



Aim

This project aimed to develop an evaluation framework for a process evaluation of the MMO Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Fisheries and Conservation Strategy.

Introduction and methodology

The objective of the MMO's MPA programme is to develop byelaws, supported by evidence and stakeholder consultation, that will manage fishing activity within MPAs, protect marine environment features, and support conservation objectives. The purpose of the evaluation was to look at learning and accountability.

This evaluation involved a review of documentation, interviews and orientation workshop, three workshops to collaboratively design and develop the Theory of Change and evaluation questions.

Results

This evaluation plan included three different options for a formative evaluation, varying to their degree of emphasis on the purposes of learning and accountability. The options were:

- A tailored process evaluation that is focused on learning and providing mid-programme assessments.
- Outcome-harvesting that enables evaluators and stakeholders to demonstrate the outcomes of the project bottom-up, without preconceived suppositions or proposals and identify opportunities for change.
- Developmental evaluation recognising that the subject of evaluation is always in a state of flux requiring continually adaptive evaluation measures and techniques.

Conclusions and recommendations

Considering the options and the requirements of the MMO, the tailored process evaluation approach will likely be the most suitable choice. This option will provide the MMO with the independence and accountability that will be required for potential challenge as the methods are clear, transparent, and repeatable. The tailored approach can be more convenient as the data collection methods can be flexible to the need to balance participatory processes with the resource and budget constraints.

Further work will be needed on the detailed design and delivery planning for the evaluation. This would start with the revisiting of the evaluation questions and Theory of Change proposed in this evaluation plan to ensure they still apply following progression of the MPA Programme.

MMO comments

This evaluation framework was carried out in 2022 and has since been followed by MMO1347 which started the initial inception and scoping process of a process evaluation of the MPA Programme.



Marine
Management
Organisation

MMO1289 Framework for a Process Evaluation of the MMO MPA Fisheries and Conservation Strategy

Further information

Please direct any correspondence to the Evidence Team (evidence@marinemanagement.org.uk)