



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Contents

Background information for reviewers	2
Answers from reviewers	3
1. Is the text self-explanatory, free of jargon and easy to follow? If not, where do you see a need for language revision or more clarity? Please specify page and line numbers if possible.....	3
2. Regarding the initial requests made to Eklipse to study the “Nexus between coastal challenges, ecosystem services and NBS” and to develop “An empowerment framework tailored to coastal resilience (including a review of existing empowerment tools)”, do you agree with the interpretation of and the refinement of the knowledge synthesis framework, and the combination in the following request: "How community empowerment tools and Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) can contribute to addressing coastal challenges and building resilient communities"?.....	4
3. Is the global methodological approach logical, well-formulated and appropriate? Please consider that the budget and timetable of this knowledge synthesis is limited (please read the timeline in page 20).....	5
4. Is the method proposed (Rapid Evidence Assessment) appropriate and justified?.....	6
5. Is there an undue emphasis on one step/research question? If so, how might it be overcome? On the contrary, should one step/research question be looked into more?.....	7
6. Are appropriate and up-to-date sources used? Do you know of any additional sources, examples we could use and where (please be as precise as possible)?.....	9
7. Any further general comments.....	10
8. Glossary (page 4 - 5).....	11
9. Introduction (pages 5 - 9).....	11
10. Objectives (page 10).....	12
11. Methodology (pages 10 - 16).....	13
12. Expected results (page 17).....	15
13. Timeline (page 18).....	16
14. References (pages 19 - 20).....	16
15. Do you have any other comment that you would like to share with the Eklipse EWG?.....	17



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THE PEER-REVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL DEVELOPED BY THE SELECTED EXPERT WORKING GROUP TO ANSWER THE EKLIPSE REQUEST ON "HOW COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS (NBS) CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ADDRESSING COASTAL CHALLENGES AND BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES?"

The form has two main parts: a "general comments" part, and a "comments by section" part where you can provide more specific comments to each section of the protocol. Where possible, please provide page and line numbers so that we can ensure we match your comments to the text.

Eclipse is a science-policy mechanism in the public interest. The lawful basis for processing your personal data under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be a public task. Our privacy policy (<http://eclipse.eu/privacy-policy/>) contains further information on the purpose and lawful basis for processing your personal data.

Please note the deadline for submitting comments is January 16th, 2024 (Extended).

Thank you very much for your support!



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

ANSWERS FROM REVIEWERS

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. IS THE TEXT SELF-EXPLANATORY, FREE OF JARGON AND EASY TO FOLLOW? IF NOT, WHERE DO YOU SEE A NEED FOR LANGUAGE REVISION OR MORE CLARITY? PLEASE SPECIFY PAGE AND LINE NUMBERS IF POSSIBLE.

Reviewer x1_V1: Yes.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V1: Some terms are clearly defined in the glossary, but sometimes the definition is missing in the text itself or does not match the definition in the glossary, including empowerment and Nature-Based Solutions. It is unclear why both NBS and EbA need to be mentioned. If EbA is a special case of NBS, then this should be summarized. L20 makes it sound like EbA is another framework that somehow builds from NBS, but it is unclear why EbA is necessary for the background of this request. Other terms are not defined: sustainable/sustainability, circular [economy], blue economy, co-creation, analytical framework, empowerment framework. Additional terms that might be understood, but a definition would ensure this: wicked problems, participative/participatory.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your comment. We agree with you that some key terms should be added to the glossary and the content/text (where relevant) of the final methods protocol/evidence report (such as community engagement, circular economy, blue economy, participatory processes, co-creation, sustainability) to allow a better common understanding. The concept of Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) has been also inserted to the definition related to Nature-based solutions (NbS).

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: The text is readable and understandable.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x4_V2: The text is really easy to follow and user-friendly.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your input.

Reviewer x5_V2: An additional edit would benefit the readability of the report. Page and line numbers are not included. The main question in figure 4 is not formulated very well; how CAN NBS and empowerment...contribute would be better than the current version. The report lacks specificity in its style and wording. What is a PRISMA flow diagram? ""Evidence extraction"" is jargon-y. It's hard to follow what will happen in 3. Evidence classification cross-analysis and validation.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback. We will reformulate figure 4 as proposed by you. Also, we have updated point 3. (evidence classification...) for a better understanding. Related to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis) technique, we will add its definition.

Reviewer x6_V2: Yes.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

2. REGARDING THE INITIAL REQUESTS MADE TO EKLIPSE TO STUDY THE “NEXUS BETWEEN COASTAL CHALLENGES, ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND NBS” AND TO DEVELOP “AN EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORK TAILORED TO COASTAL RESILIENCE (INCLUDING A REVIEW OF EXISTING EMPOWERMENT TOOLS)”, DO YOU AGREE WITH THE INTERPRETATION OF AND THE REFINEMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE SYNTHESIS FRAMEWORK, AND THE COMBINATION IN THE FOLLOWING REQUEST: "HOW COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS (NBS) CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ADDRESSING COASTAL CHALLENGES AND BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES"?

Reviewer x1_V1: I feel that the formulation of the request could be strengthened. There are currently two main components (1) NBS and (2) other empowerment tools. This framing seems to position NBS as an empowerment tool in itself. I feel more argumentation is necessary to make this claim. Is NBS always empowering for communities?

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your comment. We will take those elements into consideration in the final report.

Reviewer x2_V1: In general yes, but please see my detailed comments and suggestions marked at L147 under question 11.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: To my understanding it is ok.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x4_V2: I feel that the community empowerment tools component is thoroughly justified and well-explained in the text. However, the exploration of how and why Nature-based Solutions can contribute to addressing coastal challenges and fostering resilient communities appears to be less detailed. For example, there's a need to delve deeper into how NbS implementation in various contexts and under diverse frameworks might inadvertently lead to negative consequences for vulnerable populations. This risk underscores the importance of integrating empowerment tools, which could effectively mitigate such adverse effects. I believe it would greatly enhance the text's clarity and justification of terminologies if a more explicit



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

examination were provided regarding how the utilization of empowerment tools could result in implementing NbS that actually benefit coastal communities without creating the negative consequences that are sometimes linked to the term."

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your comment. We will examine more deeply the question related to whether nature-based solutions always lead to empowerment or not and refer to their potential weaknesses/adverse effects in the final methods protocol and then discuss this aspect in the evidence report.

Reviewer x5_V2: Should be "How can community empowerment tools and NBS contribute to..." Could it be helpful to break apart some of the named components/aims of empowerment tools (e.g., self-efficacy, autonomy, and active participation of individuals or communities in decision-making processes) and include those in searches and/or the categorization of evidence?

RESPONSE: Thank you for your input. We kindly note that the REA as a method is not considered very suitable for too broad topics. However, the time frame of the requesters to answer the request was an important aspect. For this reason, the REA was limited to a number of relevant key terms to ensure that it remains in the time impart, and to not overcomplicate query searches in platforms, as too many search terms considerably broadened the number of records obtained and decreased specificity at the same time.

Reviewer x6_V2: Yes, I agree with the refinement. However, specific objective 2 does not seem to reflect this refinement and focuses on the integration of NBS and empowerment tools. Shouldn't both the empowerment tools and NBS first be assessed independently in terms of their capacity to address coastal challenges - and then there could be a further step to look at how they might be integrated.

RESPONSE: Thanks for your input. We have considered splitting the specific objective 1 in two sub elements to address NbS and ET separately first, and then conjointly in specific objective 2 to improve the flow of ideas.

**3. IS THE GLOBAL METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH LOGICAL, WELL-FORMULATED AND APPROPRIATE?
PLEASE CONSIDER THAT THE BUDGET AND TIMETABLE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE SYNTHESIS IS
LIMITED (PLEASE READ THE TIMELINE IN PAGE 20).**

Reviewer x1_V1: Yes

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V1: I found the REA description to be very clear. A clear distinction between MCDA (sensu. Cinelli et al. 2022) and participatory multicriteria methods (sensu. Munaretto et al 2014), however, should be made. It should furthermore be clarified which method(s) will be used among this diverse set of methods or if collaborative decision analysis (Thorne et al. 2015) is more appropriate. Along these lines, clarify how stakeholders/representatives are selected as participants in the decision analysis. Please see also my detailed comments and suggestions marked at L147 at the end of the questionnaire.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Thorne, K. M., B. J. Mattsson, J. Takekawa, J. Cummings, D. Crouse, G. Block, V. Bloom, M. Gerhart, S. Goldbeck, B. Huning, C. Sloop, M. Stewart, K. Taylor, and L. Valoppi. 2015. Collaborative decision-analytic framework to maximize resilience of tidal marshes to climate change. *Ecology and Society* 20(1): 30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-07018-200130>.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. The decision support tools are no longer relevant for this request, as it has been decided to concentrate only on the Rapid Evidence Assessment after a meeting with the requesters and due to time constraints.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: The global methodological approach logically fits the timeframe.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x4_V2: Yes, it is.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x5_V2: The report is 20 pages only.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x6_V2: Yes.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

4. IS THE METHOD PROPOSED (RAPID EVIDENCE ASSESSMENT) APPROPRIATE AND JUSTIFIED?

Reviewer x1_V1: Yes.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V1: I would rather say that it is clear how the REA will inform the decision analysis, i.e. for identifying and deriving the Empowerment options and criteria for the analysis. Something to consider is whether the REA could/should be used to identify which (and how many) stakeholders or representatives to include. Less clear is then whether/how stakeholder selection will be used during or just before step 3 the decision analysis.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. Unfortunately, the MCDA is no longer relevant for this request, it has been decided to concentrate only on the Rapid Evidence Assessment.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Reviewer x3_V2: It is appropriate - but might need a better definition for "grey literature".

RESPONSE: Thank you for your comment. We will specify what we mean with grey literature and provide a classification and examples of documents under this definition, for instance, following the definition of grey literature in [Adams et al., 2016](#) and the classification of Illinois University Library (<https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1310347&p=9630544>)

Reviewer x4_V2: From the text, I got the impression that diverse decision-support methods were going to be explored, not only MCA. If this is the case, I think that indeed this is appropriate and justified.

RESPONSE: After a meeting with the requesters, the second method (MCDA) that was proposed by the EWG initially has been abandoned for this request and is not featured in the revised version of the methods protocol.

Reviewer x5_V2: MCA is not featured in this version, but I believe that is due to a decision to move away from this method?

RESPONSE: Indeed, the multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) isn't part of the revised version of the method protocol.

Reviewer x6_V2: Where is the description of Multi-criteria decision analysis?

RESPONSE: The multi-criteria decision analysis isn't part of the revised version of the method protocol.

5. IS THERE AN UNDUE EMPHASIS ON ONE STEP/RESEARCH QUESTION? IF SO, HOW MIGHT IT BE OVERCOME? ON THE CONTRARY, SHOULD ONE STEP/RESEARCH QUESTION BE LOOKED INTO MORE?

Reviewer x1_V1: All steps are appropriately considered.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x2_V1: No

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: Need to clarify some parts in the methods considering article selection.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback, we have reworked the final methods protocol and we hope that it will bring more clarity related to the article selection.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Reviewer x4_V2: I believe that one research question could definitely be expanded upon. This is particularly relevant for the reason I mentioned earlier, which is the need to address Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and empowerment tools in synergy (e.g., "in what ways do participatory decision-making processes and NbS synergistically address coastal challenges and promote community resilience?").

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. The 2nd specific objective proposed by us addresses the synergies between the concepts of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and the empowerment tools. However, we have added in the introduction how these synergies might occur and why it is important to understand them, so the reader can follow what we want to achieve with this 2nd objective (3rd objective in the final report, as the 1st one was split in two to address NbS and ET separately).

Reviewer x5_V2: I find there is more emphasis on coastal resilience and NBS, which seems to lean toward an ecological perspective on the topic and less on the innovative component of the request, which is the linkage to empowerment (tools, procedures, processes). The analytical questions prompt in the later part of 2. (paragraph before 3.) are good and deserve the most attention, not the rudimentary categorization of the articles earlier described.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your input. We will make sure to address the analytical questions in the final report. Although the innovative component (linkages between NbS and ET) is not directly part of the request, it is a very interesting element that has been included as one specific objective of the study. The rudimentary categorization of NbS and ET, although it might seem trivial, is an important part of the request, and necessary to provide contexts of how these approaches (separately) have been applied to coastal/marine areas of Europe/high-income countries first, leading us to a better understanding of their synergies and potential opportunities for integration at the European level.

Reviewer x6_V2: See comment above regarding specific objective 2. Having 3 specific objectives, with the final one being about integration of empowerment tools and NBS, would be better.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback, please see response for Question 2 above in page 5.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

6. ARE APPROPRIATE AND UP-TO-DATE SOURCES USED? DO YOU KNOW OF ANY ADDITIONAL SOURCES, EXAMPLES WE COULD USE AND WHERE (PLEASE BE AS PRECISE AS POSSIBLE)?

Reviewer x1_V1: Yes

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V1: Yes, with only a few exceptions. I suggest considering collaborative decision analysis (Thorne et al. 2015), or at least briefly describing why the chosen decision-support method is more suitable.

Thorne, K. M., B. J. Mattsson, J. Takekawa, J. Cummings, D. Crouse, G. Block, V. Bloom, M. Gerhart, S. Goldbeck, B. Huning, C. Sloop, M. Stewart, K. Taylor, and L. Valoppi. 2015. Collaborative decision-analytic framework to maximize resilience of tidal marshes to climate change. *Ecology and Society* 20(1): 30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-07018-200130>

I also suggest adding a few citations on participatory processes – please see my detailed comments under Q11 below:

- de Vente J, Reed MS, Stringer LC, Valente S, Newig J (2016) How does the context and design of participatory decision-making processes affect their outcomes? Evidence from sustainable land management in global drylands. *Ecology and Society* 21:24, <https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol21/iss2/art24/>
- Reed, M. S., A. Graves, N. Dandy, H. Posthumus, K. Hubacek, J. Morris, C. Prell, C. H. Quinn, and L. C. Stringer. 2009. Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management. *Journal of Environmental Management* 90(5):1933-1949. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j>
- Sterling EJ, Betley E, Sigouin A, Gomez A, Toomey A, Cullman G, et al. (2017) Assessing the evidence for stakeholder engagement in biodiversity conservation. *Biological Conservation* 209:159–171

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your input. We will keep some of the references above for our final methods protocol and the knowledge synthesis report.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: Yes, they are appropriate and up-to-date.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x5_V2: Empowerment references are a bit out of date. Working definition of empowerment from EmpowerUs project is not included/referenced.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

RESPONSE: As stated in the glossary, we chose the following definition of empowerment: “An intentional ongoing process centred in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access, decision authority and power over those resources and on their lives. Although empowerment is considered both a process and an outcome, is most consistently viewed in the literature as a process in the form of a dynamic continuum, involving: (i) personal/psychological empowerment; (ii) the development of small mutual groups; (iii) community organisations; (iv) partnerships; and (v) social and political action.” based on the following references: Cornell Empowerment Group (1989) in [Perkins & Zimmerman \(1995\)](#) & [Labonte \(1994\)](#) in [Laverack & Wallerstein \(2001\)](#). However, the definition that has been proposed by the EmpowerUs project will be also mentioned in the final version of the methods protocol and the report, as follows: empowerment is the process through which actors gain the capacity to mobilize resources and institutions to achieve a goal. Dimensions: (1) access to resources and institutions, (2) strategies to mobilize them and (3) the willingness to do so.

Reviewer x6_V2: <https://www.marineboard.eu/publications/building-coastal-resilience-europe>

RESPONSE: Thank you for sharing with us the reference above.

7. ANY FURTHER GENERAL COMMENTS:

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Comments by chapter and line number.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: I noticed the absence of any reference to potential gender equity issues in coastal management among the listed challenges. Is it possible to incorporate this as a sub-challenge within the existing list? Addressing gender equity acknowledges the potential disparities and inequalities that might exist among different genders concerning access to resources, decision-making processes, and benefits derived from coastal management initiatives. Maybe this is not relevant in the contexts that will be explored, but it would be interesting to add this discussion.

RESPONSE: We do analyse socio-economic and human development issues (such as socio-environmental justice) but not specifically gender equity issues. However, this could be explored in the discussion on the final report, e.g., mentioning examples of studies in which NbS or ET implementation led to gender inequities or rather contributed to bridge over these inequalities within a community.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Reviewer x6_V2: n/a

COMMENTS BY SECTION

8. GLOSSARY (PAGE 4-5)

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Sort terms alphabetically.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: None, really clear.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: The glossary is good, but some of the references are a bit dated.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

9. INTRODUCTION (PAGES 5-9)

Reviewer x1_V1: Living labs are mentioned in line 28 of the introduction but not defined until later. I would suggest providing a definition of the term when it is first mentioned.

Reviewer x2_V1:

Inserting a definition of NBS here will also provide a clearer transition to the next paragraph.

Missing transition from community engagement in general to coastal communities in particular. What makes coastal areas particularly important or useful for demonstrating the utility of NBS/EbA? Why not focus on farmland, open ocean, etc.?

“Communities will not only be seen as passive beneficiaries or end-users of nature's benefits but will be empowered as key actors and agents who can proactively decide, plan, protect, manage or restore ecosystems as a purposeful and significant contribution to enhance resilience and economic development (Vignola et al., 2009)”: How does this apply to coastal communities in particular, and why is future tense used here?



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

“Empowering coastal communities is the pathway for rushing an effective change in practices and lifestyles, shortcutting the gaps between scientific development and sustainable societal applications, namely regarding the circular and blue economy and/or NBS. The current request is put forward by the EmpowerUS project. Funded under the European Union’s Horizon Europe program, the EmpowerUs project aims to bring socio-economic empowerment of coastal communities as users of the sea to ensure more resilient, inclusive and sustainable coastal development.”: Missing transition from transformation of coastal communities in general to current request.

Eclipse process: The phase numbers do not match those in Fig. 3, which themselves are not defined, so this seems confusing.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. We have now improved the introduction and we hope that it will add clarity.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: As I mentioned in the previous section, I would highlight more the synergies between empowerment and NbS implementation to increase their uptake and positive social benefits in coastal areas.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. We have reworked the introduction and added elements on the synergies between the empowerment tools and nature-based solutions.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: The phrase "rushing an effective change" is a little odd, should it be pushing for effective change? I think the introduction could be better. As it stands, it reads as if communities are not empowered, some are, or that they do not have their own nature-based solutions or do not work well with nature. It also frames communities as being homogenous. So, adding some nuance and qualifiers around these issues would be useful.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for your feedback. We have reworked the introduction.

10. OBJECTIVES (PAGE 10)

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Clarifying who will be the user(s) of the review of evidence, decision-support tools, and scenarios who would allow for better assessing the selection of appropriate methods.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

RESPONSE: You can find more information on potential users in the ‘Expected Results’ section (relevant for each type of outcome), however a full range of potential users will be better described in the final evidence report.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: The objectives are very clear.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: See previous comments about developing 3 objectives.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

11. METHODOLOGY (PAGES 10 - 16)

Reviewer x1_V1: An extensive list of keywords has been defined for the REA in Table 2. How were these keywords selected? I might consider expanding the community empowerment keywords to include not only empowerment but also concepts related to inclusion, equity, justice, co-creation and/or co-production.

RESPONSE: The keywords were carefully selected to ensure that the results remain relevant and manageable. A better description on why selecting the specific terms will be added in the final evidence protocol.

Reviewer x2_V1: “Using the MAGICKS1 toolbox provided on the Eklipse Website. Based on the 21 potential Knowledge Synthesis Methods, two distinct, complementary methods have been selected based on the needs of the contracting EmpowerUS Project”: Incomplete sentence: "Using the..."

“A decision-support method: Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA), to...”: Apologies that I am writing so much here, but collaborative decision analysis is my main area of interest and I think there is a great potential for using it for this request. Rather than being a particular method, MCDA is a large family of software and mathematical methods (n > 200; Cinelli et al 2022). Many MCDA methods provide output that is only interpretable by someone with expertise in MCDA. If the users lack this expertise, then this would call for an additional knowledge synthesis method to translate the MCDA results into something meaningful for the users. Furthermore, many MCDA methods often do not specify how and when to involve decision-makers and users in the analytical steps, so there is a high chance of a mismatch between the results and decision-making needs (e.g., Croeser et al. 2021). Explicitly embedding or linking MCDA with another method (e.g., structured decision making [Loos & Rogers 2016], collaborative decision analysis [Thorne et al. 2015], or climate adaptation assessment [Haque et al 2016]) would mitigate or even eliminate this risk of mismatch. By contrast REA is a specific method but does not necessarily involve a decision-maker, so this will not



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

ensure useability of the MCDA output. Given Objective 2 on L126, the aim is to develop or at least use a participatory decision-support tool. MCDA by itself is not participatory, but studies that embed MCDA in a participatory process have been reviewed by Munaretto et al. (2014) and collectively labeled as participatory multicriteria methods (PMCMs). In my opinion, these methods have a clear overlap with collaborative decision analysis (CDA). PMCMs differ only in that they tend to only use deterministic predictions when linking management options to objectives, while CDA can include stochastic (i.e. probabilistic) ones. The term participatory can also be interpreted as a bottom-up approach where all members of the public are allowed and encouraged to give input to the process, whereas CDA has been used with smaller and selected groups of stakeholder representatives and decision-makers. A stakeholder selection process at the beginning implies that the process is not truly participatory.

(Table 1) Suggest relabeling column 1 (e.g. knowledge needs) to avoid confusion with the two objectives starting on L121. Are these knowledge needs based on the request text?

(Table 1) Can empowerment tools be an NBS option? If so, please explain how these are linked in the first 2 MCDA entries. Unclear how MCDA can be used to identify barriers to empowerment. For this, I would suggest an influence diagram as a basis for a Bayesian decision network (Thorne et al. 2015). BDNs are useful when accounting for uncertainties, and a barrier can be construed as an uncertain external factor (e.g., frequency of storms). MCDA is not typically suitable when accounting for uncertainties and is rather a deterministic approach.

(Fig 4): Would be useful to map the methods onto this conceptual framework to show whether/how they will be used to inform each conceptual element.

Based on the last row in Table 1, it seems that the framework for applying in each TCL would rely on MCDA and not REA alone. Please clarify.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for sharing all the interesting comments related to MCDA with us. Unfortunately it has been decided in a general assembly with the requesters that it was not the adequate method to be applied to answer the request.

Reviewer x2_V2: It appears that the comments I provided on the first version were not taken into account. The current version is more streamlined now that it addresses only the first objective. I would encourage the requesters to return to the second objective as a new request to Eklipse in the future, as I think this holds much potential for directly informing decision-making using a transparent and science-based approach.

RESPONSE: Many thanks for revising both versions of the methods protocol. Your feedback was received by the EWG after the call for review of the revised version.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: Need to define better the methodology to screen the "grey literature".



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback. We will provide some more information in the final protocol. Please see our response to question 4 - reviewer 3.

Reviewer x4_V2: Very clear, I particularly appreciate the use of diverse research terms in the query to avoid missing important information.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your positive feedback.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: This looks robust.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your positive contribution.

12. EXPECTED RESULTS (PAGE 17)

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Indicate which method/s is/are used for generating each product.

RESPONSE: In the revised version (V2), the only method applied is the REA and the "Expected results" section has been reworked. We hope that it brought more clarity to the link between the method chosen and the expected products.

(Fig. 8) This is helpful showing a hypothetical graph as the result of the decision analysis. Suggest removing the title above the graph or revising it to e.g. "'Predicted performance among Empowerment options'". The criteria are shown in the legend and could be confusing mentioning them in the title. Unclear whether each Empowerment action is additive or mutually exclusive. If they are additive, then show package of actions. For example, they could implement Biodiversity Conservation in addition to Create Urban Park. In this case, show a checklist along the x-axis for each of the 7 actions, and show 7 possible combinations of actions (i.e. 7 Empowerment options). Otherwise, explain in the description that the options as shown are mutually exclusive. This will help show how a decision-maker could use the information.

Thank you for your feedback, this graphic has been removed from the revised version.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: Clear

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

Reviewer x6_V2: I think these are very good and be very useful to EmpowerUs and beyond.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

13. TIMELINE (PAGE 18)

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: Clear.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: Looks appropriate, if challenging.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

14. REFERENCES (PAGES 19 - 20)

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Literature cited:

- Cinelli, M., Kadziński, M., Miebs, G., Gonzalez, M. and Słowiński, R., 2022. Recommending multiple criteria decision analysis methods with a new taxonomy-based decision support system. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 302(2), pp.633-651.
- Croeser, Thami; Garrard, Georgia; Sharma, Roshan; Ossola, Alessandro; Bekessy, Sarah (2021): Choosing the right nature-based solutions to meet diverse urban challenges. In *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 65, p. 127337. DOI: 10.1016/j.ufug.2021.127337
- de Vente J, Reed MS, Stringer LC, Valente S, Newig J (2016) How does the context and design of participatory decision-making processes affect their outcomes? Evidence from sustainable land management in global drylands. *Ecology and Society* 21:24, <https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol21/iss2/art24/>
- Haque, A.N., 2016. Application of multi-criteria analysis on climate adaptation assessment in the context of least developed countries. *Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*, 23(5-6), pp.210-224.
- Loos, J. R., & Rogers, S. H. (2016). Understanding stakeholder preferences for flood adaptation alternatives with natural capital implications. *Ecology and Society*, 21(3).



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

- Reed, M. S., A. Graves, N. Dandy, H. Posthumus, K. Hubacek, J. Morris, C. Prell, C. H. Quinn, and L. C. Stringer. 2009. Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management. *Journal of Environmental Management* 90(5):1933-1949. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j>.
- Sterling EJ, Betley E, Sigouin A, Gomez A, Toomey A, Cullman G, et al. (2017) Assessing the evidence for stakeholder engagement in biodiversity conservation. *Biological Conservation* 209:159–171
- Thorne, K. M., B. J. Mattsson, J. Takekawa, J. Cummings, D. Crouse, G. Block, V. Bloom, M. Gerhart, S. Goldbeck, B. Huning, C.
- Sloop, M. Stewart, K. Taylor, and L. Valoppi. 2015. Collaborative decision-analytic framework to maximize resilience of tidal marshes to climate change. *Ecology and Society* 20(1): 30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-07018-200130>

RESPONSE: Thank you for sharing with us these references. We have used some of these in the final methods protocol and will consider using them also in the final evidence report.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: Well-structured.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x5_V2: n/a

Reviewer x6_V2: See previous answer where I linked to a recent Marine Board publication.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

15. DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENT THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE EKLIPSE EWG?

Reviewer x1_V1: n/a

Reviewer x2_V1: Thanks for the opportunity to review this methods protocol. The effort looks very promising and interesting.

RESPONSE: Thank you for your feedback.

Reviewer x2_V2: n/a

Reviewer x3_V2: n/a

Reviewer x4_V2: Nothing to add.



METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOL PEER REVIEW AND OPEN CONSULTATION ON EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

EMPOWERUS REQUEST

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x5_V2: Nothing to add.

RESPONSE: Thank you.

Reviewer x6_V2: n/a