

OUR CASE STUDY AREAS



Illustration by Karl Whiteley

GET IN TOUCH

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Working together to safeguard
Marine Protected Areas

THE UK SEAS PROJECT

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WWF'S PARTNERSHIP WITH SKY OCEAN RESCUE

All life on Earth depends on our seas; they regulate our climate, generate oxygen and provide food and livelihoods for hundreds of millions of people. Yet our seas are under greater threat than ever - we are putting unsustainable pressure on our seas and the wildlife that lives there.

That's why we've partnered with Sky Ocean Rescue - our five-year partnership will see WWF working in the seas around the UK, Italy, Germany and Spain.

More than 20% of UK waters are designated as key areas for protection, known as **Marine Protected Areas**, or **MPAs**. They work by creating a safe place for nature, giving it a chance to recover from past damage and thrive again.



But for these MPAs to really work, we need them to be well managed, where wildlife is protected, and activities like tourism and fishing can happen in a sustainable way.

The UK SEAS project plays a key part in our partnership with Sky Ocean Rescue, using case study areas in North Devon and the Outer Hebrides to test new approaches to MPA management, and sharing successes and learnings across the UK and beyond.

As part of the partnership, we're also working to protect enigmatic harbour porpoises in UK waters from underwater noise and fisheries bycatch.

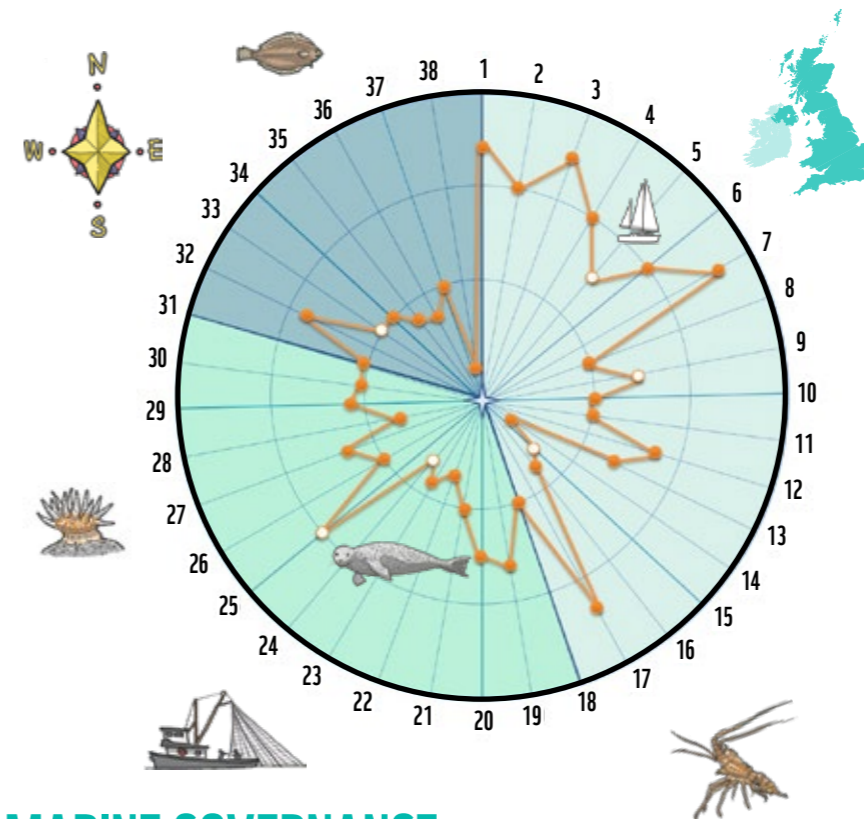


SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the habitats and species within them provide significant benefits to communities, such as fish, beautiful scenery and flood protection. These benefits to people are known as ecosystem services.

However, these benefits are threatened because of increasing pressure on the marine environment from human activities. Also, funding for the marine environment is stretched, and is likely to continue declining over time. That means we urgently need new ways to provide stable, long term funding for MPAs.

We are developing innovative sustainable finance mechanisms in our case study areas, and will use learnings from this to influence key policy changes. We're also building support amongst private and public sector stakeholders to participate and support these pilot projects.



MARINE GOVERNANCE

Many people benefit from and use the seas around us, but who should be responsible for making decisions about the use and management of the sea?

The UK SEAS project is taking a fresh look at how we manage our seas; recognising the importance of including people who use and depend on the area in management. Having good engagement with the people on the ground makes sure that management decisions are realistic, inclusive and sustainable.

The UK has committed to having a well managed network of MPAs, but what does well managed mean and how will we know when we achieve it? To answer this we've developed a tool to monitor our progress – the compass. This is composed of 38 criteria, all of which are necessary in order for a Marine Protected Area to be truly well managed.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



We want to put the voices of sea-users at the heart of discussions around the future management of our seas.

In order to foster greater stewardship for MPAs in coastal communities, we will engage and inspire new audiences, who may not currently feel a particular connection to the sea.



WHO ARE OUR PARTNERS?

The UK SEAS project is funded through a partnership between WWF and Sky Ocean Rescue. We're also working in partnership with statutory agencies, UK government, research bodies, universities, businesses and residents.

The UK SEAS North Devon case study forms part of Defra's marine pioneer – which is being delivered to pioneer the use of natural capital approaches set out in the UK Government's 25 year environment plan.

