Valuing the Ocean learning ex/change day - 16 November 2018

Notes from Sharing Outcomes, Measuring Change session facilitated by Just Ideas Richard Usher/Leila Baker

These notes harvest the learning and discussion from the morning session of the Valuing the Ocean learning day at Walthamstow Wetlands, on 16th November 2018. It focused on a framing question:

'How is the work supported through CGF's Valuing the Ocean programme contributing to better collaboration and communication of the value of the ocean, and more effective ocean protection?'

Richard Usher (RU) introduced the evaluation and learning partner role focusing on the wider movement of Valuing the Ocean and the importance of balancing the big picture (the big ambition for the ocean) and small picture (the specific aims of the work actually being funded and evaluated within the programme).

a.   Walk and Talk: The most important change you are trying to bring about

As an opening activity participants were invited to explore the Walthamstow Wetlands venue in pairs or threes for fifteen minutes and discuss: connection with the Valuing the Ocean strand and the most important change participants were trying to bring about through their work.

Feedback was taken on the ocean-scape above under the overarching goal for Valuing the Ocean – 'By 2021 more in the UK will know their wellbeing and prosperity depend on a health ocean and support actions to protect it.'

Participant feedback has been grouped thematically below:

Participants identified the importance of **framing, 'shifting the story' and communications.**

- Shifting the story around the ocean and why it matters, so people are willing to protect it.
- Consistent messaging grounded in best practice; communications work based on research of what is likely to work.

- One ocean frame.

A further thematic area was **increasing/accessing funding for marine protection.**

- Greater political commitment and funding.
- Bringing like-minded funders together to drive sustainable fishing projects.
- Getting new funders to support oceans work.

Connecting with people/values based approach was identified as a priority area.

- Connecting people to the ocean/bring the ocean inland.
- Achieving widespread/meaningful appreciation of the ocean and its value.
- Meaningful ocean connection (ocean friendly society) and sector wide collaboration (and beyond).
- An ocean literate public with personal, emotional connections to the ocean.
- Sustained interest in the ocean (beyond Blue Planet 2) converted into sustained public behaviour change – legislation.

Influence/advocacy – at local/national/international levels

- Ensuring decision-makers recognise the magnitude of importance of 2020 deadline for setting fishing levels in line with scientific advice.
- Communities care more for their ocean through their local Marine Conservation Zone
- Locally led conservation of areas of rich marine wildlife leads to international recognition of this approach.

Supporting systems change

- Supporting and equipping people and organisations for systems change.
- Building infrastructure for systems change – making link between 'inner' and 'outer' change.

Mapping and growing the network.

- Mapping the ecosystem beyond the marine sector and build connections.
- Bringing more players in to valuing the ocean.

b. What are your key achievements or outcomes over the last 1-2 years in relation to Valuing the Ocean?

In table groups participants discussed and fed back on the question above with a focus on:

- Organisational or individual level
- The wider marine conservation sector
- Ocean protection

These achievements and outcomes were then mapped to the learning questions already developed as part of VtO's learning framework:

1. How is VtO strengthening collaboration in the marine conservation sector?
2. How is VtO contributing to better communication of the value of the ocean?
3. Is increased collaboration and better communication lead to better management and increased protection of our ocean?
4. Are new approaches to communicating the ocean helping to make the sector more effective in protecting the ocean?

Through discussion and agreement in mapping achievements there were some refinements to these learning questions reflected in the rephrased questions heading tables below. Feedback captured on post-its has been synthesised within the tables.

1: How is VtO strengthening collaboration in the marine conservation sector?
• VtO has brought together a **varied group of players** many of whom were not previously working together and in doing so has strengthened relationships and seeded new collaborations. • VtO has created a **space for people working in the marine sector to consolidate and then develop their work through experiments** and then continue to create the space and offer encouragement to share what they learn. • VtO has **enabled its partners to acquire new skills and knowledge in collaborative working**, facilitation, systems change and values based communications. This has inspired and enabled partners to take new ways of working back into their own organisations and networks. • VtO is **beginning to help draw further funding into the marine sector** through: building the name and legitimacy of VtO and its work; helping to convene marine funders to explore how they could collaborate for marine; trialling new financial models to create change through WOD for schools; VtO being recognised more widely, leading to new research and funding opportunities and new collaborations.

2: How is VtO contributing to better communication of the value of the ocean?
• Research/reports commissioned as part of VtO have **helped with framing** • VtO has **built the capacity of partners to know how to use the framing** and the VBA in their work and given them the confidence to know that you can be an individual champion change in your own organisation. • Through this, VtO partners have seen a **change in sector awareness and approach to communication about the ocean**. Specifically, in team members and colleagues in the marine sector, coastal partnerships, marine recovery work, #Oneless network, and their international work. • **Change in public/media awareness and approach** to communication about the ocean. Specifically, ocean literacy has extended beyond the sector, widespread media coverage of PCBs affecting orca population, the plastic bottle problem in London is framed as an ocean issue; realizing that citizen movements can drive change. • **At a personal level:** Deeper emotional and spiritual connection to ocean in myself.

3. Is increased collaboration and better communication leading to a healthier ocean?

- **Communicating community values** to decision-makers regarding marine protected area management, regulation, research, enforcement and engagement, and watching them change their practice:
    - 1000+ people responded to Marine Conservation Zone consultation for Beachy Head East – thanks to VtO approaches through (Agents of Change)
    - In East Sussex: Increasing community voice for local ocean protection by investing time in understanding local opinion before running a campaign. People felt they strongly respected and resonated with the messaging.
    - Reducing the fishing vs. conservation conflict in local communities (such as Cromer, Norfolk) through running facilitated community workshops. Increased desire and acceptability of ocean conservation.
- **Experiments resulting in the behaviour change**: through #OneLess – policy and behaviour change = fewer plastic bottles in ocean; connecting Londoners to the Ocean; ZSL stopped selling plastic bottles – and framed this change using ocean frames; organisations in London are reducing the number of plastic bottles they use and refilling instead; Mayor of London commits to installing drinking fountains in London (£2.5 million of funding)
- **Sectoral:** seeing the seeding of learning about **local leadership** leads to better conservation across the sector; cascading what it takes for **collaboration** with the Marine CoLAB and experiments such as #OneLess; **action inquiry for systems change**
- VtO initiatives help organisations **'start the conversation'**: e.g. in schools (about our relationship with/protection of the ocean); becoming a champion on #OneLess plastic reduction – voice and personal action
- VtO has potential to **impact public and political understanding** corresponding with increasing political pressure/individual behaviour change and legal change (promised)
    - Sustainability objectives and principles on the face of the UK Fisheries Bill proposal
    - Rejection of amendment to postpone Common Fisheries Policy 'Maximum Sustainable Yield by 2020' deadline by European Parliamentary plenary in recent vote.
    - Presenting a clearer narrative to decision-makers
    - Helping to obtain High Seas negotiations/treaty

4. Are new approaches to communication and collaboration helping to make the sector more effective in protecting the ocean?

- VtO enables **community specific messaging** – more nuanced work that feels relevant to local people, but that follows a national framework. This is supported through the inclusion of wellbeing and community groups in valuing and engaging with wider marine conservation.
- It provides **encouragement, inspiration and peer learning** to continue working towards the greater goal of marine education and conservation.
- VtO focuses on '**shifting the mindset**' about how we talk about and act towards the ocean. This has been used at a range of different levels including High Seas treaty negotiations. There is increased momentum and awareness for change.
- At a personal level it has resulted in **sharing new facilitation and meeting management techniques** – which have been implemented within organisations.

c. Future aspirations – what are we already doing and what do we need to demonstrate the difference we are making?

With this shared understanding of how the achievements of different organisations and individuals mapped to the learning questions, groups explored their aspirations over the next two to three years, what indicators of change would look like and any ideas or examples of practice that would be useful for data collection.

1: How is VtO strengthening collaboration in the marine conservation sector?	
Aspirations over c.2-3 years	Indicators of change
• Marine sector has skills and systems in place to support collaboration • More collaboration between organisations within CoLab and VtO • Collaboration between the marine sector and other sectors	• VtO community grows and becomes more diverse (getting out of the CoLab bubble) • VtO community buys into a shared purpose and direction • People feel like they are part of a whole, less organisational identity; people are sharing more, there is more trust • Systems for flow of information/learning within VtO and beyond • (Core) funding is available for more collaborations • Experiments between organisations that haven't previously worked together • Increased in-kind contribution/capacity from VtO community • More organisations have the capacity and confidence to lead collaborations and to implement collaborative governance model
Quotation: *'The benefit of collaboration is felt and lived'* Ideas for how/what data to collect: • Number of days of in-kind contribution from each organisation to VtO. NB Keep it simple! (Chris Tuckett) • Story harvesting (Jen)	

2: How is VtO contributing to better communication of the value of the ocean?	
Aspirations over c.2-3 years	Indicators of change
• Behaviour change: messages have a lasting impact/people feel the connection • Ocean literate society	• People go home and behave differently • Education and numbers engaged • Map what do comms campaigns look like now and what did they look like before. Which values worked best in different contexts? • Major businesses adopt VtO comms and change their behaviour (like Adidas) • One Ocean – drop the 's' – Ocean Conference 2020

• Increased and improved understanding of the role of the ocean and earth system among policy makers, media, public, kids • Joined up decision-making across e.g. government departments	• Ocean is better integrated into UNFCCC • Legislation, budget allocation, Ocean ministry established

Quotation/question: *Do we know how the plastic focus in Blue Planet II came about, and whether there is any connection back to VtO? And if not, how we take VtO into the mass media going forward?*

Ideas for how/what data to collect:
• Wish for the ocean (Paul B)
• Social missions – Take a photo of… Tell us if… (Paul B)
• Social media analytics
• Annotated drawings coded for key messages (Paul B)
• Public surveys

3: Is increased collaboration and better communication leading to a healthier ocean?

Aspirations over c.2-3 years	Indicators of change
• High level environmental decision making incorporates ocean-friendly language/intent and these are applied/reflected in policy/binding decisions. • A diverse, unified, society-wide set of voices calls for (and acts toward) a healthier ocean. • Values, attitudes and behaviour change to become more ocean friendly.	• Policy instruments • Blue Heart – Marine Conservation Society • Key communications waypoints across different stakeholder groups • Tracking the language/social media of thought leaders • Narrow quantitative indicators around ocean engagement/participation • Content of language around online ocean petitions

Ideas for how/what data to collect:
• Impact chains to track wide range of outcomes e.g. number of policy engagements tracked to percentage enacted and percentage leading to conservation outcome (Dan S)
• Knowledge, attitudes, and practice (KAP) method to capture people-led change/perceptions

4: Are new approaches to communication and collaboration helping to make the sector more effective in protecting the ocean?

Aspirations over c.2-3 years	Indicators of change
• VtO to be 'greater than the sum of its parts' • Others come forward requesting participation because they have recognized that new approaches positively impact effectiveness (i.e. outside existing CoLAB)	• Other sector groups use the new approaches • Size of [meetings & community] that participate in information sharing

• Be seen as best practice by sector (organisations and funders) AND other sectors	• Break into new geographies/scale of community
• New 'new approaches' emerge (learn from others as well as generate from within) and learning continues	• Additional methodologies in portfolio of approaches/toolbox • Increased evidence of effectiveness of approaches are captured from usage by wider sector (i.e. refinement of toolbox through feedback) NB failures as well as successes
• Individuals/organisations have exposure/experience of using multidisciplinary skills to strengthen their own effectiveness • Deepening/broadening of sector representatives' skills and thought processes	• Qualitative: change in individuals' own perception of personal growth as advocate for ocean health
• Access/leverage greater funding because proposals draw on non-duplication and leverage multiple NGOs' skills [plus learning communicated to funders about what works, this influences funders' approach]	• Funding goes to proposals based on 'new approaches' • No duplication in projects funded • Joint NGO proposals increase. Percentage of successful proposals increase. More money into the sector • Reach more people for less money
• Healthy tension between 'one voice' and 'not being an echo chamber'	• External appreciation of whether sector is effective – power of shared approach/voice
Ideas for how/what data to collect: • 'Warm data' approach - Nora Bateson https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8tTax7ad9g (Corina) • Don't lose individual thought – don't become an echo chamber • Scale – regional impact? • Infrastructure developed • New ideas generated • Skills portfolios – breadth increased • Resilience • Harness multidisciplinary aspect of the CoLAB approach	