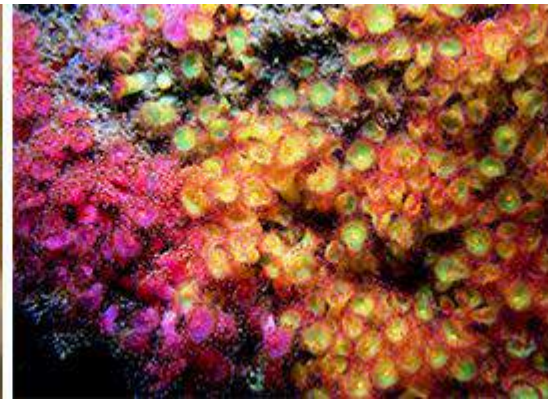


# Improving MPA management: working together for better conservation advice



Jen Ashworth, Natural England & Peter Barham, Seabed User & Developer Group

Coastal Futures January 2015

# Natural England's Conservation Advice project

- Duty to provide Conservation Advice for European marine sites and Marine Conservation Zones
- Project set up in response to Habitats & Wild Birds Directive Implementation Review (Defra, 2012), EC guidance & stakeholder feedback
- We want MPA conservation advice to:
  - Be up-to-date
  - Be easily accessible
  - Support applicants to undertake assessments
  - Be all on-line – interactive website
- So far we have produced:
  - 8 formal advice packages
  - 39 draft advice packages



See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conservation-advice-packages-for-marine-protected-areas>

# Seabed User and Developer Group:

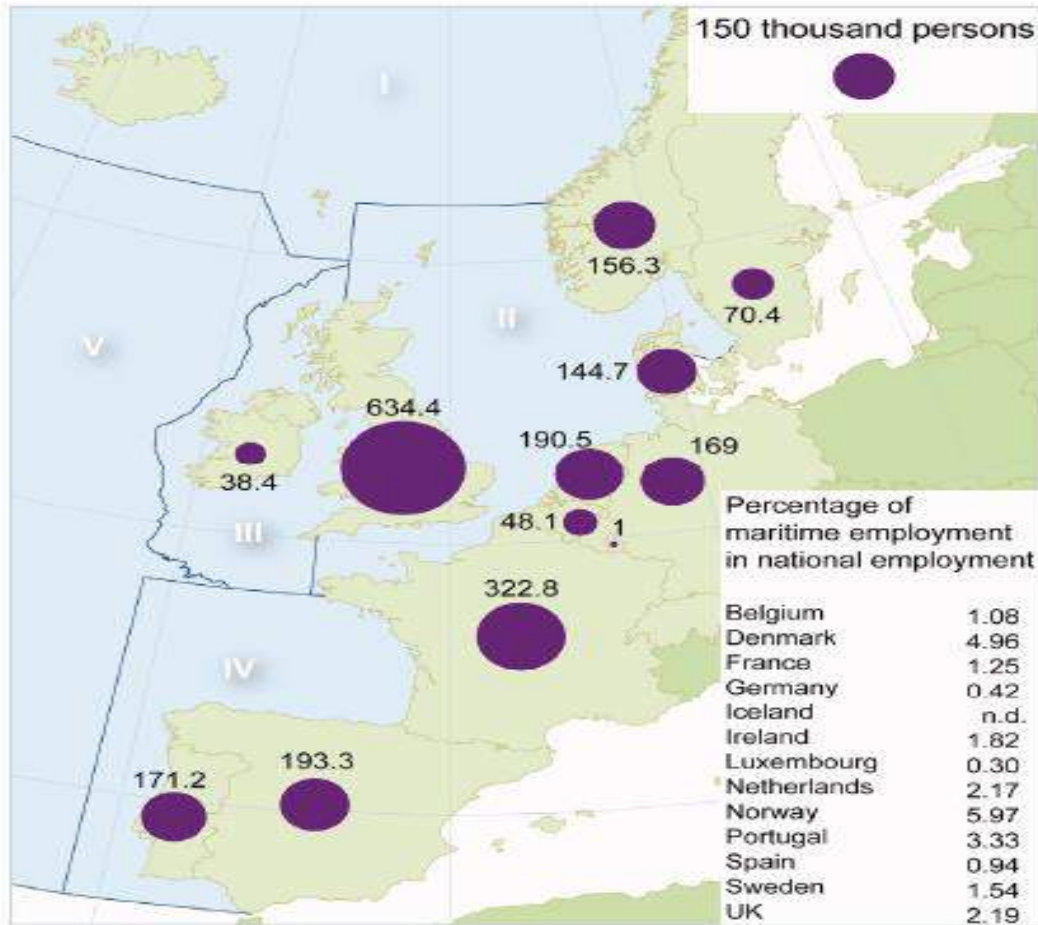
Committed to working towards sustainable development

Working with the environment

Working with conservation bodies

Seeking good practice

Better and more effective regulation



OSPAR: Draft  
QSR 2010, Ch2

- 890,000 jobs
- 2.9% of total
- 4.2% GDP
- £46bn
- Direct + Indirect 6.0% - 6.8% contribution to UK economy

\* Pugh 2008

**Figure 2.1:** Employment in all sea-related areas for the EU and Norway. Source: Policy Research Corporation, EU maritime clusters study 2008.

## Economic importance of SUDG Industries

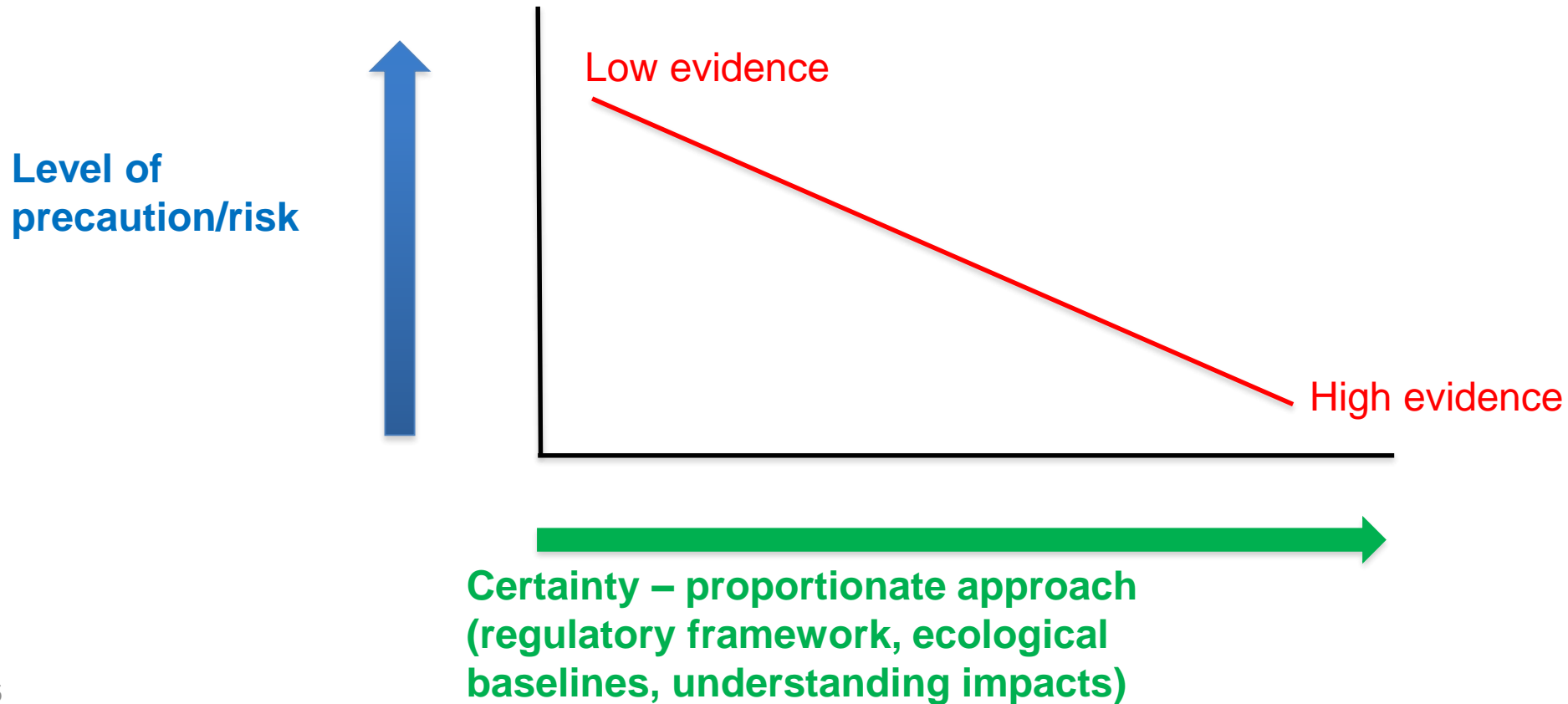
# Current Position

- Environment needs protecting
- UK industries are well regulated
- Sustainable development principles adhered to
- Generally small footprint on UK seabed
  - Zone of influence limited
  - Pressures often benign
- Marine industries are critical to climate change management
- Meeting societal needs

**Having no marine industry is not  
an option**

# Where do we want to get to?

## Precautionary or proportionate?



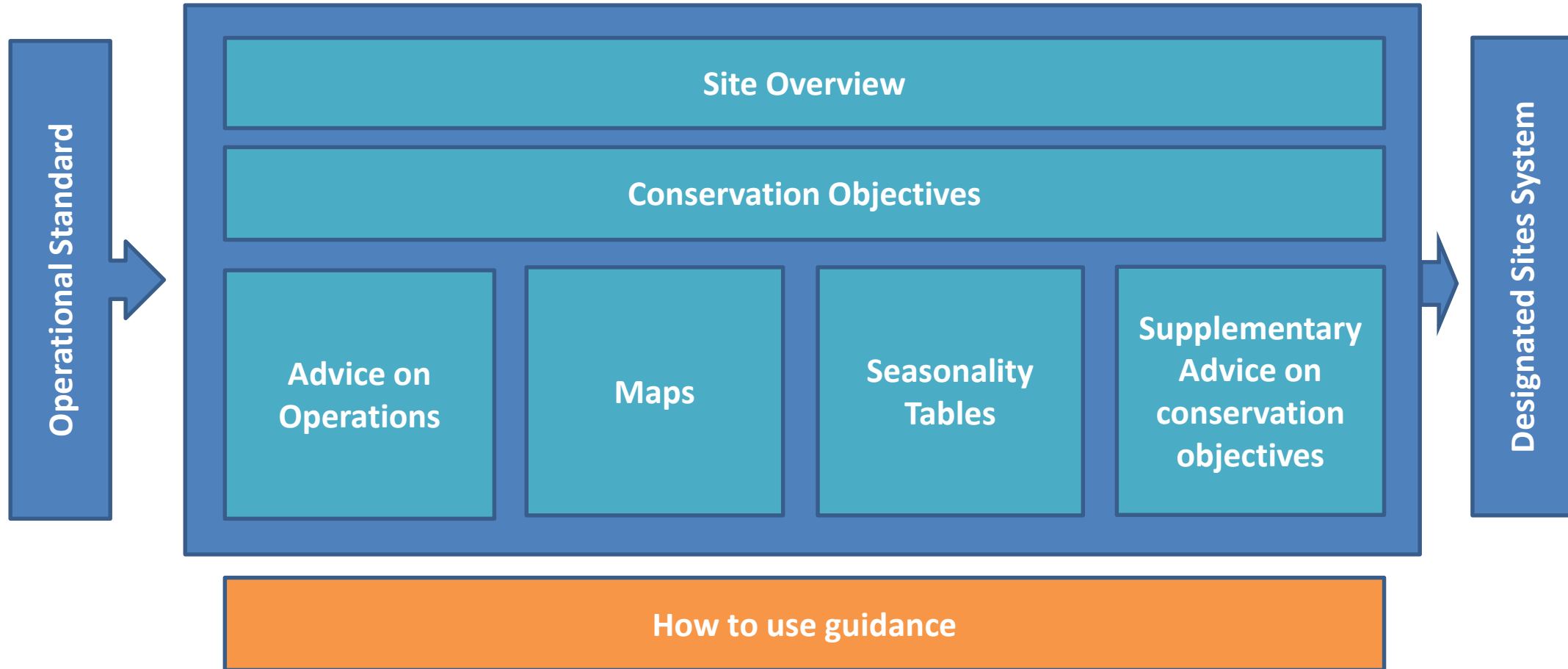
# Where do we want to get to with MPAs?

- A shared vision with industry and other sea users
- Clear outcomes for the MPA: habitats and species
- Clear understanding of current condition of the MPA
- Confidence in the evidence
- Our casework advice on projects is pragmatic and proportionate and we reduce the need for over-precaution because our advice is up-to-date

**All of which will assist both NE and industry by providing conservation advice that is easier to use and access**



# So what is Conservation Advice?





# Product 1: Advice on Operations

Berths/moorings/anchorages; Cargo operations and landward transportation; Operation of port and harbour structures; Shoreside industry and operations; Ve

NATURAL ENGLAND

## Designated Sites View

[Home](#)
[New notifications](#)
[Search for site details](#)
[Reports and statistics](#)
[Whole of England](#)
[Region](#)
[County](#)
[Interim NE reports ▶](#)
[NE Internal reports ▶](#)
[Glossary](#)

> [Search](#) > [Site list](#) > [Marine site detail](#) > [Operation Matrix](#)

### Outer Thames Estuary

#### Advice on Operations

This advice identifies pressures associated with the most common pressures of the site to these pressures.

- ▶ AGGREGATE EXTRACTION
- ▶ AQUACULTURE
- ▶ CABLES
- ▶ COASTAL DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD AND EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT
- ▶ COASTAL DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD AND EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT
- ▶ COASTAL DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD AND EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT
- ▶ COMMERCIAL SHIPPING (operation)
- ▶ ELECTRICITY FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES
- ▶ FISHING
- ▶ LICENSED ACTIONS
- ▶ OIL, GAS AND CARBON CAPTURE STORAGE
- ▶ PORTS AND HARBOURS (construction)
- ▶ PORTS AND HARBOURS (maintenance)
- ▶ PORTS AND HARBOURS (operation)
  - Berths/moorings/anchorages
  - Cargo operations and landward transportation
  - Operation of port and harbour structures
  - Shoreside industry and operations
  - Vessel maintenance



[Introduction or spread of non-indigenous species](#)

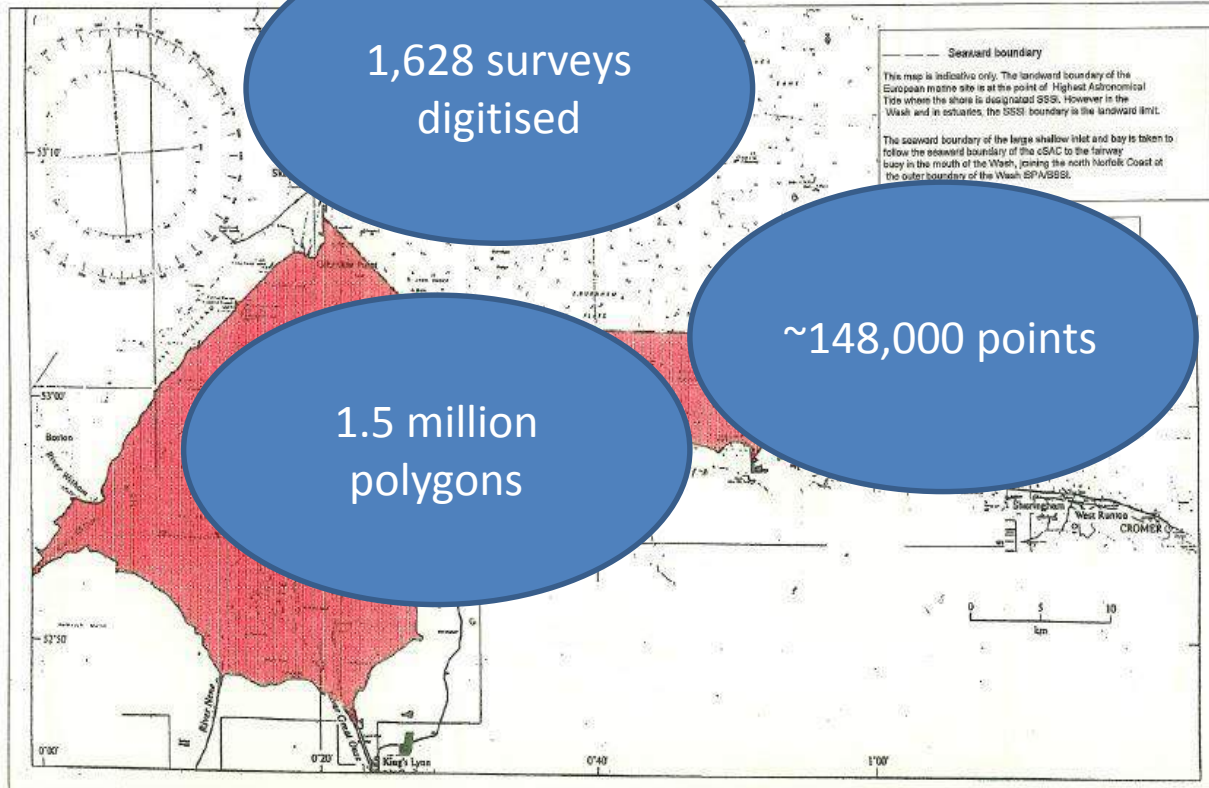
[Penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate below the surface of the seabed, including abrasion](#)

[Changes in suspended solids \(water clarity\)](#)

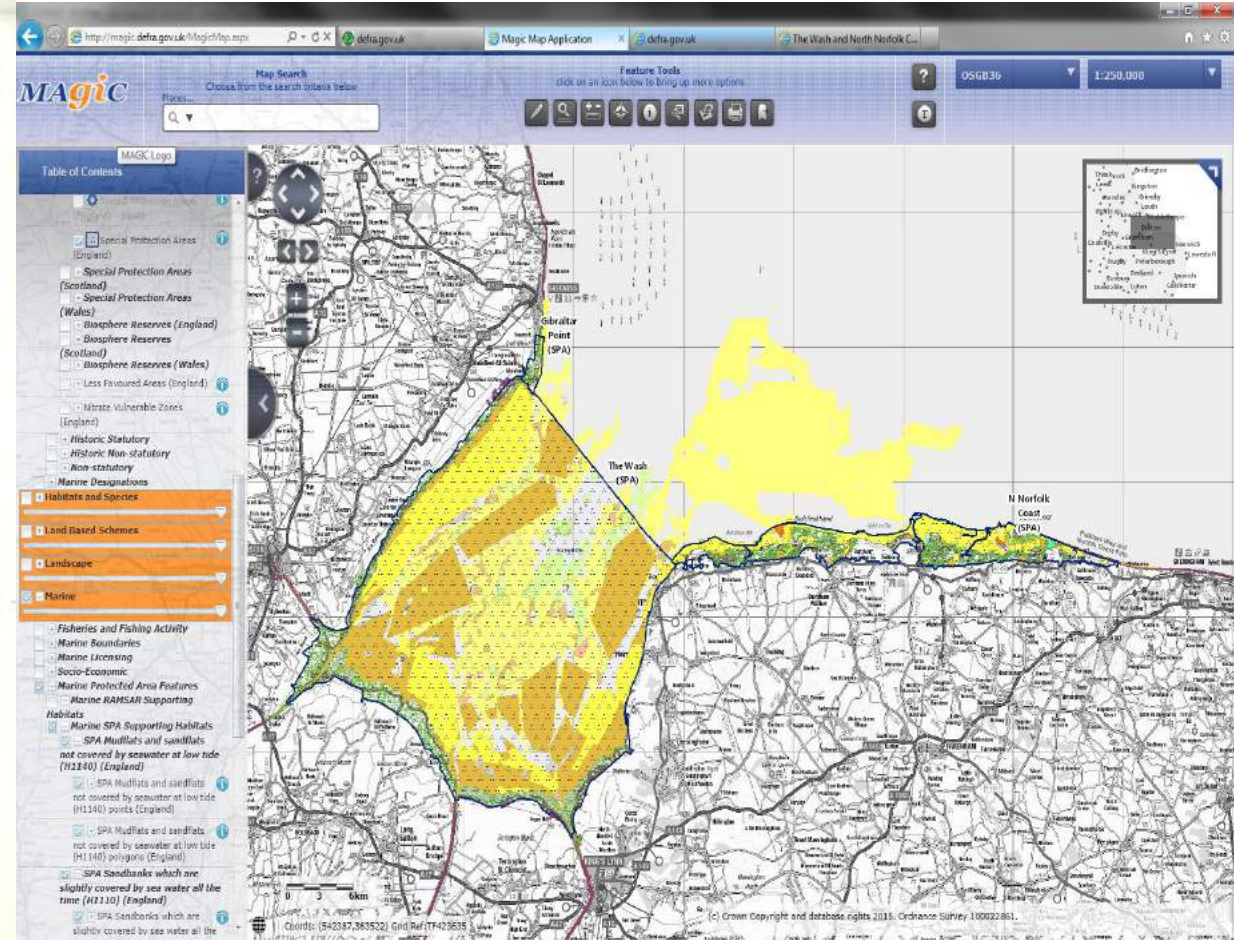
Birds	Supporting habitats					
<b>Red-throated diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>), Non-breeding</b>	<b>Subtidal biogenic reefs: <i>Sabellaria</i> spp.</b>	<b>Subtidal coarse sediment</b>	<b>Subtidal mixed sediments</b>	<b>Subtidal mud</b>	<b>Subtidal sand</b>	<b>Circalittoral rock</b>
NS	S	IF	S	S	S	S
S	S	S	S	S	S	S
S	NS	S	S	S	S	S*

# Product 2: Maps

Map 2: Location of interest features in the Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine site - Subtidal sandbanks



Based upon the Admiralty Chart Nos. 1150/108 with the permission of the Controller of HM Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. © English Nature 1999. Compiled by KRC.



## Product 3: Seasonality tables

**Table 1.** Presence by month of mobile designated features at the Alde-Ore Estuary SPA. Grey indicates periods of presence in significant numbers whereas blank (white) indicates either periods of absence or of presence but only in numbers of less significance.

Common Name	Latin Name	Designated Season	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Reference
Avocet	<u><i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i></u>	Nonbreeding ; Wintering													Cramp and Simmons, 1983
Lesser black-backed gull	<u><i>Larus fuscus</i></u>	Breeding													Forrester and Andrews, 2007; Wernham et al., 2002; Cramp and Simmons, 1983
Little tern	<u><i>Sterna albifrons</i></u>	Breeding													Kober et al., 2010; Forrester and Andrews, 2007; Pennington et al., 2004; Cramp and Simmons, 1983

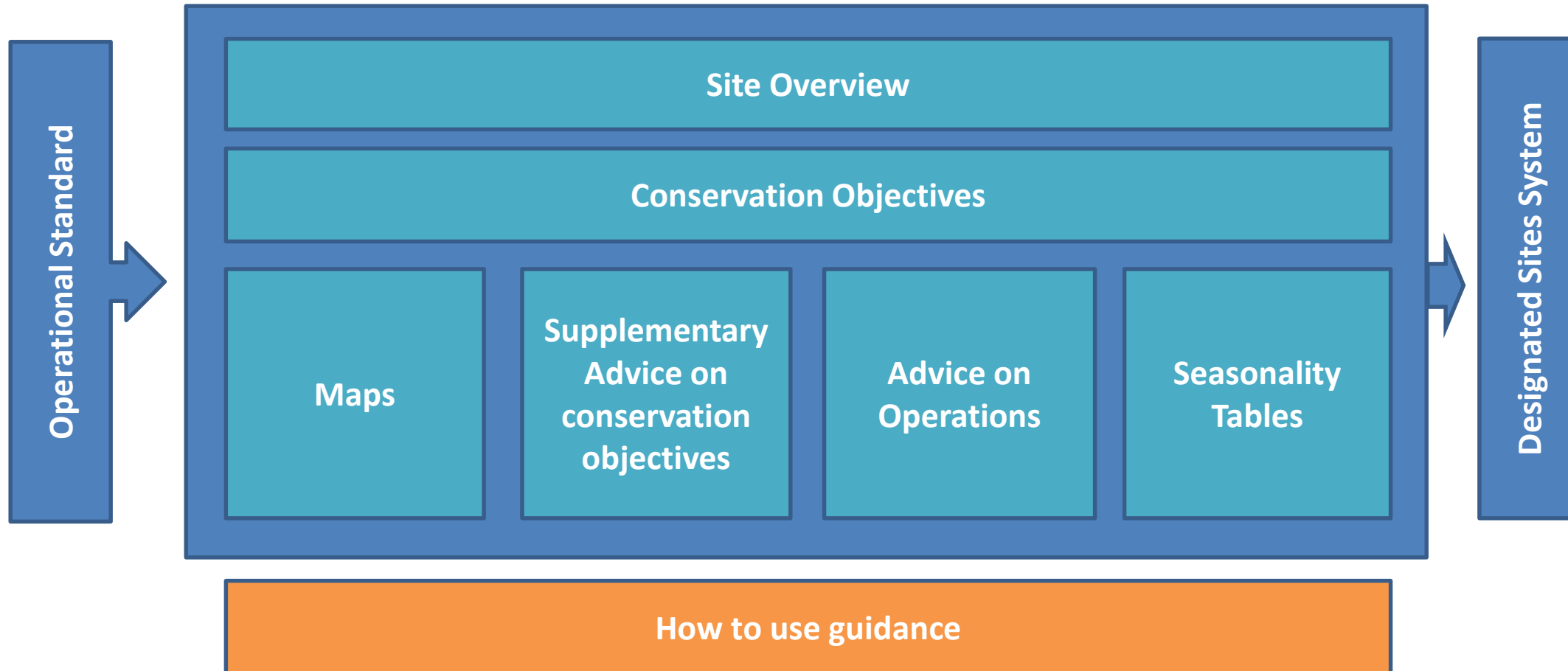


## Product 4: Detail within conservation objectives (supplementary advice)

- Tables provide detailed advice to enable the achievement of Conservation Objectives.
- Gives greater focus and clarity to the screening and appropriate assessments stages of HRA.
- Lists attributes : ecological characteristics of the site's designated species and habitats  
→ ecological integrity.
- The target identifies the desired state to be achieved for the attribute.
- Based on best available evidence (e.g. monitoring, condition assessment, sensitivity & exposure information).

Feature	Attribute	Target	Supporting and/or explanatory notes	References
Intertidal rock Infralittoral rock	Structure: physical structure of rocky substrate	Maintain the surface and structural complexity, and the stability of the intertidal rock / reef structure.	<p>The physical structure of the rocky reef will influence the marine life that's likely to be present within a site. Structural and surface complexity, the spaces between rocks, fissures and crevices are all examples of aspects that should be considered (Hiscock et al., 2006)</p> <p>The majority of the intertidal rock within the site is bedrock with occasional boulders overlying bedrock (Brazier et al., 1998; Hubble et al., 2014; Jarvis et al., 2003). There is currently no site specific information available on the structure of the infralittoral rock within the Tweed Estuary SAC.</p> <p>The target has been set due to a lack of evidence that the feature is being impacted by any anthropogenic activities.</p>	Hiscock et al., 2006; Brazier et al., 1998; Hubble et al., 2014; McNie and Pirie, 2015

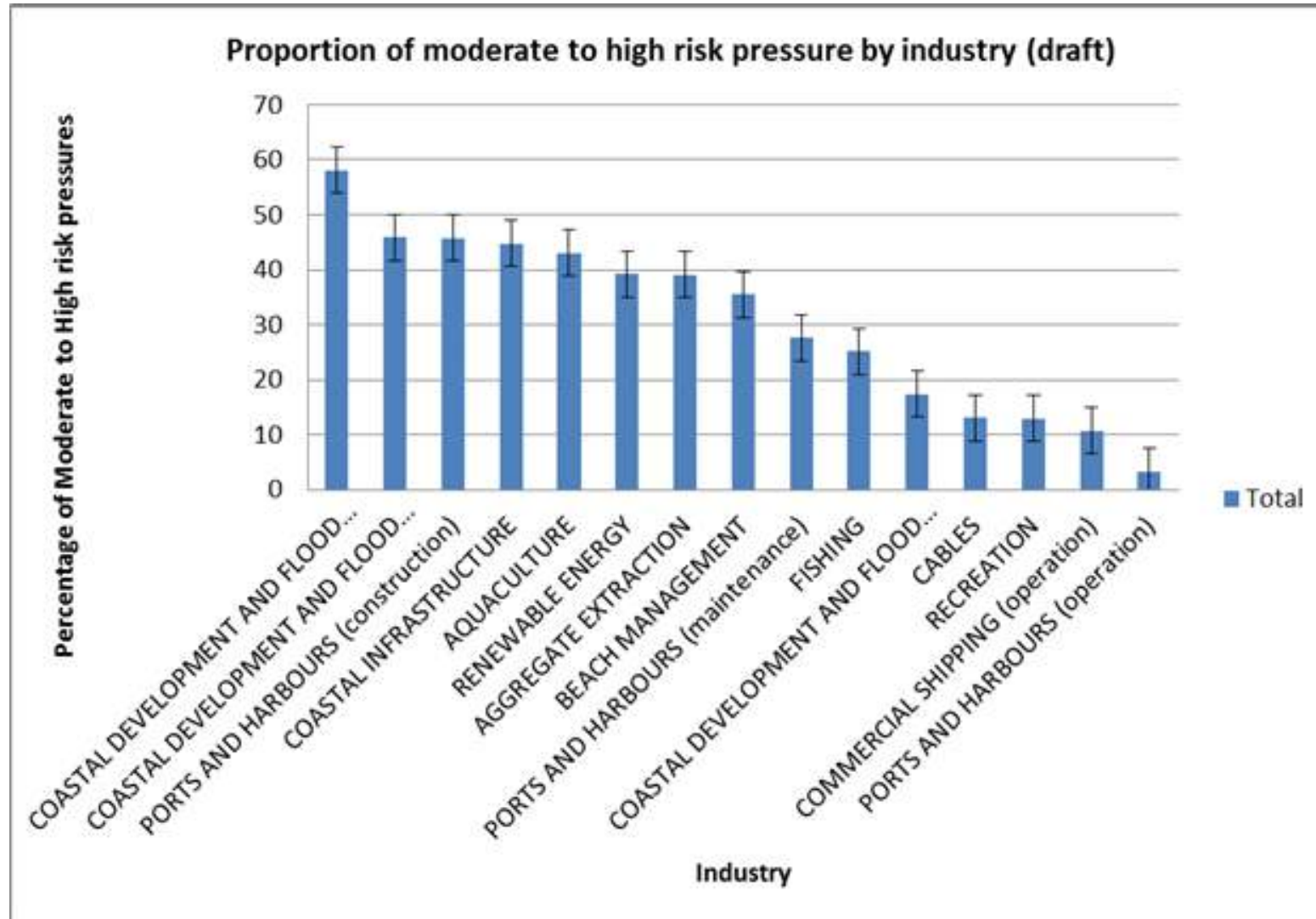
# So what is Conservation Advice?



# Working with industries and NGOs

- The advice will be unused unless we have the buy-in from sea users and other stakeholders
- We set up an Advisory Group early on to help us design advice packages and test drafts
- Industry engagement in describing the links between pressures and activities is critical to get buy-in
  - Sector workshop organised jointly with SUDG and follow up 1:2:1s with cables, aggregates, ports, offshore wind, recreational boating
  - Fisheries workshop
- Workshops with NGOs and MMO
- Area team workshops with local stakeholders including IFCA
- Led to over 7000 changes to the database

# Reducing burdens through risk profile tables





## SUDG view: outcomes for industry

- Better understanding of the work that NE has done to develop CA
- Better access to evidence-based information about MPAs and their management needs
- Better information to assist planning developments from outset
- Greater clarity and cost effectiveness
- Better agreement on the range and extent of impacts of development by sector based on clear evidence
- Better working relationships in managing MPAs

# Natural England view: outcomes

- Far greater understanding of what Conservation Advice is and how to use it
- Happier industry – greater confidence in meeting MPA management needs
- Higher quality proposals – simpler casework

**= Better environmental outcomes**

# Thank you!

Special thanks to Rob Enever, Natalie Bown, Eddy Mayhew and Lisa Jenner

# References and links

- Landing page for CA
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conservation-advice-packages-for-marine-protected-areas>
- Flow charts for how CA can be used for EMS Habitats Regulations Assessment / MCZ assessments
  - [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/441299/hra-process.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441299/hra-process.pdf)
  - [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/441298/mcz-process.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441298/mcz-process.pdf)
- MarLIN sensitivity assessments <http://www.marlin.ac.uk/evidence>
- APEM mobile species sensitivity report
- [www.sudg.org.uk](http://www.sudg.org.uk)