

Feedback session day 1

During the feedback session at the end of day 1, some concluding remarks were distilled from the first day presentations, contributions and discussions:

- Generally agreed that marine scientists should inform policy
- There is a need for communication strategies
 - o emphasis on shared responsibility (scientists and policy makers/administrators)
 - o need to understand the roles of the actors
 - Who are policy makers/administrators?
 - Who will undertake the actions?
 - What will be the cost associated with these actions?
 - Are the costs justified?
- The need for a long term policy for the North Sea was mentioned
 - o would provide some indication for future research questions
 - o seem to have a whole range of benefits
 - o what steps can we take to provoke this?
- Policy should be based on evidence – benefits include better decisions, easier to defend to public at large, increased transparency, ...
- Importance cross-border cooperation on a scientific level (but not limited to science)
- Importance of relations scientists and administrators
 - o importance of administration+ administrations need to do their homework
 - o are policy supporting administrations the ideal/only partners to transfer science to a policy level? Scientists <-> administration <-> policy (makers)
 - o intermediate → mediate between science and policy makers? But how?
 - o science PR → make yourself and your research known to the relevant actors
- Fragmentation of science (and interaction with policy levels) - How to tackle this?
 - o needs to be tackled in a larger framework
 - o what framework do we have in mind?
- Answers from marine scientists to policy questions should be accompanied by information regarding the limitations of those answers (uncertainty levels)
- Some problems mentioned (some reoccurring – many universal): language, complexity, being prepared for policy questions, perceived gaps between detailed level science and generalisation required for policy makers, data harmonisation / standardisation remains a problem to be tackled, ...
- Methods of stakeholder engagements are important and need to be appropriate
 - o Recommended actions: collate and document positive/negative experiences
- as models/research becomes more complex there is a greater need for data
- in view of the EU directives, marine strategy and policy there will be a greater need to develop tools to investigate deviations from a “normal” situation
- need for greater understanding of sediment transport and the marine biology
- need for further integration of ecological knowledge with social and economic parameters within an ecosystem-based management framework
- both anthropogenic and natural processes need to be better understood
- MAPS are important supporting tools to make research more accessible - Maps are identified as an important tool towards end-users and policy
- policy requires continues datasets and monitoring efforts that are insufficiently available
- in view of the small area of the Belgian Part of the North Sea, need for strong coordination of research efforts is even more important – but at the same time because of the scale this is perceived as realistic and achievable