

# Shared Values

Part of the follow-on to the

UK National Ecosystem Assessment



## The National Ecosystem Assessment

In 2011 the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) delivered a wealth of information on the state, value (economic and social) and possible future of terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems, but also identified a number of key uncertainties. Therefore, the UK Government and its funding partners are committed to adding to this knowledge base and are supporting a two-year long follow-on phase of the NEA. The follow-on phase will further develop and promote the arguments that the NEA put forward and make them applicable to decision and policy making at a range of spatial scales across the UK to a wide range of stakeholders.



## What are we doing?

This £264,000 research project aims to establish a clear understanding of shared values in the context of valuing nature, and provide a means to assess these for decision-making at multiple scales. The research aims to evaluate the extent to which shared, plural and cultural values of the environment (hereafter referred to as “shared values”) differ from individual values, and how they can be elicited.

It will consider how social processes might shape shared values, and will test the merit of different monetary and non-monetary techniques for capturing these values for use in decision-making. By improving our understanding of the differences between individual, shared, plural and cultural values, and how to assess them, this research will provide policy-makers with the evidence and tools necessary to give social impacts much more robust consideration in future policy decisions. The project runs from May 2012 to November 2013.

The follow-on phase is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), The Welsh Government and three research councils: the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and coordinates with numerous ongoing research activities throughout the UK.



## Project Summary

The National Ecosystem Assessment showed how the values that individuals hold shape how they take the natural environment into account, or not, in the decisions they make. Different people hold very different values, shaped by how they engage with and learn from each other, and their wider cultural and social setting. Also, many ecosystem services have collective meaning and significance to larger groups of people, who in turn are influenced by their cultural and social setting.

This research therefore goes beyond monetary valuation exercises, which are largely based on individual preferences. The research instead considers the various ways by which groups of people value different aspects of their natural environment. The project will review the academic literature on how shared (and conflicting) values have been thought of so far in different fields, such

as environment, health and renewable energy.

### Case Studies

We will then use a local and a UK-wide case study to consider how individual and group values change as individuals within the group learn from and influence each other. The local case study looks at the values of local communities working with an RSPB-led local partnership on a landscape scale conservation project in the Inner Firth, Scotland. The national case study is working with the Marine Conservation Society and other key stakeholders to explore the values of different beneficiaries of Marine Protected Areas across the UK, and will do in-depth work with an inshore fishing community in Hastings.

### Methods

Because many of the things we value about the natural environment have no direct monetary value, including for

example some of the cultural or spiritual benefits we derive from being in nature, we will use techniques from environmental economics that get people to estimate how much different aspects of the environment would be worth to them in monetary terms. We will also use non-monetary techniques (such as “Multi-Criteria Evaluation”), which get people to weigh and rank different aspects of the natural environment, and to assess the extent to which these alternative approaches usefully contribute to decisions about the natural environment.

Using both monetary and non-monetary approaches, we will consider how engaging people in discussion with one another can help demonstrate and explain shared values in ways that are more useful to decision-makers than the use of monetary outputs or individual preferences alone.



# The Team

This research brings together researchers from a wide range of disciplines to consider shared values from perspectives as diverse as philosophy, history, environmental aesthetics, ethics, ecology and economics

Name	Affiliation	Expertise
<b>Mark Reed</b> (Principal Investigator)	Birmingham City University	Interdisciplinary environmental research
<b>Jasper Kenter</b> (Project Manager)	University of Aberdeen	Ecological economics
<b>Alister Scott</b>	Birmingham City University	Environmental & spatial planning
<b>Althea Davies</b> (Research Fellow)	University of Aberdeen	Ecology & environmental archaeology
<b>Andrew Church</b>	University of Brighton	Human geography
<b>Alan Holland</b>	Lancaster University	Applied philosophy
<b>Claire Molloy</b>	Edge Hill University	Media studies
<b>Emily Brady</b>	University of Edinburgh	Environmental aesthetics
<b>Ioan Fazey</b>	University of St Andrews	Interdisciplinary environmental research
<b>Katherine Irvine</b>	de Montford University	Environmental psychology
<b>Liz O'Brien</b>	Forest Research	Sociology
<b>Mandy Ryan</b>	University of Aberdeen	Health economics
<b>Mark Everard</b>	Pundamillia Consulting	Sustainability science
<b>Michelle Pinard</b>	University of Aberdeen	Tropical forest ecology
<b>Mike Christie</b>	Aberystwth University	Environmental economics
<b>Neal Hockley</b>	Bangor University	Economics, policy & conservation
<b>Neil Ravenscroft</b>	University of Brighton	Land economy
<b>Niels Jobstvogt</b> (Research Assistant)	University of Aberdeen	Environmental economics & marine science
<b>Nigel Cooper</b>	Anglia Ruskin University	Environmental ethics, divinity & ecology
<b>Ros Bryce</b> (Research Fellow)	University of Aberdeen	Ecology
<b>Verity Watson</b>	University of Aberdeen	Health economics

## Contact



**Jasper Kenter (Project Manager)**

Email: [Jasper.Kenter@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:Jasper.Kenter@abdn.ac.uk)

Website: [www.jasperkenter.com](http://www.jasperkenter.com)

**Mark Reed (Principal Investigator)**

Email: [Mark.Reed@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Mark.Reed@bcu.ac.uk)

Website: [www.markreed.webeden.co.uk](http://www.markreed.webeden.co.uk)

## More information

Visit: <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org>

## Advisory Board

Name	Affiliation
<b>Kate Studd</b>	Inner Forth Landscape Initiative
<b>Rob Jarman</b>	National Trust
<b>Sue Ranger</b>	Marine Conservation Society
<b>Sue Williams</b>	Countryside Council for Wales

## UK National Ecosystem Assessment

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