



Highly protected marine reserves: their contribution to achieving MPA targets for Wales

Mary Lewis
Maritime Policy Officer
Countryside Council for Wales

Summary



Cyngror Cefn Gwlad Cymru
Countryside Council for Wales

Progress towards meeting MPA targets in Wales

Delivering an ecosystem approach to management of the Welsh maritime environment

HPMRs as a key tool in achieving the above

Steps towards HPMRs for Welsh waters and achieving our MPA targets



MPA targets



Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru
Countryside Council for Wales

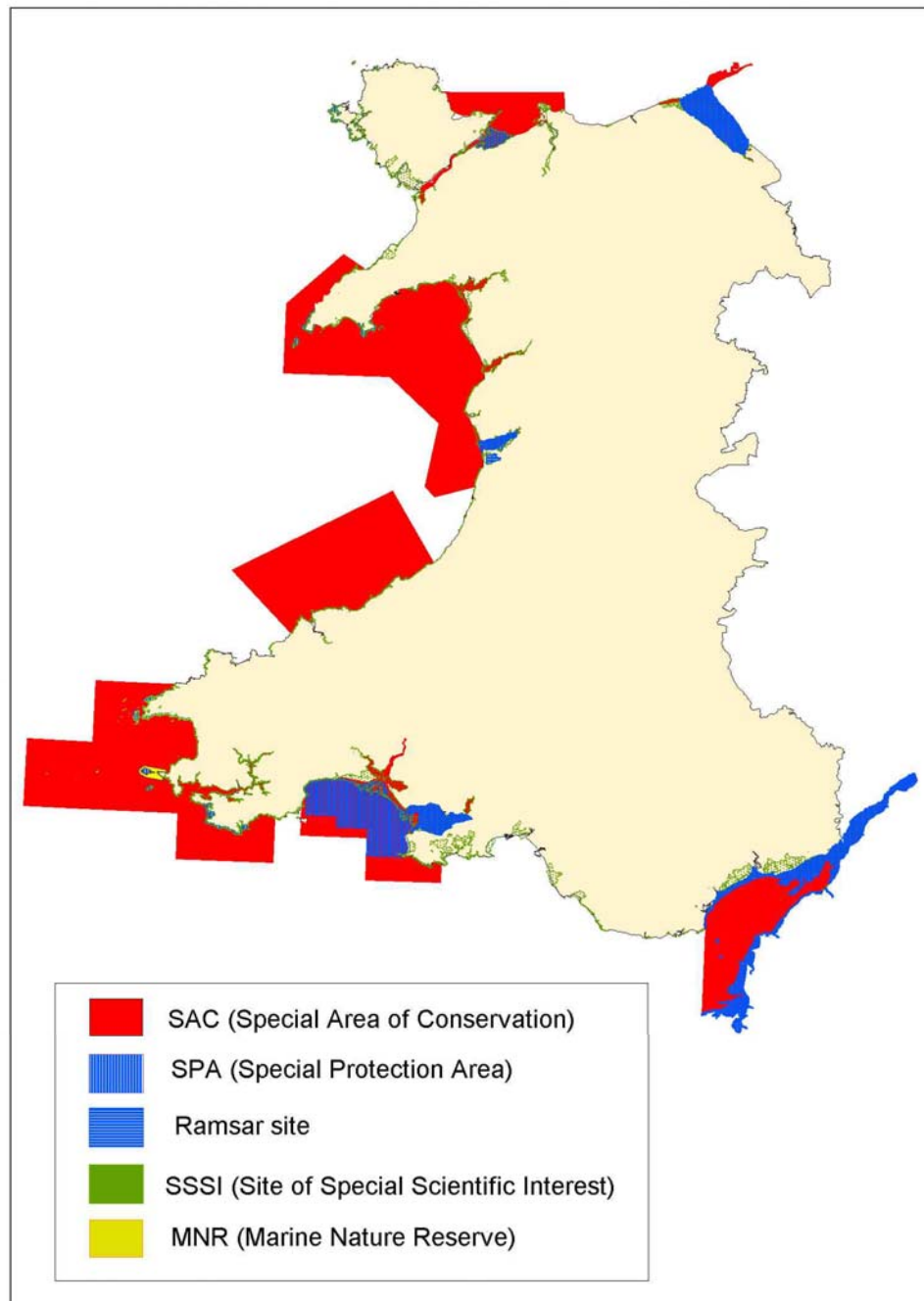
- Network
- Representative
- Ecologically coherent
- Well managed
- In place by 2010 / 2012



Current MPA Network in Wales

SAC and SPA
network
covers:

- 30% Welsh territorial seas
- 70% of the Welsh coastline



Does the existing network meet MPA targets?



Network ✓

Well managed?

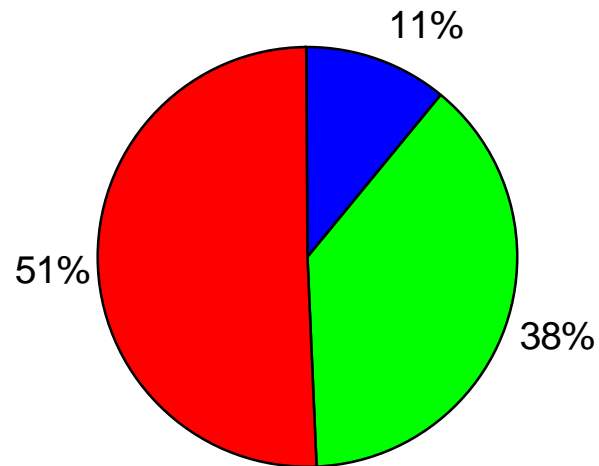


Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

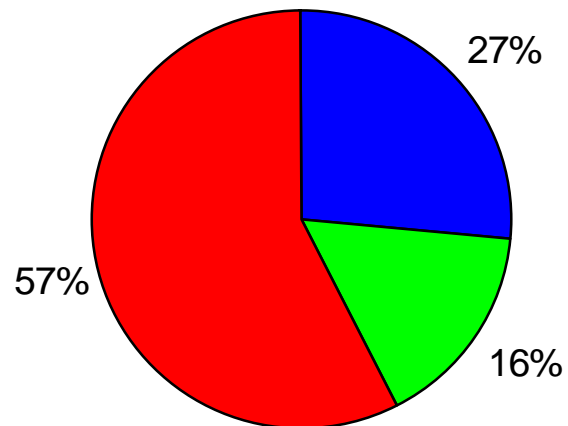
COMIT HODDEB I'W SPWYLLIAD BUCH

Welsh Marine SACs, 2007

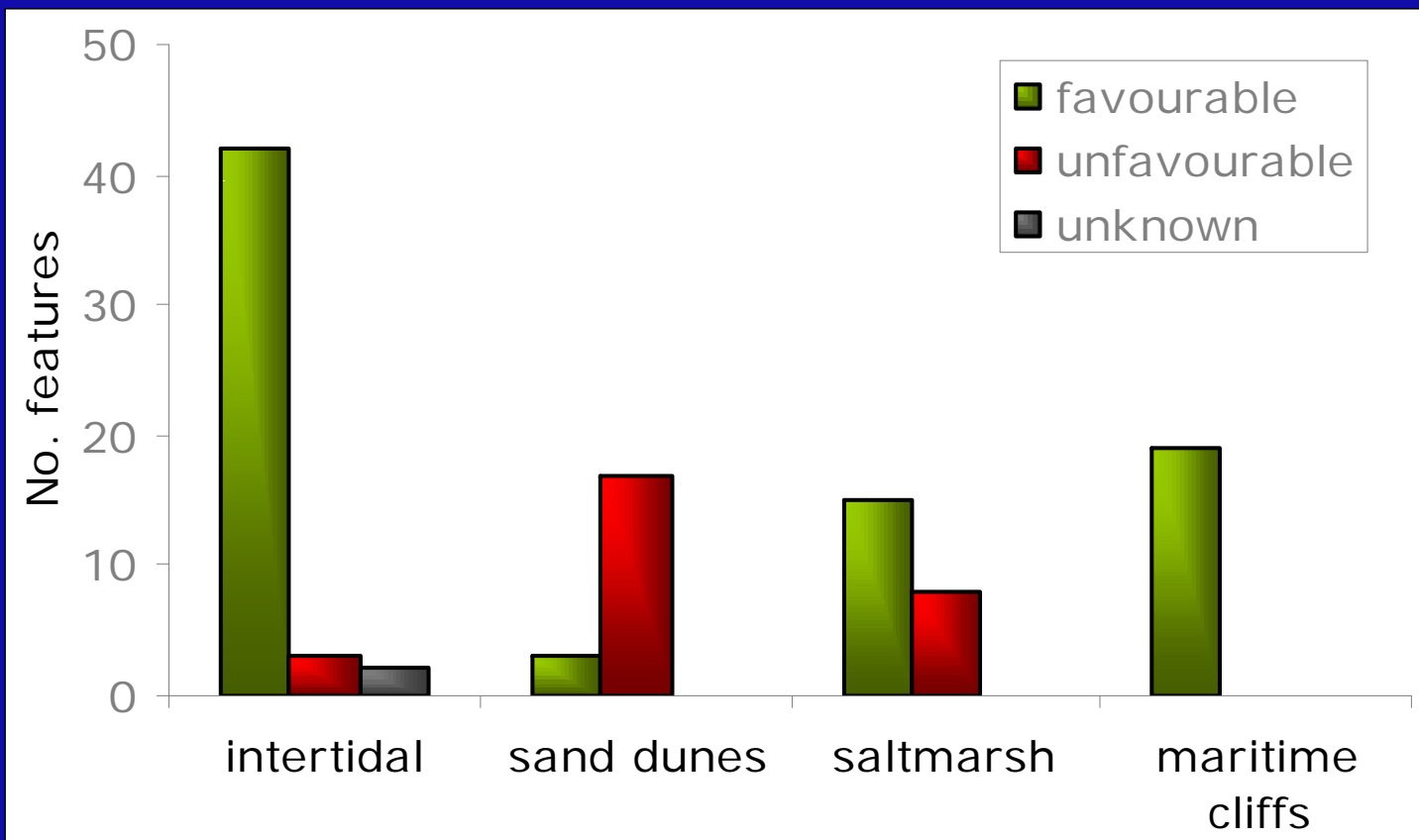
Condition
assessment of
site features



Conservation
status of site
features



Sites of Special Scientific Interest: condition assessment, 2006



Does the existing network meet MPA targets?

Network? ✓

Well managed? ✗



Does the existing network meet MPA targets?



Network? ✓

Well managed? *x*

Representative?

Ecologically coherent?



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

CEIRI HODDERS YN SPWYLLIED BUCK



Cynghor Cefn Gwlad Cymru
Countrywide Council for Wales



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

COMIT HODDEB I'W SPONSORIED BODD

Does the existing network meet MPA targets?



Network? ✓

Well managed? ✗

Representative ✗

Ecologically coherent ✗

2010 / 2012 ?



Wider context: the Welsh maritime environment

1. The Welsh maritime ecosystem has been negatively impacted upon by human activities
2. Action is needed to recover and increase resilience of Welsh maritime ecosystems, so that they can continue to provide the goods and services humans expect from them



Wider context: ecosystem approach

We need to develop a more holistic framework for management of human activity, that fully incorporates the need for protection of ecosystem function.

The ecosystem approach.



Highly protected marine reserves: what are they?



CCW definition:

“HPMRs are areas where there is a presumption against human activities, unless it can be demonstrated that they will not have a negative impact on the area.”

HPMRs: the intended benefits for Wales

- Facilitate recover and enhance resilience of wider marine environment
- Protection and recovery of large and long lived
- Protection and recovery of sensitive habitats
- Increased resilience of European Marine Sites
- Better understanding of what a natural maritime ecosystem would look like
- Help secure ecosystem goods and services for the long term



HPMRs: marine biodiversity benefits

- Study by Sue Gubbay (2006) HPMRs - evidence of benefits and opportunities for marine biodiversity in Wales
- Focus on temperate ecosystems
- Variety of biodiversity and ecosystem benefits likely to accrue over time
- Exact nature of benefits depends on sites selected and condition on designation etc.



HPMRs: marine biodiversity benefits

Gubbay (2006)

- Higher densities, biomass, size and diversity of certain species or groups of species.
- Prevention of physical damage and degradation of marine habitats
- Community and ecosystem benefits such as greater complexity of food webs and increased primary and secondary productivity
- Space and time to support the recovery and restoration of degraded habitats and declining species
- Building and supporting resilience in ecosystems
- Provision of reference areas for studying and improving understanding of the impacts of human activities on the marine environment and natural systems

HPMRs: how do we get there ?

- Study by Andrews (2006) concluded that we don't currently have the tools to designate HPMRs
- Marine Bill provides the mechanism to secure HPMRs



HPMRs: how do we get there ?

Marine Bill White Paper extract:

6.50 Where it is appropriate to allow sites to fully recover and develop, objectives may be set for MCZs that exclude all damaging or potentially damaging activities. This would create highly protected marine reserves. Such sites can play an important role in the marine protected area networks by enabling the recovery of ecosystem structure and function and providing a benchmark for the effectiveness of wider measures such as marine planning. Where suitable locations can be identified, we would aim to include a number of such sites in any MPA network.

CCW's priorities: response to Marine Bill

To ensure:

- Existing sites are properly managed
- a new system of marine spatial planning allows for the sustainable management of the wider environment
- A mechanism is available for HPMRs



HPMRs: relationship to marine SACs

CBD* sites	Designation
Multiple use sites	SACs
Strict protection sites	HPMRs



*Convention on Biological Diversity

HPMRs: next steps for Wales

- Project to recommend a process for identifying HPMRs in Welsh waters
- Within broad framework of White Paper
- Not identifying actual sites



Project objectives:



To recommend:

1. A suite of ecological criteria for identifying HPMRs
2. A process for site selection, including
 - (a) Socio-economic criteria
 - (b) A decision-making process
3. An overall process for identification, designation and review, including stakeholder involvement.
4. A policy approach to establishing HPMRs in Wales
5. Next steps for Wales, towards establishing HPMRs



HPMRs: mutual benefits



Priorities for achieving our MPA targets and securing HPMRs

Increase understanding of value and need for MPAs

Secure wide stakeholder support for MPAs, including HPMRs

Develop tools for identifying and managing HPMRs