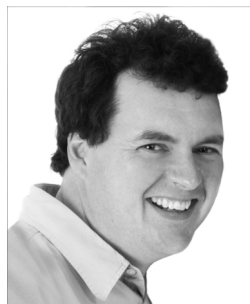


## Nic Marks

Founder of *centre for well-being*, **nef**



Nic Marks is Founder of the *centre for well-being* and has led the well-being programme at **nef** since 2001. Nic is a recognised expert in the field of well-being research and undertakes innovative research in the use of well-being indicators in public policy environments. Nic has expertise in relation to individual, social, economic and environmental indicators of well-being and has previously applied his work in policy fields as diverse as sustainable development, health and social care, education, culture and the arts, and employment. Nic has experience of devising methodologies to measure well-being, statistical and analytical skills, and a proven ability to interpret findings in a way that makes sense for policy makers, practitioners and the general public. He also has a particular interest in how objective and subjective measures can be used alongside each other to create national and local accounts of well-being and in how we can best increase well-being within our environmental limits.

Nic is regularly asked to attend speaking engagements and occupies a number of advisory positions as a result of his pioneering research. He was the lead author of **nef**'s innovative *Happy Planet Index*, a global index of human well-being and environmental impact. He was an advisor to the UK Government Office for Science's Foresight project on 'mental capital and well-being' which was published in October 2008. He devised, together with others at the centre for well-being, the model and methodology behind **nef**'s new report on National Accounts of Well-being, which gained extensive media coverage when launched in late January 2009.

Nic has a degree in Management Studies from Cambridge University, a Master's degree in Operational Research from Lancaster University and a postgraduate diploma in Change Agent Skills and Strategies from the Human Potential Research Group at the University of Surrey. He is also a qualified psychotherapist and a member of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies – ISQOLS. In 2007 **nef** won the ISQOLS 'Betterment of the Human Condition' award in recognition of their work on the Happy Planet Index.

[http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/well-being\\_current.aspx](http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/well-being_current.aspx)

## National Accounts of Well-being

Abstract:

**nef**'s *National Accounts of Well-being* report makes a radical proposal to guide the direction of modern societies and the lives of people who live in them. It says that national governments should directly measure people's subjective well-being: their experiences, feelings and perceptions of how their lives are going. These measures should be collected on a regular, systematic basis and published as National Accounts of Well-being. This proposal is inspired by the established national accounting systems that governments currently use to track aspects of their countries' economic activity. However, it argues that measures of economic activity are not sufficient to fully assess the progress of nations. It is a call to fundamentally re-evaluate established ideas of what we should collectively value, and hence what we should measure.

**nef**'s National Accounts of Well-being provide a framework for the measurement of subjective well-being. By identifying the key components of both personal and social well-being, they demonstrate how the different elements of the multi-faceted concept of well-being can be measured separately but also brought together into two key headline indicators.

We have proposed National Accounts of Well-being both as a means of assessing societal progress at the macro level, and also as providing a cross-cutting and more

informative approach throughout the policy-making process. Capturing population well-being in ways which cut across a range of areas of conventional policy-making would bring benefits at different points of the policy cycle, including direction-setting, evaluation of policy proposals, shaping delivery and evaluating the impact to identify what works, what doesn't and for whom in terms of affecting people's experience of life.

A key strand of our work on National Accounts of Well-being was the development of an interactive website to engage the public, policy-makers and academics ([www.nationalaccountsofwellbeing.org](http://www.nationalaccountsofwellbeing.org)). The website allows the data for the 22 European countries to be explored and compared at a number of levels, with users able to create both well-being profiles for particular demographic groups within countries and personal well-being profiles, based on an online survey which measures their own well-being. In addition, the different subjective well-being indicators within the National Accounts of Well-being framework can be compared to a variety of objective country-level indicators. The website also provides information for users to learn about the background to the research and to engage with the call for governments to systematically measure population well-being.