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**Abstract:** An essential component of ecosystem-based approaches in coastal zone management and the emerging field of marine planning are partnerships and collaborations between a range of multi-sector organisations and individuals. Ensuring that partnerships are effective is a priority for those responsible for planning and management in coastal and marine environments. Current partnership evaluation approaches, however, tend to view effectiveness as the cumulative end result of a set of variables acting in a linear process at a specific point in time. Given that governance and participation are acknowledged as non-linear and multifaceted processes, more reflective and nuanced approaches that take account of the dynamic, multidimensional and geographically embedded nature of the collaborative process are needed. This paper proposes a new framework for partnership evaluation based on policy narratives and indicators, and demonstrates the potential of the approach using three case studies of partnerships focused upon marine nature-based tourism. The insights from this research have direct relevance to the agencies and organisations responsible for delivering integrated coastal management, including marine spatial planning.



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**25 October 2011**

Dear Sir,

Please find attached the revised manuscript, amended according to the reviewer's suggestions, which I would be grateful if you would accept for publication in Marine Policy. Please thank the reviewer for their insightful and constructive comments.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course regarding my submission.

Yours faithfully

*Claire Kelly*

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**25 October 2011**

Dear Sir,

We accept the reviewer's suggestion to revise the title of the paper and have done so accordingly. The captions for each figure and table have also been moved to a separate page each at the end of the manuscript, as instructed. Please thank the reviewer for their insightful and constructive comments.

I hope that the revisions are acceptable to you and I look forward to hearing from you in due course regarding my submission.

Yours faithfully

*Claire Kelly*

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# Reflective Practice for Marine Planning: A Case Study of Marine Nature-based Tourism Partnerships

FOR SUBMISSION TO *MARINE POLICY*

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## Abstract

An essential component of ecosystem-based approaches in coastal zone management and the emerging field of marine planning are partnerships and collaborations between a range of multi-sector organisations and individuals. Ensuring that partnerships are effective is a priority for those responsible for planning and management in coastal and marine environments. Current partnership evaluation approaches, however, tend to view effectiveness as the cumulative end result of a set of variables acting in a linear process at a specific point in time. Given that governance and participation are acknowledged as non-linear and multifaceted processes, more reflective and nuanced approaches that take account of the dynamic, multidimensional and geographically embedded nature of the collaborative process are needed. This paper proposes a new framework for partnership evaluation based on policy narratives and indicators, and demonstrates the potential of the approach using three case studies of partnerships focused upon marine nature-based tourism. The insights from this research have direct relevance to the agencies and organisations responsible for delivering integrated coastal management, including marine spatial planning.

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## Manuscript Highlights:

- This paper examines the concept of partnership effectiveness
- Moves from viewing effectiveness as a cumulative end result to an ongoing reflective practice
- An alternative evaluation framework based on policy narratives and indicators is proposed
- The alternative evaluation framework is assessed using three case studies
- Insights from this research have direct relevance for marine spatial planning

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Main text: 8,114 words

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# Reflective Practice for Marine Planning: A Case Study of Marine Nature-based Tourism Partnerships

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An essential component of ecosystem-based approaches in coastal zone management and the emerging field of marine spatial planning are partnerships and collaborations between a range of multi-sector organisations and individuals. Partnerships are usually formalised through the creation of a collective debating structure, such as a forum or steering group, and have a mechanism for the implementation of goals. Partnership working has been heralded as a more inclusive form of governance and an effective way of developing and delivering policy intervention [1, 2]. Yet questions remain as to whether this approach provides an effective vehicle for policy delivery in practice.

It is clear from the current literature on partnership evaluation that effectiveness is viewed as the cumulative end result of a set of variables acting on a linear process at a specific point in time. However, given that governance and participation are acknowledged as non-linear and multifaceted processes [3-5], this paper argues that applying a linear, rigid approach to evaluation does not adequately reflect the dynamic, multidimensional and geographically embedded nature of the collaborative process. What is needed is a mechanism which allows the changing landscape of partnership activity, together with the shifting context in which it works, to be acknowledged as an integral part of the evaluation process [6].

This paper has two aims. First, in order to assess the effectiveness of a partnership at different stages in its development, a new framework for partnership evaluation based on policy narratives and indicators is proposed. Second, the potential of this framework is demonstrated using three case studies of partnerships focused upon marine nature-based tourism. The case studies provide evidence that the internal processes and external contexts within which partnerships operate vary over time. As a result, the performance and effectiveness of partnerships change. Such changes need not be a problem, as long as partners actively reflect upon them and respond appropriately. Using reflective practice, partnerships can continuously monitor achievements and make necessary changes to maintain their effectiveness through time. The insights from this research have direct relevance to the agencies and organisations responsible for delivering integrated coastal management and marine spatial planning.

## 2. THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH IN COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

The management of marine and coastal environments in Europe has been fragmented and undertaken by statutory bodies, public sector authorities and major landowners with little or no stakeholder participation or integration between actors [7]. During the 1990s, the encouragement of a more collaborative approach to coastal management led to the establishment of new integrated coastal partnerships [8, 9]. The shift towards collaboration was driven by a number of policy reviews, which called for closer integration between agencies and stakeholders in order to



1 achieve more coherent management of the coastal policy environment [7, 10].  
2 Structural shifts in commercial fisheries and the resulting need for communities to  
3 diversify economies, often into niche tourism markets, as well as the development of  
4 marine renewable energy has increased the importance of partnership approaches  
5 in the governance of the coastal and marine environment.  
6

7 Stojanovic and Barker [11] argue that the main contributions of these coastal  
8 management partnerships has been improved governance mechanisms through the  
9 introduction of integrated approaches to management and improved provision for  
10 participatory democracy. Partnerships have also raised awareness and  
11 understanding of coastal environments by developing links between statutory  
12 agencies and local communities, and through greater science-policy interaction,  
13 which has arguably led to a stronger focus on actions delivering coastal sustainability  
14 [12]. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of coastal partnerships has been questioned in  
15 terms of their efficiency, their legitimacy in representing all interests, their funding,  
16 and policy implementation [9, 13-16]. Stojanovic and Barker [11] suggest that coastal  
17 partnerships will continue to have a marginal role unless they become embedded  
18 within the evolving institutional framework. Indeed, the effective engagement of  
19 stakeholders in environmental decision-making is being advanced as a policy  
20 approach by government actors, both at the European Union and national levels,  
21 and is a core principle which underpins the processes and institutions within the  
22 Marine and Coastal Access Act [2, 17, 18]. Therefore, with the introduction of marine  
23 planning throughout UK waters, there might be a greater reliance on mechanisms  
24 such as partnerships to facilitate dialogue for successful adoption of plan proposals.  
25 However, there is an enormous variety in both form and function of coastal  
26 partnerships and ensuring that partnerships remain effective will become  
27 increasingly important, as the drive to collaborate becomes more deeply entrenched  
28 as the preferred policy approach. Ultimately, the acceptance of partnerships as an  
29 integral feature of coastal management and planning depends upon their ability to  
30 demonstrate their effectiveness.  
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### 39 **3. MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTNERSHIPS**

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41 Critical evaluation of the operation and achievements of a policy intervention is an  
42 accepted part of the policy process [19, 20]. Evaluation provides an opportunity to  
43 determine whether an initiative has been successful in delivering its objectives; to  
44 review progress and make changes to ensure that targets are met; and to  
45 demonstrate accountability to those contributing resources. Evaluation is therefore a  
46 means by which partners can reflect on both the process and the achievements of  
47 collaboration, assessing qualitative as well as quantitative outcomes. However,  
48 measuring effectiveness is not straightforward. It is often difficult to separate out  
49 cause and effect: namely that a particular policy outcome was related directly to a  
50 specific policy action (attribution problem). Equally, problems also occur in asserting  
51 with any confidence that outcomes would not have happened without a specific  
52 intervention (counterfactual problem) [21-23]. The 'realistic' approach offers a  
53 systematic framework for evaluation by dividing the assessment of partnership  
54 performance into three components: *context*, *process* and *outcome* [24] (see **Figure**  
55 **1**).  
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1 The contextual determinants of effectiveness are particularly important in driving the  
2 early stages of partnership formation. A 'pro-partnership' political and cultural  
3 climate, in which partnership action is seen as the most appropriate method for  
4 dealing with the issue at hand, creates more favourable conditions for action.  
5 Determinants of effectiveness associated with the process of partnership include the  
6 degree to which all relevant stakeholders are included in the process, the level of  
7 commitment that stakeholders have to remain actively engaged in partnership  
8 activity and the degree to which levels of trust exist between stakeholders from  
9 different sectors. The important determinants of outcome effectiveness include the  
10 extent to which stakeholders are prepared to abide by agreed actions, the degree to  
11 which objectives have been realised and the ability of the partnership to shape and  
12 influence future policy [25].  
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16 Each individual determinant plays an important role in contributing to the overall  
17 effectiveness of the *process* and to the perceptions of effectiveness held by  
18 stakeholders within and outside of the partnership [26]. It should be noted, however,  
19 that there can be overlap between the elements, as benefits which emerge from the  
20 *process* (such as increased levels of trust and understanding between stakeholders)  
21 may also be viewed as partnership achievements or *outcomes* [27]. This  
22 interconnectedness is shown in **Figure 1** by thin black arrows which link the  
23 determinants of process effectiveness to the determinants of output/outcome  
24 effectiveness. In addition, a large arrow links the achievements of the partnership  
25 back to the context within which it operates. This connection highlights the notion  
26 that partnership activity is embedded within the places and spaces in which it  
27 operates, and will therefore have an impact on that context throughout its actions  
28 and achievements.  
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33 Attaining consistently high levels of achievement of the determinants of effectiveness  
34 through the lifetime of a partnership is difficult and it is unrealistic to assume that  
35 partnerships will achieve high levels across all determinants at all times. It is more  
36 likely that achievement will fluctuate throughout the life of the partnership. This  
37 variation in effectiveness could be problematic when considering the legitimacy of a  
38 partnership to represent a particular interest or area within a wider management  
39 context, such as marine planning. In assessing performance, the goal of evaluation  
40 should therefore be to identify where and why partnerships have achieved high  
41 levels, and to provide insight into how any decline in performance can be improved.  
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### 45 **3.1 A NEW APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION: POLICY** 46 **NARRATIVES AND INDICATORS** 47

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49 There are currently two main deficiencies in monitoring the effectiveness of coastal  
50 partnerships. First, despite considerable literature identifying the key ingredients for  
51 partnership success, few authors have attempted to provide tools to measure the  
52 achievement of those ingredients. Second, there is a need for evaluation approaches  
53 which reflect not only the context, process and outcomes of a particular partnership,  
54 but also the *changes* in those three components over time. Current approaches do  
55 not enable the impact of changes to be acknowledged during the evaluation of  
56 partnership performance.  
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1 An appropriate way to record the temporal dimensions of partnerships is through the  
2 creation of a historical/chronological narrative, derived from multiple data sources  
3 such as minutes of meetings, reports and other documents as well as interviews with  
4 key personnel. In this way, significant landmarks in the development of the  
5 partnership can be established. From this 'timeline', a comprehensive narrative can  
6 be established to provide a detailed history of the partnership and also form the  
7 basis for systematic evaluation according to a suite of 'effectiveness indicators'.  
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10 The systematic analysis of partnership narratives utilises the stages or phases  
11 identified by Selin and Chavez [28]. These divisions are used here as a heuristic tool  
12 and should not be taken to imply rigid or distinct boundaries between events or  
13 stages of development. Indeed, the implication of fixed boundaries between stages,  
14 common in the literature, is problematic because it implies an inevitable sequence of  
15 partnership progress which, in itself, reflects limitations in current approaches to  
16 evaluation. Despite their limitations, however, the stages provided a useful structure  
17 to guide the application of the indicator framework used to assess the performance  
18 of the partnership.  
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22 The method described above was used to develop a timeline and comprehensive  
23 narrative for each of three case study partnerships. The quantitative assessment of  
24 the determinants of effectiveness at each key stage of partnership development was  
25 via detailed indicators applied to each narrative (see **Table 1**) [29]. These indicators  
26 were compiled from research on partnership working across a broad range of  
27 contexts, including health and social welfare [26, 30], tourism development [31-34],  
28 rural and urban regeneration [35-37] and integrated coastal management [9, 13, 14,  
29 16, 38]. The level of achievement of each indicator at each stage of partnership  
30 development was assessed using a subjective system. The scoring system provides  
31 a relational measure (as opposed to an absolute measure) of indicator achievement.  
32 It helps to identify changes in the achievement of specific indicators between stages  
33 within the same partnership, and allows comparison of achievement of the same  
34 indicator between different partnerships. The categories of achievement (1, 2 or 3)  
35 are deliberately broad (**Table 1**). From a detailed reading of the narrative, the level of  
36 each indicator (where relevant) was judged to be either at 1 (low level of  
37 achievement), 2 (medium level of achievement) or 3 (high level of achievement).  
38 This process of grading was repeated for each stage of development within each  
39 partnership. The scores for each indicator at each stage were compiled to produce a  
40 composite table, to assess the changing levels of achievement of each determinant  
41 of effectiveness.  
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48 There were a number of practical and philosophical issues associated with the  
49 methods chosen. Care was needed when compiling partnership narratives to ensure  
50 that small-scale subtle changes in partnership contexts or processes were not lost or  
51 overshadowed by more major ones. Risks also existed in terms of uneven bias by  
52 allowing one individual perspective, however striking, diverse or interesting it may  
53 have been, to receive more attention than it deserved because it was novel, or  
54 strongly expressed. Multiple sources of data were therefore used to set strong views  
55 into context and ensure that partnership narratives remained balanced, whilst also  
56 acknowledging particular personal standpoints. Although the partnerships in this  
57 study were situated in the marine environment, the methods developed can be  
58 applied to partnerships in any environment and at any stage of development.  
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## 3.2 SELECTION OF CASE STUDY PARTNERSHIPS

Three case study partnerships were used to assess the practical application of the methodology and to obtain some initial results from this approach. Partnerships were selected for case study on the basis of their specific focus on marine nature-based tourism activities. Tourism was appropriate because it represents a single issue; potential conflicts are managed on a voluntary basis and the industry represents an economic sector with opportunities for diversification of the rural economy. Given the complexity of the environments within which coastal partnerships operate, limiting research to single-issue partnerships enabled changes in the determinants of effectiveness to be identified, and the impact of such changes on partnership effectiveness to be assessed much more clearly than would have been the case if multi-issue partnerships had been studied.

Twelve candidate partnerships with a marine nature-based tourism focus were identified from a national database of 119 coastal partnerships in the UK and Ireland [39]. The most appropriate partnerships for use as case studies were then selected based on their meeting the following criteria:

- That they had been continuously active or operational for at least two years;
- That they had been actively engaged in managing marine nature-based tourism as a primary activity
- That they were open to the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders
- That they had no financial requirement for stakeholders to join at a basic level.

From the shortlist of 12, three partnerships met the criteria: the Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Foundation (SDWF) based in Ireland, the Dolphin Space Programme (DSP) based in Scotland and the Pembrokeshire Marine Code Group (PMCG) based in Wales (**Figure 2**).

### 3.2.1 Case study background

The Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Foundation on the western seaboard of Ireland was formally established in March, 2000 following a public forum held to discuss the potential for developing marine nature-based tourism in the area. For generations, local people had been aware of the wildlife living in and around the Shannon estuary and, in particular, the bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) population. At that time, although dolphins were encountered during the course of normal maritime activities, little notice was taken of them and their potential value as a tourism resource was not recognised. The original aims of the partnership were therefore to raise local awareness of the dolphins and their potential as a tourist attraction, and to ensure that the dolphin-watching industry was developed sustainably.

The Dolphin Space Programme, launched in 1995, is situated within the Moray Firth, a large coastal and estuarine area in north eastern Scotland. The DSP does not operate within distinct geographical limits, but is centred on the Firth itself; an area which is home to the only known resident population of bottlenose dolphins in the North Sea, as well as common, white-beaked and Risso's dolphins, harbour porpoise, minke, pilot and killer whales [40]. The purpose of the partnership was to

1 introduce voluntary management agreements with commercial dolphin watching  
2 operators in an attempt to prevent disturbance to the resident dolphins and other  
3 marine wildlife and ensure that the industry was developed sustainably.

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5 The Pembrokeshire Marine Code Group operates along the length of the  
6 Pembrokeshire coast from Amroth in the south east to St David's in the north and  
7 includes the islands of Caldey, Skokholm, Skomer and Ramsey. In response to  
8 projected growth in the marine wildlife and adventure tourism sector, the PMCG was  
9 established in 2005 to promote a sustainable approach to the use of the marine  
10 environment for tourism and activity-based recreation, including wildlife watching,  
11 diving, sea kayaking and coasteering.  
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## 14 15 **4. RESULTS**

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18 Although the partnerships selected for case study shared a similar purpose in that  
19 they were developed as a response to the perceived threat of unregulated growth of  
20 marine nature-based tourism, they were embedded within different policy contexts,  
21 social networks, economic and environmental conditions [41]. The comparison of  
22 similar partnership processes and activities, in differing contexts and conditions,  
23 provided insights into the way in which contextual factors had shaped the trajectory  
24 taken by each partnership by enabling or constraining decision-making [42]. The  
25 next section of this paper assesses the 'narratives' of each partnership and draws on  
26 interviews with key players before relating the analysis to the indicator criteria.  
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### 31 **4.1 Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Foundation**

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34 The seeds of the Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Foundation (SDWF), formally  
35 established in March 2000, lie in events nine years earlier. During 1991, an  
36 academic undertaking fisheries research (later to become the project manager of the  
37 partnership), met a commercial fisherman, who was also the Chairman of Carrigaholt  
38 Development Association (CDA) during a fisheries research trip. The appearance of  
39 a pod of bottlenose dolphins during the voyage led to a discussion between the two  
40 men about the potential economic benefits of commercial dolphin watching in an  
41 area with a weak economy. Both men were keen to ensure that any development  
42 was carefully and sustainably managed. At this point, Dúchas, the state agency  
43 responsible for environmental protection, showed little interest in the venture. By  
44 1992, funding had been secured from Shannon Development (a semi-state agency  
45 established to support the economic development of the region) for a research  
46 project to assess the feasibility of commercial dolphin watching. The industry grew  
47 steadily during the 1990s and, by 1999, a formal partnership had emerged driven by  
48 two factors.  
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54 First, there was a strong desire from within the private sector, public sector and  
55 semi-state agencies involved in dolphin-watching to prevent species and habitat  
56 degradation and a collaborative approach was seen as the best vehicle to achieve  
57 this goal. Second, the estuary was formally designated as a candidate Special Area  
58 of Conservation (cSAC) under the EU Habitats Directive in April 2000, which  
59 introduced a statutory requirement for commercial wildlife tour operators to obtain  
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1 permission for any activity which might potentially damage the protected bottlenose  
2 dolphins [49]. Although Dúchas was the agency responsible for managing the  
3 proposed new cSAC, it was clear that, in practice, it wished to have minimal  
4 involvement in policing the industry, preferring operators to regulate themselves. The  
5 partnership therefore offered a vehicle for the state to deliver its responsibilities  
6 under the new statutory instrument without having to invest heavily in local staff and  
7 infrastructure. The changing external conditions within which the partnership was  
8 developing created further justification for partnership action.  
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10  
11 The SDWF partnership was initially established with two committees: a Management  
12 Committee (comprised of commercial operators, a representative from Dúchas and  
13 the Project Manager), to focus on the day to day management of dolphin-watching  
14 activity; and a Steering Committee (comprised of the Project Manager and  
15 representatives from Shannon Development, Dúchas, Bord Fáilte, National  
16 University of Ireland, Irish Whale and Dolphin Group, the Marine Institute, Clare  
17 County Council and the Shannon Estuary Port Company) to focus on more strategic  
18 objectives, including the development and promotion of marine wildlife tourism in the  
19 area. The Management Committee developed a draft voluntary code of conduct for  
20 commercial dolphin watching activities. The code was based on controlling boat  
21 speed and direction of travel and importantly, included a maximum time limit of 30  
22 minutes per vessel per trip of close proximity to dolphins. The committee also agreed  
23 to establish an accreditation scheme which embodied a requirement to comply with  
24 the voluntary code of conduct, together with an undertaking to abide by any  
25 additional conditions that may be laid down in the proposed cSAC Management  
26 Plan. Initially, levels of consensus surrounding the details of the two schemes appear  
27 to have been high with all operators expressing their support for the schemes and  
28 indicating their willingness to comply with the new code of conduct (indicators 2, 3a  
29 and 3b at direction setting stage, **Figure 3**).  
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35 The initially high level of consensus over partnership actions began to dissipate,  
36 however, as the realities of partnership working and the operation of the code of  
37 conduct and accreditation scheme became apparent. While operators were included  
38 in the Management Committee, they were not invited to participate in the Steering  
39 Committee because of their 'vested interest' in the development of the industry.  
40 Inevitably, this rather divisive organisational structure, together with poorly defined  
41 roles and responsibilities, resulted in considerable tension and led to strong feelings  
42 of exclusion by operators as reported by an operator and the project manager. The  
43 effect was to reduce the performance in a number of linked indicators, although  
44 support for the general principles of the project remained high (indicators 1a and 1c  
45 at direction refinement stage, **Figure 3**).  
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50 Other tensions began to emerge as the partnership became more established. The  
51 issue of private sector representation was compounded by an imbalance in  
52 geographical representation on the Steering Committee. Some operators based in  
53 Carrigaholt felt that the town of Kilrush was over-represented within the partnership  
54 and resulted in more prominent promotion of dolphin watching activity in Kilrush to  
55 the detriment of more rural areas such as Carrigaholt and the Loop Head  
56 (Management Committee minutes 10 November 1999). Other actions exacerbated  
57 these concerns. The naming of the accreditation scheme in April 2000 (Saoirse na  
58 Sionna, which means Freedom of the Shannon) by the Project Manager without  
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1 consultation with other stakeholders further entrenched the existing conflict because  
2 the name was felt by some to be too closely related to one of the existing  
3 commercial dolphin watching businesses (Saoirse Seasports). In addition, in late  
4 2000, a project interpretation and education centre was established in a redundant  
5 building on the quayside in Kilrush. These events compounded the conflict over  
6 geographical advantage and eventually led to the accreditation scheme being  
7 abandoned in 2004. As a result, levels of commitment to the partnership dropped  
8 (indicators 3a and 4d at realignment stage, **Figure 3**).  
9

10  
11 After many years of division and much wrangling, the Management and Steering  
12 Committees were finally merged into one single body in late 2003. One individual  
13 summed up the process:

14 *'Well as soon as the [partnership] formalised into and under that name, we*  
15 *were excluded from the Steering Committee. [...] we had to fight for it but we*  
16 *eventually got our own representative from Carrigaholt. They were told that*  
17 *the County Council could represent Carrigaholt as well, but we felt that we*  
18 *needed our own representation'. (Operator 1).*  
19  
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21 Finally, in 2008, the partnership had reached a stage of relative calm. Since 2006,  
22 four regular committee meetings had been held per year and all stakeholders had  
23 taken the opportunity to participate. Conflicts and tensions appeared to have  
24 gradually abated and the minutes reflected a greater desire amongst stakeholders to  
25 work together towards improving and expanding the education and interpretation  
26 activities of the partnership, in line with revised partnership objectives. The indicator  
27 scores (eleven of the 16 indicators had undergone both positive and negative  
28 change) reflect a dynamic variation in the achievement of key determinants of  
29 effectiveness during the period of evaluation (column 1, **Figure 3**).  
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## 34 **4.2 Dolphin Space Programme**

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37 The Dolphin Space Programme (DSP) in Scotland emerged from a series of top-  
38 down actions led by a statutory conservation organisation, which attempted to  
39 mitigate potential disturbance to marine wildlife in the Moray Firth. Scottish Natural  
40 Heritage (SNH), the state body responsible for securing the conservation and  
41 enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage, had been formed in 1991 and had a  
42 remit not only for wildlife conservation, but also for promoting the sustainable  
43 development of rural coastal communities [43]. In the absence of statutory  
44 management tools, collaborative and partnership approaches were the only viable  
45 management option open to SNH to achieve its multiple objectives. During the early  
46 1990s there was a fear that dolphin watching activities in the Moray Firth had begun  
47 to focus attention on the potential exploitation of the marine environment for  
48 economic benefit at the expense of conservation. In June 1994, SNH took the first  
49 steps towards collaborative working when it invited local operators, together with  
50 representatives of local tourist boards, enterprise companies, local authorities and  
51 the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, to a workshop to discuss possible  
52 mechanisms for managing the growth of the industry and preventing disturbance to  
53 cetaceans [44]. The idea was to implement a voluntary code of conduct which  
54 commercial operators would agree to follow when operating dolphin-watching trips.  
55 In return, those operators who agreed to abide by the code would be 'accredited' and  
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1 could advertise that they were operating in a 'wildlife friendly' and 'sustainable'  
2 manner. Despite the potential impact on their businesses, commercial operators  
3 were broadly supportive of the proposals.

4  
5 Scientists from the University of Aberdeen were commissioned to produce a code of  
6 conduct linked to an accreditation scheme. Their view was that the Kessock Channel  
7 and the narrows off Chanonry Point were the areas that would be most likely to need  
8 tight access controls if the industry continued to grow. The restricted topography of  
9 the channels tended to amplify noise from vessel traffic and reduced the ability of  
10 animals to manoeuvre. Dolphins using these areas were therefore felt to be very  
11 sensitive to disturbance. The development of shore-based wildlife watching sites in  
12 these areas were seen by the scientists as a preferred alternative to boat-based  
13 dolphin watching [44]. It was decided that cetacean watching vessels should behave  
14 in a similar manner to routine traffic transiting the Firth by following a fixed route at a  
15 standard speed. By adopting a fixed route, cetaceans could 'choose' whether to  
16 approach the vessels or to avoid them [44]. An agreed limit on the number of trips  
17 per day or per week was also recommended, together with a programme of training  
18 for all skippers, which focussed on boat handling skills [45]. Importantly, the  
19 researchers recommended capping the total number of commercial operators in the  
20 Firth at the 1994 level (approximately ten operators) and suggested that the total  
21 number of trips allowed in the Kessock Channel and Chanonry areas be reduced  
22 from nine trips per operator per day to a maximum of four per day, shared between  
23 the two existing operators working out of Inverness [45]. In the absence of clear data  
24 on the 'carrying capacity' of the Firth in terms of levels of boat traffic in relation to  
25 dolphin disturbance, the recommendations seem to have been based on the  
26 precautionary principle. The operators themselves had little, if any, input into the  
27 development of the guidelines.  
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34 All aspects of the approach to collaboration and partnership had been heavily 'top-  
35 down'. Commercial operators felt that, as well as having been given little opportunity  
36 to influence the code of conduct, they were being dictated to by 'do-gooders'. One  
37 operator noted:

38  
39 *'Like there was a lot, in the beginning, of do-gooders meddling with people's*  
40 *jobs ... At one stage it was a war going on, you know, we were being lectured*  
41 *to, sort of like that at the time, I mean, we're still lectured, but it was ideas*  
42 *that they had that they wanted us to do and we just didn't have a say in it'.*  
43  
44 (Operator 5).  
45

46 The implementation of the code by the Steering Committee showed little  
47 understanding of the financial realities of the boat operators:

48  
49 *'Well I [wouldn't] go out with less than four people. It used to be a two hour trip*  
50 *but I'm trying to cut it down to an hour and a half. So July and August, I might*  
51 *try to get two trips on one tide to make it viable. But you couldn't make a living*  
52 *from here doing it' (Operator 5).*  
53

54 One individual reflected on the way that operators' local knowledge and experience  
55 was seen as of little value:

56  
57 *'A lot of the skippers along here maybe have been from a fishing background*  
58 *before and have moved into this, that's certainly the case with the skipper that*  
59 *I work with here, so he's got a lot of knowledge, a long knowledge of working*  
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1                   *on the sea and he just wants to be listened to, you know?'. (Conservation*  
2                   *NGO Manager (Moray)).*

3  
4 A particular concern to the operators was the apparent unfairness of the Code of  
5 Conduct which was not applied to scientific research vessels in the Firth. These  
6 research vessels, from a number of different organisations, were carrying out  
7 cetacean research. It seemed to operators that these vessels were able to approach  
8 and interact with dolphins and other wildlife without restriction, which operators felt  
9 was unfair. One interviewee explained how an operator had witnessed several  
10 incidents which he felt were unacceptable:

11                   *'..he saw [xx] fleeing about in their RIB [Rigid Inflatable Boat] in the Cromarty*  
12                   *Narrows there [..], chasing dolphins and basically they were [..] trying to*  
13                   *photograph certain ones [dolphins] to build up a dossier [..] and name them*  
14                   *all, for God's sake'. (Operator 4).*

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18 Despite these tensions, the DSP was launched in 1995 by SNH and the Scottish  
19 Wildlife Trust. The partnership was jointly funded by SNH and the EU LIFE  
20 programme, with a Project Officer appointed on a six month temporary contract (from  
21 1 February to 31 July 1995) [44]. A Steering Committee was formed to guide the  
22 development of the partnership, consisting initially only of representatives from the  
23 public sector. Despite recognition that any scheme would need to be based on  
24 collaboration, commercial operators were not invited to participate, which was a  
25 situation that lasted until late 2002. Inviting all operators onto the Committee was  
26 thought to be impractical and no single operator was felt to be in a position to  
27 represent the others, as they were in commercial competition. Difficulties were also  
28 envisaged where penalties over code breakage were to be discussed.

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32 In early 1996, the full time Project Officer's post came to an end and a new contract  
33 was issued on a part-time basis for a few more months only, due to a lack of funding.  
34 In late 1996, funding for the Project Officer position ceased completely. As a result,  
35 day to day running of the partnership fell to a member of SNH staff as an adjunct to  
36 his existing workload and progress in developing the partnership came to halt. What  
37 little time the officer had for the partnership was spent administering the annual  
38 renewal of accreditations. Without a Project Officer to negotiate and arbitrate  
39 between operators and other stakeholders, the partnership inevitably began to  
40 collapse.

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44 In 2003, as an attempt to gain access to the Steering Committee and to participate  
45 equally with other members, operators took the initiative and formed their own  
46 industry-based association, called the Wildlife Tour Boat Operators Association  
47 (WTBOS). In July 2003, WTBOS wrote to the Steering Committee and requested  
48 that two operators, elected by their members (one representing the Inner Moray Firth  
49 and one representing the Outer Moray Firth), be invited to join, to represent the  
50 interests of all operators. The Steering Committee agreed and the two  
51 representatives were invited to attend the next meeting on 9 December, 2003.  
52 Finally, operators could participate on an equal basis. As operators began to  
53 participate more, so other stakeholders, including public and voluntary sector  
54 representatives, recognised that the partnership was making progress and  
55 established more than a partial consensus. As a result, an air of confidence was  
56 created and a broader range of stakeholders began to commit more of their time and  
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1 resources to support the development of the partnership. Eventually, these struggles  
2 lead to a more equitable allocation of power and more inclusive decision-making.

3 A further improvement in the fortunes of the partnership occurred in late 2004, when  
4 funding was provided by SNH and WDCS for the employment of a part time Project  
5 Manager. The new Manager was appointed in May 2005. Having been without paid  
6 staff for eight years, this appointment was a major step forward for the project and  
7 one which engendered a great deal of hope and expectation for the improvement of  
8 all aspects of partnership activity. The new Project Manager visited all accredited  
9 operators and Steering Committee members to discuss ideas for developing and  
10 promoting the DSP more widely. New promotional material and a dedicated  
11 partnership web site were developed and, as a result, the partnership began to  
12 regain the enthusiasm and commitment of operators and rebuild trust (transcripts;  
13 Operators 6 and 7). One Steering Committee member explained the difficulties that  
14 the new Project Manager faced:

15 *'And I think her first year was very difficult because we'd lost quite a lot of*  
16 *ground. Well we never really had that much ground, and then we lost it*  
17 *because we didn't have many resources to keep it going. So about the first*  
18 *year, or two even, of [the new Manager's] post was trying to build the trust*  
19 *back up with the operators and involve them more in the group'. (Statutory*  
20 *Conservation Agency Officer (Moray)).*

21 Employment of a dedicated member of staff with direct responsibility for dealing with  
22 issues and carrying out day-to-day administrative duties provided new energy and a  
23 focus on progress. In addition, despite it being part-funded by the public sector, the  
24 post was perceived by operators as somehow independent from public sector  
25 agencies and this independence enabled the Project Manger to begin to resolve  
26 some of the deeply entrenched problems which had been preventing progress [11].  
27 The indicator scores for this partnership show how the achievement of key  
28 determinants of effectiveness fluctuated considerably over the evaluation period  
29 (Figure 3).

### 30 **4.3 Pembrokeshire Marine Code Group**

31 In common with the two foregoing case studies, the Pembrokeshire partnership  
32 (PMCG) emerged out of a concern over disturbance to cetaceans and other marine  
33 species from rapidly expanding marine wildlife tourism activities [46]. In 2002, there  
34 were 14 commercial operators offering marine wildlife boat trips from various  
35 launching points around the coastline of Pembrokeshire, and at least 50 per cent of  
36 those operators were planning to expand their businesses, with one particular  
37 company planning to operate up to 51 trips per day during the 2003 season [47]. In  
38 contrast to the Irish and Scottish case studies, however, the concerns which  
39 stimulated individuals to act were not confined to commercial wildlife tourism  
40 activities. From the outset, there was recognition by wildlife NGOs, such as the  
41 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), that disturbance to cetaceans and  
42 seals were also caused by recreational vessel traffic, including jet skis and power  
43 boats.

44 As a result of the concerns expressed by conservation agencies, three meetings  
45 were held in 2002 to establish a Working Group as a forum to debate the

1 mechanisms needed to manage the marine wildlife tourism industry. The main  
2 difficulties in protecting marine species from recurrent disturbance were the absence  
3 of strong, species specific legislation, together with a lack of resources to enable  
4 monitoring and enforcement out on the water. The Working Group had no source of  
5 financial support other than in-kind resources from the participating organisations,  
6 such as officer time and space to hold meetings. A voluntary, collaborative approach  
7 was therefore seen as the only option open.  
8

9  
10 The need to include all relevant stakeholders within decision-making structures was  
11 recognised early in the partnership establishment process. Despite operator  
12 engagement at the open meetings, some stakeholders were concerned at the lack of  
13 private sector representation on the strategic Working Group. The partnership  
14 therefore agreed that one operator should be sought from each part of the county,  
15 north, south and west, to represent private sector interests. In both the DSP and  
16 SDWF case studies, operators were excluded from strategic decision-making  
17 structures because they were perceived as having a 'vested interest' in the issues  
18 being discussed. In the Pembrokeshire case, in contrast, commercial interests were  
19 not viewed as a mechanism to prevent inclusion, but rather were seen as important  
20 in securing a locally workable solution to the issue of disturbance to marine wildlife.  
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23  
24 Paradoxically, given the willingness to foster the participation of the operators, no  
25 mechanisms were put in place to ensure that representatives reflected the views of  
26 their constituents and the partnership therefore took no part in ensuring the quality of  
27 representation. Given the lack of homogeneity of views within stakeholder groups  
28 noted above, there must be some doubt as to how well, or even whether these  
29 representatives could represent the views of their constituents, or whether, in fact,  
30 they simply represented their own perspectives. Additionally, although one operator  
31 had been nominated from the north, south and west of the county, only the  
32 representative from the northern area attended the meetings. The lack of attendance  
33 by the south and west representatives might have been a result of other business  
34 commitments. During their interviews, a number of operators alluded to the practical  
35 difficulties of attending meetings during the tourist season. August was a particularly  
36 busy time for their businesses and they therefore had little time to attend Working  
37 Group meetings. Curiously, the Working Group took the absence of the  
38 representatives from the south and west sectors as a signal that trial implementation  
39 of the codes was presenting no difficulties in their areas.  
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45 Attendance at partnership meetings by public sector representatives also declined at  
46 this stage. According to one interviewee, it was not linked to a poor perception of the  
47 need for the partnership, but rather was seen as a vote of confidence by members of  
48 the Working Group that, on the whole, the partnership appeared to be working well.  
49 The interviewee explained the lack of attendance at meetings:

50  
51 *'But my little theory is, [..], that perhaps the reason why you get such a drop*  
52 *off in [the] working group is that 'excellent, we've got an officer in post now,*  
53 *we're quite happy with how they're getting on, and we can, phew, take a*  
54 *backward seat and let them get on with it'. And [..] I'm certain that is the case*  
55 *with [this] partnership'. (Marine Protected Area Officer (Pembrokeshire)).*  
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58 There was general acceptance amongst most operators of the need for a code of  
59 conduct, and there was more open discussion than in the DSP about the form that  
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1 the proposed scheme should take. Participants suggested that the codes should  
2 apply to all vessels, and not just commercial operators. Guidelines should be flexible  
3 enough to enable the skippers of wildlife tourism vessels to react to the changing  
4 weather and tide conditions under which they operated. The code included an  
5 implicit trust in operators to operate without causing disturbance. Commercial  
6 operators were given an opportunity to trial the new codes before they were adopted  
7 fully. Issues raised from the trials included the appropriateness of speed limits in  
8 certain areas at certain states of the tide, changes needed to the proposed zones  
9 and no-go areas (based on handling vessels safely in treacherous waters), and the  
10 differing needs of powered and non-powered craft. Achieving negotiated outcomes  
11 was a key factor in helping to gain wider operator 'buy-in' to the partnership and in  
12 ensuring that solutions were tailored to local needs and conditions.  
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15  
16 The Pembrokeshire Marine Code Group (PMCG) was formally launched on 29 May,  
17 2005, but suffered from the need to constantly search for core funding, which  
18 diverted the Project Officer's time from monitoring and development activities.

19 *'Number one, definitely, is the lack of core funding, I chase my tail around [...].*  
20 *I feel I need to get out there more and there are operators out there who are*  
21 *members of the marine code who wouldn't recognise me if they saw me [...]. I*  
22 *haven't been out to have that one to one individual meeting with everyone*  
23 *because I haven't had time. Because if I had done that, I would have run out*  
24 *of money and I'd have been out of a job and the project would have ceased to*  
25 *continue'. (Project Manager (Pembrokeshire)).*  
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29 Latterly, some criticisms of operator compliance with the code of conduct began to  
30 be aired, most notably from a conservationist [48]. An escalation of conflict had  
31 begun to erode the willingness of operators to participate which threatened the  
32 stability of the partnership. Several interviewees alluded to the growing conflict. One  
33 particular operator indicated the frustration that he and others felt at the lack of trust  
34 placed in them by the conservationist, and expressed the fear that it would  
35 eventually lead to the operators disengaging completely from the partnership:  
36

37 *'I mean, [the conservationists] sort of came up with a loose idea, we helped*  
38 *[them] put the idea together, we managed the idea, we've reached a perfect*  
39 *partnership, but it's not enough, they want more [...] It's pretty good, it's been*  
40 *pretty good for the last few years [but] we're going back to the same old thing*  
41 *[...]. The risk [to the partnership] now is [from] those who distrust us... taking it*  
42 *a step too far, and they will cook it, they will cook it'. (Operator 9).*  
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46 Several interviewees indicated that, as a result of persistent accusations of code  
47 breakage, a number of operators were considering withdrawing from the voluntary  
48 agreement. Interviewees suggested that losing the support of operators could lead to  
49 significant weakening of the codes of conduct, and could lead to their  
50 disengagement from the partnership.  
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## 54 55 **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS** 56

57 In terms of context, all partnerships were a local response to environmental concerns  
58 raised by the growth of ecotourism. In the PMCG, the conservation implications of a  
59 long-established tourism industry were the main concerns, whereas the SDWF  
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1 wished to develop ecotourism using the principles of sustainability as a means of  
2 revitalising a weak rural economy. In the DSP, the instrumental role played by a  
3 statutory agency (Scottish Natural Heritage) in the formation of the partnership  
4 reflected a motivation to exert its influence on local environmental policy and  
5 management.  
6

7 Changes in external variables have been described as ‘transitional ruptures’ [42].  
8 These ‘ruptures’ are changes in the contextual conditions that comprise the  
9 boundaries within which partnership decision-making is circumscribed, that lead to  
10 new opportunities, and/or curtail existing opportunities. Transitional ruptures may  
11 represent ‘partnership snapping zones’, where institutional realignment takes place  
12 and partners must work to retain stakeholder support and adapt to new or altered  
13 conditions if they are to persist and succeed. Partnership responses to exogenous  
14 change serve to highlight the dependent relationship between context and  
15 processes, and the achievement of outputs and outcomes.  
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17

18 The most obvious example of a positive impact resulting from a change in context  
19 occurred in the SDWF. Under Irish statute, the new cSAC designation required  
20 commercial operators to obtain permission on an annual basis for dolphin watching  
21 activities and obliged Dúchas to administer such permissions and monitor activities.  
22 In the absence of resources to manage or police the new regulations, Dúchas  
23 changed its view of the SDWF, from one of little interest to an understanding that the  
24 partnership offered an opportunity to enable it to discharge its statutory duties more  
25 effectively. Change in legislation in the Shannon estuary therefore acted as a  
26 transitional rupture which had a positive effect on partnership performance. The  
27 formation of this partnership was therefore not totally dependent upon solely ‘bottom-  
28 up’ or ‘top-down’ pressures.  
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33 All partnerships faced a common dilemma about how to incorporate commercial  
34 operators in the process of partnership formation and management. In many  
35 respects, this issue reflects the ‘top-down’ nature of environmental regulation and  
36 management. While boat operators were clearly key stakeholders in the operation of  
37 the partnership initiatives, it was seen as impractical for all to be involved directly. A  
38 further difficulty was the issue of whether a single operator could represent all  
39 interests and there were ethical dilemmas to be addressed if they were to be  
40 involved in dealing with breaches of the code of conduct. The partnerships took a  
41 different approach to these issues. Both the SDWF and DSP initially excluded boat  
42 operators from strategic decision-making structures. The approach taken by PMCG  
43 was more inclusive, with commercial operator representatives appointed from the  
44 outset.  
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49 These arrangements led to very different stakeholder experiences of the partnership  
50 process. Stakeholders in both the SDWF and DSP openly challenged their exclusion  
51 from decision-making. In the SDWF, conflict had arisen early on over a lack of  
52 private sector representation and was compounded by ill-feeling over the  
53 geographical allocation of resources. Levels of engagement later improved when the  
54 separate Management and Steering Committees were amalgamated and all  
55 operators were given access to the single decision-making body. In the DSP, as a  
56 direct result of being excluded from decision-making for many years, operators  
57 formed an industry-based association (WTBOS) specifically to gain seats on the  
58 Steering Committee. As a result, previously excluded stakeholders gained  
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1 opportunities to participate in negotiation and engaged with the partnership on a  
2 more frequent basis. As operators began to participate more, so other stakeholders,  
3 including public and voluntary sector representatives, recognised that the partnership  
4 was making progress. An air of confidence was created and a broader range of  
5 stakeholders began to commit more of their time and resources to support the  
6 development of the partnership. Eventually, these struggles lead to a more equitable  
7 allocation of power and more inclusive decision-making in both the SDWF and DSP.  
8 The evidence from these case studies shows that partnerships can become sites of  
9 *power brokerage*, with stakeholder groups challenging the persistence of more  
10 traditional styles of working and the dominance of power elites, such as statutory  
11 agencies and other public sector bodies [36].  
12  
13

14 From documentary and interview transcript data, it was clear that one of the main  
15 difficulties for all three partnerships was securing adequate financial resources to  
16 support activity and implement agreed actions. The lack of secure finance led to a  
17 climate of uncertainty which constrained forward planning and hampered the  
18 achievement of long-term goals. The financial difficulties faced by the partnerships  
19 studied here are also shared by coastal management partnerships. Project staff  
20 often find themselves in a continual search for funding to secure their ongoing  
21 employment; what McGlashan [8] refers to as the ‘hamster wheel syndrome’.  
22 Clearly, if coastal planning and management partnerships are to use available  
23 resources more effectively to achieve their stated objectives, a secure and consistent  
24 funding basis must be a priority. The issue of secure resources is particularly  
25 relevant to debates surrounding the role of coastal partnerships in delivering the  
26 marine planning agenda from 2011.  
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31 **Figure 3** indicates that each of the partnerships experienced very different  
32 trajectories in the achievement of the indicators of effectiveness. While the SDWF  
33 achieved some early successes in seven out of 16 indicators, ten had taken a  
34 downturn in performance by the end of the evaluation period. The DSP was the  
35 partnership that experienced the greatest fluctuation in effectiveness. Although nine  
36 indicators had declined in performance during earlier phases of the evaluation  
37 period, all but one indicator (leadership) had improved by the end. In this respect, the  
38 DSP was the most successful partnership of the three in this study. The PMCG is  
39 characterised as having achieved steady progress through the evaluation period and  
40 was the only partnership of the three not to have experienced a collapse. Five  
41 indicators had remained stable, four had improved, four had fluctuated (with three  
42 experiencing a downturn) and two had declined in performance.  
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47 The findings from this study also have important applications beyond the evaluation  
48 of performance by offering a mechanism for partnership staff and members to reflect  
49 on good and bad practice within their partnerships. The construction of a detailed  
50 narrative of evolution and development offers a useful and reflexive tool to enable  
51 partnership staff to identify periods of difficulty as well as success, and to pinpoint  
52 the underlying reasons for these. The production and ongoing maintenance of  
53 detailed partnership narratives could therefore be embedded within the day-to-day  
54 management of a partnership, as a key element of internal short- and long-term  
55 monitoring and evaluation activities. For larger, multi-issue partnerships, narratives  
56 may need to be developed on a project-by-project or sub-group basis, rather than at  
57 the whole partnership scale. For partnerships or projects which are funded by, or  
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1 working with external agencies, such an approach may also help in providing the  
2 necessary evidence of achievement of specific targets and objectives and therefore  
3 that they can fairly represent their partners.

4 The use of the indicator framework, to provide a scoring mechanism to measure the  
5 achievement of key determinants of effectiveness, should also not be limited to use  
6 as a retrospective evaluation tool. The criteria used to score indicator levels shown in  
7 **Table 1** for example, provides clear guidance on the steps that partnerships need to  
8 take in order to achieve a score of indicator level 3, the highest level of achievement.  
9 So, for example, if a partnership wishes to ensure that it achieves good quality  
10 stakeholder representation, it will need to work towards achieving level 3 criteria for  
11 indicators 1a, 1b and 1c (**Table 1**). Similarly, if a well established partnership has  
12 completed a detailed narrative on its evolution and development and has identified a  
13 lack of commitment to implement agreed actions as a particular problem, steps can  
14 be taken to ensure that good information is available on which to base decisions;  
15 that decision-making is not limited by a lack of resources; and that decision-making  
16 bodies include representatives from those agencies with the necessary authority to  
17 make decisions. By using the indicator framework as a model of good practice,  
18 partnerships can take steps to move towards more effective operation and, just as  
19 importantly, ensure that they maintain that effectiveness.  
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**[Word Document] Figure 1. Conceptual model of the determinants of partnership effectiveness. Source: [39]**

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**[Word Document] Table 1. Indicators to measure multiple aspects of partnership effectiveness synthesised and devised for this study. Source: [39]**

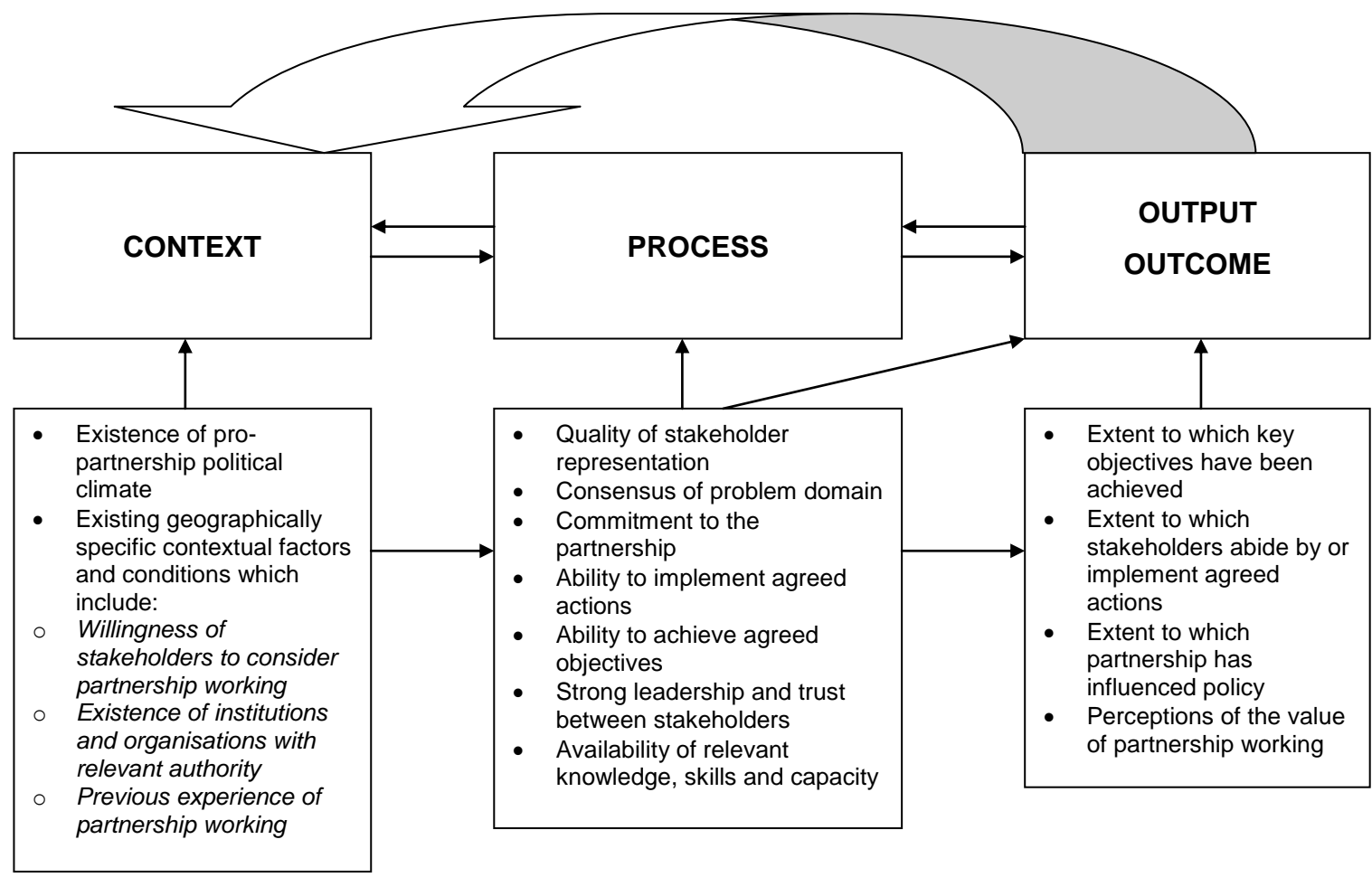
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**[PDF Document] Figure 2. Location of case study partnerships. Source: [39]**

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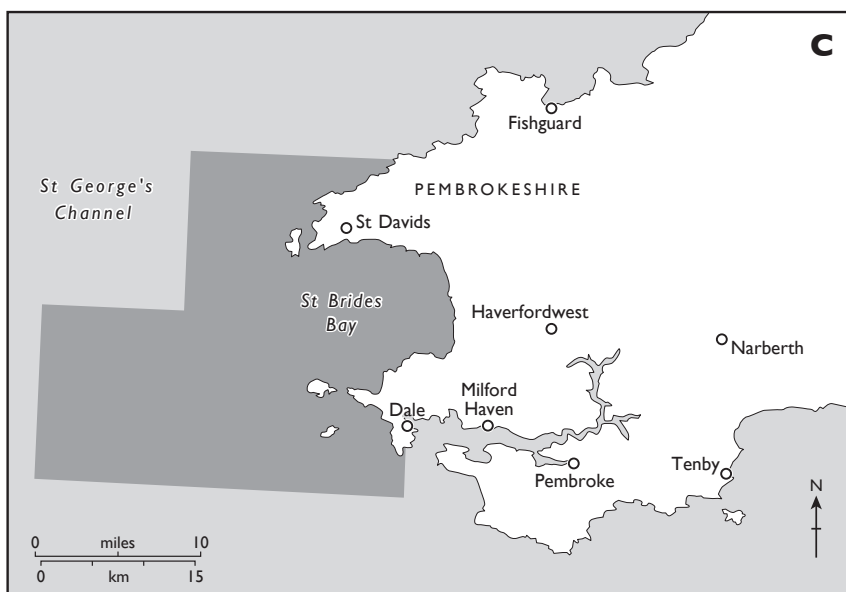
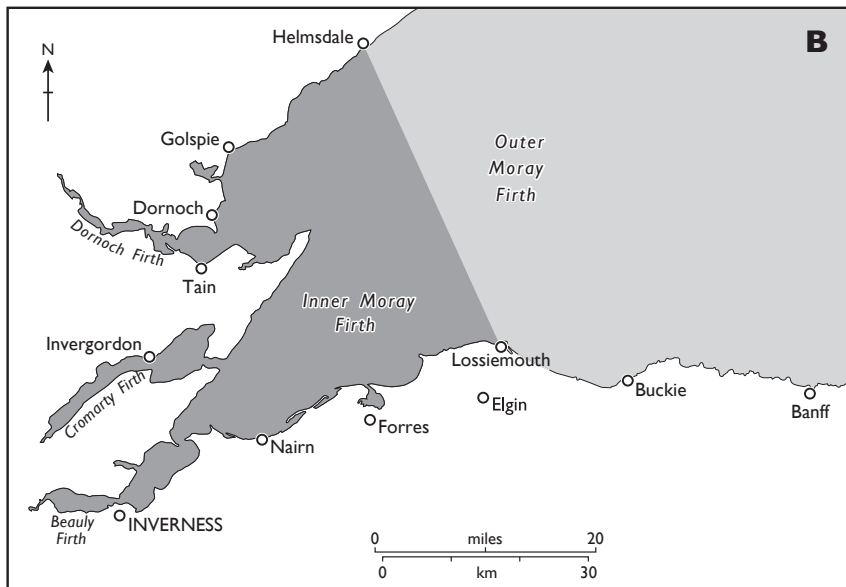
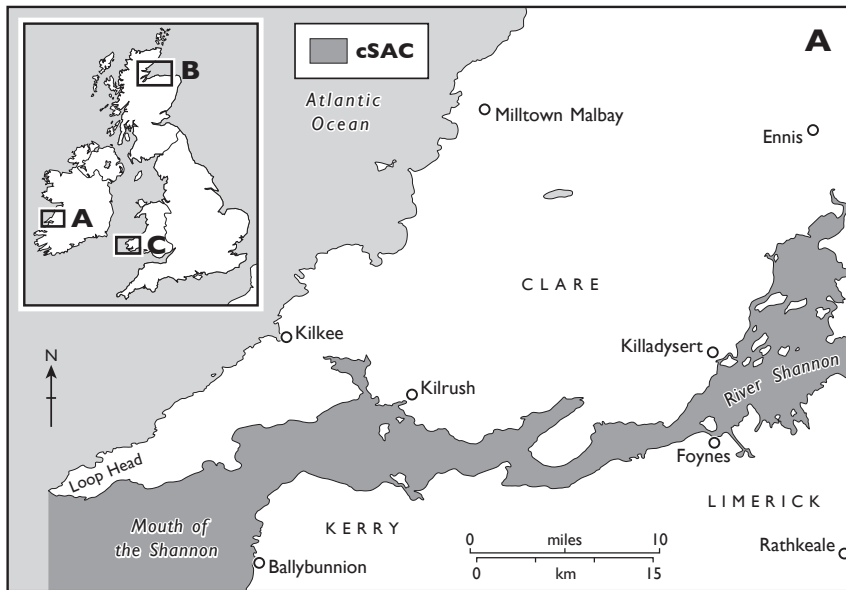
**[PDF Document] Figure 3. Indicator scores for each partnership. Source: [39]**

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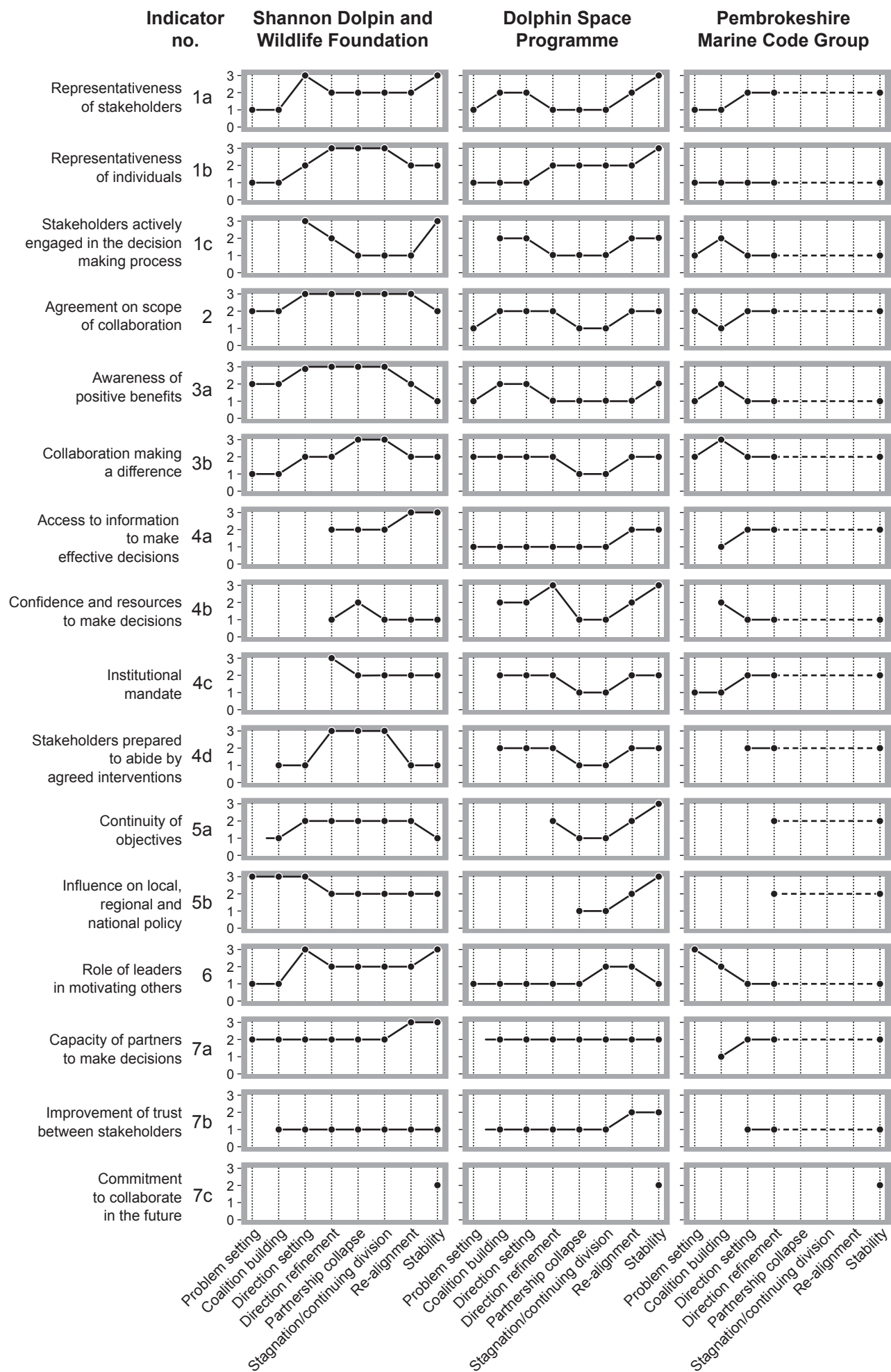


**Figure 1** Conceptual model of the determinants of partnership effectiveness. Source: [39]

Figure



Figure





**Table 1. Indicators to measure multiple aspects of partnership effectiveness synthesised and devised for this study**

<b>Determinant of effectiveness</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Provides a measure of</b>	<b>Specific indicator</b>	<b>Criteria used to score indicator</b>
1. Quality of stakeholder representation	Process	The quality of the partnership in terms of the equity and inclusivity of the stakeholder identification and inclusion process [9]	<b>1a.</b> The extent to which the range of participating stakeholders is representative of all stakeholders [49]	1 – Few existing stakeholder groups participating 2 – Some, but not all stakeholder groups participating 3 – All relevant stakeholder groups participating
			<b>1b.</b> The extent to which individuals representing a stakeholder group are fully representative of that group [9]	1 – Majority of representatives are self-selected 2 – Some representatives are nominated by their organisation, others are self-selected 3 – Majority of representatives are nominated by their organisation or through formal selection mechanisms
			<b>1c.</b> The extent to which stakeholders are actively engaged in decision-making [14, 38]	1 – Low levels of engagement, poor attendance at meetings 2 – Satisfactory levels of engagement and attendance at meetings 3 – High levels of engagement, good attendance at meetings
2. Consensus of problem domain	Process	The extent to which a shared agenda for the future direction of the partnership is developed [35]	<b>2.</b> The extent to which there is agreement among participants about the need for and intended scope of the collaboration [14, 50]	1 – Majority of stakeholders are not convinced of need for partnership 2 – Limited consensus over the need for, and scope of, the partnership 3 – Clear consensus over the need for, and scope of, the partnership
3. Commitment to the partnership	Process	The extent to which partners feel that there will be benefits to all partners from their efforts, that they are interdependent and that they add value to the partnership [35]	<b>3a.</b> The extent to which relevant stakeholders see that there are positive benefits to entice their participation [49]	1 – No clear benefits to stakeholders by joining the partnership 2 – Benefits of partnership are not entirely clear and some individuals are therefore reluctant to participate 3 – Clear benefits to stakeholders by joining partnership
			<b>3b.</b> The degree to which participants accept that collaboration is likely to produce qualitatively different outcomes to those which could be achieved by working alone [49]	1 – No clear or distinct advantage in partnership working 2 – Some, but not all, participants recognise added value by working in partnership 3 – All participants accept that partnership working produces significantly better outcomes than could be achieved by working alone

4. Implementation of agreed actions	Process	The extent to which partners are able to make decisions [32]	<p><b>4a.</b> The extent to which all stakeholders have access to the information needed to make effective decisions [51]</p> <p><b>4b.</b> The extent to which partners have the confidence and resources to make commitments and decisions [35]</p>	<p>1 – No information on which to base decisions</p> <p>2 – Limited availability of information on which to base decisions</p> <p>3 – Good availability of information on which to base decisions</p> <p>1 – Little confidence in making decisions and few resources available for implementation</p> <p>2 – Some confidence in making decisions, but actions limited by availability of resources</p> <p>3 – Confident decision-making and actions not restricted by resource availability</p>
	Context		<b>4c.</b> The extent to which partners have an institutional mandate to make decisions and accept responsibility on behalf of their organisation [35]	<p>1 – Individuals have limited or no authority to act on behalf of their organisations. Organisations with statutory responsibilities are not present</p> <p>2 – Majority of individuals have broad authority to act on behalf of their organisations. Some organisations with statutory responsibilities are present</p> <p>3 – All individuals have authority to act on behalf of their organisations. All relevant organisations with statutory responsibilities are present</p>
	Output		<b>4d.</b> The extent to which stakeholders are prepared to abide by agreed management interventions [49]	<p>1 – Few stakeholders are prepared to abide by management interventions such as codes of conduct</p> <p>2 – Majority, but not all, stakeholders are prepared to abide by management interventions such as codes of conduct</p> <p>3 – All relevant stakeholders are prepared to abide by management interventions such as codes of conduct</p>
5. Productivity	Output	The extent to which partners have progressed towards achieving specified target outputs [16]	<b>5a.</b> The extent to which key objectives agreed at the beginning of the partnership have been refined and delivered through the direct intervention of the collaborative action [13]	<p>1 – Some limited success in achieving objectives as a result of partnership action</p> <p>2 – Achievement of most objectives as a result of partnership action</p> <p>3 – All key objectives achieved as a result of partnership action</p>
	Output outcome		<b>5b.</b> The extent to which the partnership has been able to influence policy at local, regional, national levels and above [34]	<p>1 – Little or no influence on policy outside of partnership</p> <p>2 – Some limited influence on local or regional policy</p> <p>3 – Strong influence on local or regional policy and/or some influence on national policy</p>

6. Stakeholder qualities	Process	The role played by key individuals in the partnership process [52]	6. The extent to which key individuals (leaders or participants) shape, motivate or dominate the process and inspire others to participate [33, 36]	<p>1 – No clear leader or individual partnership ‘champion’ apparent</p> <p>2 – One individual takes a more prominent role but does not dominate</p> <p>3 – One individual takes a strong leadership role and ‘champions’ partnership</p>
7. Social learning	Process	The extent to which partners have gained trust and understanding from each other and the process [52]	7a. The extent to which partners have the capacity (technical skills and understanding) to make effective decisions on complex issues [9, 53]	<p>1 – Individuals do not have key skills or knowledge to make effective decisions</p> <p>2 – Some individuals have key skills or knowledge but some gaps in areas of knowledge exist</p> <p>3 – Required range of skills and knowledge is available for decision-making</p>
	Output outcome		7b. The extent to which levels of trust between stakeholders have improved [30, 37]	<p>1 – Low levels of trust between stakeholders</p> <p>2 – Moderate levels of trust between stakeholders</p> <p>3 – High levels of trust between stakeholders</p>
			7c. The likelihood with which partners would embrace the collaborative process in the future [26, 32]	<p>1 – Partnership is perceived as poor and stakeholders are unlikely to participate in future collaborations</p> <p>2 – Mixed perceptions of the partnership and indecision over whether to participate in future collaborations</p> <p>3 – Strong recognition of the benefits of partnership and clear willingness to participate in future collaborations</p>

**Source: [39]**