



Case study

Name of initiative

Lamlash Bay No Take Zone

Name of Organisation:

Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST)

Nature of organisation:

Community of Arran Seabed Trust is a local, voluntary, non-profit organisation whose aim is the conservation and recovery of Isle of Arran marine life through the protection of Lamlash Bay.

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Brief description of initiative:

The following document outlines the actions taken to create a community organisation with the goal of establishing a marine No Take Zone. COAST was formed originally by two concerned marine stakeholders, and then developed into a campaign organisation with political awareness, the ability to raise funds and promote their objectives. Key lessons learned were: awareness raising requires development of media contacts; public involvement was encouraged by outreach activities; an understanding of relevant issues and of the ecology and sensitivity of target species/habitats as well as any economic and social importance to local communities was crucial. Networking with researchers, other relevant organisations and Government also proved important as was attendance at relevant conferences. COAST found that their involvement in the political arena focussed on communication with the local community council and understanding of local priorities. A good understanding of potentially opposing views was important. The final lesson learned was to be patient and maintain a positive attitude, Understanding that the process would not be quick was essential to achieving their objectives.

Outcomes:

COAST promoted the creation of the Lamlash Bay No Take Zone, which was passed by Scottish Parliament in September 2008. Order 317 prohibits any fishing not for research purposes between the northern end of Holy Island and the opposing coast of the Isle of Arran.

The COAST experience and key steps in establishing a no-take zone**1. Raising the profile and being informed**

- A clear identity, or 'brand', was created and strategic objectives set for the group as well as short-term goals. COAST became a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' (and aims to become a charity), which has advantages that others may wish to consider.

- COAST created a membership body so individuals could join, but charged no fee. Having a membership body added credibility and proved a valuable resource for experience and skills.
- Fund raising was an important aspect and should not be overlooked by anyone setting out on a similar project.
- Being politically aware was crucial and knowing the position adopted by local elected representatives on the issues mandatory.
- Collating relevant data and understand the scientific arguments alongside more general issues was important:
 - COAST maintained that declining fish catches had led to the cancellation of the previously annual Lamlash international fish festival and made a case for the economic impact that had had locally.
 - Useful resources proved to be: SEASEARCH; underwater filming; experience elsewhere in the world (see references on the UKMPA Centre website).
- Knowledge of Scottish, UK and European legislation was required
 - Public rights to consultation were explored.
 - The extent of the fishing industry's right to the resource was examined.
 - EU legislation has been the main driver for legislation to improve water quality, in particular the EU Water Framework Directive.
 - COAST made use of the Freedom of Information Act to obtain information from Government departments.
 - Scottish Parliamentary procedures also proved important as the Petitions Committee can trigger parliamentary activity.
- COAST formed a committee to share the workload and this proved effective in keeping their project moving forward as well as being an opportunity for personal development. This also helped in keeping up momentum for the project.

2. Build public awareness and inclusion

- It was important, at an early stage, to make an informed case and present to others in the community to gain support.
 - COAST collected old photos and community oral histories.
 - For their particular project, COAST identified protected or endangered species e.g. maerl a small red calcareous seaweed. Maerl is scientifically proven as excellent marine nursery areas, but now considered endangered. Other examples seen as endangered are seagrass, flame shells, Seapens etc. and knowledge of the habitat present backed up a case for a NTZ or Marine Protected Area (MPA). For lists of protected species see Scottish Natural Heritage, Natural England or Countryside Council for Wales websites.
 - Information on water quality from SEPA (in Scotland) or local Water Authority can be useful when making an informed case.
 - Information on salmon runs, current or historical, could also be useful.
- It is important to show benefits of sustainability in the wider meaning; environment, social and economic.
- It was important to keep the larger community involved and informed by a wide range of means such as attending local shows and events, COAST had a table to illustrate the organisation at community events attended with the opportunity for people to join as a member.
- COAST were effective at keeping the project profile in the media by getting articles into the local, regional and national press and writing letters to newspapers and others they thought would support their project COAST also featured on the BBC programme 'Countryfile' and on childrens BBC.
- COAST produced a DVD of their project, created a website and produced other campaigning material to publicise their project locally as well as further afield.
- An important factor was to understand concerns of other affected stakeholders and to show how the project could deliver benefits for each group and to be able to make a

business case for sustainability.

3. Building links with other groups

- Networking proved to be key to the successful outcome of the COAST project and is an essential element in any campaign or similar project.
 - Networking created opportunities for COAST to carry out some underwater filming and to get additional publicity through newspaper articles.
 - In their case, sea anglers, static fisherman and divers were natural supporters.
- It was important to work closely with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (or the Countryside Council for Wales and Natural England) as their support gave scientific backing to the arguments and proved a valuable source of information.
- Attendance at conferences to put the case for conservation to meet the COAST objectives was important.
- It was important to ensure the scientific case could be made and it was very useful to have scientists attend meetings with local officials and the public.
- Liaison with Non Governmental Organisations who were able to assist was helpful e.g. Marine Conservation Society (MCS).
- COAST entered competitions to demonstrate commitment and to raise their profile. COAST were successful in the Observer Ethical Conservation Award 2008 and Howard Wood was selected as number 2 of 300 in the Scotsman Scottish Conservation Awards in 2009.
- COAST identified businesses with a mutual interest in protecting the environment and community welfare. A No Take Zone has particular resonance with eco-tourism for example.
- It was necessary to be aware of pending legislation and provide responses to consultations e.g. the Marine (Scotland) Act and the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act are now law.

4. Engagement with local politicians

- It was important to engage with local Arran community council, politicians and regulators (such as Marine Scotland), keeping them informed and relating the project to local priorities.
- Stamina was required due to the number of meetings to attend, many of which were delayed or postponed.

5. Celebrate wins

- For the morale of everyone involved it proved important to celebrate achievements, no matter how small.
- Lastly, many qualities were required for the COAST project; a sense of humour, resilience, patience, stubbornness and positive thinking to name just a few!