

bluedot  
associates



Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home...  
the only world known...to harbour life...There is  
nowhere else...To me, it underscores our  
responsibility...to preserve and cherish the pale  
blue dot, the only home we've ever known

Carl Sagan, 1994

# The first stage of recovery is understanding that there is a problem

I keep facing projects where there are conflicts with high coastal and marine biodiversity values and I am asked to provide advice to address the issues – often at a relatively late stage



A new port in a marine EBSA with highest national nesting populations of sea turtles – post construction



A new port in CR humpback whale breeding habitat – post construction



An LNG development in Ghana with nesting turtles – post site selection, undiscovered in previous ESIA



A new mining terminal with nesting sea turtles – post site selection



A new port and national economic hub in critical humpback whale habitat – discovered post ESIA



A new port with nesting sea turtles – discovered post ESIA



Major tourism development adjacent to an important sea turtle rookery (~30% of world's population) – post spatial planning





# What is happening?

Are good outcomes across projects, clients, countries, practitioners limited by:

- System and decision-making processes?
- Over reliance on specific tools or the wrong tools?
- Client project delivery?
- Perceptions and paradigms?
- Uncertainties?
- Lack of effective planning and screening?
- Governance?
- How we deliver studies and give advice?



# Questioning and shifting the paradigms



If the processes we use, and the paradigms we accept, lead to sub-optimal outcomes for marine biodiversity and everything connected to it should we continue to rely on them, endorse them and accept the results?



# Can we identify any underlying limiters?

To find good solutions we need to understand the framework in which they sit; and part of the solution may be to focus on the paradigms and underlying limiters that drive the framework or undermine the outcomes we see.

**How do we deal with these issues?**

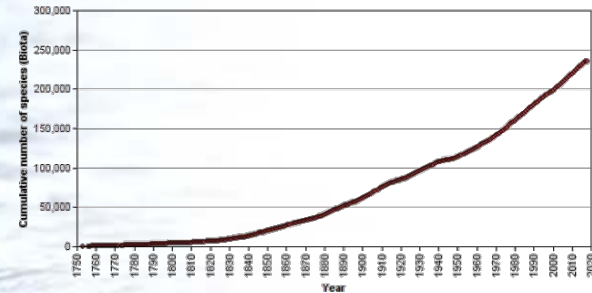
# Mind the gap – is it all about data and dealing with uncertainties?



The gaps in what we know are big

The certainty in what we know can be low

The processes we adopt seek to address these limitations, but does this always lead to better outcomes?



World Register of Marine Species, 2018



# The certainty conundrum



Understanding how to make effective actions to avoid impacts is often dependent upon drawing the lines where there is acceptable certainty and risk.

But certainty can be elusive for marine biodiversity.

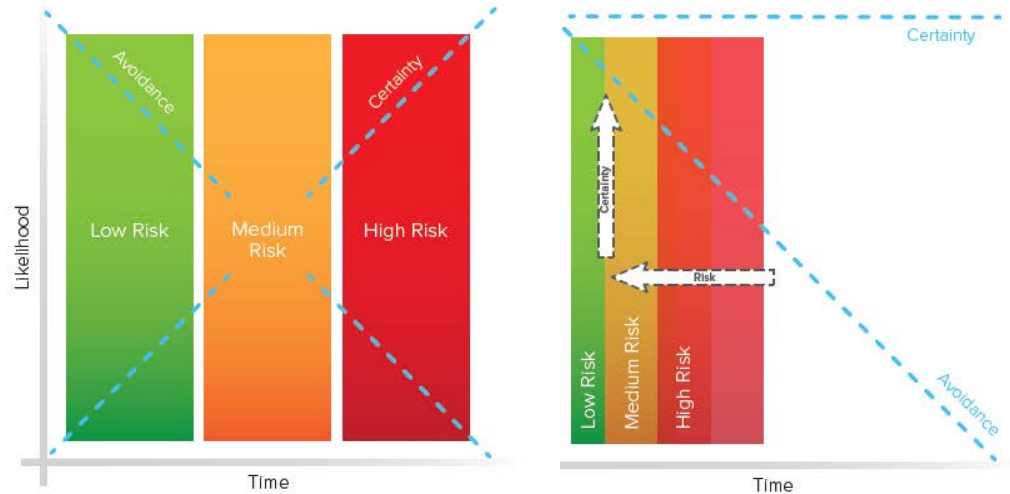
Is the quest for certainty an unhelpful paradigm for delivering timely actions? Do we need certainty to make good decisions and how do we accept the limitations to deliver better avoidance?



# Timing is everything

If the ability to avoid or incorporate other good mitigation steps is limited by the timing of actions; then developing a framework that drives decision-making to deliver these actions early in the project cycle is vital.

How do we embed the outcomes we want to see earlier with the underlying limiters and paradigms that exist?



# How do we drive value led approaches?

Good outcomes for biodiversity are often driven by values and not processes. How do we create approaches that embed value led approaches to drive benefits for marine biodiversity and the people who are connected?

This intent is a thread across environmental and social safeguards, but do we need new system-led frameworks to drive the values that are sought?

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# How do we build better project legacies?

Safeguarding marine biodiversity effectively is absolutely dependent on the engagement of local people. How do we ensure that projects connect locally to promote better local stewardship and create benefits for people associated with biodiversity values?





# How can we identify and solve the challenges we face?

We must collaboratively work on solutions as a community. Maybe this will change the precedents and paradigms for what is considered normal and acceptable when delivering advisory services.

Are we able to build or connect to an improved advisory framework?



# Chair and panel members



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