

February 2017 update

Common Ground: Engaging stakeholders in thinking about the management of the marine environment in our district.

We are running this project to get more people involved in sharing their views about how marine resources in our district are managed. With the recent designation of new [Marine Conservation Zones \(MCZs\)](#) and the effective management of existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to consider along with all the other duties, this is a very busy and challenging time for Eastern IFCA. It is important to us to get a variety of stakeholders involved: we want to ensure that we continue to develop our understanding of the different ways people use and value the coast and sea. We also need to gauge what benefits and impacts management measures will have both for people and for the environment.

How will we do this?

Eastern IFCA will continue to engage with stakeholders in all the ways we have done in the past. In 2016/17 we are also running a 'Community Voice' film project in partnership with the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and the assistance of The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site (WNNC EMS) management scheme. Through this project we aim to:

- Bring together diverse stakeholders (i.e. including fishermen and other sea-users, those with specialist knowledge and those responsible for decision-making and implementation) that can provide input into discussion particularly about MPA management;
- Share information and build understanding of the dynamics and possibly conflicting needs of stakeholders and the environment;
- Capture a diverse range of values of MPAs (e.g. use and non-use, monetary and non-monetary) that give all stakeholders an equitable and credible voice in considering management of sites.

Community Voice Method (CVM) has been used in a range of diverse settings to consider everything from land use issues in North Carolina in the USA to traditional turtle fishery management in the Turks and Caicos Islands and development of management measures for MCZs in Sussex. CVM provides an opportunity to capture the values that diverse stakeholders attach to the marine environment. It is also useful in supporting informed and equitable decision-making that takes account of a broader range of stakeholders and types of value. We will use CVM to support and develop stakeholder-informed decision making regarding fisheries management, including site specific management, and also to capture monetary and non-monetary values.

If you want to find out more about the Community Voice Method, you could watch this short film about the method and specifically how it was used in a recent project: <https://vimeo.com/150885111>

The interviews

Project partners consulted widely for recommendations of people to be interviewed. From February to April this year, 35 interviews involving 40 stakeholders were filmed in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, involving a diverse range of stakeholders. The interviews included general questions about people's connection with the coast and sea and how they use it, with specific questions about management. Interviews finally focused on

stakeholder views on key areas of Eastern IFCA decision-making (e.g. fisheries and MPA management). Most interviews lasted about 1 hour.

The film

The interviews resulted in over 30 hours of footage. Through the Summer MCS has been transcribing and coding the footage, and then analysing the coded responses within the footage to reveal the most commonly expressed views around the questions asked during the interviews. The final output is a documentary film which reflects community views on the coast and sea and management of marine resources as faithfully and fully as possible. The film's narrative is shaped by the interviewees through analysis of all the interviews. The film is approximately 35 minutes long and has included at least one contribution from every interviewee. The film serves as a constructive tool to help develop a shared understanding of the opinions and values participants associate with use the coast and sea in our district.

The film is available to view - <https://vimeo.com/191148781>

The workshops

In November, the completed film was screened at three sets of paired stakeholder workshops held in Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The first and second workshop in each region formed two halves of one event. Participants were encouraged to attend both workshops in their region. The first workshop featured the screening of the Community Voice Method film, and then identified common values associated with marine resource use across stakeholder groups. In the context of these values, key local marine management issues were identified by the participants. The second workshop further explored these key issues and gave participants the opportunity to propose actions, (within the IFCA's remit) to address important marine management issues in each of the regions. The workshops helped to identify common ground and stimulate discussion which has provided Eastern IFCA with a clear understanding of stakeholders values, views and preferences with regard to marine resource management. MCS will produce a report which will be available online in March 2017.

How will the outputs from this project be used?

Stakeholder views and values will assist Eastern IFCA in ongoing resource management decision-making, including work related to the network of marine protected areas across Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Marine Conservation Society will use the outputs from this project to further develop the Community Voice Method for its application within formal marine management consultations across the UK.

The Wash & North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site project will utilise the outputs to continue to develop our understanding of the management needs of this special coast.

How is this work funded?

The Common Ground project is funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as part of their 'Valuing the Ocean' strand.

For further information about this project please contact:

Sandra Cowper
01553 775321

sandracowper@eastern-ifca.gov.uk