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Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)

ESRC Symposium on
Marine Conservation and Governance:
MPAs and beyond
24-25 September 2015

Cultural transformations in the Scottish marine policy process

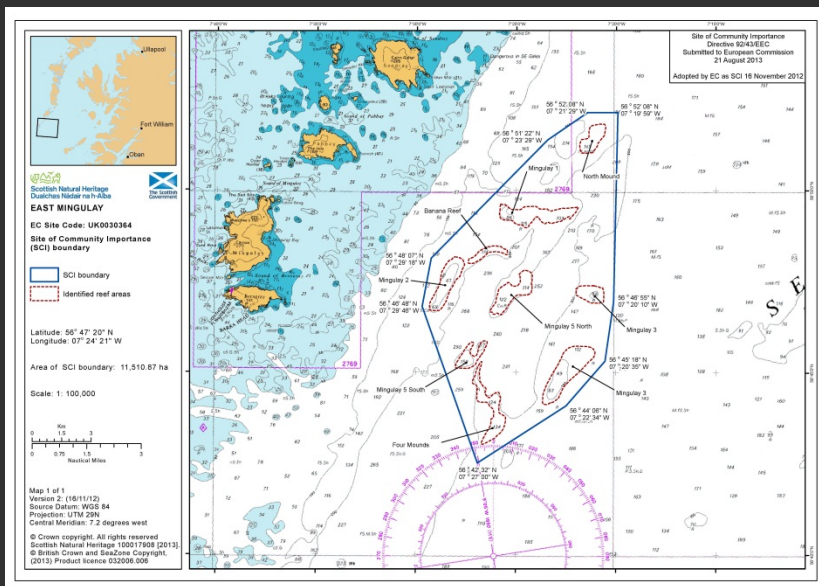
The story of Barra





Map courtesy of Tim O'Higgins (Cartography *an tUiginneach*)





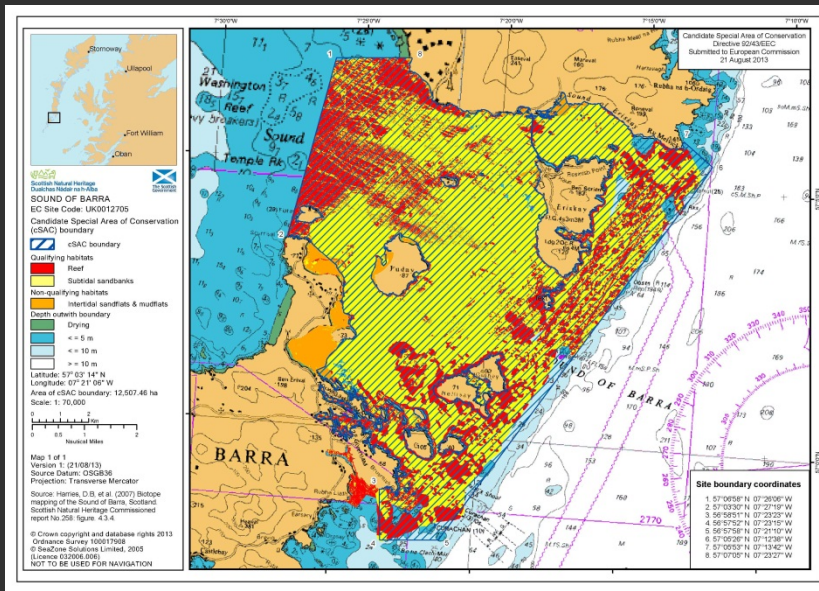
East Mingulay mSAC

2009

Proposed for designation by SNH

2011

Approved for designation by Environment Minister



Sound of Barra mSAC

2000

Proposed for designation by SNH

2011

Re-proposed for designation by SNH

2013

Approved for designation by Environment Minister

Source: Scottish Natural Heritage (www.snh.gov.uk) and SeaZone Solutions Limited

Marine Special Areas of Conservation (mSAC) off the coast of Barra

Emergent themes from 2011 fieldwork

- *'People here are not against looking after the environment but it's being forced on them here.'*
- *'We're not being listened to'*
- Different understandings of the meaning of 'conservation':
'Hands-off; keep out' vs 'Live with; use/develop wisely'
- Different ways of knowing



- Take some photographs of the Barra and Vatersay you would like your grandchildren to enjoy when they grow up
- Find an image or object which represents your connection to the sea

Community





People have been here from time immemorial, watching the sea
(Norse broch, Scurrival)



If it's in their power, they'll give you a hand



I want my grandchildren to see community on Barra



Safety. Complacency. Security.



Nice to see a full washing line, isn't it?



Community spirit
(Fisherman's Mass)



Freedom – nobody bats an eyelid



Building for the future
(Northbay pier)



Home to the harbour

A functional beauty?



Boats are objects of beauty – almost sculptural



Nice to look at. Does it serve a function?



Raw elements
(Eoligarra garage)



People still working



What it was, is gone

Connections to the sea



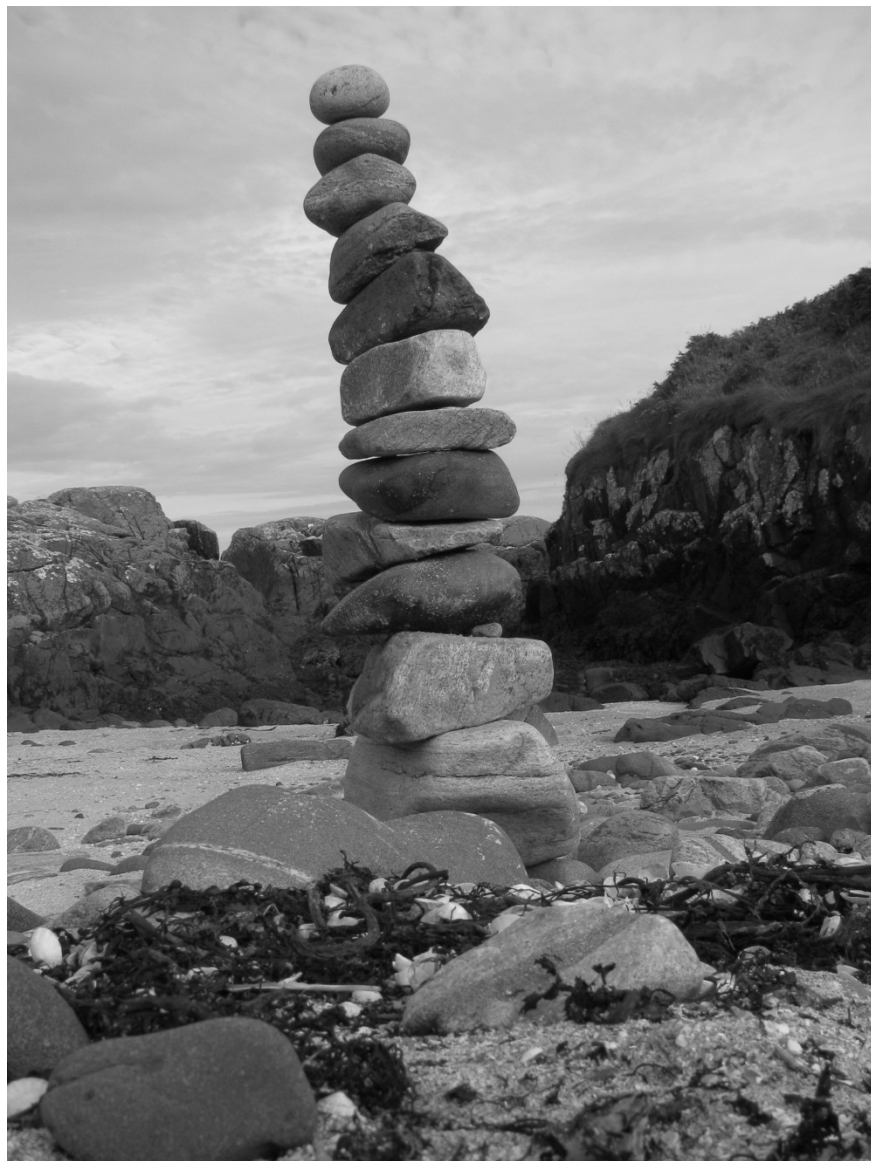








Playgrounds

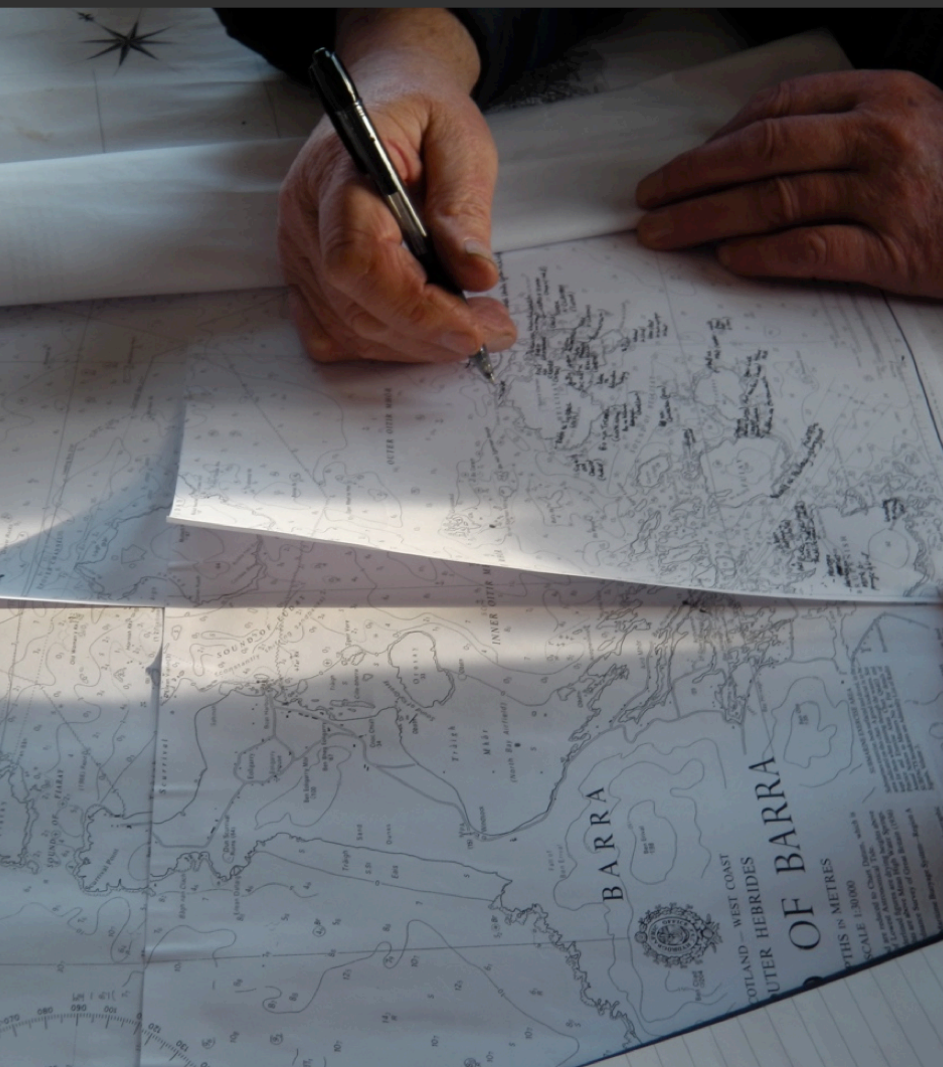






Hidden stories





Connecting Coastal Communities

Revealing relationships with the marine environment and different ways of knowing

www.mappingthesea.net



Dùthchas na Mara

Dúchas na Mara

Belonging to the Sea

<http://www.sams.ac.uk/ruth-brennan/belonging-to-the-sea>

Sgeulachdan na Mara -
Sea Stories explores the
intimate relationship
between people and
place and seeks to
make visible the rich
cultural knowledge that
exists in the seas around
Barra.

...
Explore the map and
click on the icons to
discover the various Sea
Stories.



ZOOM MEDIA



STORY ICONS



www.mappingthesea.net/barra

Turning Points and Transformations:

a community-led co-management process for the Sound of Barra marine Special Area of Conservation

From constraining to enabling networks

- Since 2012, the social and ecological networks linking the policy environment, the Barra community and the other-than-human environment of Sound of Barra are being reframed as enabling rather than constraining.
- Key actors in the conflict have redefined their positions *in relation to each other*.
- Transformation of underlying social and cultural norms within Barra community and policy environment has created new fields of possibility.

Timeline of Turning Points

"You're going with the tide rather than against the tide"

- February 2012: Environment Minister (Stewart Stevenson) met key members of Barra community at Scottish Parliament to discuss community taking the lead on management.
- March 2012: Fisheries Joint Consultative Committee meeting agreed Marine Scotland (rather than SNH) to engage with Sound of Barra communities to develop a management plan.
- July 2012: Dialogue initiated between Marine Scotland official and key members of Barra community on management plan for Sound of Barra if designated.
- November 2012: Independent review of scientific case for Sound of Barra mSAC requested by Environment Minister (Paul Wheelhouse).
- December 2012-February 2013: Marine Scotland official proposed a radically new approach to MS colleagues, Natura 2000 policy advisors and SNH: *'...we could go genuinely bottom up...and engineer a community-led approach'*.
- February 2013: Visit to Barra by Minister Wheelhouse and Marine Scotland official. In the event of designation, SNH and Marine Scotland would be *'experts on tap rather than on top'*.
- Supportive policy backdrop:
 - Permanent Secretary Sir Peter Howsden: take risks if doing things differently achieves better outcome.
 - Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill. SG commitment to *'communities being supported to do things for themselves'*.

Timeline of Turning Points (continued)

- February 2014: Appointment of Voluntary Action Barra & Vatersay (VABV) as facilitator of development of a community-led management structure for Sound of Barra.
- March 2015: Management structure report sent by VABV to Marine Scotland highlighting issues to be addressed to enable management '*through the eyes of the local people*'.
- Going forward:
 - Marine Scotland to fund further work by VABV to determine management group structure (representation of all three communities; appointment criteria; accessing advice without losing local control);
 - Outcome Agreement will ensure statutory conservation objectives can be met;
 - Management Plan to be developed and implemented 2015/2016 (led by local management group).
- Marine Scotland hopes that the Sound of Barra communities '*will take the next step, for us and with us*'.

Examples of Transformations in Norms

- Early seed planted in August 2008: SNH official persuaded key people within policy environment to allow public release of scientific cases for both Barra mSACs well in advance of consultation processes and **before** Ministerial approval given.
- 2012: Willingness of key members of Barra community to open dialogue with Marine Scotland around management of Sound of Barra. Stepping away from old 'victim vs oppressor' identities.
- 2013: Scottish Government (Minister Wheelhouse) expressed willingness to change rules (Habitats Regulations) governing management of mSACs to facilitate community-led co-management structure.
- 2014: Appointment of VABV (rather than an external 'expert') as facilitator:
 - repositions actors and knowledges within the power field;
 - broadens and redefines social and ecological networks
- - policy environment values and respects local ways of knowing and doing;
 - co-production of knowledge by policy environment, communities and other-than human-environment of Sound of Barra leading to new possibilities for action.
- Marine Scotland may not be a member of the management group – by invitation only. *'On tap'* rather than *'on top'*.



Coexisting (Clark Beaumont 2013)

- Transformations in norms are making relationships of local people with the Sound of Barra legible (visible) within the policy environment.
- Facilitating new possibilities for engagement between policy-makers and key community representatives.
- Unfolding and unknown nature of process has created space for values, worldviews and ways of knowing and doing of Sound of Barra communities.
- By reflecting entanglement of nature and culture, the Barra co-management process is creating space for articulating different ways of framing human-nature relationships which acknowledge co-existence of different conceptualisations of 'nature' in social-ecological contexts.

Further reading

- Photo-essay
(available at: <http://www.sams.ac.uk/ruth-brennan/what-lies-beneath-e-book../view>)
- Art-science collaborations with visual artist Stephen Hurrell:
 - *Belonging to the Sea* illustrated publication
(available at: <http://www.sams.ac.uk/ruth-brennan/belonging-to-the-sea>)
 - *Sea Stories* interactive online cultural map of the sea
(available at: www.mappingthesea.net/barra)