

Collaborative approaches to delivering biodiversity objectives



Keeping it simple

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Definition of collaborate

(Concise Oxford)

- Work jointly
- Cooperate traitorously with the enemy

Context and background

Site and species protection

- Management objectives?
 - Maintenance of site condition
- Not a good start for collaboration
 - Conservative, negative, complex, restrictive, exclusive
- Nor is it clear that it works
 - Micro-management cannot match the complexity and dynamism of nature
- The jewel in the crown

Frameworks and Action Plans

- BAP process, SBS process, Coastal Partnerships etc)
 - Driven and developed primarily by scientists, agencies and NGOs (inclusion of resource users difficult)
 - Ambitious, comprehensive, complex
 - Underpinned by frightening lists
 - the aggregation of specialism
 - LBAP officers/partners struggling at the coalface

Experience from SBF study

- There is a very big gap between the top, the middle and the local
 - Everyone knows this
- The will to work with each other is seriously constrained by politics and legislation, especially European
- Many have given up

RDP etc

- Pretty complex
- Farmers now need consultants to help them get environment friendly farming grants
 - Collaboration? Or alienation?
- Rewards the haves, does not encourage have-nots
 - Honeypots and deserts

Overall

- From inspiration to technocracy
- From Fraser Darling and Alister Hardy to a web of bureaucracy
- With some notable exceptions...

Laying the foundations

- Engagement/education/enjoyment initiatives
 - John Muir Award
 - Salmon in the classroom
 - Vane Farm
 - Sealife/seabird centres
 - Foyers Primary
 - <http://www.hambreyconsulting.co.uk/the-big-project-g.asp>
- Wonderful examples which underpin the opportunity and potential for collaboration
 - a fraction of the resources

Back to first principles:

*what do we all (including
collaborators) want?*



Objectives

- To most people the *status quo* is not necessarily the objective...
- But it is very hard for scientists to define alternative objectives
 - Hence the dominance of site protection/site condition
- This lies the at the heart of many of the tensions that have arisen in recent decades

Shared objectives

- Ecosystem functioning to sustain ecosystem services
 - Water and air quality; waste assimilation (incl. carbon sequestration etc)
 - Sustained agricultural, forestry, fisheries production
- Nice stuff; interesting stuff; inspiring stuff

How do we achieve them?

- Ecosystem functioning and services
 - Overall...probably not a problem, though some chemicals pose global threats (incl. CO₂)
 - Dedicated organisations to manage specific services/resources based simply on human self interest. Broadly effective?
- Nice stuff; interesting stuff; inspiring stuff: biodiversity
 - Much more difficult?
 - Function and services as a justification for conservation?
 - *Dangerous. There is massive redundancy in nature*

The nature of the beast



- The natural environment is not a frail and delicate creature to be penned and coddled
 - *its a rampart force for life and diversity*
- Stimulate diversity of enterprise and land use, reduce chemical use, increase connectivity
 - *Ecosystems will function*
 - *....and most of the nice stuff will flourish*



Rules of Collaboration

- Respect

- Resource users usually have a great deal of knowledge

- Understanding

- They usually have substantial loans and/or overhead expenses
- They are usually too busy for day-time meetings

- Flexibility/compromise

- You may not get protection of your interest but you might get creation of something (even better?)

- Time

Two examples from Sweden



**Kristianstads Vattenrike
Biosphere Reserve**



**Kosterhavets
Marine Park**

*Without better and more flexible collaboration
alienation will continue, reinforced with declining
interest and knowledge*

.....and biodiversity will suffer

New opportunities

- Biodiversity duty and SOA
 - Quality of life and opportunity
- LBAPs, Rangers
 - Don't write them off
- WFD/marine planning
- Biosphere Reserves, National Parks

In conclusion

- Keep it simple; inspire; a light touch

Wildlife is precious, but if we are too protective, we will alienate our allies and constrain biodiversity

Let nature flourish

And...start early

Thankyou

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Awareness and interest

- Awareness is the *wrong word*.
- Implies that *we* know what is right and *they* need to become aware of it.
- Engagement, understanding, interest
 - these create the basis for collaboration.





*Resist the temptation to tell
people which species and
how...*

*...unless you are a superb
communicator, economist,
ecologist, and seer*