

Implementation lessons from other measures: Habitats (and Birds) Directives and MPAs

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MPA requirements of the Directives

Habitats and Birds Directives

- Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs) to form a “coherent European ecological network” of protected areas

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- spatial protection measures, contributing to coherent and representative networks of marine protected areas



Objectives of MPAs in the context of wider environment

Habitats and Birds Directives

- Natura 2000 sites will contribute to maintaining habitats & species at favourable conservation status

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- marine protected areas are an important contribution to the achievement of good environmental status



MPA principles of the network

Habitats and Birds Directives

- SAC network based on key principles of sufficiency, proportionality and natural range
- SPAs on selecting the most suitable sites

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- Network based on SACs & SPAs plus other marine protected areas
- OSPAR MPA network selection principles of representativity, connectivity, replication



Range of ecosystem covered by MPAs under the Directives

Habitats and Birds Directives

- SACs selected only for listed habitats & species
- Marine habitats and species listed are very broad scale, with important habitats missing
- SPAs for listed and regularly occurring migratory birds

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- marine protected areas ‘adequately covering the diversity of the constituent ecosystems ‘



Selection of MPAs under the Directives

Habitats and Birds Directives

- SACs selected on scientific grounds only
- SPAs selected using ornithological criteria only
- Consultation on scientific grounds for site selection

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- No requirement to use only scientific criteria for selection
- No criteria specified
- Provides opportunity for stakeholder engagement at an early stage



UK Natura 2000 progress so far

Habitats Directive

- Implemented 1992 to present (inshore waters), 2000 to present (offshore waters)
- There are currently 81 SACs with marine components
- Additional inshore and offshore sites in preparation

Birds Directive

- Implemented 1979 to present
- There are currently 73 SPAs with marine components in coastal and inshore waters
- Additional inshore and offshore sites in preparation



Member State obligation to identify MPAs

Habitats and Birds Directives

- Legal requirement to select sufficient or most suitable sites

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

- Relies on Member States to identify sites according to Regional Environmental Agreements (eg OSPAR) and their national legislation



MSFD Article 13

“Programmes of measures ... shall include spatial protection measures, contributing to coherent and representative networks of marine protected areas ... as agreed by the Community or Member States concerned in the framework of international or regional agreements to which they are parties.”



International MPA commitments



OSPAR Convention: contribute to an ecologically coherent network of well managed MPAs by 2010

World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD): establish a representative network of MPAs by 2012

Convention on Biological Diversity: establish a network of well managed MPAs by 2012



International MPA network concepts

- Ecological coherence of networks – applying principles such as replication and connectivity
- Creating a representative network to protect ‘a bit of everything’ not just rare or vulnerable habitats and species
- Engaging stakeholders in site identification encourages support and ‘ownership’ of MPA networks



MPA commitments in UK



- UK Government and Devolved Administrations are committed to establishing an ecologically coherent and well-managed network of marine protected areas (MPAs) by 2012.
- Such a network will enable the UK to meet commitments under international conventions and contribute to measures aimed at achieving good environmental status in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- This network will be an important tool to protect our marine environment and help its recovery where necessary.



Statutory implementation of MPA network concepts in UK

- The Marine and Coastal Access Act enables the creation of a new type of MPA, a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), to protect nationally important marine wildlife, habitats, geology and geomorphology.
- Allows for the use of socio-economic information in the identification of MCZs
- The Act requires the creation of a network of sites which will:
 - represent the range of features present in the UK (representativity)
 - designation of more than one site per feature (replication)



Establishing a network of MPAs in UK waters

- The MPA network will consist of existing sites (SACs, SPAs, SSSIs and Ramsar sites) and new national MPAs, which the UK Government and Devolved Administrations will introduce through the Marine and Coastal Access Act and Marine (Scotland) Bill
- UK Government and Devolved Administrations and their Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies are working in partnership with stakeholders to identify new MPAs



Lessons learnt from Natura Directives

- Legal imperative is a strength
- Listing habitats and species is a strength, but can be restrictive
- Network concept in Habitats Directive is a strength, but needs to be built upon
- Scientific approach to selection is a strength, but lack of stakeholder involvement in identification of sites hinders support for them



Questions?

