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Ocean literacy and policy: amplifying community voices

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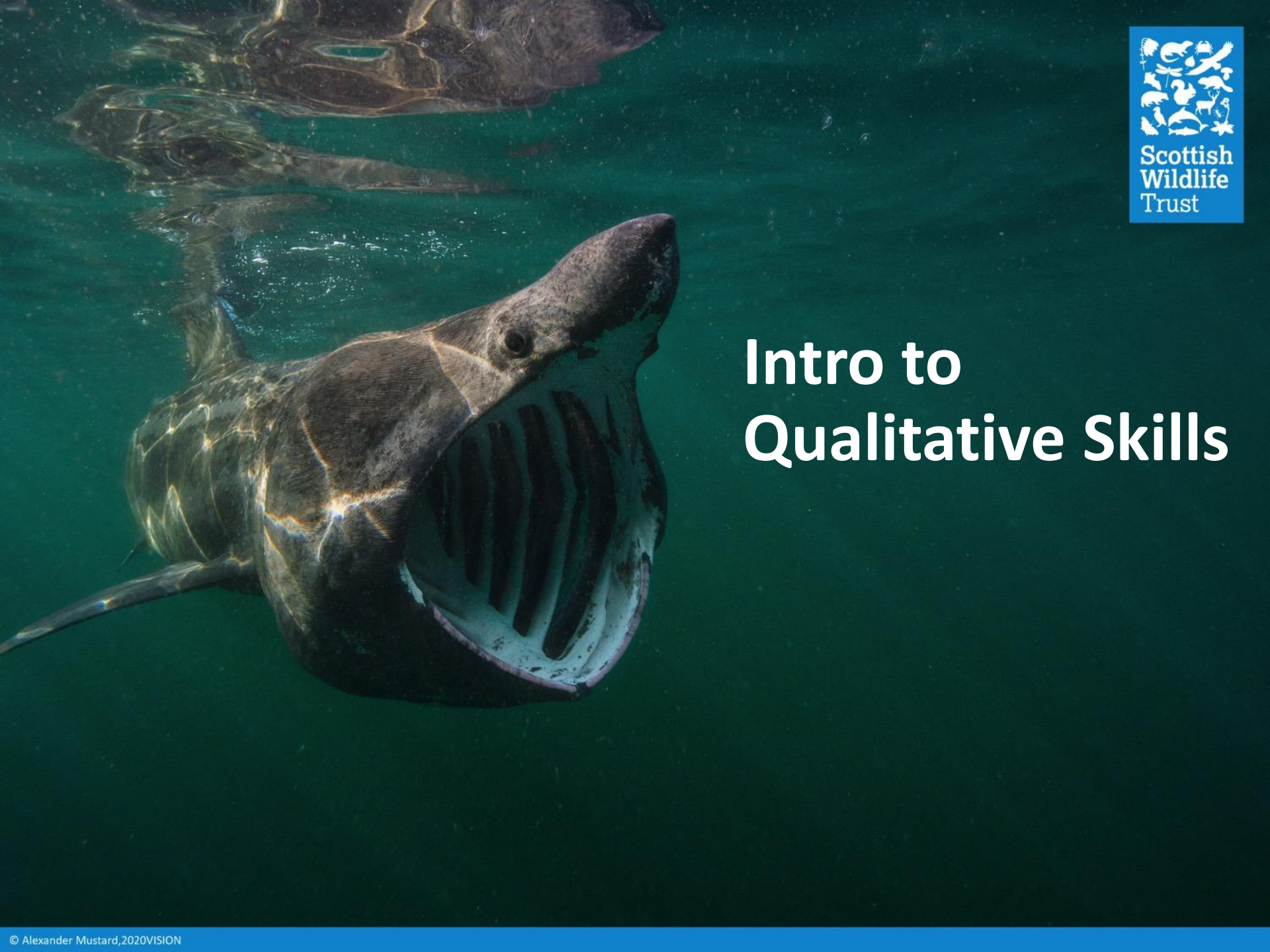
Agenda

1: Intro to Qualitative Skills

2: Opportunities and Challenges to Qualitative Approaches

3: Case study: Oceans of Value

4: Participation: barriers and support



Intro to Qualitative Skills

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Scottish Wildlife Trust

How would you define qualitative skills? Can you share any examples?

Intro to Qualitative Skills

Qualitative Skills: Skills that allow you to understand, analyze, and clearly communicate the context, importance, and impact of non-numerical data.

Focus Groups

Interviews

Observation

Oral histories

Opinion Polls

Pre-post surveys

Storytelling

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Why are qualitative skills important?

Think of where in a project you can use them!

Intro to Qualitative Skills

Why They're Important: They allow you to better understand the community, cultural, historical, and socio-political context you are working in, and provide for a more holistic understanding of the impact of your work.

Annual / Funder / Donor Reports

Collaboration

Hiring (Interviews)

Project Formation & Impact

Grant Writing & Fundraising

Client and Team Satisfaction

Opportunities & Challenges to Qualitative Approaches

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What are the advantages of using qualitative skills?

Intro to Qualitative Skills

Pros:

- Creates a fuller picture that can easily supplement data you find
- Can demonstrate the need for and/or impact of your project
- Adds narrative to your work and provides an accessible understanding of what you do
- Finds insights and perspectives

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What are the disadvantages of using qualitative skills?

Intro to Qualitative Skills

Cons:

- Does not, in itself, always lead to more trust in your project
- Is subjective and often highly contextual, meaning that other data may need to be collected for other projects
- Doesn’t always help you find patterns and trends

Case study: Oceans of Value

Scottish Wildlife Trust

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Oceans of Value project

The Scottish Wildlife Trust's Oceans of Value project, which took place between 2019-2024, focused on the seas surrounding the Orkney Islands. This project took an innovative approach to the challenge of capturing the range of values that are placed on the marine environment.

"We do lots of practical stuff, but how do we influence? What are the processes?"

1. Marine Natural Capital Assessment

2. Community Voice Method

What is Community Voice Method?

Interviews

2. **Personal experience**

a) How do you, or did you, use the marine environment?

i) Do you work there or go there for leisure?

ii) Are there any places in particular that you feel you have a personal connection with?

iii) Do your friends or family share your interest with the marine environment? (if you have one)

b) We would like to ask you about the different ways in which the marine environment is important.

- *In what ways does the marine environment matter to you as a resource that we live from?*
- *In what ways does the marine environment matter to you in terms of place and as a setting to live, work and recreate in?*
- *In what ways does the marine environment matter as a space for nature that we live with?*
- *In what ways does the marine environment matter as a part of you or your community? In what ways do you feel part of the sea?*
- *Does the marine environment matter to you in any other ways?*
- *Is there anything that you dislike about the marine environment?*

3. **Key Issues & current state of the marine environment**

a) There is a growing public interest in the health of the marine environment and how we manage marine activities (thanks to the BBC's Blue Planet series). What are your views on the health of Orkney's marine environment?"

- Do you think Orkney's marine environment is in a healthy condition?

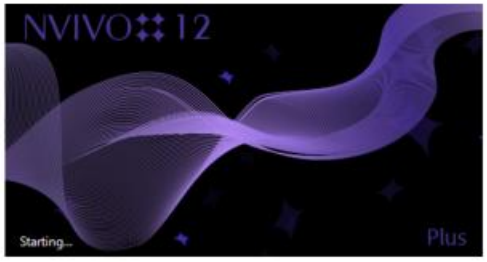
- Has the health of Orkney's marine environment changed in your lifetime?

- In your opinion what are the Key Issues facing Orkney's marine environment?

- With regards to the issues you have mentioned; do you think these could be tackled at a local, Orkney scale or at a national scale?

Analysis

In your opinion what are the Key Issues facing Orkney's marine environment	20	20
Plastic	13	14
Climate Change	7	8
Fishing	7	7
Fish farms	5	7
Human development	5	5
Dumping in the sea, pollution	4	4
Coastal erosion	2	2
Renewable energy	1	1
Coastal paths, access	1	1
Over tourism	1	1



What would be your priorities for managing Orkney's future marine environment	23	23
Sustainible Development	16	24
Involve local people	8	10
Stop overfishing	6	6
Wildlife	6	8
Renewables	3	3
Plastics	2	2
Pollution	2	3
Climate Change	1	1
Coastal Erosion	1	1
More investment for outer isles	1	1
More research	1	2
Funding	1	1
Legal enforcement	1	1

Film Production, launch and community workshop

3. Film Production

In April 2022, a tender was put out for a company to produce the film, along with other communication materials. The tender was sent to ten different companies/freelance filmmakers and the Trust received five quotes. In May 2022, Speakeasy Productions was contracted to create the film based on the main topics and themes that had been highlighted by the NVIVO analysis, and making use of clips of interview footage that best expressed them.

The opinions expressed by interviewees form the basis of the film in what is known as a "multivocal narrative" that provides a snapshot of the topics explored and opinions expressed. The film company was able to combine the interview footage with B-roll of Orkney's marine environment kindly provided by local filmmaker Raymond Besant.

Screening Film at The Phoenix Cinema, Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall, Orkney – January 2023

Community Workshop at The Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall - January 2023

Grab your popcorn!

Oceans of Value:

From local to national scales

Scottish Wildlife Trust

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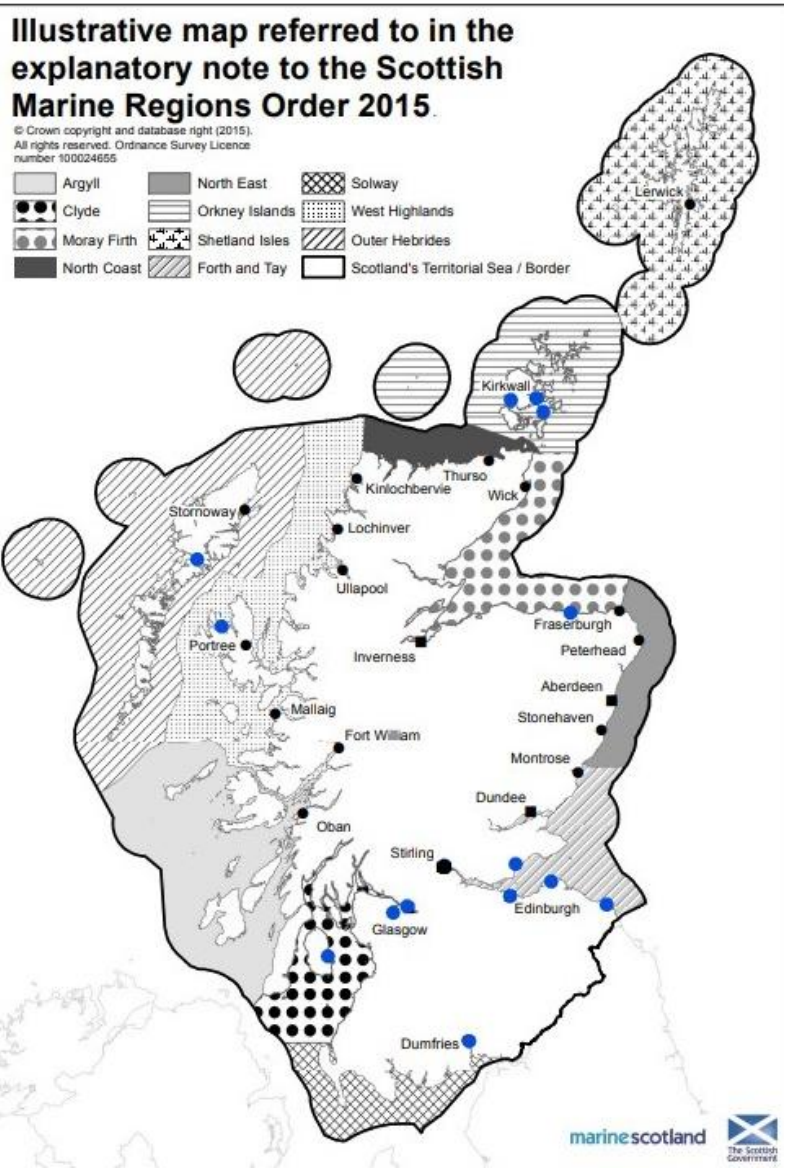
From local to national scales

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Questions:

1. What are the **key issues** facing the marine environment?
2. How should we **use and protect** Scotland's marine environment?
3. Are there any **barriers** that exist for you in engaging in marine planning conversations?
4. What **support** would help you in getting involved in marine planning conversations?

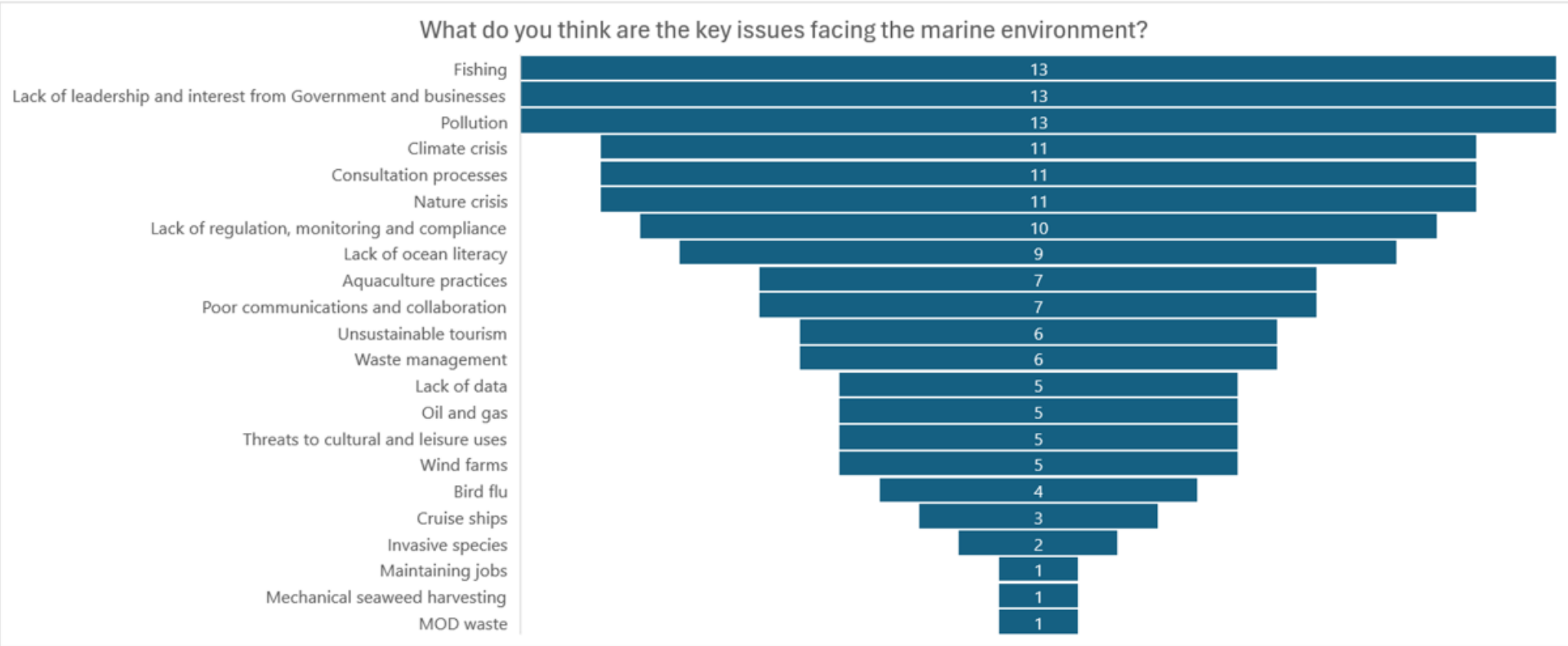


Date	Location	Marine Region
November ‘23	Dumfries	Solway
February ‘24	Edinburgh	Forth and Tay
November ‘23	Eyemouth	Forth and Tay
April ‘23	Glasgow	Clyde
August ‘23	Kinghorn	Forth and Tay
January ‘23	Kirkwall	Orkney Islands
March 24	Lamlash, Isle of Arran	Clyde
May ‘23	North Berwick	Forth and Tay
March ‘24	Paisley	Clyde
May 2023	St Margaret’s Hope, Orkney	Orkney Islands
May ‘23	Stromness, Orkney	Orkney Islands
October ‘23	Tarbert, Isle of Harris	Outer Hebrides
April ‘23	Waternish, Isle of Skye	West Highlands

Video Clip:
Overfishing

Key issues

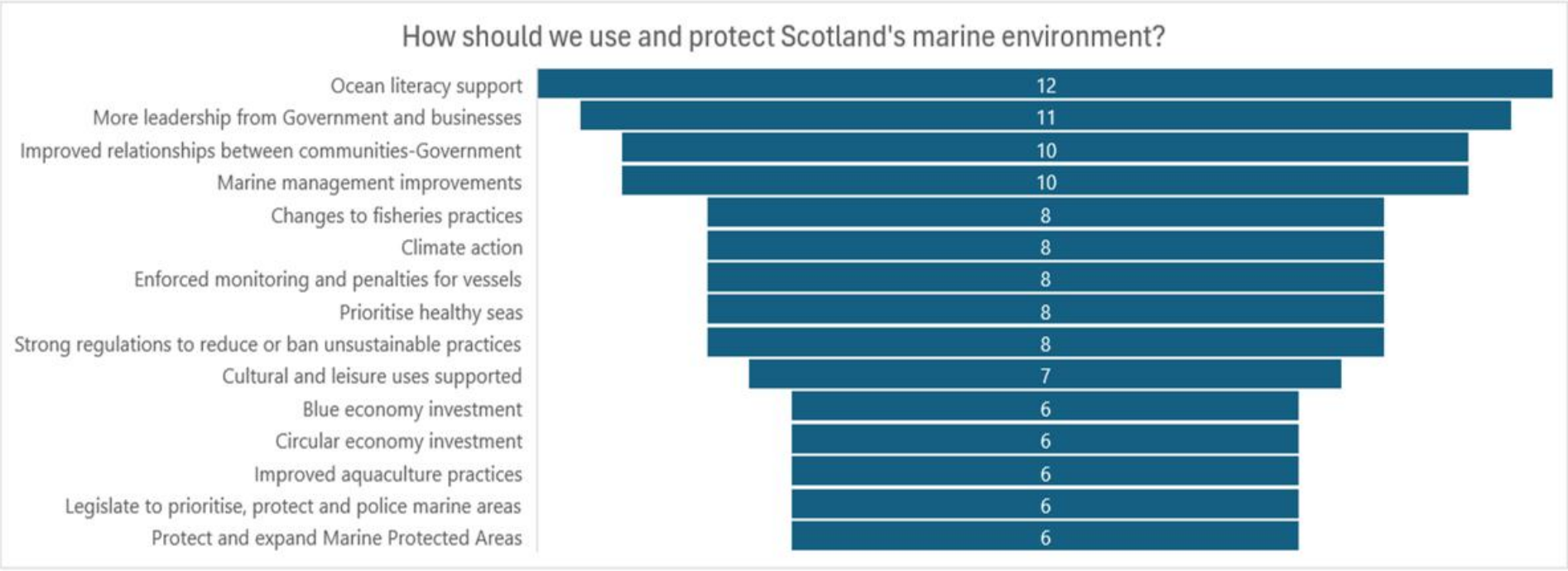
1. Fishing
2. Perceived lack of leadership from Government and businesses
3. Pollution
4. Climate Crisis
5. Consultation processes
6. Nature crisis



Video Clip:
Future Use

Future use and protection

1. Ocean literacy support
2. More leadership from Government and businesses
3. Improved relationships between communities-Government
4. Marine management improvements



Participation: barriers and support

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What barriers have you and/or your community faced when it comes to getting involved in policy conversations?

Barriers for Specific Demographics

Due to the various histories and contexts we navigate, different demographic groups face different barriers when it comes to engaging in different forms of qualitative approaches.

Ongoing ignorance of cultural / historical values

History of being taken advantage of

Financial costs of participation

Miscommunication

Lack of previous representation

Lack of capacity, time, and/or ability

Perceived lack of skill or knowledge

Barriers for Specific Demographics

We cannot expect:

Data to represent everyone within the demographic

Cooperation without providing full knowledge / consent around the project

To gather accurate information using only one specific method

To find final and complete solutions to all problems a demographic faces

People to care about work / data they have been excluded from

For people to be able to participate freely

Everyone to be interested in our work

Barriers to engagement in marine decision-making conversations

- a perceived lack of **knowledge** in marine planning and therefore a lack of **confidence**
- feeling **ignored or not welcome**
- the **language** used
- the **time** required to prepare

Barriers to engagement in marine decision-making conversations

- a lack of **accessible** opportunities to contribute
- not knowing if and when it's **appropriate** to contribute
- concern over the **hidden agenda** of the organiser
- a **lack of faith** in whether taking part is worthwhile

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What support would help you/your community get more involved in policy conversations?

"In many rural communities people are very scared of formal meetings because it's like, formal meetings are for formal people"
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Accessibility
"Language is really important as well... when I read some things I think, oh, that's not for me. That's very highfalutin and technical, but actually they need to relate the academic and technical stuff to real life"
The Scottish Wildlife Trust is a Scottish registered charity (no SC005732) and company limited by guarantee (no SC040247).
Image © Alison Moore @alisonmoordesigns

"It's not even just inclusion. It's about having an equal say as well. Because you think obviously a lot of companies, they've got money behind them. So they may get more of a say at the table"
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Being heard
"Sometimes I respond to something and I'm like, is anybody even going to read that? Have I had somebody just ticking a box? So I think the feedback loop is really important as well"
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"People need some training and support about the most effective way to make change within government... how do we influence, what are the processes?"
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Support
"About the decentralised model, I think it also means literally giving smaller communities the power to lead the way, because actually it is usually quite sustainable"
The Scottish Wildlife Trust is a Scottish registered charity (no SC005702) and company limited by guarantee (no SC040247).
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"A very cool thing, if each marine region had its own Ocean Citizens forum that was funded, that had support and people were invited to take part from various demographics"
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Representation
"At a school that you can see the coastline from, the kids are saying that they don't go down or they don't have any activities there. I find that crazy. But yeah, that's definitely common"
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Ocean literacy support

"Go out, don't expect people to come to you. Use existing community networks e.g. wild swimming groups"

"How do we make sure that every sector, every kind of community not only has the chance but is empowered to influence change?"

sea the connection

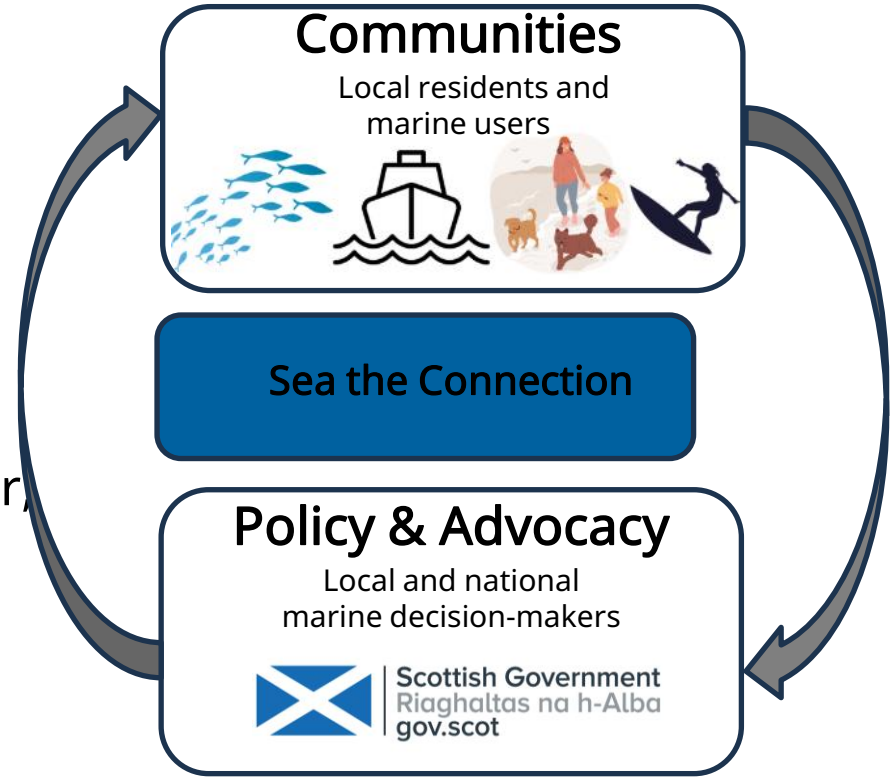
- 3 staff, 3 years (until Oct 2027)
- Implement recommendations from Oceans of Value workshops on removing barriers to participation in marine policy conversations
- Ocean Literacy - one of the social outcomes of the Blue Economy Vision for Scotland

Ocean Literacy – UNESCO

"The understanding of the ocean's influence on us and our influence on the ocean"

Our Values

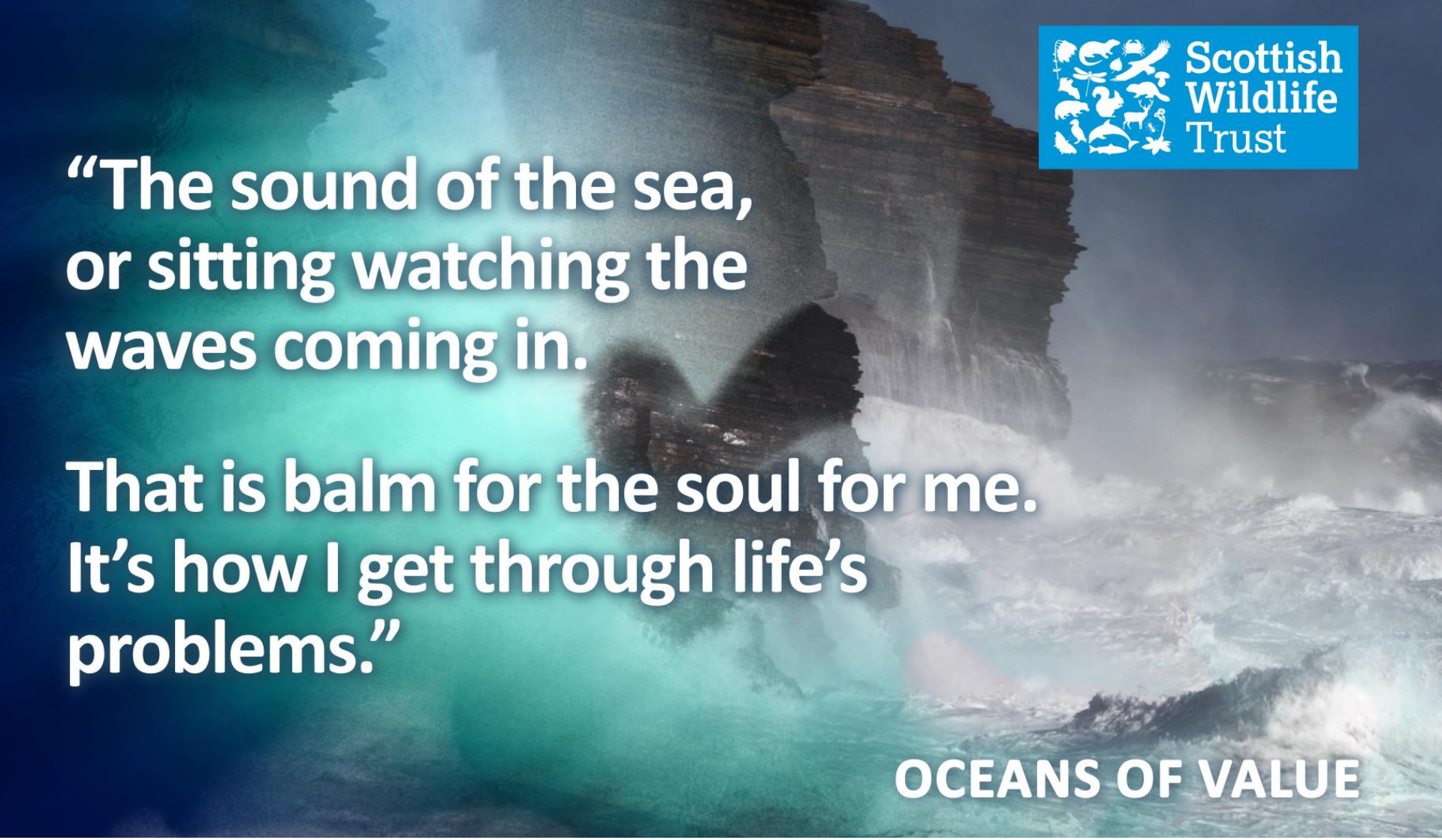
- Championing systemic changes in how marine policy-makers could and should connect with communities.
- Demonstrating the power of:
  - accessible, inclusive and meaningful policy activities...
    - co-developed with and for communities...
      - that share the values, expertise and insights of local people, at a policy level...
        - to emphasise the appetite for, and impacts of, authentic community-led marine management approaches...
          - that put communities at the heart of the decision-making processes which affect them.



Outcome: Increased ocean literacy, capacity and confidence in local communities enables participation in decision-making which impacts their lives and the marine environment

How we're going to achieve this:

1. Co-design ocean literacy programmes and deliver these in person to under-represented groups in up to 14 coastal locations (tailored to each unique area)
2. Develop an online ocean literacy toolkit
3. Establishment of a Scottish Ocean Literacy Coalition
4. Community engagement methodology and impact report
5. Production of briefings and policies promote community involvement



Interested? Please get in touch

Thank you!

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