.
Motivation to engage	This group are highly motivated to engage. They have a sector related interest in the process.
Ability to engage	This group has the lowest barrier to engagement. Time away from work is easy to justify when the marine planning is aligned with the stakeholder's own organisation's interest. Time spent engaging is directly in proportion to the perceived relevance of the marine plans to their own work.
Knowledge of the planning process	The planning process is familiar. The stages of the process are well-understood.
Support for the planning process	There is general satisfaction with the way that the plans are being developed.

3.2.5 Commercial sector large business stakeholder type

A fourth group is made up of stakeholders who work in large commercial enterprises, such as industrial businesses or transport companies. Few individuals were directly interviewed in this category but this group was described through the comments of other interviewees. As a result, generalising to describe this group's behaviour is more problematic. It is relevant to note that this behaviour group exists and has different attitudes towards marine planning compared to the SME commercial stakeholders in particular mentioned above.

Table 4: Attitudes typical of commercial large business stakeholders

Planning sector group	
Drivers to engage	They do not perceive any strong drivers to engage directly.
Motivation to engage	This group are not motivated to engage in the development of the plans until they see relevance, through potential impact on their business. High level planning is too speculative for them.
Ability to engage	This group probably has a low barrier to engagement, in that staff resources are made available where a business need is identified. However, it seems that rather than engage individually, they may well engage through a larger business forum or special interest group.

3.3 Insights into hard to reach groups

In this section, we highlight difficulties and barriers to engagement. It must be remembered that this is discussed within the context of hard to reach, less engaged groups. We found many enthusiastic and positive responses amongst stakeholders elsewhere in our research.

3.3.1 Stakeholders look for relevance

For nearly all stakeholders, the motivation to engage, and the value attached to engagement, was directly related to the perceived relevance of the planning process. The degree of perceived relevance can be inferred from views expressed by the participants.

Concern with 'relevance' as a general concept was expressed when participants told us about things such as:

- the degree to which the outcome of the marine plans will affect their interests
- how much the plan development process is relevant to their own interests (for example if they work in planning and related areas of activity)
- how closely workshops met their expectations in terms of language, outcomes, transparency and understanding of the planning process
- to what extent communications from the MMO are appropriate and useful to a stakeholder's particular area of activity

Whilst some stakeholders saw the development of the marine plans as directly relevant to their role, for example as local authority planners, others saw the relevance in terms of either threat or opportunity that the plans would eventually bring (such as commercial and environmental sector stakeholders). Uncertainty about the meaning and purpose of the plans for some of these people caused a tension between wanting to engage and not engage, weighing the cost in resources of engaging against the information gained from doing so.

Engaging businesses was difficult as the perceived benefits of being involved were harder to see. One interviewee suggested that the MMO should be reaching out to more tourism and heavy transportation organisations. To do this they should hold targeted workshops, to allow for discussions around specific sector related issues. Smaller commercial concerns, such as harbours and ports, whilst engaged, expressed anxiety stemming from the uncertainty of the consequences of the plans.

Relevance was also called for by the fishing sector. One interviewee told us that, to increase attendance at workshops from fishermen, more relevance needed to be communicated:

"I think that interest always generates numbers [of people attending workshops]. If the outline plan is likely to have an impact on what [fishermen] do."

Conservation bodies had a high estimation of the relevance of the marine plans. They often expressed gratitude at being able to take part in the engagement process. The majority were generally optimistic that the plans would help environmental protection. The exceptions were conservationists who worked in areas dominated by large ports. These people expressed pessimistic expectations that the marine plan would not do anything to help conservation work if it was at the expense of commercial interests.

This shows the wide range of attitudes and behaviours discovered in the stakeholders participating in the research. An interviewee who worked in development planning told us:

"The ability of people to engage depends on their familiarity with planning and consultation processes. I think it's harder for people who are outside the development plan process to understand how it all fits together, the Local Planning Authority (LPA), government level, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and now the MMO, and what the marine plan is and how it is used."

3.3.2 Outreach failing to connect

Whilst personal contact and good working relations with MMO representatives was highly valued amongst those we spoke to, we also discovered that many people thought that the MMO could be better at communication and engaging people in ways appropriate to their circumstances.

It was clear that stakeholders whose business or special interest was directly affected by marine planning decisions felt a sense of entitlement to have their voices heard. The perception was that it was a duty of the MMO to meet these people half way, to make it easy for them to engage, and for the MMO to be in better contact with 'people on the ground'.

For the commercial fishing sector, practical difficulties were the most significant factor, the time needed to plan ahead and engage, as well as the limited distance that fishermen would be prepared to travel to a meeting. One interviewee from commercial fishing exemplified the problem by expressing a strong desire to be consulted in the planning, and yet so far had not attended any workshops. He told us:

"We want to work with people, but we don't want to be obliterated by developments that make it impossible for us to work....so we would expect to be full partners in the marine planning process, and expect to be consulted on all aspects, so that our views are heard."

It's interesting to note that there is some expectation that it is the responsibility of the MMO to consult the fishing industry in a way that they can engage with, rather than the fishing industry trying and failing to engage with the MMO process as it stands. While this may or may not be a reasonable view on the part of the stakeholders, it is a significant attitude that the MMO should consider when communicating with hard to reach groups.

An interviewee from an Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) also spoke about this:

“You have to think about who you want to reach and how do you reach them. [The MMO] need to talk to people at their level and the way they want to be engaged.”

Similar barriers were expressed about workshop discussions. The mixed audiences included people with specific interests, rather than planning-level thinking.

“One barrier to engaging was that the principles talked about at the workshops at first were so broad that it was difficult to get into the meat of the conversation.”

In the recommendations section of this report we will look at ways that communication and engagement events could be better tailored to meet stakeholder expectations.

3.3.3 Misunderstanding of the marine plans and their purpose

There was widespread confusion about the purpose of the marine plans and what they would be used for. People had a misconception that the plans will tell them in detail what they can and cannot do. They do not appreciate that the value of the plan is strategic, by dictating broad areas for certain activities, rather than giving specific detail that will decide licensing questions, for example.

Stakeholders with this misunderstanding were seen in all sectors, commercial, environmental and planning sectors. Concerns that the specific detail of permissions was not specified generated anxiety and frustration with the plan development process. This in turn contributed towards negative opinions of the MMO.

One typical response of this type was from someone running a port authority. When asked how important they felt it was for them to be involved in the plan development process they said:

“If what [the MMO] are planning to do affects our port harbour area, then it's 10 out of 10. But if what they are planning to do does not affect our harbour area, it's a 0/10, no interest whatsoever.... Selfish though it sounds that's what it boils down to. We're keeping an ear to the ground to hear what's happening, but not getting terribly involved in it.”

A view on the engagement process was expressed in these terms by one interviewee from a conservation association:

“The big summary from me is I think the MMO has done very well with the engagements from the workshops, but I think they really need to keep their eye on specific local engagement... The danger is that no direct engagement leads to suspicion... That's where you get most of the resistance, when people don't understand the detail of what's being proposed then the natural response is concern.”

For related reasons, the value of engaging stakeholders too early was questioned by one interviewee, who worked for an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as part of a county council in the East region. He told us:

“I don't think that putting lots of money into explaining the plans to people at this stage would be good value for money, because at this stage there won't be enough specific detail in the plan to satisfy most people, it's not got the answers or the certainty to reassure people at this stage. What [the MMO] could do is give useful case studies of how the plan is used.”

Several interviewees expressed the fear that the final plan would be ineffective. They based this on having searched for examples of when the East plan had been used in decisions. This search had been motivated by concern to understand the outcome of the planning process, to judge how much time they should dedicate to engaging. No references to the East plan being cited in planning decisions was found by the interviewees. They concluded that the plan was of no practical use and were inclined to disengage from the development of the marine plan for their own region.

Lack of awareness about the impact of the plans was very common. For example, only two interviewees expressed the belief that business should be confident that the plans would not damage the status quo. These interviewees were familiar with the planning process and understood that the plan must take into account existing practices.

Of those interviewed only two people expressed knowledge that the plans had the three dimensions, economic, environmental and social. Many people saw the plans as entirely about environmental protection, while others saw only the dimension of the plan that posed a threat to their own activity.

3.3.4 More recognition of involvement

Many stakeholders, especially from environmental and commercial groups, expressed the feeling that their engagement wasn't being valued by the MMO. One interviewee expressed this as feeling that they were 'just part of the process' with nothing coming from involvement. Other people told us that they had hoped to discuss specific issues at workshops but found the communication to be from the MMO outwards, rather than a two-way dialogue.

One interviewee from a coastal partnership told us:

"It's frustrating not being able to show how my input has been used... I can't justify taking the whole day to attend without any feedback."

The interviewee wanted to know whether their input had been taken forward. This would help to justify to managers, the value of attending. Instead they said they could only recall receiving a very general progress update on regional planning.

Some interviewees had experienced great frustration that evidence they had submitted had been ignored without an explanation being given. While some interviewees understood that the MMO had the authority to be selective about what

evidence was relevant and what was not, they also expressed concern that the MMO did not publish a complete list of evidence submitted and the decision in each case to explain why it was included or not. Without this there were fears that either their evidence hadn't been successfully submitted to the system, or that their evidence had been dismissed without proper consideration.

3.3.5 Lack of understanding how the MMO relates to other bodies

Many interviewees, especially those who had limited engagement, expressed confusion about how the marine plans would fit alongside the work of other bodies such as the Environment Agency, Defra, Local Enterprise Councils, planning inspectorates, London Port Authority and others.

An executive of a harbour commission told us:

"But there is such a broad range of plans and organisations and stakeholder engagement. We actually get swamped with it at times. And it can be very difficult to just clarify who is with what and which plan is with which legislation, etcetera."

People who engage infrequently also had a less precise understanding of the marine plan development process, namely that it was in cycles and that each engagement served as part of a long-term, structured process.

3.3.6 Varying understanding of the Marine Information System

While a few interviewees were familiar with geographic information systems (GIS) systems, most were not. Those that used GIS as part of their work had a good opinion of the MMO's Marine Information System (MIS). They were confident about how to use the system and understood that it was an evolving system.

One person, an ecologist working in planning for a county council, was under the impression that the completed MIS would be the entire purpose of the marine planning process.

"I think the end result [of the plan development] is an interactive map where you can find out what activity is going on."

There was another group of participants who had looked at the MIS once or twice and thought of it as a way to keep informed about latest license applications in their area. It's not clear to them though that the information is updated often enough for this to be a reliable resource. Perhaps the MIS should indicate when the information was last updated in each sector and region.

Participants less familiar with the MIS often expressed difficulty in using the interface. Some asked if there could be simple instructions in a pdf format, or perhaps a video linked to from within the MIS pages. One participant suggested that at each workshop there could be a 5 or 10 minute introduction to the MIS application with information on where to find more detailed instructions for using it.

A few interviewees were introduced to the MIS during the phone interview, by the interviewer. While there were difficulties in understanding the interface, such as how to see the layers of information, once it was working the interviewees were impressed and thought it would be a valuable resource that they would return to.

An interviewee who runs a chartered fishing business was not aware of the Marine Information Systems website. When guided to it during the interview he was very impressed at the level of information available:

"[Looking at the MIS website] That's brilliant. That will be useful. I can pass that on to the other charter skipper members as well."

3.4 Insights from online survey

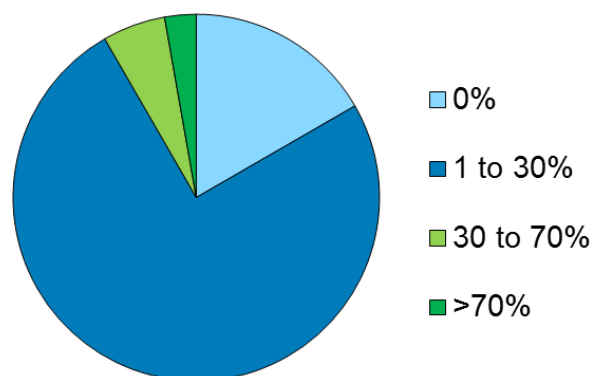
This section summarises results of the online survey. This adds quantitative measures to the insights gained from the telephone interviews. Nomensa investigated statistical analysis of the survey results. However, small sample sizes prevented robust statistical methods. The insights drawn are qualitative conclusions arrived at as emergent properties of the research.

Table 5: Overall responses to the online survey

Responses	Percent	Responses
Complete	94.6%	35
Partially complete	5.4%	2
		Total 37

3.4.1 Respondents and their interaction with marine planning

Figure 1: What proportion of your time is spent working on topics relevant to marine planning?



When asked (36 responses) “*What proportion of your time is spent working on topics relevant to marine planning*” 75.0% of respondents engaged with marine planning in the course of their organisational working commitments for less than 30% of their working time (either operating in a professional or a voluntary capacity for an interest-based organisation). 16.7% reported having no working involvement with marine planning in their current roles. Only three respondents worked with marine planning for longer than 30% of their working time. Of these, two respondents

reported themselves as working in the Conservation sector, with the third working for a non-governmental departmental body.

Respondents, while selected to provide a geographical spread, were asked to select their marine plan area(s) of interest.

Table 6: Respondent’s plan areas of interest

Marine Plan Area	Percent	Responses
All	6.1%	3
East inshore and offshore	18.2%	7
South inshore and offshore	18.2%	7
South east inshore	21.2%	8
South west inshore and offshore	24.2%	9
North east inshore and offshore	24.2%	9
North west inshore and offshore	39.4%	15
Not sure	0.0%	0

Respondents were able to select more than one marine plan area of interest (hence percentages in Table 6 exceed 100%). Whilst responses were received from all marine plan areas, responses were skewed to respondents with a North West regional focus (39.4%), followed by South West and North East regions, both with 24.2% responses each. Two respondents also highlighted their interest in planning at a national level, by selecting the ‘All’ response option.

Respondent’s sector of work

Table 7: Respondents by sector of work

Sector of work	Percent	Responses
Business Other	2.7%	1
Coastal Partnership	2.7%	1
Conservation	18.9%	7
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	8.1%	3
Fishing	5.4%	2
Government Departments	2.7%	1
Heritage	5.4%	2
Non-departmental Government Body	8.1%	3
Planning Authorities	21.6%	8
Ports and Shipping	8.1%	3
Recreation	5.4%	2
Recreation	5.4%	2
Tourism	5.4%	2
		Total 37

Primary areas of response to this single selection response question centred around Planning Authorities (21.6%) and Conservation (18.9%) sectors, thereby equating to just over 40% of responses (40.5%).

Respondent’s sector of interest

Whilst a range of primary sectors of interest is provided in [Annex 4](#), those sectors scoring more than 40% of respondent interest to this multi-selection response question were identified as follows:

- Climate Change 48.4%
- Coastal Change 48.4%
- Coastal Partnership 45.2%
- Conservation 51.6%
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management 48.4%
- Heritage 45.2%
- Marine litter 41.9%
- Planning Authorities 45.2%
- Recreation 51.6%
- Shoreline Management Plans 51.6%

3.4.2 Previous attendance at an MMO marine planning workshop

Just over a third of respondents (36.1%) reported that they had previously attended a marine planning workshop.

Those who had previously attended were then asked to rate their experience of the pre, during and post-workshop experience, and to give their reasoning for their ratings if rating seven and above (high), or three and below (low). These ratings and underlying rationales for them are provided in [section 3.4.10](#) of this report.

3.3.3 Future workshop attendance and contributing factors

Table 8: Do you plan to attend any workshops in the future?

Intent to attend future workshops	Percent	Responses
Yes	41.7%	15
No	2.8%	1
Maybe	55.6%	20
		Total 36

Whilst 41.7% of respondents intended to attend future workshops, just over half (55.6%) of respondents expressed uncertainty in future attendance.

Primary reasons to attend mentioned by ‘Yes’ respondents were cited as i) known relevance to day job ii) to inform future activities and wider stakeholder engagement or iii) out of a sense of curiosity. For example

i) Known relevance to day job

“If they are relevant to my role as Ecology Officer.”

ii) To inform future activities and wider stakeholder engagement: this was identified as being important to facilitate an understanding of how to gain wider commitment from groups interacted with and thereby support their own stakeholder management:

“I work with voluntary and community sector groups which are based in the Hendon and Ryhope wards. These groups deliver sessions and activities along heritage coastline. It would be good to understand a little more about marine planning and how community groups and residents can get involved so I could encourage their involvement.”

iii) Out of a sense of curiosity: namely to determine and gauge the benefits of future engagement in the marine planning process.

“To understand if there is any relevance to the ‘Visitor Economy’ and the implications for spatial planning etcetera.”

Propensity to travel to attend workshops

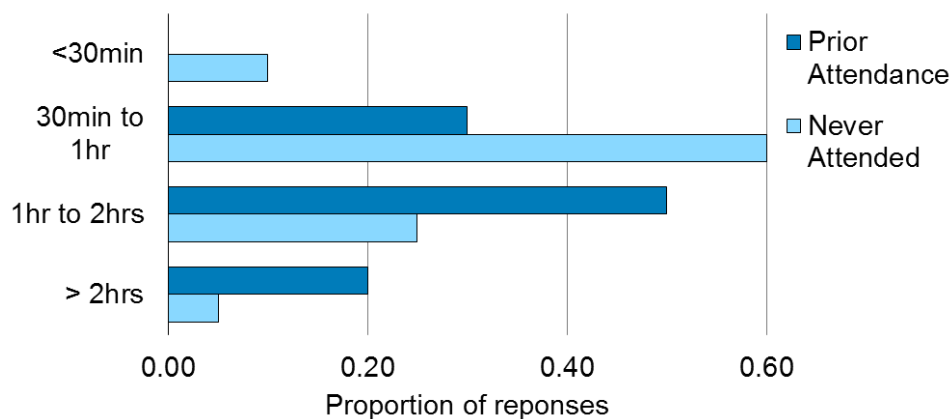
To guide planning and decisions around location considerations for the MMO’s future face-to-face engagement activities respondents were asked “how much time they would be willing to spend to travel to a marine planning workshop”.

Table 9: Maximum time prepared to travel to marine planning workshop (all respondents)

Travel time for workshops	Percent	Responses
Up to 30 minutes	6.7%	2
Over 30 minutes to an hour	50.0%	15
Between 1 to 2 hours	30.0%	9
More than 2 hours	13.3%	4
		Total 30

Just over half of respondents (56.7%) were prepared to travel up to one hour to attend a meeting. Only a small proportion (6.7%) were only willing to travel up to a maximum of 30 minutes. Meanwhile, nearly a third of respondents stated that they would be willing to travel between one to two hours to attend a workshop (Table 9).

Figure 2: Comparison of time prepared to travel to a marine planning workshop (attendance versus those never having attended a workshop)



Notably, the willingness to travel was greater amongst those who had previously attended a planning workshop, with 70% of respondents willing to travel over an hour to attend versus only 30% amongst respondents who had yet to attend a workshop (Figure 2)

3.4.4 Reasons to engage in the marine planning process

Survey participants were asked “What are your reasons for engaging in the development of the Marine Plans?”. This question was used to ascertain the primary drivers behind stakeholders seeking to become initially engaged with the MMO’s marine planning process. A number of diverse themes were subsequently identified from this free-text response, listed from most frequent to least frequent as follows:

- support work and interest in environmental, biodiversity and marine sustainability areas: 10 mentions
- meet statutory obligations: six mentions
- support economic growth, including the development and maintenance of important physical assets (e.g. ports etc.): five mentions
- protect personal and local community interests (leisure/tourism and personal livelihoods): five mentions
- help determine the future success of an area: four mentions
- manage the interaction between local land and marine environments (including tidal marine considerations): three mentions
- safeguard and support local/national maritime heritage (physical and culture heritage): two mentions

3.4.5 Intended stages of engagement with the marine planning process

Participants were asked “At what stage do you want to be engaging with the Marine Plans?”. This multiple-selection response question was used to capture the range of intended points of engagement stakeholders currently have in the marine planning process.

Of those who responded, the majority (in excess of 80%) expressed interests in the plan development and consultation phases (Table 10). Almost all those that were interested in involvement in plan implementation and monitoring phases, were respondents who also selected either or both the previous phases of plan development and draft plan consultation. This implies a strong interest in a long-term on-going engagement throughout the process.

Table 10: Intended points of involvement in the planning process

Points of involvement	Percent of responses	Number of responses
Plan development	80.6%	29
Draft plan consultation	83.3%	30
Plan implementation	58.3%	21
Plan monitoring	55.6%	20

3.4.6 Thoughts regarding current frequency of contact with the MMO regarding marine planning

Participants were asked “How would you describe the frequency of contact you currently have with the MMO regarding marine planning?”.

Just over 6 in 10 respondents (Table 11) were content with the frequency of current contact they currently have with the MMO around the marine planning process. No respondents expressed a desire for less contact.

Table 11: Thoughts regarding current frequency of contact with MMO

Frequency of contact with MMO	Percent	Responses
Feels about right	61.3%	19
Would like more	38.7%	12
Would like less	0%	0
		Total 31

3.4.7 Thoughts regarding the ideal outcome of the marine plans for stakeholders and their organisations

Participants were asked “Please can you describe what the ideal outcome of the Marine Plans would be for you and the organisation you work for?”. This free text question was used to capture stakeholder perspectives around their ideal scenarios and outputs as a result of engaging in the marine planning process.

Responses highlighted a range of different prospective desired outcomes. The most common desired outcome (eight responses) focused around securing a balanced use of marine resources for the benefits of different parties and areas of interest. This raises an interesting opportunity of being able to bring diverse audience groups together under a common theme or topic area within the marine planning process. This is consequently explored further as a recommendation (SD3) under [section 4](#) of this report.

Particular emphasis was given here around achieving a common understanding of planning objectives amongst respective stakeholder groups. Ecosystem and biodiversity management featured prominently with seven mentions and local economy (including leisure and tourism) attained four mentions. Two mentions were also cited around facilitating a closer interplay between terrestrial and marine planning.

Conversely, respondents who expressed uncertainty around their desired outcomes, did so as they felt it too early for them to draw conclusions around expectations at such a perceived early stage in the process. This was used by them as justification for their relatively low levels of engagement with the marine planning process to date.

3.4.8 Stakeholder interactions with their own stakeholder groups

Participants were asked “How many people do you currently share information with regarding marine planning?” 90.9% of respondents (Table 12) consult with at least

one or more stakeholders (defined broadly as those in their own organisation as well as those in special interest groups, local committees, professional associations) regarding the MMO’s marine planning process. This insight therefore creates interesting scope and opportunities to help support and inform secondary/indirect stakeholder audiences as a result (see [section 4](#) for recommended activities relating to this opportunity).

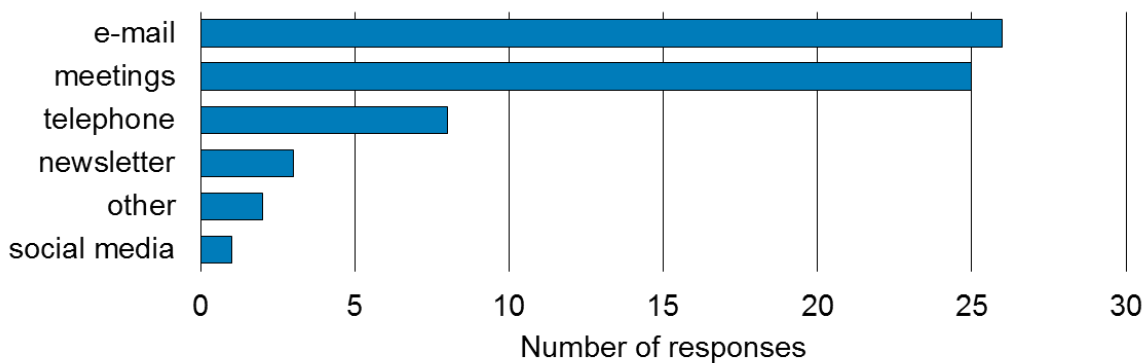
Table 12: How many people do you currently share information with regarding marine planning?

Number of people	Percent	Responses
None	9.1%	3
1 – 5	30.3%	10
6 – 10	24.2%	8
11 – 20	9.1%	3
21 – 50	15.2%	5
51 – 100	0.0%	0
More than 100	12.1%	4
		Total 33

Those with larger consultee groups (over 20 consultees), tended to be linked to coastal partnerships, fishing, conservation, tourism and recreational areas, as well as non-departmental governmental bodies.

Participants were then asked, “How do you currently share information about the marine plans?”(Figure 3).

Figure 3: Communication methods currently used by stakeholders to interact with their consultees



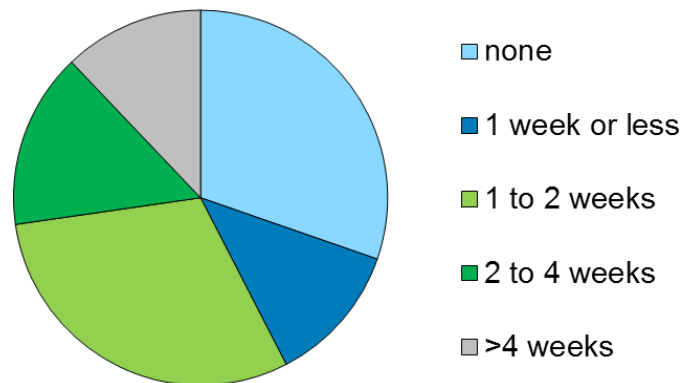
Of the 30 respondents who consult with their own wider group, email (26 responses) and local meetings (25 responses) remain the primary channels by which they do this (Figure 3).

Interestingly, social media is used very rarely to communicate and share planning updates currently, whilst ‘Other’ category responses included verbal and the internal circulation of MMO information within their consultee groups.

Participants were then asked, “How far ahead of a workshop do you consult with other people in your own networks to allow you to share their thoughts at the workshop?” This question was designed to inform an appropriate timeframe for

sending out materials to primary stakeholders. This was to allow primary stakeholders to effectively engage and consult with their wider stakeholder groups ahead of any workshops or wider future stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Figure 4: Stakeholder pre-workshop consultation timings with own consultee groups



There were 33 responses to this question. Whilst nearly a third (30.3%), do not currently consult with anyone in advance of the workshops, the majority of those who do consult do so around two weeks ahead of the workshop (10 responses). Meanwhile, four responses reported engaging earlier in the process and, in some cases, up to four weeks in advance (four responses).

Respondents that currently share with more than 20 others, tended to consult with them further in advance. These respondents accounted for three of the five selecting the response '2 to 4 weeks', and two of the four selecting 'more than 4 weeks'.

3.4.9 Marine Information System (MIS) usage

Participants were asked “Have you used the Marine Information System (MIS) website?” Whilst not directly related to the stakeholder engagement process, the online survey also provided a valuable opportunity to get a sense of respondents’ awareness of the MMO’s current MIS portal and their previous and prospective use of it.

Just over a third of respondents (34.3%) had previously used the MIS portal, with just under half (42.9%) planning to use it in the future (Table 13).

Table 13: Current and intended future Marine Information System usage

Current and intended future MIS usage	Percent	Responses
Yes	34.3%	12
No but plan to use it in the future	42.9%	15
No and don't have any plans to use it	22.9%	8
		Total 35

Of those who had previously used the MIS tool, the primary reasons were to:

- check data for planning and case work purposes
- marine licenses (application and progress tracking)
- acquire more information regarding the marine plans for the local region.

Of those who had not previously used the MIS tool, but intended to do so in the future, primary reasons to use were stated as:

- to stay abreast of marine plan updates and impacts on areas of interest
- to support and inform their own planning processes.

3.4.10 Strengths

The research interviews highlighted a number of strengths regarding the current marine planning process. These were then elaborated on in the online survey in an attempt to quantify levels of satisfaction placed by stakeholders on the longitudinal experience of the workshops overall.

A primary insight from the qualitative interview stage of our research related to the fact that previous workshop attendees had identified strengths and weaknesses at specific points within the marine planning process. As a result, the online survey was used to assess stakeholder engagement at three distinct stages around the workshops, rather than addressing stakeholder satisfaction as a global whole. These three stages were defined as follows:

- **Pre-workshop:** to relate to the quality of communications and clarity of expectations set in advance of the workshops
- **Intra-workshop:** to relate to the quality of interaction on the day, from both an MMO facilitation and peer-to-peer engagement perspective
- **Post-workshop:** to relate to communications and outputs received or engaged with by participants as a result of attending the workshops.

Pre-workshop

Eight of the 12 respondents rated the workshop 7 or higher, thereby implying a relatively high level of satisfaction with the information and pre-workshop communications process. Meanwhile, only one respondent marked the experience as low (3 rating given).

Intra-workshop

10 of the 12 respondents to this question scored the workshop experience 7 or higher showing a relatively high, to high level of satisfaction. Meanwhile, only two respondents marked the experience within a mid-range rating of 6.

Reasons for higher/relatively high satisfaction were cited as the:

- Regionalisation of workshops to keep discussions geographically specific.

- Ability to discuss issues in an open forum format. “Good mix of speakers, roundtable discussions and discussions at the exhibition boards”.
- Good organisation and facilitation (from experienced MMO representatives) to appropriately guide and direct stakeholder discussions as appropriate.

Post-workshop

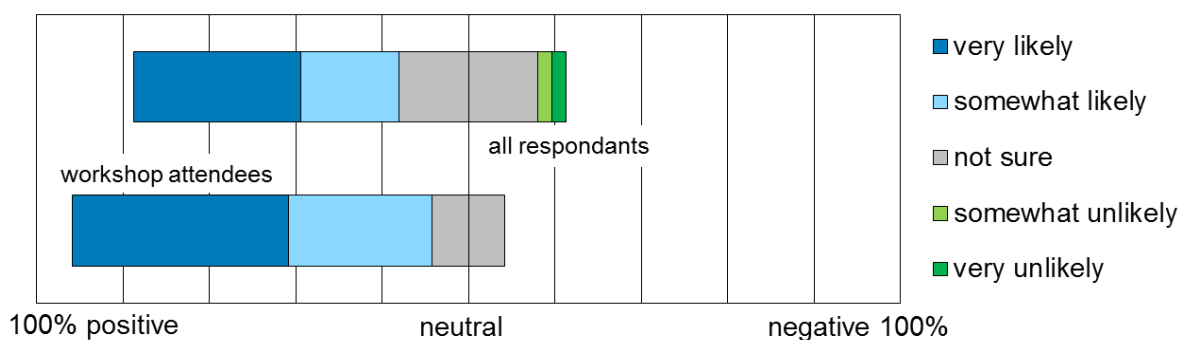
For this question eight of the 12 respondents scored the post-workshop experience seven or higher, showing a high/relatively high level of satisfaction. Meanwhile, only one respondent marked the experience as low (4 rating given).

“At the session they advised what the next steps would be, and they delivered what they said they would. Information was provided via relevant marine plan page on the website.”

These strengths should therefore consequently be built on and consolidated to further drive positive stakeholder engagement in the future.

The MMO undertakes post-workshop satisfaction surveys routinely and these tend to score quite highly (mean satisfaction scores of 7/10, data provided by MMO). Dissatisfactions expressed in interview tended to relate to more specific matters, and not necessarily to the immediate follow-on from the workshop. For example, while a stakeholder may feel that the workshop satisfactorily informed them of the next steps in the process, they may have expressed dissatisfaction about difficulties in submitting evidence in later stages.

Figure 5: Likelihood of recommending MMO marine planning activities to a friend or colleague interested in marine planning matters (all responses and prior attendees at workshops)



Nearly two thirds of respondents (61.3%) were likely or very likely to recommend marine planning activities to a friend or colleague interested in marine planning matters (all respondents). Those who had previously attended a workshop had a higher propensity to recommend, than those who had not. For example, of those that had previously attended workshops, six respondents stated that they would be very likely to recommend with only two respondents declaring themselves as unsure. There were no negative responses (workshop attendees)

3.4.11 Conceptual understanding of marine planning

Responses provided as a free-text response showed that marine planning is generally understood as a concept, even amongst those with less familiarity of marine planning matters. Only a small number of respondents (four), were unable to give any form of definition.

The survey yielded some interesting ways in which respondents articulated their understanding of marine planning. Of particular interest was the emphasis given to certain aspects of the planning process and/or to the perceived benefits arising from marine planning.

Here, as in the telephone interviews, we found that environmental protection is commonly thought to be the priority of the marine plans.

These responses can be broadly categorised, as follows:

- Planning and co-ordination of differing areas of interest: four mentions
- Environmental protection and sustainability: 14 mentions (and the over-riding assumptive position for those expressing uncertainty in their response)
- Land and sea interaction/analogy (spatial protection and responsible management of resources): three mentions
- Economy (regeneration and sustainable growth of region's economic interests): two mentions.

3.5 Challenges

In this section we describe the challenges to enhancing stakeholder engagement that present themselves as a result of the insights gained from both the interviews and the online survey. Whilst the challenges are grouped into themes for clarity of presentation, there are overlaps and relationships between the challenges.

3.5.1 Demonstrating to stakeholders the relevance of engaging

Demonstrate relevance

The most commonly expressed driver to engagement was the degree of perceived relevance of the marine plans to stakeholders' interests. The challenge here is to communicate, through appropriate channels and at suitable times, the aspects of the engagement that are most relevant to each stakeholder. These will naturally vary from sector to sector and from region to region.

Increase understanding about the development of marine plans

A commonly reported experience was that discussion at workshops was at a very high level of general concepts and principles. An ecologist working for a county council told us:

“At the workshops there were some arguments about policy wording which seemed very pedantic. In practice, it will come down to the practical issues involved.”

This was demotivating for some stakeholders, who found it impossible to contribute on matters of fine detail, as they were more concerned with the eventual consequences of the plan for their conservation or commercial activity.

Around a third of stakeholders did not clearly differentiate between the *development* of the marine plans from their eventual *use* such as in licensing decisions made by the MMO. As a result, the purpose of the engagement sometimes did not meet the expectations of these stakeholders. There is a challenge to raise understanding across all stakeholders of the importance of the entire process, from development through to implementation and use, and the opportunities available at each point in that process.

Demonstrate the usefulness of the marine plan

For some stakeholders there was an expectation that the plans, when complete, will be written at too general a level, and possibly of no practical use. This is demotivating for those short of time to engage. Some stakeholders had researched the East Marine Plan to see how it was being used. They reported finding no evidence that it was used at all in planning and licensing decisions. This again was demotivating and confusing.

In contrast, those with experience with the development of plans, such as those from Local Planning Authorities are familiar with the process and engage readily. The goals of the process are closely aligned with their own needs, for strategic plans. Stakeholders without planning experience struggled to understand the slow pace of the planning cycles.

A county council project officer expressed the opinion that people in the East region are generally aware of the plan. However, people involved in regulatory bodies say to him that they have only used the plan once in the last year to make consent decisions. He expressed the opinion that the East plan is very high level and isn't getting any traction:

"It's not specific enough to get enough impact to get people to take significant notice."

Help stakeholders decide when and how to engage

Many stakeholders, especially those in commercial sectors such as ports and fishing businesses, have to weigh the cost of engaging in the development of the marine plans against the value this brings.

To decide this, stakeholders try to find out what the consequences of the plan will be. In this area there is significant confusion, lack of understanding and lack of communication. The challenge here is to therefore, be able to provide helpful and accurate information about how engagement is valued and used.

Reduce anxiety about outcomes

This uncertainty leads to anxiety for these stakeholders, which is both a barrier and a motivator to further engagement. These stakeholders would like to either disengage, because the plan will not affect them, or engage fully, to mitigate the threat to their activity the plan could bring.

One harbour commissioner commented:

"We must maintain an interest because we have no idea where this [plan] is going."

Explain the purpose and use of the Marine Information System

The purpose of the MIS needs to be made clear to users of the service. From the online survey 34.3% of respondents used the MIS and another 42.9% said they intended to use it in the future. The purpose and experience of using the MIS therefore needs to be communicated clearly so that the users have appropriate expectations of its value and capabilities.

All those who looked at, and used, the MIS expected it to be a thoroughly up to date reference for current activity and licenses. Some were unsure if it contained current license applications. Some stakeholders, even some planners, believe that the MIS was the entire purpose of the marine plan, and seemed to expect nothing more than a complete MIS resource as the outcome of the marine planning process.

More explanation of how to use the system, the interface and the controls, would be welcomed by all users, (except those few who are already familiar with other GIS systems).

3.5.2 Attending meetings

Cost of engaging

There are many practical challenges affecting attendance at workshops. In this project, cost of attending meetings was measured in terms of time away from work, travel costs and the extra work load to get back up to speed after returning to work.

Time away was the most significant for all stakeholders. Typically, most of one working day was 'lost' to attend a meeting.

Smaller stakeholders, such as conservation trusts, co-ordinate with others similar to themselves, and send one representative between them. They will then feedback to the rest of their stakeholder group.

Distance factor

Smaller stakeholders wanted meetings to be as local as possible. Two reasons for this were given. Firstly, this would mean higher attendance from 'hard to reach' groups. Secondly, it was expected that the more local a meeting was, the more it would focus on specific local issues and plans.

From the results of the online survey, it can be seen that travel times of more than an hour would significantly reduce the numbers willing to attend a meeting, especially amongst less engaged stakeholders.

An interviewee from the fishing sector told us:

"[Meetings need to be] as local as possible. Travel is time and expense...it can be a day out of the office for somebody. It can be difficult for us."

Timing

The fact that stakeholder workshops were held both in evenings and during the day was appreciated. Although some people thought that weekend meetings would help fishermen, the fishermen themselves said that Saturday morning might work, but not weekends generally. Similarly, daytime meetings were preferred, rather than having to go to a meeting in the evening after a long day's work. Fishermen also wanted to travel less far and have meetings at times of the year when they were least likely to be out at sea.

Dates

Having a range of dates within a region was appreciated. One stakeholder was disappointed that all the dates were within a short space of time, rather than spaced out over a few weeks. This would make them easier to fit around other commitments.

Desire to engage in the future

Many stakeholders who have been too short of time to attend events nevertheless said it was very important for them to engage. Their desire to engage was not in correlation with their level of engagement so far. The clear motivation for these people was to be informed and to inform the plans based on their commercial interests. The fact that they had not engaged shows how significant the practical barriers are (lack of time, money and resources).

The majority of stakeholders who had attended workshops intended to continue to attend the next round.

Interest in web-based meetings

Two interviewees expressed an interest in joining meetings held as online webinars. This idea is worth exploring further, to discover in what contexts and for what purposes a web-based meeting would enhance engagement.

3.5.3 Keeping stakeholders engaged

The challenge here is to keep stakeholders engaged once they have participated.

Barriers to understanding

Stakeholders managing commercial activity find the complexity of multiple layers of designations and protections frustrating. Those short of time found that the output from meetings was not presented in a way that enabled them to find what was relevant to them quickly. Some stakeholders also expressed a dislike of what they saw as the use of jargon in MMO communications.

Feeling swamped

Those short of time expressed a sense of 'consultation fatigue', feeling swamped by the amount of information they were being asked to read and engage with. This was made worse if the stakeholder felt they had no clear understanding of how the MMO's responsibilities related to those of other bodies, such as Defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

"In my experience, I've seen that smaller organisations, such as harbour masters, do not have the time and resources to engage with planning. There are too many requests and they suffer from 'consultation fatigue'."

Submitting evidence

Clearly one challenge for the MMO is to convince all stakeholders that every effort is being made to be fair and transparent and remain true to the purpose of the marine plans. Frustration was expressed by some stakeholders around the process of submitting evidence. This came particularly from those with commercial interests. They were concerned that the submission form for providing evidence would only allow environmental evidence, and not evidence for the commercial or social value of activities.

Quality of evidence was also a frustration. One stakeholder expressed concern that the MMO would only accept Marine Environmental Data and Information Network (MEDIN) compliant data. This was felt to limit the usefulness of the evidence collection, as so little evidence would qualify.

A harbour commissioner told us:

"We haven't been encouraged that anything we have said has been listened to so far."

Transparency

Several stakeholders who had submitted detailed evidence are concerned that no explanation is given around how decisions have been made. They want to know why some evidence has been dismissed and why some has been included.

Perceptions of bias

The majority of stakeholders working in ports, fishing and other commercial businesses said they felt that environmental concerns were dominating the agenda.

They told us that at workshops they had attended the environmentalists were in the majority and had the 'loudest voice'. It was felt that the value of commercial interests to the economy and society wasn't being given due weight.

Conversely, a small number of conservationists and academics thought that the marine plans would do little to protect marine life and the environment. They perceived that the plans would maintain the status quo and continue what they saw as the general degradation of habitats and breeding grounds.

3.5.4 Perceptions of the MMO

All forms of previous contact with MMO representatives, such as at local forum meetings, licensing applications and enforcement activities, contribute to the overall expectations stakeholders have about their future engagement with the MMO. Stakeholder's historic experiences therefore heavily conditioned their expectations of the MMO's role and approach towards the marine planning process.

There are challenges in making the best of existing local 'on the ground' relations and in spreading awareness of the MMO to those who need to know, in a way that will engage them. One often repeated comment was that the MMO had a 'one size fits all' engagement strategy, which was not felt to be a successful strategy for wider engagement.

A project manager at a county council in the East region told us:

"I think the planning team have a very difficult task ahead, in terms of engaging with as many people as possible. I think they're doing a good job of that, and I think the fact that they've commissioned this study demonstrates that."

Licensing application and enforcement

Many people were familiar with applying for licenses. Frustrations with this were expressed by some stakeholders. The application process was criticised by some because it required complete information to be submitted in a single form filling session, rather than being able to be done in stages, saving progress each time.

The process was seen as precise and difficult:

"You can't submit without every bit of information being in your application."

Since the MMO was perceived as a single entity, these frustrations set up negative expectations around engaging with marine plan development.

Stakeholder expectations were also conditioned by perceptions of the MMO arising from enforcement activity. A few stakeholders running ports said they had found the MMO to be authoritarian and difficult to deal with.

Concern was also expressed that, in some cases, when local residents had had first contact with the MMO around enforcement, their relationship had begun badly, not knowing they had broken any rules.

Local Marine Officers

Many stakeholders reported having good relationships with their local MMO officers at harbours and local offices. All those who met MMO officers said they felt that they could talk to the MMO officers to inform and be informed about relevant news and developments.

However, frequent face-to-face contact with MMO officers did not correlate with a stakeholder's awareness of the development of the marine plans. There was a lack of information about marine planning being passed on by MMO officers to local stakeholders.

An interviewee involved in fishing in the North West told us:

"Everything comes through me. I'm the link into the fishing industry in the North West. ... I know the senior MMO officers, and they know my involvement in the North West. But, these MMO officers who deal with me might be on the operational side of the MMO, which might be different from the marine planning."

MMO representatives at local meetings

When MMO representatives sat on local committees, forums and conservation groups, this was greatly appreciated. It made the MMO visibly involved and approachable. There was often a sense of surprise that MMO representatives did not use time at local forums and meetings as an opportunity to spread awareness of the marine plan development.

When MMO representatives failed to take up opportunities to sit on local forums or visit locations after being invited this had a damaging impact on perceptions of the willingness of the MMO to listen to stakeholders' concerns.

Continuity of contact

A handful of stakeholders are experiencing frustration that each contact with the MMO (in general, not just with marine planning) is with a different person. There is a sense that the MMO's internal workings are leading to information being 'lost in the system'.

Nature of engagement

Many stakeholders expressed concern that the MMO did not do enough to understand the situation 'on the ground'. There was a strong desire from stakeholders across the full range of sectors for more, and regular, face to face, or personal contact with MMO staff. This was seen as essential so that the MMO could better inform itself of the issues faced by stakeholders, lead to better two-way communication through personal contacts, and speed up the resolution of issues.

3.5.5 Networks of engagement

Being time-poor has resulted in several stakeholders relying on being informed of MMO activity via third party organisations. The challenge here is therefore to find ways to take advantage of wider dissemination of information should these networks be engaged with by MMO.

Attending workshops

When travel and time away from work had a high cost, some people were self-organising with other bodies to send a single person to stakeholder meetings to represent all their interests. This was particularly prevalent amongst small conservation trusts and charities.

Being informed via professional networks

Several stakeholders in fishing and small businesses relied on other organisations (such as the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations) as the channel through which they would learn of any relevant marine plan development.

They said they did not have time to keep themselves informed but trusted other people to alert them to anything they should be concerned about. This puts the stakeholder into a reactive position, rather than pro-active, in relation to the plan development process.

Value of being included

The vast majority of the conservation bodies and environmental organisations we spoke to expressed great appreciation of the MMO for including them in the workshop and marine plan development process. This was very valuable to them as they felt informed about future plans.

While this is not a challenge, there is possibly scope to enhance their engagement. They often did not express a need to contribute to 'directing' the plans but were very keen to be involved simply by being informed as the plans developed.

3.5.6 Disaffection

The challenge here is to re-engage those who have become disaffected with either the planning process or with the MMO in general. Around a quarter of stakeholders expressed frustration with their engagement with the marine plan development.

Some reported a general feeling amongst their peers that the MMO was not really listening to them. They thought that the MMO were performing a 'token exercise', under obligation. These people were not convinced that the MMO was properly engaged in a genuine engagement exercise.

This feeling could be the result of various different experiences. These include workshops seeming to be dominated by one group, and evidence not being accepted or represented in post-workshop documented outputs. These stakeholders usually expressed concern that they were in the minority in their context, for example

an ecologist working near a busy port, or a harbor master at a workshop dominated by environmental stakeholders.

Some people, especially those involved in licensing or enforcement, expressed frustration with previous experiences with the MMO. This can also prejudice stakeholders against engaging in other MMO contacts, such as the planning activities.

One interviewee expressed a high level of dissatisfaction with her contact with the MMO:

"I understand the concept behind the MMO, a one-stop-shop, but it seems to have turned into just another layer... They don't even seem willing to understand the ground. We invited them out to come and look at the site [but nothing happened]."

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Overview

This concluding section focuses on a series of recommendations to address the themes, challenges and opportunities identified in the previous sections of the report.

Our recommendations broadly break down into two main types, namely those that:

- **build reach and awareness with a wider set of appropriate stakeholder audiences for marine planning** - for ease of reference these recommendations are prefixed with the letter 'B'
- **allow for a sustaining and deepening of the relationship within and throughout the marine planning process** - for ease of reference these recommendations are prefixed with the letters 'SD'.

These two types are not mutually exclusive however. As we will see, sustaining relationships with existing stakeholders also forms an integral and natural part of helping to build reach and gain wider stakeholder awareness.

Three real-world examples, based on insights given by participants at the qualitative interviews, have also been incorporated into this section. They help share best practice and highlight areas of high worth and value which were specifically referred to by participants in the course of the interview sessions.

In [section 4.4](#) of this report we have also included an overview of potential metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs are directly set in the context of the recommendations made here and are presented for MMO's consideration. These KPIs will allow for both the monitoring and objective measurement of the success of any future engagement and consultation activities the MMO may undertake around marine plan development.

4.2 Broadening reach

B1 Using existing stakeholder networks

This opening and overarching recommendation is aimed primarily at broadening stakeholder reach through the power of stakeholder networks. This builds on the work done by the MMO in the reports titled [User Story Analysis Report \(May 2017\)](#) and [MMO Marine Planning Iteration 1 Engagement Summary \(July 2017\)](#)

This involves using stakeholders from within the MMO's current contact base to help build and grow awareness. This can create initial interest in the concept of marine planning and the value it can bring to prospective future stakeholders, their interests and core areas of activity and responsibility.

[Section 3.4.8](#) has already highlighted the respective reach of stakeholders and the size of their own consultee groups, noting that conservation-related stakeholder respondents show a tendency for wider consultee groupings.

Adopting a stakeholder network approach to identify contacts, who may act effectively to reach out to a wider network of inter-related stakeholder contacts, is therefore vitally important in this respect.

Over time, this network can be built out as reach widens and matures to include indirect stakeholder contacts, such as those sitting one step removed initially from the MMO in the engagement process.

B2 Continue to identify, grow and measure reach

Identifying and developing stakeholder ‘nodes’ or ‘hubs’ for widening reach can be achieved by using a combination of different methods.

Of these, two are particularly pertinent to the MMO, namely:

- Self-identification from anecdotal experience.
Using existing knowledge from the MMO’s regional planning teams and in-situ staff, the MMO could identify current influential stakeholders and how they are broadly regarded as advocates of MMO and the planning process within the wider stakeholder community.
- Continuing to develop the stakeholder value matrix.
This builds on the continued stakeholder mapping analysis already carried out by the MMO, which, for example, has evaluated stakeholders’ influence, relevance, knowledge and support of marine planning, and stakeholder status, such as ‘champion’. The stakeholder value matrix could be developed by tracking size of stakeholder’s own consultee groups and wider contact networks. This would be valuable to understanding the indirect reach of engagement. The sum total of these values allows for an overall ‘calculation’ or evaluation of stakeholder engagement worth.

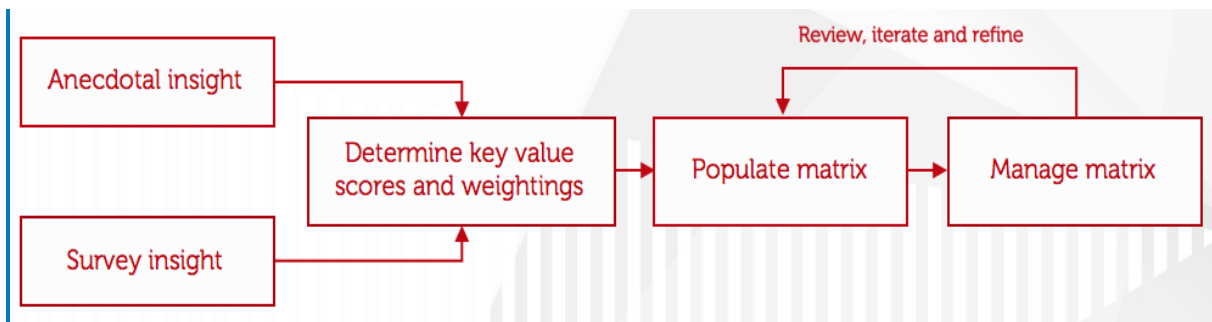
This approach therefore recognises the differing value and opportunity each stakeholder type may have in facilitating a broadening reach and wider awareness of MMO’s marine planning activities.

This can in turn pave the way to creating a differentiated communications and engagement strategy, based on the value and nature of the different potential network types. Each direct stakeholder may open up more contacts to the MMO, to drive future engagement activity.

This is a particularly pertinent consideration for the MMO, not least given the recognition of the overall remit the MMO holds around the marine planning process and the size and resources of the team available to fulfil its planning remit.

A suggested process flow for building and managing the stakeholder value matrix is shown below.

Figure 6: Managing a stakeholder value matrix



B3 Cultivating a partnership network

Recognising the value of each stakeholder as an advocate or partner will be vitally important in helping to sustain the value they may bring in widening awareness and reach of the MMO's activities.

At the heart of this approach lies the management of a core set of high-value advocates (augmenting an idea initiated under the MMO's stakeholder mapping analysis), using the value and passion they bring to the process.

Creating an advocate specific proposition, built around a number of different factors, would therefore help to address this opportunity.

Primary areas for consideration should therefore include:

- A differentiated communications programme (messaging, materials and frequency). This would recognise stakeholders as advocates and talk specifically to them in the context of their role and interest as well as providing materials (e.g. an advocacy support kit) to help them in their wider communications and advocacy activities to their networks.

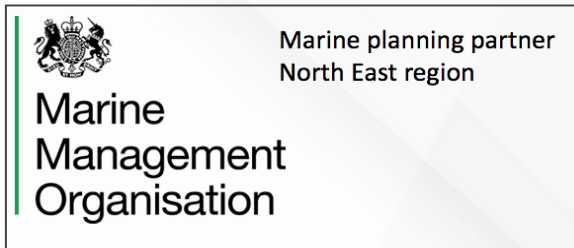
This is likely also to necessitate a greater regularity of communication beyond the current quarterly newsletters, as our research has shown that these communications generally get read on receipt and are rarely referred to thereafter.

- Visual recognition as an MMO marine planning partner: providing some visual recognition to advocates to use (as an effective affiliate partner within the planning process) would also help to encourage the value advocates bring to the process.

The stakeholder interviews identified the potential kudos which can come through being directly engaged with the MMO, representing a formal

recognition of their value and standing within the wider context of marine planning and sustainability.

Figure 7: A sample visual endorsement that could be made available to advocates to display in their own outbound communications



A review of potential communications toolkit components for consideration to help cultivate an active stakeholder partnership network should therefore look to include:

- **A curated set of MMO produced and trusted third-party articles**
This may include articles from non-MMO sources, selected for their relevance to the marine planning process and/or focused around specific or similar issues to those being sought to be addressed by the marine planning cycle and the implementation of the marine plans.

These can be provided as links to hosted content on the MMO website or made available in a wrapped pdf format for ease of onward sharing with a consultee stakeholder's own wider networks.

- **PDF assets relating specifically to the planning engagement and consultation process**
These would drive wider awareness of the mechanics and practicalities of the planning process and the benefits of engaging with it directly or indirectly.

For example, this could include 'best practice' recommendations and guidance for stakeholders who want to consult their wider networks prior to attending workshops. This would ensure a relevant cross-section of the partners' consultees are engaged with effectively.

Providing them in a PDF format will also make these assets highly portable and help to encourage wider sharing to build awareness amongst the stakeholder's own consultee networks.

- **Image and rich media assets**
Any assets, such as visually meaningful imagery (e.g. photographs of people and activity in workshops) and/or audio and video materials, will also greatly support and encourage partners to engage with their own wider stakeholder networks.

Image and rich-media content are also known to be highly shareable and generally shared more frequently than text-based content.

- **Visual partnership endorsement**

A badge or other graphic that stakeholders can use in their own communications to show they are endorsed by the MMO as a marine planning partner. This consideration draws directly on the previous recommendation and the perceived value in the sense of endorsement by providing a visual recognition of the partner's on-going and valued involvement in the marine planning process to stakeholders.

Case study - The River Thames Society

The River Thames Society (RTS) acts as a guardian for both river activities and those bordering the River Thames, with three stated core aims, namely:

- to protect the natural beauty of the river, adjacent lands and buildings of historical and architectural interest and to promote nature conservation
- to support and contribute to the efforts of other organisations
- to preserve and extend amenities and to encourage the use of the river for all purposes.

To date, the society has no reported direct engagement with the MMO regarding marine planning matters. However, it is very open to contact with the MMO to find out more about the marine planning process and its relevance to the society's core aims and activities.

The society currently has around 850 members, many of whom have wider connections to other professional bodies and practices, highlighting its value as an organisation through which the MMO can seek to widen its reach and awareness of the marine planning process.

The RTS is broken down into five bodies in total. Each society looks after a specific stretch of the river to ensure overall coverage from the river's 'source to the sea'.

The society is overseen by its chair, who also manages the Society's Tideway and Estuary branch. Its members include individuals as well as a wide diversity of clubs ranging from rowing clubs to corporate enterprise representatives.

The society has charitable status and gets involved in any matters relating to the river. It used to be heavily consulted by local authorities but has stepped back in recent years as it would need a full-time body of people to interact on all the requests which would otherwise now be coming through.

Instead, the society now tends to deal with local bodies, developers and planners around specific issues about which they come to the society for advice or have been made aware of in the local vicinity of the river. The society has been previously consulted on the Mayor of London Plan and the Blue River project for example.

It also produces a written quarterly publication (distributed to members, government, MPs, amongst others) and would gladly include any MMO related news and events in there to grow and build awareness, alongside discovering more about the MMO's planning activities and their potential relevance and benefits to the society.

Meanwhile, the society also hosts a website, however this is currently updated on a more ad-hoc basis: <http://www.riverthamessociety.org.uk/>

B4 Engage on a wider thematic and socio-cultural level

Research interviews also underlined the differing nature of interviewee's potential relationships with marine planning.

As well as economic and environmental concerns, the interviews highlighted the importance of socio-cultural considerations, which too, will have an impact on the future of the affected communities and their cultural heritage for generations to come.

These considerations are closely inter-related to other interest areas such as local economic practices and heritage conservation. However these also run more deeply into the heart of the communities and the shared sense of identity and maintenance of traditions which have largely grown out of and been sustained by continued marine and coastal access.

Preserving cultural practices and norms should therefore also be an opportunity and given more prominence in future communications aimed at building stakeholder reach.

Besides economic, recreational and environmental interests, cultural factors potentially have one of the most natural affinities with members of the general public and their local communities.

Drawing on a sense of involvement and creating a legacy for future generations to sustain and enjoy the coastal environment can act as a powerful trigger to engage local community members. It is therefore likely to represent a particularly effective and powerful messaging strategy for engaging a broad demographic range of stakeholders.

B5 Use online channels and media to drive and sustain longitudinal engagement, particularly during periods of sustained downtime

The challenges of initiating and sustaining longitudinal engagement throughout the marine planning processes were evident at both interview and online survey stages of research.

For example, many stakeholders spoke about the practical, time-challenges associated with both their initial and continued engagement.

"There's only so much I can do, as I manage the (marine zoo) site."

Similarly, the challenges of showing the continual progression and evolution of the engagement process with clients were highlighted in respondent feedback.

“It does feel that we are repeating the same things...recently it hasn't felt that many changes have been made to what we're being asked to comment on, despite these workshop discussions.”

Providing more opportunities to engage over a longer term, beyond the current workshops, would allow further discussion around how the issues identified at the workshops may be addressed and allow some of the outputs from the last meeting to be 'formalised'.

Stakeholders therefore also need to be given the opportunity to feed in their thoughts, perspectives and responses over an extended period of time around events, so those unable to attend feel they can still have an active role to play in helping to inform and shape the marine planning process.

Using online channels to create a more long term sense of interaction around the relatively punctuated engagement points in the planning process is therefore strongly recommended as a way to address this specific challenge.

Using online channels would therefore allow the MMO to both sustain, deepen and grow engagement, whilst also potentially bring in new/complementary parties into the processes outside of the current formal engagement points and locations.

Fundamentally, this centres on extending reach and awareness, both of which are core pre-requisites to driving future engagement.

B6 Stress the importance of receiving anecdotal evidence alongside empirical insight

Our interviews also attracted some interesting comments relating to stakeholder perceptions of what constituted valid inputs into the engagement process.

These appear to be acting as a deterrent to potential initial engagement or sustained engagement in the future from potentially valuable stakeholders.

For example, this was aptly summed up by the enduring perception of one conservation participant, who felt that the MMO is seeking, and setting a greater precedence on, facts and figures over more anecdotal evidence.

As a conservationist and educationalist this stakeholder, with a technical and ecological background, did not therefore feel subsequently qualified to speak out as loudly at engagement events as others.

This strongly implies that anecdotal thoughts and evidence are perceived to be somehow less relevant and lack the significance of evidence based on qualified views.

Whilst it may be the case that empirical measures are given the proper weighting in decision making, there is a value in listening to other evidence if this gives stakeholders a sense of their contribution being heard and valued.

We therefore strongly recommended that the stakeholder communication process clearly takes every opportunity to emphasize that all types of input into the engagement process are welcome, irrespective of whether they are currently backed by a body of data or empirical evidence to support them.

In some cases, the marine planning may also actually help to build a body of data insight out of more qualitative initial insight. In turn, this can be used to further evolve and support the plans in both the latter stages of the planning process and future implementation stages.

B7. Frame the value of engagement around clear benefits of participation and underpin this with a genuine sense of sincerity and credibility in the way these core benefits are articulated to stakeholders

Insights, from both the research interviews and online survey, highlighted the importance of the perceived relevance of the marine planning process to stakeholders' own interests and objectives. This is one of the primary drivers for stakeholders to engage, as well as disengage, with the process.

While it is therefore vitally important that any stated benefits which could be potentially realised as a result of a stakeholder's direct engagement in the planning process are clearly articulated, it is also equally important that these benefits are also perceived as being both plausible and credible amongst these potentially new stakeholder audience groups.

Conversely, the counter-effects of ill-perceived benefits can have significantly negative impacts on engagement, not just at an individual, but also at a wider local community level.

The effects of these negative impacts can be remarkably self-sustaining and create a longer term and potentially embedded culture of distrust. This situation is also likely to be further exacerbated through any social sharing and amplification of messages via word of mouth or other informal communication networks used by some stakeholder groups.

For example, one such instance cited by an interviewee in the East planning region related to a current on-going initiative to bring wind farm technology to the Lowestoft area. Promises of additional job creation for the local community were largely met with skepticism and indifference, as key opinion formers were quick to highlight that most of the development and maintenance work would need to be conducted elsewhere in the UK and Europe, as a result of contractual arrangements and expertise requirements.

Whilst a potentially powerful engagement trigger, any statement of economic benefits to the local community therefore has to be backed up by the requisite levels of evidence to show how related activities are likely to yield meaningful economic differences in the local community.

Two particularly effective engagement techniques which we regard to be of particular relevance and consideration to initiate and sustain stakeholder engagement in such a long-term process as marine planning have been summarised in Table 14.

Table 14: Different engagement mechanisms and their corresponding impacts on stakeholder attitudes and behaviours

Engagement mechanism	Attitudinal/Behavioural impacts
Testimonials -Written -Video	<p>Social proof</p> <p>This relates to the fact that people are more likely to associate with the views and opinions of those they perceive to be similar to themselves. This has become ever more potent in the context of a waning of deference to those in perceived positions of authority.</p> <p>Social proof has become increasingly synonymous with the 'people like me' phenomenon and can be found in a wide range of digital and non-digital contexts, notably social media networks, for example.</p>
Fear of missing out (FoMo)	<p>Loss-aversion</p> <p>Knowing that others are benefitting from taking a decision to participate in the process can be a powerful lever to stimulating interest and broadening stakeholder network reach in the process.</p> <p>This technique is commonly used in areas of perceived scarcity and used to particularly good effect in e-commerce situations where highlighting remaining stock levels can be used to stimulate a decision to buy.</p>

Using social proof, for example, by involving people with similar interests and outlooks to those current stakeholders being engaged with, has proven to be a particularly effective engagement mechanism across a wider diversity of initiatives affecting local communities.

B8. Make the marine planning process feel truly local by engaging both professional and specific interest groups at a local a geographic level as possible.

The stakeholder interviews also highlighted the importance of being able to engage both professional and specific interest groups at a truly granular and local geographic level.

Fundamentally this means visiting groups in their own settings and pre-existing meeting cycles to both gather support and interest in attending workshops. It also means using stakeholders' pre-existing meeting frameworks as a feedback mechanism for post-workshop follow-up and any accompanying evidencing activity relevant to the particular groups in question.

For example, securing a short time-slot (typically 10 to 15 minutes) at local meetings and forums would allow the MMO's regional marine planning representatives to attend meetings, feedback on upcoming events surrounding the marine planning process, as well as provide an opportunity to feedback on any post-engagement workshop and evidencing activities.

Importantly, this would also enable the MMO's regional marine planning representatives to gain a greater context of the workings of the individual groups and the key characters and protocols used by different stakeholder groups.

These engagements can therefore provide valuable, informal, insights which, in turn, can be used to inform effective future engagement activity with the relevant groups concerned as well as help to shape and inform the expansion of the stakeholder mapping analysis into the stakeholder value matrix.

B9. Make the marine planning process feel truly meaningful and personal

Whilst sharing some similar characteristics with the previous recommendation, our research interviews highlighted that the 'harder to reach' audiences place a greater store on planning as a 'means to an end', rather than it forming an end in itself, which builds towards longer term strategic goals.

This carries significant ramifications for the methods and messages used to extend engagement beyond core audience groups. Typically, this means looking to focus the message on specific issues, relevant to the region. It also means showing how they relate directly to important audiences and their interests within any given region and planning area.

In doing so, this message needs to vary in accordance with the needs of the sector and not a generic, 'one size fits all' approach. This will also help to convince stakeholders that the MMO has a real understanding of local matters and the issues and concerns faced by local coastal communities.

This needs to be supported by a high degree of clarity around what the scope of the marine plan is, namely what it is and, equally important, is not, set out to do.

To mitigate any dilution of messages over gaps in time between engagement activities, it is also vitally important that stakeholders are succinctly reminded at the opening phase of each engagement of the scope of the MMO's remit and the role of the marine planning process.

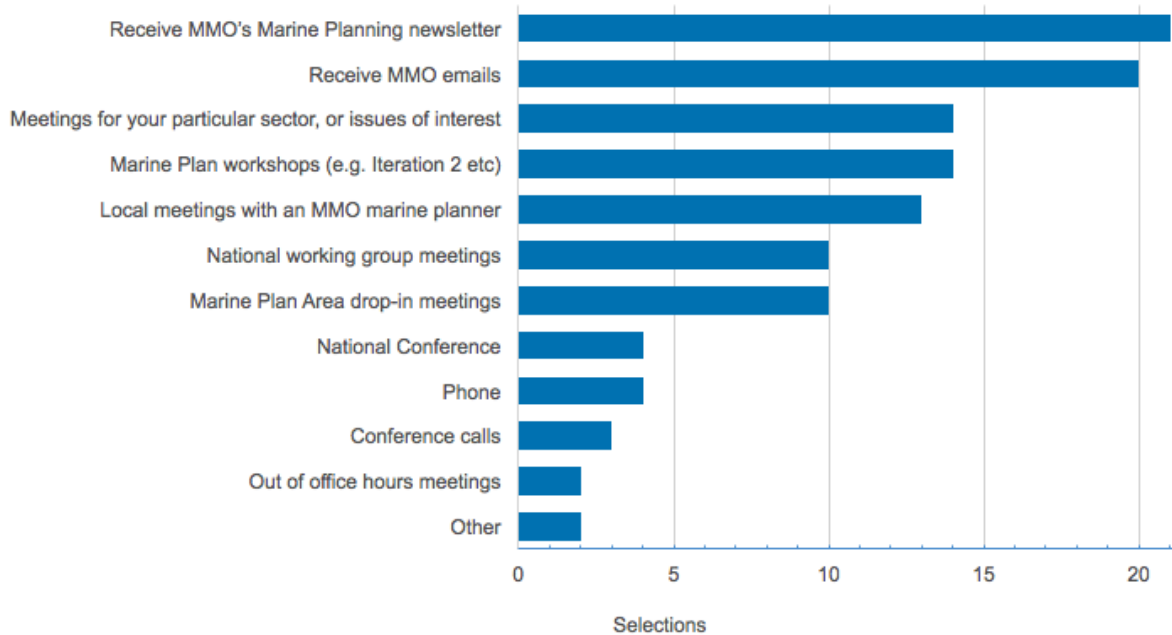
This will also bring additional benefits in helping to engage new stakeholders, irrespective of the current phase of the marine planning process.

Recommended activities to help support this, include:

- **Publishing digital/off-line materials (emails, leaflets) to address direct audiences and specific issues relating to them.**
These materials can therefore highlight where the marine planning process has a role to play in these specific and varying contexts

- **Help people make meaningful connections with marine plans.**
Interview insight also emphasised the need and potential to engage with interest groups traditionally one-step removed from marine planning, such as those focused on land-based planning activities. For example, the current Cumbria Heritage coast extension project is a prime example of how marine-based planning has a direct impact on inland coastal activities.
- **A mix of communication channels and formats are also recommended to help bring the process and the benefits of engaging with it to life.**
This should include a balanced mix of non-textual and potentially rich media (imagery, video content). Using rich media is also highly shareable in social media channels and would therefore assist the MMO in pushing out their messages of benefits of participation in the planning process even more widely.

Figure 8: Survey responses as to preferred channels of engagement for the future marine plan development



Whilst digital engagement, in the form of email (58.8%) and newsletters (61.8%) were equally mentioned by around six in 10 respondents, face-to-face engagements, run by either stakeholders or by the MMO as part of the marine planning process (workshops and working groups) all featured prominently, returned a range of responses (29.4% to 41.2%).

For reference, responses captured under the 'Other' category related to a meeting with MMO representative and direct contact, without any further information being provided.

Grouping engagement around cross-audience based themes such as fishing, protecting the natural environment, rather than sector specific themes, would encourage a wider diversity of stakeholders and balanced representation of views to be carried forward through the marine planning process.

B10. Build more direct public awareness through mainstream and local media channels

The interviews also highlighted issues regarding wider direct public awareness of the work the MMO undertake regarding marine planning matters.

These were aptly summed up in the following participant quotes:

“The MMO need to learn to be more outward facing.”

“People don't generally know who the MMO are. They're not just about regulations.”

Social media networks, notably Facebook, have been shown to be particularly effective engagement mechanisms with local and wider audiences with commonly shared interests regarding coastal environmental protection, both in terms of helping to grow reach and awareness, but also to sustain and deepen engagement with existing stakeholder audiences.

Mainstream and local press and media could also be used. Securing slots in appropriate media channels (TV, radio, mainstream and special interest press) would therefore help to spread the message wider, and act as a platform to help introduce the concept and value of marine planning to local communities, whilst providing an opportunity to explain how interested parties can get involved. For example, one participant named BBC Countryfile as being a particularly relevant potential influencer.

Building relationships with schools and local educational establishments would spread awareness of environmental and marine matters. This engagement method should also be viewed as part of an on-going wider education process, ultimately with the aim of being able to embed coastal/marine environmental management into the core curriculum as part of a wider and longer term strategic engagement activity.

B11. Widen existing perceptions of MMO beyond just those of an ‘enforcement’ agency

This is a perception largely held by those who have had previous contact with MMO as an enforcement and licensing agency and is therefore likely to be acting as a barrier to engagement in the marine plan process itself.

Identifying credible links which allow for the perception gap between enforcement and planning to be bridged would therefore create a potentially more direct route into driving wider stakeholder engagement with the marine planning process.

This is on the basis that the consultations and engagement during the development of the plans will have a direct bearing on their final policies and also on the implementation and enforcement activities associated with them.

Articulating the inter-relationships and encouraging potential stakeholders to take a long-term view, and the associated benefits of doing so, would therefore contribute

towards a greater positive perception of the MMO; one built on the favourable pillars of trust, openness, transparency and forward-thinking.

We therefore recommend that this should, in part, be achieved through a series of specific campaigns to redress existing enforcement perceptions using themes such as:

- The MMO are about much more than just enforcement.
- This is your chance to have a say in how we can work effectively together to ensure a sustainable future for our marine habitats and coastal communities.

Playing on a wider sense of social conscience and legacy for future generations should also be investigated. This, however, needs to be carefully managed and scripted to ensure messages come across with the appropriate levels of credibility and authenticity.

B12. Clarify the MMO's role with respect to other agencies

The difficulty of knowing where the respective responsibilities of the different bodies rests was raised by a broad cross-section of stakeholder types.

This lack of clarity on day-to-day matters will therefore be contributing to a wider sense of a lack of transparency in the individual roles and remits of different governmental bodies and agencies. In turn, this will naturally spill over into the MMO's marine planning process, by creating uncertainty in stakeholders' minds around their ability to make a difference, and therefore on the value of becoming engaged in the process.

"It would be good to find a correct route towards being able to address different matters and being able to arrange meetings with decision makers."

Core agencies and bodies cited by participants at interview stage included:

- The Environment Agency
- Defra
- The Port of London Authority
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- The Department of Transport.

We therefore recommend that explicit reference should form part of any communications regarding scope and remit of the MMO and the potential relationship between them and the marine planning process, to help alleviate any sense of doubt or uncertainty in stakeholders' minds.

A project manager for an AONB suggested that the MMO should combine with people such as the planning inspectorate, Defra, or local authorities "to agree a couple of examples and really demonstrate what's possible with planning, and ground that in reality, as far as possible."

He suggested that doing this will make people see the relevance and engage with the plans.

"People don't recognise the value of the marine plans at the moment because they aren't spatially explicit enough and aren't prescriptive enough to have an impact, given that they need to cover a 20 thousand kilometre square area. So, the way to address this issue is to consider a smaller area of interest. That might be an estuary, a protected area, whatever...with multiple authorities working in that area. If they can take the framework of the marine plan and interpret that for them [they could demonstrate the plan working]."

B13. Use language and descriptors appropriate to each audience type

The interviews and online survey both highlighted the challenges noted by less familiar stakeholders around the usage of 'technical' language and the impact it can have on their ability and willingness to engage in the marine planning process.

To address this challenge, we recommend using either one, or a combination of two fundamental approaches, as follows:

1. Segment communications by audience type

Using a segmented communications approach will allow stakeholders to receive an appropriate articulation of the message based on their level of understanding and familiarity with the marine planning process.

This will benefit both more experienced marine planning stakeholders and lessen the potential perception of being patronised through the 'dumbing down' of the core messages.

It will also give less experienced stakeholders a sense of learning and a heightened propensity to engage in the future, based on their positive feelings of learning and knowledge enrichment courtesy of the MMO and its communications approach.

Adopting this approach is obviously heavily reliant on having an appropriate level of insight into individual stakeholder roles and knowledge levels.

Where communications are to be provided to specific audience types, this approach is therefore strongly recommended.

2. Adopt a tiered communications approach

Using a tiered communications approach allows a single point of message to be addressed at all stakeholder groups, without burdening experienced marine planning stakeholders at the expense of less experienced stakeholders and vice-versa.

This can be achieved in a number of different ways, such as by:

- including references and brief descriptions at appropriate points within the communication. This is commonly referred to as 'delivery at context of need'

- using a glossary, so that less familiar stakeholders can refer to a secondary listing of terms and definitions
- adopting a more structured content-based approach specifically when addressing multi-audience stakeholder groups, and groups where relatively little is known regarding their levels of technical knowledge and expertise
- using text highlighting to denote an accessible summary form of the article to allow time-poor or less technically-minded users to get a sense of the subject matter area.

Our recommendation would therefore be to initially adopt a combination of the first and last approaches and to test various articulations of these with a representative cross-section of experienced and less familiar stakeholder audience types.

Structuring content in this way, with appropriate headers and sub-headers to signpost familiarity and expertise levels, would therefore allow stakeholders to quickly and appropriately scan communications, orientate themselves with the sections of content relevant to their level of knowledge or expertise, and skip those that do not apply. By saving time this will benefit the reader and increase the likelihood of messages being read.

A chief executive at a port commission told us how much she appreciated the structured information she received in an email called the 'Government UK Weekly Digest Bulletin'. This bulletin notifies her of any changes in legislation for anything relevant to the port industry.

"I get an email every week. It's a list of headings that mean something [and two rows of text beneath each] ... In two seconds I can run down the headings in that email and see anything that might apply to me, and the link takes me to where the information is. It's absolutely fantastic. Now why can't the MMO do something like that in relation to marine planning?"

4.3 Sustaining and deepening engagement

Whereas the previous recommendations focused primarily around broadening stakeholder reach, the recommendations which follow revolve around activities which have the primary aim of deepening and sustaining existing stakeholder relationships.

As previously mentioned, these recommendations are prefixed with the letters 'SD' for ease of reference.

Before detailing these recommendations, we want to set out three examples of stakeholder engagement from other organisations. These examples clearly help to illustrate some of the recommendations we have set out in this report.

Best practice example – Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan

During the course of the stakeholder interviews, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan was identified as an interesting example of stakeholder engagement.

“They broke [the process] into chunks and made you feel engaged and you're being listened to.”

The National Park’s planning team were reported as engaging stakeholders early, in small groups, and then breaking the planning process into manageable chunks.

This made it transparent at all times what stakeholders were being asked to do, in an understandable context, “rather than being asked to comment on a massive, 500-page draft of plan.”

The planning team also made it clear from the outset as to who they would be consulting with, what their ambitions and objectives were and how they planned to use the consultations to inform the process going forward.

The planning team initially engaged with stakeholders in isolation, breaking consultations down to focus around specific aspects of the plan, before bringing all stakeholders together and then breaking them further down into specific interest groups based on participant questionnaire feedback.

As an example of simple initial engagement, the planning team’s first email questionnaire had just three questions, namely:

- What do you love about the Yorkshire Dales National Park?
- How could the Park be improved?
- What are the three most important issues for us to address from your perspective?

Best practice example – West Cumbria Mining Consultation

West Cumbria Mining’s (WCM’s) consultation process was also heavily praised for its transparency and clarity by a conservation stakeholder in the North West marine plan region.

WCM currently use a planning portal which allows stakeholders to see everyone's responses to the consultation process. This includes showing the date on which responses were given as well as providing details of responses and supporting rationale for them from the mining committee itself.

The planning portal also goes on to break down information by respondent type, such as by an individual, organisation, or charity. (Note: Nomensa therefore assume that some form of opt-in had previously been granted by respondents to make potential personal identifier information available to fellow consultees, but we were unable to confirm this at interview stage.)

Meanwhile, date-range search functionality allowed consultees to time-slice the data. This was regarded as being particularly valuable as it enabled stakeholders to see if there had been any updates since their previous visit, making it easy for them to stay abreast of the latest developments in the consultation process.

Conversely, the same North West region stakeholder highlighted the comparative difficulties they had experienced with the current MMO consultation process and, in particular, locating if and where their specific responses and those of their own consultees had been captured.

“It’s impossible to search through, so I just gave up.”

They also expressed a concern around the lack of clarity as to how responses have been categorised, grouped or articulated. This creates a heavy burden on their time and is further exacerbated by the fact that the planning response spreadsheet generally takes a long-time to open for them.

Best practice example – The Environment Agency

The Environment Agency (EA) were also highlighted as an organisation considered to be effective in their implementation and facilitation of stakeholder engagement activity.

A particular strength highlighted during the interviews related to their ability of bringing together a range of particular interest groups around specific themes, such as offshore renewables, or aggregates extraction, all within a workshop setting.

In turn, this allowed for a balanced discussion around opportunities and blockers within each of the regional areas to be conducted at each workshop.

The EA’s efforts to avoid jargon, wherever possible, and make things accessible to a wide diversity of audiences with differing levels of knowledge and understanding, was also praised. Similarly, the quality of follow-up activities was raised as a particular strength in their on-going engagement and communications with consultee stakeholders. This included the provision of follow-ups to all workshop attendees with presentations, providing clear details as to outputs, actions and next steps.

The EA were also cited as often making available a wider list of attendees from each of their consultation events, subject to having received appropriate prior consent.

In the case of one interviewee, this led directly to two further project engagement opportunities relating to marine planning and conservation, which they are consequently working on as a result of sharing this opted-in list of consultees.

SD1. Highlight the risks of non-engagement whilst ensuring an appropriate balancing of perceived risks versus benefits in planning process engagement

In the spirit of open communication, it is vitally important to promote a balanced view of potential engagement triggers for stakeholders to both become and remain involved in the marine planning process.

For example, certain sectors, notably, those involved with commerce and heavy industry, struggled to see any real positive benefits for the wider business and commercial community. This situation is compounded by the considerable pull exerted by existing business commitments, which have to be prioritised ahead of any potential marine planning points of engagement.

These interviewees felt that their involvement would be triggered by the need to manage their own constraints and protect their commercial interests.

Triggers to engage would therefore essentially revolve around ensuring awareness of initiatives/activities and being able to take appropriate potential action or provide an appropriate response should any marine planning outputs show the potential to adversely affect future business interests or activities.

For these reasons, there is a high likelihood that any economic benefits of marine planning will feel rather tenuous to them, whilst a greater upside is considered to reside with the conservation sector.

Providing a balanced view of the marine planning process, all-be-it one which may appear more disproportionately driven towards a particular set of audience groups, is therefore vitally important to secure future engagement.

SD2. Use existing workshops as an opportunity to gather direct ‘in the moment’ feedback

Holding a brief, 10 to 15-minute feedback session with a representative cross-section of workshop attendees (e.g. eight to 10 maximum) to review pre-workshop expectations, workshop structure and facilitation would provide an effective way to engage stakeholders directly in identifying any future improvement opportunities surrounding the workshop-based consultation process.

A feedback form could also be used to identify appropriate wider stakeholder groups to engage with, and take advantage of, the ‘in the moment’ opportunities to capture direct workshop attendee feedback which would be otherwise lost in the post-workshop business-as-usual contexts.

The MMO’s recent practice of using feedback form data to re-validate “knowledge” and “support” scores should be continued to update the expanded stakeholder value matrices, in particular regarding reach potential and value scoring associated with this metric element.

SD3. Consider running parallel bespoke workshops with stakeholders engaged in particularly technical or complex areas of activity

The interviews and the online survey also highlighted the value of providing opportunities to conduct more bespoke consultations, which feel less ‘government’ or ‘public sector’ in their focus.

Interviewees working with a relatively high degree of contact with marine planning related matters particularly felt that the current 'one size fits all' consultation approach is likely acting as a potent deterrent, thereby discouraging business leaders from actively participating in the marine planning process.

Holding more bespoke consultation workshops, should the opportunity arise, would therefore allow for more targeted discussions around specific sector related issues to take place.

Based on our interview insights, we would also recommend that these are run alongside the wider generic workshops to provide a parallel approach to gaining stakeholder input, as generic workshops are widely appreciated as an opportunity to also engage on a wider, less technical level. The MMO trialed opportunities for more targeted technical input to the "cause and effect" stage of marine planning in the NW/NE/SW/SE in mid-2017 through smaller group engagement. However, this was not in parallel with a more generic engagement with a less technical focus.

To achieve the appropriate levels of stakeholder input and engagement any parallel consultation processes would also need to be sensitive to seasonality issues and timing impacts.

For example, stakeholders working in fisheries management and sustainability would welcome additional opportunities to engage in the wider consultation process to talk specifically about the integration of fisheries management plans into the MMO planning processes.

"Fisheries are so specific... fisheries need their own section in the plan."

For these stakeholders, engagements would work best from early in the new year through to early spring, as late spring and early summer months are spent on field research, surveys, as well as running commercial fishing fleets to take advantage of more favourable weather conditions.

SD4. Give stakeholders clear expectations of what is/will be required from them at each stage of the consultation process to maximise perceived benefits of engagement

With those more familiar with planning-orientated contexts, the more evolutionary approach associated with the marine planning process was initially questioned by some stakeholders already working in these areas.

For example, one experienced, senior strategic planner shared their initial perceptions of the marine plans (in this case the North East region) as being 'lacking in substance' and 'gappy'.

However, attending an initial consultation workshop helped to bring the evolving nature of the plans to light and with it the benefits of being able to help input and as a result influence the process from the earliest possible stages of consultation.

We would therefore strongly recommend that the formative nature of the plans at the time they are made available for referral and consultation is clearly articulated to all stakeholder groups in all outward facing communications relating to the marine planning process.

This will help to create and accentuate a positive perception of the overall planning process to be one of open collaboration and on-going consultation.

Conversely, the absence of any clear explanations as to the benefits of this formative approach will heighten the risk of both non-initial engagement and/or the sustaining of further engagement amongst potentially valuable stakeholder groups.

It may also help to support the sustainability of the relationship as external stakeholders may move between different organisations in the course of the planning process.

Clarity of engagement will therefore create the potential for continuity of engagement with these stakeholders as they move to relevant organisations, and potentially those who have not previously been engaged in the marine planning process.

In a related, but separate, instance, certain interviewees expected a more formal two-way exchange of information through the consultation workshops, therefore implying a misalignment of expectations as to the nature of the workshops and any preparation which may be required, or not.

Setting clear expectations in any outward communications relating to the consultation workshops around preparation, and types of activities stakeholders can engage with to get the most from the workshops, is therefore strongly recommended.

As insights from the online survey underline, around nine in 10 stakeholders actively consult with their own stakeholder groups ahead of any formal marine planning consultation with the MMO currently.

SD5. Provide improved access to information

This recommendation has been broken down into two specific, but closely inter-related, sub-recommendations (SD5.1 and SD5.2), as follows.

SD5.1 Give stakeholders the ability to easily check that their thoughts and concerns have been taken into account through the consultation process

The stakeholder interviews highlighted the importance of providing consultation workshop related outputs and evidence in an as openly transparent and accessible way as possible.

Whilst the MMO were praised for making this information available via the portal website, a common theme emerged regarding the inability of stakeholders to readily locate and access information relevant to their particular interest or specific areas of concern.

To encourage on-going, longitudinal engagement through the provision of easy access to topics and materials relevant to specific audience needs, it is strongly recommended that stakeholders are able to search according to a set of defined search criteria.

A list of summary search criteria, identified during the research, as being of the greatest value is outlined below:

- Sector/area of activity - e.g. Fisheries, Conservation
- Date - e.g. when initially raised and any dates of subsequent iterations thereafter
- Raised by – who the issue was raised by
- Location – e.g. workshop, location or via remote consultation and corresponding region(s)
- Response – from the MMO and any information regarding next steps (e.g. ‘To be discussed further at next workshop for South East region’).

Providing such search capabilities would also help to address the issue raised by some interviewees around challenges in trying to understand how responses may have been categorised, grouped or articulated.

This will also allow stakeholders who may be less familiar with the consultation process, or one step removed from the process, to be able to engage with the information and provide appropriate input remotely into the planning process.

This recommendation also addresses a potential barrier to future longitudinal stakeholder engagement in the planning process based on a lack of clear line of sight between stakeholder’s consultation process activity and the explicit return on their time investment for it.

For many stakeholders, particularly those who are time-poor, or those who may require prior clearance from senior managers to attend, the ability to show a clear return on their investment of time in the process is vitally important.

Indeed, this was highlighted as a potential barrier by some to their continued engagement within the process, therefore having detrimental consequences on the outcomes of the planning process and the levels of open collaboration throughout it.

Ensuring transparency of inputs into the consultation process (including any explicit references to issues and inputs raised by particular sectors or organisations) will be of significant value.

This will help to foster a culture of open-collaboration and reciprocation of information and insight exchange required to sustain the planning process throughout its lifecycle.

From a context of transparency this recommendation is therefore very closely related to that made around the making accessible all pertinent workshop consultation inputs (see SD2 for further details on this specific recommendation).

SD5.2 Show reasons for any non-explicit inclusion of consultation insights in any post-consultation communication and documented outputs

This recommendation sits closely alongside the recommendations already highlighted regarding the need for transparency and accessibility of information and inputs arising from the consultation process in SD 5.1.

The absence of this information in post-workshop consultation notes and evidence was therefore called into question by some participants who were unclear as to the reasons for non-inclusion.

This prompted these stakeholders to question their input and roles in the wider consultation and the value of any sustained further engagement may bring for both them and the organisations whose interest they were representing.

We therefore recommend that all insights (where appropriate) are duly noted in any post follow-up consultation outputs made available through MMO's planning portals and all relevant outward facing communications activities relating to the marine planning process.

These should include:

- Issue name and brief description, including a unique identification number to facilitate future referencing
- Reasons for non-inclusion, which should also clearly state whether the issue has been excluded outright or has been subsumed into another, similar-related activity or issue.

The incorporation of 'reasons for non-inclusion' will therefore connect very strongly with the principles of transparency, accessibility and openness highlighted by many stakeholders as being underlying prerequisites to their continued engagement and commitment to the planning process.

It will also help stakeholders directly engaged in the planning process to manage the expectations of their own wider stakeholder group more effectively, thereby helping to preserve their standing and integrity in the wider context of their own stakeholder engagement activity.

SD6. Ensure continuity of contact with existing stakeholders following changes to MMO representation

This final recommendation relates to ensuring the sustainability of personal inter-relationships between regional representatives of the MMO whilst highlighting their importance in sustaining interest and involvement in the planning process.

This assumes even greater applicability in the case of the MMO's marine planning process given its protracted nature and the fact that any area may undergo at least one rotation of representatives within any given region over the course of the plan's

lifecycle. Changes of staff at regional level mean that external stakeholders will typically have to start rebuilding their relationship from scratch.

For example, one stakeholder referred to change in their planning region and the fact that they had yet to meet the MMO replacements whilst inferring the negative impact this may ultimately have on sustaining a productive working relationships and future engagement in the marine planning process.

We therefore strongly recommend that, if not already, appropriate continuity plans are put in place with key stakeholder groups within any given planning region.

This will help to ensure an as unbroken as possible thread of engagement between the MMO's regional representatives and the key external stakeholder groups, ensuring sustainability of engagement through the planning process.

These research insights also stress the importance of making any engagement with the marine planning process feel inherently personal and less like an engagement with a large impersonal governmental-type agency.

4.4 Define aims, objectives, KPIs and metrics

Identifying potentially appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) against which to measure the future effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, were also highlighted as a desired secondary objective of this overall project initiative.

This short section therefore focuses on the identification of an appropriate set of KPIs which could be used to help evaluate the effectiveness of future stakeholder engagement.

4.4.1 Key Performance Indicators

KPIs translate objectives into measurable insights from which a set of metrics can be generated. These typically take the form of either breadth or depth-based KPIs.

Based on, and informed by, our qualitative and quantitative research we have identified the following set of recommended KPIs.

Settling on a set of up to five to seven KPIs is recommended. This allows for valuable and manageable set of performance indicators to be realised.

1. Breadth KPIs

Breadth measures focus on audience reach, namely the ability to distribute information effectively via both formalised (e.g. marketing communications and formal training processes) as well as more informal routes such as social sharing.

Whilst breadth and depth KPIs are essentially separate types of measure they will naturally inter-relate as the propensity to social share will be influenced by the level of engagement or depth a stakeholder feels as a result of the training they receive.

2. Depth KPIs

Meanwhile, depth measures concentrate on the level of perceived engagement that a stakeholder experiences from their involvement.

This is often related to the quality of the engagement received and how far it meets a stakeholders' expectations or pre-conceptions.

Quantifying depth measures can be particularly challenging, as these are essentially qualitative judgements on a stakeholder's part and are both emotionally and well as rationally informed. However, Nomensa have recommended a KPI that can help support this.

4.4.2 Potential KPI measures

Metrics are the final layer of the model. They define the specific measures used to benchmark the defined KPIs against. For ease of reference these are best displayed alongside their respective KPIs as shown in the following summary table.

Metric quantifications are currently for illustration purposes and will need to be determined prior to commencing the long-term evaluation.

All metrics should be conducted at both a regional (e.g. South East, North East, etc) and at an 'All regions' or National level. This will allow for potential regional variations to be tracked and noted accordingly.

Table 15: Key Performance Indicators

KPI type	KPI	Brief description
Breadth	Direct stakeholders engaged with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face • Online 	Number of stakeholders inputting into the planning process directly as a result of the consultation and evidencing process. This can either be treated as an aggregated score incorporating face-to-face and online/remote engagement as a single KPI figure, or by breaking these down into their two constituent parts.
Breadth	Indirect stakeholders reached	Number of stakeholders reached through the consultation efforts of direct stakeholders, as encouraged by the MMO and the marine planning process. This will provide a comparatively looser, but also a truer, representation of stakeholders consulted within the planning process.
Breadth	Opportunities to engage	Number of events run within a given region over a set period of time. This may include a geographic location element, incorporating travel-to time ranges.

KPI type	KPI	Brief description
Depth	Repeated engagement	Number of times an individual has participated in various consultation rounds e.g. Iteration 1 and 2 would count as one repeated engagement.
Depth	Net Promoter Score (NPS)	<p>For example, an average score of 8/10 or higher as measured via an online survey, would indicate high engagement or potential advocacy.</p> <p>This simple rating can be used as a proxy of the perceived value stakeholders have derived from participating in the consultation process. Again, this can be broken down further into engagement type e.g. face-to-face, remote, or a mix of both.</p>

4.5 Guiding principles

Guided by research insight and analysis we have consequently identified a series of seven overarching guiding principles.

Each principle has been pre-fixed with the letter 'P' for ease of future reference.

These principles are designed to serve as a constant checkpoint against which any future stakeholder engagement activity can be referenced and assessed, prior to and/or after its implementation.

Each guiding principle is accompanied by a number of short questions, or evaluation heuristics, for future reference.

P1. Creating a two-way sense of dialogue

- Does the proposed activity easily allow stakeholders to give feedback and input, either before, during, after or throughout the planning process?
- What mechanisms are in place to provide timely responses back to stakeholders based on their insights and inputs?
- How can these be improved or built upon?
- How will stakeholder questions be handled, including those which may come from outside of the formal marine planning process?

P2. Informing timely action

- Irrespective of the communication channel used, does stakeholder interaction provide stakeholders with a meaningful response time to help inform their next steps?
- What speed of response is likely to be required to allow a stakeholder or different stakeholder groups to be able to take informed action?

P3. Demonstrate balance, integrity and objectivity

- Have all stakeholder views and opinions been accounted for?
- Have all stakeholder views and opinions been given appropriate credence in the eyes of the stakeholders affected?

P4. Delivering transparency and accessibility

- How have reasons for non-explicit inclusion of consultation insights been accounted for in the process?
- Has any technical terminology been used which may be unfamiliar to certain stakeholders? (If unavoidable, ensure that an appropriate lay-description is provided.)
- Has information been provided in an appropriate format to allow all audience groups to access it?

P5. Giving due recognition

- Have all stakeholders been given due recognition for their time and efforts given over to the marine planning process?
- How will stakeholder efforts be recognised throughout the planning process?
- Are there additional channels or touchpoints which could be used to reinforce a sense of recognition in stakeholders' eyes of the value of their participation in the planning process?

P6. Engendering a sense of equality and inclusivity

- Have all stakeholder groups' thoughts and opinions been given equal consideration and credence in the process?
- Has an appropriate balance of consultation insights been given to potentially diametrically opposed points of view?
- Have consultation insights and responses been captured and given in a way which cannot be construed to suggest any form of inherent bias?

P7. Giving clear explanation of how this activity fits into the planning cycle

- At each point of contact, communication or event, has it been made clear what the overall marine planning process is, what stage this is and what the expected outcomes are to stakeholders?

This analogous to giving clear 'navigation' aims to help stakeholders stay engaged. This will help those who are short of time, or engage only infrequently.

4.6 Conclusions and next steps

4.6.1 Recommended next steps for the MMO

Based on the insights, analysis and recommendations captured and evidenced through our research activity Nomensa recommend that the MMO adopt a structured approach towards its review and implementation of the recommendations contained in this report.

Once reviewed, assessed and prioritised these recommendations should be used to inform, or act as inputs to, any future or any existing stakeholder engagement plans or roadmaps.

These roadmaps should incorporate a range of both short-term as well as longer term and continuously evolving stakeholder engagement activities, such as the expansion of the MMO's stakeholder mapping analysis into a stakeholder value matrix and the continual updating and refinement of it throughout the marine planning process.

Where higher risks may be perceived to be associated with certain recommendations over others, we recommend that a 'test, learn, iterate' approach should be adopted.

This will allow for certain approaches to be tested in a relatively controlled environment and with a given representative cross-section of user audiences. This will also allow for appropriate success factors or potential areas of improvement to be clearly isolated and refined appropriately, before potentially rolling them out to a wider stakeholder audience base.

Using the principles and metrics covered in this concluding section of the report will also help give the MMO a meaningful framework of reference upon which to judge, gauge and measure their future stakeholder engagement activity as well as potentially benchmarking it against their historic activities undertaken to date.

In doing so, this will allow for incremental improvements and their impact to be identified, whilst helping to more readily evidence the extent of the impact such activities may have had on both broadening and deepening stakeholder engagement in the overall marine planning process.

Before bringing this report to a formal conclusion, Nomensa would like to touch on two final areas.

These are:

- responses to the MMO's requested own stakeholder feedback engagement questions, as presented in the online survey
- Nomensa's requested thoughts on the usage of incentives as a way of driving future online survey research engagement activity.

4.6.2 MMO stakeholder mapping analysis survey feedback

Three questions were added to the final iteration of the online survey at the request of the MMO.

The relevance of marine plans to you and/or your work
Your current knowledge of marine planning
Your level of support for marine planning

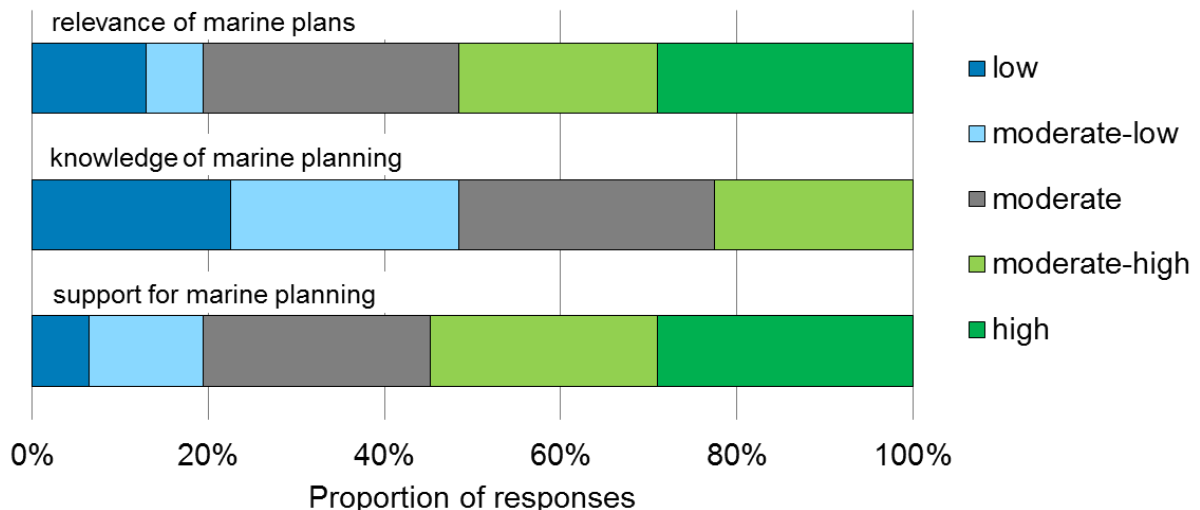
Responses to these questions are intended to be used by the MMO to contribute to their stakeholder mapping analysis which helps inform future support and advocacy for the marine planning process amongst their existing stakeholder audiences.

The questions looked to ascertain respondents thoughts with regards to three core areas, namely:

- **relevance** of marine planning to stakeholders and their areas of responsibility
- current levels of **knowledge** regarding the marine planning process
- current levels of **support** for the marine planning process.

In total, 31 responses were received to each of these questions. Each of these was rated on a 1-5 scale with 1 being low and 5 being high.

Figure 9: Stakeholder perceptions of plan relevance and knowledge and support of marine planning



Over half the respondents (51.6%) considered marine planning to be of direct relevance to them and/or the work (paid, voluntary or both) they undertake for their organisation (a rating of 4 or 5).

Meanwhile, almost half (48.4%) considered their knowledge of marine planning to be low or basic currently (a rating of 1 or 2), highlighting further opportunities for the MMO therefore to raise awareness and help raise knowledge levels.

This should, logically, in turn, help strengthen and sustain engagement in the planning process moving forward.

Finally, only 19.4% expressed a low/relatively low level (a rating of 1 or 2) of support for marine planning in general.

This should be interpreted as a highly encouraging result and an extremely positive backdrop, which efforts to build and sustain engagement should be actioned and evaluated against in the future.

4.6.3 Nomensa's thoughts regarding future survey incentivisation

Finally, it is worth noting that the online survey was not incentivised at the request of MMO. At the request of the MMO, Nomensa were asked to comment on the usage of incentives to drive future response rates.

Nomensa's view is that an appropriate form of incentivisation should be considered when conducted in the future, however this needs to be carefully considered to ensure it equates reasonably to the level of commitment and insight being sought from respondents.

Incentives for consideration should also encompass a potential range of incentive types, these may be broadly broken down into one of three categories:

- financial, such as monetary incentives or monetary substitutes, such as charitable donations or retail/experience vouchers
- physical gifts, such as merchandise or equipment
- non-financial, such as guidance, expert advice, training and education.

In terms of appropriate types of incentive for future consideration by the MMO, Nomensa recommends that a mix of financial and guidance-based incentivisation be given consideration. Using guidance-based incentives would be particularly interesting route to pursue.

Not least, this approach would provide the MMO with a valuable opportunity to both deepen and broaden stakeholder reach as a result of the guidance process, whilst also yielding valuable benefits in helping to create a more informed and engaged set of stakeholders as a result.

Annex 1: Telephone interviewee numbers by sector and region

Region	Stakeholder sectors represented
East (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public (1) • Conservation (1)
North East (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IFCA (1) • Fishing (1) • Conservation (2) • Business (1) • Planning Authority (3)
North West (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Authority (3) • Business (1) • Fishing (1) • Ports and shipping (1) • Conservation (2) • Tourism (1)
South (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public (1) • Business (1) • Recreation (2) • Conservation (4)
South East (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation (2) • Fishing (1) • Planning Authority (1)
South West (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public (1) • Planning Authority (1) • Ports and shipping (2) • IFCA (1) • Conservation (2) • Research (1)

Annex 2: Interview discussion plan

Research Overview

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has asked Nomensa to undertake an analysis of motivations, drivers and barriers to engaging in marine planning of a representative sample of external stakeholders in marine planning. This activity is an integral part of a larger 'Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement' project. Our research will focus on capturing awareness, understanding, experience and views of past communications and engagement in marine planning, as well as investigating stakeholders' motivations and drivers for them wanting to engage in marine planning. In order to achieve this, we will be conducting 48 interviews with selected stakeholders across England, by phone or in person, over a two week period between the 4th and 15th December 2017.

Objectives

The objectives for our research will be to:

- Provide insights into drivers, motivations and barriers why stakeholders are engaging or not engaging in the MMO planning cycle;
- Provide recommendations on how to enhance engagement with current stakeholders;
- Identify opportunities to increase the stakeholder spread, both in numbers as well as geographically by focusing on 'hard to reach' groups;

Any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or metrics which may be deemed appropriate to measure future levels of engagement based on our research insights will also be highlighted at final report stage.

Nomensa's Approach

Reviewing a discussion plan

A discussion plan serves as a guide to user interview sessions. Questions will be adapted to the individual needs of the session. The moderator will adapt the sessions depending on the amount of time available, and may prioritise some topics in order to focus the needs of the session's core objectives. Questions may appear indirect. This allows the moderator to approach the objectives from different angles.

Interview Session Guide

The following section is an overview of how each session will be run. It includes examples of how the session will be introduced, key questions, tasks and areas to explore with each participant.

Welcome and session context

- Introduce yourself and Nomensa;
- Explain that today we will be discussing their role and what awareness and engagement they might currently have with MMO;
- Emphasise that there are no correct answers, only individual experiences, thoughts and opinions;

- Explain that the interview will be recorded and obtain permission;
- Ask the participant if they have any questions before the session proper starts.

Introductory script

Nomensa are an independent research company. We are conducting research on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)'s Marine Planning team. The purpose of our research is to understand more about your experience with the Marine Management Organisation work they do. We will focus on marine planning in particular.

The MMO will then use the findings of our research to improve their effective engagement with stakeholders like yourselves. The session will last around one hour, and you are free to take a break or stop the session at any time. Your information will be kept confidential and only be used for service evaluation and improvement purposes. When we share our results, your name and personal details will not be used. We would like to audio record the session with your permission. *[Moderator to agree recording with participant]* If you are happy to proceed, I would like to ask you to read a copy of our Data Protection Statement and also read and complete the Consent Form. *[Moderator to provide documents to participant]*. Do you have any questions for me before we begin? *[Moderator to start recording device and begin interview]*

Introductory Questions (10 minutes)

I'd like to start with a few questions about you and your role:

1. Firstly, can you tell me about your role and the organisation you work for?
 - i. Who do you work for?
 - i. What is the approximate size of your organisation?
 - ii. What do they do?
 - ii. What does your role involve?
 - i. What are your key responsibilities?
 - ii. Are you involved in planning, and even marine planning, for your organisation? If so, how?
 - iii. What does a typical day look like?
 - i. What are the key challenges you face in your role?
 - ii. What are your most valuable resources, you typically refer to help you in your work? For example, these may be people, processes or materials such as documents or digital resources.
 - iii. What are your views, good and bad, of these reference sources? *[Prompt into what makes them good or bad from the participant's perspective. Capture thoughts on how they could be improved, where appropriate.]*
 - iv. What other bodies or organisations do you engage or work with in your work?
 - i. Who are they and what do they do?
 - ii. How often and when do you have contact with them?
 - iii. How do you interact with them? (e.g. email, phone, face-to-face etc).

- iv. Are any of these government bodies or agencies?
- v. Are any of them involved with marine planning?
[Note the participant's reaction to the concept of 'marine planning' to see if this is intuitively understood. Pay close attention to the natural language they use to describe it and note the language used too.]

Part 1: MMO engagement questions (10 minutes)

I'd now like to ask you about the Marine Management Organisation specifically.

- 2. How familiar are you with the MMO and what they do?
 - i. What do you know about them?
 - ii. How does/do you think their work relates to you and the organisation you work for?
 - iii. Do you know anything else about them?
 - iv. What contact, have you had with the MMO to date? For example:
 - i. Do you receive emails or other communications from MMO?
 - ii. How often do you receive these?
 - iii. How relevant are they to you?
 - v. Have you been actively engaged with the MMO to date?
 - i. What form did your interaction(s) take?
 - ii. Approximately when was this (and where if face-to-face)?
 - iii. What happened as a result of this/these engagement(s)?
 - vi. Have you ever referred to one of the MMO's digital services, such as their website or Marine Information System? If yes:
 - i. What were your reasons for using them?
 - ii. What did you think of them?

Part 2: Awareness and engagement in marine planning cycle (25 minutes)

I would now like to talk to you more specifically about your engagement with the MMO's marine planning activity.

- 3. How familiar are you with the MMO's marine planning work? For example:
 - i. Do you know anything about their current marine planning activity?
 - ii. Are you aware of Marine plans?
 - iii. At what point or points in the marine planning process would you expect to engage with them?
 - i. What are your reasons for saying this?
 - iv. How do you engage (or, if not, would you like to engage in the future) with them? For example:
 - i. Face-to-face at a large event in your area with many stakeholders?
 - ii. Face-to-face at a small focus group in your area?
 - iii. Phone?
 - iv. Online (e.g. by email or via survey etc.)?
[Prompt; If face-to-face how far would you be prepared to travel to attend the event and why?]
 - v. What would you expect to happen after this/these engagement(s)?
[Prompt: If they have already engaged, get them to give their thoughts on their experience of this and the ramifications of this. See if they have

any thoughts on how this could be improved in the future too.]

4. I want to ask about your engagement in the MMO's marine planning process.
 - i. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10's high and 1's low, how important is it to you that you're actively engaged in the MMO's marine planning process? What are your reasons for saying this?
 - ii. What are the challenges you face/would anticipate facing when engaging with the MMO and their marine planning activities? *[Prompt: these may include technical, physical barriers, government trust or time issues etc.]*
 - iii. How familiar are you with the MMO's marine planning activities and how they go about them? For example:
 - iv. What do you know about the Marine plans?
Namely, are participants aware of:
 - i. The regional breakdowns (i.e. marine plan areas) and which marine plan area they fall into?
 - ii. The regional variations in marine planning and what form these variations might take?
 - iii. How advanced the Marine plan is for their region?
 - iv. The range of differing areas of concern the plans cover and which issues are likely to be relevant to them?
 - v. The marine planning cycles and how they work?
 - v. Have you had any previous feedback or communication with the MMO regarding the marine planning process?
 - i. What would make engaging with the MMO planning cycle more meaningful for you or your organisation?
 - ii. What are the biggest challenges you have (or would expect to have) if looking to get involved in the future?
 - iii. How do you think these challenges could be addressed?
 - iv. What might encourage you to recommend engaging with the MMO to other people or relevant organisations you work with? *[Prompt: see if they have already recommended the MMO to peers, colleagues or other organisations and, if so, under what circumstances.]*

Part 3: Future engagement (10 minutes)

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about your possible future engagement with the MMO.

5. Firstly, do you intend to have any future contact with the MMO and their marine planning process?
 - i. What are your reasons for saying this?
 - ii. What form would you like this to take? (e.g. channels)
 - i. What are/would be your preferred channels/methods for receiving communications from the MMO?
 - ii. Conversely, what are/would be your preferred channels/methods for contacting the MMO and giving your views to them?

Summary and Close (5 Minutes)

“Thank you for your time today. We really appreciate you taking the time to talk to us. I just have a few summary questions to finish our discussion.”

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us in relation to what we've discussed today?
7. Finally, would you be interested in taking part in further research relating to the MMO and Marine planning?
 - i. If yes, do you have any preferences for how this might be done? For example:
 - i. Large Face-to-face events
 - ii. Small focus groups;
 - iii. Phone;
 - iv. Survey;
 - v. Other.
 - ii. If no, why is that?
 - iii. Finally, is there anyone in your organisations or organisations you work with who you feel might be interested in future research?
 - i. What are your reasons for suggesting them?

Annex 3: Online survey plan

Survey overview

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has asked Nomensa to undertake an online survey of a sample of external stakeholders with interests in marine planning. This activity forms an integral part of a larger 'Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement' project.

The survey will aim to add quantitative data to the qualitative results captured from our previous stakeholder interviews. This survey will therefore focus on capturing and investigating stakeholders' experiences and views around their engagement in marine planning.

We will be creating an online survey which the MMO will send to external stakeholders by email in early January 2018.

Objectives

The objectives for the survey will be to:

- Provide insights into drivers, motivations and barriers as to why stakeholders are engaging or not engaging fully in the marine planning cycle;
- Inform recommendations on how to enhance engagement with current and potential stakeholders;
- Identify opportunities to increase the stakeholder spread, both in numbers as well as geographically by focusing on 'hard to reach' groups.

These findings will contribute to the draft and final reports Nomensa will be preparing for this project.

Nomensa's Approach

Reviewing a survey plan

Answers to questions will incorporate an appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative response options.

Some questions will also have conditional supplementary questions. These will only be shown if the respondent selects a particular response(s) to an initial question. This conditional logic is given in italics below each question, where applicable. No question will be set as mandatory. This will allow participants to readily move through the survey, answering questions appropriate to their own thoughts and experiences.

The survey will be constructed around themes and insights from the qualitative research. This will allow us to identify patterns across different types of stakeholders, roles and regions.

Finally, the survey plan should also actively support the creation of a meaningful stakeholder value matrix and should typically take around 10-12 minutes for participants to complete on average.

Online Survey

Introduction screen

Marine Management Organisation online survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your time is greatly appreciated in helping the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) understand how they might go about improving their engagement with you regarding the marine planning process. This survey should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete.
[User clicks next to begin the survey]

Question screens

Question 1

Whilst working for your organisation approximately what proportion of your time is spent referring to policies related to marine planning?

- 0%
- Up to 30%
- 30 to 70%
- More than 70%

[User to choose one option only.]

Question 2

Have you previously attended an MMO marine planning workshop?

- Yes
- No

[If 'Yes' then move to Question 2.1. If 'No' then go to Question 3.]

Question 2.1

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being high, 1 being low, how would you rate your experience regarding any pre-workshop communications, materials and guidance you received ahead of the workshop?

[Likert scale 1 to 10.

If score 0 to 3 or 7 to 10 then go to Question 2.2.

If score 4 to 6 then go to Question 2.3.]

Question 2.2

Please explain your reasons for this score.

[Free text entry. Then move to Question 2.3.]

Question 2.3

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being high, 1 being low, how would you rate your experience of the workshop itself?

[Likert scale 1 to 10.

If score 0 to 3 or if 7 to 10, then move to question 2.4.

If score 4 to 6, then move to Question 2.5.]

Question 2.4

Please explain your reasons for this score.

[Free text entry. Then move to Question 2.5.]

Question 2.5

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being high, 1 being low, how would you rate your experience regarding any follow-up communications or information you may have received after the workshop?

[Likert scale 1 to 10.

If score 0 to 3 or if 7 to 10, then move to question 2.6.

If score 4 to 6, then move to Question 3.]

Question 2.6

Please explain your reasons for this score.

[Free text entry. Then move to Question 3]

Question 3

Do you plan to attend any workshops in the future?

-Yes

-No

-Maybe

[If 'Yes', then move to Question 4.

If 'No' or 'Maybe' then move to Question 3.1.]

Question 3.1

Can you tell us why this is?

[Go to Question 4.]

Question 4

How are you currently engaging in the development of the Marine Plans? (Please select all those that apply.)

[List:]

-Receive MMO emails

-Receive the MMO newsletter

-Phone

-Conference calls

-Local meetings

-Regional meetings

-Regional workshops

-National Conference

[Go to Question 5.]

Question 5

What form of engagement would you like to have with the development of the Marine Plans in the future? (Please select all those that apply.)

[List:

- Email
- Phone
- Online live webinars
- Conference calls
- Local meetings
- Regional meetings
- Regional workshops
- National Conference
- Local meetings within your organisation (presentation on marine planning to your local meeting)
- Out of office hours meetings
- Meetings for your particular sector, or issues of interest
- Other (please specify) [Free text entry box]

[If any meetings or Regional workshops are selected then move to Question 5.1. Otherwise, go to Question 6.]

Question 5.1

How long are you prepared to travel to get to a meeting?

- Up to 30 minutes
- Over 30 minutes to an hour
- Between 1 to 2 hours
- More than 2 hours

Question 6

What are your reasons for engaging in the development of the Marine Plans?

[Free text entry]

Question 7

At what stage do you want to be engaging with the Marine Plans? (Please select all that apply.)

- Input during the development of the plans
- During the consultation of the draft plans
- For implementation of the plans after adoption
- Other (Please explain) [Free text entry box.]

Question 8

How would you describe your current thoughts as to the potential impact of the Marine Plans on your work or area of interest(s)?

- Very positive
- Largely Positive
- Not sure
- Largely negative
- Very negative

[User can choose one option. All go to Question 9.]

Question 9

Can you tell us why this is?

[Free text entry.]

Question 10

Please can you describe what the ideal outcome of the Marine Plans would be for you and your organisation you work for?

[Free text entry]

Question 11

How many people do you currently share information with regarding the Marine Plans? (Include special interest groups, local committees, professional associations you may consult with around the marine plans.)

-None

-1-5

-6-10

-11-20

-21-50

-51-100

-More than 100

[If answer is more than 'None' then Question 11.1. Otherwise, go to Question 12.]

Question 11.1

How do you currently share information about the Marine plans? (Please select all those that apply.)

-At meetings of my interest group

-By email

-By newsletters for groups you belong to

-By phone

-On social media

[Then go to Question 11.2.]

Question 11.2

How far ahead of a workshop do you consult with other people in your own networks to allow you to share their thoughts at the workshop?

-I don't consult with anyone in advance

-1 week

-1 to 2 weeks

-2 to 4 weeks

-More than 4 weeks

[User can choose one option only.]

Question 12

On scale of 1 to 10, 10 being high, 1 being low, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you have to give marine planning related information and evidence to the MMO outside of the workshops?

[Likert scale from 0 to 10. 0 end labelled 'not at all satisfied', and 10 labelled 'completely satisfied'.

If answer 0 to 4 then go to Question 12.1. Otherwise move to Question 13.]

Question 12.1

Please can you tell us what would help improve this experience for you?

[Free text entry.]

Question 13

Have you used the Marine Information System (MIS) website?

-Yes

-No, but plan to use it in the future

-No and don't have any plans to use it

[If 'Yes' then Question 13.1.]

Question 13.1

What have you used the Marine Information System for?

[Free text entry.]

Question 14

Please can you provide us with the following information. This will help us to understand how your answers relate to other groups in your area.

Area:

[List with choice of:

-ALL

-East

-South

-South east

-South west

-North east

-North west

-Not sure

[If 'Not sure', ask respondent to enter the first part of their postcode for cross-referencing, then continue as below. Respondents may also select more than one region, but not if the options 'All' or 'No sure' are selected.]

Sector of work (select all that apply)

[List of options]

Academia

Aggregates

Aquaculture

Business other

Cables

Carbon Capture and Storage

Coastal Partnership

Conservation

Consultant

Devolved administrations

Energy

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

Fishing

General public
Government Departments
Heritage
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Local Nature Partnerships
Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)
Nations other
Non-departmental Government Body (NDPB)
Government Departments
Planning Authorities
Ports and shipping
Recreation
Research
Renewables
Rivers and catchments
Tourism
Water companies

Sector of interest (select all that apply)

[List of options]

Academia
Aggregates
Air quality
Aquaculture
Biodiversity
Business other
Buyer of fish
Cables
Carbon Capture and Storage
Climate change
Coastal change
Coastal Partnership
Commercial shipping
Communications
Conservation
Construction
Consultant
Cumulative effects
Decision Maker
Defence and national security
Devolved administrations
Dredging and disposal
Ecology
Ecosystem services
Education
Employment
Energy
Evidence
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
Fishing
Flooding
General public
Government Departments

Harbours
Health and wellbeing
Heritage
Highly mobile species
Historic environment
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Local Nature Partnerships
Marine industry
Marine licences
Marine litter
Marine pollution response
Marine Protected Areas
Marine transport
Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)
Nations other
Navigation
Non-departmental Government Body (NDPB)
Nuclear energy
Offshore renewable wind energy
Oil and gas
Planning Authorities
Policy
Ports and shipping
Protected species
Recreation
Recreational angling
Renewables
Research / science
River Basin Management Plans
Rivers and catchments
Seascape
Shoreline Management Plans
Terrestrial plans
Tidal or wave energy
Tourism
Underwater noise
Waste water treatment and disposal
Water companies
Water quality

Question 15

We would very much like you to sign up to our email distribution list. If you would like to do this please provide following details.

- First name
- Last name
- Organisation
- Email address
- Confirm email address

Closing screen

Thank You

Thank you again for your time and interest shown in taking part in our research.

We will also be in touch with regards to the Iteration 2 workshops taking place in spring 2018.
Best regards,
The Marine Planning team.

Annex 4: Online survey participants sector of interest

As part of the online survey participants could select multiple options from a list of sectors, to select those that they were interested in. Here are the full results, given twice for ease of reference: first alphabetically, then ranked by popularity.

Areas of interest ordered alphabetically

Your sector(s) of interest (please select all that apply)	Responses
Academia	3
Aggregates	4
Air quality	4
Aquaculture	3
Biodiversity	13
Business other	2
Buyer of fish	0
Cables	4
Carbon Capture and Storage	3
Climate change	16
Coastal change	21
Coastal Partnership	14
Commercial shipping	1
Communications	4
Conservation	17
Construction	4
Consultant	1
Cumulative effects	3
Decision Maker	4
Defence and national security	1
Devolved administrations	3
Dredging and disposal	9
Ecology	13
Ecosystem services	9
Education	4
Employment	4
Energy	9
Evidence	6
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	15
Fishing	13
Flooding	9
General public	9
Government Departments	6
Harbours	11
Health and wellbeing	8
Heritage	14
Highly mobile species	5
Historic environment	9
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	11

Your sector(s) of interest (please select all that apply)	Responses
Local Nature Partnerships	6
Marine industry	8
Marine licences	11
Marine litter	14
Marine pollution response	11
Marine Protected Areas	11
Marine transport	4
Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)	2
Nations other	1
Navigation	5
Non-departmental Government Body (NDGB)	4
Nuclear energy	3
Offshore renewable wind energy	9
Oil and gas	3
Planning Authorities	15
Policy	10
Ports and shipping	6
Protected species	11
Recreation	16
Recreational angling	8
Renewables	8
Research / science	4
River Basin Management Plans	3
Rivers and catchments	6
Seascape	8
Shoreline Management Plans	16
Terrestrial plans	7
Tidal or wave energy	12
Tourism	12
Underwater noise	4
Waste water treatment and disposal	5
Water companies	2
Water quality	12

Areas of interest ordered by number of responses

Your sector(s) of interest (please select all that apply)	Responses
Coastal change	21
Conservation	17
Climate change	16
Recreation	16
Shoreline Management Plans	16
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	15
Planning Authorities	15
Coastal Partnership	14
Heritage	14
Marine litter	14
Biodiversity	13
Ecology	13
Fishing	13
Tidal or wave energy	12
Tourism	12
Water quality	12
Harbours	11
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	11
Marine licences	11
Marine pollution response	11
Marine Protected Areas	11
Protected species	11
Policy	10
Dredging and disposal	9
Ecosystem services	9
Energy	9
Flooding	9
General public	9
Historic environment	9
Offshore renewable wind energy	9
Health and wellbeing	8
Marine industry	8
Recreational angling	8
Renewables	8
Seascape	8
Terrestrial plans	7
Evidence	6
Government Departments	6
Local Nature Partnerships	6
Ports and shipping	6
Rivers and catchments	6
Highly mobile species	5
Navigation	5
Waste water treatment and disposal	5
Aggregates	4

Your sector(s) of interest (please select all that apply)	Responses
Air quality	4
Cables	4
Communications	4
Construction	4
Decision Maker	4
Education	4
Employment	4
Marine transport	4
Non-departmental Government Body (NDGB)	4
Research / science	4
Underwater noise	4
Academia	3
Aquaculture	3
Carbon Capture and Storage	3
Cumulative effects	3
Devolved administrations	3
Nuclear energy	3
Oil and gas	3
River Basin Management Plans	3
Business other	2
Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)	2
Water companies	2
Commercial shipping	1
Consultant	1
Defence and national security	1
Nations other	1
Buyer of fish	0