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Participatory Impact: Paving the Collective Way Forward in Marine Science Communication

Measuring impact in marine science is more than a simple strategy; it is a complex participatory process that involves new interactions, capacity building, collaboration and collective action. This presentation will illustrate how a participatory impact approach can measure and achieve a deep impact when dealing with the multiple stakeholders involved in the processes and outputs of marine science and ocean literacy.

"To ensure marine science communication is on the right path, we need to pause, reflect, and take stock of our collective progress. Measuring and optimising impact in marine science communication requires two key ingredients - reflections and feedback loops."

Patricia McHugh's passion for achieving change and societal impact has led her to spend the last 8 years designing a Collective Impact Assessment Framework for marine science communication. Patricia began her impact journey by undertaking a PhD on the Development and Measurement of Impact Indicators for Science Communication using Social Marketing and Social Innovation Theory. Patricia's interdisciplinary PhD not only measured the impact of science communication in Ireland, it also visualized the participatory impact of science communication networks using a technique called Value Network Analysis. Patricia brought her knowledge of impact measurement to Sea for Society, a FP7 European funded project, where as a postdoctoral researcher Patricia was responsible for the design, development and analysis of Sea for Society mobilisation activities, using social innovation indicator measurements, within an EU marine context. Bringing her national and European applications of impact measurement together, Patricia is now a postdoctoral researcher with the Whitaker Institute at the National University of Ireland Galway on Sea Change, a Horizon 2020 project. Patricia's current work involves designing, training, and implementing Social Innovation Participation Processes (SIPPs) within an Ocean Literacy context for Sea Change. Patricia's use of SIPPs is instrumental in the design and coordination of a Collective Impact Assessment Framework, which monitors and tracks the impact of SIPP actions implemented over the lifetime of the Sea Change project. Together SIPPs and the Collective Impact Assessment framework pave the way forward in achieving behavioural and social change, whilst also optimising impact. As a result of this research, Patricia delivers behavioural change training and participatory impact workshops to environmental organisations, national marine institutes and aquaria in Ireland.