



COMMUNITY INITIATIVES & RARE

Overview

This information sheet is for educators and other relevant stakeholders interested in organising a community initiative in the context of Sea for Society, or other projects raising awareness on marine ecosystem services. This is based on the Rare concept which, rather than studying environmental problems, focuses on bright spots in conservation – locally-led successful efforts worth emulating on a global scale.



Photo: rare.org

Objectives

- To involve a broad audience in personal action, taking into account the importance of the Ocean for human life
- To receive further feedback from the general public on some aspects of the Blue Society Challenge and ideas on Blue Society solutions

At a glance

Duration: Long-term series of events. Note that due to the long-term nature of the Rare concept, the activity would certainly last longer than the SFS project.

Organisation time: At least a year

Target group: General public, young people, local stakeholders

Organisation

Implementing or helping the development of Blue Society community actions or positive initiatives create awareness through education and information about the opportunities of marine resources, the impact man has on nature and implement the society of tomorrow. The concept involves identifying local ambassadors, training and practical action. The Sea for Society project has an ambassadorial role in kick-starting each local action.

Partners should recruit local Rare ambassadors, local stakeholders, known as champions, who would take the project further. They may be already trained in running local community activities. They would then spread the word. Examples could include local community groups, fishermen groups, local/national (voluntary) environmental agencies. The focus must be a local issue, although it could be scaled up.

These ideas can then be developed into a Community Initiatives database. Actions would then be organised to promote these community initiatives. This could be supported through a worldwide forum.

Overview:

1. Identify such a community positive dynamic: locally-led solutions, bright spots which bring an local emulation
2. Support their promotion and help them to be reproduced in communities around Europe.
3. Foster replication of the most successful local projects (turn local change into European impact)

Planning

The Rare approach follows a fixed formula which could be adapted for Blue Society topics:

Step 1: Identify a bright spot. Rare actively looks for answers to pressing conservation challenges, what we call “bright spots,” all across the globe. How did it work? Can it be replicated? Is the organization or person behind the bright spot willing to share the recipe for success?

Step 2: Create the formula for replication. Next, we reconstruct the formula for success – the factors, conditions, and sequence of events that led to positive change. Rare calls this formula its “Theory of Change.”

Step 3: Identify partners. Rare builds a coalition of 15-20 partners to support design, execution, and monitoring of any given activity. Rare partners are either Implementing, Strategic, Technical or Funding.

Step 4: Choose campaign sites. Depending on the topic, Rare looks for sites where local human behaviour is one of the top threats, introducing sustainable alternatives is technically and financially viable, a qualified local implementing partner is willing to manage the campaign and where success will enhance learning and impact at the cohort level.

Step 5: Select Rare conservation fellows who train and mentor participants.

Step 6: Secure funding through fundraising and investment.

Step 7: Implementation over a series of 3+ years.

Step 8: Impact measurement. Rare develops a monitoring plan to gauge impact at each step in the Theory of Change. Rare has sophisticated tools for tracking changes in awareness, attitudes, and behaviours, which demonstrate positive impact by year three in most campaigns.

Step 9: Sustain impact through alumnus programmes, transferable skills and online platforms for exchange.

Links

Rare.org
<http://www.rare.org/>

The Rare approach in detail
<http://www.rare.org/sites/default/files/RareApproachWEB.pdf>

Rare on fisheries
<http://www.rare.org/fisheries>

Surfers Against Sewage
<http://www.sas.org.uk/>