

Ganging up on the problem: the benefits, and challenges, of collaboration

Dr Katherine Yates

 @yates_KL

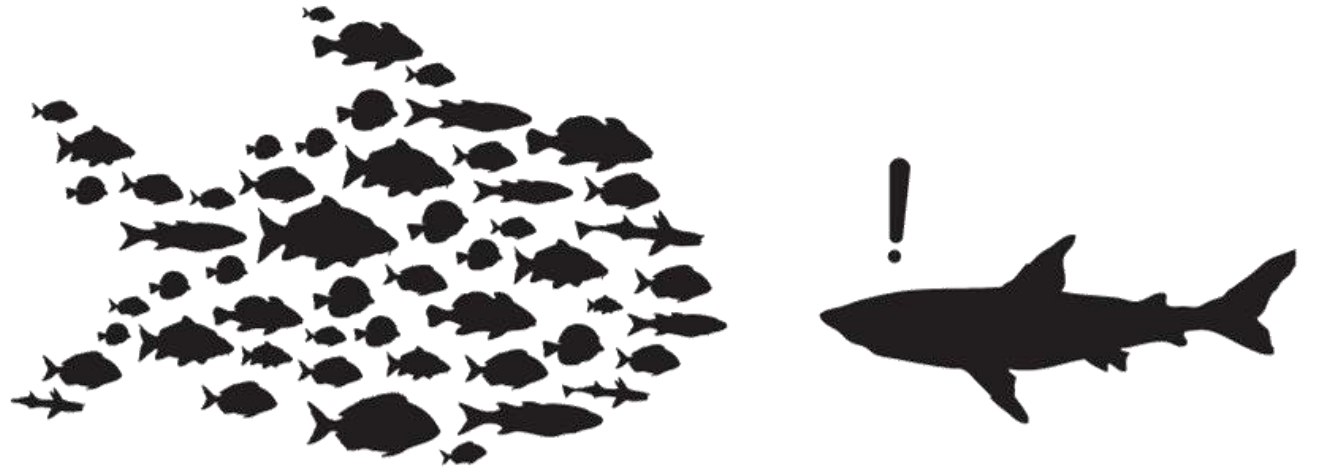
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Collaboration is essential

Collaboration is challenging and there are many barriers

Collaboration requires conscious and explicit allocation of substantial resources

Collaboration can (does!) change the world



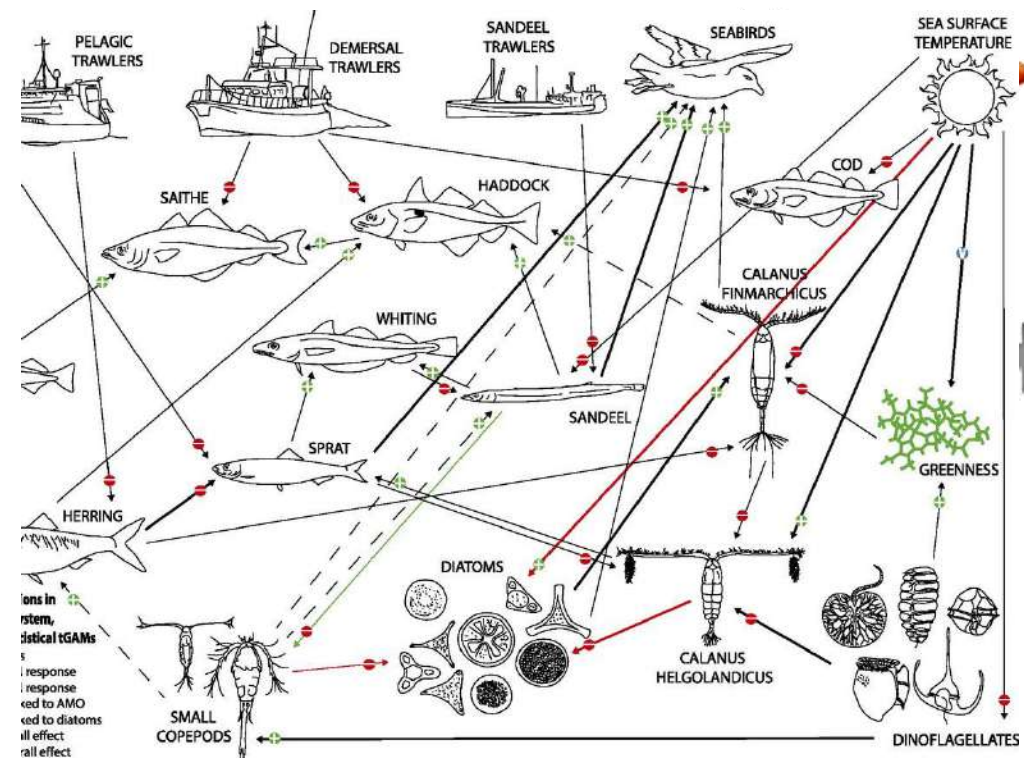
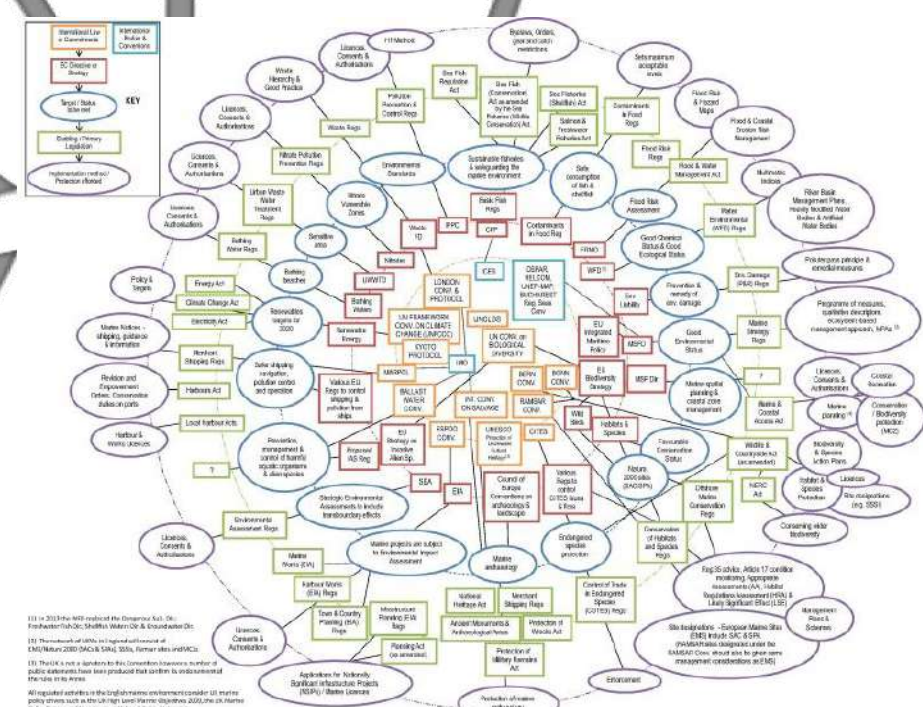


We care





Mind bogglingly complicated



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Science of collaboration

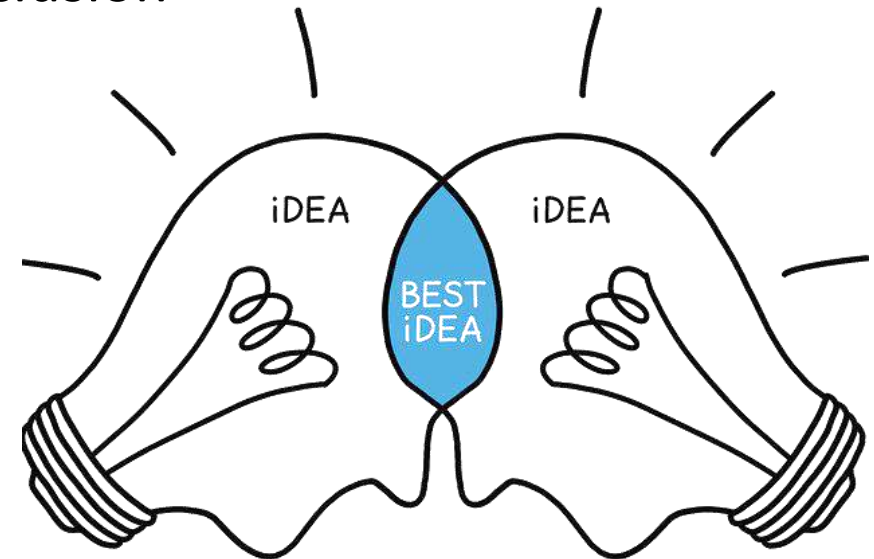
Evidence shows that collaboration between people from **diverse** backgrounds and skill sets ... with a healthy dose of respect.... Can yield big returns

Collaboration is especially important with increasing specialisation

Four stages of collaboration

- Foundation, formulation, sustainment and conclusion

Barriers and Incentives



Barriers and incentives for collaboration between UK academics and government practitioners

- Online survey
- One-to-one interviews
- Workshops

>200 participants



Incentives

Academics	Practitioners
Impact & desire to do something useful	
Improved understanding of government/policy	
Access to resources (e.g. Data, direct funds)	
Increased awareness of the work of others	
Broader collaboration/Expanded Network	
New research opportunities/questions	
Supporting for funding applications	
REF (Research Excellence Framework)	
Personal Satisfaction/interest	
Public accountability	
Different perspectives	
Increased credibility	
Job Prospects	
Feeds in to teaching	

Barriers for academics

“Very hard work. Like pushing rocks up-hill. Requires a long-term sustained effort to achieve any impact”

“...I almost never get replies from people...and I don't have time to chase them”

“Many government institutions don't know who is responsible for what...no one knows who is the best person”

“It takes a lot of time to get to know who to contact and then to build up trust and lines of communication. That [time] is not always available”

“....points of contact appear to change position so frequently that it is challenging to maintain the engagement for long enough to reach the intended outcome”

“Time is very limited as an academic and rarely does this type of work meet annual appraisal targets”

Time & Opportunity cost

Insufficient effort/time from government

Difficulty making initial contact

Mismatch in focus [agenda]

Government slow and bureaucratic

Lack of recognition in academia

Trust issues

Staff turnover

Funding shortfall

Mismatch in timescales

Lack of flexibility / play safe

Status as a researcher

Uncertainty

Barriers for practitioners

Its often a lot of hassle and in the end its easier to do the work ourselves

Previous experience was that time spent wasn't worth the gains of the final output

Academic research doesn't focus on my issues, on policy issues, and it takes too long to get results

They engage at the start, but then they go off and do their own things.. The scope changes... and I don't get what I need

Hard to find... I don't want to have do research to find research... don't know what's out there and don't have time

Time and energy

Timeline

Applicability/utility of outputs

Funding cycles

Don't understanding policy

Publication worthiness [agenda]

Knowing who and what's out there

Lack of follow through

Academic gold plating

Confidentiality



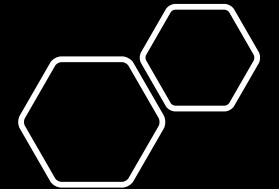
Marine
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Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

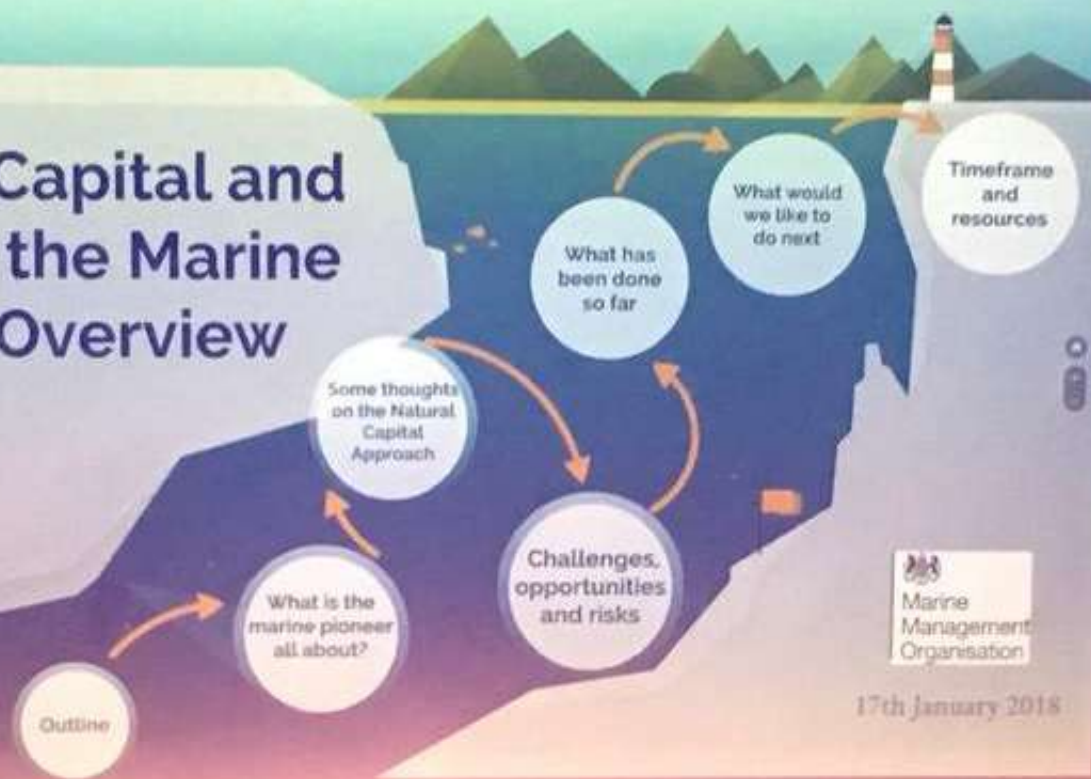
Marine Pioneer

Local partnerships of government agencies, researchers and stakeholders that undertake a range of projects and explore innovative ways of operating, with the ultimate aim of informing the delivery of the 25 year plan.



Natural Capital and the Sea: the Marine Pioneer Overview

Aisling Lannin



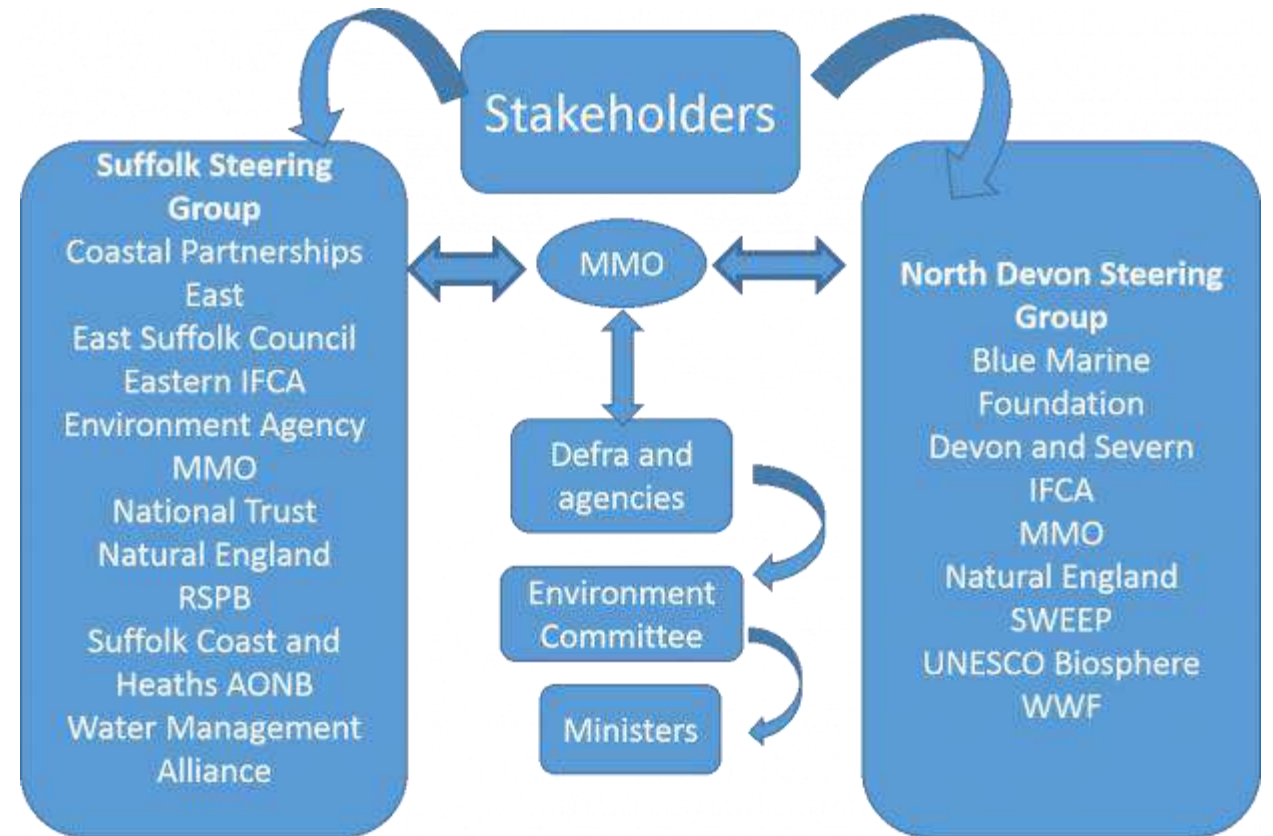
Marine Management Organisation

17th January 2018



Incentives

Test things on the ground
Share experiences & information
Provide advice to government



Barriers

Initial resistance to collaborated with
“them”

Different starting points

Funding/resources



Benefits

“Sold” on collaboration

Spin-offs

Space to be creative

Educated each other

Play to each others strengths

Impact at both local and national scales

Connections



Lessons learnt

Multidisciplinary is essential

Creative, sharing space is essential

Need for leadership and a vision

Need for connections

Complex issues require complex answers

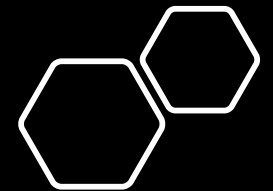




UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

MSc in Marine Conservation

A unique masters programme delivered in
partnership with marine conservation
practitioners from over 20 organisations



Incentive

To make a different type of course, one that was directly relevant to the sector

Approached practitioners to co-create



Barriers

Time

Varying responsiveness

Maintaining relationships

Logistic effort

Diplomacy

Being comfortable with prodding



Benefits

Totally different learning experience
Graduates with the skills to do the jobs
“make a difference”

Reputation

Spin-off collaborations

Catalyst for encouraging wider engagement



Lessons learnt

Got to put in the effort

Find complimentary ways of helping each other

Not enough thought, care and time put into relationship building and maintaining



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Collaboration requires conscious and explicit allocation of substantial resources

Need for knowledge exchange and connectors

Need to be accessible

Collaboration does change the world – more sustainable management

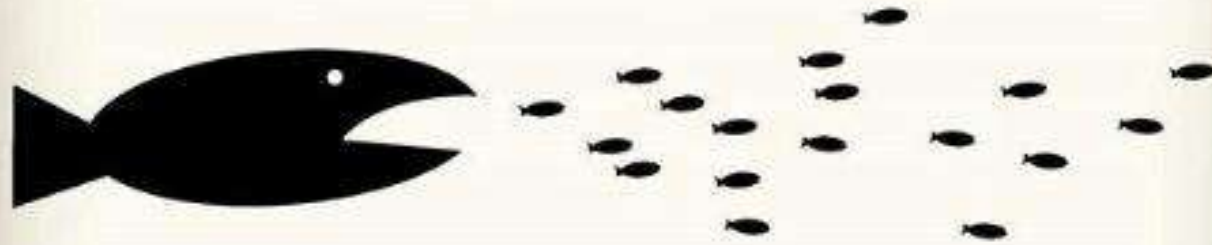




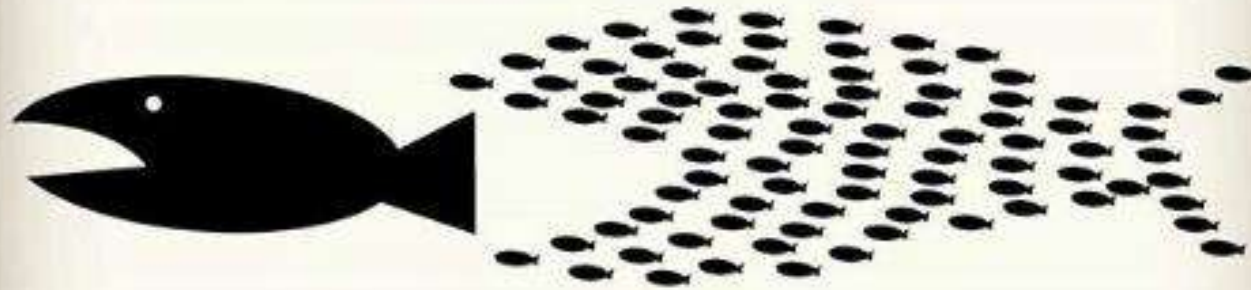
**Marine
Management
Organisation**

My thanks, my collaborators

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DON'T PANIC,



COLLABORATE