

# AITHER QUARTERLY LETTER | Q3 FY2020-21

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## Embedding value in government decision making

Demonstrating and delivering value is crucial at a time when government decisions are under scrutiny and economic and environmental challenges continue to mount. But when it comes to making better decisions, value can be hard to tie down.

In this edition we unpack some practical tools and techniques we use to help our clients identify and deliver valued outcomes for society.

We also invite you to join Associate Director Martijn Gough and Senior Consultant Sarah Leck as they share their insights in [a webinar on economic analysis for coastal adaptation](#) on Wednesday 31 March.

## Accounting for value leads to better decisions

Understanding value reveals the costs and benefits of different actions – or inaction – and how these are distributed across users, uses, time and space. It supports better decision making, from the household level to decisions that affect industries, communities and environments. And it helps bring about positive change.

Taking value into account requires work, including engagement and analysis, that can add time and costs to decision making. But if we don't identify and assess the value of desired outcomes we risk wasting everyone's time. In our experience, a lot of effort is spent working towards outputs not outcomes, or on outcomes that are unrealistic or without a clear value proposition.

If we don't know the real value of different outcomes to individuals, industries, communities and governments, it's impossible to weigh up priorities and trade-offs. It's hard to secure buy-in or satisfy people when the outcomes being sought do not reflect the values of those affected. It also becomes impossible to know whether government interventions are working.

Including value in government decision making is therefore integral to improving how we deal with complex and contested topics, including water and environmental management.

## Some practical ways we can embed value in decision making

Value is never fixed or easily measured. The real world is complex and imperfect, the future is uncertain, and data is often limited.

But we can bring outcomes and value-based decision making to the fore. In line with our purpose of helping our clients make better decisions, recent projects we've led show how value can be incorporated.

Some of our recent projects look beyond financial value to include environmental, social, and cultural values. Consistent with the theme of [World Water Day 2021](#), our insight piece discusses [How valuing water can help improve decisions](#).

In [Enhancing value through outcomes-based monitoring and evaluation](#), [Clare Ferguson](#) describes how insights from effective monitoring and evaluation can improve planning, delivery, and adaptive management, and enhance overall value.

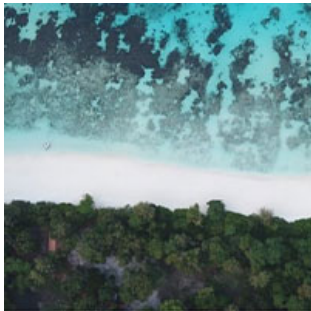


## Enhance value through outcomes-based monitoring and evaluation

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE →](#)

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In [The value of communicating economics in coastal adaptation decision-making](#), [Martijn Gough](#) and [Sarah Leck](#) explain how combining robust economic analysis with clear communication of value, risk and uncertainty builds stakeholder confidence in value-based solutions.



## Communicating economics to influence coastal adaptation decision-making

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE →](#)

[REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR →](#)

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Martijn and Sarah will share some of their insights from multiple adaptation assessments in a [webinar](#) on Wednesday 31 March. Please register and join us if you can.

These are some of our recent experiences with using value to improve decision making and outcomes. They underscore our experience with approaches to help make better decisions, and we continue to work to this end.

Please continue to share your own ideas and work, or reach out to us for a discussion.

Yours sincerely

Will Fargher and Chris Olszak

Co-Founders and Directors, Aither