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WS2 evaluation of synthesis and arguments framework with stakeholder recommendations

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Summary

Stakeholder consultation and involvement remain central to BESAFE's success. The BESAFE project organised its second stakeholder workshop in Brussels on 13 and 14 May 2014. Building upon the feedback obtained from stakeholders at the first workshop (reported in D2.2), the central aim of this second workshop was to consult with stakeholders to obtain their further opinions and suggestions about how the synthesis of results and the development of the arguments framework can be best tailored for practical application and ease of access by a wide variety of future users.

Accordingly, BESAFE partners gave presentations on the initial results from the case studies and the effectiveness of arguments (WP2), an overview of arguments surrounding the European Biodiversity Strategy at EU and Member State levels (WP3), links between biodiversity and ecosystem services (WP4) and design and content of the synthesis tool kit and web tool (WP5). Stakeholders were asked to comment and make suggestions during break-out group, plenary and round table discussions.

Resulting important recommendations, that also take account of additional comments from the project Advisory Board, include:

- Design of the toolkit and the briefs that it comprises should put emphasis on the arguments involved, on how they are used, and on their effectiveness in different situations, in keeping with the overall focus of BESAFE.
- The information should be presented in a style and format that will maximise knowledge transfer to a variety of audiences.
- The web tool should be designed to be user-friendly for a range of stakeholder types to enable them to access appropriate information efficiently.
- A clear strategy should be developed for the afterlife of the project results – a “bequeathing strategy” to ensure longevity of the toolkit and web tool beyond the end of the project.
- There was some reiteration of recommendations made at the first workshop (see BESAFE Deliverable 2.2), particularly that language and contextual framing should be tailored to the different user groups, and that the overall framework of project outputs should focus on the use of arguments and combinations of arguments in practical situations.

The stakeholders welcomed and accepted the invitation to assist with the further development of the toolkit and web tool through opportunities for consultation and contribution during the final phase of the project (including, but not limited to, the final stakeholder workshop).

1. Introduction and structural organisation of this Deliverable

BESAFE investigates the effectiveness of different types of arguments in convincing policy and decision makers to take action for biodiversity protection. Apart from our scientific goal of disentangling the relationship between the effectiveness of different types of arguments and the contexts in which they are used, we are also committed to producing results which are practically useful and accessible through a web-based tool. Achieving this goal effectively requires input and feedback from stakeholders. BESAFE is therefore set up as an interactive project in which we have incorporated stakeholders from an early stage, and, together with them, learnt by doing throughout the duration of the project.

About 16 months into the project, the initial literature review, methodology development and case study selection processes were completed. The first (of three) stakeholder workshops was held on 23-24 May 2013 at the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) in Brussels. The second workshop was also held in Brussels on the 13-14th May 2014, by which time the case studies were largely completed and initial analyses of the results undertaken. The workshop was attended by 13 stakeholders from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (UK), Ministry of Environment Bulgaria, Nacka University (Sweden), Richardo-AEA (UK), Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy (France), Lancaster University (UK), County Administrative Board Örebro (Sweden), Norwegian farmers (NGO), Radboud University Nijmegen (Netherlands), Leuven University (Belgium), TripleEEE consultancy (Netherlands), Swedish University of Life Sciences and the province of South-Holland (Netherlands).

This deliverable consists of the present Introduction (Section 1), followed by a short statement of the aim of the workshop (Section 2). The report of the proceedings of the workshop is provided in Section 3. An overview of the main stakeholder recommendations, the BESAFE responses and, where applicable, further actions to be taken is given in Section 4. This section also takes note of the comments and suggestions provided after the workshop by the Project Advisory Board, and reproduced as Annex I to this Deliverable. The list of participants at the workshop is provided as Annex II and the Programme as Annex III.

Note that Sections 3 and 4 report stakeholder opinions, questions, suggestions and recommendations within the context of the verbal discussions at the workshop. Nothing in these sections should therefore be interpreted as BESAFE research results or as opinions of particular BESAFE partners, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

It should also be stressed that these 'centralised' workshops form only a part of the overall stakeholder integration work in BESAFE, and in particular that all of our case studies involve their own stakeholder interaction processes.

2. Aim of the Workshop and invitation policy

Building upon the feedback obtained from stakeholders at the first workshop (reported in BESAFE Deliverable 2.2), the central aim of the second workshop was to consult with stakeholders to obtain their further opinions and suggestions about how the synthesis of results and the development of the arguments framework can be best tailored for practical application and ease of access by a wide variety of future users. Special attention was given to issues relating to the design of the final tool kit and web tool. The full agenda is given in Annex 2.

As this workshop was again aimed at the same groups of stakeholders (decision makers, NGO representatives and researchers) as the first one, all participants of the first stakeholder workshop were invited again by the project coordinator. The long-list of stakeholders compiled for the first workshop was sent to the partners for updating, and partners were asked to personally invite their own stakeholders. The rest of the stakeholders on the list was invited by the coordinator. The workshop was also published on the BESAFE website and the option was offered to register subject to approval. In total, over a hundred stakeholders were invited.

Three of the first workshop participants were able to return for the second workshop, giving some continuity, alongside ten first-time participants.

3. Workshop report

3.1 Stakeholder expectations at the beginning of the workshop

During the introductions, we asked the stakeholders what expectations they had of the workshop, based on the information they received and their knowledge of the project. As specific points, the stakeholders indicated they wanted *'to learn what the strongest (most effective) arguments are'*, *'to learn about the different types of arguments that can be used by local policy makers'*, and *'to learn about cases in Europe similar to their own ones'*. They were also interested in a possible tool/results that can be used by stakeholders, and in learning where, when and how the ecosystem services framework and arguments can contribute to justifying and/or helping conservation policy, decisions and actions.

3.2 What have we learned so far?

For the convenience of the stakeholders who did not participate in the first stakeholder workshop, the project's general aims and structure and the outcome of the first stakeholder workshop were presented as an introduction. This was followed by three rounds of presentations, break out groups (first two rounds only) and plenary discussions. The presentations are available from the [policy corner of the BESAFE website](#).

1. "The effectiveness of arguments. Initial results from the case studies"

Pekka Jokinen and Malgorzata Blicharska presented results from our case studies on the implementation of the N2000 network, the National Strategy for Mires and Peatlands in Finland and the Bialowieza forest conflict (for an overview of the case studies please visit www.besafe-project.net) to illustrate the results we are obtaining in our case study work. Our 15 case studies are analysed separately as well as all together. To guarantee consistent collection of the common information on 'events' (e.g. policy documents, occasions on which decisions were taken), stakeholders and argumentation used in the case studies, we constructed a database. The effectiveness of arguments (defined as change in behaviour, action due to a particular argument) was also recorded in the database. Examples of the way the database can be used to produce overviews were given. These examples for instance show that different types of arguments are used at different policy stages.

Questions and remarks

Responding to the Finnish peat case observation that court decisions were based on ecological values, while the interest of locals did not play a role at all, the remark was made that it is only possible for judges to motivate a decision in the terms of the legal framework in question. It is, however, important to be aware that the actual decision may also have considered other grounds, which do not show in the official documents.

Break out groups

The break out groups were presented with an overview of the database and asked to answer the question “what information in it was most important and relevant for the stakeholders, and why?” They were also asked to indicate what contextual factors would be potentially interesting and important to consider in the analysis.

Specific information on stakeholders in the process was indicated as very relevant: are all of them included, in which way, which stakeholders supports which argument and how effective is that support. The need was expressed to have results per category, e.g. regional / national, business, NGO, etc.). Information on the changes in argument use over time was also indicated as being very relevant. Both these features are already part of the BESAFE research plan.

The stakeholders remarked that the right arguments and framing for specific situations should be used, and that a robust framework is needed for consistent interpretation. A question was if it would be possible to give information on the uncertainty of the results as well?

A second question was if it would be useful to group the cases that have similar subjects, in order to reduce complexity and learn from the comparison of similar cases in (slightly) different contexts?

Reflection on the remarks and questions by Pekka Jokinen

We will certainly focus on the changes of arguments in time, this is already in the BESAFE research plan. A grouping of case studies is already in progress. We will also look into the possibility to give information on uncertainty.

2. “A comparison of arguments surrounding the Biodiversity Strategy 2020”

Dieter Mortelmans presented an overview of the results of our comparative study of arguments surrounding the Biodiversity Strategy. The aim of the study is to identify commonalities and differences in argumentation at EU and member state levels. For that purpose, argument maps were constructed based on three claims selected at the EU level, resulting in a total of 21 argument maps (three EU and 18 maps from six Member States). Arguments per claim were then categorized and compared across countries and between EU and country level. This argument maps analysis provides a good overview of the variety of arguments used for three essential claims in the Biodiversity Strategy. Results show that the emphasis is on economy/nature relationships and that there are few political¹/moral arguments used. The terminology differs depending on document type and there is a wide spread of

¹ I.e. arguments based on agreements in the political domain, which can be seen as combining legal and social, ‘democratic’ obligations

argument categories (found in all countries). The interpretation of those arguments however varies between countries².

Discussion on the use of argument maps: advantages/disadvantages

The result of the discussion after the presentation was that the argumentation mapping gives a quick overview of complex debates, helps to identify different issues at Member State level and can help to match different governance levels. It does, however, just map the arguments used, and not the underlying political process or resulting actions. It could also be used to study differences of argumentation over time. For the local scale it could be useful for analysing live debates and identifying conflicting stakeholder interests.

Break out groups

The breakout groups were asked to think of specific examples in their area of expertise which could benefit from this research. They were also encouraged to think about any other applications or recommendations.

The general impression was that argument mapping useful on several levels, but that it was not clear how it links with local events. The groups indicated that argument maps could be useful to help co-construction of science policy, show which arguments are weak, where the logic in attacking an argument falls down, which arguments you can use to help biodiversity, which ones you can't and why. Other uses could be to find out which arguments convince different stakeholder types, and to check if assumptions about stakeholder beliefs are right. Again, the importance of the right framing and right arguments for the right audience and of following the changing of arguments over time was emphasized.

There was confusion about if the mapping tool was part of the BESAFE toolkit. This led to the remarks that we should look at well-established management theory to structure the project frame better, and that the need is not for a toolkit, but for helping people with generalities, to construct their own toolkit.

A second point of confusion was how the argument mapping links to effectiveness. The remarks here were that the question is when did you reach your goal? What were the success criteria from the person making the argument? These might be quite different from what they *said* were their objectives. For example, we need to be aware of "over-asking" as a negotiation strategy: not getting everything you asked for does not mean the

² These interpretation differences could at a later stage possibly be linked to context factors

actual goal is not reached; it might have been much lower. This has important implications for how we judge effectiveness!

Reflections: no judgement of their effectiveness is put on the arguments, it is just observed what the differences in use are (*i.e. the only indication of effectiveness is the fact the arguments are used, which might indicate the users thought they were potentially effective*). The argument maps are created by BESAFE, using an external software tool. The goal was to understand what was going on in the different countries on the Biodiversity Strategy. BESAFE could add a link to the software tool to the tool kit and offer guidance on its use, if this is considered useful for the stakeholders.

3. “Evidence for the links between biodiversity and ecosystem services and how ecosystem services are used in argumentation”

Pam Berry presented an overview of a detailed literature review we carried out for 11 specific Ecosystem Services (ES). The review looked at the evidence for relationships between Ecosystem Service Providers (ESPs) and these services and between ESPs and biotic attributes. We carried out a network analysis looking at connections between service and provider type and attributes. Certain types of ES tend to be linked with certain types of ESPs, however, there are still many gaps in knowledge on the direction and strength of the specific relationships between ES – ESPs – biotic attributes. However, while the ES valuation literature is extensive, only very few studies explicitly cover the relationships from values – ESBs – ESPs – biodiversity.

She also presented the preliminary findings of a Q study on the different views on the arguments for biodiversity and ES conservation, across stakeholders and eight EU Member States. It showed that while policy-makers, researchers and NGOs all have a utilitarian perspective on biodiversity, they do have different perspectives and arguments that they use for the importance of biodiversity and ES.

Plenary discussion

The stakeholders were asked to reflect on the way they could/would use the information on the links between biodiversity and ES, how they would you like it made available, and how they could use knowledge of different stakeholders views of the arguments.

A first comment was that the nature of the relationship between ES and Biodiversity was not fully covered in the review. The literature shows that there is no single relationship between ES and biodiversity, and indeed that many ES do not necessarily depend on the *diversity* of life but rather on specific components or functions of ecosystems. Pam Berry explained that indeed we are looking at the components of biodiversity that are important for delivering services, as well as examining evidence for *diversity* contributing to ES. A second comment was that rare species are not

particularly involved in many ES, and could therefore be considered not important, suggesting that the assumption that ES arguments could enhance the protection of rare species may not be justified. This is true for many services – though not, for example, for cultural and touristic services associated with rare species viewing – but it should also be recognized that ecosystem services are often seen as an ‘added value’ concept for biodiversity protection: not a replacement for conservation policies grounded on other values (such as rarity and moral obligation to protect), but rather a means of extending protection outside traditional protected areas networks.

Stakeholders felt that the work shown can help conceptually. Five years ago there was a misunderstanding about biodiversity (considered restricted to conservation). The mapping of ES provision shows biodiversity underpins many things. The review found a lot of evidence, even if not all aspects could be covered. There are however huge gaps, where information is needed. The network diagrams help identify where evidence is and flag up where evidence may be missing. But the degree of complexity is great. Sometimes the focus is on one main species that provides a service (though generally that species will depend on a healthy ecosystem), but often the interaction among species in providing a function or services is a direct area of investigation and interest. It was also indicated that it would be interesting to explore links between ES and land management as well. The question was asked how detailed work like this fits in with the rest of BESAFE? The stakeholders also indicated the need for good examples: how can the relationships be used for more effective argumentation? The examples are basically there, as for each link in the diagram there is a link to a paper in the literature database.

How can the knowledge on different stakeholder perspectives on arguments for biodiversity and ES conservation be used? Pam Berry explained that it is hoped that the Q study also will be analysed by country and the views of decision makers will be looked at specifically too. Another question was if we could also look at complexity within groups? It was explained that it is not possible to go down to an individual level, but that some contextual information was collected during the study.

Reflections: While we are indeed still reflecting on how we can make the best use of detailed work like this, there is potential for the identified strong links between certain biotic attributes and ES to be used to inform management of ES. They could also be used to identify what components of biodiversity (including species and habitats) are important to ES and therefore need conserving for continued ES delivery. The different stakeholder perspectives on arguments for biodiversity and ES, when fully analysed, could be used to identify arguments that are particularly pertinent to certain types of stakeholders.

3.3 Wrapping up day 1

At the end of this first day we reflected on the results that were presented and the main conclusions to be drawn. The importance of BESAFE's basic idea was again emphasized by the stakeholders: focus on what arguments are useful in which situation. We will look in more detail at the potential usefulness of mapping of arguments in the context of the BESAFE toolkit. . The EU project "Kyoto" (Knowledge Yielding Ontologies for Transition-based Organization) might be interesting to look at in that respect, as this looks at the automatic analysis of the content of texts. The work on the link between ES to biodiversity is interesting, and it will be more interesting to see in which particular cases it can be used in argumentation. It might also be useful to look at how ES relate to the new concept of Nature-Based Solutions, introduced in H2020. "Solutions" sounds better than "service" and "nature" sounds better than "ecosystem", and the concept could therefore be useful in communication.

Day 2

3.4 Introduction on the toolkit and web tool.

For the next session we asked the stakeholders to reflect on the first draft of the web tool.

Rob Tinch introduced the first draft of the toolkit and web tool to the stakeholders. The toolkit seeks to present outputs of BESAFE in a format suitable for aiding the selection of arguments for different contexts and audiences. It will be available in printed form, as well as online. The web tool is intended to be a user-friendly front-end or interface for the toolkit. There are many ways in which these project outputs could be constructed and a key aim of the workshop was to elicit feedback on some initial ideas and guidance for future development.

The toolkit was presented both using a SpicyNodes (www.spicynodes.org) format (see Figure 1) and as a wiki (www.wikispaces.com) (see Figure 2). Each format allows users to navigate through the information, with a certain amount of information presented on-screen, and links to more detailed BESAFE 'briefs' and to external sources. The SpicyNodes format (selected in part because it was used successfully in the SPIRAL project) provides a visual web of links among different topics and gives limited space for on-screen text – it is designed primarily to guide users through a complex area to the specific information they need. The Wikispaces format allows more on-screen information, at the expense of losing the visual overview of links. It was explained that both formats were initial attempts, and in particular that they were incomplete (in terms of final content not being available yet – this will draw heavily on analysis in the final year of the project) and very flexible (we could change most aspects of them, or indeed abandon these ideas and follow different ones).

Initial feedback, therefore, focused on general reactions to the design, user-friendliness and accessibility of the tools, rather than details of content. Following

this, examples of the 'briefs' were circulated in printed form, with varying formats, again with a focus more on design than on details of the information content.



Figure 1: Screenshot from 'SpicyNodes' version of toolkit

Case	Partner	Topic	Description	Report
Invasive species strategies; Germany, Europe	UFZ	Management of invasive species	The study analyses the arguments in the implementation of a strategy on invasive alien species into European law against the background of the discourse on invasive alien species and existing values for biodiversity	BESAFE_brief_Invasives.pdf Details Download 276 KB
Large mammals in Norwegian wild-lands	NINA	Management of large carnivores	The study focuses on the debate on a policy to manage large carnivores in Norway. It investigates different stakeholders' perceptions the management of carnivores	
Water company uses of valuation evidence in investment planning	Eftec	Use of economic instruments	The study explores how ecosystem services information can be used alongside customer preference surveys to justify the large scale of investment in water treatment technologies that protect the environment.	BESAFE_brief_WATER_2014_04_28.pdf Details Download 195 KB
Nested Socio-Ecological Systems in the Romanian Lower Danube River Catchment	UNIBUC	Sustainable management planning	The study focuses on the conflicts between objectives of sectoral policies and those aimed at biodiversity conservation and analyses arguments for sustainable use of natural capital in management of Lower Danube River Catchment	
Public controversies surrounding the return of red fox and wild boar to Flanders, Belgium	IBO	Controversy and conflict	The study focuses on the on-going dispute about the rapid spread of foxes and wild boars in Flanders, Belgium, illustrating how different views and arguments are associated with institutional and cultural biases	
An underwater tidal electricity turbine; Northern Ireland	PLUS	Investment versus biodiversity	The study explores the arguments involved in conflicts of interest (energy provision and biodiversity) brought by different stakeholders in case of the establishment of the world's first commercial scale open stream tidal turbine	
Bialowieza Forest conflict, Poland	SLU	Controversy and conflict	The case describes conflict between forest management and conservation and evaluates arguments used in the conflict, showing which arguments were most effective and how they transferred between governance levels.	BESAFE_brief_BForest.pdf Details Download 159 KB
National Strategy for Mires and Peatlands; Finland	SYKE	Sustainable use natural resources	The study analyses both the implementation process of the National Strategy for Mires and Peatlands and investigates the various arguments used in public debate on the different uses of peatlands	BESAFE_brief_Peatlands.pdf Details Download 150 KB
Management plans for the Andalusia national parks; Spain	UOXF	Sustainable management planning	The study analyses the importance people attribute to alternative arguments for protected areas, ecosystem services and conservation, and investigates whether the ecosystem service approach is incorporated into conservation strategies	BESAFE_brief_Andalusia.pdf Details Download 245 KB

Figure 2: Screenshot from Wikispaces version of toolkit

Comments

One set of comments focused on the user-friendliness of accessing specific information. Although it was recognised that the SpicyNodes framework aimed to provide a logical ‘click-through’ way to guide users to the information they need, it was also suggested that if too many clicks were needed to get through to that information, some people might switch off, or feel lost if it’s not obvious at the start which ‘branch’ they should follow.

In particular, it was suggested that a search engine feature would be very useful. This could take the form of a classic text-search with Boolean logic, and/or a list of check-boxes for topics covered in the toolkit (allowing users to pick out examples matching specific criteria, for example combining successful conservation, agriculture, and water supply). The key questions of interest are likely to be “what has been effective in a particular situation”, and “in which situations has a particular argument been effective”, and it is important that the toolkit should make the answers easily accessible.

There was no general agreement on a single specific format that would be ‘best’, however. Some liked the SpicyNodes format; others commented that this design appealed to ‘young people’ and favoured a more traditional text-based arrangement. In fact, after some discussion, it became generally agreed that different ways of providing the information should be made available.

There were, however, common themes that should be adopted across all methods, including very clear instructions at the front-end / entry point explaining exactly how the tool structures and treats the information, and how users can find what they need. The front page needs to be less ‘cluttered’ and provide a clear map. The ‘target audience’ and the ‘sector’ are the key elements to stress – the ‘who to contact’ box is not useful at this level.

There was general concern about the longevity of the toolkit and of project results more generally, recognising the fact that BESAFE itself will end with no further funding for keeping the toolkit up-to-date. We explained that options are under discussion; in particular, we are exploring the possibility of integrating BESAFE outputs into the OPERAs/OpenNESS resource hub (currently ‘O-Nest’, but this name is under discussion). Another option is to allow (selected) users, or perhaps a NGO, to edit and maintain the Wiki – taking the toolkit out of the academic research environment into the responsibility of the users. There are of course risks with this approach, not least that the quality control is taken out of project hands, so care would be needed.

It was also suggested that the information could be partly ‘time-proofed’ if it were kept more general, avoiding very specific information that might date more rapidly. To the extent that this is possible it makes sense, although information on case studies and particular policy contexts is clearly quite specific, rules about how to

frame arguments for different stakeholder types may be more generalised and 'timeless'. But languages / jargons change rapidly and some form of periodic updating is probably essential.

The BESAFE focus on successful arguments for conservation was noted and queried: there are also arguments that can be effective *against* biodiversity. It was suggested that the toolkit might also cover these, in the context of providing information on how to “defeat the opposition”. Although this has not been a primary focus of the research, more specific information can be found in the case studies, and there are already some counter-arguments included in the toolkit, so there is some scope to provide such information.

Stakeholders noted that a lot of the information presented seemed to be targeting scientists, or to be quite academic. A 'light' version would be welcomed. Partly this can be addressed by the search functions helping to guide users to bypass extraneous information and move straight to their main interests, and the briefs (presented later) do aim to provide a 'non-academic' overview of complex topics.

3.5 Information Briefs

As a part of his introductory talk describing progress in the development of the toolkit and web tool, Rob Tinch introduced the concept of Information Briefs. These pieces of writing would provide information to stakeholders as the “endpoint” nodes along the pathways of the web tool, but they would also be made available as a collection in a booklet, forming the basis of the toolkit. This is similar to the design of the presentation of information in the SPIRAL project. Briefs could be written on different subjects, ranging from results of BESAFE case studies to external information relevant to the aims of the project.

Within the “Learning Workshop” that followed the introduction, hard copies of a number of sample draft briefs were circulated and stakeholders were asked to read and discuss these within three break-out groups. They were asked to report back their main comments in plenary session with following round table discussions. The organisers suggested that stakeholders should address the question “What is useful, what could be improved upon and how?” by considering such issues as subject matter and information content, style, and format of presentation. The stakeholder contributions are summarised below, under three relevant headings, though it is recognised that the content of these sometimes overlaps.

Content of the briefs

Comments from the stakeholders about content distinguished between (i) the subject matter (what should the briefs be about?) and (ii) the information content (what should be included and exclude from the briefs?)

In relation to (i), there was some debate about how much BESAFE results information, such as case study results, should be presented in the briefs in

comparison to external, but relevant information from other sources. Stakeholders had an overall view that a balance is essential and that it must be made clear exactly which information is which. Also, the stakeholders noted that briefs reporting case studies are in danger of bringing too much information about the story of the case, at the expense of presenting information about arguments. The arguments should be the primary focus of attention, also perhaps including arguments that were observed to fail under particular circumstances. The level of transferability of the case study briefs to other situations needs to be maximised.

Turning to the information content of (ii), the stakeholders identified the inclusion or exclusion of illustrations and diagrams as an important point. The ensuing discussions came to the overall conclusions that diagrams or graphics should be generally included, as this can make the interpretation easier, but there were also warnings that such illustrations take up space, so should only be used where clearly relevant and that the graphics need to be very easy to understand. Stakeholders also discussed whether scientific references to other work should be formally listed at the end of the briefs, but there was no stakeholder consensus of opinion on this issue.

Issues of style and format of presentation

The stakeholders were all of the opinion that the style and format of the briefs were important to overall success in information transfer to wide user audiences. The general conclusion was that several different formats should be used “information for all”, as well as more specific formats aimed at different target groups. The stakeholders brought many specific, but wide ranging points into the discussions. A cluster of these involved the varying stakeholder opinions that the draft briefs that were circulated were on the one hand too complex and/or too scientific paper-style oriented, but that on the other hand the briefs need to provide a realistic balance between communication skills and science adequacy.

There was a suggestion to write in “press release” style, in which the important information is provided at the start, in short paragraphs, with longer, more explanatory paragraphs later in the text. But it was also pointed out that equally, many readers will also search, in the first instance, in the conclusions section at the end of the brief, and that it is necessary to provide the important information in this part of the document.

Stakeholders also suggested that the length of the briefs should be about 2 pages of text, though the total length could be extended to accommodate diagrams (see above). In addition, stakeholders wished to see a common format of the documents, including, for example, standardised sub-section titles where possible. This would allow the users to scan the different briefs more efficiently.

Other general issues

Stakeholders expressed a need to clarify the relations between the different briefs. This may be interpreted as reflecting comments on subject matter above – it is

necessary to make clear what the briefs are reporting, and their relations to each other.

The concern about the how to keep the information up to date after the end of the project was expressed again, particularly in relation to website links that become outdated or are shut down.

3.6 Final plenary and round table discussion

The final session confirmed that the participants broadly appreciated the toolkit and web tool and found they had potential to be user-friendly and useful, after further development and changes.

Stakeholder reactions to specific aspects (see also figure 1) are recorded below:

The section on arguing for different audiences is clearly useful and should be on the opening screen of the web tool.

The section “Arguing for biodiversity” is useful for background information, but a different wording was suggested: “Why arguments can work”. The section on case studies, focusing on effectiveness of arguments used, is also useful, though it was suggested that we might consider merging these sections.

The section “I need to use arguments for a particular situation” should be linked to a search engine/topic area to find information on particular arguments/situations; or the search engine could be on a different interface, linking back to the toolkit pages.

The section on “biodiversity and policy” was seen as lower priority: most stakeholders are likely to be looking for help with the local situation, how to use arguments with local policy makers. It was suggested that we should focus on core BESAFE topics. It was also suggested that information on EU and national regulations and contexts would be welcome. In fact this rather matches with our intentions: the idea of the non-BESAFE sections is to guide users to outside sources where BESAFE does not directly cover their interests, so that we do not aim to reinvent wheels but also do not leave toolkit users stuck for where to find information they need. It was stressed that we need to make clear what is BESAFE output and what is external.

Locally-specific information would also be welcome, but this is not practical (and could not be kept up to date) – rather, we can suggest strategies for how to find this information.

The section “I want to find out who to contact” should be deleted from the front – contact suggestions can come at the end of particular branches, along with links to further information.

On style, the information should be kept simple and easy to find. The information will not be complete – we only have a limited number of case studies – but we can provide new ideas, knowledge, illustrate and to help stimulate users to draw on the toolkit for their own work. It was agreed that there should be no references in the briefs – academic details can be left to the full reports, linked to from the briefs/web tool so that any users interested in such information can find it. Different formats were proposed, for example following the “Findings for All” concept used in BIOMOT - less ‘heavy’ than a policy brief. Again, multiple methods could be useful, allowing different users to find the style they most appreciate.

The importance of user-friendliness was again stressed: key suggestions were: clear information at the front-end, guidance for users, headline data providing an overview of the main findings as an introduction to different topic areas, and searchable lists of keywords and topics guiding users to the information they most need.

3.7 Evaluation of the Workshop

Reactions to the workshop were positive. The stakeholders said they’d liked the fact that we genuinely listened, reacted and even changed the agenda/breakout in response to their comments – we weren’t just there to present and defend our work. They also commented:

‘good to take time to think about these issues and to hear from different perspectives’,

‘the workshop had the right length and was rich in content’,

‘I feel nourished and rich’,

‘it was nice to meet other stakeholders and get informed on the research’,

‘Happy there was no defensiveness from the researchers on the comments: this was refreshing’,

I could use the toolkit with a lot of data and projects’.

Points for improvement

1. Informing stakeholders before the meeting

The stakeholders indicated that they would appreciate it if information on the dates of the workshop could be sent at an early stage. Another comment was that ‘Sometimes assumptions were made about stakeholders’ knowledge’. But also: ‘I visited the website before the meeting. Ten minutes was enough to get an idea’. More targeted information should be distributed before the meeting for participants to prepare themselves: ‘brief us before the start. What are the purposes, expected end results’. Road testing could also be done before the workshop. But: just before the workshop, a brief with just enough to read in the airplane/train should be provided.

2. Role of stakeholders

It was indicated that we could make better use of the stakeholders, because ‘we have the knowledge about the arguments, because we use the arguments and know

when (in which context) an argument can be effective or not'. Therefore we should use the time with them better and not put too many presentations on the programme (i.e. provide the information beforehand). Next time we should have more practical exercises in groups.

BESAFE should get more background information on the invited stakeholders before the meeting to be able to use their input better, and also provide this information to the other stakeholders.

Provide more structure and provide a written brief before each breakout.

3.8 Final remarks

As the BESAFE project approaches its concluding phase, we will continue to ask for the active involvement, and indeed hope to increase stakeholders' participation in the development of the web tool. Most participants at the first workshop and all at this one expressed interest in helping us with that. After a first working version is developed later this year, we will therefore ask them to test it and give their feedback. Participants were thanked for their contributions.

4. Recommendations and actions

Here we express the main stakeholder suggestions made at the workshop, together with relevant comments offered later by the members of the Advisory Board, as a number of perceived recommendations. We provide our own comments to these recommendations and indicate any further actions to be taken, where appropriate.

The recommendations have been most useful in helping us to continue to find the best approaches and emphasis to achieve the goals of BESAFE. All the recommendations and our responses can be incorporated within the line of the ongoing project plans, and therefore do not require any change of our formal research and deliverable frameworks. This includes the arguments framework of the project, in which a continuous progression of the development of the framework was planned and is on-going, as discussed at the workshop. Revisions and delivery of the final version of the framework tool kit and web tool are scheduled towards the end of the project.

1) Use the appropriate language and framing

On several occasions during the workshop, the stakeholders re-emphasised the importance of using language and contextual framing that is tailored to the different user-groups.

These concerns were previously addressed as an important point in the report of Workshop 1 (BESAFE Deliverable 2.2, Recommendation 1). We ensure that language and argument framing in context are applied in all aspects of the project, including the descriptions of the case studies and in the argument framework of the case study database. We conclude that no specific additional action is required, beyond continuing to ensure that appropriate languages and framings are used throughout the toolkit and web tool development.

2) Use combinations of different arguments, recognising that biodiversity interest is not homogeneous

At our first stakeholder workshop, the stakeholders flagged the use of a combination of arguments to gain the attention of stakeholders with different interests and to generally strengthen any particular case. The issue resurfaced in this workshop as the recommendation that we should take into account that biodiversity interest is not homogeneous.

The multiple argument approach was previously addressed and taken up as an important point in the report of Workshop 1 (BESAFE Deliverable 2.2, Recommendation 2). We will continue to advise all users of the arguments framework and other project outputs to be aware of and where possible to employ a spectrum of different arguments. We conclude that no additional action is required.

3) Be aware of possible limitations of the content of official documents

The issue was raised during the workshop that official decisions taken within legal bounds can be limited by the constraints of official procedures and terminology and D5.1 WS2 evaluation of synthesis and arguments framework with stakeholder recommendations

therefore may not fully reflect other arguments in the background that may have played an important role in the action identified.

Within BESAFE we have already considered this issue, and in particular the cases studies do not rely only on information from official documentation, but include information from interviews and from other literature (including for example popular writing/media, websites and so on). We also recognise that the legal and policy contexts can constrain both the arguments used, and their effectiveness – indeed, the relationship between context and effectiveness is a particular area of interest for BESAFE. We conclude that no additional action is required.

4) Recognise that negotiation strategies include strategic elements

The point was raised that argument and negotiation strategies may often include strategic features such as “over-asking” – e.g. a conservationist may start by arguing for a very high level of protection as a negotiating position, but actually be hoping to achieve a “realistic compromise” of moderate protection. In particular, it was suggested that this could bias estimates of effectiveness, since cases in which arguments for high protection result only in moderate protection could be interpreted as ‘failures’ of the arguments.

However, BESAFE looks at effectiveness of arguments in terms of actions taken and changes of behaviour against the baseline situation - not in terms of what was obtained in comparison to what was asked for. Strategic behaviours, such as over-asking, can be featured in the BESAFE framework, but in the sense that BESAFE seeks to consider how different framings of arguments influence outcomes in different contexts. Therefore we conclude that this point does not really influence our results, but is a valid one to consider for incorporation in our web tool.

5) Make a conceptual map of the relationships between ES and biodiversity

The BESAFE WP4 presentation on relationships between particular ESs and biodiversity stimulated a further discussion on the general subject of the relationship between ES and biodiversity protection, and the issue was readdressed again in one of the advisory reports with the recommendation to develop a conceptual map of the relationships. The advisor also provided suggestions as to the form such a map could take, with each aspect having two “faces to be considered – those of *de re* and *de dicto* thinking.”

An important background premise of the map as suggested appears to be the view that arguments for protecting ESs and their associated value benefits would *replace* other forms of argument for and benefit of biodiversity. In fact, in common with the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and a considerable volume of other research and policy exercises, BESAFE regards ES as a *value-added strategy* to supplement, not replace, other arguments. The work we carry out on the relationship between specific services and biodiversity must be seen in that light. Moreover, BESAFE investigates the effectiveness of all types of arguments for biodiversity, and equally all types of benefits obtained from ES, not just the economic/monetary value. Furthermore, BESAFE research also includes analysis of

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synergies/conflicts between arguments, and the dynamic features of arguments, explicitly recognising the potential for some forms of argument to ‘crowd out’ other forms, or to shape the future demand and supply of arguments/data.

Action: We will reinforce our efforts within the project and its arguments framework to ensure that there is clear distinction and understanding that ES arguments for biodiversity protection can be regarded as additional, even supplementary arguments, potentially adding value to, but not replacing other types of argument. The extent to which different arguments are actually complementary or antagonistic in any particular case is considered within BESAFE primarily as an empirical matter, and will feature in our analysis of the effectiveness of different arguments strategies in different contexts.

6) Provide information on counter-arguments against biodiversity

Within the workshop discussions, and also at the suggestion of a member of the Advisory Board, it was indicated that it may be useful if BESAFE could also offer information on common counter-arguments, and on how to oppose them.

Although BESAFE has a primary focus of investigating arguments for biodiversity and not specifically those against, the case studies examine whole argumentation processes and do record information about counter-arguments, as well as about the attitudes and power of different stakeholders, and various other contextual information. So while the BESAFE framework focuses on arguments for conservation, the developing guidance and toolkit does not ignore the counter-argument side.

Action: We will explore how to incorporate any new and relevant counter-argument information obtained within BESAFE to future users of the arguments framework and tools.

7) Be wary of using “intrinsic value” or “benefits” in framing arguments

Some members of the Advisory Board felt that any appeal to intrinsic value may be difficult to apply as it is not easy to understand and decision-makers may have difficulty in taking it into account. Also, a member of the board was of the opinion that argument definition should not be framed in terms of benefits, as this term is much too restrictive.

These are empirical matters. We tend to agree that it is often not advisable to emphasise intrinsic value too much, but this would be a conclusion following from our analysis, not an axiom. The term “benefit” is used within BESAFE to encompass the full spectrum of types of value, including the non-economic “benefits” of cultural/aesthetic human reactions listed by the advisor. In the context of the effectiveness of any particular argument framing in a given case, it is again an empirical matter whether or not using the term “benefit” tends to help or hinder argument effectiveness.

Action: We regard the use of the term “benefit” as used within BESAFE research and writing as valid, and will ensure that the terms we use are clearly explained to avoid any possible confusion. We will take the issue of reference to intrinsic value and to

‘benefits’ further when carrying out our analyses, in the context of exploring empirically the conditions under which different arguments and framings are more or less effective in promoting conservation.

8) Explore further options for case study reporting and analyses

One of the Advisory Board members made a number of suggestions of further work that could be undertaken within the project, including particularly applying Bayesian methods to the case study data, employment of the *de re/de dicto* concept in BESAFE analyses (see also Recommendation 5 above) and examining possibilities to compare the methods and outcomes of the BESAFE Q sort study with the card ranking of motives undertaken by BIOMOT.

Within BESAFE, considerable thought was given to planning and executing the case studies and their analyses. Given the resources and timeframes, it would not appear to be feasible to undertake new work in the directions suggested at this late stage of the project, although comparisons of the Q studies with BIOMOT studies can be considered.

Action: We will explore the possibility of Q study comparisons with BIOMOT motive rankings. Other ideas for future research that cannot be incorporated within the BESAFE workplan will be considered and written up in the final phases of the project. Otherwise, we conclude that no additional action is required.

9) Provide a clear outline of a strategy for the afterlife of the project results – the “bequeathing strategy”

During the stakeholder discussions and also reflected in the Advisory Board comments, there was a general wish that effort should be made to ensure longevity of the project results, including the tool kit and web tool, to keep them available and, if possible, updated beyond the conclusion of the project.

We acknowledge the importance of such longevity of the project outputs and, as reported in the workshop, integration into the OPERAs/OpenNess resource hub is being explored, as well as other options.

Action: This issue will be explored further and a strategy provided during the final period of the project.

10) Design the toolkit and the briefs it comprises to focus primarily on the arguments, and present the information in a style and format that will maximise knowledge transfer to a variety of audiences.

Within the workshop discussions of the toolkit and information briefs, the stakeholders made numerous suggestions regarding the design and format of the briefs and the balance of content, as outlined in the Workshop Report Section 3.5 of the present document.

This feedback is most helpful to BESAFE and provides valuable guidance on how the toolkit and its information briefs should be tailored to be of greatest relevance to future users.

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Action: The suggestions and comments made by the stakeholders as documented will be used to guide the further development of the tool kit and briefs during the final stages of the project.

11) Ensure that the web tool is designed to be user-friendly for a range of stakeholder types to enable them to access appropriate information efficiently.

The discussions of the web tool during the workshop included numerous suggestions from the stakeholders on how it could best be developed, with some emphasis on the importance of design to achieve user-friendliness for different audiences (see the Workshop Report Section 3.4 of the present document).

The ideas expressed are stimulating and will be helpful in developing this “front end” for and interface with the tool kit.

Action: The suggestions and comments made by the stakeholders as documented will be used to guide the further development of the web tool during the final stages of the project.

12) Increase the use of stakeholder feedback and take measures to use their input to greatest advantage for the next (final) stakeholder workshop

The stakeholders were broadly supportive and appreciative of the way the workshop was carried out and of the genuine attempts to incorporate stakeholder input in the design and conduct of the project. They stressed the need to continue this process and in particular to enhance stakeholder participation in the crucial phase of converting empirical results to a clear and user-friendly toolkit and web tool, leading up to the final testing of the tool at the final workshop. Several participants indicated their willingness to contribute to this process.

Action: We fully recognise the importance of stakeholder involvement at this stage of translating results to guidance, and welcome the willingness of participants to help with this. We will ensure that every effort is made to consult and draw on stakeholder expertise in developing products that will be useful to our target audiences.

5. Annex 1: List of participants

Surname	First name	Institution
Costello	Brendan	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, UK
DeGroot	Wouter	BIOMOT (Radboud University Nijmegen), NL
Eriksson	Liselott	Nacka University, Sweden
Heistek	Jolanda	Triple-E, NL
Holland	Alan	Lancaster University, UK
Hubert	Claire	Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, France
Løken	Øivind	Norwegian farmers (NGO), Norway
Owen	Roger	Scottish Environment Protection Agency, UK
Popa	Florin	BIOMOT (Leuven University), Belgium
Radoslav	Stanchev	Ministry of Environment, Bulgaria
Sandström	Ulf	County Administrative Board Örebro, Sweden
Smithers	Richard	Richardo-AEA, UK
Wiersema	Menko	Province of South-Holland, NL
Partners		
Berry	Pam	Environmental Change Institute, UK
Blicharska	Gosia	SLU – Swedish University of Life sciences, Sweden
Bogers	Marion	Alterra Wageningen UR, NL
Bugter	Rob	Alterra Wageningen UR, NL
Grudova	Margarita	Pensoft Publishers Ltd, Bulgaria
Haslett	John	Paris-Londron University of Salzburg, Austria
Mathieu	Laurence	EFTEC – Economics for the Environment Consultancy, UK
Mortelmans	Dieter	INBO – Institute for Nature and Forest Conservation, Belgium
Tinch	Rob	EFTEC – Economics for the Environment Consultancy, UK
Van Herzele	Ann	INBO - Institute for Nature and Forest Conservation, Belgium

6. Annex 2: Programme

Tuesday 13 May

13.00 Welcome and opening

13.15 Introductions and expectations

13.45 - 17.00 What have we learned so far?

- 13.45 Introduction: Rob Bugter (BESAFE coordinator)
- Block 1: 14.00 – 15.00 The effectiveness of arguments. Initial results from the case studies: Pekka Jokinen

15.00 Tea break

- Block2: 15.30 – 16.30 A comparison of arguments surrounding the Biodiversity Strategy 2020: Dieter Mortelmans
- Block3: 16.30 – 17.30 Evidence for the links between biodiversity and ecosystem services and how ecosystem services are used in argumentation: Pam Berry

17.30 – 18.00 Reflection on today's discussions and introduction to tomorrow's learning workshop

19.30 Dinner at La manufacture, 12 O L V van Vaakstraat, Brussels

Wednesday 14 May

9.00 Introduction on the toolkit and web tool. Rob Tinch

9.30 – 12.00 Learning workshop

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

12.00 – 12.30 Final plenary and round table discussion on the main issues and outcomes

12.30 Closure and lunch

7. Annex 3: Advisory Board reports

(only included in BESAFE internal version)