

Conference Abstracts & Biographies

6D – Blue Economy II

Chair: Sarah Young, WWF

Social licence to operate for aquaculture: the role of local communities in sustainable production

Suzannah-Lynn Billing and Paul Tett, The Scottish Association for Marine Science

Abstract:

Marine aquaculture is widely recognised as an industry with the potential to fulfil food, development and sustainability targets. However, with increasing allocation of marine space for Blue Growth industries and conservation measures, competition between these allocations and priorities for coastal communities is a social sustainability issue that is coming to the fore. Research and development in the aquaculture industry tends to focus on environmental and economic outcomes. Nevertheless, social acceptability is recognised by industry, research and government as key to its sustainable growth. In many coastal communities around Europe, there is an emergent movement of community-led groups which are opposed to aquaculture developments, making it more difficult to find space for expansion or formation of new sites. This study explores the drivers and motivations for objecting to or supporting the expansion of the aquaculture industry, using the theory of social licence to operate (SLO). The discussion is based on the thematic analysis of 1388 public comments made on planning applications for new finfish farms in Scotland from 2012-2016 and interviews with opposition groups. It also includes preliminary data collected from 6 seaweed cultivation companies based across the European Economic Area. The analysis reveals the complexities involved in SLO, including areas of concern for engaged members of local communities. It shows that there are key actors who shape and drive engagement with the societal debate around the acceptability of aquaculture through the effective distribution of information. Thought and dialogue between research, regulators, industry and communities is needed to improve the sources of information on which local communities and the wider general public base their opinions of the aquaculture industry. This is of particular importance given the trend for more local marine and coastal planning processes and the desire to increase aquaculture production in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: social licence to operate, aquaculture, sustainability, coastal communities, industry.

Interdependencies of Mangroves and Fisheries Production in the Klang Islands

Jennice Yap Shu Ee, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Abstract:

Marine aquaculture is widely recognised as an industry with the potential to fulfil food, development and sustainability targets. However, with increasing allocation of marine space for Blue Growth industries and conservation measures, competition between these allocations and priorities for coastal communities is a social sustainability issue that is coming to the fore. Research and development in the aquaculture industry tends to focus on environmental and economic outcomes. Nevertheless, social acceptability is recognised by industry, research and government as key to its sustainable growth. In many coastal communities around Europe, there is an emergent movement of community-led groups which are opposed to aquaculture

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Keywords: social licence to operate, aquaculture, sustainability, coastal communities, industry.

Building our blue economy: mobilising investment in marine areas in the UK

Sarah Young and Toby Roxburgh, WWF

Abstract:

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Keywords: social licence to operate, aquaculture, sustainability, coastal communities, industry.

Rethinking the Blue Economy around Natural Capital in North Devon

Andrew Bell, The North Devon UNESCO World Biosphere Service

Abstract:

North Devon is a UNESCO World biosphere Reserve that includes all the catchments that drain to the north coast of Devon and the include the marine area to 12 nautical miles beyond Lundy. As a designation with a role to test new policies relating to the management and sustainable use of ecosystems by society, it is testing the natural capital approach to planning in the marine environment. Work to date has involved mapping the natural capital, their ecosystem services and their beneficiaries with a view to creating a “natural capital plus” plan that will enable investment and management for blue growth in the Bristol Channel area. In this session we will resent the work to date and a proposed framework for the plan on which we would welcome your feedback.