



**VALUING
NATURE
PROGRAMME**

VNP20



Demystifying shared and social values

Valuing Nature Paper | October 2019

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Key messages

- Shared and social values are values that people express together as members of communities, from local to global scales. Empirical research has clearly distinguished them from individual values.
- Values are plural. Not all types of values can be boiled down to a single metric, whether monetary or non-monetary. This is because different value systems are not directly comparable.
- The values that people express when asked as individuals in conventional consultation or valuation are a subset of their values. They are unlikely to represent all of their values and beliefs, including those that they share collectively with others. It is often necessary to undertake some form of deliberative process to reveal these hidden values, so that they can be incorporated in decisions.
- Taking a shared values approach is particularly important when dealing with uncertainty and complexity, where values are likely to be subtle and implicit and where issues are contested or associated with many different stakeholders.
- Different methods are suitable for eliciting different types of values. A comprehensive assessment requires a mixed-method approach that combines different approaches to account for these different types of values.
- If decision-makers take account of this diversity of values, decisions are likely to be more representative of the values of those that they affect and may also be less contested.

Introduction

Shared and social values are those that bind people together, for example as citizens and as members of communities. Economics traditionally considers the values of individuals, but many of the values that people express are not for themselves, but for others and the communities and society in which they live. These collective, shared and social values often relate to the landscapes people live in and visit. While there has been an increasing emphasis on using economic approaches for assessing the benefits of nature to people, many people experience emotional, cultural and spiritual connections to places that are hard to fully express in monetary terms. This note aims to help practitioners and decision-makers make better decisions, based on an appreciation of the shared values that people hold together and that are distinct from individual values. It focuses on shared, social and cultural values around managing the natural environment. However, many of the concepts and applications could be adapted to other policy areas.

People value the natural world in four key ways. Firstly, we live *from* the world, through for example, food and energy—this reflects how the environment matters as a resource, a means to our sustenance. Secondly, we live *in* it; this points to the world as a place that is the setting of our life events, where we live, work and recreate. Here nature contributes to our personal and collective histories and place identity, and nature contributes to our sense of place. Thirdly, we live *with* the world; this points to nature or non-humans as important others, who co-exist alongside us, acknowledging that we are one species alongside the larger biotic community living on this planet. Finally, we live *as* the world, which points to the natural world as ourselves, individually and collectively, where it hard to clearly separate between people and nature. For example, this is expressed in notions and experiences of kinship and oneness, where we can feel directly part of the web of life and experience the land or sea as part of us. O'Connor and Kenter, building on the work of the philosopher John O'Neill, considered these four ways that the world matters as four 'life frames' of the world, collectively coined the *Life Framework*¹.

¹ O'Connor and Kenter, 2019, "Making Intrinsic Values Work; Integrating Intrinsic Values of the More-Than-Human World Through the Life Framework of Values," *Sustainability Science* 31, no. 3: 93–19, <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00715-7>



To be well-informed, equitable and transparent, the policies and decisions that we make need to take account of all of these four frames, expressed through the views of the diversity of communities and stakeholders that decisions may affect. People's views are strongly influenced by their values, which can be deeply held. However, not all of the ways that people value the world are necessarily pre-formed in their minds, nor easily articulated. They may be implicitly expressed in their daily lives, embodied in peoples practices and activities, or sometimes almost entirely unformed when dealing with challenging and potentially unfamiliar environmental questions. Values often become clearer when people get together to discuss (or 'deliberate') what matters to them. Taking these values into account early on in the decision-making process can help make better decisions that are more likely to be accepted by society.

People express different types of values. These range from how valuable something is to them ('contextual values'), to deeper held 'transcendental' values that include principles such as honesty and fairness plus the wide range of life goals people might strive for, from harmony with nature and meaningful friendships to wealth and social status. These values are often shared by communities (including 'communities of practice', such as groups of users of the environment), cultures and society at large ('communal' and 'cultural' values). People may express different values depending on whether they are asked as an individual householder or a member of their local community or interest group, or as a consumer versus a citizen, and depending on how they are asked (e.g. through an individual survey or through deliberation with others).

New approaches are needed for identifying and taking account of these shared and social values, that are often hidden yet frequently emerge in conflicts and challenges to contentious decisions. Conventional (e)valuation often fails to reach out to these values. This is because it tends to assume that the preferences and opinions people express as individuals tap into all forms of value, and that adding up different people's values represents the sum total of values held by a constituency of people. Values are 'plural'. Not all types of values can be boiled down to a single value indicator, be that in money terms or expressed in other ways. This is because different types and dimensions of values are not directly comparable (they might be 'incommensurable') – for example, it is often not possible to compare values that are associated with the different Life frames outlined above.

Rather, to elicit these plural, shared and social values, it is often necessary to use a mix of monetary, non-monetary and hybrid approaches to include the fullest possible range of value systems necessary to inform more robust, inclusive and far-sighted decision-making. Often such a mix will include deliberation, to make explicit and learn about the values held by different groups in society, so that these can be incorporated in decisions. For example, the UK National Ecosystem Assessment follow on (NEAFO) found clear evidence of how deliberative and mixed-method approaches were able to elicit a more inclusive suite of values than conventional approaches, finding evidence of clear differences between individual and shared values across several empirical studies².

This does not mean decision-makers necessarily have to add a whole new separate set of procedures to what they already do. In many cases, existing methods can be adapted and integrated into decision-making processes, so that what is already being done can be done better.

It is ultimately a judgement call to consider when shared and social values should be considered explicitly in decision-making. However, as a general rule, there is particular added value to taking a 'shared values approach' in the following cases:

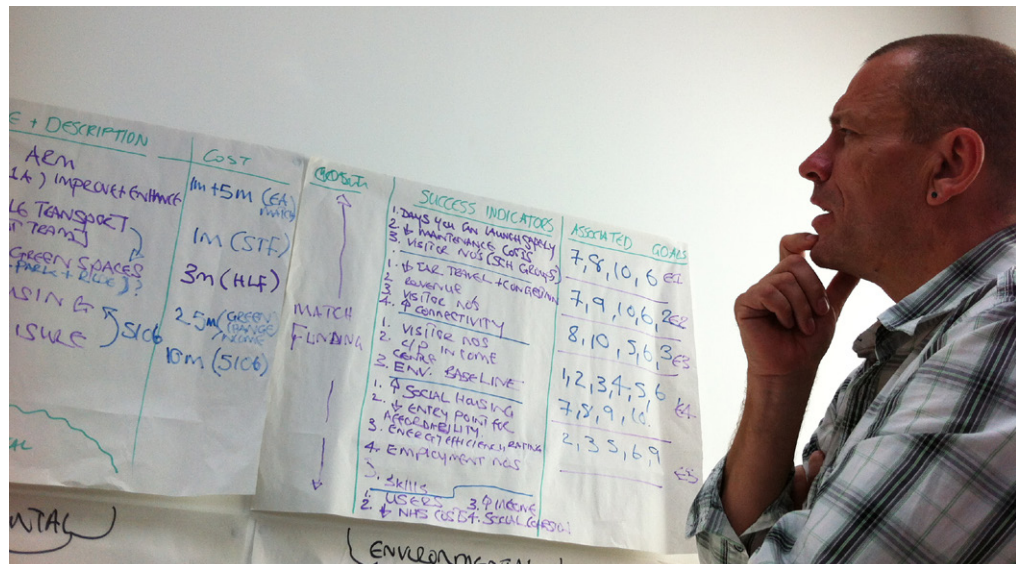
- where issues or ecosystem services under consideration are complex;
- where there is a lot of uncertainty;
- where values are likely to be subtle and implicit;
- where issues or evidence are contested;
- where there are a large number of different stakeholders.

² Kenter et al., 2014 "UK National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-on Phase. Work Package Report 6: Shared, Plural and Cultural Values of Ecosystems," (Cambridge: UNEP-WCMC), <http://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1275.6565>

Why do shared and social values matter?

Shared values are important for everyone involved in making decisions.

- **National government and its agencies** need to understand the social impacts of future policies and how they are likely to be perceived by the public.
- **Local government** can benefit from looking beyond traditional consultation processes so as to understand the plurality of values that communities hold.
- **Research funders** need to ensure that their research priorities reflect social and cultural as well as economic and environmental priorities. They also need to ensure that commissioned research resonates and connects with the values that underpin decisions in policy and practice.
- **Land managers** can benefit from understanding the shared values that different groups of people hold for particular places. Otherwise these values may only become apparent once decisions have been taken and provoke conflict. Such decisions may be challenged in court or planning permission may be delayed or withheld.
- **Businesses** need to know what values and behaviours the society and communities they operate in want and expect from them in order to maintain their social license to operate. Brand and reputation also affect their customers' opinions and their willingness to continue to buy goods and services.
- **Non-governmental organisations and community and activist groups** often have close connections to local communities, and understanding the shared values can help such organisations manage their assets and communicate their key messages more effectively.



What are shared and social values?

The terms ‘shared’ and ‘social’ values have been used to indicate a wide variety of different things in the literature. Key dimensions of values that can be used to discriminate between different types of shared and social values include: the concept of value; the value provider; the intention of value; its scale; and the process used to elicit values (Figure 1)³. Emerging from these dimensions, seven different, non-mutually exclusive types of shared and social values can be identified:

1. **Transcendental values** are the principles and overarching goals that guide us, going beyond or transcending specific situations. Transcendental values are a deeper held type of value; they are often shared within communities or within society and thus termed as shared values. They can be ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ and include both ethical and non-ethical values; examples include wealth, honesty, fairness, enjoying life, harmony with nature, discipline, peace and security.
2. **Cultural or societal values** are culturally shared principles and virtues, as well as a shared sense of what is worthwhile and meaningful. Societal values are the cultural values of a society. Many societies are diverse, so there may be many sets of cultural values in one society that overlap to a greater or lesser degree with each other.
3. **Communal values** are values held in common by members of a community (e.g. geographic, faith or belief-based or activity-based communities).
4. **Group values** are the values expressed by an ad-hoc group of people (e.g. in a focus group), through consensus or majority vote, or more informally.

³ Kenter et al., 2015, “What Are Shared and Social Values of Ecosystems?,” *Ecological Economics* 111: 86–99, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2015.01.006>

5. **Deliberated values** are the values that individuals or groups express as a result of deliberating with one another, typically involving discussion and learning. For example, values may be deliberated in formal settings such as a valuation workshop, or on social media.
6. **Other-regarding values** express the sense of importance attached to the well-being or moral standing of others (whether they are human or non-human).
7. **Value to society** is the benefit, worth or importance of something to society as a whole.

Taken together, these different types of shared and social values represent the values that we come to hold and assign through our interactions with others in one way or another. It is these values that inform and shape narratives of our ‘common good’.

Within this values framework, there are some further value types that are not necessarily a type of shared value, but that are important to define. Transcendental values can be contrasted with *contextual values*, which are opinions on the importance of context-specific objects of value. For example, someone might value peacefulness (transcendental) and also value one’s local beach (contextual), perhaps because that person experiences the beach as a peaceful place. In addition to transcendental and contextual values, the third concept of value is *value indicators*, including monetary values and non-monetary indicators such as rankings, scores and qualitative value indicators. Cultural, societal, communal and group values can all be contrasted with *individual values*, deliberated with *non-deliberated values*, and value to society with *value to the individual*.

Thus, as we have seen, there are many types of values. The term *plural values* relates to the notion that these cannot all be measured using a single yardstick (such as money), so more than one method typically needs to be used to be able to assess values fully.

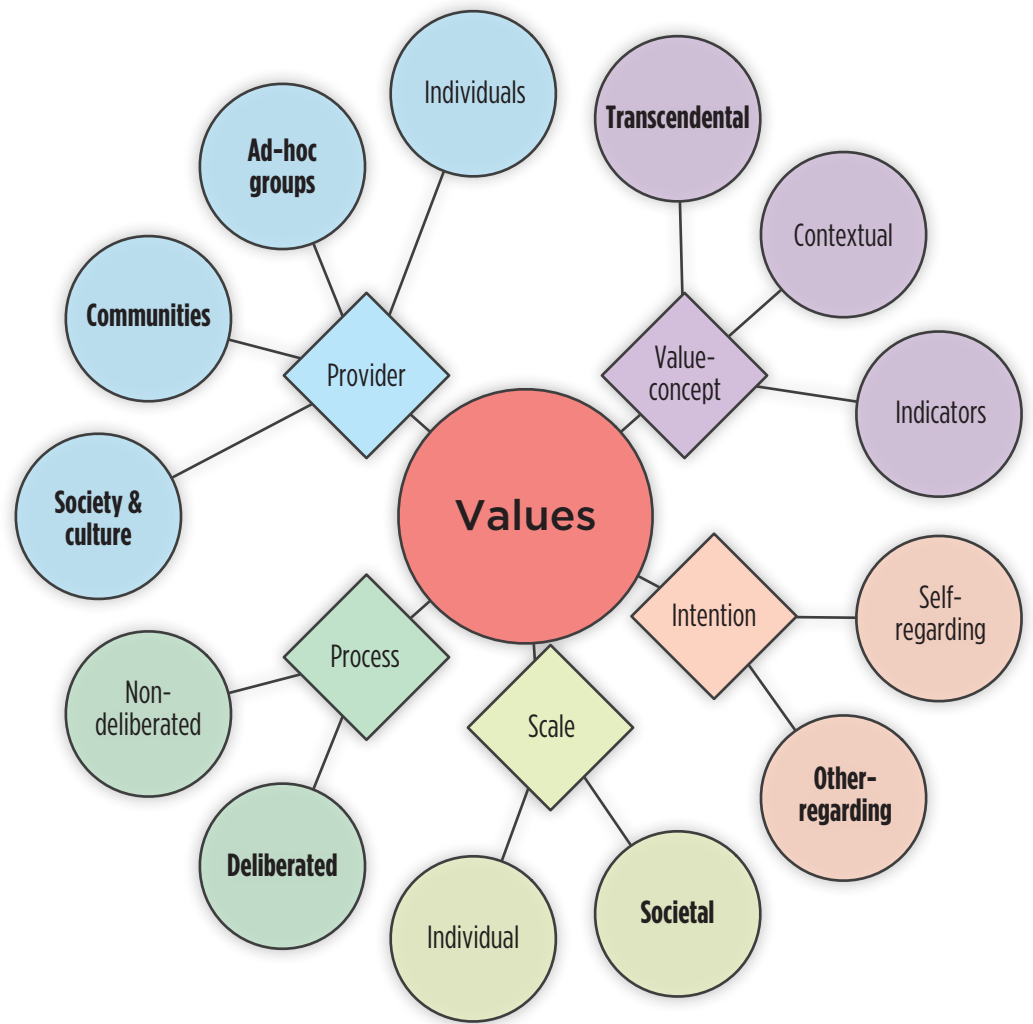


Figure 1: The five dimensions and seven main types of shared values.

Dimensions are depicted as diamonds. On the basis of these five dimensions, we can differentiate between seven main, non-mutually exclusive types of values that might be termed shared, social, or shared social values (circles with bold text); and other types of values (other circles). For example, *provider* is a dimension that indicates who may provide values in a valuation setting; societies, cultures, communities and ad-hoc groups provide *societal*, *cultural*, *communal* and *group values*, which are all distinct types of shared and social values.

Case example 1: Understanding the value of potential marine protected areas

The Westminster and UK Devolved Administrations committed to protect marine biodiversity and ecosystem services by establishing a network of marine protected areas (MPAs). However, little was known about how user groups such as divers and sea anglers value the locations proposed as MPAs. The UK NEA follow-on investigated the shared social values of these groups using a combination of deliberative monetary valuation (DMV), multi-criteria analysis (MCA), non-monetary well-being indicators, and storytelling. The research provided a rich understanding of why different places were important in particular ways, such as in the excitement that people feel when they see a creature they've never seen before, the bond that people develop when they go out together or the peacefulness that they feel when they are alone with the immensity of the sea. In comparing individual values elicited through an online survey with shared values elicited through group-based deliberation, shared values better reflected these emotional connections and relationships, and were more confident and considered.⁴

⁴ Kenter et al., 2016, "The Impact of Information, Value-Deliberation and Group-Based Decision-Making on Values for Ecosystem Services: Integrating Deliberative Monetary Valuation and Storytelling," *Ecosystem Services* 21: 270–90, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2016.06.006>



Monetary and non-monetary shared and social values

While much of the recent interest in shared and social values has resulted from a critique of mainstream economic approaches as being too narrow, shared and social values are not necessarily non-monetary. There is an increasing number of examples of economic approaches that are based on a shared values approach. For example, in a group of methods called Deliberative Monetary Valuation (DMV), groups of people collectively deliberate and potentially agree on shared monetary values in the form of ‘fair prices’ for different environmental goods (see **Case Example 1**), or social values in the form of a social willingness to pay for different policy options. There are also diverse examples of mainstream economic theory critiquing individualistic, instrumental approaches⁵. There is now also an increasing number of examples of approaches that bring together ecological, economic and sociocultural indicators in ‘integrated valuations’⁶, with some focusing on monetary and non-monetary individual values, and others on a more collective or communal shared values approach.

⁵ Massenber, 2019, “Social Values and Sustainability: a Retrospective View on the Contribution of Economics,” *Sustainability Science* 14: 1233-1246, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00693-w>

⁶ Jacobs et al., 2016, “A New Valuation School: Integrating Diverse Values of Nature in Resource and Land Use Decisions,” *Ecosystem Services* 22: 213-20, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2016.11.007>



Relational, instrumental and intrinsic values

In addition to shared and social values, there is also an increasing interest in *relational values*. These are contrasted with *intrinsic* and *instrumental values*.

Instrumental values refer to when something is important as a means to a human end. For example, a river may be valued for its navigation function. Instrumental values are often associated with an economic lens, although there are also many non-monetary valuation methods that make instrumental assumptions about values.

⁷ Pascual et al., 2017, "Valuing Nature's Contributions to People: the IPBES Approach," *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 26: 7–16, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2016.12.006>

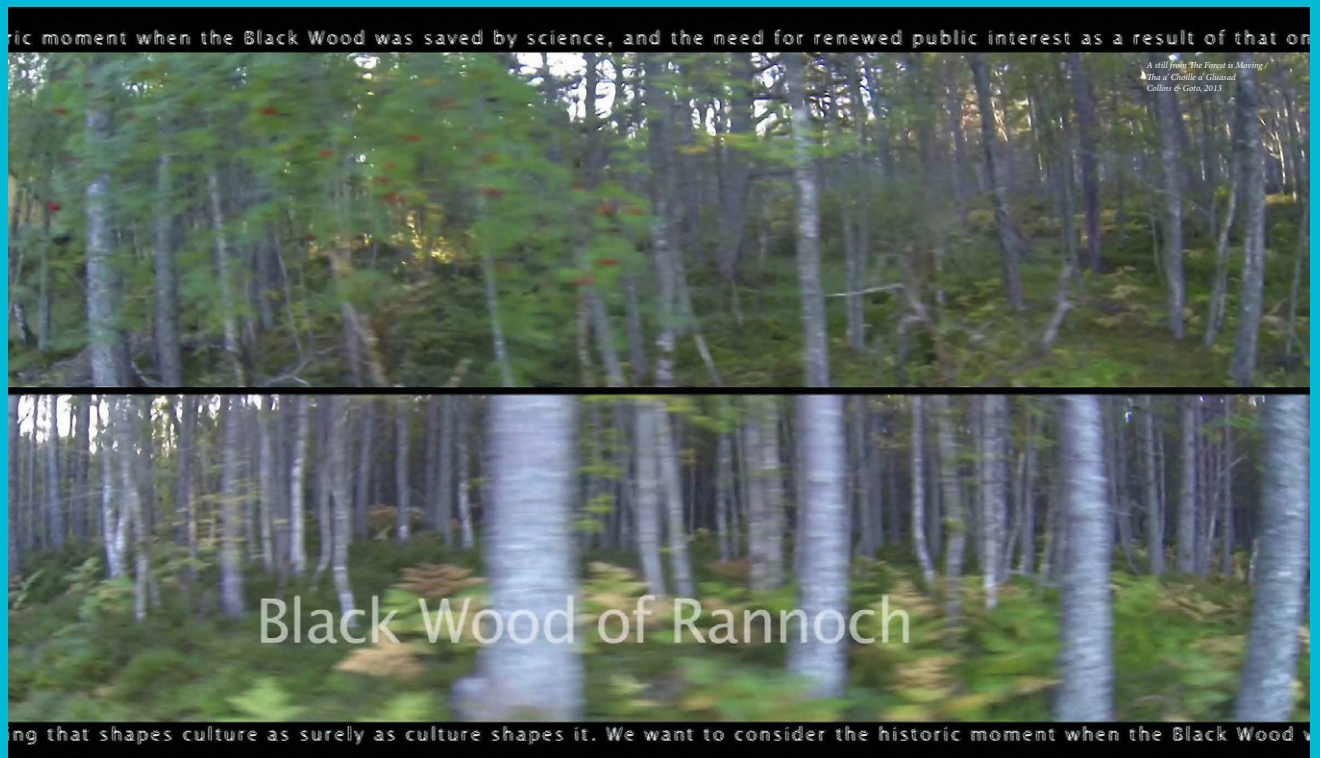
⁸ Batavia and Nelson, 2017, "For Goodness Sake! What Is Intrinsic Value and Why Should We Care?," *Biological Conservation* 209: 366–76, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2017.03.003>

⁹ O'Neill, 1992, "The Varieties of Intrinsic Value," *The Monist* 75: 119–37

Relational values is a more fuzzy concept, because there are diverse ways in which the notion of 'relationality' can be interpreted. They have been emphasised by authors associated with the Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and IPBES has conceived of them as values that express non-substitutable, meaningful relationships between people and aspects of nature⁷. For example, for the community around the Black Wood of Kinloch Rannoch (see **Case Example 2**) the contribution of that forest to people's identity is not replaceable by another forest – the Black Wood provide a unique sense of place and others forest harbour different identities. As that case example shows, relational values are not just underplayed by instrumental economic approaches, but also conservation science-based management can exclude them.

Intrinsic values denote when something is important in and for itself. What this means more precisely has been the study of decades of work in environmental ethics^{8,9}. Fundamentally, it is possible to see intrinsic values as objective, which means that the value is thought to be associated with the real properties of an object of value (e.g. it is alive or sentient), or to see them as subjective, where the value is associated with a human being valuing something as an end in itself, reflected in subjective expressions such as love or awe. Previously, objective intrinsic values were considered as a fairly abstract notion, considered in ethics and operationalised primarily through legal protection (e.g. EU Habitats and Bird Directives), making them difficult to compare with ecosystem service assessments in practice. However, within the context of the Life Framework, the notion of *articulated intrinsic values* expresses that the natural world has values independent of people, yet where the recognition and articulation of these values can be both a scientific and a subjective and social affair¹. For example, people recognise that animals and plants live their own lives and articulate their interests. This provides for an opportunity to articulate intrinsic values more explicitly alongside the instrumental and relational values expressed in concepts and frameworks such as natural capital, ecosystem services and nature's contributions to people.

The notions of instrumental, relational and intrinsic values are thus about how the importance of the natural world is justified. While any of these values can be considered using more individualistic or more group-based perspectives, relational values are often shared within cultures and communities. The recent debates around the importance of relational values and the importance of shared and social values are thus complementary in terms of broadening valuation to be more pluralistic, pointing out the need to include the personal and experiential dimensions of people-nature relationships and to move beyond the individual, harnessing social and deliberative processes for forming and understanding shared meanings and perspectives on the different ways nature is important.



Case example 2: Black Wood of Rannoch

The Black Wood is the most significant remnant of ancient Caledonian pine forest in the Southern Highlands of Scotland. In 1973 the Forestry Commission used conservation science to protect the forest from its own policies of intensive management; more recently, the same logic of scientific conservation constrained public access and engagement, appearing to manage community values 'out of the system'. To help address this, a wide range of partners representing diverse interests, including humanities scholars, government agency and NGO representatives and local residents, worked with environmental artists Collins and Goto Studio to critically review the physical and aesthetic condition of the forest and its historic management through arts-based dialogue¹⁰. Site visits, workshops and residencies helped establish current ideas about ecology, landscape and culture, while interrogating preconceived ideas about 'appropriate' human-forest inter-relationships. The social and cultural domain was understood as a safe place to reconsider meaning and value, helping conflicting parties to find common ground in the protection of the Black Wood. The arts-based deliberative approach helped to break down boundaries, encouraging participants to go beyond their usual comfort zone. Outcomes included concept plans that recognize a suite of shared values and a desire for future effort to resolve concerns about access and awareness.

¹⁰ Edwards et al. 2016, "An Arts-Led Dialogue to Elicit Shared, Plural and Cultural Values of Ecosystems," *Ecosystem Services* 21: 319–28, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2016.09.018>
Also see: <http://eden3.net/future-forest/>

How to assess shared and social values

A variety of methods may be used for different kinds of situation and at different stages of consultation to help stakeholders express their views and underlying values. Examples are provided in Table 1. They can be categorised into six main groups:

- **Deliberative** — such as in-depth discussion groups; citizens’ juries;
- **Analytical-deliberative** — such as participatory modelling where stakeholders work with academics to develop models that take into account a range of variables involved in a proposal;
- **Interpretive** — such as analysis of media coverage or the study of cultural history from documents;
- **Interpretive-deliberative** — such as participatory mapping, storytelling coupled with deliberation, or arts-based dialogue.
- **Psychometric** — such as using questionnaires to assess the wellbeing benefits of green or blue spaces.
- **Psychometric-deliberative** — such as using a ‘values compass’ to consider the importance of different transcendental values to a community; and

Table 1: Examples of methods that can be used to assess shared, plural and cultural values
Adapted from the UK NEAFO Shared Values: Handbook for Decision-makers (www.sharedvaluesresearch.org/handbook). An extended table with spatial and timescales and resources required can be found in the handbook.

Technique		Description
Deliberative	In-depth discussion groups	Group discussions (often repeated and usually involving four to eight people), during which participants shape the terms of the discussion, develop themes in ways relevant to their own needs and priorities.
	Citizens’ juries	A small cross-section of the general public who come to a considered judgment about a stated policy issue/problem through detailed exposure to, and scrutiny of, the relevant evidence base. The group responds by providing a recommendation or ‘verdict’.
	Deliberative opinion polls	A technique designed to observe the evolution of the views of a large citizen test group as they learn about a topic. Typically the group votes on the issues before and after an extended debate.

Technique		Description
Analytical-deliberative	Participatory modelling	The involvement of stakeholders in the design and content of analytical models that represent ecosystem services and their benefits under different spatial and temporal conditions.
	Deliberative monetary valuation	Techniques that use formal methods of group deliberation to come to a decision on monetary values for environmental change. May be allied to survey-based techniques (contingent valuation or choice experiments) or use a non-econometric approach to establish values (e.g. by incorporating citizens' juries).
	Deliberative multi-criteria analysis	Techniques that involve groups of stakeholders designing formal criteria against which to judge the non-monetary and (sometimes) monetary costs and benefits of different management options as the basis for making a decision.
Interpretive-deliberative	Participatory mapping/GIS	A group of stakeholders considers or creates a physical or digital map to indicate landscape features that are valuable (and/or problematic). Participants may also rate or rank these features for importance. Map layers can also incorporate photo, video, artwork, poetry, etc.
	Storytelling	Participants are asked to tell stories about their experiences of or in relation to places. These may be reflected upon in a group setting to discuss values related to these experiences.
	Group interviews	Participants are interviewed about their values, beliefs and preferences. Group interviews allow for deliberation and are similar to in-depth discussion groups. However, in group interviews, the terms are set by the interviewer rather than the group.

Technique		Description
Interpretive	Media analysis	The use of a range of textual analysis tools (particularly content, frame and discourse analysis) on (mass) media outputs and social media content over a selected period of time.
	Desk-based cultural history study	A wide range of qualitative techniques including ethnography and participant observation, genealogy, life-history methods, dramaturgical analysis, textual analysis of various sorts including discourse, content and frame analysis.
	Other interpretive methods	A wide range of qualitative techniques including ethnography and participant observation, genealogy, life history methods, dramaturgical analysis textual analysis of various sorts including discourse, content and frame analysis.
Psychometric-deliberative	Values compass	This method asks participants to consider which of their individual transcendental values are most important by ranking or rating them, and then asks them to discuss the degree to which these values are important for the community, culture or society. Values can also be ranked or rated on a group basis.
Psychometric	Subjective wellbeing indicators	These can be used to assess how and the degree to which places contribute to wellbeing, and are thus highly suitable for assessing the value of cultural ecosystem services using a quantitative non-monetary metric.
	Other psychometric	Psychometric testing refers to the measurement of psychological phenomena and processes, such as knowledge, experience, attitudes, values, beliefs, norms. Psychometric models can be used to better understand the impact of deliberative processes on values.

A handbook developed by the NEAFO provides suggestions for decision-makers on when and how shared values can be taken into account in their decision-making by:

- Providing examples of both existing methods that are likely to be familiar to many decision-makers (e.g. from *The Magenta Book*) and new approaches;
- Showing ways in which multiple tools and methods can be used together in specific policy venues and contexts; and
- Encouraging decision-makers to integrate shared values into their decision-making processes.

Deliberation

Group deliberation with citizens and diverse stakeholder groups is important for forming and identifying shared and social values. While there are different approaches to deliberation, they have in common that they emphasise forming reasoned opinions in an inclusive way. Deliberation also enables different individuals and groups within society to learn from one another through their interactions with each other (*social learning*). When integrated into monetary or non-monetary valuation, deliberation focuses on forming and weighing values around different environmental goods, or policy options. Broadly speaking, there are two types of deliberative valuation methods: ‘deliberative’ techniques enable participants to discuss different kinds of evidence and values together; and ‘analytical-deliberative’ techniques are more structured, integrating deliberation with analytical tools such as in deliberative monetary valuation (**Table 1**).

Usually, deliberation and social learning involves interactions between people with different transcendental and contextual values. Often, the deliberation process will work towards agreeing on contextual values and/or value indicators (e.g. an agreed willingness to pay or an agreed ranking of management options) by consensus or majority vote. This may involve discussion of information and beliefs, exchange and debate of transcendental values and how they relate to the context, and negotiation. Thus, through the deliberation process, participants can both express their transcendental values and form their contextual values.

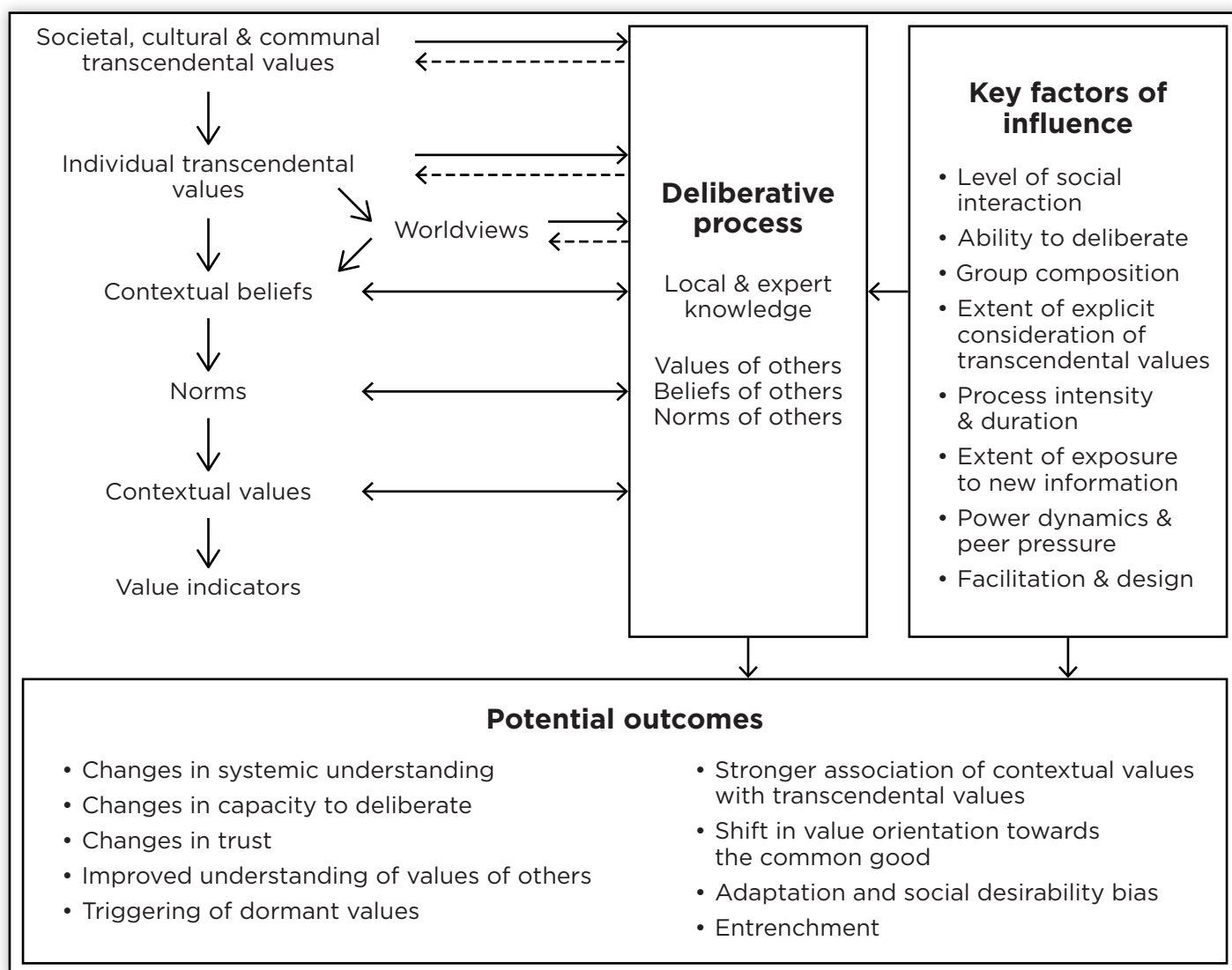
The Deliberative Value Formation model (**Figure 2**) provides a conceptual and applied framework for this approach. It consists of:

- 1.** An understanding of the key factors that influence how deliberation forms values;
- 2.** An understanding of the potential outcomes of deliberation in a valuation context;
- 3.** A chain of influence that conceptualises deliberative value formation as a translation of transcendental values into contextual values and value indicators, and links the key components that constitute this process.

The purpose of the DVF model is to support transparent goal setting for deliberative valuations and explicit consideration of how sought outcomes will be achieved by managing key factors of influence through process design and facilitation, which in themselves are considered as ‘meta-factors’. The DVF also present a six-step template for designing deliberative valuations. The six steps include:

- 1)** establishing the institutional context, for example: what is in and out of scope, how does the valuation relate to decisions;
- 2)** eliciting and discussing transcendental values: what is most important in life to us as individuals and collectively, what goals should we be seeking;
- 3)** considering contextual beliefs, broader policy impacts and systemic relations, for example, what are the causes and effects of current behaviours and policies and how could they be changed;
- 4)** considering implications for transcendental values: to what degree do possible changes resonate with our life goals;
- 5)** deliberation of norms and contextual values: what do we think should happen and what is the importance of different environmental goods and policy options within this context;
- 6)** expressing values through value indicators: providing some way to quantitatively or qualitatively assess the relative importance of different goods or policy alternatives.

Figure 2: The Deliberative Value Formation Model (adapted from Kenter et al., 2016¹¹).



¹¹ Kenter et al., 2016, "The Deliberative Value Formation Model," *Ecosystem Services* 21: 194-207, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2016.09.015>

¹² Brouwer et al., 1999, "Public Attitudes to Contingent Valuation and Public Consultation," *Environmental Values* 8: 325-47, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30301714>

¹³ Kenter et al., 2016, "The Impact of Information, Value-Deliberation and Group-Based Decision-Making on Values for Ecosystem Services: Integrating Deliberative Monetary Valuation and Storytelling," *Ecosystem Services* 21: 270-90, <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2016.06.006>

Some empirical case studies suggest that participants feel more confident about deliberated group values than non-deliberated, individual values, and participants may also feel more comfortable about these values being used by decision-makers rather than values they express as individuals (e.g.^{12,13}). However, often the value of deliberation is not (or not just) in sharing values and reaching consensus, but also in appreciating the reasons behind other people's values, helping people to be able to 'live with' decisions that emerge from the process, whether they agree with the outcome or not.

Working with a professional facilitator is particularly important in complex and/or contested decisions. However, in any decision-making context good facilitation can increase the efficiency of the process, ensure everyone has a fair say, balance power dynamics, increase learning and enjoyment and generally help get the most out of it for everyone involved.

There is also increasing evidence that combining deliberation with more interpretive approaches, such as storytelling, film, or arts, can help to address a number of key drawbacks of deliberation, namely:

- Classroom settings can be complemented by more *in-situ* approaches that can empower those not usually comfortable with traditional deliberation
- Dominant voices can be balanced by more structured ways of collecting and feeding in different viewpoints, such as through ethnographic film, empowering the ‘not-so-usual suspects’.
- The emphasis on ‘reasoned argument’ in traditional deliberation can be balanced with approaches that open more to experience and embodiment, such as storytelling and creative methods. This way the process can help elicit latent, subtle and relational values more effectively.

Deliberation may be used at various points in decision-making processes, for example:

- **exploratory phase:** understanding the sorts of challenges stakeholders are facing that the decision might be able to address; scoping the objectives and approach to ensure the outcomes of the decision are as relevant as possible to everyone involved in the decision;
- **evidence collection and analysis:** it may be useful to gather evidence with stakeholders through deliberation to elicit shared values, appraise options and better understand attitudes, perceptions and likely reactions to potential decisions among different groups;
- **interpretation of evidence:** whether evidence comes from stakeholders or other sources, it may be useful to engage stakeholders in the interpretation of evidence, making links and contributions to issues that might otherwise have been overlooked.



Navigating the plurality of social values

From the above, it is clear that there is a huge diversity both in terms of how shared and social values are conceived of, and how they are assessed. This diversity is reflected in the number of different disciplines that have engaged with these values, including ecological and mainstream economics, geography, sociology, social psychology, anthropology, philosophy, religious studies and arts. Over recent years, many more disciplines have engaged with the field of ecosystem assessment and ecosystem services. There is also increasing emphasis on integration of local as well as scientific knowledge around environmental values in decisions. This has given rise to new frameworks for characterising the relationship between people and nature. The IPBES Nature's Contributions to People (NCP) framework is said to include ecosystem services but go beyond these by more explicitly embracing the relational perspectives inherent in many systems of local and indigenous knowledge¹⁴. The Life Framework with its four frames (Living from, in, with and as the world) is being considered by IPBES to complement NCP as a new overarching values framework, as it is inclusive of ecosystem services and NCP but goes further still, by moving beyond nature as a benefit provider and more explicitly embracing two-way relationships, and reciprocal embodied, intrinsic and transcendental values.

¹⁴ Díaz et al., "Assessing Nature's Contributions to People," *Science* 359: 270-72, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aap8826>

However, the diversity of approaches to valuing nature across these different frames of people-nature relations are substantial. Researchers and practitioners conceptualise social values in ways that connect to particular understandings of the world based on history, culture, geography and personal experience. However, rather than argue over the ‘best’ way to conceive of or assess social values, or trying to convert them all to a single metric or currency, a more fruitful way of dealing with this plurality is to recognise that each approach addresses environmental values, and policy and management, from a different angle. It is important to recognise that the choices about what and how we research in relation to complex environmental issues are inherently normative, because all problem descriptions partially result from the lenses through which issues are viewed. Different disciplines use different ‘*value lenses*’ to look at nature: lenses of worthiness, or lenses of what is considered to matter¹⁵. For example, lenses may be more individualistic or more collectively oriented and more relational or more instrumental, etc. In addition, different knowledge traditions harbour *meta-lenses*, comprising specific theories and bodies of scientific or local and indigenous knowledge that articulate different perspectives on social valuation, with their own epistemologies and explicit or implicit *meta-values*: values about values, for example, about how values should be aggregated. **Figure 3** shows key questions that can be asked of different disciplines to understand how they go about assessing shared and social values.

¹⁵ Kenter et al., 2019, “Loving the Mess: Navigating Diversity and Conflict in Social Values for Sustainability” *Sustainability Science* 14: 1439-1461, <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00726-4>

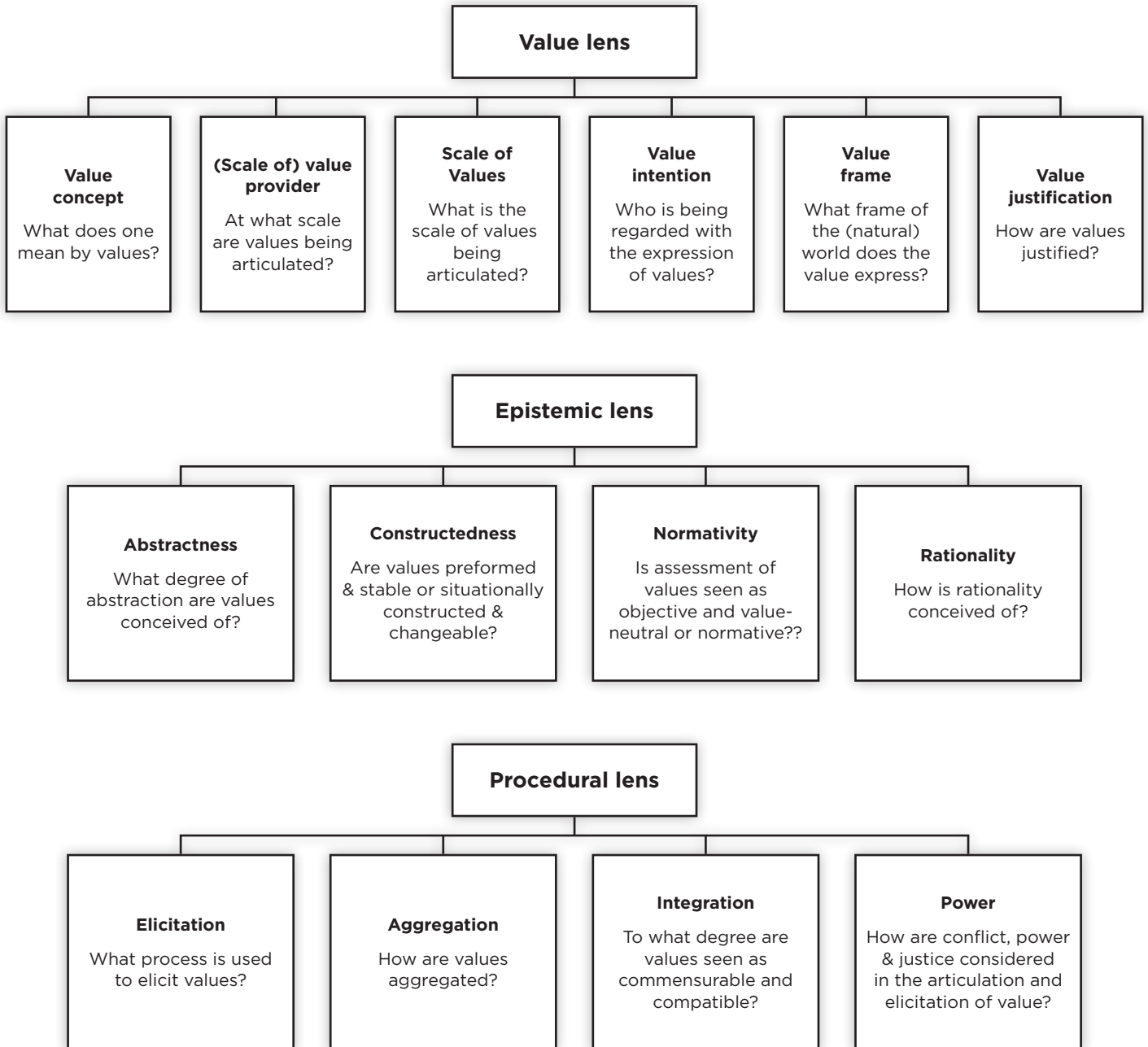
The Life Framework, the different kinds of deliberative methods presented above and the DVF model can also provide a helpful way of organising and synthesising values in relation to multiple types of social values. The four easy to understand and communicate frames of why nature matters can be used both as a checklist to ensure a broad spectrum of values is considered, and as a way to organise value knowledge gathered from multiple disciplines. Particular disciplinary valuations can provide evidence in relation to one or more frames, and multiple lenses can be harnessed to gain a deeper understanding. For example, economic production functions and ethnographic knowledge are very different, but can both inform our understanding of how nature matters for people’s livelihoods (‘living from’). Diverse deliberative methods such as multicriteria analysis, deliberative monetary valuation and arts-led dialogue, provide an opportunity to bring together multiple forms of knowledge that can be considered whilst informing an overall evaluation of different policy alternatives, strategies or scenarios. Through the straightforward organisation of the Life Framework, instrumental and relational values of ES and NCP can be brought together.

Working with citizens or stakeholders, through the DVF process, transcendental values can be linked to contextual beliefs to form shared, deliberated contextual values and norms, and ultimately use appropriate monetary and/or non-monetary indicators to assess the different management scenarios under consideration. Crucially, by working deliberately with the Life Framework emphasising multiple ways people can frame the importance of nature, we can identify where different stakeholders share values and where they conflict. The process may lead to consensus around management measures, or it can seek to build more acceptance of each other's values ('agreeing to disagree') and more trust in collaboration and eventual decisions.

Key implications for decision-makers

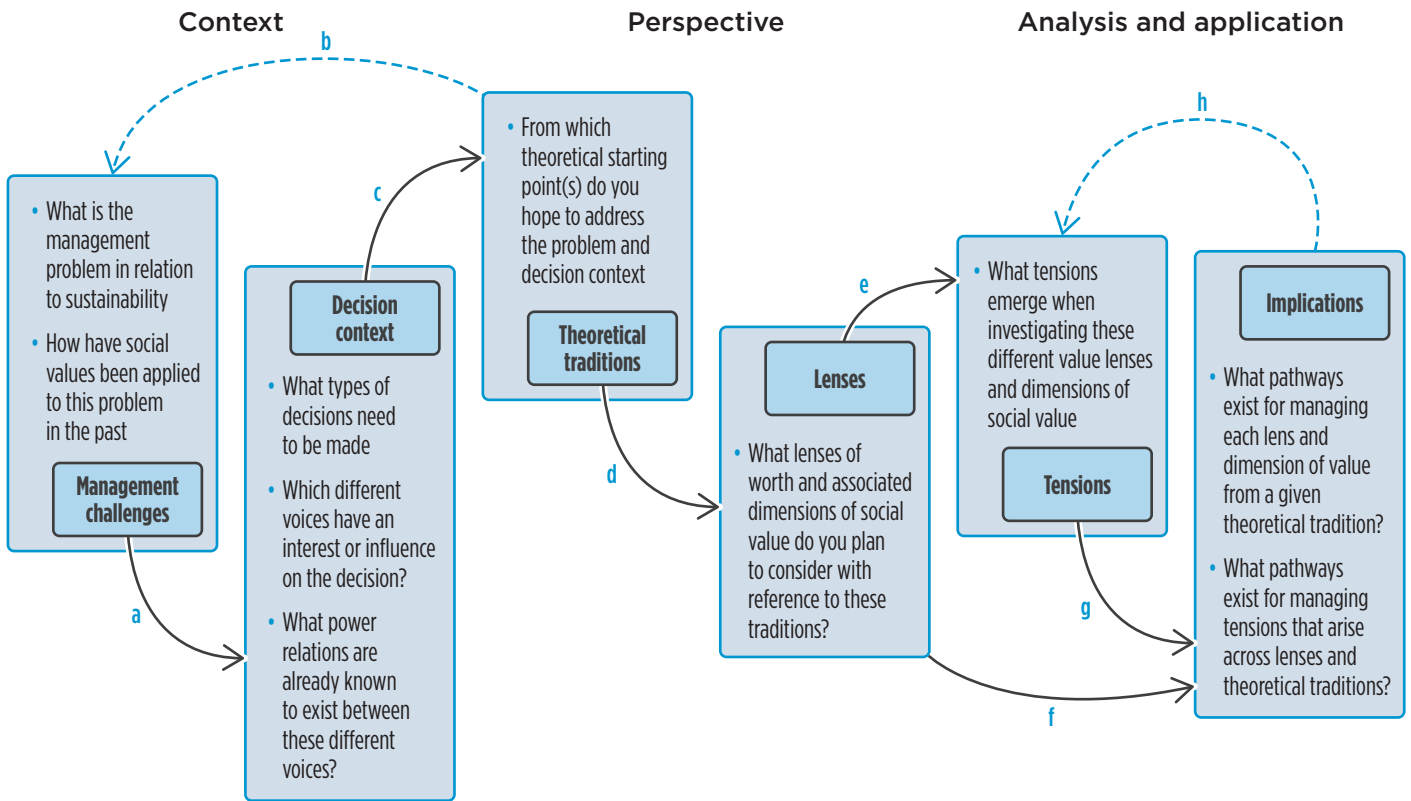
- If decision-makers take account of a greater diversity of values, decisions are likely to be more representative of the values of those that they affect, and may also be less contested;
- Focusing just on individual and economic values can limit the validity of valuation and consultation, especially if these views are dominated by the most articulate, affluent or politically powerful voices;
- Different methods are suitable for eliciting different types of values. A comprehensive assessment requires a mixed-method approach and consideration of social values from multiple lenses. The degree to which this is needed, and worth investment of additional resources, will depend particularly on the complexity and potential contestedness of the issue at stake.
- A combination of the Life Framework and deliberative methods provide a way to implement a 'shared values approach' and bring different types of knowledge and values together. This makes it possible to effectively work with plural values and at the same time come to a practical evaluation.
- The process itself can sometimes help to identify new and hitherto unsuspected values and may also lead to new and unexpected solutions to problems;
- The process can also help to identify groups whose values are not being considered, and identify ways of engaging them more effectively by focusing more on the values that motivate those groups.

Figure 3: Key questions that can be asked of different knowledge traditions that deal with social values, according to their value, epistemic and procedural lenses (Adapted from Kenter et al. 2019¹⁵).



¹⁵ Kenter et al., 2019, "Loving the Mess: Navigating Diversity and Conflict in Social Values for Sustainability" 14: 1439-1461, <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00726-4>

Figure 4: Questions that can be asked to help navigate a plurality of social values
(Adapted from: Raymond et al., 2019¹⁶).



¹⁶ Raymond et al., 2019, "Editorial Overview: Theoretical Traditions in Social Values for Sustainability," *Sustainability Science* 14: 1173–85, <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00723-7>

Further reading

- Kenter et al. (2015), “What are shared and social values of ecosystems?”, *Ecological Economics* 111: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2015.01.006>
- Special issue: *Ecosystem Services*, Oct 2016, “Shared, plural and cultural values”: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/ecosystem-services/vol/21/part/PB>
- Special issue: *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, Dec 2018, “Relational values”: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/current-opinion-in-environmental-sustainability/vol/35>
- Special feature: *Sustainability Science*, Sept 2019: “Theoretical traditions in social values for sustainability”: <https://link.springer.com/journal/11625/14/5>
- UK National Ecosystem Assessment follow-on (2014): “Shared, plural and cultural values: A handbook for decision-makers”: <http://sharedvaluesresearch.org/handbook/>

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About this paper

Shared and social values are those that bind people together, for example as citizens and as members of communities. This paper explores these values in relation to nature, considering both concepts and application.

It covers the following topics:

- What are shared and social values?
- Why and when do they matter?
- How can they be assessed?
- How can we navigate the plurality of values?
- Forming values through deliberation
- The Life Framework of Values
- Case examples
- Key implications for decision makers

Suggested citation: Kenter, J.O. 2019.
Demystifying shared and social values, Valuing Nature Paper VNP20.

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