



## Supporting Implementation of **M**aritime Spatial Planning in the **C**eltic Seas



### Evaluation of Maritime Spatial Planning

#### Component 1: Supporting Implementation of MSP

#### Component 1.4: Evaluation of the Maritime Spatial Planning Process



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### List of Acronyms

**BMAPA** – British Marine Aggregates Producers Association

**CBD** – Convention on Biological Diversity

**DAERA** – Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs [Northern Ireland]

**EA** - Ecosystem Approach

**EA-MSP** – Ecosystem Approach to MSP

**EBM** – Ecosystem Based Management

**EIA** – Environmental Impact Assessment

**EU** – European Union

**GES** – Good Environmental Status

**HLMOs** – High Level Marine Objectives

**iMADP** - Welsh Government’s interim Marine Aggregate Dredging Policy

**MCAA** - Marine and Coastal Access Act [UK]

**MCZ** – Marine Conservation Zone

**MMO** – Marine Management Organisation [UK]

**MSFD** – Marine Strategy Framework Directive

**MSP** – Maritime Spatial Planning

**RAWPs** – Regional Aggregate Working Parties

**SAR** – Safety and Rescue

**SBSTTA**- CBD’s Subsidiary Body, Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

**SEA** – Strategic Environmental Assessment

**SoNaRR**- State of Natural Resources Report (Wales)

**TPEA** – Transboundary Planning in the European Atlantic

**WNMP** – draft Welsh National Marine Plan

**About SIMCelt**

SIMCelt - Supporting Implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning in the Celtic Seas is a two-year €1.8 million project co-financed by DG Mare and focussed on promoting the development of transnational cooperation to support the implementation of EU Directive 2014/89/EU in the Celtic Seas. Led by University College Cork, the project consortium comprises both planners and researchers from seven partner institutes representing a mix of governmental authorities and academic institutes from Ireland, France and the UK. This consortium is particularly interested in developing meaningful cooperation between neighbouring Member States to support implementation of spatially coherent plans across transboundary zones of the Celtic Seas, building on previous work and leveraging new opportunities to identify and share best practice on technical, scientific and social aspects of transboundary MSP.

**About Evaluation of MSP**

This component was designed to examine approaches taken to the evaluation of MSP by marine planning authorities working in the Celtic Seas and identify areas of common interest from which consensus may be built. Examples of evaluation processes trialled in Northern Ireland and Wales form part of the report examining ways to involve sectoral stakeholders and decision makers in an adaptive evaluation cycle.

## Introduction

One of the objectives of the SIMCelt Project is to examine approaches to the evaluation of maritime spatial planning (MSP) in the Celtic Seas. This activity has been led by University of Liverpool, working with representatives from all other partners. Throughout this report we refer to “maritime” spatial planning (MSP) as defined by the EU in which MSP is “*about planning and regulating all human uses of the sea, while protecting marine ecosystems.*” However, we recognise that the MSP abbreviation may refer to both “marine” and “maritime”. The difference in terms is usually, “marine” referring directly to the marine area and therefore having a more environmental focus; “maritime” referring to maritime industries which has a more economic connotation, as in the EU Directive (2014/89/EU). In the UK, the main focus of this report, the term “marine planning” is the recognised term. This report focuses on parts of the UK (Wales and Northern Ireland) that are at a sufficiently advanced stage in their MSP processes for consideration of approaches to evaluation to be of benefit, particularly through collaboration with marine planners.

Management of the seas has traditionally been undertaken on a single sector basis, each with its own regulatory and management approaches. This form of management has limited scope for resolving conflicts between sectors, bringing about trade-offs between activities and accounting for cumulative impacts on the marine environment (Halpern et al. 2008). MSP has increasingly been seen as a more integrated management approach to manage conflicts or opportunities for synergies between sectors and use of marine space and work towards sustainable development and conservation of marine ecosystems.

The purpose of MSP evaluation is to ensure MSP effectiveness through a systematic and standardised review of the MSP process and outputs (TPEA, 2015). It is a critical part of the MSP process and helps identify if the stated objectives are being achieved. Although well-established in other cyclical management processes, evaluation of MSP is a relatively new field both in research and in practice. Most of the academic literature focuses on requirements for MSP evaluation and challenges in evaluating MSP. The evaluation models or frameworks that have been developed include a range of perspectives, from ecological or planning based perspectives and process or outcome orientation (TPEA, 2015).

Marine plans contribute to the implementation of the EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, (2014/89/EU) which requires plans to be in place by 31 March 2021. The MSP Directive provides a framework for MSP, but Member States are responsible and competent for designing and determining the format and content of the spatial plans, including institutional arrangements and any approach to the identification of maritime spaces to different activities and uses. The Directive also highlights the need for an evaluation process that will evaluate spatial and temporal management measures within a decision making process leading to implementation, accompanied by monitoring and periodic review. *Article 7(3)* of the Directive stipulates that:

*“Maritime spatial plans shall be reviewed by Member States as decided by them but at least every ten years.”*

Furthermore, *Article 14 Monitoring and Review* details the requirements for monitoring and reporting implementation of the Directive:

*“1. Member States shall send copies of the maritime spatial plans, including relevant existing explanatory material on the implementation of this Directive, and all subsequent updates, to the Commission and to any other Member States concerned within three months of their publication.*

*2. The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and to the Council, at the latest one year after the deadline for establishment of the maritime spatial plans, and every four years thereafter, a report outlining the progress made in implementing this Directive.”*

Under the Directive, MSP evaluation is part of a structured planning process of “full cycle” approach. The Directive also refers to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) highlighting the need for an Ecosystem Approach to MSP and that the objectives of MSP activities should be set in the context of environmental, economic and social factors.

The UK Government and Devolved Administrations’ vision for the marine environment is one of “clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas” (HM Government 2011). The High Level Marine Objectives (HLMOs) jointly agreed by the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government reflect the full range of the UK government and devolved administrations’ policies in the marine area and take forward the vision for the marine environment. The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) introduced a new marine planning system for the UK and provides the legal mechanism to help achieve the UK vision. The MCAA requires marine plans are prepared for the UK marine area (0-200 nautical miles). The UK Marine Policy Statement (HM Government, 2011) established the framework for preparing marine plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.

As the marine planning authorities of the UK are now at various points in producing marine plans, testing approaches to the *evaluation* of these plans is recognised as an important part in improving MSP and assessing achievement towards objectives. The requirements under section 61 of the MCAA (2009) are to monitor and periodically report on every six years, and keep under review:

- a) the effects of the policies in the marine plan;*
- b) the effectiveness of those policies in securing that the objectives for which the marine plan was prepared and adopted are met;*
- c) the progress being made towards securing those objectives;*
- d) if an MPS governs marine planning for the marine plan authority’s region, the progress being made towards securing that the objectives for which the MPS was prepared and adopted are met;*

Within the UK, MSP processes have been progressed by the marine planning authorities for England and the devolved administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

- Scotland’s National Marine Plan was completed in 2015 and is due for a review (2018) under the requirements of the MCAA.
- DAERA is currently developing marine plans for both the inshore and offshore regions for Northern Ireland, which will be published as a single document.
- A Sustainability Appraisal is also being undertaken in Northern Ireland to assist in the development of the Marine Plan.

- England is broadly divided into 11 marine plan areas, which will each have a plan with a long-term (20 years) view of activities and will be reviewed every 3 years.
- There will be eleven English marine plans; the North West will have a single plan (covering both the inshore and offshore areas) following requests to have a single process and one plan for these areas.
- The English marine plan areas are scheduled to all have a plan by 2021.
- Wales is currently preparing its first National Marine Plan.
- The written draft Welsh National Marine Plan is now out for public consultation (December 2017).

Evaluation of the UK marine plans is therefore at different stages, reflective of the different stages of plan implementation. Evaluation approaches are currently being developed alongside plan review, plan implementation and plan development. Within the SIMCelt project we have worked to develop evaluation approaches with Northern Ireland and Wales.

This report presents an overview of MSP evaluation approaches and general principles for successful implementation and evaluation. As part of our SIMCelt evaluation work we have drawn on the experience of other projects such as the TPEA Project and Baltic Scope project<sup>1</sup>. We have engaged MSP authorities and key stakeholders in the UK to inform the development of suitable evaluation tools and approaches. The results of this report are intended to support the implementation of MSP in the Celtic Seas and throughout the EU. This report is intended to be used in conjunction with other SIMCelt deliverables.

## Objectives

**Specific Objective:** To examine approaches taken to the evaluation of MSP by MSP authorities working in the Celtic Seas and identify areas of common interest from which consensus may be built.

This activity builds on existing practice, by working with MSP authorities to scope existing approaches to the evaluation of MSP, to develop these and the underpinning criteria and indicators. This activity has recognised that the development of maritime spatial plans, and their associated evaluation, are at different states of progress within each of the MS whose plans cover part of the Celtic Seas and is in line with the Commission's MSP Roadmap Principle 8 of adaptive management. Rather than repeating previous work, this sub-component builds upon existing proposals for evaluation, tailoring them to the needs of the selected Member States for this component of work.

Existing approaches to evaluation have been reviewed and compared in this report, in order to identify areas of common interest. Where appropriate, this has been informed by previous work e.g. Transboundary Planning in the European Atlantic (TPEA) Evaluation Report and the UNESCO Guide to Evaluating Marine Spatial Plans (Ehler, 2014).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tpeamaritime.eu/wp>; <http://www.balticscope.eu>



**Output:** Report to the Steering Committee on analysis of approaches taken to the evaluation of MSP in the Celtic Seas and any conclusions drawn.

The output from this action will be made available for consideration to the MS responsible for the development of marine plans within the Celtic Seas. This activity will involve the further development of existing approaches to the evaluation of MSP, by means of a review and development of evaluation criteria and indicators. This will involve an analysis of the results of previous studies and projects in the context of the needs of the development of marine plans within the Celtic Seas. Proposed evaluation criteria will be developed by an Evaluation Task Group (partner sub group) and brought to the Steering Committee for further consideration.

## Summary of Current MSP Evaluation Theory and Practice

MSP is an ongoing and adaptive process of which evaluation and performance monitoring are essential components of the overall management process (Ehler and Douvère, 2009; Ehler, 2014). Evaluation of an MSP process step or a complete evaluation of a maritime spatial plan provides insight into the performance of a given step or whether the plan is confirming that outcomes and objectives are being achieved. Evaluation can be performed in relation to the planning process and governance procedures to identify improvements from an operational or efficiency aspect. The written plan can be evaluated for consistency and whether it logically follows that the MSP objectives will be achieved by implementing the written document. Evaluation can also assess the performance of the plan in achieving management outcomes and objectives.

Several guides to MSP evaluation have been produced including: work by the Monitoring and Evaluation of Spatially Managed Areas (MESMA)<sup>2</sup> project in Europe, which created a generic framework for monitoring and evaluating ocean planning; the UNESCO guide on evaluation in MSP (REF), which focuses on evaluating plan results; and the Transboundary Planning in the European Atlantic (TPEA) project, which created a framework for evaluation of transboundary MSP. In addition, there is a growing body of academic literature and other MSP project outputs that include evaluation guides and tools.

The UNESCO guide to MSP Evaluation is intended for practitioners responsible for planning and managing marine areas and outlines key principles for MSP evaluation and eight steps for monitoring and evaluating the performance of marine spatial plans. The UNESCO guide emphasises that MSP evaluation and monitoring should not be left until the end of the process; evaluation and monitoring need to be considered at the very beginning of the process rather than waiting until the plan is complete. A key principle from the UNESCO guide is that management objectives and expected outcomes are measurable.

The TPEA project (2012-2014) examined critical elements of the transboundary MSP process in the context of legal and policy frameworks, participatory approaches and technical considerations. Although the TPEA project focused on the transboundary nature of MSP processes, the general principles of transboundary evaluation can also be applied in a plan-level context. A review of MSP evaluation in practice and literature by the TPEA project demonstrated the development of various evaluation models from a range of perspectives, including: an ecological perspective (MESMA evaluation model); a monitoring focused evaluation (MASPNOSE)<sup>3</sup>; outcome orientated evaluation (Laurian et al. 2010); and a planning-led approach (Carneiro, 2013). The TPEA review also highlighted that MSP evaluation needs to be tailored to the specific context of the individual MSP process and needs to take into account the constraints within which public authorities operate.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.mesma.eu](http://www.mesma.eu)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wur.nl/en/show/Maspnose-Maritime-spatial-planning-in-the-North-Sea.htm>

General principles for MSP evaluation, described in the TPEA review and the UNESCO guide to Evaluation, are presented in Table 1:

**Table 1. General Principles for MSP Evaluation**

<b>General Principles</b>	<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>TPEA</b>
<i>Importance of considering monitoring and evaluation at the beginning of the MSP process</i>	✓	✓
<i>Setting clear objectives</i>	✓	✓
<i>Outcomes should represent the most important result of planning</i>	✓	
<i>Limited number of sound indicators with targets to ensure measurable progress</i>	✓	
<i>Baseline values for the indicators</i>	✓	
<i>Indicators, targets and baselines and reporting requirements should be linked to monitoring and evaluation</i>	✓	✓
<i>Different evaluation criteria will apply at different stages of the MSP process</i>		✓
<i>Stakeholder involvement is an important part of successful evaluation</i>		✓

There is some overlap in the general principles of both the UNESCO guide and the TPEA review, and even when not highlighted by the guides as a general principle, both guides mention the above principles in their accompanying descriptive text. Whilst the UNESCO guide emphasises that evaluation and monitoring should be considered at the start of the MSP process, evaluation can take place at different stages throughout the process. Evaluation of MSP outcomes has so far rarely been carried out as most MSP processes are still in the early stages of implementation.

### Evaluation Frameworks

Different evaluation models or frameworks have been developed. Many of these are theoretical and have not yet been applied to a practical case of MSP. These frameworks or models vary in complexity and focus, as the reasons for evaluation or the components of plans being evaluated can

differ. Various models have included more ecological (e.g. MESMA or the Baltic SCOPE checklist) or planning-based perspectives (e.g. Carneiro, 2013); and some are more process (e.g. TPEA) or outcome (e.g. Laurian et al. 2010) orientated. A standardised protocol for MSP has not been developed, as most evaluation programmes will need to be tailored to the specific MSP purpose (TPEA, 2015).

The evaluation framework proposed by Carneiro (2013) consists of generic criteria, which could be further developed in the context of the specific MSP case. The framework has criteria for four stages i) plan-making process ii) contents of the planning document iii) plan implementation and iv) plan outcomes and impacts.

The TPEA Good Practice Guide (Jay and Gee, 2014) outlines several key principles for i) preparing an MSP evaluation process and ii) carrying out evaluation (see Box 1).

#### Box 1. TPEA Good Practice Guide principles for preparing and carrying out MSP evaluation

##### 1. Preparing an Evaluation Process

###### **Ensure cost effectiveness and proportionality**

*Evaluation of transboundary MSP should be conducted in a way that is proportionate to the time and resources available*

###### **Develop an appropriate framework for evaluation**

*Evaluation of transboundary MSP should be built into the overall process*

###### **Draw up suitable evaluation criteria and indicators**

*Evaluation of transboundary MSP should be based on tailored criteria and indicators*

##### 2. Carrying out Evaluation

###### **Ensure a well-managed evaluation process**

*The transboundary MSP process may be regularly reviewed, with agreed periodicity and clear responsibilities assigned*

###### **Evaluate stakeholder involvement**

*Stakeholder involvement and satisfaction with the transboundary MSP process may be continuously reviewed.*

Adapted from: (Jay and Gee, 2014)

Whilst the key principles from the TPEA project are set in the context of transboundary MSP, they are readily applicable to national planning initiatives. The TPEA project also developed a comprehensive evaluation framework, in the context of transboundary MSP, which should consist of the following elements:

1. Evaluation of the plan-making process
2. Evaluation of the plan contents
3. Evaluation of plan implementation

#### 4. Evaluation of plan outcomes and impact

#### 5. Process for communicating results

Evaluating the process is an essential element in ensuring the effectiveness of MSP (Jay and Gee, 2014).

Dominguez-Tejo and Metternicht (2018) evaluated planning documents of Sydney Harbour, Australia as part of a wider framework to advance efforts of EBA-MSP. The key findings of the evaluation included:

- Continuous investment in new documents which perpetuate some planning weaknesses, without indication of organisational learning from previous plan evaluations,
- Specific weaknesses identified across all planning documents: linguistics ambiguity, unclear hierarchy of goals and objectives, lack of clear time frames to implement goals and objectives, adoption of unmeasurable and highly ambitious plans,
- Existing plans should be updated on the basis of periodic reviews indicating progress towards stated goals/objectives in line with the Ecosystem Based Approach (EBA) (see following section) and adaptive management.

Carneiro (2013) highlights the problem of attribution and causality when evaluating a plan in terms of measuring the impacts of a plan. A key question when evaluating the effectiveness of a plan is what can reasonably be expected to measure as an effect of MSP, without the impact of other interventions and the dynamic nature of the marine environment (Carneiro, 2013). Logic chain hierarchies (working down through plan components vision, goals etc, to specific measures) used for wider policy evaluation and clear indicators for each step of the MSP process (as part of an evaluation framework) may help to evaluate effectiveness of a marine plan more clearly. Another suggestion is to use expert or stakeholder judgement to construct the “counterfactual” (i.e. what would have happened if no plan was implemented) and to estimate the magnitude of the changes as a result of the plan (TPEA, 2015).

Previous reviews of MSP processes have indicated lack of evidence that successful outcomes are being achieved through adopted plans (Jones et al. 2016; Domínguez-Tejo and Metternicht 2018). Since the implementation of successful MSP largely depends on the setting of effective management goals and objectives (Domínguez-Tejo and Metternicht 2018), it is important that MSP evaluation is rigorous in reviewing these objectives and their influence on the development an adopted plan. Alongside the setting of goals and objectives, outcome and performance indicators should be set at the same stage of the process to enable effective evaluation (Ansong et al. 2017).

### Ecosystem Based Approach to MSP

Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) considers human society as an integral part of ecosystems when managing natural resources (Koehn et al. 2013). EBM recognises the interconnectedness between systems, cumulative impacts and integrates ecological, social, economic and institutional perspectives (Christensen et al. 1996; Ansong et al. 2017). The goal of EBM is to maintain marine ecosystems ensuring they are healthy, productive and resilient in order to deliver ecosystem services to sustain human use (Foley et al. 2010; Ansong et al. 2017). EBM moves away from approaches

considering single species, short term perspectives and small spatial scale to whole ecosystem management with longer time scales, and includes stakeholders as part of an adaptive management approach. However, implementation of EBM has been slow as planners and resource managers have found the concept too broad and complex (Ansong et al. 2017).

MSP has been identified as a process for the effective delivery of EBM or, as referred to in EU-Directives, “an Ecosystem Based Approach” in MSP. MSP is intended to ensure that maritime uses are planned with ecological, economic and social objectives ensuring that ecosystem services are delivered by considering all interactions within the marine environment. Therefore, MSP is an essential tool for implementing an Ecosystem Based Approach (Gilliland and Laffoley, 2008). By combining the two concepts, Ecosystem-based MSP (EB-MSP) aims for:

*“the maintenance of marine ecosystems in a healthy condition, the sustainable exploitation of ecosystem goods and services, the reduction of conflicts among competing uses of the maritime territory, and the provision of multiple benefits to an as wide as possible array of involved sectors.”* (Ansong et al. 2017).

In order for MSP to work effectively as a tool for delivering EBM, the principles of EBM must be incorporated into the MSP process. Seven core elements for an EB-MSP process (Table 2) were identified by Ansong et al. (2017):

**Table 2. Seven core elements for an EB-MSP process**

<b>Defining and analysing existing situation</b>	1. Selection of plan area and boundary 2. Scoping, data collection and mapping 3. Understanding structural and functional biodiversity 4. Cumulative impacts and ecosystem service perspective
<b>Stakeholder participation</b>	5. Cross-sector integration
<b>Planning Phases</b>	6. Setting of management measures and trade-off analysis
<b>Implementation and Monitoring</b>	7. Adaptive management

The “Ecosystem Approach” is a key concept as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

*“a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”* (CBD, 2012)

The implementation of EBA has faced challenges, including poor availability of planning tools to implement the approach (Dominguez-Tejo et al. 2016). The CBD’s Subsidiary Body, Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) has therefore developed operational guidance and 12 principles (referred to as the Malawi Principles) to overcome the lack of clear guidelines, which in combination with the MSP framework, should help to overcome the challenge of EBA implementation (Dominguez-Tejo et al. 2016). Domniguez-Tejo et al. (2016) have used selected Malawi principles as guidance for developing evaluation criteria for MSP processes. By adapting this

approach, it is a useful method for evaluating to what extent MSP processes have applied and implemented an EA.

The Baltic Scope Project has made progress in integrating the two concepts (EA-MSP), with the production of a General Ecosystem Approach Checklist that emphasises the multi-dimensional aspect of the EA and contributes to guidance for applying an EA to MSP. The Baltic Scope checklist (Baltic SCOPE Project, 2017) aims to provide marine planners and authorities with a tool to secure that all key elements of the EA (based on the HELCOM/VASAB guidelines) are included in the MSP process and its organisation. The Baltic Scope Project applied this checklist to the Baltic Scope partner countries evaluating the extent to which the EA had been applied to MSP processes within the Baltic Sea area. As part of the EA Toolbox, the Baltic Scope project also developed a Planning Support Checklist, to be used in the planning process to identify potential conflicts and synergies and their possible solutions. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Checklist is also intended to be used as part of the SEA-MSP process and inform the implementation of the EA.

It is important to include the principles of EA-MSP in MSP Evaluation Frameworks to ensure that EA-MSP is made operational through an iterative, continuous and adaptive process. Lessons learned in the previous planning and evaluation cycles should be adapted into the next planning cycles. This iterative use of evaluation results is especially important in MSP processes where limited relevant knowledge and information in the marine environment are common challenges (Ansong et al. 2017). Domínguez-Tejo et al. (2016) also recommend an adaptive approach for implementing EA-MSP, combined with a precautionary approach. Performance monitoring therefore has a clear role to play in evaluation, identifying explicit feedback connections between the results of monitoring programmes and the desired outcomes of the plans (Domínguez-Tejo et al. 2016).

Successful implementation of planning frameworks accounting for socio-ecological systems relies on the setting of effective management goals and objectives (Domínguez-Tejo and Metternicht, 2018). MSP processes should therefore have clearly defined objectives for environmental, social and economic factors.

Domínguez-Tejo and Metternicht (2018) recommend that future efforts in implementing EA-MSP would need the following improvements:

- Meeting SMART-Open Standards criteria<sup>4</sup>
- Ensuring goals and objectives clearly reflect community's societal values
- Achieving adaptive implementation cycles through evaluation of management plans

## Summary

Evaluation of MSP is to ensure quality through a standardised review of processes and outputs (TPEA 2015). Various evaluation models and frameworks have been proposed from a range of perspectives and can be applied and adapted to different MSP contexts. Practical evaluation of MSP is still in early stages; outcome evaluation has rarely been carried out. Key principles of MSP evaluation should include: a comprehensive evaluation exercise encompassing all the different stages of the MSP process; MSP processes should have clear objectives which evaluation can review and assess

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<sup>4</sup> A combined assessment framework of SMART criteria (Specific. Measurable. Achievable. Relevant. Time Limited) and Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation (see Domínguez-Tejo and Metternicht 2018).

progress towards; and the evaluation must be tailored to the specific context, including: elements of transboundary MSP where appropriate, land-sea interactions and criteria for evaluating against an ecosystem approach. MSP evaluation should also recognise the availability of resources for evaluation and crucially should include stakeholder involvement to be successful.



## Methodology

We reviewed the outputs of previous projects on MSP evaluation and the more recent academic literature to examine approaches taken to the evaluation of MSP, identifying common practice, general principles and evaluation frameworks. To avoid duplication of previous projects we reviewed and summarised the unifying principles to inform our approach in developing tools for use by MSP planning authorities working in the Celtic Seas.

We have worked specifically with the MSP authorities of Northern Ireland and Wales in developing tools that may be used as part of an MSP evaluation package. Working with marine planners in both project areas is an essential part of the development of evaluation approaches as it provides critical timely, realistic and practically suitable information to inform the approach.

Within Northern Ireland, feedback from marine planners led us to develop a tailored evaluation framework and aid in the development of an evaluation questionnaire tool for completion by decision makers. The marine planning authority in Northern Ireland may consider integrating these suggested approaches into any future monitoring and evaluation. The framework and questionnaire may also be adapted to suit other Marine Plans.

Within Wales, following consultation with marine planners, we developed a questionnaire that we could send to key stakeholders in order to develop an approach to evaluating a specific chapter with the draft Welsh National Marine Plan.

In the context of the previous summary of MSP evaluation approaches, building upon the TPEA MSP evaluation framework and working in collaboration with marine planners, we sought to apply the principles of evaluation to statutory MSP processes within the Celtic Seas project region.

## Northern Ireland

### Introduction

The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 builds on the provisions set out in the MCAA 2009 by establishing a strategic system of marine planning in Northern Ireland's inshore region (0-12 nautical miles). The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is responsible for preparing marine plans in Northern Ireland. DAERA is currently developing marine plans for both the inshore and offshore regions, produced as a single document. To assist in the development of the draft Marine Plan, a Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared. DAERA will also prepare a report on the Marine Plan process in Northern Ireland, as required by legislation.

### Tailored Evaluation Framework

Whilst different evaluation models or frameworks have been developed, many of these are theoretical and have not yet been applied to a practical case of MSP. These frameworks or models vary in complexity and focus as the reasons for evaluation, or the components of plans being evaluated, can differ. For example, frameworks may have an ecological or planning perspective and may be process or outcome orientated.

A finding from the TPEA project was that whilst there were a number of frameworks or evaluation models to draw upon, most of these had been developed in the context of research projects, and not through statutory or officially recognised processes. The SIMCelt approach has been to use the TPEA evaluation framework as the starting point, adapting it in partnership with a MSP authority. The TPEA framework provides a list of criteria for evaluating transboundary MSP and is divided into three stages: preparation, diagnosis and planning; corresponding to stages of the MSP planning cycle. Separate categories, data and information, stakeholder engagement and communication, cover cross-cutting elements of evaluation. Other frameworks and evaluation guidance that have informed this work include the UNESCO guide, the BALTIC SCOPE Project and frameworks from the academic literature including: Carneiro (2013) and Domínguez-Tejo et al. (2016). By working with a marine planning authority, the SIMCelt evaluation framework has been adapted in the context of operational or practical constraints for planning authorities, whilst ensuring a rigorous and adequate evaluation of MSP. As with the TPEA framework, cost effectiveness, flexibility and proportionality have been important considerations in adapting this framework.

### Introduction to NI Evaluation Framework

An important consideration for the application of the evaluation framework, as identified by the TPEA project, is the amount of resources available for conducting an MSP evaluation of an acceptable quality. By working with marine authorities in Northern Ireland, we were able to identify evaluation questions as part of a comprehensive evaluation framework that were feasible to answer with available data (or questions that highlighted data gaps) and resources. The questions in the framework also incorporated elements of the ecosystem approach and transboundary MSP evaluation criteria. The researchers developed the framework by reviewing previous MSP evaluation frameworks and relevant academic and grey literature. The competent authority for Northern Ireland worked in tandem with the researchers to refine the draft framework. Table 3 presents the evaluation framework developed specifically to support the development of the marine plan for Northern Ireland. References in the table to 'policies' are to policy statements within the plan setting out planning guidance for marine activities.

## Evaluation Framework

Table 3. Tailored Evaluation Framework for Northern Ireland

<b>A. Process Evaluation</b>			
<b>Preparation</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
1. Legal and Administrative Framework	a. Is there a formal jurisdictional MSP system in place?	Q. What is the legislative framework? Q. Is the legislation adequate in order to initiate the plan process? Q. What institutional change, if any, was made as part of creating the plan?	<p><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></p>
2. Institutional capacity and co-operation	a. Who is the Marine Planning Authority?	Q. What entities and regulatory authorities are part of the plan process?	
	b. Have the roles and responsibilities of organisations in MSP been clearly defined and communicated?		
	c. Are there institutional resources (e.g. staffing, skills, funding, data availability) for organisations to engage in MSP?	Q. Which organisations are responsible for leadership, skills, resources and integration of key roles? Q. Is there efficiency, effectiveness, economy, equity and equality of main functions (e.g. understanding context, establishing vision)?	
	d. Is there effective formalised communication between organisations?		
	e. Is there equitable sharing of MSP responsibilities and tasks across borders?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
3. MSP Area	a. Has an agreed area has been defined for MSP purposes?	Q. At what spatial scale was the plan developed? Q. How does the plan scale match the ecosystem scale? Q. What is the spatial scale for implementation?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
4. Formulation of strategic objectives	a. Have agreed strategic objectives for the MSP process been established?		
	b. Have economic, social and environmental opportunities been incorporated into the strategic objectives?		
	c. Have principles of cooperation, governance and MSP been incorporated into the strategic objectives?		

Diagnosis			
Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
5. Governance Framework	a. Have existing and emerging policy, regulatory and management frameworks for planning and sectoral interests relevant been drawn up?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Has any analysis been carried out of the consistencies and inconsistencies of the policy, regulatory and management framework (including across borders)?		
	c. Have any gaps in the policy, regulatory and management framework needed for consideration of (transboundary) issues been identified?		
	d. Has there been consideration of the relationship between MSP, ICZM and terrestrial planning across the area?		
	e. Have stakeholders have been involved in drawing up the policy, regulatory and management framework?		
	f. Do planners understand the institutional set up relevant to MSP governance (in each country)?		
6. Area Characteristics	a. Have the ecological, economic and social character of the area has been described?		
7. Uses and activities and relevance of coastal and maritime issues	a. Have key pressures and opportunities for the area have been identified? b. What are the existing conflicts at this time? c. Is there a need to create spatially explicit zoning?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
8. Specific Objectives	a. Have agreed specific objectives for the area been established?		<p><i><b>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</b></i></p>
	b. Have economic, social and environmental opportunities been incorporated into the objectives?		
	c. Have stakeholders been included in the formation of specific objectives?		
9. Planning alternatives (options and scenarios)	a. Have options and scenarios for the area been given consideration?	Q. Has there been a priori analysis of the effect of any of the policies in the plan?	
	b. Is there coherence between the options and scenarios presented and the wider policy, regulatory and management framework?		
	c. Have methods for visualisation and analysis of issues, options and scenarios been used?	Q. Which decision support tools are used to inform spatial allocation decisions?	
10. Efficiency	a. Has the plan making process been carried out comprehensively and efficiently?	<p>Q. How long did the process take?</p> <p>Q. Were there adequate resources for the plan making process?</p> <p>Q. Were particular steps especially demanding of time and resources?</p>	

<b>B. Plan Evaluation</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
11. Coherence	a. Is there a Vision for the Plan? Are there objectives, indicators and targets?	Q. What are the stated objectives? Q. How were they created? Q. Are the objectives conceptual (e.g. conserve biodiversity) and/or operational (e.g. protect 15% of the coastline)? Q. Have indicators and targets (and interim targets) of performance for the plan been identified? Q. Has a baseline for the indicators and targets been established? Q. Do the objectives logically stem from the plan making process/Legislative mandate?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Is there harmonisation between the analyses and proposals in the plan and those of other policy and management instruments?	Q. Have management actions for each objective been identified? Q. Are the proposed management options able to reduce the risks of not achieving the MSP objectives? Q. What is the economic and technical feasibility of the proposed management options in terms of implementation, enforcement and integration into operational activities? Q. Are the management activities SMART? Q. Is there harmony across regions within the MSP?	
	c. Are there strategic and specific proposals for the area?		
12. Relevance	a. Have the relationships between the main needs and ambition of the region or country (socio-economic, environmental, cultural, governance) and the components of the plan been identified and clearly communicated?		
	b. Have the boundaries of the planning area been clearly communicated?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
13. Scope/Integration	a. What is the degree of horizontal integration amongst main sectors?	Q. Does the plan consider all uses or just selected sectors? Q. Is there coordination among sectoral policies?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. What is the degree of vertical integration between different levels of government?		
	c. Is there a mechanism for addressing conflicts between main sectors?		
	d. How is the plan future-proofed?	Q. How does the plan recognise and deal with uncertainty and risk? Q. How are trade-offs analysed?	
14. Conflict analysis	a. Identification of main conflicts (those with most important impacts on process)	Q. How are trade-offs framed and formalised? Decision support tools?	
	b. Is there identification of the main drivers of conflicts?	Q. What are the legislative obligations/strategic sectoral objectives?	
	c. What are the approaches and mechanisms in place to address conflicts?		
15. Conformance	a. Is there conformance with strategic principles and objectives?		
	b. Is there conformance with statutory rules and guidance?		
	c. Is there conformance of planning methods?		
	d. Is there conformance across spatial scales and with other policy principles and objectives?		



Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
16. Guidance for Implementation	a. Is there an agreed schedule for implementation?		
	b. Is there clarity of provisions and schedule for implementation?	Q. What governance and institutional arrangements are used to implement the plan?	
	c. Is there clarity and adequacy of roles and responsibilities?		
	d. Are there adequate follow up mechanisms?	Q. How long does the plan apply? Q. What is the interval for update and revision?	
	e. Are there adequacy resources for implementation?		
17. Approach, data and methodology	a. Is there comprehensiveness and clarity of presentation of data?	Q. Has the spatial extent of human activities, uses and pressures been adequately mapped? Q. Have data gaps been identified and if so what are they? Q. Are there plans to fill these data gaps? Q. Where data is missing has expert judgement been used?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Are details of methodology provided where appropriate?	Q. Are pressures and impacts adequately mapped?	
	c. Is there information about who conducted the analyses?		
18. Quality of Communication	a. Has the Plan been written using Plain English?		
	b. Are suitable methods for visualising planning data used?		
	c. Is there a balance between level of detail and reader/user friendliness?		
	d. Is the plan structured appropriately?		

<b>C. Plan Implementation</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
19. Roles and responsibilities	a. Have roles and responsibilities for implementation been clearly assigned?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Is there clarity on cross sector decision making structures and processes for MSP?		
	c. Have licensing decisions affecting the MSP area been taken in a co-ordinated way and in line with the proposals set out in the planning documents?		
20. Resources	a. Have adequate resources been made available within the responsible organisations?		
21. Implementation /Utilisation	a. Have the proposals set out in plan been implemented?	Q. What is the work plan for the implementation of the MSP? Q. Who is responsible for the oversight, direction and reporting as to the implementation of the MSP?	
	b. Has the plan been utilised in decision-making (political level)?		
	c. Is there evidence of plan utilisation in management and development control (operational/technical level)?		
	d. Is there alignment of other policy and management instruments with the plan?		

<b>D. Outcomes and Impact Evaluation</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
22. Achievement of objectives	a. Has there been an assessment of the extent to which strategic objectives have been met?	Q. What is the progress being made to secure objectives? Q. What is the progress being made to secure HLMO? Q. Is there an articulation of how the objectives will be achieved? i.e. "intervention logic"	<i><b>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</b></i>
	b. What are the difficulties hindering the achievement of the objectives?	Q. How (if any) have conflicts resolved? (e.g. formal examination of alternatives, advisory committee, unstructured compromise among user groups)	
	c. Has there been a review of the uptake of wider recommendations?		
	d. Has there been a review of the implementation of planning proposals?		
	e. Is monitoring in place to facilitate the evaluation and impacts of the planning outcomes?		
	f. Have the outcomes and impacts of planning provisions been evaluated?		
23. Monitoring and performance measures	a. What are the products of the MSP process?		
	b. What constitutes success of the plan?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
23. Monitoring and performance measures ( <i>cont'd</i> )	c. Have formal metrics of success of the plan (e.g. indicators and reference targets) been adopted? If so, what are they?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	d. Does the plan incorporate monitoring?		
	e. Is adaptive management an explicit component?	Q. Is the adaptive management formally structured around response to feedback from monitoring?	
	f. Is there a strategy for updating and improving the decision support tools based on monitoring and evaluation?		

Cross Cutting Themes			
Stakeholder Engagement			
Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
1. Stakeholder Engagement	a. Have potential participants representing statutory and non-statutory organisations been identified through stakeholder analysis?	Q. What entities were included as part of the process? Q. How were stakeholders defined and what standards were used to determine which stakeholders had legitimate standing? Q. Was there a stakeholder engagement plan?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Has stakeholder engagement been representative of interests (within across jurisdictions/sectors)?		
	c. Have stakeholders participated at critical points throughout the MSP process?	Q. Which parts of the process were stakeholders allowed to participate? Q. In what form was their participation? Q. What was the process for facilitating stakeholder participation? Q. Did stakeholders have equal opportunity to participate actively in the process? Q. Was there a broad public participation process? Q. What were the criteria for judging “effective” participation?	
	d. What methods have been used that have fostered collaboration and equitable engagement?		
	e. How have stakeholder perspectives have been incorporated in the MSP process?	Q. To what extent were economic and social data, capturing affected individuals and communities, which were not represented by stakeholders?	
	f. Are stakeholders satisfied with their level of participation and incorporation of their input?	Q. What is the influence of stakeholder participation on the plan? (Process satisfaction vs. result satisfaction)	

<b>Data and Information</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
2. Data Availability and quality	a. Have knowledge and data needs have been identified?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Has the best available, relevant data has been used?		
	c. Has a suitable shared system for data management and analysis been used?	Q. Have suitable methods and technology been used?	
	d. Is data is consistent across the MSP area?		
	e. Is there evidence of robustness, clarity and reproducibility of analyses?		
	f. Has there been co-operation in gathering and managing data?		
	g. Have stakeholders have been involved in providing relevant data?		
<b>Communication</b>			
3. Communication	a. Has transparency been ensured by regular reporting of the MSP process?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Has non-technical information about the process been communicated to the wider public?		
	c. Have events communicating the MSP process have been held?		

	d. Have links been made to related processes and organisations and the academic community?		
	e. Have results and recommendations been clearly communicated to policy makers?		
	f. Has the MSP process been conducted and communicated in languages that are accessible to participants?	Q. Have non-technical summaries been produced? Q. Is there clarity of the plan text given the intended audience? Q. Is there clarity of data/analyses in the written plan? Q. Is there a balance between level of detail and reader/user friendliness?	
<b>Transboundary</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
4. Regulatory framework	a. Have existing and emerging policy, regulatory and management frameworks for planning and sectoral interests relevant to transboundary issues been identified?		<i><b>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</b></i>
	b. Have any gaps or inconsistencies in the policy, regulatory and management framework needed for consideration of transboundary issues been identified?		
	c. Have licensing decisions affecting the transboundary MSP area been taken in a co-ordinated way and in line with the proposals set out in the planning documents?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
5. Governance Framework	a. Is there effective formalised communication between organisations across borders?		<p><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></p>
	b. Is there equitable sharing of transboundary MSP responsibilities and tasks across borders?		
	c. Have principles of transboundary cooperation, governance and MSP been incorporated into the specific objectives?		
	d. Is there clarity on cross border (cross sector?) decision making structures and processes for MSP?		
	e. Has there been consideration of the relationship between MSP, ICZM and terrestrial planning across the transboundary area?		
	f. Have stakeholders (for transboundary issues) been involved in drawing up the policy, regulatory and management framework?		
	g. Do planners understand the institutional set up relevant to MSP governance (in each country)?		



<b>Ecosystem Based Approach</b>			
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Prompts</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
Plan	a. Environmentally/ecologically sustainable	Q. Does the MSP have the necessary spatial and temporal measures to ensure that the ecosystem features and functioning and the fundamental and final ecosystem services are safeguarded?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
Management Objectives	a. Environmentally/ecologically sustainable	Q. What are the indicators and thresholds used to forecast the ecosystem benefits as a result of implementing the management options? Q. What criteria and consultation processes demonstrate how the management measures reduce risks to traditional, cultural, social and economic ecosystem services?	
<b>Ecosystem Approach</b>			
1. Biological/cultural values given equal value	a. Have environment, social and economic values given equal consideration?	Q. Does trade off analysis consider market and non-market (e.g. ecosystem service value) economic components?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Is EBA explicitly integrated into planning goals/targets, principles or objectives?		
	c. Have social and cultural values been identified and explicitly integrated into spatial analysis?		
	d. Have economic values been identified and explicitly integrated?		
	e. Has data on selected human uses been standardised?		
	f. Have environmental values been identified and explicitly integrated?		

Criterion	Key Questions	Prompts	Evidence
2. Managers consider effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems	a. Are there adjacent activities or ecosystems outside the MSP boundaries?	Q. Have Cumulative impacts been considered? Q. Has there been a cross sector approach in considering impacts?	<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Have project or potential effects from the plan and activities within the MSP adjacent to ecosystems and communities been considered?		
	c. Have EIAs been conducted or specified as a requirement of future development?		
3. Need to understand and manage the environment in an economic context	a. Has an overview of the social and economic context of management issues been provided?		
	b. Have ecosystem goods and services been identified and explicitly integrated to spatial analysis?		
	c. Have economic valuation methodologies for ecosystem goods and services been applied?		
4. Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning in order to maintain ecosystem services is a target	a. Has an overview of ecosystem functioning and dynamic relationships been provided?	Q. How well does the MSP link with other policies for nature conservation to achieve these indicators/objectives?	
	b. Have risks/threats to ecosystem structure and function been considered?		
	c. Have risks and uncertainties from uses been considered?		
	d. Have risks and uncertainties from uses been analysed quantitatively		

	e. Have management strategies and practices been adopted to facilitate recovery or restoration of ecosystem structure and function (including threatened components)?		
5. Ecosystem managed within the limits of functioning	a. Have management goals and practices to avoid or minimise adverse environmental impacts been adopted?		<b><i>This column is to be populated with plan-specific information in response to the questions in the previous columns</i></b>
	b. Have unsustainable practices identified and changes adopted?		
	c. Has the precautionary approach/principle been adopted?		
	d. Has an adaptive management approach been adopted?		
	e. Have future/ongoing environmental assessments and monitoring programmes been adopted?		
6. Ecosystem approach undertaken at the appropriate scale	a. Has the scope of the process been defined through operational and administrative criteria yet included ecological boundaries?		
	b. Has the geographical scope of the process considered terrestrial and/or catchment units?		
7. Appropriate balance between and integration of conservation and use of biological diversity	a. Have both strict and multiple use conservation zones been identified and promoted?		

## Summary

The Evaluation Framework developed in the previous section builds upon the work done previously by the TPEA project. The framework has been adapted in consultation with Northern Ireland's MSP authority to develop suitable, feasible and effective guidelines for evaluating the Northern Ireland Marine Plan which is still only at draft stage. The TPEA evaluation framework for evaluating transboundary MSP processes has been adapted to suit the NI MSP process. Additionally evaluation criteria that more definitively evaluate whether the Ecosystem Approach has been applied, have also been appended to the framework.

## Evaluation Questionnaire tool for Decision Makers

Northern Ireland is currently developing approaches towards MSP evaluation at an early stage of the MSP process. In addition to working on the development of a suitable evaluation framework, and in conjunction with the SIMCelt project, an Annual Evaluation Questionnaire for Decision Makers has been developed which may be used as part of the evaluation toolkit. The questionnaire is intended to enable decision makers to reflect, on what changes or developments have occurred in their sector (over the previous 12 months) and to gauge the extent to which the policies of the NI Marine Plan have influenced these changes.

The Evaluation Questionnaire for Decision Makers is at an early stage of development as the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland was at draft stage at the time of creation. It is designed to be a tool that may help evaluate the effectiveness of the policies, when adopted, by quickly identifying which of the draft core and activity policies are being used as part of the decision making process, and to what extent. It is designed to be as straightforward as possible in order to encourage speedy feedback whilst minimising the burden on decision makers.

Ideally the questionnaire would be completed online using software that instantly collates and presents survey results instantaneously. As well as using quantitative measures, the questionnaire also provides space for the interviewee to explain their scoring if they so wish. It may often be the case that the questionnaire requires a follow up interview if any serious issues are brought to light. It is envisaged that the collation of numerous questionnaires across a variety of sectors, and over a period of several years, may inform the evaluation of the Marine Plan in a quantitative way.

Figure 1. Northern Ireland Evaluation Questionnaire for Decision Makers

# Annual Decision Makers Evaluation

## DRAFT

Marine Planning is an ongoing and adaptive process and therefore regular evaluation is essential. By completing this form on an annual basis you will be helping to help assess the effectiveness of the Marine Plan policies. On each of the following three pages you will have the opportunity to outline up to three main changes that have occurred in your sector over the past 12 months and reflect on the extent to which the Marine Plan policies have influenced these developments. Such changes may include the development of new policies/plans/decisions/change of process etc.

This questionnaire has been designed to be a quick way to seek feedback from Marine Plan users but please note that you are also welcome to contact us at any stage to share your views. At the end of the questionnaire there is space if you wish to add any further information. Thank you for completing.

First name

Last name

Date

Organisation

Main responsibilities

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Please outline up to three main developments that have occurred in your sector over the past 12 months. This may include the development of new policies/plans/decisions/approvals/refusals/change of process etc.

Change 1

Change 2

Change 3

Please rate the extent to which each policy influenced CHANGE 1

	Policy NOT APPLICABLE	-Policy NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED /hampered this change	NEUTRAL- change would have happened regardless of Marine Plan	Policy POSITIVELY INFLUENCED this change	Change was ENTIRELY ENABLED because of the existence of this policy
Stakeholder Engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate Change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coastal Processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-Existence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cumulative Impacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage Assets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Invasive Alien Species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land & Sea Interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Litter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Noise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural Heritage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seascape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of Evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carbon Capture & Storage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial Fisheries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defence & Nat Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dredging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Aggregates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ports, Harbour & Shipping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telecoms Cabling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tourism & Recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the extent to which each policy influenced the CHANGE 2

	Policy NOT APPLICABLE	-Policy NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED /hampered this change	NEUTRAL- change would have happened regardless of Marine Plan	Policy POSITIVELY INFLUENCED this change	Change was ENTIRELY ENABLED because of the existence of this policy
Stakeholder Engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate Change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coastal Processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-Existence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cumulative Impacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage Assets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Invasive Alien Species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land & Sea Interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Litter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Noise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural Heritage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seascape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of Evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carbon Capture & Storage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial Fisheries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defence & Nat Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dredging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Aggregates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ports, Harbour & Shipping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telecoms Cabling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tourism & Recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the extent to which each policy influenced CHANGE 3

	Policy NOT APPLICABLE	-Policy NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED /hampered this change	NEUTRAL- change would have happened regardless of Marine Plan	Policy POSITIVELY INFLUENCED this change	Change was ENTIRELY ENABLED because of the existence of this policy
Stakeholder Engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Air Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate Change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coastal Processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-Existence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cumulative Impacts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heritage Assets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Invasive Alien Species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land & Sea Interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Litter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Noise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural Heritage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seascape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use of Evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water Quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carbon Capture & Storage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial Fisheries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defence & Nat Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dredging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marine Aggregates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ports, Harbour & Shipping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telecoms Cabling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tourism & Recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please feel free to use this space if you wish to give additional information on your above choices, or if you have any other comments on the Marine Plan policies . If you wish to discuss any aspect of this questionnaire or wish to discuss your choices in person, please do not hesitate to contact the Marine Plan team at any stage. We encourage all feedback, positive or negative. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.



## Summary

The Evaluation Questionnaire for Decision Makers is at an early stage of development. The questionnaire may help assess the effectiveness of the NI Marine Plan once adopted and the effectiveness of the policies contained within the plan. It aims to identify which policies are being used in decision making and to what extent, and also aims to identify whether these changes may be attributed to any of the policies in the plan.

The above tool may be easily adapted to other plans to enable planners to monitor how policies in the plan are being taken into account in decision-making.

## Draft Welsh National Marine Plan

### Introduction

The Well Being and Futures Generation (WBFG) Act 2015 requires public bodies listed in the Act to have a long term vision and co-ordinated approach in delivering the seven well-being goals<sup>5</sup> which apply in the marine area and therefore to the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP).

The WNMP is intended to provide a guide for the use of the Welsh seas and how Wales may best benefit from their resources (Welsh Government, 2017a). Marine planning is seen by the Welsh Government as a method for facilitating the sustainable development of the Welsh marine area, bringing together stakeholders and policy makers, reducing complexity and minimising duplication (Welsh Government, 2017). Marine planning will incorporate the ecosystem approach as required by the UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS), therefore seeking to balance economic growth with conservation and social needs. The WNMP will apply sustainable development principles supporting the sustainable management of natural resources (Welsh Government, 2017a). It is intended that marine planning will:

*“• Ensure multiple benefits from the marine environment – understanding opportunities for co-location of activities and uses of the marine environment so that we can maximise “win-wins”.*

*• Optimise opportunities for the sustainable exploitation of all sectors, particularly those with substantial room for growth including coastal tourism, aquaculture and renewable energy.*

*• Take practical opportunities to secure ecosystem recovery to support resilience whilst enabling the sustainable exploitation of natural resources within limits.*

*• Focus more on providing benefits to society, but particularly for coastal communities, from the marine environment.”* (Welsh Government, 2017b).

The WNMP will set out the Government’s policy for the sustainable development of the Welsh marine planning area (inshore and offshore) for the next 20 years. The WNMP aims to set out the ambitions for future use of marine natural resources, outline how various marine users should interact and consider each other in activities and future plans. Marine planning policy is intended to support sustainable blue growth through clarifying how proposals should be developed, identifying areas of sea where they may be most appropriately sited and by ensuring that there is early and positive engagement between various marine users. The approach to managing marine activities in the draft WNMP have been developed in conformity with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and UK Marine Policy Statement (2011), and applies the sustainable development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Public consultation on the draft WNMP is intended to occur for 16 weeks, beginning with the release of the draft WNMP in December 2017. The Welsh Government will consider the consultation responses and how they have been considered will be reported in any re-draft of the WNMP and accompanying documents. Concurrent independent investigations on the proposals in the draft may occur at this time. Upon completion of the consultation and review of responses, the plan will then

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<sup>5</sup> <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

be finalised, published and adopted with the agreement of Welsh ministers and also the Secretary of State because the plan contains policy relating to retained functions. Once adopted, the plan will have effect and must be applied as set out in the MCAA (2009).

As progress is made towards adopting the plan, the Welsh Government has stated it will work with public authorities and key stakeholders to support and guide them in the implementation of a planned approach to marine decision making (Welsh Government, 2017a). There is also recognition that applying a new policy framework will take time and that the WNMP will evolve through subsequent iterations as experience is applied and lessons learned.

The draft WNMP is intended to support the sustainable development of Welsh seas and includes policy in relation to 11 sectors, including **marine aggregates**. The proposed marine aggregates policy in the draft WNMP transposes key elements of the Welsh Government's interim Marine Aggregate Dredging Policy (iMADP) (2004) and provides a strategic policy for aggregate decision making across Wales. The iMADP applied to the Bristol Channel and a review process<sup>6</sup> of this policy led to the proposal to withdraw and replace it with Wales-wide policy within the draft WNMP.

The policy proposals have been considered by key stakeholders with marine aggregates interests. Further comments on the aggregates policies outlined in the draft WNMP are invited as part of the WNMP consultation.

### Sector Profile: Aggregates

England and Wales have one of the most developed marine aggregate industries in the world, extracting 15-20 million tonnes annually from the seabed (The Crown Estate, 2017). In Wales, marine aggregates are economically important, with 47% of all sand and gravel sold in Wales derived from a marine source (Welsh Government, 2017c). Marine aggregate resources are widely distributed across Welsh waters; historically the majority of extraction has occurred in the Bristol Channel, Severn Estuary and North Wales. The aggregates sector provides a vital contribution to construction and maintenance of infrastructure underpinning economic and social well-being and supporting sustainable development.

#### *Sustainability*

The main dredging areas are in the Bristol Channel and one site in North Wales. Financial and carbon costs greatly increase when transported by road as aggregates are a low value bulk commodity, therefore it is important that aggregates are sourced close to their point of use (Welsh Government, 2017c). Demand for aggregates has been relatively constant over the past decade and applications are unlikely to increase in the near term. The area of seabed that is licensed for marine aggregate extraction continues to be minimised through employing best practice guidance and methodologies established to support resource management (BMAPA, 2016). This guidance aims to ensure that dredging operations occur only where there are commercially viable sand and gravel resources, sufficiently thick to not expose underlying bedrock sediment and therefore to enable ecological recovery following cessation of dredging activities (BMAPA, 2016).

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<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government (2017) Welsh National Marine Plan: Review of interim marine aggregate dredging policy. Report Number: WG31640

The draft WNMP emphasises that aggregates are a finite marine natural resource and the extraction and rate of use needs to be managed sustainably. Aggregates as a sector covered in the draft WNMP will also be managed under the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) framework as promoted by the Environment Wales Act (2016).

### *Climate change*

Objectives of the sector include those that specifically address climate change and energy, committing to reducing emissions and maximising efficiency (BMAPA, 2016). A core value of the industry is also to recognise the need to support future coastal and flood defence schemes, for example, through the provision of beach replenishment sands and gravels (BMAPA 2016).

### *Natural resources and environmental protection*

The marine aggregates sector is carefully regulated to ensure that impacts from dredging activity on the environment are minimised. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) provide environmental protection, aiming to ensure the environment is considered in a systematic and transparent way that avoids damaging impacts. Additionally, the MSFD and EU Habitats Directive provide a clear statutory requirement for environmental protection and there is a formal consideration in the issue of marine licenses (Welsh Government, 2017c). The need for coastal impact study is also incorporated into the marine licensing decision process (Welsh Government, 2017c). The Crown Estate states its commitment to being a responsible landlord by minimising the impact that marine aggregate dredging has on the natural environment, helping local communities and preserving archaeological finds (The Crown Estate, 2017).

### **Sector Monitoring**

The aggregate sector has a wide range of data which it reports annually, contributing to the measurement of the sustainable development of the sector (BMAPA, 2016). The BMAPA works in partnership with Historic England and the Crown Estate to report on archaeological heritage, and works with Defra, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), the Crown Estate and the Welsh Government to deliver compliance monitoring. Seabed monitoring is required to fulfil the conditions attached to marine licences for extraction and is intended to contribute towards the understanding of sand and gravel habitats, and potentially add information to Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) site monitoring.

### **Evaluation Exercise: Aggregates**

As part of the SIMCelt project, examining approaches to the evaluation of MSP by marine planning authorities, we recognised that the development of marine plans, and their associated evaluation, is at different stages of progress across the project area. Given the different approaches taken by various MSP authorities towards MSP and the different progress made by various authorities, it was important to work in collaboration with key stakeholders and government in developing approaches to evaluation and monitoring. To explore options for evaluating the draft Welsh National Marine Plan, we used the draft plan aggregates sector chapter as a case study example.

We undertook this work in collaboration with the Welsh Government to help inform their developing approach to WNMP monitoring and reporting. We requested the input from the Welsh Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group in order to provide key stakeholder feedback as part of this collaborative approach. Members of the stakeholder group have expertise and understanding of marine planning and wider marine management and are representative of different organisations with interests in the marine environment. By inviting stakeholders to participate in the evaluation exercise, the resultant feedback is intended to contribute to growing understanding of the evaluation of marine planning and developing ways of evaluating marine planning processes.

Stakeholders were invited to participate in this study through the completion of a written questionnaire (Appendix 1) and were given an accompanying letter of invitation. The questionnaire required a written response to a set of structured questions about evaluation of the draft Welsh National Marine Plan in the context of the aggregate sector chapter. The purpose of the questionnaire was to explore a possible evaluation framework for the aggregates section of the Draft Welsh National Marine Plan through consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to support the development of a practical, realistic and cost-effective approach.

Our specific aims for this exercise were to establish:

- What needs to be monitored and evaluated for the aggregates sector in the light of the policy set out in the draft plan?
- What needs to be measured to assess the effectiveness of the plan under Sec 61 of the MCAA (2009)?

The questionnaire outlines a potential framework with reference to the draft plan, and invites comment and further suggestions to aid our exploration of evaluation approaches. There are two types of questions included in the questionnaire:

- i) Questions that **could potentially** be asked as part of an evaluation of the plan following the plan's adoption. These questions relate to the numbered sections of the current draft plan (387- 447) and are under the heading *Proposed evaluation questions (EQ)*
- ii) Questions posed as part of this consultation in order to improve the evaluation framework (E.g. Q1.a). **These are the questions that the stakeholders were invited to answer.**

The written questionnaire was emailed to members of the Welsh Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group and responses were returned to the researchers. A total of six written responses and one phone interview, by which comments on the questionnaire were provided orally, were received.

The standard consultation responses were examined and key themes (similar issues raised in a number of responses) were identified at each question. Reasons for opinions, alternative suggestions and other related comments were also noted.

## Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

Table 4. Respondent Profile

Type of Organisation	Number of Respondents
<i>Academic/Scientific</i>	1
<i>Energy</i>	1
<i>Environment</i>	1
<i>Industry/Transport</i>	3
<i>Public sector</i>	1

### Overview of Responses

The following paragraphs highlight the main themes that emerged in the questionnaire responses.

One respondent felt that the framework was thorough for an initial evaluation of the plan, but that the evaluation framework itself should be reviewed after its first use to highlight any gaps for subsequent reviews. Other respondents felt that in its current form, this evaluation would be too detailed and resource intensive. One respondent suggested that it is better to consider headline principles in the first instance that look to build on, rather than duplicate, existing processes and arrangements. Assessment and reporting should be simple and the potential to use existing data should be utilised with any overlap between implementation of plan policies and other casual factors clearly explained.

There were a number of comments that reflected the need for the evaluation framework/questionnaire to have a relationship with the monitoring framework and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Monitoring and evaluation of the regulatory system should be separate although there should be a link between the two, with the results of monitoring informing the evaluation process. Hence if the regulatory system is inefficient, the plan will not be successful; evaluation should be able to point to the problem that needs solving. Another respondent noted that there needs to be an overarching way to evaluate how the plan feeds into marine licensing for aggregates and other sectors. Marine licence decisions should be plan led and once the plan has been implemented, it will need to be reviewed to determine if and how this is happening.

A crucial comment was that the evaluation should be about monitoring the effectiveness of the plan and the influence of the plan. One respondent noted there needs to be clarity on what the focus of the monitoring is: the policies or the supportive narrative text of the marine plan. Also, that more focus should be placed on how to monitor the actual policies and highlighting problems and opportunities relating to either the sustainable growth of the sector, or management of conflicts between policies or sectors. The most important question for one respondent was how relevant authorities have ensured that they have delivered their functions so they are in accordance with the

marine plan. Additionally, that adaptive management should be a consideration, i.e. evaluation points to the potential problems and how they can be rectified. One respondent signposted the Magenta Book<sup>7</sup> as a useful tool in developing the evaluation approach, by using logic chains and hierarchy of objectives.

Respondents suggested that the focus of the questions should be rephrased to be more neutral i.e. that questions should not be leading, focus on negative aspects or suggest that the aggregates industry is of less importance under the plan.

### **General Policies**

General comments regarding the general policies were that perhaps it was not necessary to monitor the application of general policies in the way suggested by the proposed evaluation questions. Respondents suggested that the general policies could be monitored themselves rather than at a sector-specific level. One respondent noted that:

*“There needs to be a clear consideration on what is required to be monitored, whether this is the policies themselves or the narrative. If there is a benefit in assessing how a particular sector is applying the general policies this could be addressed in any monitoring of the general policies themselves.”*

One respondent suggested that the evaluation questions were too generic but that the specific considerations were too detailed. Another respondent noted that these questions may generate a lot of data; if applied to all sectors and without a clear aim this may be of limited value. If there is a need to monitor any changes due to the plan or, how the general policies are applied to sector decision-making, a useful question could be based on:

- “Has there been any additional information that you have considered following the adoption of the plan?”
- “Are there any policies that have been difficult to consider, and if so, why?”

### **Sector-Sector Interactions**

In terms of archaeological protocols, respondents were aware that it is a requirement of marine licences to have a protocol in place. More specific/appropriate evaluation questions were suggested by respondents including:

- “whether codes of practice used have been successful in recording archaeological features and how understanding has improved”
- “providing evidence to show how relevant public authorities have considered strategic planning options in decision making”
- “whether any issues have arisen in relation to interactions between aggregates and other sectors during the lifetime of the plan and whether the plan was able to help resolve these”
- “How have other industries interacted with the aggregate industry?”

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>



- “How have any new proposals (since adoption of the plan/previous review) for aggregate dredging sites minimised their impacts on existing or planning activities in other sectors?”

An additional suggestion was to consider evaluating an overarching outcome related objective for aggregates interacting with other sectors. For example:

- “Adverse impacts to and resulting from new aggregates activity is minimised; and positive impacts to and resulting from new aggregates activity are maximised”.

By reviewing this objective, it was felt that evaluation would then be reviewing success. For example, if the objective was not successfully achieved, reasons could include regulatory reasons, policy weakness, process and governance reasons. If the objective was successfully achieved, this could be due to the policy imperative to co-locate and demonstrate engagement with other sectors.

One respondent suggested that the Sustainability Appraisal should be referred to in this section of evaluation, as it may inform whether areas are “incompatible/compatible”. Additionally, one respondent suggested the focus on this section may be more realistic as “plan-enabled or plan supported development” as currently, the strategic planning angle, whilst interesting, implies that the marine plan is leading development decisions.

The majority of respondents felt that the proposed evaluation questions were feasible to answer, but a significant input from licensing would be needed, as most of these plan policies formalise and standardise the checks and balances that should arguably already be taking place. Furthermore, resources for an evaluation process would need to be accounted for and included in evaluation-process planning; a streamlined approach to monitoring is necessary.

### *Ecosystem Interactions*

Similar comments to question one were made in that monitoring and evaluation effort should not be duplicated. For example, for a given marine licence, there is a formal review process every five years in which some of these criteria are already considered. Additionally, that in any monitoring questions, there needs to be a clear identification between what is monitoring for the purposes of the plan, and those that could be monitoring the consequences of other legislation or policy. Any overlap in monitoring should be acknowledged and highlighted. Due to the existence of other monitoring programmes, most respondents felt the questions in this section were feasible to answer.

One respondent suggested that there must be alignment with the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) as this will be the authoritative statutory reporting on ecosystems and natural resources. The SoNaRR report should therefore inform the evaluation questions. The respondent highlighted that the challenge will be in ensuring that environmental information prepared for the marine environment, including for EIA and development, is somehow captured to inform SoNaRR, which should then inform evaluation of the WNMP. Furthermore, past and future trends should receive more emphasis in the WNMP given the dynamic nature of the marine environment.

Two respondents felt the supplementary questions in this section were too leading (as large steps are made to minimise the impacts of marine aggregate extraction already), or concentrated on the negative aspects. One respondent felt that arguably many of the supplementary questions were largely irrelevant.

Suggestion questions/improvements included:

- “How has the main plan influenced the way that the impacts of marine aggregate extraction on marine ecosystems are minimised?”
- “Whether there are any improvements that could be made to the regional monitoring programme to ensure habitats are appropriately monitored and protected.”
- “Ask for evidence to show that dredged areas are showing signs of recovery.”

It was also suggested that the supplementary questions in this section could be restructured to follow a similar timeline as a project or development. For example, considering questions that relate to information used to inform Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs); how were potential impacts considered during the application process; what post-consent monitoring has been undertaken and has this been used to inform subsequent applications.

Furthermore, a respondent noted that a critical factor in ensuring success of the plan is *sustainable development* and it is therefore important that the interactions between developments and the environment are not lost.

### Future

Two respondents felt that these were important evaluation questions, and that given the relationship with the construction industry on land especially, trends and capacity should be evaluated in that context. However, one of the respondents suggested that although these were useful, they may not be necessary to monitoring the implementation of the plan, but future iterations. Furthermore, two respondents suggested that a trends question, likely based on historical performance as the process of forecasting future demand, will be challenging. However, information should be available from the Regional Aggregate Working Parties (RAWPs) that consider construction aggregates supply.

Additional/ rephrasing of questions suggested included:

- “Are the areas appropriate; is there a need for further Strategic Resource Areas (SRAs) or a refinement of SRAs?”
- “What is the current level of permitted reserves within areas licensed for marine aggregate extraction?”
- “Whether there is sufficient flexibility built into the plan to deal with uncertainty like market shocks and/or counter-trend scenarios (which could include climate change/extreme events)?”
- “insights into any major infrastructure projects on the horizon that would require marine aggregate and if there is the ability to provide for this.”

It was noted that information to answer these questions was available and collected annually, albeit at a national rather than regional scale.

### Climate Change

Respondents again referred to previous comments made for *general policies* and for question one. One respondent noted that impacts around dredging on flood risk and beach impact are already

incorporated into EIAs. Two respondents suggested that the sub-questions may not be realistic, in the context of climate change as any changes from climate change are likely to be subtle, and almost indeterminate from other commercial/operational factors that are at play. One of these respondents noted, however, that information from this question may help establish a robust baseline against which long term changes can be assessed.

Another respondent posed several questions in relation to this section:

- “What is the objective here? Does the plan need to be responsive to the uncertainty arising from climate change?”
- “What is the baseline understanding of the impact of climate change on the aggregates sector?”
- “What are the expected trends? Uncertainties? Cumulative effects with other sectors?”
- “Does the plan help improve this understanding (improving evidence?)?”
- “Does the plan facilitate whatever action is needed to make the sector more resilient to climate change impacts?”

Another suggested question:

- “Whether there is evidence to indicate that climate change is actually having an impact on the aggregates sector.”

### Governance

Respondents noted that changes to governance would need to be monitored against a baseline understanding of effectiveness. One respondent suggested that whilst potentially feasible to answer through the provision of any EIA Consent Decisions, this was not an appropriate evaluation question and would likely be reviewing aspects that are not a consequence of the plan itself. Another respondent suggested that the governance angle is where most of the analysis should focus; “as it is about how the requirements of the marine plan are being delivered in practice against the background of a regulatory regime that was already in place and functioning.”

A suggested evaluation question from one respondent referred to the previous section on *future interactions* and the question regarding SRAs; an overarching question on trends from industry might be useful if phrased in the context of SRAs.

Other suggested question included:

- “Have there been any issues with differences in governance between the devolved authorities?”
- “How many Production Agreements have been awarded since the plan implementation?”
- “Has a good practice guidance document been produced for Wales?”

Another respondent suggested that if there is a focus on evaluating governance, the evaluation should be focused on the effectiveness of the plan/ influence of the plan on governance to facilitate plan objectives.

### *Key Evidence Needs*

One respondent noted that this section should be informed by the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and the SoNaRR. Another suggested it may be useful to frame the question in the context of the SRAs as previously suggested.

Suggested questions included:

- “whether any other evidence needs have been identified”
- “What evidence has been developed following adoption of the plan and was this specific to SRAs?”

Future needs for aggregates over the period of the marine plan was highlighted as a key consideration. The relevant point of: “what is required to support baseline market demand alongside other demands arising from major infrastructure projects coastal defence projects?” was also emphasised in relation to key evidence needs.

### ***Aggregate Policies***

#### *Sector Objectives*

A suggestion from one respondent was that these evaluation questions may be more suited to consultation rather than evaluation.

One respondent suggested that there is a need to consider how the objective is responsive to change/uncertainty. Additionally, that cross-sector interactions need to be recognised, to allow for a holistic decision-making process.

A note on the information provided as part of the evaluation exercise, from one respondent was that additional signposting to sections of the marine plan would benefit those answering the evaluation questions.

- “Are there any further inclusions required in the marine plan to evaluate progress against the objective?”

Establishing future needs over the plan period was noted as a relevant consideration, as the extent, location, intensity of operations may vary over the plan period. A respondent also highlighted that underlying this section is how the marine plan has influenced the way that marine aggregates extraction is developed and managed - what has changed?

#### *Sector Policies*

In reference to AGG\_01, it was suggested that it is important to ensure that the restricted tonnage limits are regularly reviewed.

One respondent emphasised that the considerations need to be aligned with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and not just the HLMOs. Furthermore, another respondent emphasised that the evaluation questions need to assess the impacts of the policies themselves, and that there is a need for clarity over the purpose of the monitoring, how the data will then be evaluated, and how the data will be used, i.e. to inform future evaluations.

One respondent noted that more emphasis/weight should be given to considering the environmental impacts of these policies alongside the other considerations. Another respondent suggested that the application of the safeguarding policies will be important in practice, but it will be largely for other activities to demonstrate how they have taken into account marine aggregate extraction.

### **Summary Points**

- Feedback points to the importance of good planning for effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of MSP,
- Clear, measurable objectives are critical at the beginning of the MSP process against which progress can be measured and performance evaluated,
- Critical role of monitoring in demonstrating the performance of management actions and in steering the implementation process,
- Clear delineation needed between evaluation questions that will be used as part of an ongoing performance evaluation process and questions more suited to a monitoring framework or stakeholder consultation,
- The stakeholder group has detailed knowledge of the specific plan/sector context and therefore their input is critical in developing an evaluation approach,
- Plain, simple and non-leading language should be used in the evaluation questions,
- The Ecosystem Approach was a key theme in respondent's feedback with several respondents noting the importance of considering the environment throughout the evaluation questions.

### Summary

The draft WNMP is now available for public consultation. Input from stakeholder groups will continue and likely focus on the content of the written plan, plan policies and implications for sectors. However, it will be important to further collect information and input from stakeholder groups regarding how to monitor the impacts/outputs of the plan and to inform the evaluation approach. The results of the SIMCelt work in collaboration with the Welsh Government have provided some key insights into developing an evaluation approach for the draft WNMP.

## Recommendations

Key Recommendations from this SIMCelt component include:

- Continue to develop evaluation approaches for the Celtic Seas project region in collaboration with marine authorities,
- Clear objectives are needed,
- Evaluation frameworks can be usefully adapted to the specific MSP context, enabling planners to tailor their evaluation approach,
- Simple and easy tools for decision makers to routinely evaluate performance of the plan are needed (i.e. NI decision maker questionnaire tool),
- Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders in the development of evaluation approaches as local and sector informed knowledge are crucial,
- Evaluation approaches should be reflective of the resources available but should also be comprehensive and rigorous to enable learning and as part of an adaptive MSP cycle,
- Key challenges/knowledge gaps remain including: land-sea interactions; Celtic Seas transboundary elements - a critical factor will be the extent to which the EA has been applied and how to evaluate this.

## Conclusions

The results from this project should be revisited over the subsequent stages of MSP processes in the Celtic Seas, considering evaluation of MSP is an iterative process. Evaluation can enable MSP processes to take advantage of new information that may contribute to the improvement of MSP as part of a cycle of adaptive management.

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## Appendix 1. WNMP Evaluation Exercise: Questionnaire

### **Case Study for Stakeholder Feedback- Exploring Evaluation of the Draft Welsh National Marine Plan Aggregates Sector**

#### **Introduction**

Marine planning or maritime spatial planning (MSP) is a way to manage human activities in the seas by introducing principles that have been long used in terrestrial planning. Marine plans are intended to guide those who use and regulate the marine area encouraging sustainable development whilst taking an ecosystem-based approach to management.

Marine planning in the UK is driven by the UK Marine Policy Statement, which includes the high-level marine objectives and vision for the marine environment, and the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) (2009), which provides the legislative framework. As the devolved administrations of the UK are now at various points in producing marine plans, *evaluation* of these plans is recognised as an important part in improving MSP and assessing achievement towards objectives. The requirements under the MCAA (2009) Sec 61 are to monitor and periodically report on every six years, and keep under review:

- a) the effects of the policies in the marine plan;*
- b) the effectiveness of those policies in securing that the objectives for which the marine plan was prepared and adopted are met;*
- c) the progress being made towards securing those objectives;*
- d) if an MPS governs marine planning for the marine plan authority's region, the progress being made towards securing that the objectives for which the MPS was prepared and adopted are met;*

We refer here to the combined monitoring, reporting and reviewing required under the MCAA (2009) as evaluation.

As part of the SIMCelt Project, the University of Liverpool is aiding the development of MSP evaluation approaches. The purpose of this document is to explore a possible evaluation framework for the aggregates section of the Draft Welsh National Marine Plan through consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to support the development of a practical, realistic and cost-effective approach. Welsh Government is committed to engagement and collaboration in developing marine planning for Wales and will feed the findings of this work into the Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group for further consideration.

Welsh Government has yet to consult formally on the draft WNMP but has shared the draft chapter text at this stage with the SIMCelt project to enable early consideration of proposals from the point of plan evaluation. A formal evaluation will be undertaken later in 2017; the findings of this work will respect the stage of progress of the WNMP when the work is reported.

Our aims are to establish:

- What might need to be monitored and evaluated for the aggregates sector in the light of the policy set out in the draft plan?

- What needs to be measured to assess the effectiveness of the plan under Sec 61 of the MCAA (2009)?

The following questionnaire outlines a potential framework with reference to the draft plan, and invites comment and further suggestions to aid our exploration of evaluation approaches. There are two types of questions below:

- i) Questions that **could potentially** be asked as part of an evaluation of the plan following the plan's adoption. These questions relate to the numbered sections of the current draft plan (387- 447) and are under the heading *Proposed evaluation questions (EQ)*
- ii) Questions posed as part of this consultation in order to improve the evaluation framework (E.g. Q1.a). **These are the questions that we invite you to respond to.**

### **1. Contribution of Aggregates to Cross-Cutting Policies of the Draft Welsh National Marine Plan**

The Welsh Government proposed policy for the future development and use of the marine plan area for a range of sectors is described in the Draft Welsh National Marine Plan. The Aggregates Sector has a chapter within the plan (see Annex 1) that includes a sector objective, and specific plan policies that support the objective. Along with the cross-cutting policies, the sector policies are intended to contribute to the delivery of the plan objectives and overall vision.

The Aggregates Sector chapter of the draft Welsh National Marine Plan highlights the importance of integrating aggregates with broader (cross-cutting) plan policies (the WNMP General policies that support the High Level Marine Objectives e.g. Historic environment, MPAs, seascapes, economy etc). We have therefore included reference to the specific cross cutting policies that are set out as sections in the Aggregates chapter of the plan as part of the evaluation questions in this document as it will be necessary to evaluate the extent to which the aggregates section is contributing to the achievement of these policies.

#### **WNMP Aggregates chapter section 'Current and potential future interactions with other sectors'**

This section considers the potential of the aggregate sector to share space with other sectors where there is flexibility in the location and timing of activities.

#### *Proposed Evaluation Question*

#### **EQ. How have interactions (current and potential) been considered since the adoption of the plan?**

Taking into account, for example: (paragraphs 387-391 of the draft WNMP)

- Have any new proposals (since adoption of the plan/ previous review) for aggregate dredging sites minimised their impacts on existing or planned activities in other sectors?
- What liaison has been put in place with other sectors and has this changed since adoption of the plan?
- Have dredging activities followed the existing codes of practice with archaeological interests?
- Has there been any spatial overlap with aggregate sector-incompatible activities/ sectors since adoption of the plan? E.g. MOD/ aquaculture?
- Have strategic planning options been produced for aggregate and other sectors and are public authorities considering optimal use of resources in decision making?

Q1.a. Do you think this proposed evaluation question and associated considerations are adequate and appropriate in order to evaluate the contribution of aggregates to the cross cutting policy (current and potential future interactions)?

Q1.b. Will it be feasible to answer the proposed evaluation question? To what extent would you anticipate being able to provide evidence to support your answer?

Q1.c. Can you suggest any other evaluation questions in relation to this section of the plan?

Please provide your response:

**WNMP Aggregates chapter section 'Ecosystem Interactions'**

This section considers the regulation of aggregate sector to minimise the impacts of dredging on the marine ecosystems.

*Proposed Evaluation Questions***EQ. How have the impacts of dredging on marine ecosystems been minimised and regulated since the adoption of the plan?**

Taking into account, for example: (paragraphs 392-396)

- Is there evidence of on-going monitoring and mitigation that is informing EIA and the consent process?
- Are previously dredged areas showing signs of recovery?
- . Are vulnerable habitats near to dredging license areas being monitored? Do they show evidence of disturbance?
- Have cumulative impacts of dredging across an area monitored and considered in license applications, e.g. in the length of the license?
- Have Marine Aggregate Regional Environmental Assessments (MAREAs) been undertaken?

**Q2.a. Do you think this proposed evaluation question and associated considerations are adequate and appropriate in order to evaluate the contribution of aggregates to the cross cutting policy (ecosystem interactions)?**

**Q2.b. Will it be feasible to answer the proposed evaluation questions?**

**Q2.c. Can you suggest any other evaluation questions in relation to this section of the plan?**

Please provide your response:

**WNMP Aggregates chapter section 'Future'**

This section is concerned with the availability of aggregate resource in the Welsh marine area (paragraphs 397-398).

*Proposed Evaluation Questions*

**EQ. What are the current trends in demand for marine aggregate?**

**EQ. What is the current status of resource supply in viable aggregate resource areas?**

**Q3.a. Do you think these proposed evaluation questions are adequate and appropriate in order to evaluate the contribution of aggregates to this cross cutting policy (future)?**

**Q3.b. Will it be feasible to answer the proposed evaluation questions?**

**Q3.c. Can you suggest any other evaluation questions in relation to this section of the plan?**

Please provide your response:

**WNMP Aggregates chapter section 'Climate Change'**

This section considers the impact of climate change on the aggregate sector .

*Proposed Evaluation Question*

**EQ. Has the impact of climate change on the aggregate sector been considered since the adoption of the plan?**

Taking into account, for example: (paragraphs 399-400)

- What is the availability of resource in inshore wave exposed locations?
- What are the trends in operation of dredging vessels in these areas?
- What are the current trends in demand for beach replenishment aggregate?
- Have impacts from aggregate dredging on flood risk/ beach impact been considered in EIA?

Q4.a. Do you think this proposed evaluation question and associated considerations are adequate and appropriate in order to evaluate the contribution of aggregates to the cross cutting policy (climate change)?

Q4.b. Will it be feasible to answer the proposed evaluation question?

Q4.c. Can you suggest any other evaluation questions in relation to this section of the plan?

Please provide your response:



WNMP Aggregates chapter section 'Governance'

This section considers the regulation and governance of the aggregate sector.

*Proposed Evaluation Question*

**EQ. How has regulation and governance of the aggregate sector changed/ been improved since the adoption of the plan?**

Taking into account, for example: (paragraphs 402-406)

- Is there evidence of transboundary co-operation in decision making for applications where this is applicable?
- What decision-making and advisory authorities have been involved?
- How many "exploration and option Agreements" have been granted?
- Has the TOE/ BMAPA Good practice guide been used to inform delivery of marine aggregates policy?
- Have best practice codes and protocols been applied to dredging and disposal activities in relation to historic environmental assets? E.g. RCAHWW.

Q5.a. Do you think this proposed evaluation question and associated considerations are adequate and appropriate in order to evaluate the contribution of aggregates to the cross cutting policy (governance)?

Q5.b. Will it be feasible to answer the proposed evaluation questions?

Q5.c. Can you suggest any other evaluation questions in relation to this section of the plan?

Please provide your response:

## 2. Key Evidence needs related to marine planning for the aggregate sector

Key evidence needs for the aggregate sector in relation to marine planning are outlined in the draft plan.

### “401. Key Evidence Needs

- better understanding of aggregate resource and reserves, especially offshore and in Mid and North Wales;
- better understanding of physical / sedimentary processes in the Severn Estuary - upstream of the bed load parting zone; and,
- more cost effective monitoring of the impact of aggregate dredging on the sea bed ecology (using regional monitoring of sediment composition as a proxy for benthic sampling).”

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 128

Q6.a. Is there anything missing from these key evidence needs that is required in order to evaluate the marine plan in relation to marine aggregates?

Q6.b. Has the spatial extent of the aggregate sector, uses, pressures and associated impacts been adequately mapped?

Please provide your response:

### 3. Sector Objective

The sector objective describes the desired future state for the aggregates sector:

*“To continue to use marine aggregates resources at a rate and in locations which best meet our current and future needs by ensuring adequate reserves are provided for through long-term licences”*

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 129

*Proposed Evaluation Questions for Sector Objective*

**EQ. Is this sector objective coherent with the wider plan vision and overall plan objectives?**

*Vision:*

*“Welsh seas are clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse:*

- *Through an ecosystem approach, our seas are healthy and resilient and support a sustainable and thriving economy.*
- *Through access to and enjoyment of the marine environment, health and well-being are improving.*
- *Through Blue Growth more jobs and wealth are being created and is helping coastal communities become more resilient, prosperous and equitable with a vibrant culture.*
- *Through the responsible deployment of low carbon technologies, the Welsh marine area is making a strong contribution to energy security and climate change emissions targets.*

*Our vision is being achieved through an integrated, evidenced and plan-led approach that respects established uses and interests whilst securing the benefits from new opportunities, recognising the importance of ecosystem resilience, the value of biodiversity and the imperative to adapt to climate change.”*

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Vision and Objectives pg 8

HLMO	Objective	
Overarching	1	Support the sustainable development of the Welsh marine area by contributing across Wales' well-being goals, ensuring the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) by taking account of the cumulative effects of all uses of the marine environment.
Achieving a sustainable marine economy	2	Contribute to a thriving Welsh economy by encouraging economically productive activities and profitable and sustainable businesses that create long term employment at all skill levels.
	3	Maximise the opportunity to sustainably develop marine renewable energy resources, helping to achieve the UK's energy security and carbon reduction objectives, whilst fully considering other's interests and ecosystem resilience.
	4	Provide space to support existing and future sustainable economic activity through managing multiple uses, encouraging the coexistence of compatible activities, the mitigation of conflicts between users and, where possible, by reducing the displacement of existing activities.
Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society	5	Reduce poverty and support the development of vibrant, more equitable, culturally distinct, cohesive and resilient coastal communities.
	6	Support enjoyment and stewardship of our coast and seas and their resources by encouraging equitable and safe access to the marine environment, whilst protecting and promoting valuable landscapes, seascapes and heritage assets.
	7	Improve understanding and enable action supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation.
Living within environmental limits	8	Support the achievement and maintenance of Good Environmental Status (GES).
	9	Protect, conserve, restore and enhance marine biodiversity to halt and reverse its decline.
	10	Maintain and enhance the resilience of marine ecosystems and the benefits they provide in order to meet the needs of present and future generations.
Promoting good governance	11	Support proportionate, consistent and integrated decision making through implementing forward-looking policies as part of a plan-led, precautionary, risk-based and adaptive approach to managing Welsh seas.

	12	Apply the Sustainable Development (SD) principle and the principles of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) to decision making as part of a plan-led approach delivered in line with ecosystem approach principles.
Using sound science responsibly	13	Develop a shared, accessible marine evidence base to support use of sound evidence and provide a mechanism for the unique characteristics and opportunities of the Welsh Marine Area to be better understood.

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Vision and Objectives Pg 9

**EQ. Have indicators/ targets of performance been identified for this objective?**

**EQ. Has a baseline been established for this objective?**

**Q7.a. Do the proposed evaluation questions provide sufficient information with which to evaluate progress towards the sector objective?**

**Q7.b. Is anything missing from the marine plan that will enable evaluation of progress towards this objective?**

**Q7.c. Do you have additional monitoring requirements within the sector, which could be used to inform evaluating progress towards this objective?**

Please provide your response:

#### 4. Supporting and Safeguarding Policies

The supporting policy for the aggregate sector is intended to maintain an adequate and continuing source supply of suitable resource relatively close to point of use. The safeguarding policies for the aggregate sector should be applied in all proposals (including new aggregate sector proposals) with the potential to impact upon aggregate activities in strategic resource areas (SRAs).

##### AGG 01

###### **"AGG 01: Aggregates (supporting)**

Proposals for aggregate extraction in Strategic Resource Areas are encouraged within any permitted tonnage limits that may be defined for that area.

Relevant public authorities should, in liaison with the sector and other interested parties, collaborate to understand opportunities for the sustainable use of:

- aggregate Strategic Resource Areas; and
- wider marine aggregate natural resources;

in order to support the sustainable growth of the aggregate sector through marine planning."

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 132

##### *Proposed Questions for evaluation AGG01*

**EQ. What are the trends in current permitted tonnage limits for defined areas?**

**EQ. What are the current growth indicators for the aggregate sector?**

**EQ. Have relevant public authorities liaised with the sector to understand opportunities for sustainable use of marine aggregate?**

Further considerations that could be taken into account when answering the evaluation questions (paragraphs 425- 433):

- Has an adequate and continuing source of supply of suitable resource been maintained?
- Have new licenced areas been located in offshore areas where possible?
- Have tonnage limits been reviewed regularly? If they have been amended, has full engagement and consultation taken place before any statement?
- Have decision makers taken into account [see 428.]?
- Have relevant public authorities balanced costs/ benefits of near shore marine aggregate supply in applications?
- What is the status of larger, longer-term extraction licences? Eg. are these occurring predominantly offshore?

- Has adequate provision been made for appropriate wharf facilities?
- Are key evidence gaps being addressed by interested/ relevant parties?
- Have the relevant safeguarding policies been applied in aggregate proposals?

AGG\_02-03-04

**“AGG 02: Aggregates (safeguarding)**

Proposals potentially affecting areas where a marine licence and production agreement for aggregate extraction has been granted or formally applied for should not be authorised unless compatibility with the existing, authorised or proposed aggregate activity can be satisfactorily demonstrated or there are exceptional circumstances. Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:

- a) avoiding adverse impacts on those activities; and/ or
- b) minimising impacts where they cannot be avoided; and/ or
- c) mitigating impacts where they cannot be minimised.

If adequate compatibility cannot be achieved, proposals should present a clear and convincing justification for proceeding.”

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 134

**“AGG 03: Aggregates (safeguarding)**

Proposals potentially affecting areas where an exploration or option agreement has been offered or is in place for aggregate extraction should not be authorised unless compatibility with the existing, authorised or proposed aggregate activity can be satisfactorily demonstrated. Compatibility should be achieved, in order of preference, through:

- a) avoiding adverse impacts on those activities; and/ or
- b) minimising impacts where they cannot be avoided; and/ or
- c) mitigating impacts where they cannot be minimised.

If adequate compatibility cannot be achieved, proposals should present a clear and convincing justification for proceeding.”

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 135

**“AGG\_04: Aggregates (safeguarding)**

Proposals potentially affecting Strategic Resource Areas for aggregate extraction should demonstrate how they, in order of preference:

- a) avoid adverse impacts on future potential aggregate extraction in those areas; and/ or
- b) minimise impacts where they cannot be avoided; and/ or
- c) mitigate impacts where they cannot be minimised; and

should present a clear and convincing justification for proceeding where (a-c) are not possible.”

Draft Welsh National Marine Plan  
Aggregates Chapter pg 135

*Proposed Questions for evaluating AGG02-03-04*

**EQ. Have proposals have demonstrated compatibility (in order of preference) or a clear and convincing justification?**

**EQ. Is there an agreed schedule for implementation of these [policies]?**

**EQ. Is there clarity and adequacy of roles and responsibilities for implementation?**

Further considerations that could be taken into account when answering the evaluation questions (paragraphs 435- 447):

- Have the safeguarding policies managed the potential adverse impacts of other sector activities on current, planned and future potential activities of the aggregates sector?
- Have the SP. Ensured appropriate consideration of the extent of impacts on existing and future aggregate extraction?
- Have relevant public authorities had dialogue with NRW, Welsh Government and TCE regarding potential development that coincides with aggregate resource?
- Has early engagement between developers occurred?
- Have proposals that overlap with consented or leased areas demonstrated they can successfully co-exist with the aggregate sector?
- Have proposals seeking approval on the basis of exceptional circumstances been clear, evidenced and convincing in their justification?
- Have appropriate liaison arrangements between industries occurred for spatially co-existing activities?
- Have proposals for consents for new activities in or affecting aggregate exploration/ option areas or aggregate SRAs demonstrated ability to co-exist or clear and convincing justification for proceeding?
- Have decision makers considered:
  - The extent to which a case for exceptional circumstances has been made;
  - The strategic importance of the proposal (eg that it is in line with this plans policies and supports the plan objectives);



- The extent the proposal, if accepted, would help that sector meet its own objectives;
- The extent to which the aggregate sector objectives and policy would be adversely impacted,
- The net effect upon the environment and other users.  
[447.]?

*Proposed Evaluation Questions for supporting and safeguarding policies*

**EQ. Have applications considered the full range of relevant policies and considerations, including the safeguarding policies associated with other sectors?**

**EQ. Has evidence addressing relevant policies been provided to support decision-making?**

**EQ. Are the proposed policies enough to achieve the MSP objectives?**

**EQ. What is the feasibility of the proposed policies in terms of implementation, integration and operational activities?**

**EQ. Is there harmony with the sector policies and those of other sector policy and management instruments?**

**EQ. Do these policies assist in reducing between sector conflict?**

**Q8.a. Do the previous questions provide sufficient information with which to evaluate progress towards the sector specific policies?**

**Q8.b. Is anything missing in the marine plan that will enable evaluation of progress towards these policies?**

**Q8.c. Do you have additional monitoring requirements within the sector, which could be used to inform evaluating progress towards these policies?**

Please provide your response:

**5. Final Evaluation Questions**

Q9.a. Does this evaluation framework provide sufficient coverage in order to evaluate the aggregates chapter of the marine plan adequately?

Q9.b. Is anything missing from the evaluation framework? Can you suggest any additional elements that need to be included?

Please provide your response: