



Marine
Management
Organisation

Management of marine Non Licensable Activities (mNLA) in the Solent Maritime SAC

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As part of the Environmental Improvement Plan the government has committed to the following targets:

Interim target - ensuring that 48% of marine protected area features are in favourable condition by 2028

Long Term target - ensure that 70% of features are in favourable condition by 2042 with the remainder in recovering condition

Drivers for managing mNLA

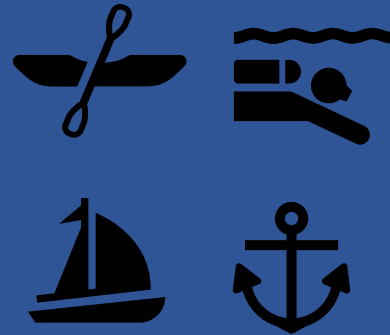
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MMO is responsible for assessing and managing marine non-licensable activities (mNLAs) in order to further the conservation objectives of marine protected areas (MPAs) in England within 12 nautical miles (nm) of the coast.



Through the management of marine non-licensable activities, MMO will be contributing towards its key services of protecting marine habitats and wildlife as set out in the MMO Corporate Plan 2022-25.



The mNLA strategy will also support the achievement of goals 1 and 3 in MMO2030 Strategic Plan:

Goal 1 - Work with partners to restore functioning marine ecosystems introducing increased levels of protection and improvement to our marine environment.

Goal 3 - Ensure MMO is recognised as a world leader for the marine management activities it regulates and the services it delivers across England, UK and Internationally.

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What are mNLA?

Marine non-licensable activities (mNLA) are those which do not require a marine licence (as defined by [section 66 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009](#)) and also excludes all types of fishing.

These are mostly marine recreational activities which include, but are not limited to:

- non-motorised watercraft, for example kayaks, windsurfing, kite surfing, dinghies;
- powerboating or sailing with an engine – anchoring and mooring, launching and recovery, participation;
- sailing without an engine - anchoring and mooring, launching and recovery, participation; and
- diving and snorkelling.



Image source: MMO

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Evidence reports and liaison with Natural England identified 41 MPAs which may require consideration of the impacts of marine non-licensable activities on the habitats and species (known as 'designated features') for which the MPAs are designated.

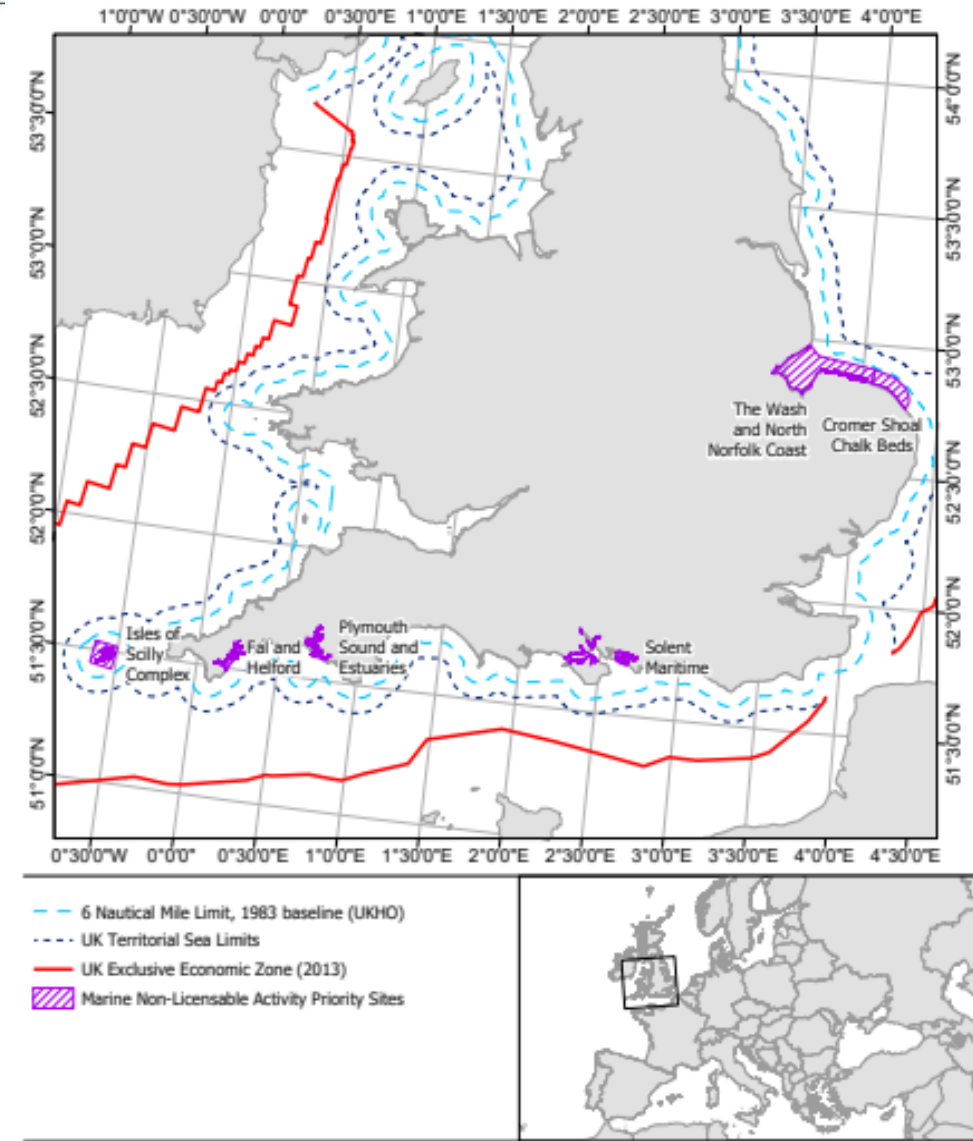
MPAs with designated features that have been assessed as being in **unfavourable condition as a result of mNLA** will be taken forward for detailed site assessments.

MCT have identified 6 priority sites so far as:

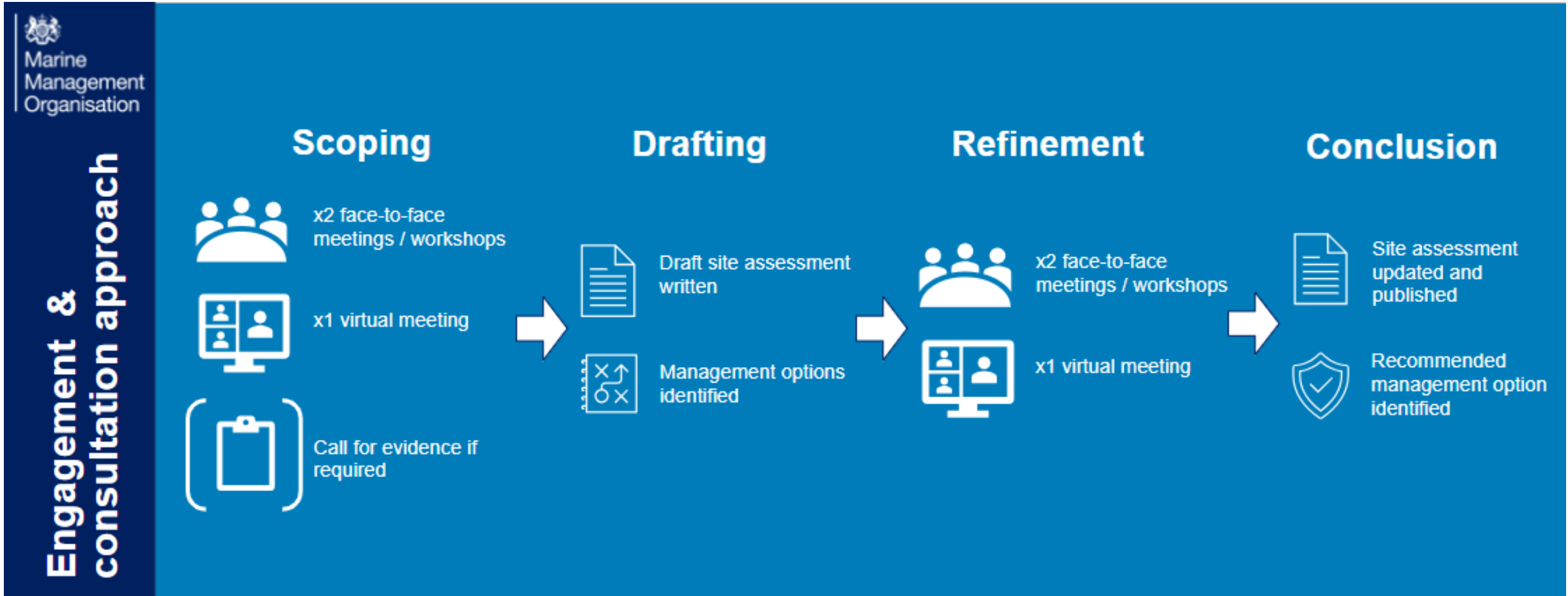
1. [Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ](#).
2. [Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#)
3. [Isles of Scilly Complex SAC](#)
4. [Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC](#)
5. [Solent Maritime SAC](#)
6. [The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC](#)



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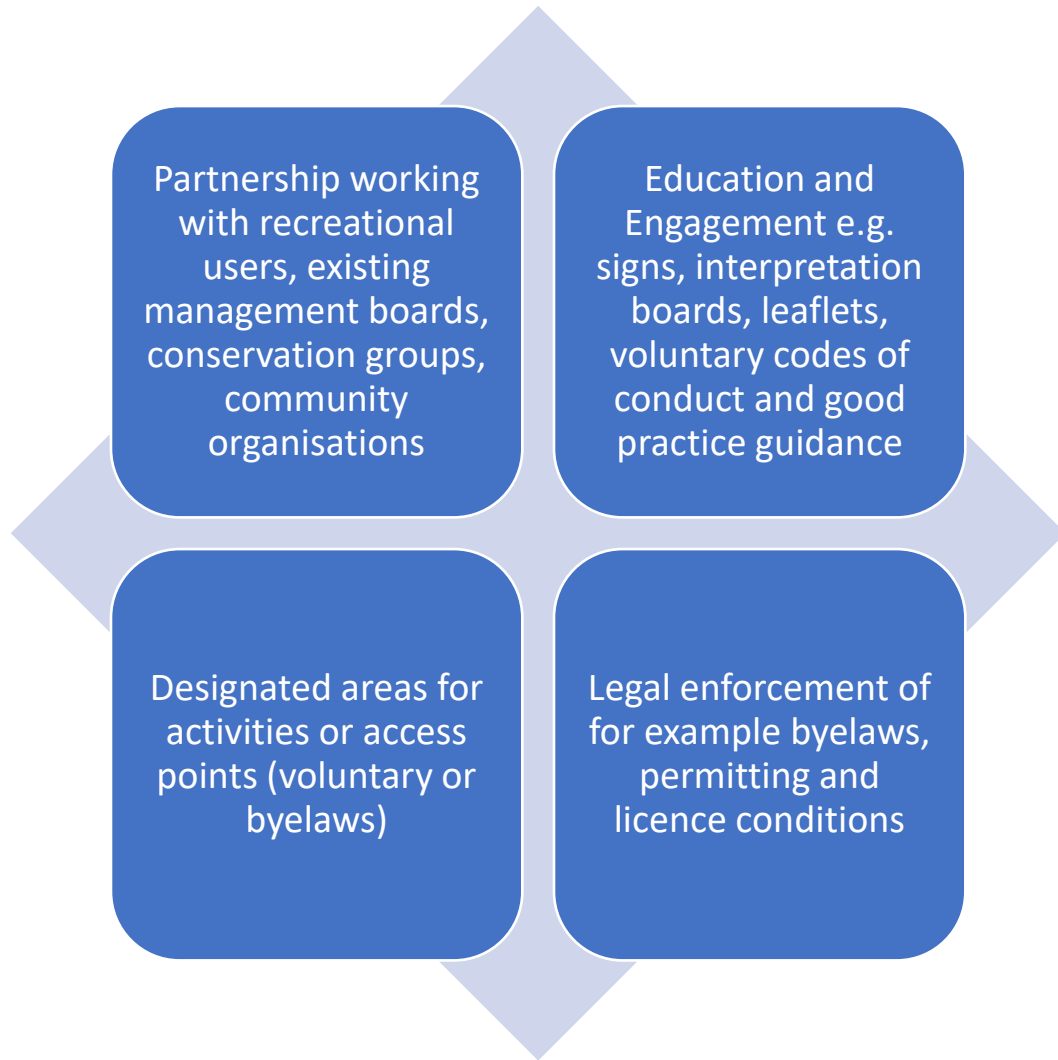


Engagement Approach



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MNLA management measures available



Management measures will be selected on the basis of the most effective way to further each site's conservation objectives.

Management measures may range from voluntary measures to statutory MMO byelaws and are developed through appropriate levels of regional engagement and consultation.

What MMO byelaws can protect

MMO byelaws can prohibit or restrict a range of activities depending on the location and need for protection:

- entry to a site, movement or other activity by people, animals, vessels or vehicles;
- vessel speed;
- vessel anchoring;
- killing, taking, destroying or disturbing any animals or plants;
- anything that interferes with the seabed or damages or disturbs any object in the sea;
- specific activities in certain parts of the site;
- specific activities in certain periods of a year; or
- certain methods of activity within a site.



Image: Natural England Remedies



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Solent Maritime SAC Designated Features and conditions

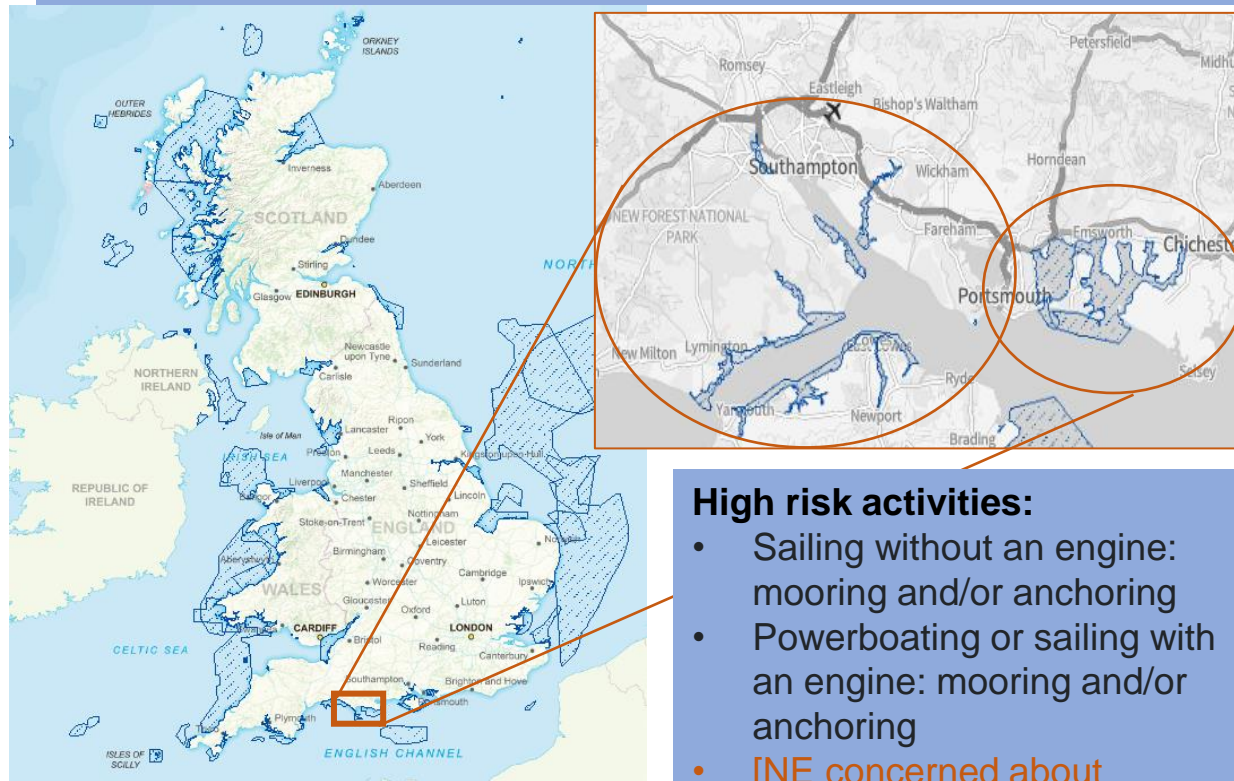
Natural England condition assessment states:

- **Sandbanks** which are slightly covered by sea water all the time – *subtidal seagrass*
 - 100% Unfavourable no change.
- **Mudflats** and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide - *Intertidal seagrass*
 - 70% unfavourable no change, 30% unfavourable declining
- **Estuaries** – *subtidal seagrass*
 - 70% unfavourable no change, 30% unfavourable declining.

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Designated for:

Estuaries (+sub-features); Mudflats and sandflats (+sub-features); Sandbanks (+sub-features); Annual vegetation of drift lines; Coastal lagoons; Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria*; Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Atlantic salt meadows; Spartina swards and Desmoulin's whorl snail.



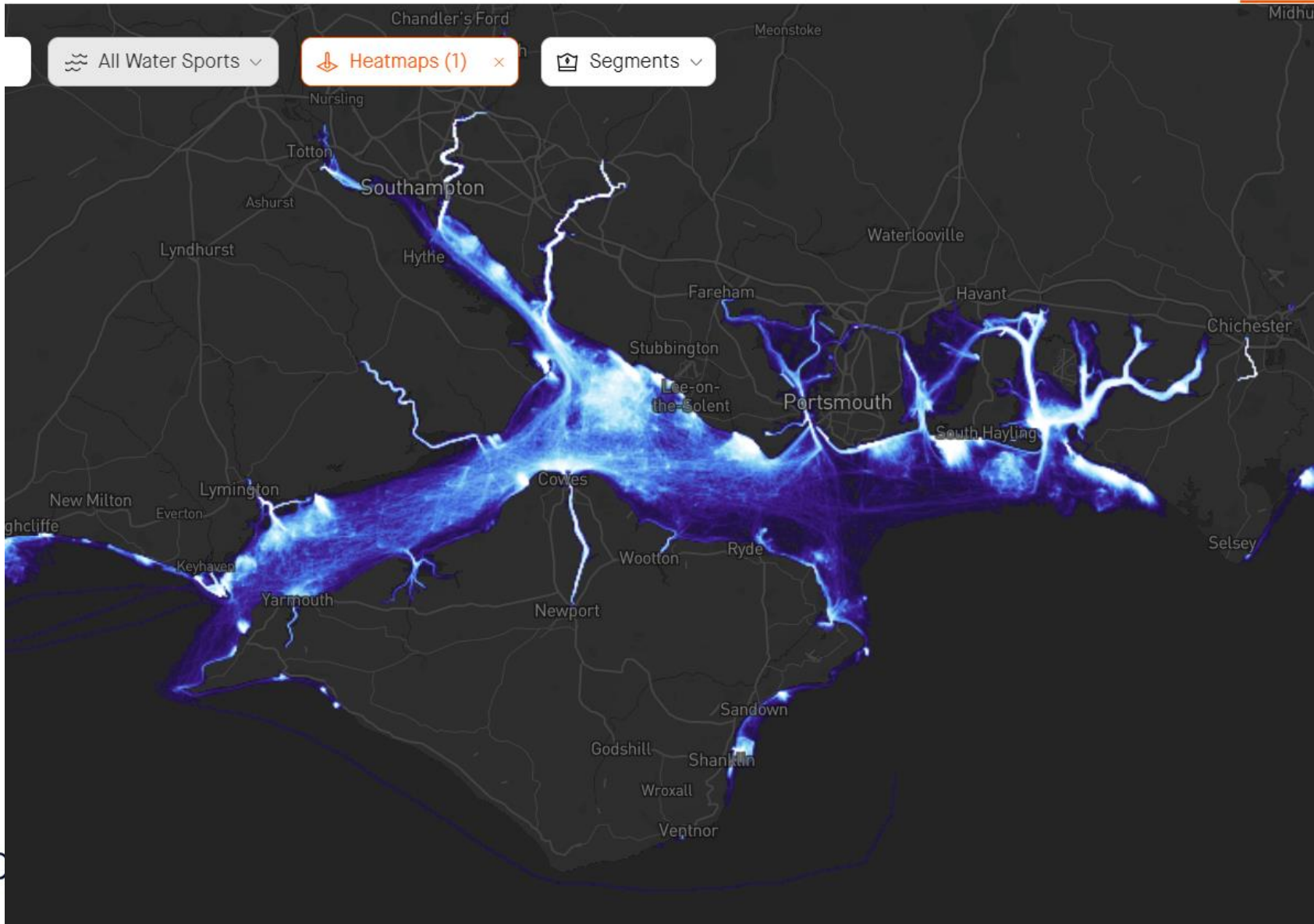
All features (except intertidal coarse sediment (NS) and Desmoulin's whorl snail (NA), sensitive to abrasion/disturbance of the substrate.

High risk pressures:

- Abrasion/disturbance of the substrate
- Penetration and/or disturbance of the substrate
- Physical change to another seabed type
- Physical change to another sediment type

High risk activities:

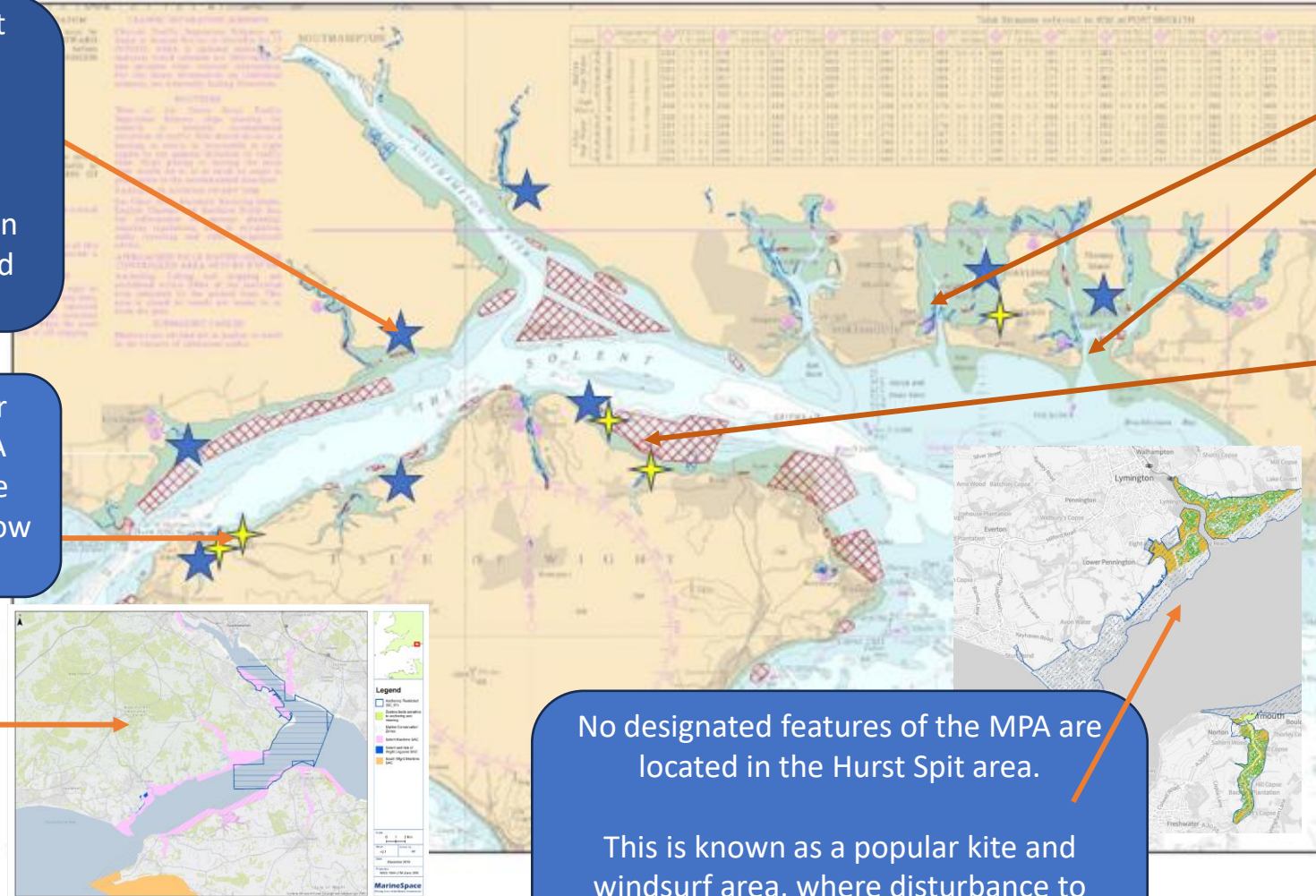
- Sailing without an engine: mooring and/or anchoring
- Powerboating or sailing with an engine: mooring and/or anchoring
- [NE concerned about launching and recovery, although no high-risk pressure on DSS]



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Non-Licensable activities taking place

Solent



Evidence project (Anchoring and Mooring 2) identified recreational anchorages within SAC area denoted with blue star

Survey points for ReMEDIES mNLA survey points are denoted with yellow star

Large anchoring restriction area in western channel – query evidence project

No designated features of the MPA are located in the Hurst Spit area.
This is known as a popular kite and windsurf area, where disturbance to birds is a concern amongst local stakeholders and groups.

Chichester & Langstone Harbours are popular paddle sports areas (harbour dues)

Osborne significant levels of boating activity compared to other sites. Site was selected as the location of ReMEDIES Wildlife VNAZ.

MMO Anchoring and Mooring 2

- 136 RYA affiliated Clubs of which 48 are also training centres.
- 184 training centres covering all forms of watersports participation.
- 69 marinas and boatyards.
- 67 anchorage areas and - -
- 203 mooring areas identified.

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Existing Management



- 1) **Codes of conduct and awareness raising materials –** Bird Aware Solent circulated by many harbours.
- 2) **ReMEDIES new wildlife VNAZ in Osborne Bay**
- 3) **Langstone Harbour -**
 - Specified zones for Jet Skiing and Waterskiing (Waterskiing is only permitted during specified season)
 - Windsurfing and Kayaking participants must avoid landing on the islands in the harbour (birds)
 - Kite Surfing is NOT permitted in Langstone Harbour without written consent from the Harbourmaster
 - A dedicated Kite Surfing zone is available outside the Harbour on the southern shoreline of Hayling Island.
- 4) **National Trust Newton Creek –**
 - No access zone for canoes, SUP code of conduct to protect sensitive habitats and species.

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Conclusions and Recommendations

- mNLAs of most concern are **boating and paddlesports** (launching)
- Need to establish **MMO jurisdiction boundary** and where this will require collaboration with local authorities, particularly in the many estuaries. There are some **large areas of the site that sit outside of Harbour Authorities**, where mNLA is also occurring.
- Engage with a wide number of existing stakeholders, partnerships and other relevant authorities, avoid stakeholder fatigue.
- There are a number of **proactive Port and Harbour Authorities in the area**, managing impacts to habitats and birds through the collective work of Bird Aware Solent, Solent Coastal Forum, Solent seascape project - evaluate the effectiveness of this to inform approach.



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Wider MMO working - mNLA

MCT lead role to assess and engage on the sites proposing management measures -

Collaborative working with other agencies is required to evidence issues and support management measures:

- Harbour Authorities
- Regional MPA networks
- IFCA
- MCA
- Natural England
- The Wildlife Trusts
- eNGOs

Wider MMO involvement required to implement management -
Compliance and enforcement

- MPASum citizen science project
- Marine wildlife Disturbance reporting platform

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Images source: MMO



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Questions

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