

Conference: Restoring Estuarine and Coastal Habitats in the North East Atlantic (REACH North East Atlantic)

Natural History Museum, London 16th July, 2019



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Programme

Our near shore seas and estuaries in the North East Atlantic have been transformed by human activity with significant losses of key habitats and the services they once provided. We have the capability to reverse some of these changes and there is growing interest in, and examples of, habitat restoration.

The REACH North East Atlantic conference brings together experts from academia, government, NGOs and industry to recognise what we have lost, develop an understanding of what we can do and inspire the restoration of estuarine and coastal habitats.

The conference will consider the following:

Past: Where have we come from? What estuarine and coastal habitats did we have? What benefits did they provide?

Present: Where are we now? What do our estuarine and coastal seas look like today? What are we doing now to restore them? What best practice and lessons learned can we share?

Future: Where are we going? What are the challenges for restoration in the nearshore environment and what habitats are suitable for practical restoration? What could our estuaries and coastal seas look like? What opportunities do we have to restore them? What happens if we don't? What innovative financial mechanisms are there to fund restoration and what are the regulatory challenges going forward?

Introduction to the Conference: Restoring Estuarine and Coastal Habitats in the NE Atlantic (REACH NE Atlantic)

Welcome to the REACH conference. England's 25 Year Environment Plan sets out a challenging ambition to restore marine biodiversity and our conference is the first step in responding to this challenge. We want to share this ambition across the UK and with our NE Atlantic partners to understand the benefits that we have lost and learn from the great work that is already underway helping to restore marine habitats. Our collective ambition is to bring together, and inspire, a community of restoration practitioners to see what more we can achieve to benefit people and wildlife.

We have grouped our speakers, as far as possible, into understanding the past, present and future. The aim of the conference is to expose our audience to a wide range of views and practical projects and to inspire further networking and discussion, both on the day and beyond. Outputs from the conference will include a report on the sessions and key points from our speakers.

We hope the momentum generated will lead to further discussions to develop future activity that pools our collective expertise and capacity to achieve much greater restorative activity, greater than the sum of the parts.

Conference programme

09.00 Doors open for refreshments and delegate registration

Introductions

09.30 - 09.35 Introduction. **Roger Proudfoot**, *Environment Agency (host)*

09.35 - 09.45 **Emma Howard-Boyd**, *Chair of the Environment Agency*

09.45 - 10.00 **Tony Juniper**, *Chair of Natural England*

10.00 - 10.15 Defra 25 Year Environment Plan - linking our plan to objectives and driving change. **Sara MacLennan**, *Defra*

10.15 - 10.30 A joined up approach. **Professor Peter Fox**, *Environment Agency, Head of Water, Land and Biodiversity*

Session 1 – The Past – Chair: Matt Frost, Marine Biological Association

10.30 - 10.45 Conservation must overcome shifted environmental baselines to address 21st century problems. **Professor Callum Roberts**, *York University*

10:45 – 11.00 Saltmarsh, past present and future. **Dr Mike Best**, *Environment Agency*

11:00 – 11.15 A Framework for evaluating carbon sequestration – the earth tech approach starting with cetaceans. **Ralph Chami**, *International Monetary Fund*

11.15 – 11.30 Restoring the coast – what are we trying to conserve? **Tim Collins**, *Natural England*

11.30 - 11.45 Q & A

11.45 - 12.30 Break 1 - Sandwiches

Session 2 – The Present – Chair: Dr Julia Stigwart, Queens University

12.30 - 12.45 Flood and Coastal Risk Management – what role for habitats? **Rachael Hill**, *Environment Agency*

12.45 – 13.00 Restoring saltmarshes with dredge sediment – recent advances in the Solent, the UK and globally. **Colin Scott**, *Associated British Ports Marine Environmental Research*

13.00 - 13.15 Dornoch Environmental Enhancement Project (DEEP): Successes and Challenges. **Dr Bill Sanderson**, *Heriot-Watt University*

13.15 - 13.30 Sowing the seeds of recovery for our British coasts – a story of hope. **Dr Richard Unsworth**, *Swansea University*

13.30 – 13.45 Fish in intertidal habitats. **Steve Colclough**, *Institute of Fisheries Management*

13.45 – 14.05 Q & A

14.05 - 14.25 6 x 3 min presentations:

Open coast seagrass restoration in Portugal. Large scale seagrass transplants. **Alexandra Cunha**, *Joint Nature Conservation Committee/Centro de Ciencias do Mar*

Restoring native oysters in the Essex estuaries. **Alison Debney**, *Zoological Society of London*

Solent Oyster Restoration Project; restoring oyster populations in a crowded marine environment. **Jacob Kean-Hammerson**, *Blue Marine Foundation*

Sussex kelp forest restoration: enhancing fish habitats and biodiversity. **Sean Ashworth and Kathryn Nelson**, *Sussex Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority*

Design of our Tyne – funding through innovation. **Zahra Ravenscroft**, *Environment Agency*

MARINEFF coastal enhancement project. **Dr Ken Collins**, *University of Southampton*

14.25 - 15.10 Break 2 - cake

Session 3 – The Future – Chair: Professor Colin Moffat, Marine Scotland, Scottish Government

15.10 - 15.25 Marine Pioneer: Using a natural capital approach for saltmarsh Restoration. **Aisling Lannin**, *Marine Management Organisation*

15.25 - 15.40 Improving the science-base: design and evolution of creek networks in restored saltmarshes. **Clementine Chirol**, *Queen Mary University London*

15.40 - 15.55 The past, present, and potential future of estuarine and coastal habitats in the East Coast of England. **Tiziana Luisetti**, *Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science*

15:55 – 16:10 Sustainable finance for marine management. **Penny Nelson**, *World Wildlife Fund*

16.10 - 16.30 Q & A

16.30 - 16.40 Next steps and close