H2020

# TOOL FACTSHEET

## Tool name

Public comment analysis

## Tool type

Tool (Public comment analysis)

## Short description of the tool

Public comment analysis (PCA) was used for characterising spatially relevant and location-specific social management issues. It involved searching and qualitatively coding statements of support and of objection to proposed marine aquaculture development, available on the local authority planning web-site.

## Source (where/ link)

PCA is a generic procedure rather than a set of algorithms or a software application (although the QSR Nvivo software can be used to code statements). An example of the application of PCA is provided by: Billing (2018).

## Licence cost or other type of costs (e.g. maintenance)

Free
Very time-consuming

## General requirements (technical and input data)

Requires public access to planning applications and qualitative data analysis skills

## Management dimension for which the tool could be used

☒ Policy / Management

☒ Environmental

☒ Economic / Market

☒ Other sectors

## Main functionality

☒ Site identification

☐ Modelling

☐ Mapping

☒ Stakeholder engagement

☐ Economic analysis

☐ Ecosystem services assessment

☐ Scenario analysis

☒ Other: (Please specify) – Management and policy

## Fields of application (i.e. issue to be solved)

Public comment analysis reveals the drivers of complex social interactions between policy, planning, local communities and aquaculture development. It can uncover mitigation options/ strategies.

## Circumstances in which it can be implemented (strength and opportunities)

The strength of this tool is that it reveals complex social issues which are otherwise often misunderstood. It provides opportunities for industry and communities to find quick wins and strategies for development which are mutually beneficial. It exposes the drivers of conflict.

## Limitations

Public comment analysis takes a significant amount of time and requires public access to planning permission. It is only available where there is legislation in place for stakeholder engagement during a planning application.

## Technical skills needed to operate the tool

Requires qualitative data management and research skills.

## Background knowledge needed to implement the tool

Requires understanding of the local area, both biophysical and social, as well as the local planning and licencing regime.

## How can the tool contribute to the EAA

Please select the EAA steps that the tool can contribute:

1. ☒ Scoping
2. ☒ The identification of issues and opportunities
3. ☒ Prioritisation of issues
4. ☒ Objectives
5. ☒ Management actions
6. ☒ Monitoring (social)

## How can the tool contribute to the MSP

Please select the MSP steps that the tool can contribute:

1. ☒ Define goals and objectives
2. ☒ Gather data and define current conditions
3. ☒ Identify issues, constraints, and future conditions
4. ☒ Develop alternative management actions
5. ☐ Evaluate alternative management actions
6. ☒ Monitor and evaluate management actions
7. ☒ Refine goals, objectives and management actions

## AquaSpace case studies in which it has been implemented

**Case study name:**

Argyll, Scotland

**Reference and link to case studies report:**

Aquaspace D4.2 on Library/Reports page at www.aquaspace-h2020.eu

Data obtained from: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment

## Other bibliographic references

**Billing, S.-L.** (2018) Using public comments to gage social licence for finfish aquaculture. AquaSpace and LMC working paper, available from www.aquaspace-h2020.eu on Library/Other Documents page

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*Cite as*:

Billing, S-L.(2017) Public Comment Analysis

Tools factsheet from Aquaspace toolbox. http://aquaspace-h2020.eu