



Cross-sectoral coordination and integration

Journey Planner [3]

Guidance document
November 2021

Background

Governance is concerned with the way in which decisions are taken and implemented to realise a collective goal. In short, it is the means to an end.

Purpose – Effective partnership working is crucial for achieving better outcomes and aligning benefits for the environment, economy and society. This document provides suggested guidance for designing and implementing effective partnership governance arrangements.

Focus – Partnerships related to flood and coastal erosion risk management, water management or broader partnerships featuring these aspects.

Target audience – The guidance aims to support existing partnerships, or those looking to establish new partnerships.

Self-assessment framework – a separate self-assessment framework is also available to download to enable (existing/emerging) partnerships to assess the effectiveness of their partnership arrangements.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Natural Resources Wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



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Background

Journey Planners – Guidance is provided in the form of Journey Planners, which are each made up of modules (including objectives, advice and good practice examples).

Your partnership: Your priorities – Although the Journey Planners are numbered (1 to 3) they do not need to be read in order, or in their entirety. You can navigate to specific modules of interest to suit your needs and priorities.

Background – This guidance was produced as a result of the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme funded research project '[Understanding effective Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management governance in England and Wales](#)' (2019/20) and an internal Environment Agency project on water governance and catchment partnerships (2018/19). Both projects identified governance challenges encountered in partnerships and conditions for successful partnership working. These lessons have been combined to create practical guidance on effective partnership governance. This is not intended to provide a definitive or prescriptive view on good practice, but to offer suggestions for overcoming common governance challenges and establishing stronger, more effective and legitimate partnerships.



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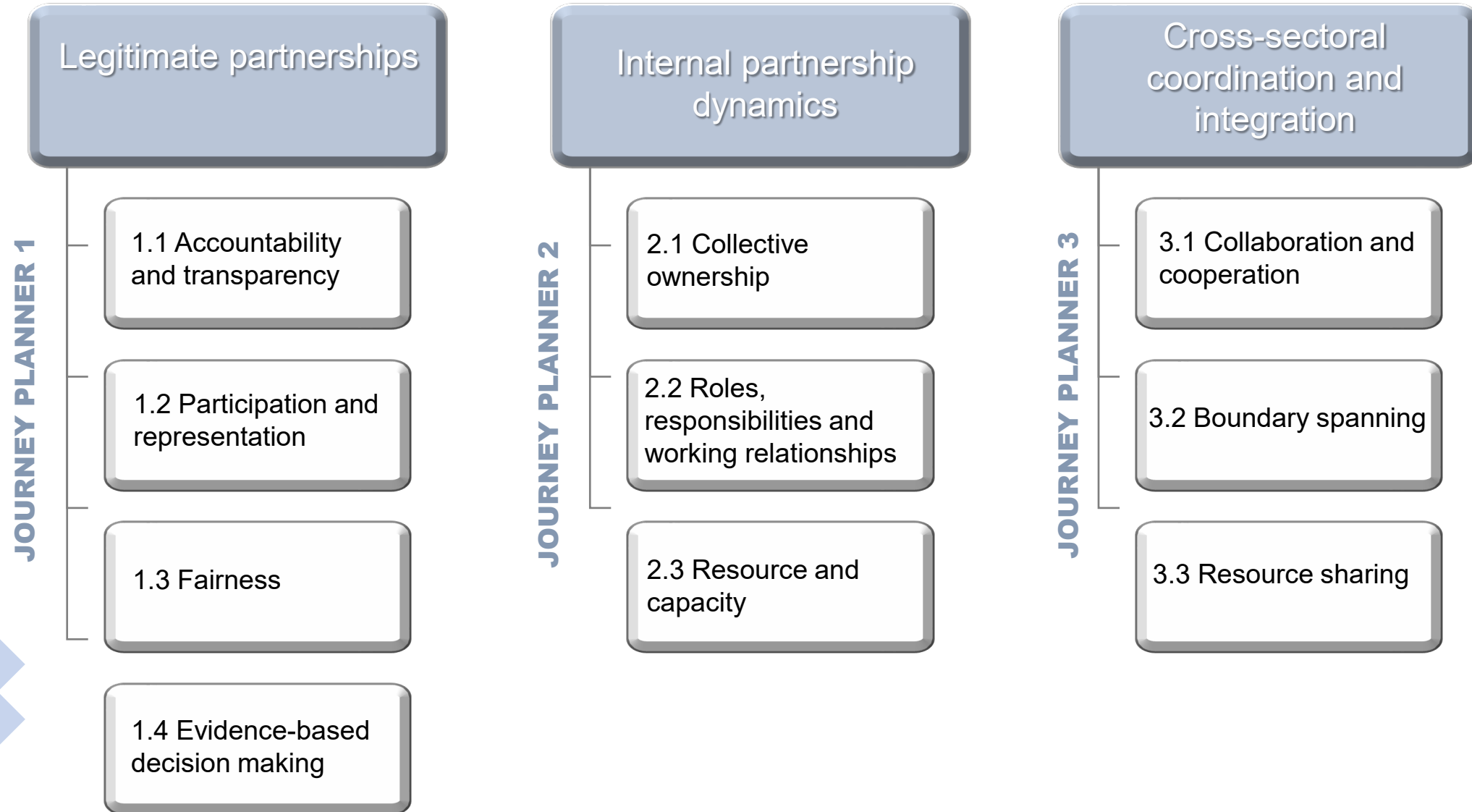


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Overview of Journey Planners



Cross-sectoral coordination and integration

Journey structure

Modules

**3.1 Collaboration and
cooperation**

3.2 Boundary spanning

3.3 Resource sharing

Destination

Where possible and appropriate, partnerships should endeavour to coordinate and integrate their activities with other relevant actors and sectors to support the implementation of multi-benefits and enhance resource efficiency.

Different types of governance 'bridging' mechanisms are essential, related to:

- **Collaboration and cooperation**
- **Boundary spanning**
- **Resource sharing**

Pathways for improving coordination and integration across sectors

- 1 **Collaboration and cooperation** – partners must be willing and able to collaborate and cooperate. Specific structures, processes and mechanisms can support this and help establish conditions conducive to collaborative working.
- 2 **Boundary spanning** – One of the biggest barriers to coordination and integration often relates to the boundaries of organisational working, including remits of responsibility, planning and funding cycles, and administrative jurisdictions. This challenge is further exacerbated by the complexity of natural processes, which span across these boundaries. Therefore, strategies or mechanisms for resolving these barriers are essential.
- 3 **Resource sharing** – The ability to transfer, share, co-invest or even co-create resources is important to facilitate coordination and integration. Resources can take many forms, including data, technological capabilities, financial resources, as well as human resources (such as personnel, skills and expertise).

Navigating the journey planner: user guide

Symbols



Objective



Statutory requirement: (^W) indicates Wales only and (^E) indicates England only; otherwise assume both



Advice. Examples of good practice are marked as **Eg**



Further information and resources

Abbreviations

CaBA	Catchment Based Approach
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
FCERM	Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LA	Local Authority
NRW	Natural Resources Wales
PSB	Public Service Board (Wales)
RFCC	Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
RMA	Risk Management Authority



Module 3.1

**Collaboration and
cooperation**

Willingness and ability to collaborate – Individuals, organisations, groups and partnerships must be willing and able to collaborate and cooperate where required. Collaboration and cooperation can be thought of as a spectrum; at its simplest, this might involve sharing data and information (cooperation only), through to more complex forms of collaboration involving the integration of resources and joint activities, for example. The approach adopted by the partnership (and where it is situated across this spectrum) ultimately depends on its goals and objectives. However, where appropriate, efforts should be made to identify opportunities for cross-sectoral working, where it can improve efficiencies, maximise value for money and achieve multiple benefits. Specific structures, processes and mechanisms should be in place to support this.

[1]

St

Cooperation duties in FCERM – Under [Section 13](#) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) are required to cooperate in exercising their FCERM functions. Powers for sharing information (where this is for the purpose of a RMA fulfilling its duty to co-operate) are also outlined.

RMAs and coastal protection authorities may also arrange for a FCERM function to be exercised on its behalf by another RMA. Likewise, the Environment Agency or NRW can arrange for a coastal erosion risk management function to be exercised on its behalf by a coast protection authority, lead local flood authority or an internal drainage board (England only). Such arrangements can be formalised through a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (see box 5 and 6).

[2]

St

Power to request information in FCERM – under Section 14 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Risk Management Authorities may request a person to provide information in connection with the authority's FCERM functions.

[3]

3.1

Collaboration and cooperation

Formal and informal cooperation agreements –

Establishing formal cooperation agreements, memorandums of understanding, or even informal expectations and working cultures conducive to collaborative working, are vital. [4]

Public Sector Cooperation Agreements (PSCAs) –

PSCAs are intended to facilitate cooperation between public sector Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) and encourage efficient, mutually-beneficial arrangements at the local scale. These agreements allow RMAs to legally establish how they will achieve tasks of mutual benefit (such as maintenance works, asset inspection, small-scale capital works or assistance during flood events). Agreements are established for a 5 year period. [5]



Public Sector Cooperation Agreements

[Guidance and agreement templates](#) for establishing Public Sector Cooperation Agreements have been developed by the Associate of Drainage Authorities and the Environment Agency. [6]

Eg

Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Public Sector Cooperation Agreements (PSCAs) have been established to enable the 14 Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) to undertake consenting and enforcement duties of ordinary water courses on behalf of the Environment Agency and Lincolnshire County Council. This required the IDBs' responsibilities to be extended across internal drainage districts for them to be able to operate across the county. The county council provides the IDBs with financial support for its administration. [7]

Informal mechanisms – Where possible, it is advantageous to promote and encourage informal mechanisms for facilitating collaboration and cooperation – such as supporting secondments, job rotations, or encouraging cross-membership with other groups. [8]

Collaboration and cooperation

Eg

Legal models for formal cooperation: Water Resources East

Water Resources East (WRE) provides an example of an innovative formal mechanism for developing cross-sector working. WRE was originally formed in 2014 to develop a collaborative approach to water resource management. Since 2019, WRE has been an independent legal entity comprising of a number of organisations – including five water companies, the National Farmers Union, county councils, environmental charities, a power company, the Countryside Land Alliance, the Broads Authority and the Association of Drainage Authorities. The Company (limited by Guarantee) has a multi-sector Board of Directors and operates as “*an inclusive, collaborative membership organisation*” ([WRE Business Plan, 2020](#)).

The objectives of WRE are aligned with the Environment Agency’s [National Framework for Water Resources](#). WRE was selected as one of the English regional planning groups charged with the development and publication of Regional Plans. The main goal of the organisation is to engage stakeholders as partners in the co-creation of the Regional Plan and broaden representation in decision making. They have also published a [seven-part strategy](#) for managing regional water resources.

Bringing these organisations together early in the creation of the plan helped facilitate a better understanding of stakeholder needs (across the water, agriculture, power and environmental sectors), and how best to balance any necessary trade-offs. This formalised mode of governance was considered to be a more sustainable model for managing water resources, which in turn helped increase flexibility through the sharing of resources.



There are three tiers to the membership organisation:

- i) Primary Funding Members (contributing a minimum 3% of the organisations operational costs or similar in-kind resources) who have representation on the Board of Directors;
- ii) Standard Members who form part of the Strategic Advisory Group who support the decision making and have equal

voting rights to the Board of Directors; iii) a consultation group of regulators, government organisations and customer representatives who have no voting rights but offer scrutiny and specialist knowledge.

3.1

Collaboration and cooperation

Eg

Collaboration between Flood Risk Management and River Basin Management Planning

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (DCIoS) Environment Agency Area Leadership Team in 2019/20 maintained and protected the commitment to a joined-up approach to developing the new round of Flood Risk Management Plans and River Basin Management Plans. They recognised that investing effort to align planning and broader engagement now will ease and improve partnerships in the future.

“Right now is the perfect opportunity to consolidate our information and shape where we want DCIoS to be in future. This is why we want to protect and properly resource this work”

To support and continue integrated working they asked teams to dedicate and protect personnel and resources (one day a week per team) to prioritise joint approaches to flood risk management and river basin management planning. Catchment workshops (internal and external) were held to engage more widely informing future measures. Key external groups include South West RFCC, catchment partnerships, local nature partnership, local authorities and a coastal group.

“By bringing internal and external teams and programmes together early we can ensure more integrated working, reduce duplication of work, and ensure we’re focusing our efforts where they’ll make the biggest difference in the future. Also, the consultation on RBMP is a Catchment Partnership Host Success Measure that we are progressing. We will align our place-based plans with local authorities’ flood risk management strategies, and work with South West Water to link into their Drainage Wastewater Management Plans (DWMP)”

Photos below: Creating DCIoS Area/catchment measures at external and internal workshops



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Module 3.2

Boundary spanning

Recognising the need to work across different boundaries – It is important to be able to work across different geographical and organisational boundaries (such as remits of responsibility, planning and funding cycles, and administrative jurisdictions) to address problems in a holistic way and implement solutions at the most appropriate scale. We refer to this as ‘boundary spanning’. The primary objective of boundary spanning is to enhance joint working at the local/operational scale. This is about finding ways to effectively work within the existing governance and policy landscape established at the national scale, and designing ‘work arounds’ to potential barriers or constraints that this may create.

[11]

Aligning planning and funding cycles (where possible) opens up the potential for coordinating activities across sectors and the sharing of resources and joint planning.

[12]

Eg

Aligning goals and agendas across sectors

The Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee developed a shared 25 year strategy supporting the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan and FCERM Strategy, with this vision:

“Communities, businesses and infrastructure within the Thames catchment are flood resilient and adapting to the impacts of climate change across the next 25 years and for future generations.”

This strategy includes “slowing the flow of water in the upper catchment and upstream of settlements through measures including Natural Flood Management (NFM), better land management and creating new storage areas, to reduce peak flows at places at risk of flooding further down the catchment”

The RFCC natural flood management sub-group is reviewing NFM potential by opportunity mapping and secured funding for the next phase of natural flood management upscaling and partnership activity in the Thames basin. This spans 3 Environment Agency Areas – Hertfordshire and North London; Kent, South London and East Sussex; and Thames.

[13]

Wider governance context: Boundary spanning concepts

Cross-sector water environment management is facilitated in England (and cross-border) through the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) and National CaBA Support Group. This promotes local collaborative working at a water catchment scale to achieve a range of environmental, social and economic benefits while improving/protecting the water environment. As a concept, CaBA is reinforced by:

- [Defra's policy framework on the Catchment-Based Approach](#)
- Implementation through activities of [Catchment Partnerships](#), which help drive integrated approaches to land-water management, leverage funding and create multi-benefit schemes.
- Informed by ongoing reviews – such as a [2015 Defra review of 25 CaBA pilots](#), which suggest partners and best practice for working more closely with other partnerships, and “between planning regimes, to support closer working and help bring different planning systems/plans together in a synergistic way”.

In Wales, ecosystem services and ecosystem-based approaches are commonly referred to as part of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR); defined as using natural resources in a way and at a rate that maintains and enhances ecosystem resilience and the benefits they provide. This is mandated through the [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#) and endorsed through [Natural Resources Policy](#), which advocates a holistic, joined-up approach to SMNR and cross-sectoral working to support ‘win wins’ and multi-beneficial schemes.

[14]

Problem definition – When defining the problem(s) and goals of the partnership, it is vital to take into account the nature and scales of underlying natural processes. This is necessary to inform appropriate solutions and to identify whether or to what extent other stakeholder groups may need to be involved. Where possible and appropriate, cross-sector working should be initiated early in the development of a partnership.

[15]

Working across administrative boundaries – Partnerships should consider which organisation has the best capabilities and capacities to undertake a particular function. This might require organisations to work (to some extent) outside of their administrative boundaries and responsibilities.

[16]

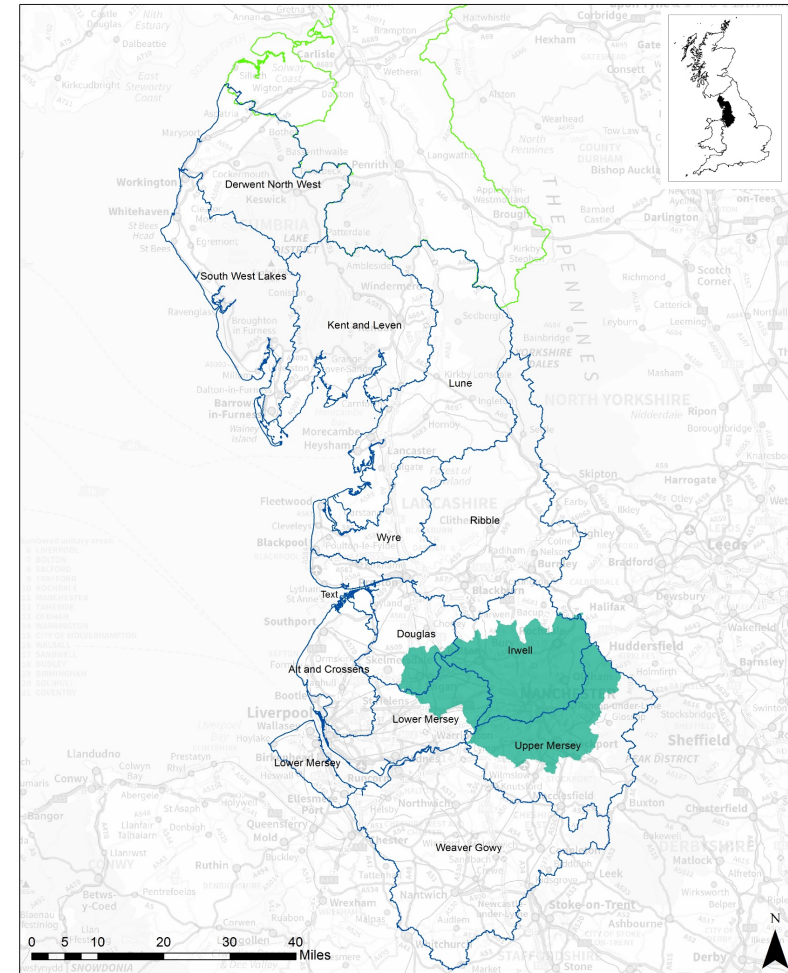
Eg

Boundary spanning through Natural Course

Natural Course is a collaborative project funded through the EU LIFE Integrated projects programme (€20.0m, running from 2014 to 2024). It represents a collaboration between the Environment Agency, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Natural England, the Rivers Trust and United Utilities, and spans the breadth of the North West River Basin District (approx. 13,200 km²); crossing 5 counties and containing 12 management catchments made up of 43 operational catchments, 632 water bodies, and around 7,500 km of rivers (<https://naturalcourse.co.uk/>).

The project aims to address the barriers restricting the achievement of 'good' ecological status for the water bodies within the region, by trialling new ways of collaborative working, innovative solutions, joined-up decision making, co-financing and capacity building. Now in its 3rd phase, Natural Course has implemented 30 projects (see <https://naturalcourse.co.uk/projects/>) and is credited with facilitating collaboration across the region and helping to overcome constraints associated with different organisational remits, resources, affordability and procurement, for example. See commentary by Natural Course on [working collaboratively](#).

[17]



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Module 3.3

Resource sharing

Resource sharing for cross-sectoral working

Sharing resources – The ability to transfer, share, co-invest or even co-create resources is important for facilitating coordination and integration. This is also fundamental for using resources efficiently.

[18]

Data sharing agreements – Mechanisms for the sharing of data may need to be in place to encourage and facilitate effective cross-sectoral working. Depending on the nature of the data and partnership these may be more or less formal.

[19]

Joint collection of data – Some partnerships may establish governance arrangements for the joint collection and use of data. Benefits include: collected data can be tailored to the needs of the partnership; ensuring consistency of data; cost sharing; avoidance of duplicated effort; and data collection and processing tasks can be assigned to partners with the best capability or capacity. This is particularly important for cross-sectoral working as different data/standards are often used by different sectors.

[20]

Cross-sectoral knowledge transfer – Maximising opportunities for sharing knowledge across relevant organisations and other partnerships can facilitate coordination and integration. A useful and efficient strategy is to utilise members who sit on other relevant partnerships (cross-membership).

[21]



Further information – Sharing resources *within* a partnership

The governance requirements for maximising resource efficiency within a partnership are outlined in Journey Planner 2 (*Internal partnership dynamics* - see Module 2.3).

[22]

Resource sharing for cross-sectoral working

Eg The Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) and Severn Estuary Coastal Group

The Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP) acts as the secretariat for the Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG). The mutually supportive relationship between the two groups has proved useful in helping to align FCERM with the wider sustainability and resilient growth agenda in the estuary. In part, this is facilitated through SEP's cross-membership with various other key groups and the secretariat services it provides to the Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities (ASERA), the Bristol Channel Standing Environment Group and the Wales Coastal Groups Forum. As an umbrella body for various estuary groups and stakeholder interests, SEP is an important channel for disseminating information and raising awareness of relevant issues within the estuary, through which opportunities for coordinating activities can be identified.

[23]

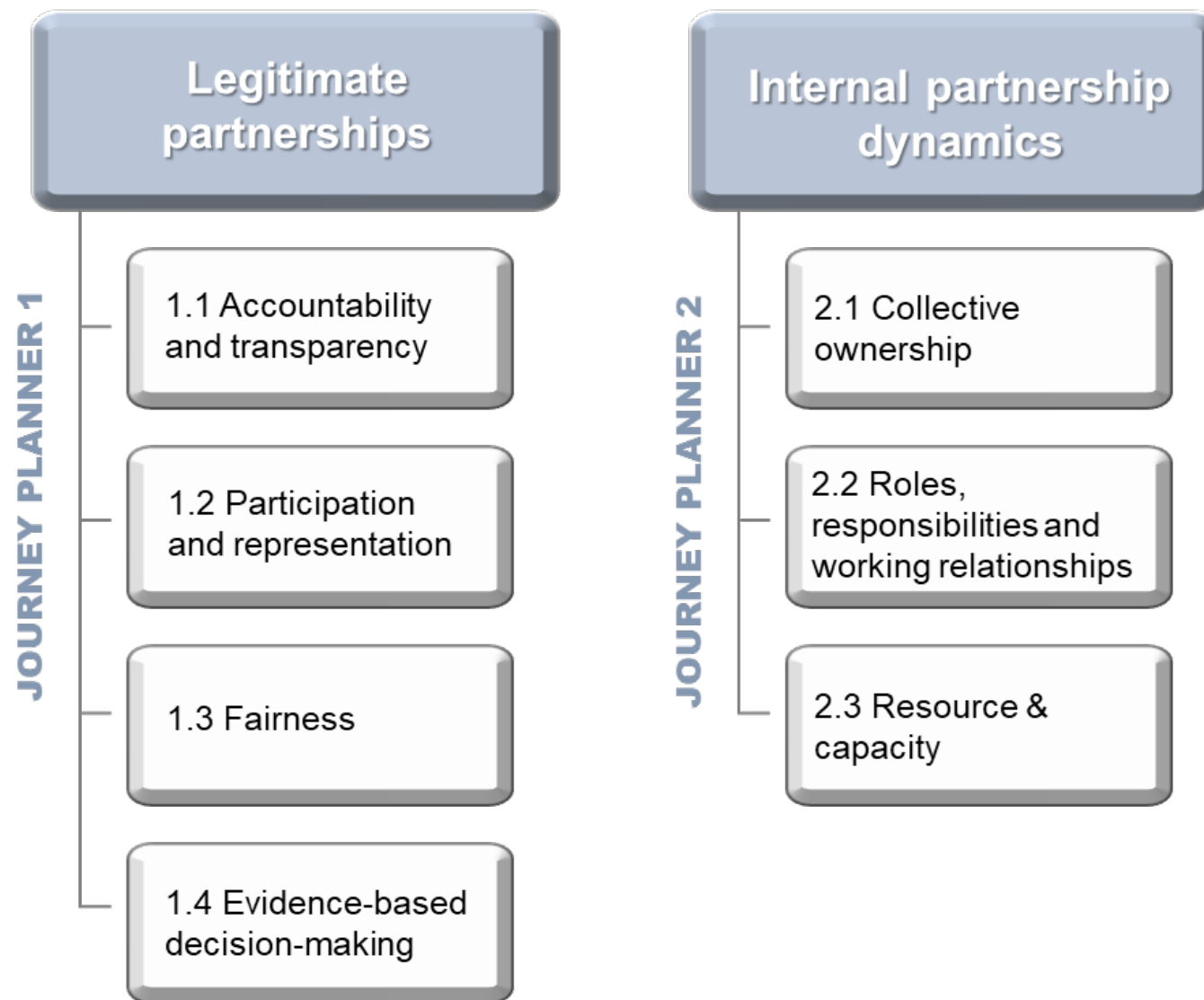




Destination

Journey planning

Continued



Background information

Research project FRS17186

Flood and Coastal Research Team, Environment Agency

Project webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-research-reports/understanding-effective-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-governance-in-england-and-wales>

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