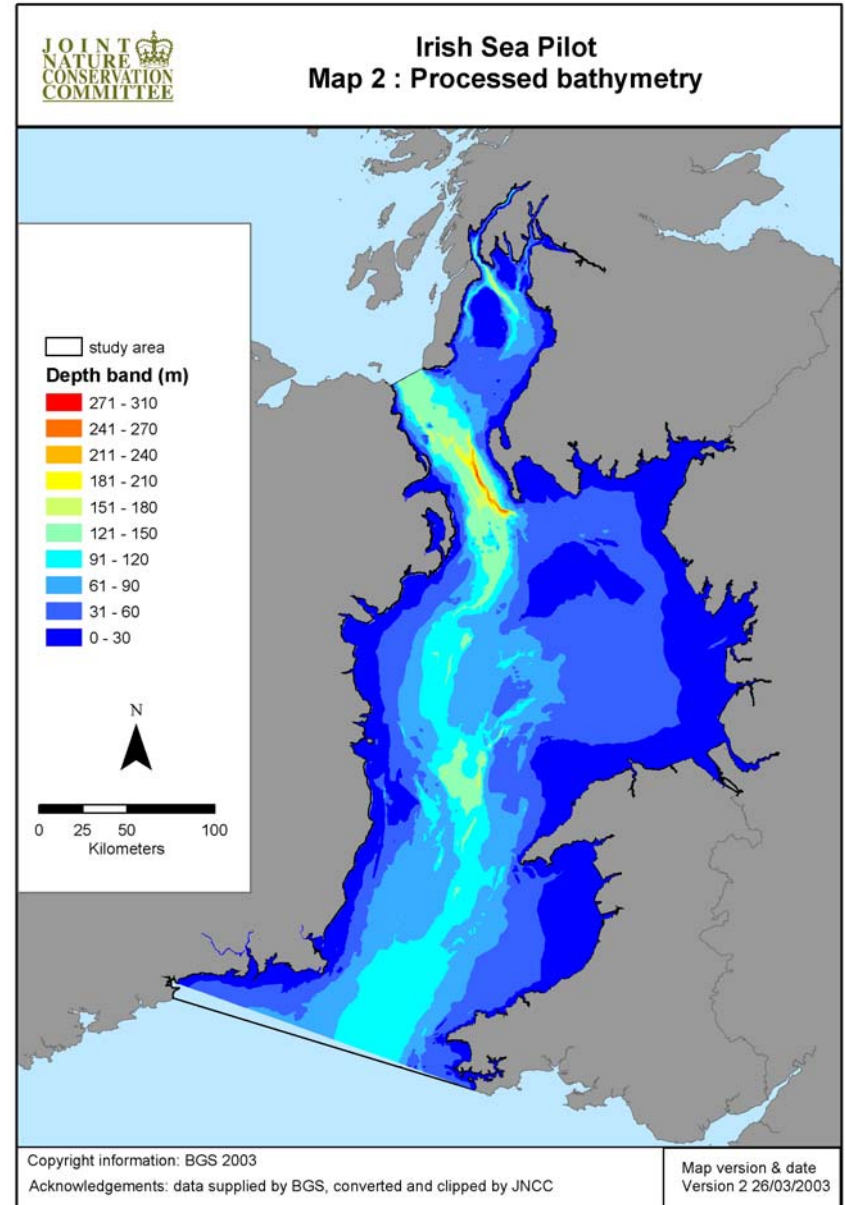


Irish Sea Pilot

Testing marine nature
conservation policy
at a regional sea
scale

www.jncc.gov.uk/irishseapilot



A new nature conservation framework

SCALES

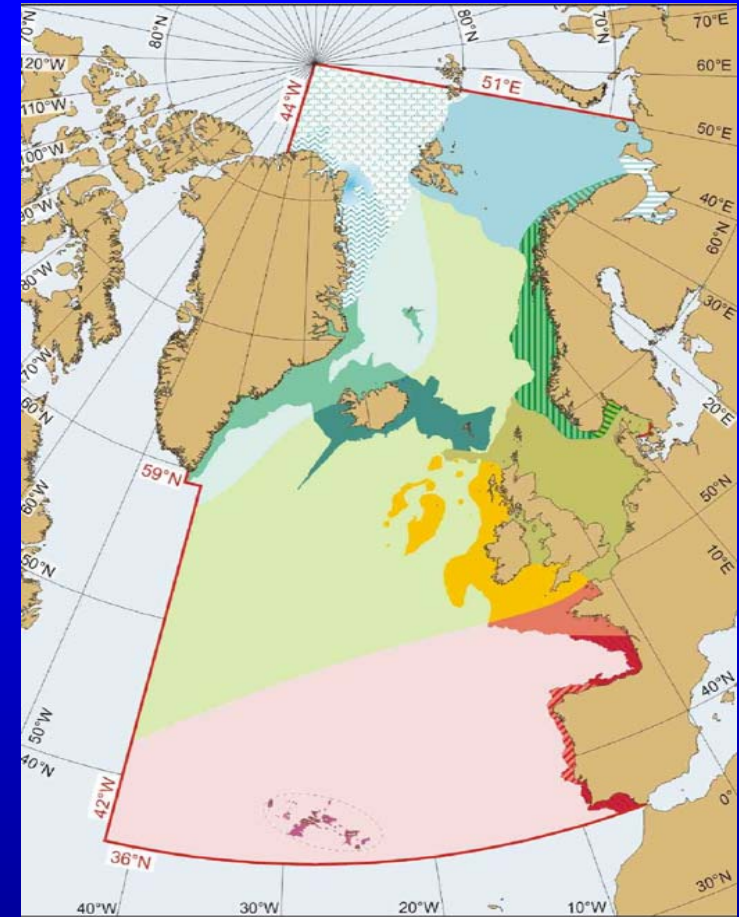
1. The whole (regional) sea
2. Marine landscapes
3. Special Areas
4. Habitats/ species

PROCESS

1. Data collation
2. Mapping and GIS
3. Set and refine criteria
4. Identify features requiring conservation
5. Set conservation objectives
6. Review governance and develop proposals

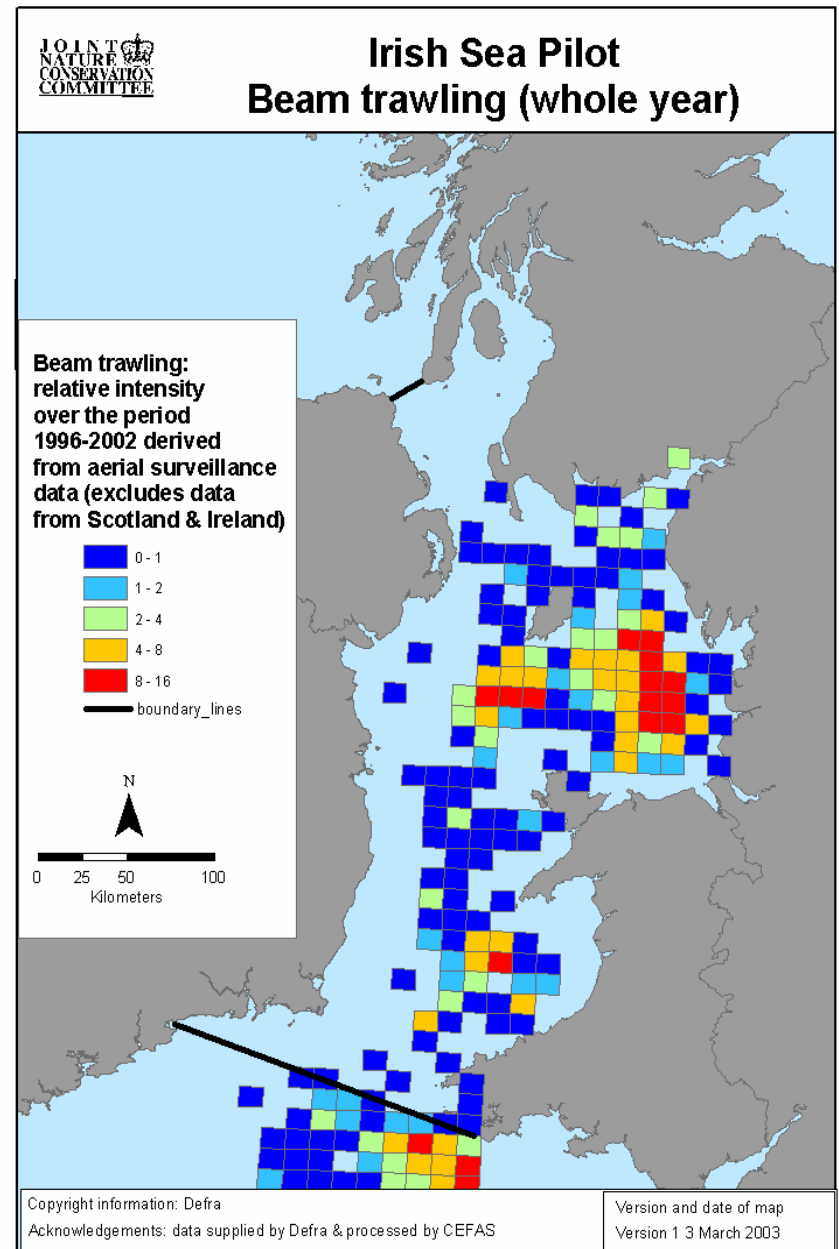
Whole Sea proposals

- Apply an ecosystem approach, avoiding adverse incentives and subsidies.
- Co-ordinate data management and monitoring internationally with common standards and data sharing.

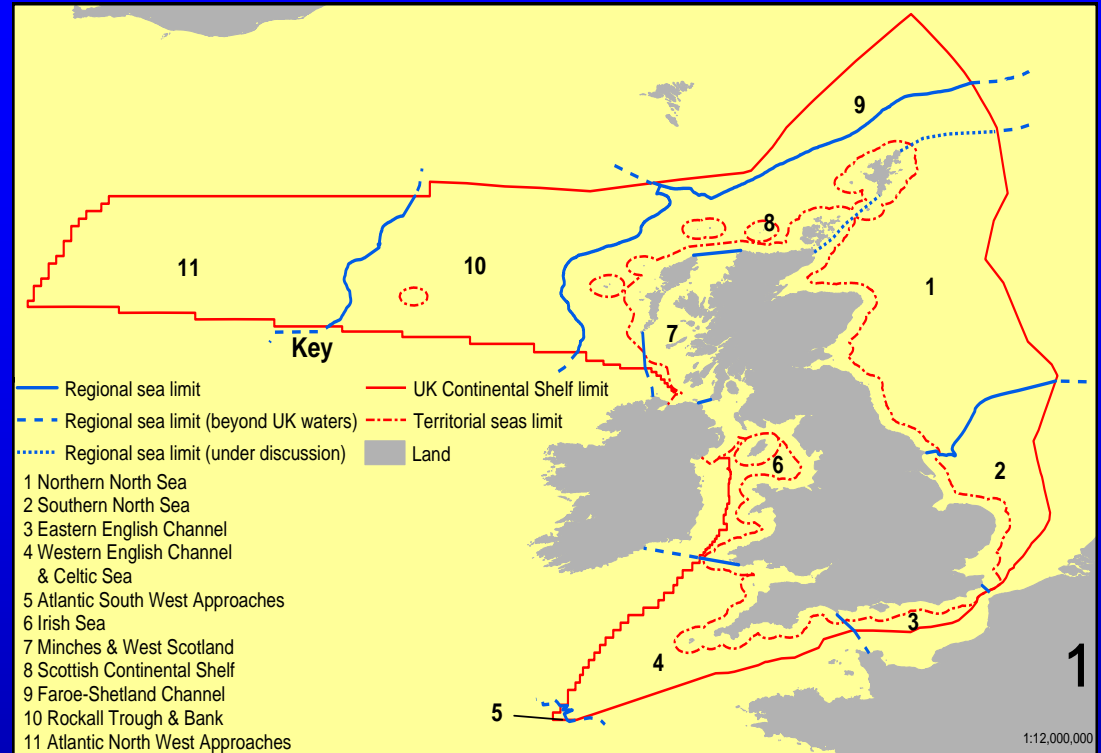


Data proposals

1. Establish standard marine and coastal map/chart & coastline.
2. Set up an EU marine data system, (harmonisation not integration, common standards, defined data management responsibilities)
3. Publicly funded data should be publicly available.
4. Consent data should be publicly available
5. Maintain library of GIS data.



Regional sea proposals



➤ Establish EU policy support

➤ Agree a regional sea framework internationally.

➤ Set up regional sea Fora with international, national and stakeholder engagement.

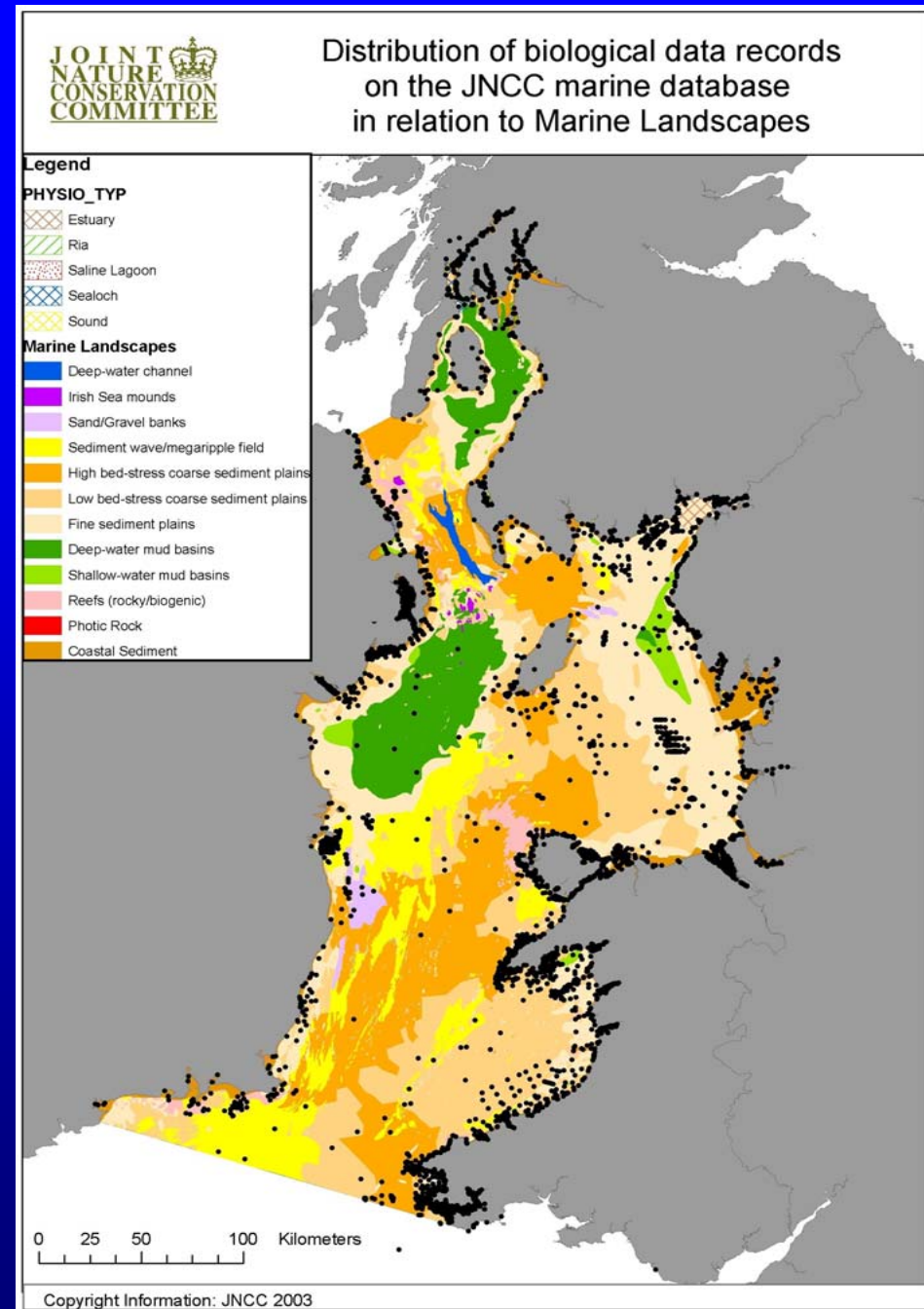
➤ Use the regional sea scale for strategic planning, and establishing an ecologically coherent network of MPA.

Marine Landscapes: Uses

- A seabed 'countryside map',
- A guide for conservation policy
- A backdrop for spatial planning
- Scale to describe human uses

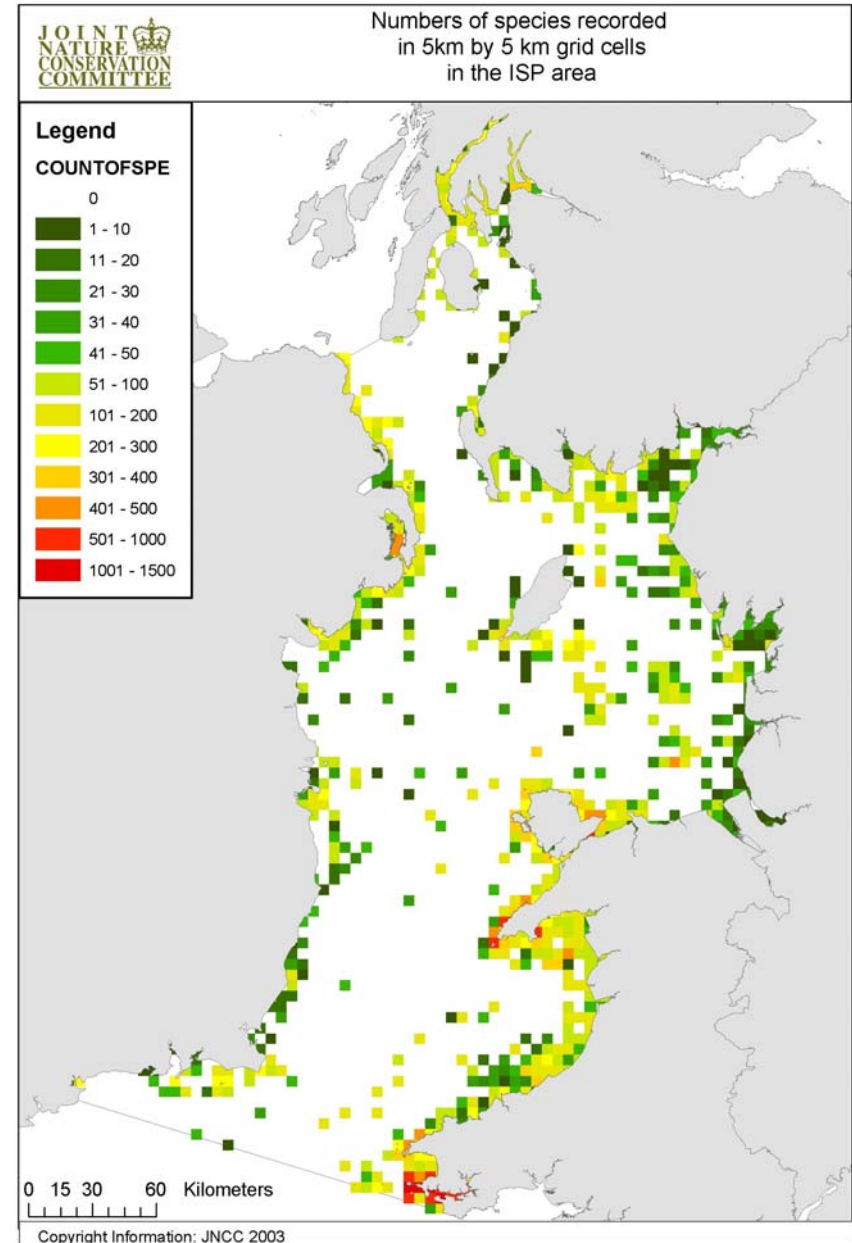
Proposals:

- Adopt a landscape classification approach,
- Further refine and test methods
- Map the landscapes of NW European seas



Nationally important areas

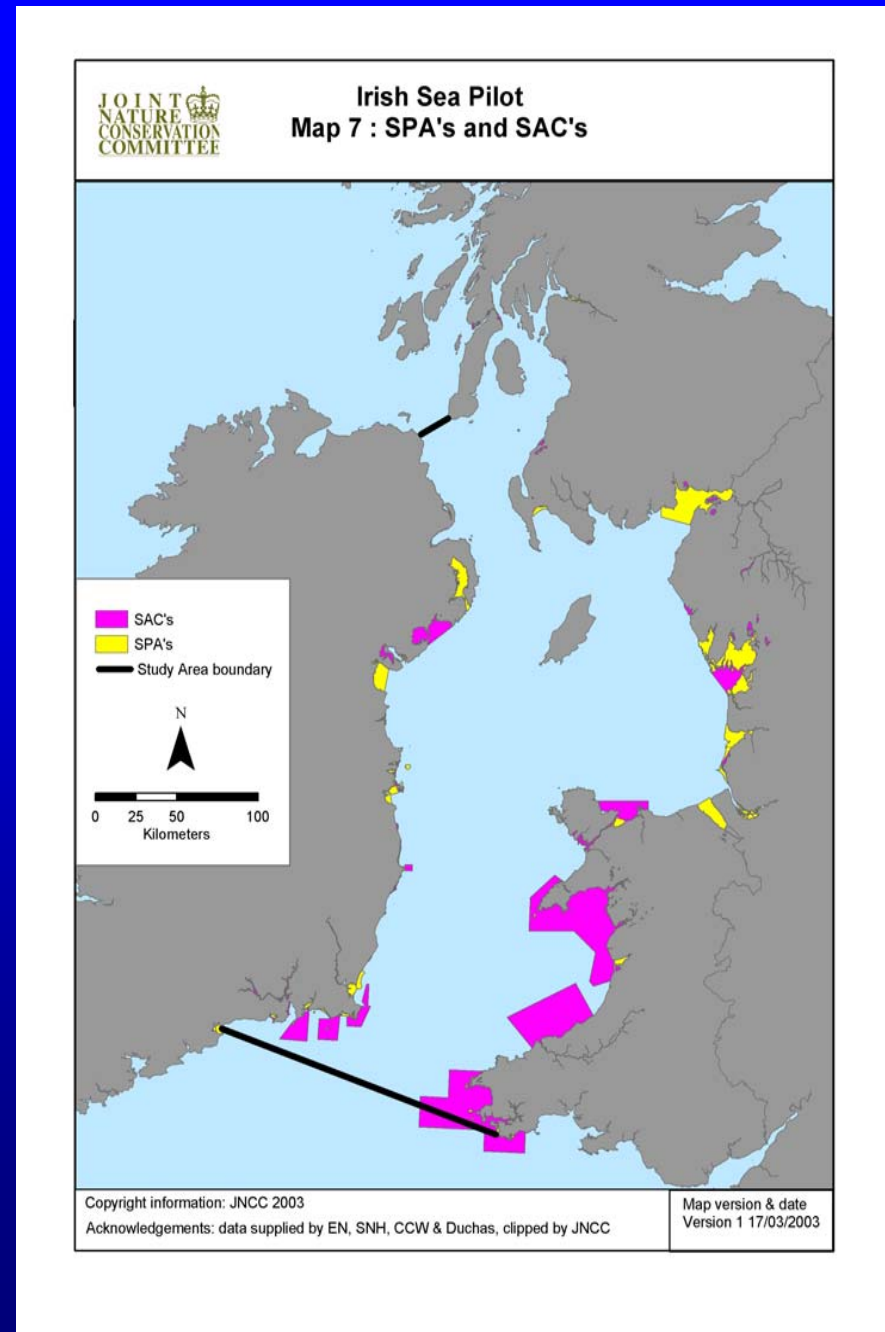
- Relationships of species with ecological units
- Broad-scale sensitivity mapping
- Identify high biodiversity areas
- Nationally important area criteria



Nationally important areas:

Proposals

- Establish an ecologically-coherent network of nationally-important areas.
- Make provision for management schemes and regulatory measures to protect areas from damage.
- Carry out trials of no take zones with the agreement of the fishing industry.



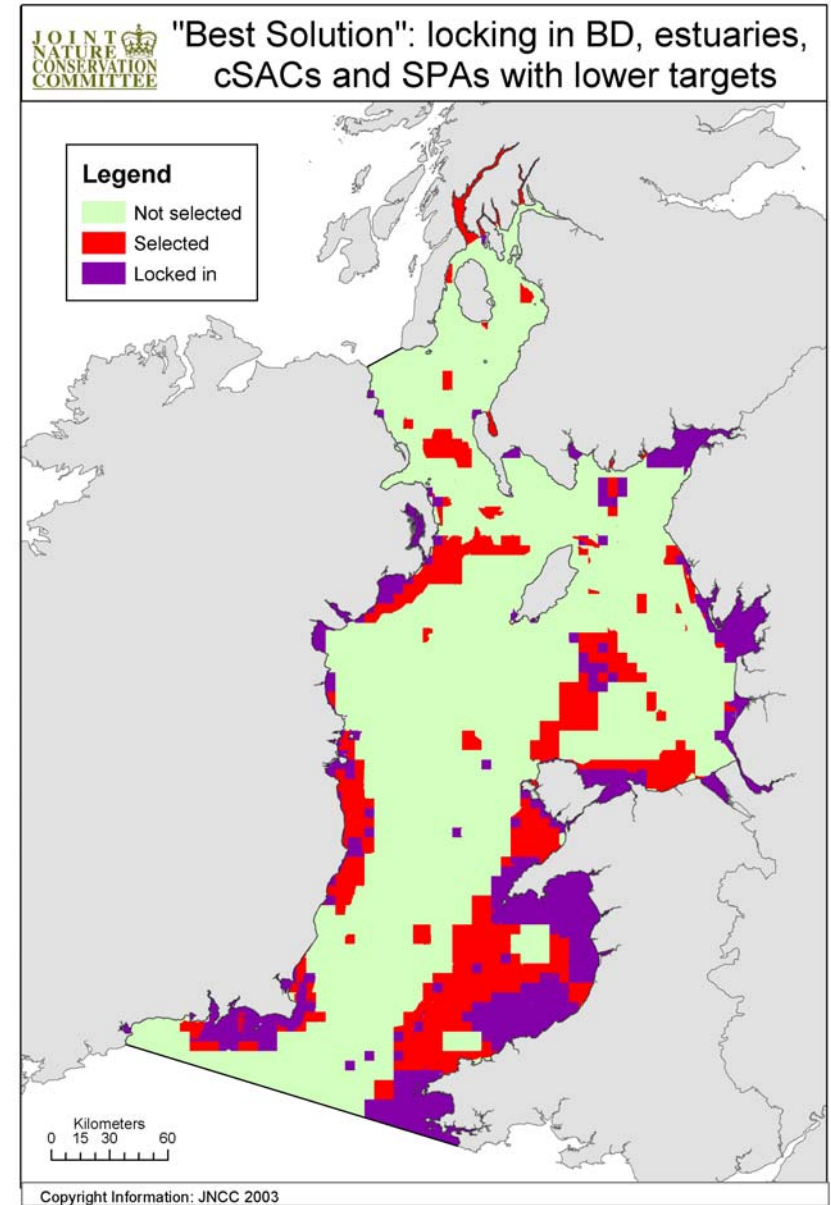
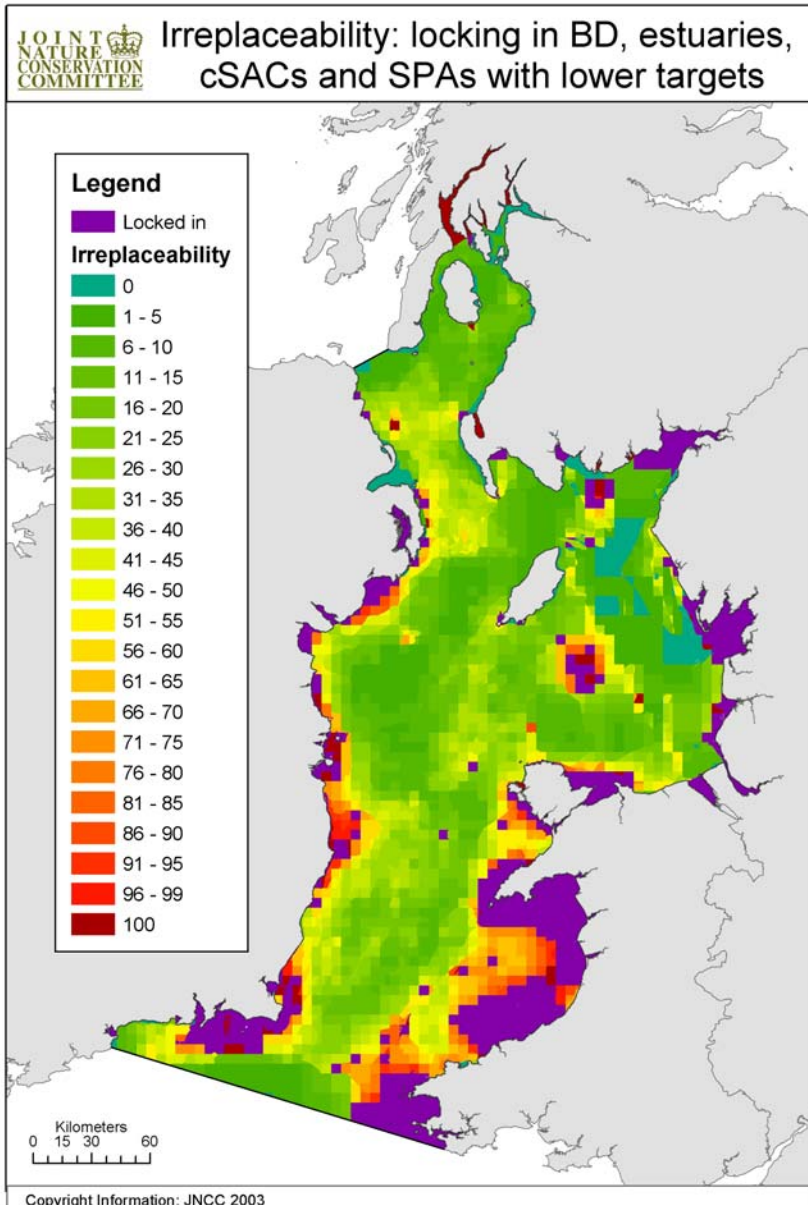
Why advocate a national site series

1. To restore population structure: e.g. age, size, gender;
2. To protect biodiversity assemblages
3. To eliminate fishing gear impacts and by-catch from important areas;
4. To provide fisheries data crucial to improving management regimes : e.g. mortality rates;
5. To demonstrate the benefits of management;
6. To provide long term 'natural' monitoring, benchmark, control and research sites.

Principles of an ecologically coherent network

1. **Mutually supporting areas;**
2. **Incorporating the full spectrum of biological diversity (not just rarity, endangerment etc);**
3. **Replication of habitats in separate areas;**
4. **Total area and site distribution should sustain species and habitats in perpetuity;**
5. **Use of the best available information for site selection, without delay pending data collection .**

Testing the use of MARXAN software in the Irish Sea



Nationally important habitats & species

- 26 habitats
- 170 species



Proposals:

1. Adopt criteria
2. Agree a national list of important features
3. A statutory duty to list features and promote recovery measures

Enforcement proposals

- 1. Identify a primary responsibility for marine nature conservation enforcement and provide requisite powers**
- 2. Establish a national recording scheme for offences, incidents and prosecutions**
- 3. Examine requirements and costs of more effective enforcement of marine nature conservation and consider possible agency structures.**

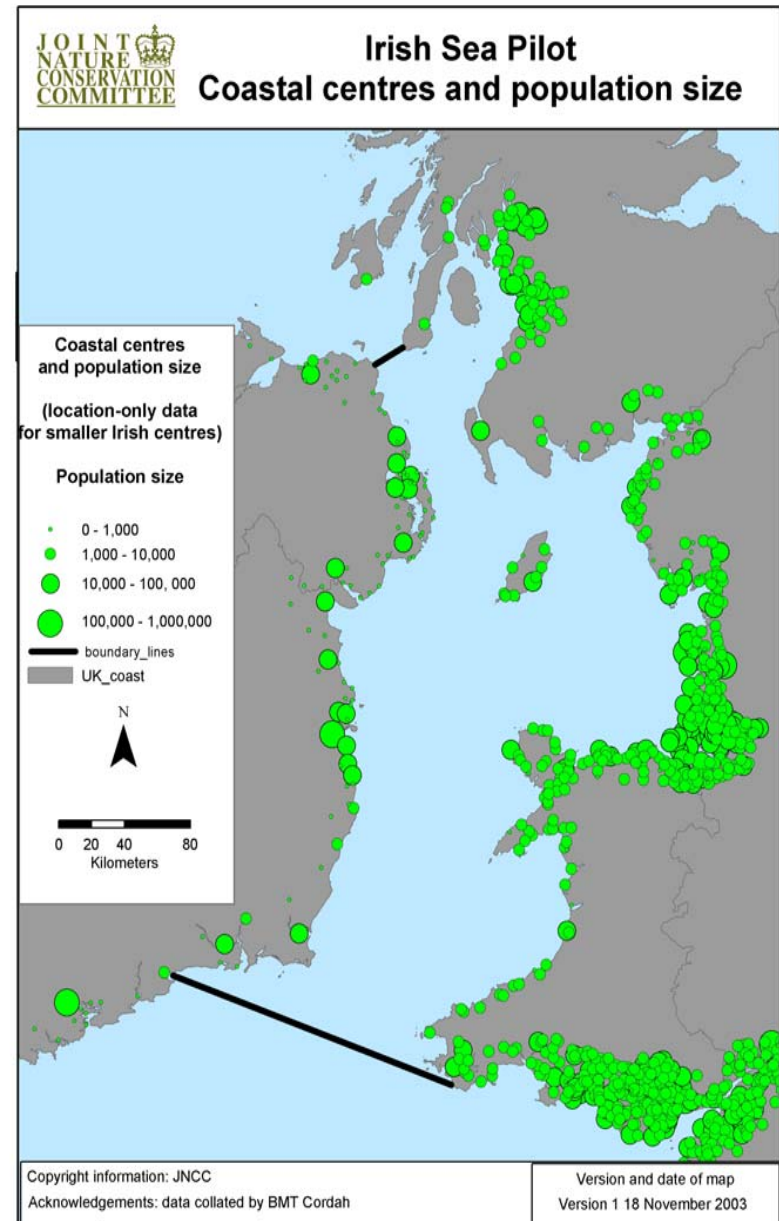
Governance proposals

- 1. A new Cabinet committee with overall responsibility for marine strategic planning**
- 2. Defra lead in strategic planning of regional seas, engaging departmental, devolved and international interests**
- 3. Investigate the benefits combining department or agency responsibilities for marine sustainable development.**

UK Marine Spatial Planning?

New legislation, powers and duties needed to provide for:

- Plan preparation 0-200NM
- An ecosystem approach
- Duties on public bodies to act sustainably
- Building international consensus for regional sea scale policies



Future work

1. Completion of a national list of species, habitats & landscapes
2. Refinement and extension of a marine landscape classification
3. International agreement on a regional sea structure
4. Completion of the nature conservation framework for the Irish Sea
5. Implementation of the framework as part of an integrated management scheme for the Irish Sea
6. A trial of marine spatial planning at the regional sea scale