

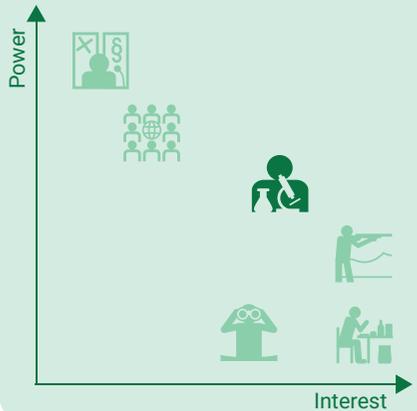
Scientists



Scientists researching bowhead whales © Fernando Ugarte

Scientists study marine mammals and their **ecosystems** to understand their behaviour, **ecology**, and the challenges they face. Their findings help inform policies and **management** strategies aimed at **conserving** these **species** and maintaining a healthy marine **ecosystem**. Through scientific study, experts contribute valuable knowledge to ensure the well-being of marine mammals and their **sustainable coexistence** with **human activities**.

Discuss: Does the matrix reflect each **stakeholder's** interest and influence in marine mammal **management** decisions?



Did you know that...

- A scientist is anyone who practices science professionally. They can work, for example, for universities, research institutes, private companies, NGO's, or be self-employed.
- International collaboration is important for scientists, as the ocean and marine mammals do not know borders.
- Scientists follow ethical guidelines to ensure their research is honest, unbiased, and beneficial to society.

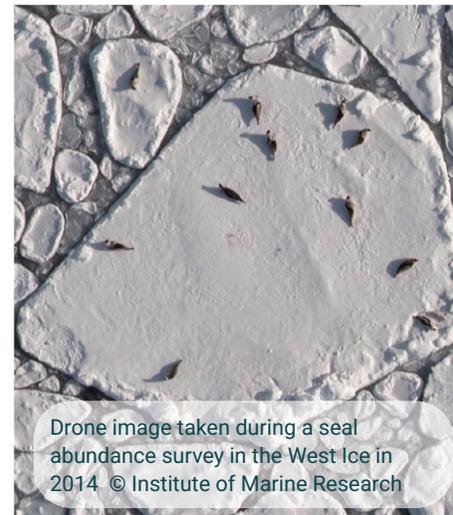
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Scientists follow different steps to learn about things. First, scientist establish a research question and go out in the field to collect information, like studying the behaviour of a **species**. Then, they organise and analyse this data to understand what it means. After that, they write reports to share their results and some of them give advice based on their findings. This helps others, like **decision-makers**, make informed decisions to **conserve** the **environment**. These steps can be performed by the same persons, or there can be different scientists working on different phases of a project. Some scientists only work in the field, while others focus on laboratory work or on analysis and writing.



Scientists record all their observations in the wild to preserve every detail © Heleen Middel



Drone image taken during a seal abundance survey in the West Ice in 2014 © Institute of Marine Research

Scientists can decide to study a specific topic because they are curious about it, they want to solve a particular problem, or they find it important. This bottom-up approach may result in findings that nobody even thought about. Sometimes scientists are requested by **decision-makers** to look into a particular subject; this is called top-down motivation. An example of this is when the **NAMMCO Scientific Committee** is requested to find out if a hunt is actually **sustainable**, or to look into issues related to marine mammal interactions with fisheries.