

Connecting people and nature – monitoring visits to the outdoors in Scotland

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ORN Research Seminar
18 April 2018

nature.scot



Historical context

- The Land Reform (Scotland) Act, February 2005, gave people in Scotland legal rights of access to most land and inland water provided they acted responsibly.
- These rights and responsibilities are set out in the *Scottish Outdoor Access Code* (SOAC).
- SNH given a statutory duty to publicise and promote the SOAC and to keep it under review.
- And a 10 year target to secure:
‘improved public enjoyment and protection of the countryside, measured by an increase in the numbers of walkers visiting’.



Monitoring the impact of the access legislation

- Establish a baseline measure of participation in outdoor recreation before the access legislation came into effect on 2005
- Identify a survey vehicle to monitor participation over the next 10 years
- A number of survey sources ... identified a lack of consistent long-term data on outdoor recreation in Scotland and no existing means of securing long-term trend data of the type required



Scottish Recreation Survey (ScRS)

- A new national-level survey measuring participation in outdoor recreation in Scotland, managed by SNH working in partnership with FCS
- Running over a 10-year period (2003 – 2012)
- Questions placed on TNS's omnibus, the Scottish Opinion Survey, on a monthly rotating basis
- Interviews conducted in-home, using CAPI, with a representative sample of 1,000 adults in Scotland each month; 12,000 interviews pa
- National level data: nos. and characteristics of people participating in outdoor recreation; types of locations visited; activities undertaken; party size & composition; access issues; transport used; distance travelled; length & duration of trip; expenditure; SOAC awareness.



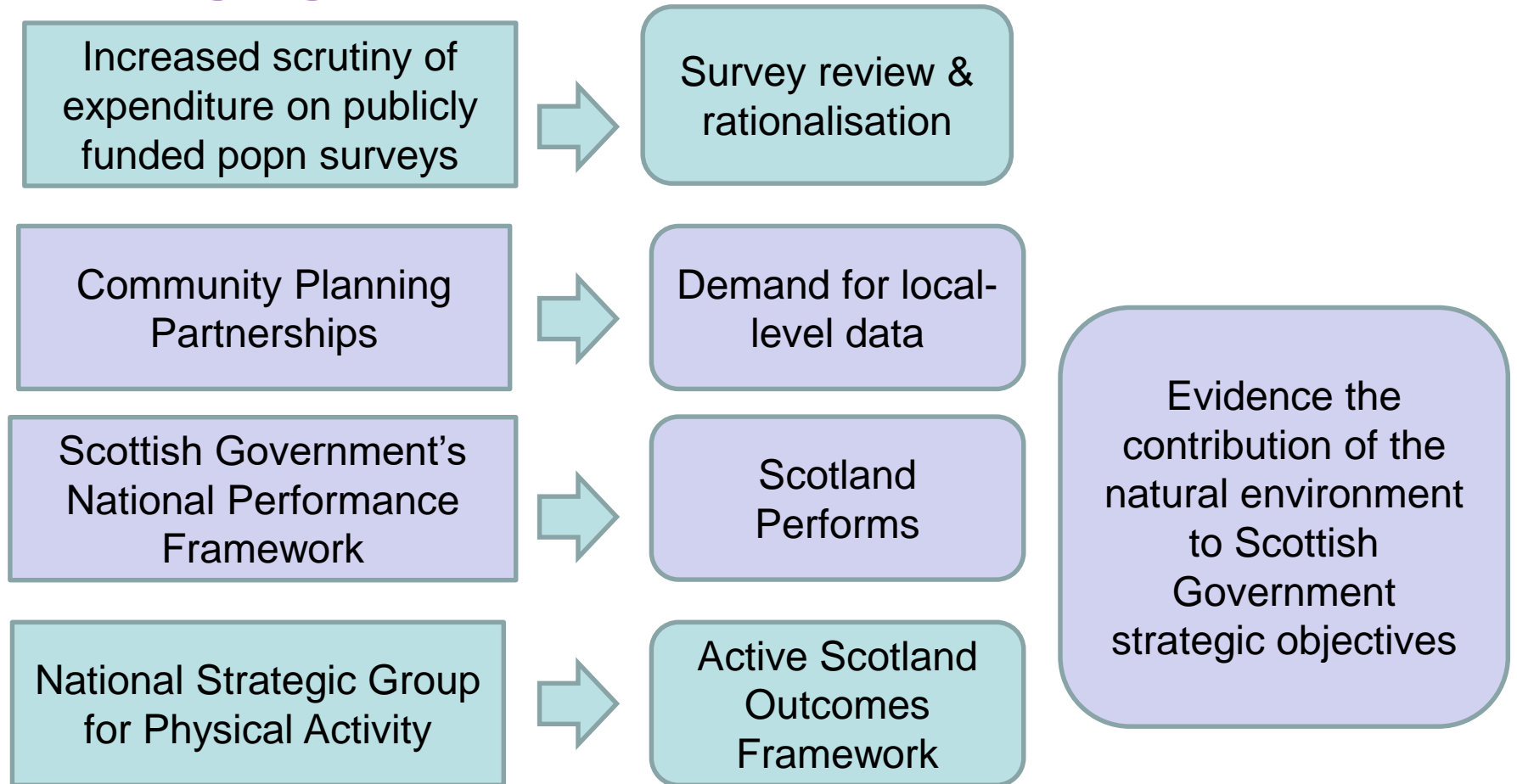
Scottish Recreation Survey data

Used over 10 years by SNH and its partners to:

- Inform guidance, advice and policy work
- Monitor progress in the delivery of outcomes
- Identify key trends in participation
- Understand our target audiences and focus resources more effectively
- Measure awareness and understanding of the SOAC and associated promotional campaigns



Changing landscape



The way forward for monitoring participation

- Better collaboration between environmental organisations commissioning research.
- Survey rationalisation, addressing issues of duplication, inconsistency, data gaps in existing surveys - and a reduction in expenditure over the long-term.
- Better demonstrate the links between connecting people with nature and the Scottish Government's strategic objectives.
- National data on an annual basis to measure progress against NIs (Scotland Performs).
- Local-level data to inform our engagement with community planning partners.
- Continuity with previous survey data.



The way forward for monitoring participation

Scottish Household Survey

Annual headline data at national and local-level:

- visits to the outdoors
- greenspace (access, use, satisfaction)
- environmental volunteering
- neighbourhoods

Scotland's People and Nature Survey

The story behind the headlines - detailed national-level data on people's connection with nature, once every three years:

- outdoor recreation
- forests/woodland
- urban greenspace
- national parks
- landscape
- environmental attitudes
- benefits of engagement



Scotland's People and Nature Survey



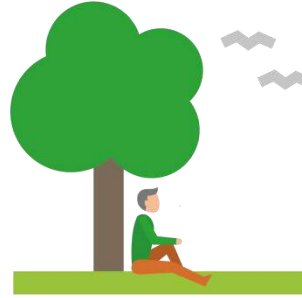
- A national-level survey measuring how people in Scotland use, value and enjoy the natural environment
- Ran in 2013/14 with plans to repeat in 2016, 2019, 2022
- Managed by SNH working in partnership with FCS, Greenspace Scotland, Cairngorms NP, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs NP and in consultation with Central Scotland Green Network Trust
- Question modules placed on TNS's omnibus, the Scottish Opinion Survey, on a monthly rotating basis (data continuity with ScRS)
- Interviews conducted in-home, using CAPI, with a representative sample of 1,000 adults in Scotland each month; 12,000 interviews pa



A few findings 2013/14



396 million visits to the outdoors



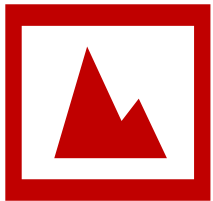
9 in 10 outdoor visitors report health benefits



134 million visits in urban areas, but gap between expectations and experience of local greenspace



81% of adults satisfied with national provision of woods for recreation versus 62% satisfied with local provision



94% of adults believe Scotland's areas of wild land should be protected



65% of adults rate their local landscape positively; negative perceptions more likely to be expressed by those living in the most deprived areas



The future

- Continuing pressure on budgets; fieldwork for the 2016 wave of SPANS delayed until 2017/18; survey content and sample sizes reduced.
- Continuing pressure on SHS and other Scottish Government surveys in terms of scale and content.
- Commitment to undertake two further waves of SPANS.
- Review of SPANS survey methodology is likely (data continuity versus size and scope of survey?).
- Exploring other data collection options.



For further information on SPANS and other research

<https://www.snh.scot/professional-advice/land-and-sea-management/managing-access-and-recreation/increasing-participation/measuring-participation>

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