



Nature restoration law and MPAs

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for the Baltic marine region

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Proposal for a nature restoration law

A key initiative of the **European Green Deal** and the **Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**:

- **Protection** needs to be strengthened but **is not enough**
- Need for **large scale restoration effort**
- Complement and **build on existing policy framework** (BHD, MSFD, WFD)
- Focus on the **synergies between climate and nature policy**



Regulation on nature restoration: structure



By 2030 restoration measures cover 20% of EU's land and sea

By 2050 – all ecosystems in need of restoration

Specific restoration targets

Protected
Habitat Types
(Annex I HD)



Habitats of
protected
species (BHD)



Marine
Habitats
(beyond HD)



Urban
ecosystems



River
connectivity



Pollinators



Agro-
ecosystems



Forest
ecosystems



Marine restoration targets

- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to improve** to good condition areas of habitats in not-good condition
 - ✓ ...for **groups** of habitat types: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **90%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to re-establish** the habitat to reach the favourable reference area
 - ✓ ...for **groups** of habitat types: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **100%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary to **improve the quality and quantity** of habitats of species listed in Art. II, IV, V HD and wild birds + Annex III of regulation (including re-establishing them) and **enhance connectivity** until sufficient quality & quantity is achieved

Marine habitat types (Annex II)

1. Seagrass beds
2. Macroalgal forests
3. Shellfish beds
4. Maerl beds
5. Sponge, coral and coralligenous beds
6. Vents and seeps
7. Soft sediments (above 1000 meters of depth)

2. GROUP 2: MACROALGAL FORESTS

EUNIS code	EUNIS habitat type name	Related Annex I (Habitats Directive) codes
Atlantic		
MA123	Seaweed communities on full salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1160; 1170; 1130
MA125	Fucoids on variable salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1170; 1130
MB121	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB123	Kelp and seaweed communities on sediment-affected or disturbed Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB124	Kelp communities on variable salinity Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1130; 1160
MB321	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral coarse sediment	1160
MB521	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral sand	1160
MB621	Vegetated communities on Atlantic infralittoral mud	1160
Baltic Sea		
MA131	Baltic hydrolittoral rock and boulders characterised by perennial algae	1160; 1170; 1130; 1610; 1620
MB131	Perennial algae on Baltic infralittoral rock and boulders	1170; 1160
MB232	Baltic infralittoral bottoms characterised by shell gravel	1160; 1110
MB333	Baltic infralittoral coarse sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1160
MB433	Baltic infralittoral mixed sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1130; 1160; 1170
Black Sea		
MB144	Mytilid-dominated Black Sea exposed upper infralittoral rock with fucales	1170; 1160

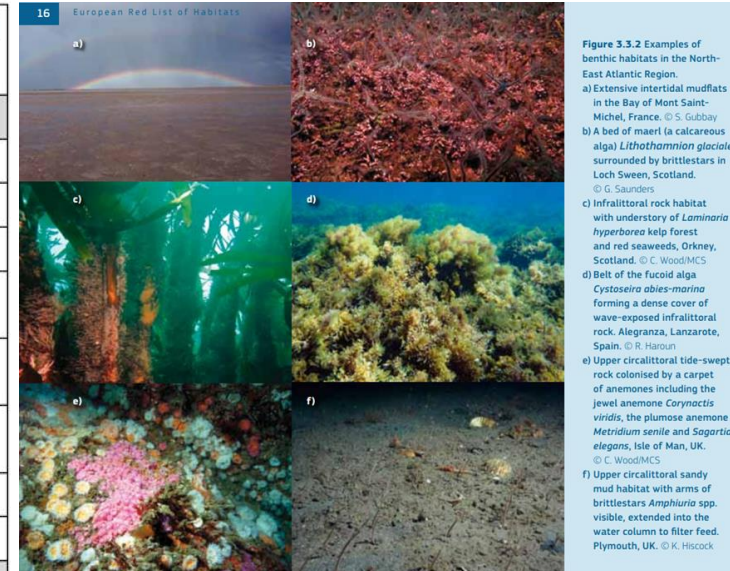


Figure 3.3.2 Examples of benthic habitats in the North-East Atlantic Region.
a) Extensive intertidal mudflats in the Bay of Mont Saint-Michel, France. © S. Gubbay
b) A bed of maerl (a calcareous alga) *Lithothamnion glaciale* surrounded by brittlestars in Loch Sween, Scotland. © G. Saunders
c) Infralittoral rock habitat with understory of *Laminaria hyperborea* kelp forest and red seaweeds, Orkney, Scotland. © C. Wood/MCS
d) Belt of the fucoid alga *Cystoseira abies-marina* forming a dense cover of wave-exposed infralittoral rock. Alegranza, Lanzarote, Spain. © R. Haroun
e) Upper circalittoral tide-swept rock colonised by a carpet of anemones including the jewel anemone *Corynactis viridis*, the plumose anemone *Metridium senile* and *Sagartia elegans*, Isle of Man, UK. © C. Wood/MCS
f) Upper circalittoral sandy mud habitat with arms of brittlestars *Amphiprora* spp. visible, extended into the water column to filter feed. Plymouth, UK. © R. Hiscock

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine_EU_red_list_report.pdf

What next for NRL?

- **Commission proposal** June 2022
- **Council general approach and EP report**
- **Ongoing trilogues**, ambition to agree on the law by end 2023
- **Preparations for the implementation** are ongoing with Member States and the European Environment Agency
- The first **deadlines for putting in place restoration measures** would approximately coincide with (protected area) targets of the Biodiversity strategy for 2030

Restoration and protection

Role of MPAs in restoration

- Areas under restoration **do not have to be protected areas**, however...
- If the restored areas comply with the criteria for protected areas, these areas should also contribute towards the EU targets on protected areas.
- Conservation objectives and measures in many **Natura 2000 sites and other MPAs already require restoration** of habitats.
- Protected areas will provide an important contribution to the restoration targets in the strategy by creating the conditions for restoration efforts to be successful and to ensure no deterioration.
- **Strictly protected areas have a key role in marine restoration.**

Strictly protected areas

- **Strictly protected areas will enable ecosystems to thrive** because they will create the close to pristine conditions without pressures.
- **Passive restoration – let the nature recover.** However, sometimes active restoration will be necessary (**re-establishment** of habitats).
- Live laboratory for showing what **good condition** actually means and which **restoration methods** work best.
- Success will depend on their proper **monitoring, surveillance and enforcement.**
- Demonstrate the **benefits nature can provide to society and economic sectors**, such as fisheries.

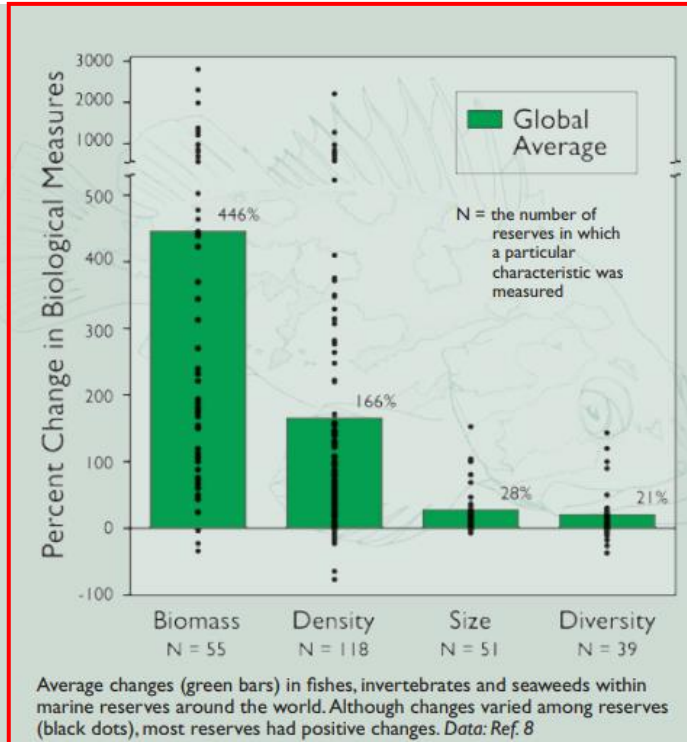
It is already happening...

Typically when a marine reserve is established, the goal is to increase the abundance and diversity of marine life inside. Scientific research shows that marine reserves consistently accomplish this goal.

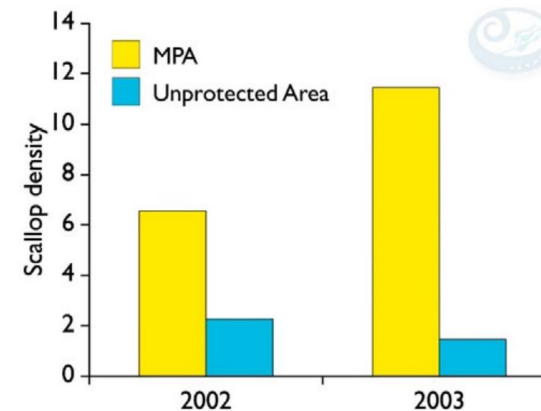
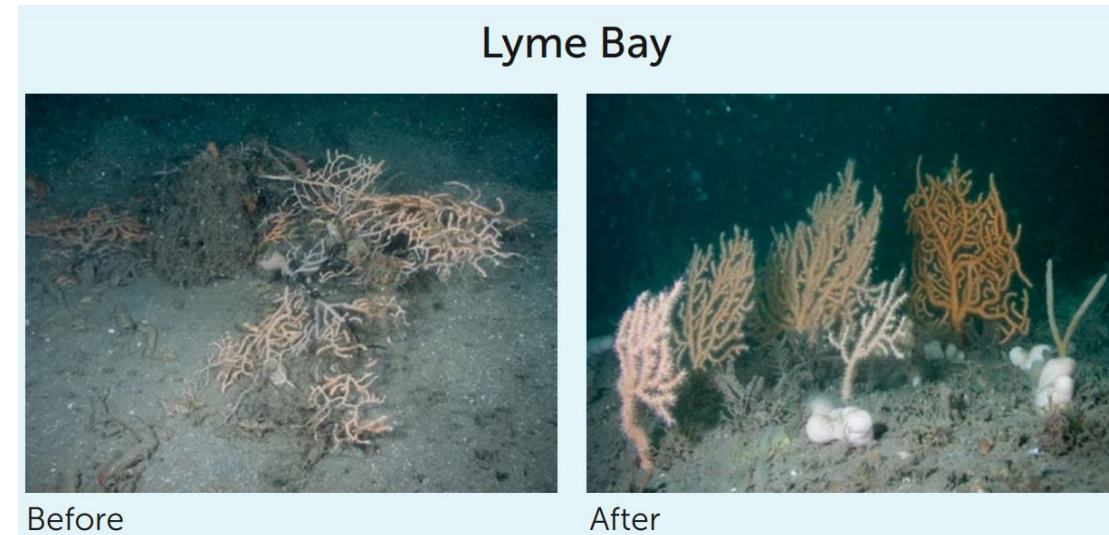
More Fishes, Shellfish, and Other Marine Life

Considerable scientific documentation—published in peer-reviewed journals—provides a clear picture of what has happened after the establishment of marine reserves.

Scientists have studied more than 150 marine reserves around the world and monitored biological changes inside the reserves. In 2006, a global review of many of these studies (see top graph) revealed that fishes, invertebrates and seaweeds have shown average increases in biomass, density, size and diversity inside marine reserves.



Source: Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans. 2011. The Science of Marine Reserves (2nd Edition, Europe). www.piscoweb.org. 22 pages



Average densities of legal-sized scallops per 100m both inside the Bradda Inshore fishing exclusion zone and outside in adjacent fully fished areas during the years 2002 and 2003. Data: Beukers-Stewart et al. (2005) Marine Ecology Progress Series

Source: DEFRA (2020) Benyon Review Into Highly Protected Marine Areas, Final report.

Horizon Mission: Restore our Ocean, seas and waters by 2030

European Blue Parks call: Protection and restoration of marine habitats

- **Effectively managed marine protected areas with clear science-based conservation objectives and conservation measures that contribute to the restoration and protection of marine ecosystems and support a shift towards strictly protected areas;**
- **Protection and restoration of marine habitats and species through strictly protected areas, in particular of seabed habitats, including to preserve their carbon sequestration capacity, ensure spill-over of fish, provide ecosystem functionality and maintain connectivity;**
- **Enhanced resilience and adaptation potential** of coastal and marine ecosystems and improved provision of their ecosystem services, in particular in relation to **climate change mitigation/adaptation and to fisheries;**
- A blueprint for the designation and management of marine protected areas and/or for shifting their status from “protected” to “strictly protected” including criteria and tools for quantifying their success/ effectiveness in terms of conservation outcomes/results; a blueprint for the identification of ecological corridors as part of a blue Trans-European Nature Network;

Thank you



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