





Workshop 1 Report



Cromarty Firth Sea the Value Workshop 1

Thursday 22nd June 2023 10am

National Hotel, Dingwall

The *Sea the Value* project aims to understand the different values communities hold towards their local marine environment, the diverse benefits it provides, and how nature-based solutions can support and integrate with community development. The project is focussing on two case studies in the UK, the Cromarty Firth in Scotland, and the Solent on the south coast of England. The project outputs will be used to inform the wider management and planning of marine biodiversity across the UK.

The University of Aberdeen and the Moray Firth Coastal Partnership facilitated a participatory mapping workshop to identify and map the features and benefits provided by the coastal ecosystems in the Cromarty Firth. The workshop was held at the National Hotel in Dingwall and was attended by a mix of stakeholders from 20 local organisations (Table 1). A full list of participants and their contact details is provided in Appendix 1.

Organisation						
University of Aberdeen (Facilitator)	Highland Council					
University of Portsmouth (Facilitator)	Marine Conservation Society					
Moray Firth Partnership (Facilitator)	Opportunity Cromarty Firth					
Mossy Earth	Invergordon Development Trust					
Consultant / Black Isle Coastal Park	University of Aberdeen Lighthouse Field Station					
Highland Council	RSPB					
Clan Munro	Highland Council					
Cromarty community member / Black Isle Coastal Park	Nature Scot					
Scottish Water	Cromarty Boat Club					
Marine Scotland	WDC					
SAMS	Black Isle Partnership					
Moray Ocean Community						

Table 1: Workshop attendees organisations.

Participants collectively identified and mapped the natural, modified/managed, and man-made features around the Cromarty Firth and the benefits which they associate with these features. All the project outputs, including maps, data and reports will be provided back to stakeholders for future use. This report summarises the initial outcomes of the first Cromarty Firth workshop.







Session One: Introduction (Plenary)

Tavis Potts welcomed the attendees and thanked them for attending the event. Tavis introduced the Sea the Value project team (Table 2), the Sea The Value project and outlined the aims and objectives of the workshop.



Image 1: Tavis Potts introducing participants to the Project Team.

Table 2: The Project Team.

Name	Organisation	Role			
Tavis Potts	Aberdeen University	Co-convener of the workshop, presenter, Co- Facilitator Cromarty Firth West.			
Jeremy Anbleyth-Evans	Aberdeen University	Co-Facilitator Cromarty Firth West, post- workshop GIS mapping, production of satellite images.			
Daryl Burdon	Daryl Burdon Ltd	Co-convener of the workshop, presenter, Co- Facilitator Cromarty Firth East.			
Vicky Merriman	Moray Firth Coastal Partnership	Co-convener of the workshop, presenter, Co- facilitator of Cromarty Firth central.			
Drew Ferguson	Moray Firth Coastal Partnership	Co-facilitator of Cromarty Firth East			
Andrew Van Der Schatte Olivier	University of Portsmouth	Co-facilitator of Cromarty Firth Central			

The remainder of the first session comprised two further introductory presentations: The Moray Firth Coastal Partnership: Vicky Merriman; Participatory Mapping: Daryl Burdon. The presentation slides presented on the day are included in Appendix 2.







Session Two: Identifying and Mapping Features & Sub-Features (3 Groups)

Following a brief introduction, participants were split across three tables to identify and map the features and sub-features of the Cromarty Firth. Features mapping is important to identify habitats and species in addition to the modified/managed and man-made features that make up the seascape of the Cromarty Firth. Identification of multiple features supports the investigation of the benefits which they provide which can improve societal welfare.

A recent Sentinel-2 satellite image from 30 May 2023 was downloaded from Copernicus EU open access (<u>https://scihub.copernicus.eu/dhus/#/home</u>) and was used for the workshop (Figure 1). Given the extent of the Cromarty Firth, the mapping exercises were split across the Western, Central and Eastern Cromarty Firth, respectively (Figure 2). The image was cropped to focus on the Cromarty Firth itself and was laid above an Ordinance Survey map of the area to aid participants in locating particular geographic areas and/or features (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Satellite images of the Cromarty Firth captured at 11:43 on 30 May 2023.







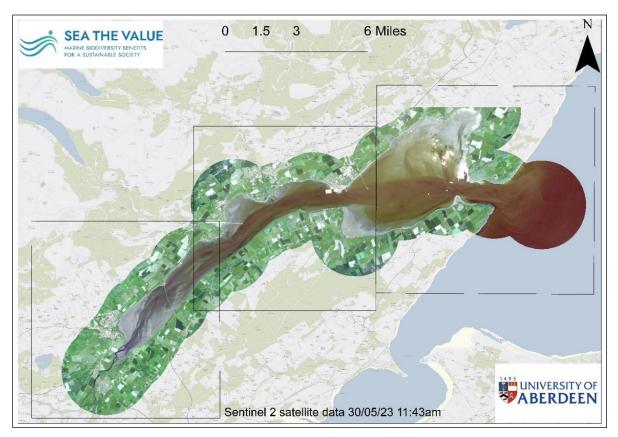


Figure 2: Division of the Cromarty Firth used in the workshop.

Following a brief introduction to the activity, each group was tasked with the following:

- □ Introduce yourselves within your group
- **Gamiliarise yourselves with the case study maps**
- □ Spend 5 minutes individually making a list of features/sub-features
- □ Compile a list of features/sub-features on the flipchart as a group
- □ Map the features/sub-features which are visible from the satellite image creating your own key for each feature directly on the map.

After 60 minutes, each group was given the opportunity to view, comment and contribute to the lists and mapping undertaken at the other two case study tables.









Image 2: Participants undertaking the features mapping exercise.

A summary of the features/sub-features identified by each group are presented below (Table 3). These lists have been taken directly from the flip-charts and some post-workshop standardisation may be required before the maps are digitised.

A photo record of the pre-digitised maps from session two is included in Figure 3.



Table 3: Summary of features/sub-features identified by each group.

Features		
Cromarty Firth West	Cromarty Firth Central	Cromarty Firth East
Pefferside park	Agricultural fields	Coastal realignment
Football stadium Victoria Park	Arable fields producing barley for whisky	Coastal paths
Artificial Tern raft	Beaches	Cromarty bridge
Fishing boffy	Bridges (was Cromarty Bridge only, but then amended)	Yacht club
Bridges	Core paths	Fishing archaeology
Housing	Cruise liners	Car park
Wrecked fishing boats	Derelict Land (ex-industrial) brownfield	Jetty
Target stones	Distillery	Hard defences
Findhorn quarry (Disused)	Dolphins & Porpoise areas	Waste water treatment
Wastewater treatment centre	Dredging zone	Dredge disposal
Russian revolution graffiti carved in trees	Fish nursery grounds	Distillery
Airstrip	Flotsum & Jetsom (seaweed & litter)	Heat exchange point for woodchip plant
Farmer's livestock market	Golf Courses	Rigs
River Peffer channel modification	Harbour / Dock	Port harbour
Stepping stones across saltmarsh	High Streets	Church
Farmland barley, potatoes, wheat, grass	Historical Wrecks	Reclaimed land from firth
Livestock farmland	Housing	Zostera seagrasses
Plantation forest	Industry Outlets	Shipwrecks
Munro foreshore	Levies / Coastal barriers	Mussels



Features				
Cromarty Firth West	Cromarty Firth Central	Cromarty Firth East		
Dingwall beach	Lifeboats	Horse mussels		
Seagrasses	Managed Woodland	Cetacean routes		
Mudflats	Mooring Areas	Cliff		
Saltmarshes	Motor Boat / leisure	Cliff nesting		
Blue mussels	Mudflats	Sheep grazing area		
Sandbanks	Mussel Beds	Woodland		
Firth channel	Mussel Farm	Lateral navigation marker		
Dunglass Island	Natural deep water channel	Bird hide		
Burns	Natural woodlands	Ferry crossing		
Community woodland	Navigation lane	Community woodland		
Oak woodland (deciduous) SSSI	Old oyster beds	Whale and Dolphin shorewatch sites		
Woodland (conifer)	Swimming / paddleboarding area			
Woodland (deciduous)	Piers			
Cetacean limit	Water exchange for biomass plant			
Seal area	Marine sewerage			





Figure 3: Images of the features maps from each table (outputs from Session 2)







Session Three: Identifying and Mapping Benefits (3 Groups)

This session started with an introductory presentation on natural capital and ecosystem services followed by an introduction to the second activity (Daryl Burdon). Each group was tasked with the following:

- □ Individually make a list of benefits that society gets from the Cromarty Firth on post-it notes.
- □ Compile the list of benefits, with participants taking it in turn to contribute to the list.
- □ Assign a number to each benefit using pre-defined list or using additional numbers where required.
- □ Using numbered sticky dots, map which features/sub-features deliver each benefit.

After 60 minutes, each group was given the opportunity to view, comment and contribute to the lists and mapping undertaken at the other two case study tables. A summary of the benefits identified by each group is presented below (Table 4). Numbers were assigned to each benefit for the purpose of the mapping exercise. This information was taken straight from the flip-charts and some degree of post-workshop standardisation may be required across the sites.

A photo record of pre-digitised maps from session two is included in Figure 4.



Table 4: Summary of benefits identified by each group.

Benef	its				
Western Cromarty Firth			ral Cromarty Firth	Easter	rn Cromarty Firth
4	Clean and clear water / (Fresh and salt) / Run of river	1	Primary production	12	Carbon sequestration – woodland, saltmarsh, mudflats, seagrasses
5	Functioning ecosystems	4	Water quality	13	Fishing, agriculture, potting locations
5	Habitat	11	Treating pollution (organic)	20	Soft and hard sea defences
5a	Whiskey (barley)	12	Carbon sequestration	21	Bioremediation / waste removal
12	Carbon sink / Carbon sequestration	13	Food	22b	Bird watching
13	Food growing / fishing	20	Flood prevention	22c	Rowing / kayaking – common everywhere
19	Flood prevention	22	tourism	22d	Cruising / boat trips
21	Bioremediation	22j	sailing	22i	Recreational fishing
22	Tourism economic benefit / NC 500 / attractions wider economic benefit potential	23	Mental wellbeing	22j	boating
22b	Bird watching	23a	Physical wellbeing	22k	Wild swimming
22c	Sailing club – potential for more paddle boards / social water sports	25	Education / research	22n	Wildfowling- no RSPB licencing
22i	Recreational fishing	31	Water resources	23	Spiritual wellbeing – any churches or WW sites
22k	Swimming	32	Historical	24	Great views / Viewpoints / coastal areas
22p	Cycling	36	Biodiversity	25	Education
23	Cultural / Social cohesion	37	Sense of place	26	Physical health benefits – footpaths / beaches other natural features
23a	Accessible pathways = health and wellbeing future benefit as current paths aren't that accessible			27	Psychological benefits



Benef	Benefits							
Weste	rn Cromarty Firth	Central Cromarty Firth	Easter	Eastern Cromarty Firth				
23b	Nature connection		34	Settlements, also dispersed				
24	Views /Aesthetic benefits		35	Place to work – almost everywhere				
26	Social intertidal walks / run / recreation		37	Sense of place				
27	Stress relief / Psychological health benefits		39	Brewing / distilling				
28	Wind farms		40	Deepwater channel / ferry connections, coastal roads				
32	Historical net and cobble salmon farming / History identity / architecture can promote area / natural museum		41	Cruise ships				
33	Industry related to natural resources							
33a	Forestry							
34	Place to live							
35	Economic better access to work / Job creation / Place to work							
36	Habitat biodiversity / species biodiversity							





Figure 4: Benefits mapping from the West, Centre and East Cromarty Firth (outputs from Session 3).







Discussion Points from Cromarty Firth West

- Hydroelectric potential was noted in the Evanton Black gorge, Clan Munro's area since at least 1025.
- Oysters were noted at least until 1890 by the bridge.
- 8,940 litres flowed into the Cromarty Firth per day in the Dingwall area.
- There has been significant litter built up on the Castle Craig shoreline.
- The catchment area of the Ardross Wind zone was different to Nigg, and the benefits needed to be shared locally through a community development organisation.
- There was discussion over whether farming fields such as barley and forests are carbon sequestering or carbon positive, and the relationship to shoreline habitats.
- There was a question of whether removal of spartina invasive cordgrass was an improvement and a benefit.
- The 'Bad Mud' site was flagged as an area that needed further investigation and baseline mapping at low tide with the drone but dangerous to walk on.
- In contrast, the stepping stones were marked as both a natural feature enhancing the landscape whilst offering a modified path benefit across the saltmarsh.

Discussion points from Cromarty Firth Central

- There was discussion regarding biodiversity –the group wanted to add both positive and negative aspects because some things increase biodiversity and some decrease it – e.g., spraying of farmland leads to less insects, but then re-introduction of hedgerows in agricultural fields leads to increase in wildlife etc. There was also discussion around structures in the water potentially reducing biodiversity as destroying habitats but could be creating new ones.
- Dredging sites not included as the ones from the Port of Cromarty Firth are just dumped back at the mouth of the Sutors, it's not used for making concrete or other uses as it is normally done down south.
- Some discussion regarding mental and physical well-being, all agreed that physical wellbeing is likely to improve mental health, but it might not always be true the other way round ultimate decision made that it does, and that anywhere on the map could be a place to improve both types of health.
- Discussion regarding areas that might have a negative impact on health e.g., noise pollution from boats, lights from port disturbing sleep but then that's very subjective and what bothers one person could be soothing to another, so they didn't split this out. Big discussion regarding what was meant by 'Water quality' originally used 31 but change to whole new number 38 which includes natural filtering (like mussel beds) with water treatment includes all rivers.







Discussion points from Cromarty Firth East

- RSPB's coastal realignment site was missed off the top of the map however it was agreed to include this area post-workshop it was noted that there was potential to expand the site at Udale Bay.
- All coastal footpaths on the map were supplied from work undertaken on The Black Isle.
- Comments were made that we should note noise hotspots within the Cromarty Firth.

Session Four: Discussion (Plenary)

An open discussion session was co-chaired by Tavis Potts and Daryl Burdon. The following issues were raised and discussed amongst the group:

- Daryl Burdon and Tavis Potts emphasised that the workshop would support the socio ecological evidence baseline by integrating community stakeholder's understandings of the Cromarty Firth environment. Moving towards the next workshop, it would be important to take the users' perspective on future scenarios, considering the benefits.
- A question was raised as to how we could share with a wider audience around the Cromarty Firth? Could there be an open-source wiki style map where people could add more information through the website? Sea sketch was raised as a possible way of achieving this. Tavis confirmed that there is a desire to engage with groups online and face-to-face in between workshops and with the digital outputs of Workshop 1.
- □ There is a potential option to undertake some semi-structured interviews to allow for more detailed discussion of local areas with certain stakeholders historical and cultural knowledge of place making and ecology, but within the constraints of the project resources.
- A participant explained how he had gone about creating his map for the Transition Black Isle, and that he had several copies available for perusal which he would make available for anyone interested.

Next Steps

Daryl Burdon outlined the following next steps for the project:

- □ The workshop will be summarised and sent out to participants and anyone else interested.
- □ All outputs from the workshop will be digitised, features and benefits will be standardised across the sites, and will be converted into an interactive pdf for the Cromarty Firth. These outputs will be circulated to all attendees for comment and will be used in Workshop #2.
- □ Workshop #2 is planned for October 2023. The aim of Workshop #2 will be to progress from the interactive pdfs created within Workshop #1, along with other resources, to discuss potential trade-offs of benefits under different future scenarios.
- □ Finally, all participants were reminded to complete the feedback forms, and to indicate whether they wish to attend Workshop #2. A summary of feedback is provided in Appendix 3.







Acknowledgements

The Sea The Value Project Team wishes to thank all of the attendees for their enthusiasm and valuable inputs to the workshop. The project team also wish to thank UKRI for funding the project and to Vicky Merriman and Drew Ferguson from the Moray Firth Coastal Partnership for their assistance in organising the workshop.







Appendix 1: Participants

Name	Organisation	E-mail Address				
Andy Goldie	Opportunity Cromarty Firth	a.goldie@cfpa.co.uk				
Ben Leyshon	NatureScot	Ben.leyshon@nature.scot				
Col Gordon	Invergordon Development Trust	colinchindown@gmail.com				
Colin Macrae	Consultant / Black Isle Coastal Park	solutions@cozm.co.uk				
Fiona Richardson	Highland Council	fiona.richardson@highlifehighland.com				
Francis Williams	Moray Ocean Community	morayoceancommunity@gmail.com				
George Sylvester	Cromarty Boat Club	g.selvester@btinternet.com				
Hector Munro	Clan Munro	hectormunro@outlook.com				
Helen Ross	Highland Council	helen.ross@highland.gov.uk				
lain Gatward	SAMs	iain.gatward@sams-enterprise.com				
Ingrid Robertson	Cromarty community member / Black Isle Coastal Park	ingrid.robertson@yahoo.co.uk				
Isla Graham	University of Aberdeen Lighthouse Field Station	<u>i.graham@abdn.ac.uk</u>				
Isla McLeod	Mossy Earth / Moray Ocean Community	isla@mossy.earth				
Jethro Watson	Highland Council	jethro.watson@highland.gov.uk				
Judith Harvey	Cromarty Boat Club					
Julien Paren	Black Isle Partnership	julien.paren@gmail.com				
Marcia O'Hara	Highland Council	Marcia.OHara@HighlifeHighland.com				
Sarah Macdonald Taylor	WDC	salmac10@yahoo.co.uk				
Steph Elliott	RSPB	Steph.Elliott@rspb.org.uk				
Stephan Walker	Scottish Water	Stephan.Walker@scottishwater.co.uk				
Terri Sawyer	Moray Ocean Community	terrie.s3@proton.me				
Tom Bannerman	Marine Conservation Society	tom.bannerman@mcsuk.org				
William Ellison	Marine Scotland	William.Ellison@gov.scot				







Appendix 2: Workshop Presentations













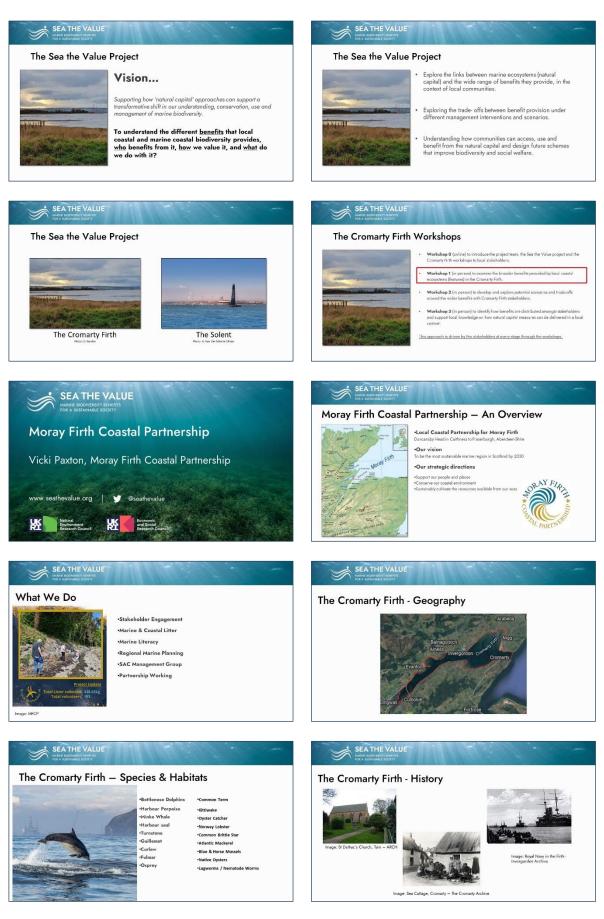


















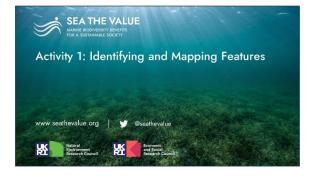




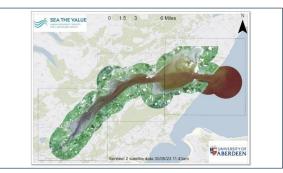


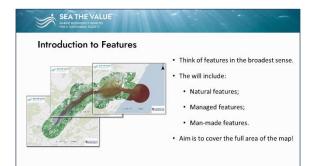












Seascape (Cultural Service)

Marine Ecosystem (Natural capital)







Wildlife watching (from a Cultural service) Natural sea defence (from a Regulating service)

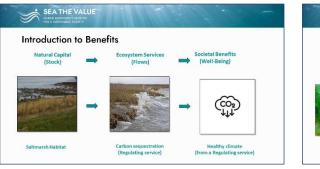
Natural hazard regulation (Regulating service)

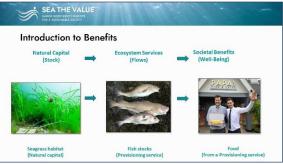
Saltmarsh Habitat

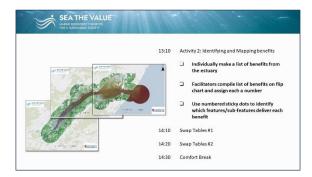














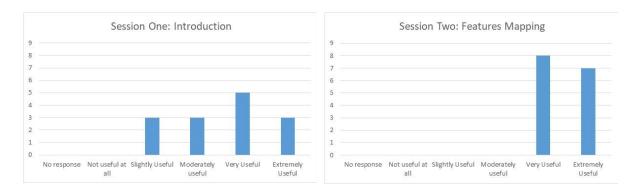




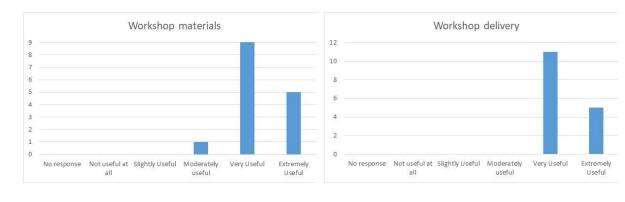


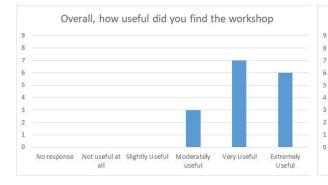


Appendix 3: Summary of Workshop Feedback

















The venue				The catering							
						12					
						10					
						10					
						8				_	
				_							
						6					
						4					
						2					
						0					
No response	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	No respons	e Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Goo

Sample comments on what was most useful about the workshop:

"Interesting to meet and network with other stakeholders."

"Meeting others. Renewing relations and making new ones. Learning about the area. Meeting the STV project team and the process."

Sample comments on how the workshop could be improved in the future:

"More frequent breaks or shorter sessions".

"Please think about timing – all my CC counterparts in the relevant area could not attend due to day time."

"The tiny little stickers could be better! Maybe bigger?"

"Quality of the projector. Microphone so all the speakers could be heard".