

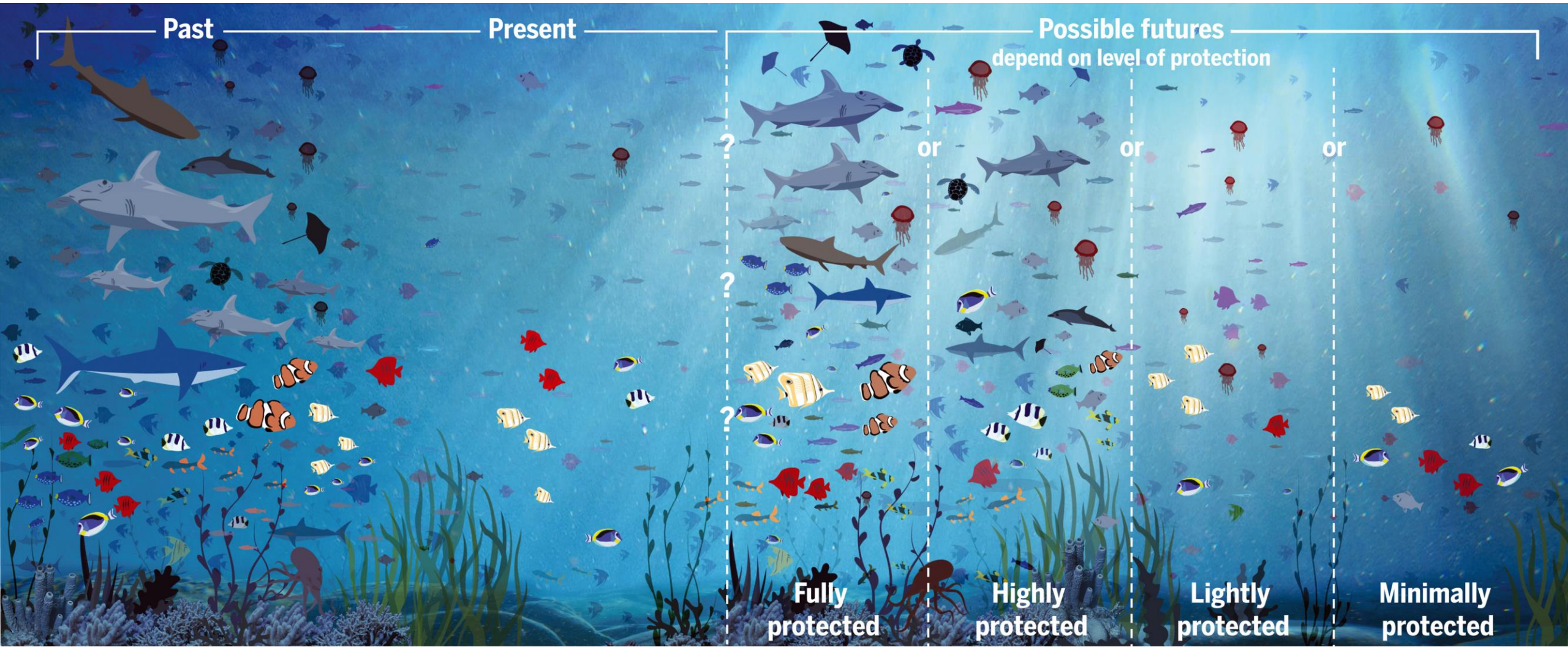


Biodiversity strategy targets for a coherent and effectively managed EU MPA network

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2nd EU Blue Parks Community Workshop

Brussels, 7 March 2024



Source: Grorud-Colvert et al., Science, 2021 (DOI: 10.1126/science.abf0861).

EU policy context



- **the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive**
- **EU Biodiversity strategy for 2030**
- Global biodiversity framework
- **Nature restoration law *proposal***
- **Marine action plan**
- Climate policy and climate law

Biodiversity strategy for 2030

PROTECT NATURE

- Legally protect at **least 30% of the European Union's sea area** – coherent trans-European nature network
- **Strictly protect at least a third** of the EU's marine protected areas (**10%** of sea area)
- **Effectively manage all protected areas**, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
- **Fisheries management measures must be established in all MPAs** according to clearly defined conservation objectives and on the basis of the best available scientific advice.

RESTORE NATURE

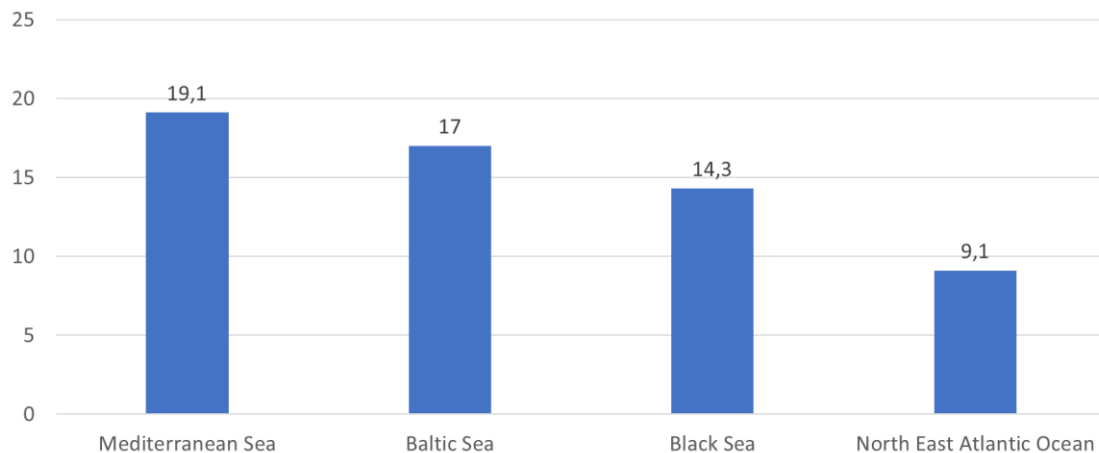
- **Nature Restoration Law** with **legally binding restoration targets**, including for the marine environment.
- Achieving good environmental status of marine ecosystems, including through strictly protected areas, must involve the **restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems** as well as important **fish spawning and nursery areas**.
- **Reduce bycatch** of sensitive species and the impact of bottom fishing **on the seabed**.

A larger and coherent EU network of protected areas

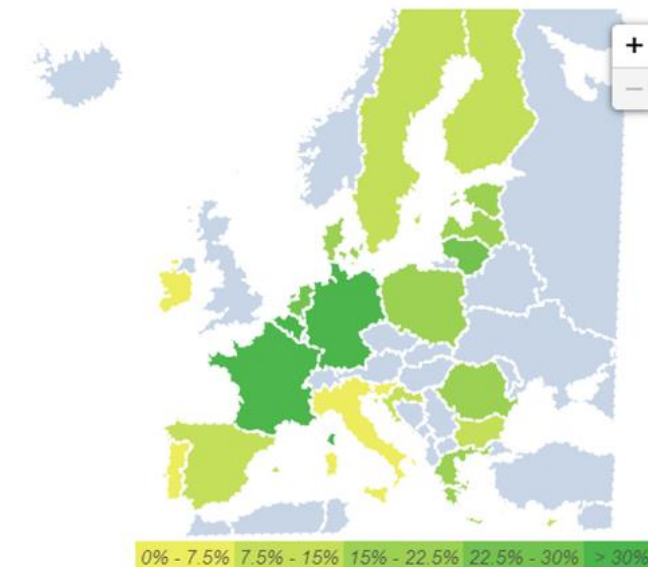
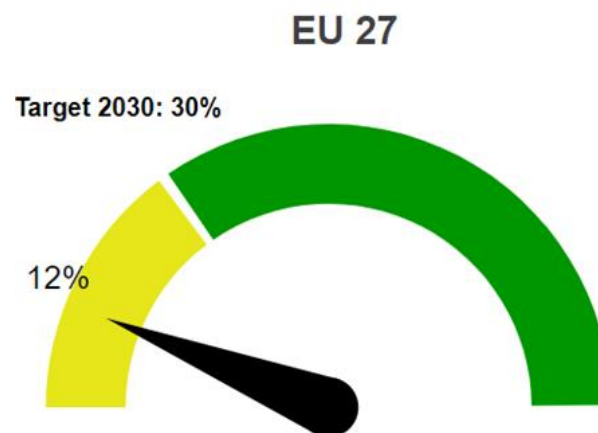
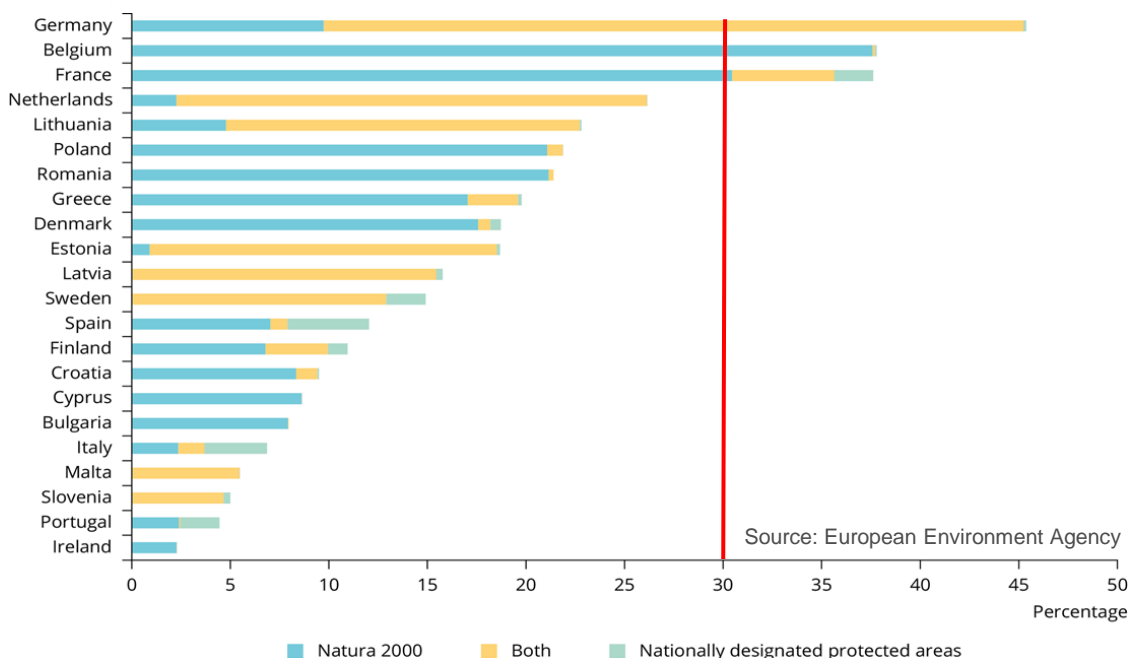
- **Legal protection** for at least $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 30\% \text{ of EU land area} \\ \mathbf{30\% \text{ of EU sea area}} \end{array} \right.$
 - ↳ **Strict protection** for at least $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 10\% \text{ of EU land area} \\ \mathbf{10\% \text{ of EU sea area}} \end{array} \right.$
- Integrate **ecological corridors**
- All protected areas have clearly defined **conservation objectives and measures** and are **effectively managed** and appropriately **monitored**

EU marine protected areas today

Total MPA coverage (%) in marine regions



- EU MPA network currently covers **12% of EU seas** (Natura 2000 >9%)
- **Less than 1%** is strictly protected
- Most MPAs are **not effectively managed**



Working together to achieve the targets



Third Natura 2000 biogeographical seminar for the Mediterranean and Black Sea marine regions

Background Document

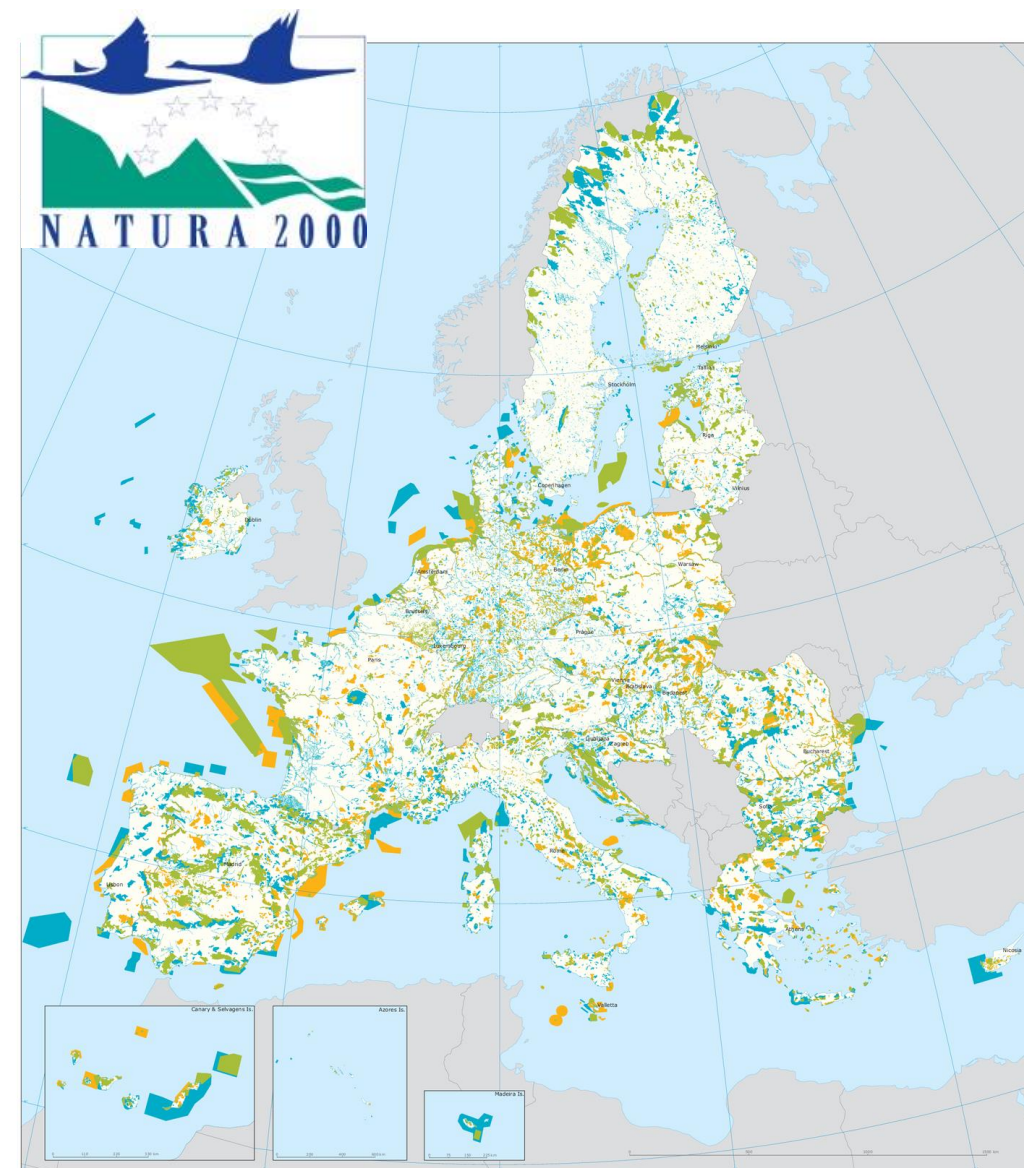


- **The Natura 2000 biogeographical process** expanded to include the pledge and review process for Biodiversity strategy targets
- So far **5 Member States submitted pledges for marine protected areas**: Spain, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden
- **Marine biogeographical seminars**:
 - Atlantic and Macaronesia, October 2023, Ireland
 - Baltic, November 2023, Latvia
 - **Mediterranean and Black Sea**, March 2024, France

12-14 March 2024, Marseille
Palais du Pharo, Marseille, France

Supporting effective management of Natura 2000

- **Natura 2000** - the **largest** coordinated network of protected areas in the world
- Covers **9% of EU seas**: main driver of MPA designation (**75% of all EU MPAs**)
- Strong **legal obligations for designation and management of sites**
- **Nature dialogues** with authorities and stakeholders, **guidance**
- **EU co-financing**
- **Enforcement**







NATURA 2000 - EUROPEAN UNION
Yellow: Birds Directive sites (SPA)
Blue: Habitats Directive sites (pSCI, SCI, SAC)
Green: Sites - or parts of sites - belonging to both Directives



Source: Natura 2000 - DG ENV, compiled from databases from the Member States. Source background map: © EuroGeographics/Eurogeographics and DG ESTAT. Website of Natura 2000 data for Europe, updated until 2010. Projection: Lambert Azimuthal Equal Area.

EU methodology to assess MPA management effectiveness

- Proposal developed in 2021-22   
- Uses effort-based and outcome-based criteria and indicators
- Tested on 75 Natura 2000 sites and other MPAs – development continues



Version 5.4

Instructions

Area Input

1. Conservation Objectives

2. Pressures

3. Conservation Measures

4. Management

5. Monitoring

6. Conservation Outcomes

Configuration


Progress Assessment

Save & Exit

PROGRESS ASSESSMENT Return Main Menu

Site Identification:

THEME		% of Total Score
1.	CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES	73
2.	PRESSURES	83
3.	CONSERVATION MEASURES	50
4.	MANAGEMENT	51
5.	MONITORING	73
6.	CONSERVATION OUTCOMES	33



Global Progress Overview

INDICATOR	QUESTION		YES	PARTIAL	NO
A	1	Have conservation objectives (COs) been set for the MPA?			
B	2	Have the pressures on species/ habitats protected in the site been identified and their impact assessed (indicate if pressures are inside/outside the MPA, and confidence level)?			
C	3	Have conservation measures been established to achieve the conservation objectives of the MPA (NB. Applies to relevant measures inside and outside the MPA)?			
D	7	Is there sufficient collaboration between authorities and bodies that are responsible or competent for managing activities that affect the protected species/habitats, including those outside of the MPA?			
E	9	Is there regular and systematic monitoring of the types and level of pressures acting on the MPA protected species/habitats?			
F	11a	Have conservation objectives been achieved or are they on track to be achieved in the timescale specified in the relevant conservation objective?			

Site Name:

Site Code:

Site Location:

Site Designation (Category and Type):


Date of designation:

Overlapping site Designations:

Management body (if established):

Respondent / Institution:

Date:



Nature restoration law



Nature Restoration Law For people, climate, and planet

22 June 2022
#EUGreenDeal



Restoring wetlands, rivers, forests, grasslands, marine ecosystems, and the species they host will help:



Increase biodiversity and secure the things nature does for free, like cleaning our water and air, pollinating crops, and protecting us from floods



Limit global warming to 1.5°C



Build up Europe's resilience and strategic autonomy, preventing natural disasters and reducing risks to food security

New binding targets suggested by the law:

- restore habitats and species protected by the EU nature legislation
- reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030
- no net loss of green urban spaces by 2030 and a minimum of 10% tree canopy cover in European cities
- improved biodiversity on farmland e.g. for grassland butterflies, farmland birds, high-diversity landscape features
- restore drained peatlands
- healthier forests with improved biodiversity
- at least 25.000 km free-flowing rivers by 2030
- restore seagrasses and sea bottoms

Environment

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**
- Key global target of the GBF

Regulation on nature restoration

Overarching objective

Restoration targets

Implementation framework

**National
Restoration Plans**

**Monitoring and
Reporting**

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

By 2050 – all ecosystems in need of restoration

**Co-legislators reached provisional agreement on NRL
European Parliament adopted the text in February**

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 habitat types (Annex II NRL)

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

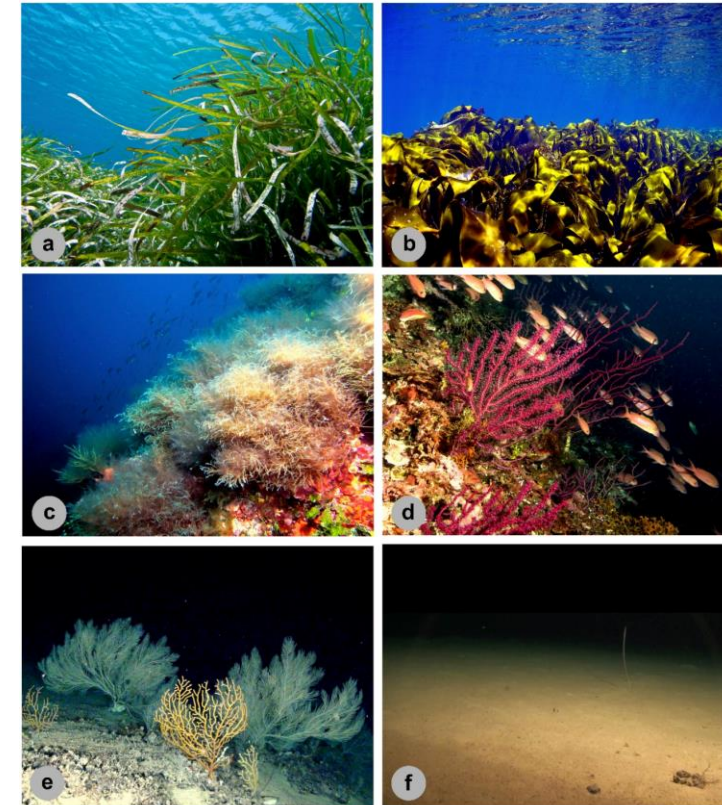
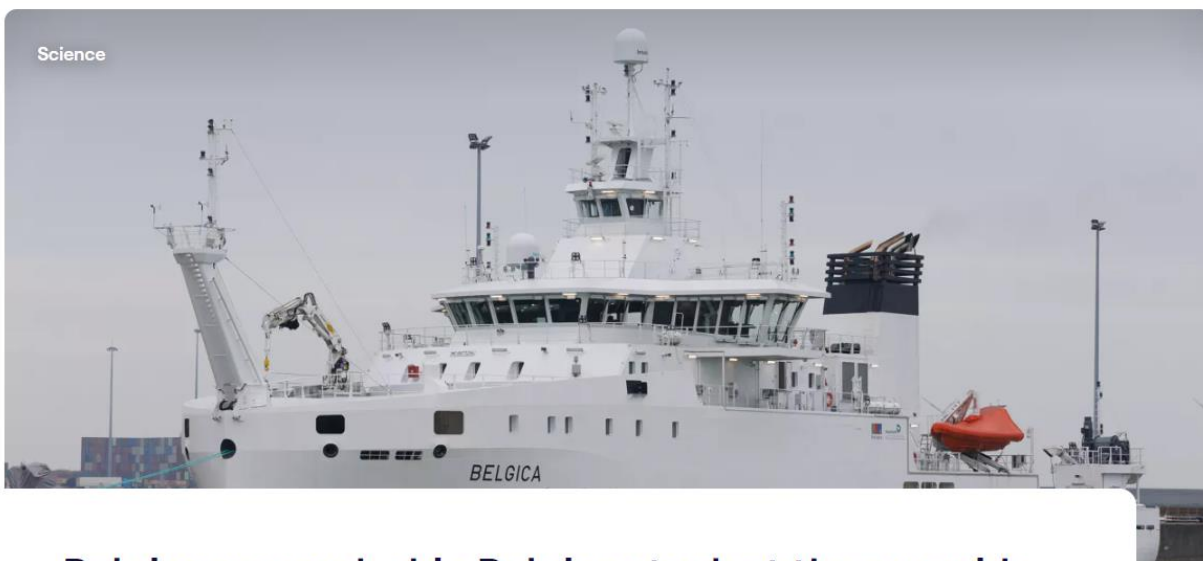


Figure 3.50. Case study habitats: (a) *Posidonia oceanica* meadow; (b) *Laminaria hyperborea* kelp forest; (c) *Cystoseira zosterooides* macroalgal forest; (d) Mediterranean coralligenous assemblage; (e) Deep-sea coral garden; (f) Deep-sea bottom community. Photos by Thanos Dailianis (a), Janne K. Gitmark (b), Cristina Linares (c, d), © OCEANA (e), Chris Smith (f).

Source: MERCES project (Horizon 2020) – Deliverable 1.1.: State of the knowledge on European marine habitat mapping and degraded habitats

Key challenges

Mapping marine biodiversity and its condition

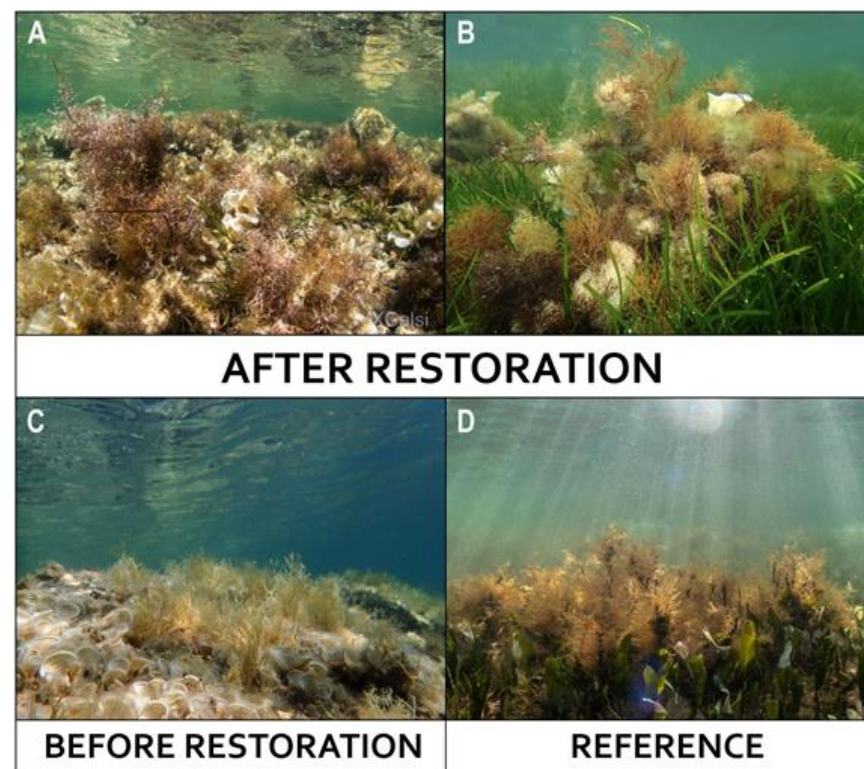


Belgian research ship Belgica stuck at the quayside two-thirds of the year due to lack of cash

In 2024 Belgium's new Belgian scientific research vessel Belgica will only be able to sail the high seas a third of the year due to a lack of budget. As a

Our knowledge is still very limited.

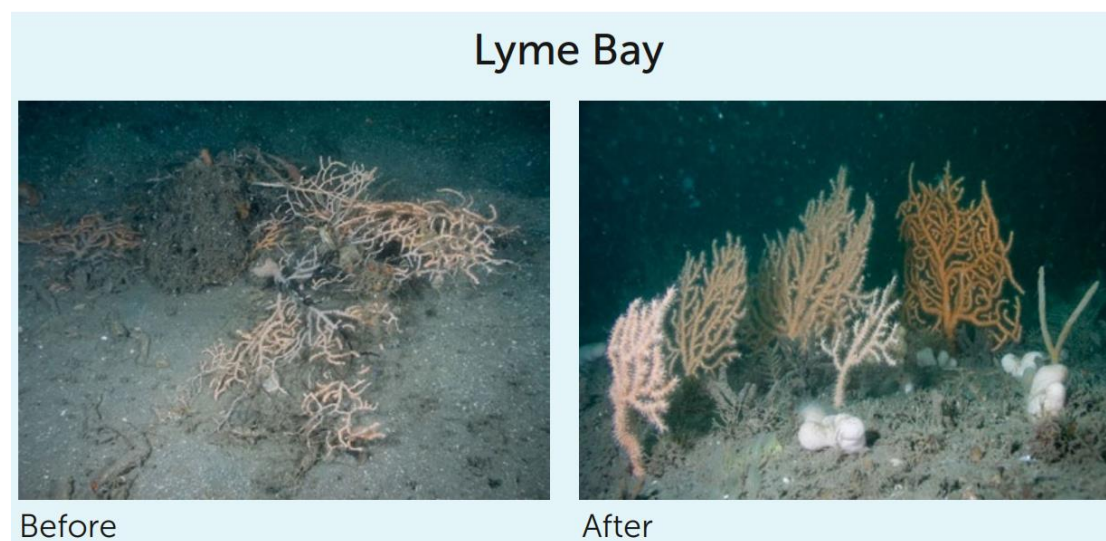
Marine restoration is currently limited to certain ecosystems and areas, focusing mainly on active restoration



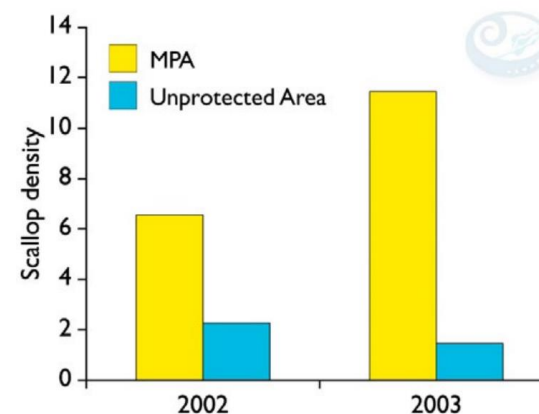
Source: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2023.1176655>

Role of MPAs in restoration

- Areas under restoration **don't have to be protected areas**, however...
- **Effectively managed protected areas** can create **the conditions for restoration** efforts to be successful and to ensure **no deterioration**.
- **Strictly protected areas** have a **key role in marine restoration**.



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



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*

We are not interested in “paper parks”.

Only effectively managed MPAs protect biodiversity and deliver substantial socio-economic benefits.

