

Coastal & Marine Biodiversity Group

# Implementation Plan Framework

August 2007

## **Introduction**

The Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Groups role is to ensure that activity in relation to meeting the objectives of the coastal and marine Habitat and Species Action Plans is well co-ordinated and supported. The activities of the Group will facilitate effective communication between the relevant government agencies, local government, the private and voluntary sectors and relevant stakeholders and will include the maintenance and strengthening of links within the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Further details of the groups remit and membership is specified in the terms of reference.

There are a number of other stakeholder groups set up, or proposed, to deliver the requirements of the WFD and ICZM but this group focuses on biodiversity delivery. The work programme sets out work that will be carried out at a partnership level promoting good practice, encouraging participation and raising awareness.

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## Statutory & Non-Statutory Site designation

**Objective 1:** Ensure that all priority coastal and marine habitats that meet the scientific criteria for SAC / ASSI designation are designated by 2015 and that locally important sites are identified and protected.

Key Action 1.1: Designate all coastal and marine habitats that meet the scientific criteria required for SAC / ASSI designation, by 2015.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
1.1.1	Identify and designate new marine SACs	<b>EHS, DARD</b>	2012	Potential list of marine SACs presented to JNCC (Skerries, Red Bay Maerl Bed, The Maidens, Pisces Reef, Pockmarks)
1.1.2	Review the coverage of coastal & marine features within the ASSI network and amend existing citations if required.	<b>EHS</b>	2015	Under way
1.1.3	Initiate a programme for designating additional coastal and marine ASSIs.	<b>EHS</b>	2015	

Key Action 1.2: Protect locally important sites by identifying them in Area Plans and in Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
1.2.1	Identify coastal SLNCs in Development Plans and in Local Biodiversity Action Plans.	<b>Planning Service</b> EHS NGOs District Councils	Ongoing In line with Area Plan	
1.2.2	Identify how biodiversity can be protected via AONB Management Plans	<b>Area Management Groups, District Councils, EHS</b>	2008	

## Management of designated sites

**Objective 2:** Work to maintain favourable condition or improve the conservation condition towards favourable, of 95% of the features underlying the designation of internationally important wildlife sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest by 2013.

Key Action 2.1: Monitor and report on the condition of designated coastal and marine habitats.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
2.1.1	Prepare conservation objectives for management of designated sites.	<b>EHS</b>	2012	
2.1.2	Regulate adverse activities within ASSIs and SACs, as appropriate.	<b>EHS All Competent Authorities</b>	Ongoing	Voluntary regulatory activities e.g. Strangford Lough "Out & About"
2.1.3	Monitor and report on the favourable condition of site selection features.	<b>EHS</b>	Ongoing – 6 yearly reporting cycle	

Key Action 2.2: Identify ASSIs/SACs in unfavourable condition and initiate and implement site management plans for restoration for identified sites by 2010.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
2.2.1	Continue with a programme to restore coastal and marine SACs/ASSIs which are not in favourable condition.	<b>EHS All Competent Authorities</b>	Ongoing	<i>Modiolus Modiolus</i> Restoration Plan agreed
2.2.2	Ensure that agri-environment schemes and MOSS are used effectively to deliver coastal management and restoration.	EHS, DARD	Ongoing	

## Management of Coastal and Marine Habitats

**Objective 3:** Maintain the current extent and overall distribution of coastal and marine habitats currently in favourable condition and improve the condition of those areas, which are degraded but readily restorable by 2010 and introduce management regimes to improve the condition of the remaining areas by 2015.

### Targets for Northern Ireland Coastal and Marine HAPs.

Habitat	Target unit	Maintenance	Achieve condition by 2015	Condition (%)	Restoration by 2015	Restoration (%)	Expansion by 2015	Expansion (%)
Coastal saltmarsh/Mudflat	Hectares - ha	10,985	tbc		-		-	
Coastal sand dunes	Hectares - ha	1,571	tbc		30 2010 target	2%	-	
Coastal vegetated shingle	Hectares - ha	50	tbc		-		-	
Maritime cliff and slope	Kilometres - km	500	475	95%	-		50 ha	
Saline lagoons	Hectares - ha	42	40	95%	-		2	5%
Seagrass beds	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Tidal Rapids	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Maerl Beds	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Mudflats	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Sheltered muddy gravels	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Mud habitats in deep water	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Sabellaria alveolata reefs	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Sabellaria spinulosa reefs	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Sublittoral sands and gravels	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-			
Modiolus modiolus beds	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	tbc		1200 ha by 2020 target	-	-	-
Littoral and sublittoral chalk	Hectares- ha	Data to be updated	-	-	-	-	-	-

Key Action 3.1: Maintain the extent and condition of coastal and marine habitats.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
3.1.1	Review and publish relevant PPS's ensuring that they fully consider coastal and marine habitats.	<b>PEPG (PPS 2 Planning &amp; Nature Conservation) DRD (PPS 20: The Coast)</b>	2006	
3.1.2	Carry out a risk assessment of invasive species which are having an impact on coastal and marine habitats and consider potential eradication methods, develop control strategies and raise awareness of issues.	EHS NPWS	2008	
3.1.3	Produce guidance to ensure that coastal and marine management and restoration plans are incorporated into Local Biodiversity Action Plans.	<b>EHS</b>	2007	
3.1.4	Ensure that the protection of coastal and marine biodiversity is included in the Review of Inshore Fisheries.	<b>DARD</b> , EHS, MTF	2007	Review of Inshore Fisheries Management in Northern Ireland published January 2007
3.1.5	Develop appropriate mechanisms to manage sand and gravel extraction.	DOE	2007	The Environmental Impact Assessment and Natural Habitats (Extraction of Minerals by Marine Dredging) (England and Northern Ireland) Regulations 2007 – in force 1/5/07
3.1.6	Consider implications of climate change for coastal & marine biodiversity and assess the need for adaptation measures	All		
3.1.7	Site managers/owners to manage and maintain the extent/condition of coastal/marine habitats	All		

Key Action 3.2 Monitor the condition and distribution of coastal and marine habitats.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
3.2.1	Compile an interim inventory of coastal and marine Priority habitats.	<b>EHS</b>	2007	Interim Inventory Project complete by March 2007
3.2.2	Contribute to the revision of habitat classifications, definitions and indicators for coastal and marine habitats.	<b>EHS</b>	2009	
3.2.3	Review the current extent & condition of coastal and marine habitats and identify gaps.	<b>EHS</b> , AFBI	2007	
3.2.4	Develop and initiate a monitoring programme to assess the condition of coastal and marine habitats.	<b>EHS</b>	2007	

Key Action 3.3 Carry out a strategic review of restoration opportunities for coastal and marine habitats.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
3.3.1	Produce an interim strategy for the restoration of coastal and marine habitats in Northern Ireland.	<b>EHS</b>	2008	
3.3.2	Promote and develop demonstration sites for the management and restoration of coastal and marine habitats.	<b>EHS</b>	2008	
3.3.3	Initiate restoration of the priority sites identified in the Restoration Strategy.	<b>EHS</b>	2008	
3.3.4	Ensure an integrated and effective approach to funding for restoration of coastal and marine habitats.	All	Ongoing	

Key Action 3.4 Monitor the condition and distribution of coastal and marine species

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
3.4.1	Monitor the distribution and population of coastal & marine priority species.	<b>EHS</b> , DARD	Ongoing	Review of Marine Turtles in Northern Ireland completed Jan 07

## River Basin Management Planning

**Objective 4:** Ensure that all coastal and marine sites are fully incorporated into River Basin Management Plans by 2009.

**Key Action 4.1:** Ensure that coastal and marine habitats are properly recognised and managed through River Basin Management Plans.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
4.1.1	Ensure that all Natura 2000 included in the WFD Protected Areas Register.	<b>EHS</b>	2007	
4.1.2	Collate details of coastal and marine habitats and conservation objectives into a GIS format to inform the river basin management planning process.	<b>EHS</b>	2009	
4.1.3	Include consideration of coastal and marine habitats in the Significant Water Management Issues Report.	<b>EHS, DARD</b>	2007	
4.1.4	Ensure that WFD protected areas are monitored through the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the WFD.	<b>EHS</b>	2008	
4.1.5	Set clear objectives for coastal and marine habitats in River Basin Management Plans with adequate provision of resources for their management and restoration.	<b>EHS</b>	2009	

## Research

**Objective 5:** Identify and support research to advance the implementation of this work programme.

**Key Action 5.1:** Continue to carry out research as necessary to improve our understanding of coastal and marine distribution, function and management.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
5.1.1	Identify and prioritise coastal & marine habitats and species research requirements	All	Ongoing	
5.1.2	Continue to carry out and support research to help develop our understanding and management of coastal and marine habitats and species.	All	Ongoing	
5.1.3	Disseminate the results of research projects to as wide an audience as possible.	All	Ongoing	

## Education and awareness

**Objective 6:** Encourage active participation and increase awareness and understanding of coastal and marine issues amongst the public, landowners and stakeholders.

**Key Action 6.1:** Promote appropriate access to coastal and marine habitats and seek to raise public awareness of coastal and marine habitats.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
6.1.1	Develop a coastal & marine habitat and species awareness programme for politicians, senior civil servants and decision makers	All	2007	
6.1.2	Develop a coastal and marine habitat awareness programme.	EHS, Area Management Groups, Site Managers	2007	
6.1.3	Provide appropriate access, interpretation and educational provision in relation to key coastal and marine habitats.	EHS LAs Site Managers	2007	
6.1.4	Make locally relevant information on coastal and marine habitats available to the public and school children	EHS DEL LAs	2007	
6.1.5	Develop links with organisations and programmes to promote the exchange of information, experience in management techniques and conservation strategies.	All	2007	
6.1.6	Arrange an annual seminar for BDG.	<b>EHS</b>	Annual	

Key Action 6.2: Develop good practice for Coastal & Marine habitat management.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
6.2.1.	Review relevant guidelines and materials on the management of coastal and marine habitats and produce a directory of best examples.	EHS LAs NT	2008	
6.2.2	Ensure that advice to coastal landowners and managers is well-informed and consistent.	<b>DARD</b> <b>EHS</b>	2007	
6.2.3	Encourage people to participate in active management of coastal & marine habitats	EHS, NT	Ongoing	

## Implementation

**Objective 7:** Ensure that this work programme is implemented and review progress by 2010.

Key Action 7.1: A Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Group, led by EHS, including Government, NGOs and businesses, will help implement this work programme.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
7.1.1	Review work programme and progress on an annual basis.	EHS	Annual	
7.1.2	Review terms of reference on an annual basis.	EHS	Annual	
7.1.3	Record specific actions that have been progressed	All	Ongoing	

Key Action 7.2: Further develop links with Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Key Tasks		Partners - Lead Partner(s) in <b>bold</b>	Timeframe	Comments/Update
7.2	Further develop links with the UK, the Republic of Ireland and International organisations on coastal and marine management.	All	Ongoing	