Foresight analysis practice abstract: Scotland

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When conducting foresight analysis for the Badenoch, Strathspey and West Moray Scottish MRL, a number of key variables were identified by the research team. These included variables that were social, environmental, and economic.

Through a Serious Game participants discussed linkages between the different variables and developed underlying long-term drivers that were influencing these. These included climate change, globalisation, societal attitudes, demographic changes, and land use changes. Participants then voted and ranked the two most uncertain and important long-term drivers. The two that scored the highest for uncertainty and importance were globalisation and societal attitudes.

The research team then developed four scenarios based on these two drivers being either high or low, before participants in a second workshop chose the scenario that they most preferred. The chosen scenario was 'Socially conscious society within highly globalised markets,' characterised by Whisky production that is both environmentally sustainable and socially responsible, while still being globally connected. In this scenario tourism in the region grows whilst successful environmental awareness and outreach campaigns minimise environmental impacts. Investment in affordable housing, local facilities, and wages see the local working population increase.

In a final workshop, participants suggested a range of local and national policies that may help this be achieved. These included policies addressing housing, transport, tourism, health and well-being, engagement with young people and education, agriculture, ecosystems and wildlife conservation, and emphasis on the private sector.

MOVING receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 862739. The content of this document does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed therein lies entirely with the author(s).