

MAKING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN LAND AND SEA

the place of coastal protected landscapes in the marine environment



foreword

The importance of the marine environment to coastal protected landscapes and vice versa may seem to be obvious. However, when one delves deeper into the matter, the connection between the two is a lot more complex than is immediately apparent and requires considerable study and a whole range of new actions on the part of the managers of these nationally important areas.

The Europarc Federation, in particular the Atlantic Isles Section, has recognised the need to address the many challenges that arise for protected landscapes where land and sea meet. In March 2006, Europarc Atlantic Isles ran a seminar in Manchester to identify those challenges. One of those identified was to raise awareness amongst all those involved with these areas [locally and nationally] of the challenges and the ways in which they might be addressed in the future.

The purpose of this booklet is to meet this challenge in three ways

1. by describing the nature and importance of the connection between land and sea in this context
2. by setting out a set of principles to guide the planning and management of the marine dimension of coastal protected landscapes
3. an agenda for protected landscapes in the United Kingdom

The Coastal and Marine Working Group, which has been formed by Europarc Atlantic Isles, has a membership drawn from many of the coastal protected landscapes in UK, from the national conservation agencies and NGOs. Its work will be devoted to promoting the principles and the Agenda amongst policy makers at local and national level

Whilst the focus of the booklet is on the UK, the Working Group hopes that it will strike a chord around the whole European coast and that the principles will be of value to all of those planning and managing these special areas where land and sea come together.

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Chairman

Coastal and Marine Working Group
Europarc Atlantic Isles

THE EUROPARC FEDERATION

The voice of Europe's protected areas

Europarc is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 38 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

EUROPARC ATLANTIC ISLES

Works with protected areas and their partners in England, Iceland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to look after Europe's precious natural heritage.

It brings together over 60 organisations, from national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty, to academic institutions, NGOs and government agencies.

For more information on Federation and Europarc Atlantic Isles visit their websites:


www.europarc.org and
www.europarc-ai.org.uk

Contacts

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introduction

The conservation of the marine environment

Interest in the conservation of the marine environment is increasing rapidly at various levels

Internationally

The Convention on Biological Diversity provides the framework for a wide range of initiatives addressing the conservation of the marine environment. The OSPAR convention covering the North East Atlantic also provides the framework for the establishment of a system of marine protected areas.

Within Europe

The EU is preparing a European thematic strategy on the protection and conservation of the marine environment. This is nearing completion and will be part of the overall maritime strategy for Europe, which is also under active consideration.

The Natura 2000 programme has led to the identification of special areas of conservation in the marine environment

Within UK

There is the prospect in the near future of marine legislation to address the planning and management of the marine environment

The focus of this interest is on the establishment of a comprehensive system for the planning and management of the marine environment, involving the establishment of a system

- marine of spatial planning
- marine protected areas; and
- administration for marine areas

Coastal protected landscapes and the marine environment

The relationship between coastal protected landscapes and their adjacent marine environment is often neglected. It is important to appreciate and understand the strength of this relationship, especially as there are so many coastal protected landscapes in UK and their special qualities are derived in no small part from the marine environment; and in many instances are bounded by waters designated SAC under the EU Natura 2000 programme.

The role of National Parks in UK in this environment has come under the spotlight:

- In Scotland – the Scottish Executive is currently considering the establishment of coastal and marine national parks
- In Wales – the Welsh Assembly Government has asked the two coastal National Parks in Wales [Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia] report on what they see as their role in the coastal and marine environment.
- In England – with the recent debate about extending the proposed area of the South Downs National Park into the marine environment during the inquiry into the designation.

Integrated Coastal Zone Management [ICZM]

Whilst much of the interest has focussed on the marine environment, the importance of integrating the planning and management of land and sea has not been ignored. An EU recommendation for the implementation of ICZM in Europe was agreed in 2002. It encouraged member states to commit to a common vision for the future of their coastal zones and to adopt the principles of good coastal zone management as identified in the Commission's Demonstration Programme on ICZM. As part of the approach the EU requested that each member state should prepare its own strategy by February 2006. As a prelude to the preparation of the strategy each State has been required to undertake a stocktaking exercise of ICZM as it happens in their territory. In the UK the stocktake was completed in 2004 and the preparation of a strategy for ICZM for each of the four nations in the UK and for the UK as a whole is now nearly complete.

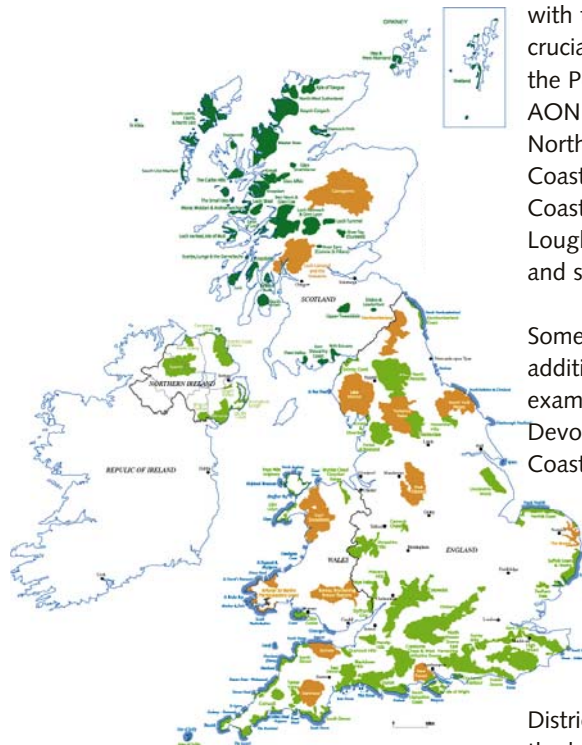
The context

It is with the prospect in view of a new system for planning and management of the marine environment and of a move towards greater integration between land and sea that this booklet has been prepared. It will help establish the place of coastal protected landscapes in any new system that is established and help make the connection between land and sea.

the character of coastal protected landscapes in UK



As the map of protected landscapes in UK shows a significant proportion of the coastline of England, Wales and Northern Ireland has been designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB] or National Park on account of the high quality of the landscape. Similarly in Scotland long stretches of coast have been designated as National Scenic Areas [NSA] and shortly some of those areas may be designated as Coastal and Marine National Parks. Much of the coast of England and Wales has also been defined as Heritage Coast in recognition of its outstanding undeveloped character.



Protected landscapes in the United Kingdom

National Park and The Broads
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
National Scenic Areas in Scotland
Heritage Coast
Towns

There are some coastal protected landscapes where the close relationship with the marine environment has been crucial to their designation, for example the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park; AONBs such as Isles of Scilly, Cornwall, North Devon, Chichester Harbour, Norfolk Coast, Northumberland Coast, Solway Coast, Anglesey, Llyn, Gower, Strangford Lough and Causeway Coast and Glens; and some of the Scottish NSAs .

Some have very important coastlines in addition to inland areas of high quality, for example AONBs such as South and East Devon, Dorset, South Downs, Suffolk Coast and Heaths and Mourne; National Parks such as Exmoor, the New Forest and North York Moors; and some of the Scottish NSAs .

Others have only small lengths of coast, such as Arnside-Silverdale, Kent Downs AONBs and the Lake District National Park, but they are none the less special places.

The variety of coastal scene is enormous ranging embracing hard rocky cliffs with occasional sandy coves; offshore islands; low soft cliffs and sand dunes with extensive beaches at low tide; Estuaries often with extensive intertidal areas; historic towns and villages and harbours; and numerous combinations of these features.



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the boundaries between land and sea vary in nature

▼
Some are unclear where
there are extensive intertidal
areas



► Some are complicated
where there are groups of
islands and islets offshore



◄ Some are clear cut with
cliffs and no beach



▲ Some are clear with a beach
backed by cliffs or dunes



The special qualities of coastal protected landscapes are derived in no small way from the intimate relationship with the marine environment. The connections are numerous and diverse, with social and economic as well as environmental dimensions:



- ▶ the special landscape/seascape qualities are derived from the many moods of the sea, the wide open vistas and feeling of wilderness

▼ ecologically there are strong connections, for example nesting and feeding birds use both land and sea; marine fisheries depend on intertidal areas for spawning and nursery areas; and seals use feeding grounds and resting banks.



- ▶ there are strong connections economically and socially, with local communities deriving their livelihood from fishing and tourism and local waters often having the potential for sand and gravel extraction, tidal and wind power generation and oil and gas production



- ▶ the natural processes in the marine environment [erosion, deposition and sediment transport] impact on the form of these coasts



- ▶ the importance of the quality of water on land and at sea





- recreational use of the waters adjacent to these areas, often with access from the shore within them, and people's enjoyment of coastal scene from land are further proof of the link between land and sea



- there are also strong cultural heritage and historic connections with the sea

issues and opportunities facing coastal protected landscapes – the challenges for the future

In March 2006 Europarc Atlantic Isles held a seminar in Manchester during which a range of issues and opportunities for coastal protected landscapes were identified and summed up as the “challenges for the future”. They add up to a significant agenda which will need to be developed in detail and addressed not only by protected landscapes themselves but also by their national organisations [Association of National Park Authorities and the National Association for AONBs], national agencies [Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage] and government [national, devolved and local] and NGOs.

Issues for coastal protected landscapes

A number of issues for coastal PLs requiring action were identified during the seminar, in particular:

The connection between land and sea

The special qualities of these areas are derived in no small part from the intimate relationship with the marine environment – marine flora and fauna and sub-aqua landscapes. In many instances these protected landscapes are bounded by waters designated SAC under the EU Natura 2000 programme. However, this connection is not generally recognised, especially in the designation of these PLs, whose boundaries and plans go to the waters edge.

The separation of land and sea

The current system of planning and management of coastal protected landscapes is not integrated with the marine environment, with an artificial divide between the marine and the terrestrial systems at the low water mark. Furthermore the importance of coastal protected landscapes is not fully recognised in the planning and management of the marine environment. There is a very real danger of trying to plan and manage the land, the coast and the sea as separate entities, rather than as a continuum.

The impact of development and a variety of activities on their special qualities

These areas are also important as tourist destinations, with the use and enjoyment of the coastal waters being a major draw for visitors – coastering, sailing, diving and surfboarding. The waters adjacent to these areas also support or have the potential for a wide range of activities e.g. sand & gravel extraction, tidal, wave and wind power generation, fishing, oil & gas production in addition to recreation.



Coastal change

Changes to the shape and character of the coastline brought about by sea level rise etc are likely to be one of the most important issues for coastal PLs to address, in particular the need

- to make space for change on the coast
- for flexibility on the part of PLs and for them to identify features that they want to take with them into the future
- for a vision for what the “new” coastline might look like



- to recognise the large scale on which change needs to be considered

Awareness and understanding

It is clear that there is a need for

- a much greater understanding of the marine environment and the activities that take place within the sphere of influence of coastal.s
- better understanding of the physical changes taking place on the coast
- recognition that change is taking place now not just in the future

Resources

PLs do not have all the skills, time or money to take on a wider role in their adjacent marine environment

Opportunities for coastal Protected Landscapes

Engagement with existing planning and management processes

There are a number of planning and management processes with which PLs have an opportunity to engage, notably

- Water Framework Directive [WFD] – the process now underway for the WFD will help to link land and sea. The Environment Agency is seeking the help of many organisations to plan for and implement the directive – PLs should be well placed to contribute and benefit from the process
- Shoreline Management Plans – the start of the second round of SMPs is imminent. They could be a crucial vehicle for PLs to address the whole question of change to the coast line, in particular what the shape and character of the coastline might be in the future
- Seascape assessments – techniques to assess the impacts of marine development are being developed by CCW and SNH together with private sector specialists. These techniques could be adapted and refined for use by PLs in articulating their special qualities of the

landscape/seascape and their sensitivity to marine development and activities and as part of SEAs and EIAs

- Marine SAC management plans – the preparation of these plans that cover some of the special qualities of a PL provide a very important opportunity for integrating the planning and management of its special qualities
- ICZM Partnerships – the development of ICZM initiatives could provide PLs further opportunity for ensuring that their interests are taken into account

Engagement with policies / actions of national agencies

A number of national agencies have or are preparing policies and action programmes, which will be addressing directly or indirectly the interest of coastal PLs. By influencing those plans and actions coastal PLs could strengthen their position across the sea-land divide, especially those of

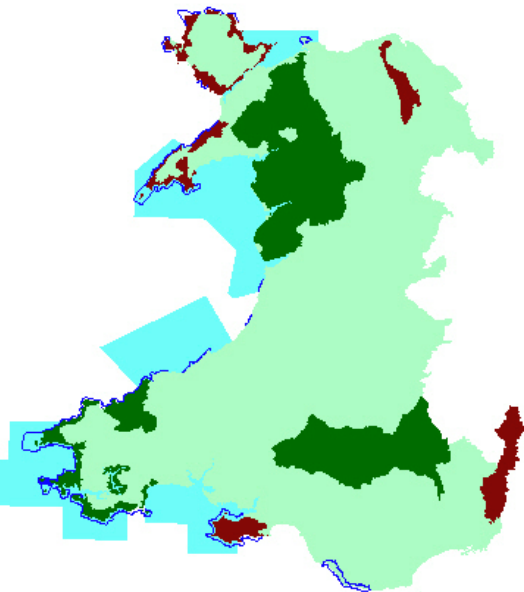
- **Natural England** – a new organisation with a remit that extends into the marine environment, which will be developing its policies for the coastal and marine environment in the near future, including those relating to the future of Heritage Coasts and Access to the coast; and the
- **Environment Agency** – has published a marine strategy addressing many of the key issues for the marine environment adjacent to coastal PLs



a case study – wales and the pembrokeshire coast

The coastal protected landscapes of Wales

The coastal protected landscapes of Wales [Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia National Parks, Anglesey, Gower and Llŷn AONBs and Ceredigion and Glamorgan Heritage Coasts] embrace a very significant length of the Welsh coast. Furthermore they are all bounded to a significant degree to seaward by waters designated SAC under the EU Natura 2000 programme.



These areas are also very important as tourist destinations, with use and enjoyment of the waters a very important draw for visitors. They also have communities which rely on the connection with the sea for their livelihood and are concerned about their future. The adjacent waters support or have the potential for a wide range of activities, including fishing, gas production, tidal and wave energy and sand extraction.

The coast of Pembrokeshire

The inshore waters, coastline and adjacent maritime areas of Pembrokeshire provide a valuable case study of the issues facing the planning and management of both coastal protected landscapes and the marine environment. They are nationally and internationally important for nature and





landscape conservation. This is recognised by the designation of approximately two thirds of the coast as SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), and the inclusion of large areas in marine and terrestrial SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SPA's (Special Protection Areas). Up to 40% of the coast is owned by the National Trust with most of the coastline also within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and as such is of outstanding landscape importance. At the same time, Pembrokeshire is host to one of the UK's (and Europe's) major oil ports, and international ferry terminals, which are being seen as an increasingly important "gateway" to the western seaboard. Tourism is vital to the county's economy and is inherently dependent on the high quality of Pembrokeshire's maritime and coastal environment.

The map of Pembrokeshire illustrates the administrative complexity of the coast and adjacent waters with areas defined for conservation, military activity, waste dumping and port management. Yet there is no overall framework within which the



area, including the National Park and the cSAC, planned are managed – the jurisdiction of the National Park does not extend into the marine environment, even though its special qualities are derived from it in no small measure.

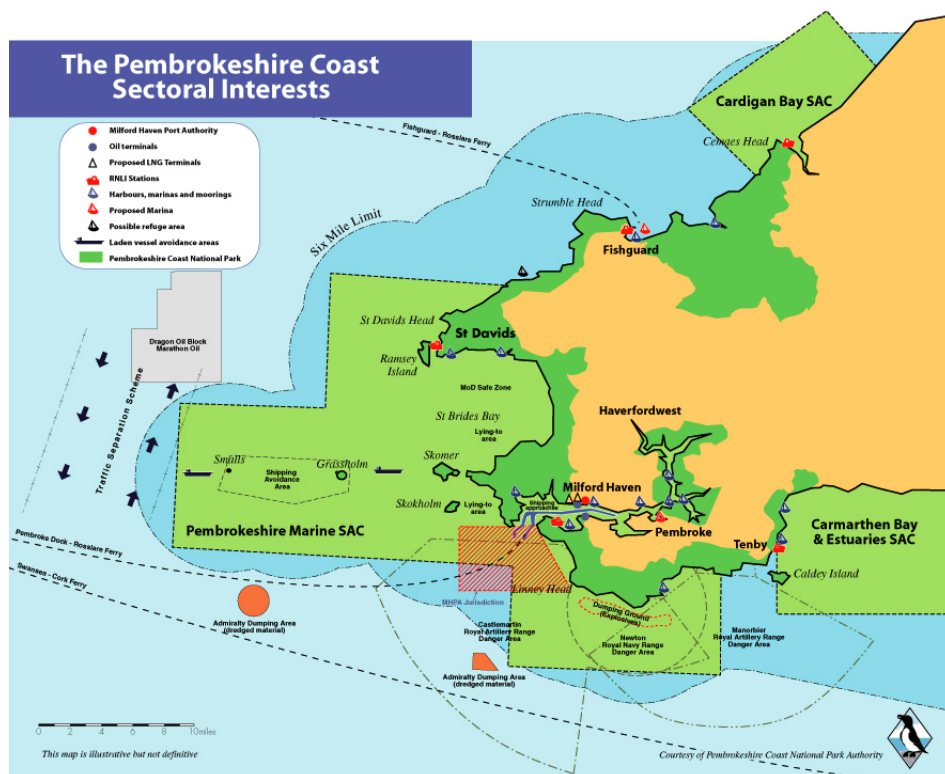
The interface between these environmental and economic elements is characterised by a plethora of organisations and users, with little integration and co-ordination; no united forum for debate and the exchange of information.

A voluntary approach

There have been a number of voluntary initiatives to tackle these issues. The Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum was established in May 2000, bringing together a variety of stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sector, who are working together to promote a sustainable approach to the planning, management, use and development of the Coastal Zone of Pembrokeshire. The Forum aims to raise awareness of coastal issues providing an arena for informed discussions and debate amongst all with an interest in, and users of, the coast. It has also led the development of a strategic framework for the sustainable management of the Pembrokeshire coastal zone. The National Park is a founding member of the Forum and contributes significantly to its work

Recent years have seen significant changes in the number of outdoor activity providers and wildlife and dive boat operators within Pembrokeshire. It has an extensive natural resource base, including world class cliff climbing, the best surfing beaches in Wales, a combination of westerly facing rugged coastline, sheltered inlets and bays and the more tranquil Dugleddau Estuary. In addition to these features Pembrokeshire also offers an abundance of marine life to include seals, porpoise, whales, dolphins and seabirds. A voluntary marine code has been established to encourage responsible behaviour amongst local boat operators working in this very sensitive environment.

Whilst these voluntary initiatives are of value in raising awareness and understanding of the issues facing such an important area, the establishment of a statutory framework for planning and managing the coast and adjacent waters in an integrated way would be invaluable in securing a sustainable future for the area.



the way forward



The planning and management of the marine environment

In the future it will be important that any new system for the planning and management of the marine environment fully recognises the important connections between land and sea where protected landscapes are concerned. Coping with the complex social, economic and environmental interactions to secure a sustainable future for these special areas is a major challenge. The forthcoming Marine Bill presents a major opportunity for coastal protected landscapes to achieve formal recognition of their position across the land sea divide and as forces for integration, especially with the prospect of. This should be done in the following way:

Marine protected areas

- the purposes of a system of MPAs are drawn wider than biodiversity and physiographic features to include not only landscapes/seascapes, but also cultural and historic features –
- any system of MPAs should include integrated marine/terrestrial protected areas, including the extension of the boundaries of existing protected landscapes to embrace their area of interest in the marine environment – the Scottish experience in relation to coastal and marine national Parks will be instructive in this context
- the system should provide sufficient powers to secure the purposes for which MPAs are designated, in particular the positive management of water based recreation and tourism

Marine spatial planning

- the marine landscapes/seascapes of national importance, including any integrated marine/terrestrial MPAs, that are designated should have statutory management plans that are a formal part of the MSP process
- the marine dimension of existing coastal protected landscapes is given due recognition through the extension of their statutory management plans to cover the area of their interest in the marine environment – those plans should then be a formal part of the MSP process.
- the purposes of any MPA as expressed in detail in their management plan, including any integrated marine/terrestrial MPAs, are treated as material considerations by those public bodies taking decisions on marine consents
- the principles of Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 as applied to AONBs and National Parks [respectively] in England and Wales should apply to all public bodies involved with the planning, management and use of the marine environment

Integrated Coastal Zone Management

- it will be crucial is to establish an overall system of ICZM, underpinned by statute, which secures the full integration at the land sea interface and provides the framework within which managers of MPAs can secure integration at a local level.
- the concept of integrated marine/terrestrial protected areas protected could meet the needs of integration at the land sea interface along significant stretches of coast i.e. coastal AONBs and NPs with a remit extending out to sea.
- the potential for some PLs to play a major role in co-ordinating coastal management

Principles for coastal protected landscapes and the marine environment

The following principles for planning and management of coastal protected landscapes in relation to the marine environment should be adopted by those responsible for and engaged in the future of these special areas:

- the future well-being of these protected landscapes and their communities are intricately connected with the future of their adjacent waters.
- the system of planning and management for these areas should be integrated with the marine environment.
- coastal protected landscapes must engage with the planning and management of the coastal and marine environment and with ICZM processes
- any legislation or policies for the marine environment should provide for the formalisation of the place of these special areas in any arrangements agreed for the planning and management of the coastal and marine environment.
- PLs should have a good understanding of
 - the marine environment with which they are so closely linked
 - how climate change will affect them
 - coastal change and to develop ideas for what any “new” coastline might look like
- Management plans must address the connection between land and sea, in particular
 - the articulation of the special qualities that are derived from the marine environment
 - set out policies and actions to ensure conservation and management of those special qualities, especially the issue of coastal change arising from climate change
 - as vehicles for raising awareness at all levels, especially amongst local communities

- Develop a toolkit for managing the connections between land and sea
- Deploy and/or adapt existing planning and management techniques for use in the marine environment [e.g. management plans and landscape / seascape assessment] and develop new ones where necessary
- Raise awareness amongst decision makers and the public of the issues facing coastal PLs and their communities and how they can help address them
- Engage with and, where appropriate, take the lead in the processes such as ICZM, planning of the shoreline, plans prepared under the Water Framework Directive, planning and management of adjacent marine protected areas

The Agenda in UK

Protected landscapes in UK, individually and collectively, can make progress in the short term by:

- Securing adoption of the principles by all those involved and responsible for coastal protected landscapes, nationally and locally
- Influencing the development of coastal policies, especially those of Natural England and the review of Heritage Coast policies in England and Wales
- Engaging with public bodies on coastal issues in the discharge of their duties towards National Parks under Section 62 and AONBs under Section 85 for National Parks
- Making the most of the opportunity presented by the Marine Bill for formalising their position in the marine spatial planning / consents processes and as part of any system of marine protected areas
- Making the most of the opportunities presented by current planning management initiatives, such as the Water Framework Directive and Shoreline Management Plans
- Making the case for resources to allow them to fulfil their extended role resources



