SOPHOI

Robbie Gregorowski

Evidence Sense-making & Learning in Complex Systems

Turning evidence into collaborative sense-making, learning and action on complex challenges

Robbie is a proven **evidence, learning and complexity expert and team leader with over 20 years' experience**. He designs and operationalises innovative yet practical monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks that help organisations understand and address complex challenges — building their capacity to become 'evidence-based, collaborative sense-making and adaptive-learning' organisations.

He works across diverse complex adaptive systems — from locally-led adaptation to low-carbon transition — and extensively in knowledge services, supporting knowledge networks, think-tanks, communities of practice and policy-advocacy platforms. Alongside leading strategic and impact evaluations, he facilitates MEL design and capacity-building in cross-cultural settings, designing systems from the ground up and building teams' capabilities through trust, collaboration and buy-in.

Robbie pioneered Sophoi's signature approach, **ESLA Loops — Evidence Sense-making Learning Action Loops** (www.eslaloops.io) — a way of using evidence to inform learning and action on complex challenges. It helps stakeholders make sense of MEL evidence together, valuing the sense-making 'process' as much as the evaluation 'product'.

Robbie sits on two evaluation expert advisory panels – for the International Committee of the Red Cross Expert Panel and the FCDO EQuALS Expert Panel. Robbie is based near Brighton in the UK. He holds an MSc Distinction from SOAS, University of London.

Areas of expertise Complexity-aware MEL system design · Strategic & impact evaluation · Theory of change & results frameworks · Collaborative sense-making & facilitation · Climate, environment & adaptation · Knowledge networks & policy advocacy · MEL capacity building

Selected clients Clean Air Fund · Adaptation Fund · Pacific Institute · Great Barrier Reef Foundation · ClientEarth · Climate Emergency Collaboration Group · World Bank · IUCN · FILE · Luminate · Climate-KIC · World Green Building Council · Mastercard Foundation · CIFF

His most recent projects include:

- **Climate Emergency Collaboration Group (CECG): Conversation-Based Reporting (CBR) to Portfolio Sense-making (2025-26) - A portfolio-level, conversation-based learning system for climate philanthropy.** This project represents the latest evolution of the ESLA Loops approach: the full realization of the Three-Step Complexity-Aware Evidence Sense-making & Learning System. By replacing traditional written forms with CBRs, the organization captures the rich context and nuance that forms often erase. The use of AI (NotebookLM) for secure transcript synthesis allows for the rapid processing of these conversations, which are then fed into Miro-based collaborative sense-making sessions. This methodology proves that human-centric conversations, when supported by a rigorous learning infrastructure, are the most effective data source for navigating the complexities of the climate emergency.

- **ClientEarth (CE): Global Theory of Change & Europe Strategy 2025-2030 (2024-25)** - **A shared Global Theory of Change guiding ClientEarth's 2025–2030 strategy.** Working with ClientEarth, Robbie led a Sophoi team to co-design an updated Global Theory of Change and impact framework, facilitating high-level workshops with the organisation's "Engine Room", its Board of Trustees, and European teams to shape the 2025-2030 strategy. The portfolio and sense-making approach was designed to help the organisation "see the whole" system – providing tools for decentralised, aligned decision-making so that individual legal actions contribute to a cohesive global vision rather than siloed legal action.
- **Clean Air Fund (CAF): Low Cost Sensor evaluation & Global Learning Partnership (2024-26)** - **AI-enabled synthesis turning grantee interviews into strategic priorities.** Robbie led two theory-based, mixed-methods evaluations for the Clean Air Fund. The first assessed CAF's added value in its Low Cost Sensor (LCS) data strategy across a purposive sample of nine global grants; the second, delivered with ClearUp Consulting, synthesised outcomes from air quality policy workstreams across Ghana, Poland and the UK for CAF's Global Learning Partnership. Both pioneered the use of AI tools (Claude and NotebookLM) to synthesise extensive grantee interviews, feeding Miro-based collaborative sense-making workshops and ESLA Loop "deep dives" that moved stakeholders rapidly from raw data to strategic priorities.
- **Foundation for International Law for the Environment (FILE): Strategic Learning Review (2021-25)** - **A results framework capturing impact beyond the courtroom.** As Learning Partner to FILE, Robbie led a Strategic Learning Review of its climate litigation portfolio – refreshing the Global Theory of Change while designing a Results Framework able to capture the long-term, non-linear outcomes of legal interventions. Sophoi pioneered an "Areas of Change" framework hosted on a "virtual living platform" in Miro, integrating quantitative indicators with rubric-based collaborative sense-making so FILE could visualise outcomes "outside and beyond the courtroom", such as shifts in public discourse and corporate accountability.
- **Pacific Institute: Advancing Water Equity and Resilience MEL (2024-25)** - **An independent evaluation grounded in complex-systems thinking and community voice.** Robbie provided a sequenced programme of support for the Pacific Institute – refining its Theory of Change and developing an Impact Framework – which underpinned an independent mid-grant evaluation of the Advancing Water Equity and Resilience project across diverse water-stressed regions. Grounded in complex adaptive systems theory and the Cynefin framework, the evaluation embedded two rounds of collaborative sense-making so community and grantee stakeholders were active interpreters of the evidence rather than merely sources of data.
- **Climate-KIC MEL in systems thinking guidance and learning modules (2024-25) - Practical systems-thinking MEL guidance for global climate leaders.** Robbie is developing the MEL in systems thinking guidance and online learning modules for Climate-KIC's Climate Leadership Academy. The practical MEL guidance build's on the ESLA Loops approach, integrating collaborative sense-making into MEL systems design, and adopts C-KIC's underlying approach to systems transformation through complex adaptive systems and innovation portfolios.

Summary of wider MEL projects

- **IUCN – Global evaluation of influence on policy (2023-24)**

  Evaluation Team Leader

  Key focus areas: Theory-based, complexity-informed evaluation; policy influence; Global Biodiversity Framework; Nature-based Solutions; Forest Landscape Restoration; collaborative sense-making

- **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2023 – on-going)**

  Evaluation Expert Panel Member

  Key focus areas: Evaluation quality assurance, including theory of change, evaluation design, evaluability assessment, and peer review of evaluation reports

- **Foundation for International Law for the Environment (FILE) (2023-25)**

  Developing a climate and environmental litigation results framework for the FILE

  Key focus areas: Indicator compendium development, organisational results framework design, results reporting platform and tool development

- **Mastercard Foundation (2022-23)**

  Core MEL capacity building support to the Mastercard Foundation Impact function

  Key focus areas: MEL system design and capacity building, Impact team training and capacity building, youth employment

- **Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) (2021)**

  Core MEL support to the CIFF Evidence Measurement and Effectiveness team

  Key focus areas: MEL system design and capacity building, EME team training and capacity building, impact indicator development, deep decarbonisation, climate change litigation

- **Foundation for International Law for the Environment (FILE) (2021-22)**

  Strategic Learning Review of FILE's Climate Litigation Portfolio

  Key focus areas: Results – sensemaking – learning (RSL) system design, climate change litigation, complex systems, systems innovation and transformation, sensemaking and adaptive learning

- **IKEA Foundation & Laudes Foundation (2021-23)**

  Results – Sensemaking – Learning system for the BuildingLife Initiative

  Key focus areas: Results – sensemaking – learning (RSL) system design, climate change indicator development, real-time evaluation, deep decarbonisation, climate change innovation, complex systems, systems innovation and transformation, sensemaking and adaptive learning

- **Laudes Foundation (2021)**

  B Team MEL System Design and Implementation

  Key focus areas: MEL system design and capacity building, advocacy strategy, complex systems, systems innovation and transformation, sensemaking and adaptive management

- **Great Barrier Reef Foundation (GBRF) (2019–on going)**

  Resilient Reefs Initiative (RRI) Evaluation & MEL Support

  Key focus areas: MEL system design and capacity building, climate change indicator development, organisational evaluation, climate change adaptation, resilience-based management

- **Climate-KIC (2020–21)**

  MEL Design for Systems Transformation

  Key focus areas: MEL system design, MEL training and capacity building, climate change innovation, complex systems, systems innovation, and transformation, sensemaking and adaptive learning

- **Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) (2019–21)**

  Meta-Evaluation of the Energy Transition Strategy and Portfolio

  Key focus areas: Meta-evaluation, strategy evaluation, climate change indicator development, climate change mitigation, renewable energy

- **African Development Bank (AfDB) (2020-22)**

  MEL system design for the Climate Change and Green Growth Strategy

Key focus areas: MEL system design, MEL training and capacity building, climate change resilience, adaptation and mitigation, Green growth

- **WRI - Global Commission on Adaptation (2020–21)**

  Locally Led Adaptation MEL Working Paper

  Key focus areas: Strategy design, collaborative research, locally led adaptation, MEL innovation, inequality - Reshaping Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for Locally Led Adaptation

- **Archipelago Eco Investors (2020–2021)**

  Plastics One Fund Impact Measurement and Management System

  Key focus areas: Impact measurement and management (IMM), circular economy, systems innovation

- **FCDO EQuALS Expert Panel (2018–ongoing)**

  MEL Technical Advisory Service

  Key Focus areas: Evaluation quality assurance, including theory of change, evaluation design, evaluability assessment, and peer review of evaluation reports

- **World Bank Adaptation Fund (2019-20)**

  Innovative MEL Study

  Key Focus areas: complex adaptive systems, systems transformation, innovation in MEL, local voice in MEL

- **DFID Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes (BRACED) (2014-18)**

  Head of MEL Unit, BRACED Knowledge Manager

  Key Focus areas: Impact evaluation design, multi-country monitoring system design, resilience measurement and monitoring

Contact Robbie

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