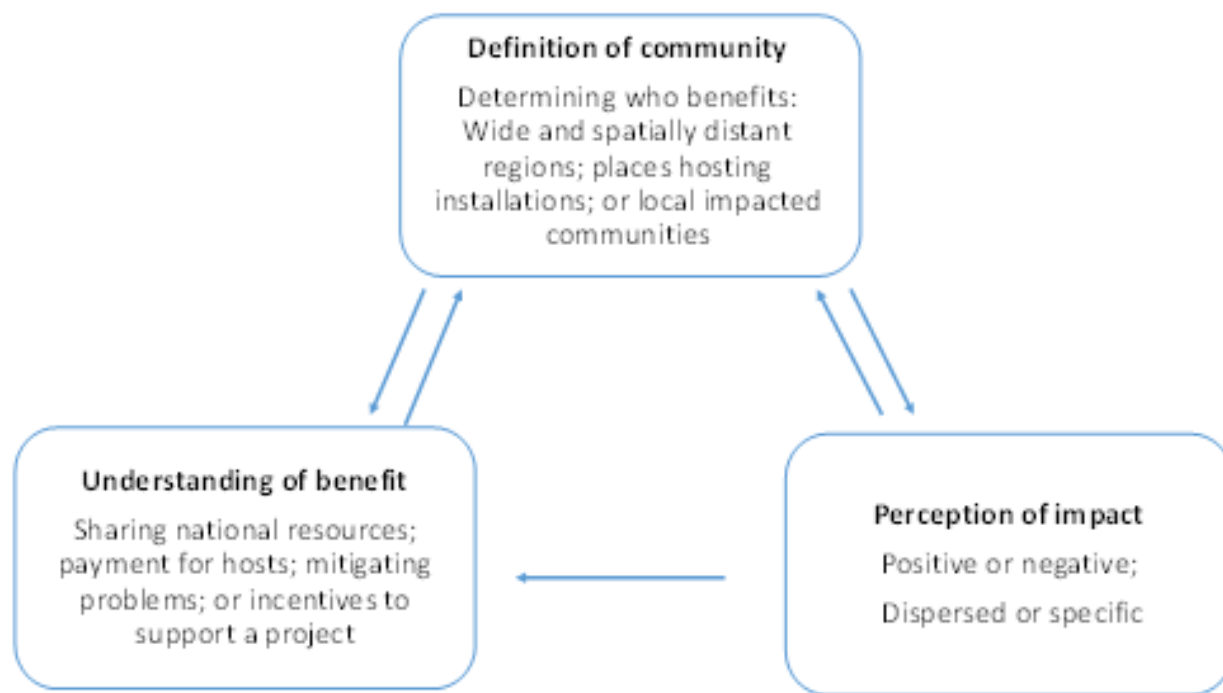


Institution: University of Edinburgh		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 21 Sociology		
Title of case study: From policy to practice: Identifying the communities, impacts, and benefits from offshore energy projects		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013 - 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Dr. Claire Haggett Dr Mhairi Aitken	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer in Sociology Research Fellow	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2008 - ongoing 2009 - 2018
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013-July 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact <p>The UK's world-leading commitment to offshore wind energy and ambition for local communities to benefit has unfortunately not been matched by effective engagement with those communities. Haggett's body of research on societal aspects of renewable energy development devised a way to pinpoint the relevant onshore communities for offshore projects, understand how they are impacted, and deliver appropriate benefits. This research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) provided the basis for Scottish Government Best Practice Guidelines in 2015, making it the first country worldwide to formalise good practice for community benefits in this sector; (2) informed the Scottish Government's Community Energy Policy which has helped transform industry practice across the UK; (3) was successfully used by a multi-national offshore wind farm developer, turning local opponents of the project into supporters. 		
2. Underpinning research <p>The UK Government intends for a third of electricity to be generated from offshore wind farms by 2030, making it the first time in UK history that there will be more electricity from renewables than fossil fuels. Although these projects are supposed to directly benefit local communities, in 2014, the Scottish Government recognised that there was no means to identify these communities, ensure benefits, or therefore achieve effective and fair processes of engagement. Haggett et al's research in response, commissioned on the basis of their body of work (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4), was the first ever systematic analysis of communities, benefits, and offshore energy.</p> <p>The underpinning research is a series of connected empirical interdisciplinary projects conducted between 2013-2015 (with Haggett as Principal or Co-Investigator) on the societal aspects of renewable energy development. It spans all scales, from large commercial to community-owned projects; it includes local, national, and international contexts; and it addresses both onshore and offshore installations (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). The research drew on a range of international comparisons to develop a wholly novel understanding of the relationship between different types of communities, impacts and benefits for offshore energy projects. It identified and analysed every known case of community benefit scheme from offshore energy, anywhere in the world. This involved extensive data collection, and examination of policy, planning, and practice in each country, and the detail of the particular cases of community benefits. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders including developers,</p>		

local planners, and community organisations, as well as documentary analysis of planning documents, project websites, and press coverage of any community benefit efforts.

This resulted in a new framework which rethought the ways in which an 'affected' community is identified, impacts from new projects are determined, and benefits are therefore conceived of and delivered (3.5, 3.6). It showed that understandings of benefit, impact, and community are inescapably connected to each other. For example, if a project is perceived to deliver positive impacts from the harvesting of a national natural resource, then the community may be identified as a whole nation which is benefitting from this resource. By contrast, the community may be identified more locally where the aim is to provide benefits to mitigate a specific negative impact that may have been experienced as the result of a project. This framework is summarised in Diagram 1 below:



Overall, the research showed that

- (1) it is possible to identify the relevant communities for offshore benefit schemes; and
- (2) an explicit relationship between communities, impacts, and benefits can be devised.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1 **Haggett**, C., Creamer, E., Harnmeijer, J., Parsons, M., Bomberg, E. (2013) Community Energy in Scotland: The Social Factors for Success. Report commissioned by ClimateXChange for the Scottish Government.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201030220522/https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/research/projects/community-energy-in-scotland-the-social-factors-for-success/>

3.2 **Haggett**, C., Aitken, M., Rudolph, D.P., van Veelen, B., Harnmeijer, J., Markantoni, M. (2014) Supporting Community Investment in Commercial Renewable Energy Schemes: Summary Report.

https://web.archive.org/web/20210114164428/https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/media/1550/supporting_community_investment_in_commercial_energy_schemes_-_summary.pdf

3.3 Aitken, M, **Haggett**, C., and Rudolph, D. (2016) 'Practices and Rationales of Community Engagement with Wind Farms: Awareness Raising, Consultation, Empowerment', *Planning Theory and Practice*, 17 (4): 557–576. DOI: [10.1080/14649357.2016.1218919](https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2016.1218919)

3.4 **Haggett**, C., and Aitken, M. (2015) 'Grassroots Energy Innovations: The Role of Community Ownership and Investment, *Current Sustainable/Renewable Energy Reports*, 2: 98–104. DOI: [10.1007/s40518-015-0035-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40518-015-0035-8)

3.5 Rudolph, D., **Haggett**, C., Aitken, M. (2015) Community Benefits from Offshore Renewables; Good Practice Review.
https://web.archive.org/web/20210114164901/https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/media/1534/executive_summary_-_community_benefits_from_offshore_renewables_-_good_practice_review.pdf

3.6 Rudolph, D., and **Haggett**, C., and Aitken, M. (2017) 'Community Benefits from Offshore Renewables: The relationship between different understandings of impact, community and benefit', *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 36 (1): 92–117. DOI: [10.1177/2399654417699206](https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654417699206)

4. Details of the impact

Haggett et al.'s research led to a connected chain of impact, from providing the basis for government best practice principles which, in turn, shaped national policy, to shaping the practice of wind farm developers.

Building the foundation for Scottish Government Best Practice Principles

The Scottish Government aims to create a 'world class' offshore renewable energy industry. To achieve this aim by securing benefits for affected communities, the '*Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Offshore Renewables*' (5.1) were produced. These Principles are based upon Haggett et al.'s key research finding (3.1, 3.2) that "the definition of community and design of a community benefit package will be influenced by the understanding of why such provisions are necessary" (5.1, p7). The Principles are entirely structured around the concepts and definitions developed by Haggett et al. (3.1, 3.2), and they extensively cite the research (5.1, pp. 5, 7, 8, 12, 17). Overall, the document addresses issues that Haggett et al.'s research had identified as important, lists the research as a further resource; and the entirety of pages 21-24 of the Principles are directly taken from Haggett et al.'s research report. Accordingly, the research meant that the Scottish Government was the first country in the world to formalise good practice for community benefits from offshore projects (5.1, p5).

Informing Scottish Government Policy

Evidence of the impact of these Good Practice Principles is that the Scottish Government developed new policy on communities and offshore energy drawing heavily on them. In the first national policy on community energy – the 2015 Community Energy Policy - Haggett et al.'s research about identifying communities (3.3, 3.4) is cited directly, and their work on offshore community benefits is what leads the Scottish Government to be able to say that they are "driving new standards of good practice" (5.2, p.8), and that their policy on community energy has transformed industry practice, across the UK (5.2, p.4). This has been taken forward in practice, and community benefits are now standard considerations for offshore windfarms (5.3, pp.56-59). Government staff testified that Haggett et al.'s research allowed them to identify what community benefits from offshore developments should be, and gave credibility to their policy, enabling them to secure buy-in from different stakeholders (5.4).

Shaping developers' practices across the UK

Haggett et al.'s research findings have not only shaped best practice principles and policy, but they have also been taken forward and used in practice – for example by the multi-national developer Vattenfall, who are building the European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre (EOWDC) in Aberdeen Bay. This wind farm has market-leading engineering and technology runs the most powerful wind turbines in the world, and has become internationally renowned through high profile legal cases, and (in)famous supporters and proponents. To address vital issues of public support in such a high-profile project, Vattenfall have made their community benefits scheme the cornerstone of their community engagement and outreach – and based the

strategy, design, and delivery of the scheme entirely and explicitly on Haggett's research. This included "ways to initiate, communicate, consult and administer the fund" (5.5). Haggett's involvement was made known publicly: "One of Scotland's experts on renewable energy funding, Dr Claire Haggett, has worked with the Vattenfall team to ensure an independent approach is taken to develop the scheme" (5.6). The scheme is now in operation explicitly following Haggett's research and recommendations. For example, the fund is being used to benefit a large region through the positive impact generated by the project income; and it acknowledges the impact on specific local communities hosting the onshore infrastructure, issuing grants which are "now making a difference on the ground in communities" (5.7). The set-up of the scheme has been highly successful, with community opponents of the wind farm now publicly expressing their support for it, due to the recommendations Haggett made about how to implement the fund, and the way in which the benefits scheme is operating (5.8).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 Scottish Government, 2015. Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Offshore Renewable Energy Developments

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201201163426/https://www.localenergy.scot/media/77721/Good-Practice-Principles-for-Offshore-Community-Benefits.pdf>, pp.5, 7, 8, 12, 17, 21-24.

5.2 Scottish Government, 2015. Community Energy Policy Statement: Final Version

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201201170752/https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00485122.pdf>, pp.4, 8.

5.3 Glasston, J.; Durning, B., Olorundami, T., and Welch, K. (2020a) Guidance on assessing the socio-economic impacts of offshore wind farms (OWFs), Impact Assessment Unit (IAU), Oxford Brookes University.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201201163823/https://radar.brookes.ac.uk/radar/items/6c7548dd-c768-4db8-9dce-7980c426c7a4/1/>, pp.56-59.

5.4 Testimonial, Manager of Local Energy Scotland, the Scottish Government agency which published the Good Practice Principles, transcript of interview on 21/02/17.

5.5 Testimonial, Local Liaison Officer and Project Communicator, Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm, Vattenfall Wind Power Ltd, email on 18/08/2017.

5.6 Vattenfall cooperation:

- Press coverage of the community benefit fund for the EOWDC Aberdeen Bay wind farm. <https://web.archive.org/web/20201201164126/https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/fp/news/local/windfarm-windfall-set-to-benefit-communities/>
- Vattenfall, 2018. Community Benefits Scheme Information Leaflet <https://web.archive.org/web/20201201164355/https://group.vattenfall.com/uk/contentassets/49718c3d4d2746e08071cfd8fbf9ccdd/eowdc-community-scheme-update-booklet-june-2018.pdf>
Haggett cited on page 2; document lists the structure of the Scheme, which is based on Haggett's research.
- Vattenfall, 2019. Unlock our Future Fund: Fund Strategy. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20210114170158/https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/media/827024/Fund_Strategy.pdf Haggett cited p.3

5.7 Statement from Chair of the Panel which delivers the Vattenfall funding, cited in <https://web.archive.org/web/20201201164852/https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/north-east/2023849/vattenfall-funding-applications-open-for-community-groups-and-charities-in-the-north-east/>

5.8 Statements from local residents (previously in opposition to the wind farm) and community council members, supporting the funding scheme, the way in which it has been designed to ringfence some funds for particular communities, and the success of projects that have now

been funded from it, cited in

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201201165307/https://www.energyvoice.com/renewables-energy-transition/190590/aberdeen-bay-wind-operator-to-splash-3m-community-cash/>; and
<https://web.archive.org/web/20201201170156/https://www.grampianonline.co.uk/news/windfarm-fund-opens-for-entries-191667/>