



## 2010 Status Report on the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas



## OSPAR Convention

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the “OSPAR Convention”) was opened for signature at the Ministerial Meeting of the former Oslo and Paris Commissions in Paris on 22 September 1992. The Convention entered into force on 25 March 1998. It has been ratified by Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and approved by the European Union and Spain.

## Convention OSPAR

La Convention pour la protection du milieu marin de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est, dite Convention OSPAR, a été ouverte à la signature à la réunion ministérielle des anciennes Commissions d'Oslo et de Paris, à Paris le 22 septembre 1992. La Convention est entrée en vigueur le 25 mars 1998. La Convention a été ratifiée par l'Allemagne, la Belgique, le Danemark, la Finlande, la France, l'Irlande, l'Islande, le Luxembourg, la Norvège, les Pays-Bas, le Portugal, le Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, la Suède et la Suisse et approuvée par l'Union européenne et l'Espagne.

## Acknowledgement

This report has been prepared by Dr Henning von Nordheim (Convenor of the OSPAR ICG-MPA), Mr Tim Packeiser (Secretary of the OSPAR ICG-MPA) and Mr Mirko Hauswirth (German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, BfN), task managers for Germany as lead country for MPAs, with colleagues from the ICG-MPA and on the basis of information and data provided by Contracting Parties on their respective Marine Protected Areas nominated for inclusion in the OSPAR Network of MPAs.

## Cover photo

Western part of the Svalbard archipelago selected by Norway as an OSPAR Marine Protected Area in 2009. Photograph taken by Mr Morten Ekker. The photograph shall not be used for any other purpose without prior permission from the copyright holder.

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## Executive Summary

The year 2010 has been agreed by the OSPAR Commission as the target date for having completed an ecologically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas. This Status Report aims to summarise the information made available by Contracting Parties (CPs) on their respective MPAs nominated to OSPAR and on this basis assess to what extent the target has been achieved.

In the period 2005-2010 eleven of the twelve OSPAR Contracting Parties bordering the North-East Atlantic have selected and nominated sites as components of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas. The contributions by Contracting Parties differ substantially regarding distribution of sites across coastal and offshore waters as well as regarding overall coverage of their national waters by OSPAR MPAs.

By 31 December 2010, the OSPAR Network of MPAs comprises a total of 181 sites, including 175 MPAs situated within national waters of Contracting Parties and six MPAs in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). Collectively, these sites cover 439,679 km<sup>2</sup> or 3.15 % of the OSPAR maritime area in the North-East Atlantic. As the vast majority of sites have been designated in CPs' territorial waters, overall coverage of coastal waters by OSPAR MPAs is consequently higher at 14.1%. Overall coverage of offshore areas, *i.e.* the Exclusive Economic Zones of Contracting Parties, by OSPAR MPAs remains very low at 0.56%. The distribution of MPAs across the five OSPAR Regions is likewise imbalanced, resulting in major gaps of the MPA Network. The Greater North Sea, the Wider Atlantic and the Celtic Seas are the best represented OSPAR Regions, with 6.25%, 4.65%, and 3.53% coverage by OSPAR MPAs respectively. While coverage of the Arctic Waters is at 1.36%, the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast has less than 1% protected by OSPAR MPAs.

Comprehensive conclusions on the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs are currently not possible due to the unavailability of relevant ecological data on the distribution of species and habitats in the OSPAR maritime area. Considering the spatial arrangement of its components, as summarised above, the OSPAR Network of MPAs cannot be judged to be *ecologically coherent* yet. As no sufficiently detailed information on the management of sites has been made available by Contracting Parties, it remains similarly impossible at this time to comprehensively conclude on the extent to which OSPAR MPAs are *well-managed*. While in general a number of sites are subject to management regimes, including conservation objectives, management plans and specific regulatory measures, no evidence on their effectiveness in achieving the goals for which these were established has been provided. Management plans and measures for many sites are still being prepared.

## Récapitulatif

L'année 2010 a été déterminée par la Commission OSPAR comme étant la date cible pour l'obtention d'un réseau écologiquement cohérent de zones marines protégées (ZMP) bien gérées. Le présent rapport d'avancement a pour but de résumer les informations mises à la disposition des Parties contractantes sur leurs ZMP respectives désignées à OSPAR et d'évaluer, en se fondant sur ces informations, dans quelle mesure l'objectif a été atteint.

Au cours de la période 2005-2010, onze des douze Parties contractantes OSPAR bordant l'Atlantique du Nord-Est ont sélectionné et désigné des sites à titre de composantes du réseau de ZMP OSPAR. Les contributions des Parties contractantes varient grandement en matière de distribution des sites dans les eaux côtières et du large ainsi que de couverture d'ensemble de leurs eaux nationales par des ZMP OSPAR.

Le réseau de ZMP OSPAR comporte, au 31 décembre 2010, 181 sites dont 175 sont situés dans les eaux nationales des Parties contractantes et 6 dans des zones au-delà de la juridiction nationale (ABNJ). Ces sites couvrent au total une superficie de 439.679 km<sup>2</sup> soit 3,15 % de la zone maritime OSPAR dans l'Atlantique du Nord-Est. Les ZMP OSPAR couvrent au total plus de 14,1% des eaux côtières car la grande majorité des sites ont été désignés dans les eaux territoriales des Parties contractantes. La couverture totale des zones offshore, c'est-à-dire les zones économiques exclusives des Parties contractantes, par les ZMP OSPAR est très faible, correspondant à 0,56%. De même la distribution des ZMP dans les cinq Régions OSPAR est inégale, donnant lieu à des écarts importants dans le réseau de ZMP. La mer du Nord au sens large, l'Atlantique au large et les mers celtiques sont les régions OSPAR les mieux représentées, leur couverture par des ZMP OSPAR étant respectivement de 6,25%, 4,65% et 3,53%, tandis que celle des eaux arctiques est de 1,36% et que celle du golfe de Gascogne et des côtes ibériques est inférieure à 1%.

Il est actuellement impossible de tirer des conclusions exhaustives sur la cohérence écologique du réseau de ZMP OSPAR car les données écologiques pertinentes sur la distribution des espèces et des habitats dans la zone maritime OSPAR ne sont pas disponibles. On ne peut pas encore considérer que le réseau de ZMP OSPAR est *écologiquement cohérent* étant donné la distribution spatiale de ses composantes. Il est de même impossible, à l'heure actuelle, de tirer des conclusions exhaustives sur la mesure dans laquelle les ZMP OSPAR sont *bien gérées*. En général, un certain nombre de sites sont soumis à des régimes de gestion, notamment des objectifs de conservation, des plans de gestion et des mesures réglementaires spécifiques mais on ne dispose d'aucune preuve de leur efficacité lorsqu'il s'agit d'atteindre les objectifs. Des plans et des mesures de gestion pour les autres sites sont encore en cours de préparation.

## Background

The Sintra Ministerial Statement, adopted at the meeting of the OSPAR Commission at Sintra, Portugal, on 22-23 July 1998, included the commitment that the OSPAR Commission will promote the establishment of a network of marine protected areas to ensure the sustainable use and protection and conservation of marine biological diversity and its ecosystems.

This process was enhanced by the Bremen Ministerial Statement, adopted by the First Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Helsinki and OSPAR Commissions in Bremen, Germany, on 25-26 June 2003, as it established the commitment to complete by 2010 a joint network of well-managed marine protected areas that, together with the Natura 2000 network, is ecologically coherent,

The aims of the OSPAR MPA Network have been set out as

- to protect, conserve and restore species, habitats and ecological processes which have been adversely affected by human activities;
- to prevent degradation of, and damage to, species, habitats and ecological processes, following the precautionary principle; and
- to protect and conserve areas that best represent the range of species, habitats and ecological processes in the maritime area.

Recommendation 2003/3 of the Convention for the Protection of the marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) sets out that in the years subsequent to 2005, Contracting Parties should report by 31 December to the OSPAR Commission on any OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that they have selected (or deselected) and on any corresponding management plans that they have adopted or substantially amended in that year. In 2006, the OSPAR Biodiversity Committee (BDC) agreed that annual reports on the status of the OSPAR Network of MPAs should be prepared in the period up to 2010.

This document presents the 6<sup>th</sup> Status Report on the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas taking into account all Marine Protected Areas that have either been nominated by Contracting Parties within their respective national waters or established collectively by the OSPAR Commission in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) until 31 December 2010.

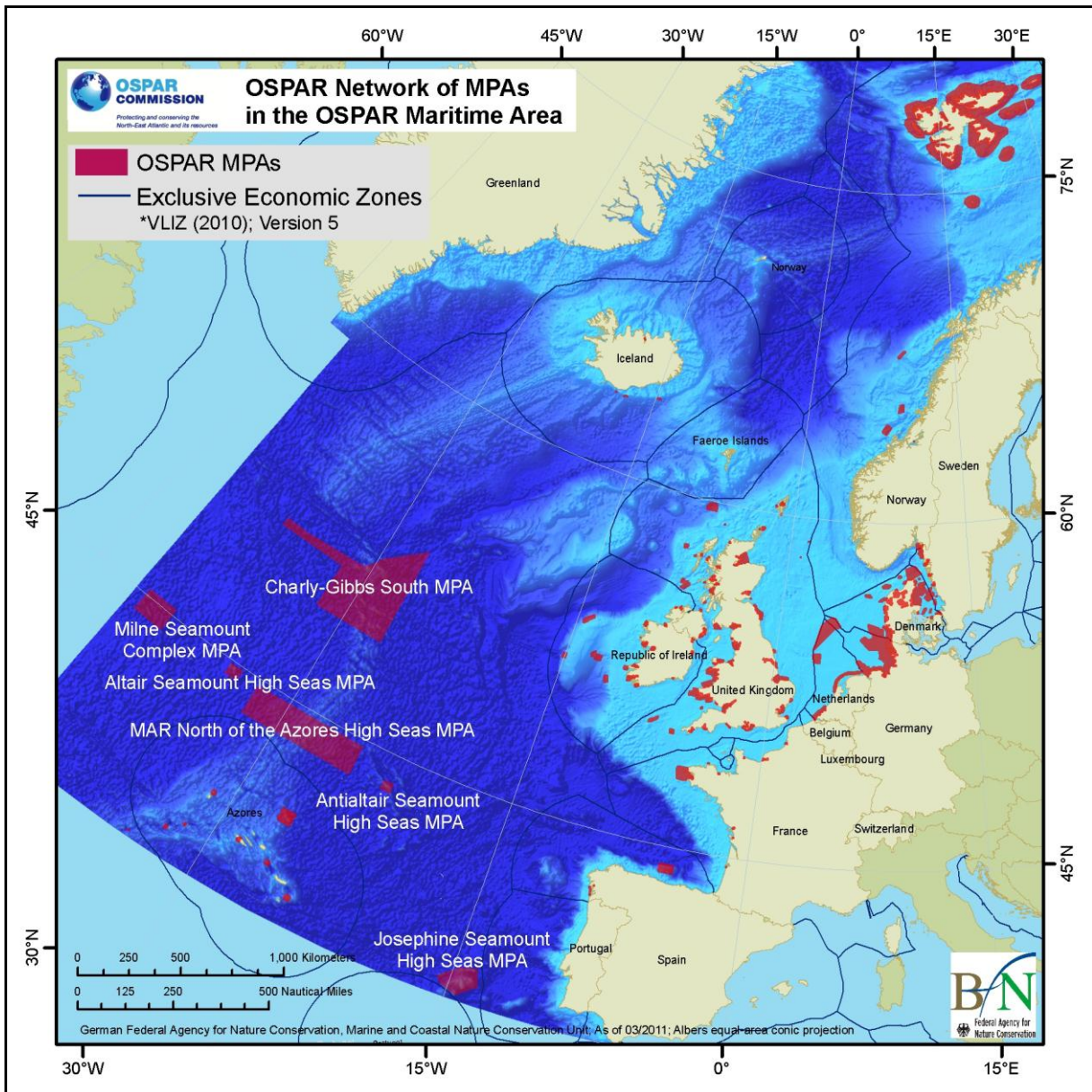
Since the year 2010 has been determined by the OSPAR Commission as the target date for having completed an *ecologically coherent* network of *well-managed* marine protected areas, the report aims to summarise the information available and on this basis assess to what extent the target has been achieved.

**Sources of data and information on the OSPAR Marine Protected Areas:** The analysis of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is based upon the data and information provided by Contracting Parties in the process of nominating their MPAs to the OSPAR Commission and subsequently to the OSPAR database of Marine Protected Areas held at the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN). All calculations are made with reference only to the OSPAR maritime area as defined in the OSPAR Convention, excluding overseas territories and territories of Contracting Parties in the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas.



# Analysis of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas in 2010<sup>1</sup>

The OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as of 31 December 2010 comprises a total of 181 sites, including 175 MPAs situated within national waters of Contracting Parties and six MPAs in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). Collectively, these sites cover 439,679 km<sup>2</sup> or 3.15 % of the OSPAR maritime area in the North-East Atlantic.



**Figure 1.** OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas (as of 31 December 2010)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All figures, tables and maps in this Status Report provide information on the OSPAR Network of MPAs as of 31 December 2010.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of visibility, OSPAR Marine Protected Areas within the boundaries of Exclusive Economic Zones have in this map been slightly increased. A number of the smaller sites otherwise would not be visible in this illustration showing almost the entire OSPAR Convention area.

## OSPAR Marine Protected Areas under National Jurisdiction

### Distribution of MPAs in Contracting Parties' national waters

Contracting Parties (CPs) have in the period 2005–2010 nominated a total of 175 MPAs and collectively agreed on six MPAs in ABNJ for inclusion in the OSPAR Network of MPAs<sup>3</sup>. The contributions by CPs regarding number of MPAs nominated, MPA coverage and distribution in their respective national waters differ substantially. Table 1 indicates the number of sites per CP and associated area subject to MPAs. As can be inferred from Table 1, there is no direct relationship between the number of MPAs nominated and the total area protected as the sizes of MPAs varies substantially.

**Table 1.** OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (as of 31 December 2010)

OSPAR Contracting Party	OSPAR MPAs	MPA coverage in Territorial Waters (km <sup>2</sup> )	MPA coverage in Exclusive Economic Zones (km <sup>2</sup> )	MPA coverage in High Seas (km <sup>2</sup> )	MPA coverage - Total (km <sup>2</sup> )
Belgium <sup>4</sup>	0	0	0		0
Denmark	40	8,956	5,497		14,453
France	9	3,598	0		3,598
Germany	6	8,968	7,917		16,885
Iceland	7	10	69		79
Ireland	19	1,593	2,543		4,137
Netherlands	5	2,434	5,880		8,313
Norway	8	78,509	2,091		80,601
Portugal	8 <sup>5</sup>	1,022	4,679		5,700
Spain	2	85	2,398		2,483
Sweden	8	1,047	211		1,258
United Kingdom	63	13,057	2,807		15,864
ABNJ*	6			286,308	286,308
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>119,280</b>	<b>34,092</b>	<b>286,308</b>	<b>439,679</b>

\*ABNJ = Areas beyond National Jurisdiction

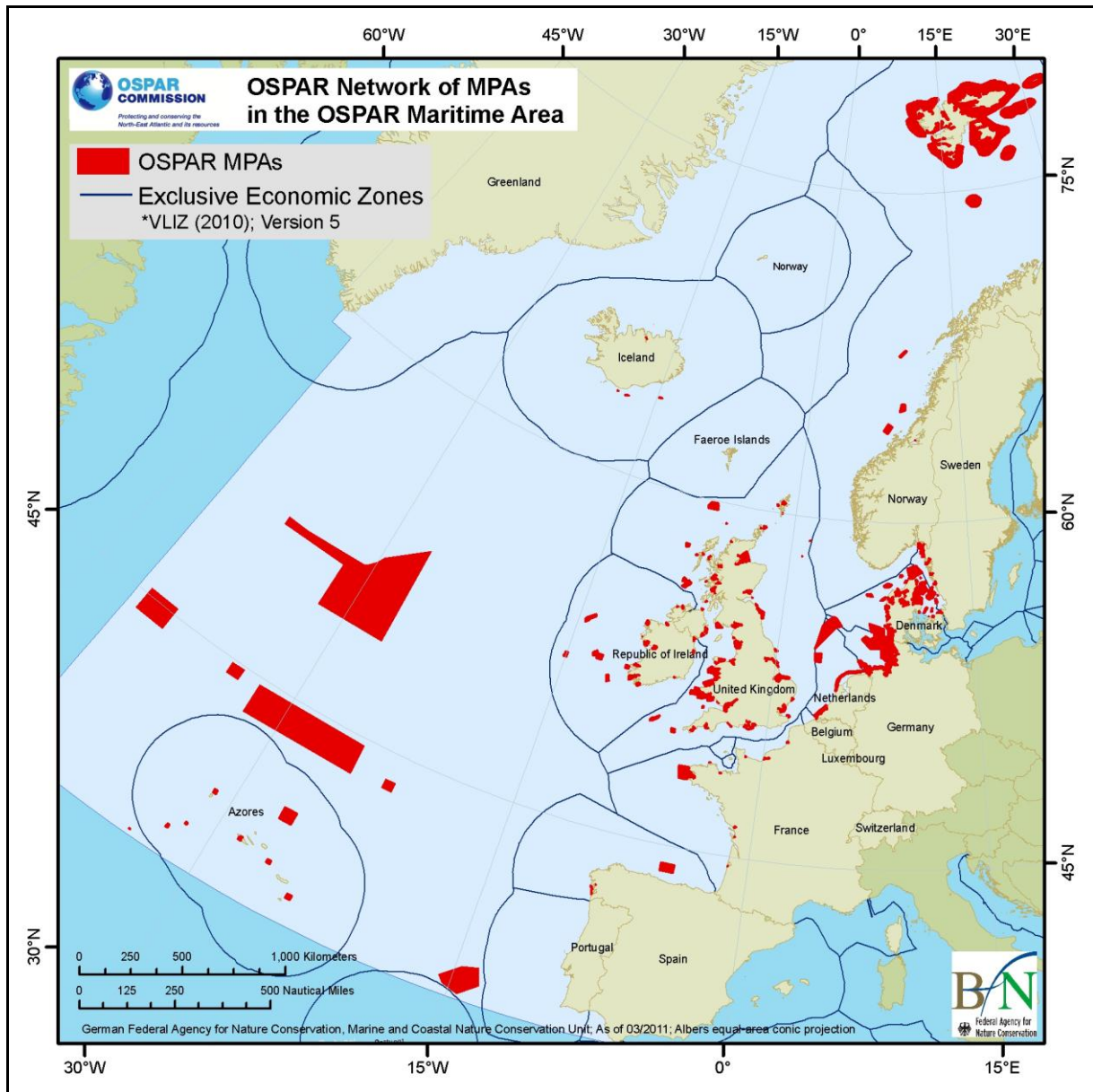
<sup>3</sup> Please, refer to Annex I for a list of all OSPAR MPAs nominated until 31 December 2010; Annex II for illustrations of each CP's national waters showing the respective MPAs nominated; and Annex III presenting the evolution of the MPA Network in the period 2005-2010.

<sup>4</sup> In 2007, Haelters et al. (MUMM) proposed the western part of the "Westhinder" as an OSPAR-MPA for the conservation of the gravel beds. A report by Degraer et al (MUMM) in 2008 proposed a ca 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> area (in the SW of the Belgian part of the North Sea) as a potential Site of Community Importance (Habitats Directive). Following a public consultation, Belgium notified this site in 2010 to the European Commission and the federal administration is presently assessing whether or not (part of) its MPA network can be proposed as OSPAR-MPAs.

<sup>5</sup> In addition, Portugal has nominated the seafloor and sub-seafloor of four of the areas listed in the category of 'ABNJ', that are encompassed by Portugal's submission to the UN CLCS on the outer limits of its extended continental shelf. These areas, collectively covering 119,900 km<sup>2</sup>, have not yet been taken into account in the analysis of OSPAR MPAs under national jurisdiction.



Figure 2 shows the OSPAR Network of MPAs and the boundaries of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of Contracting Parties<sup>6</sup>.



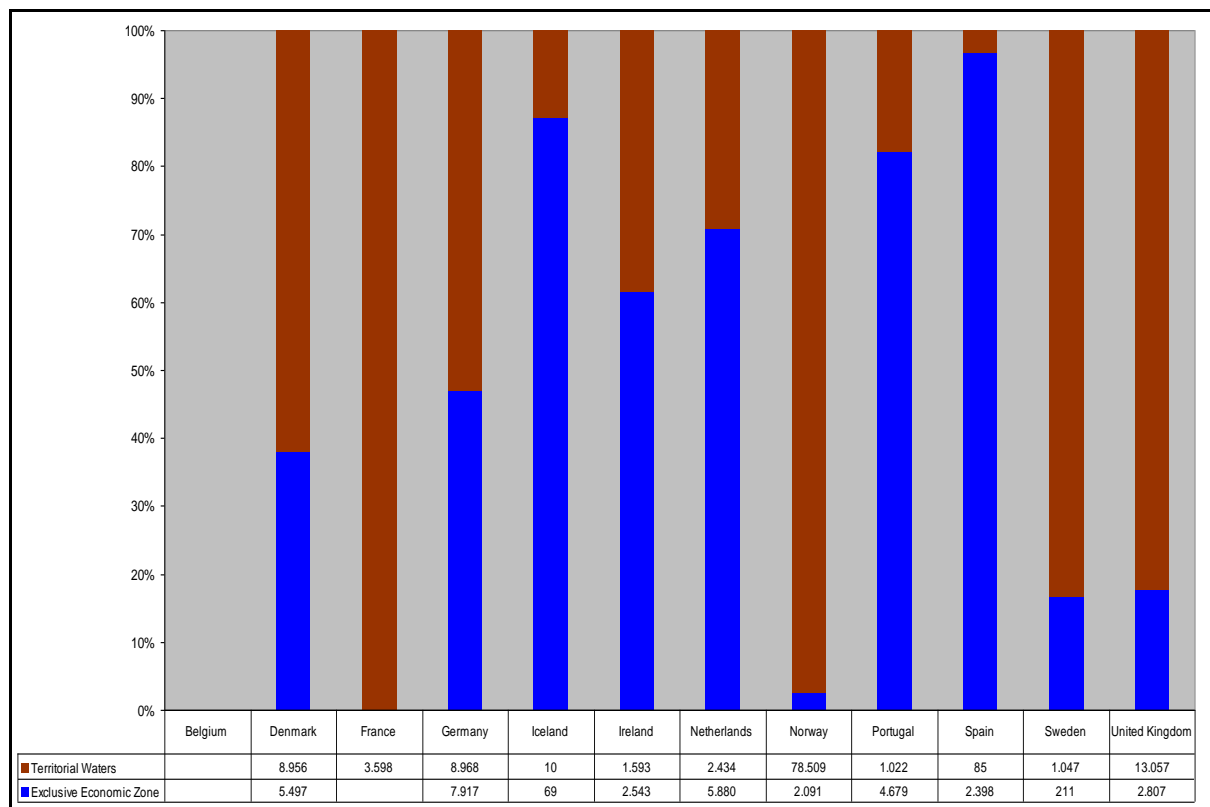
**Figure 2.** OSPAR Marine Protected Areas and Exclusive Economic Zones of OSPAR Contracting Parties<sup>7</sup>

Figure 3 provides an illustration of the relative distribution of OSPAR MPAs across territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones of Contracting Parties. While France is the only CP that so far has nominated MPAs only in its territorial waters, Norway has > 95% and the United Kingdom and Sweden both >80% of their protected areas situated up to 12 nautical miles from the shoreline. In contrast, Spain (>90%), Iceland and Portugal (both >80%), and The Netherlands (>70%) all have MPAs

<sup>6</sup> The boundaries of Contracting Parties' Exclusive Economic Zones have been obtained from the open source VLIZ Maritime Boundaries Geodatabase (<http://www.vliz.be/vmcdcddata/marbound/>). It is noted, that not all of these boundaries as shown in the map have been officially declared by Contracting Parties.

<sup>7</sup> For the purpose of visibility, OSPAR Marine Protected Areas within the boundaries of EEZ have in this map been slightly increased. A number of the smaller sites otherwise would not be visible in this illustration showing almost the entire OSPAR maritime area.

predominantly established in their EEZ. Germany, Denmark and Ireland show a relatively balanced distribution of their respective MPAs across territorial waters and EEZ.



**Figure 3.** Distribution of OSPAR MPAs across Contracting Parties’ territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones in the North-East Atlantic (as of 31 December 2010)

It has to be noted that even though 5 of the 11 Contracting Parties have more than 50% of their MPAs situated in their respective Exclusive Economic Zones, overall only about 22% of the protected area has been designated in offshore areas (see Table 1)<sup>8</sup>.

Figure 4 highlights further aspects regarding the distribution and coverage of OSPAR MPAs in Contracting Parties’ national waters<sup>9</sup>. For each CP<sup>10</sup>, the distribution and total area coverage of MPAs nominated to OSPAR in its territorial waters and EEZ, respectively, is shown (brown/blue colour of vertical bars). Furthermore, horizontal bars indicate the relative coverage (in %) of OSPAR MPAs in its territorial waters, the EEZ and overall in its national waters (light brown/light blue/red, respectively).

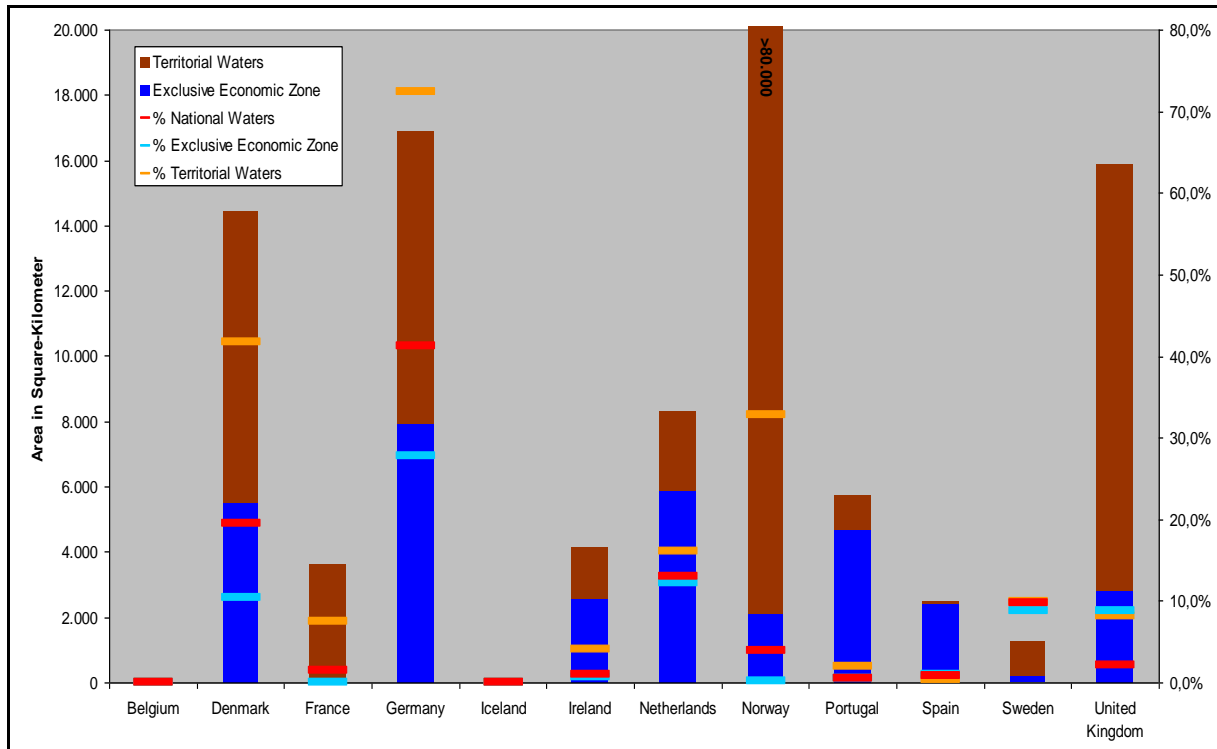
Figure 4 illustrates the differences between CPs regarding the extent to which their national waters are subject to OSPAR MPAs. It needs to be taken into account that the total area of CPs’ national waters

<sup>8</sup> This is mainly due to the extensive MPAs designated by Norway in the territorial waters around the Svalbard archipelago (ca. 78,000 km<sup>2</sup>). Without these three MPAs, the distribution of protected areas across territorial waters and EEZ would almost be balanced.

<sup>9</sup> The area calculations have been made with regards to the OSPAR maritime area only, *i.e.* without including the overseas territories of Contracting Parties and marine territories of Contracting Parties in the Baltic (Denmark, Germany and Sweden) or the Mediterranean (France and Spain).

<sup>10</sup> The area calculations for Denmark have been made for the mainland only, *i.e.* without including the territories of Greenland and the Faroes Islands.

differs substantially (see Figure 2 above for an illustration of CPs' marine areas under national jurisdiction.)



**Figure 4.** MPA coverage in Contracting Parties' national waters (as of 31 December 2010)

Amongst OSPAR Contracting Parties, Norway hosts the largest area subject to MPAs (>80,000 km<sup>2</sup>) with a high absolute and relative coverage of MPAs in its territorial waters. However, due to the extensive area of its national waters, the overall relative coverage of OSPAR MPAs is at 3.9%. Denmark and The Netherlands show a relative MPA coverage of 19%<sup>11</sup> and 13%<sup>12</sup>, respectively, in their national waters. Sweden has 9.7% of its national waters covered by MPAs. Although the UK has nominated by far the most OSPAR MPAs, collectively covering about 15,900 km<sup>2</sup> and 8% of its territorial waters, the overall proportion of their national waters protected is at 2.1%. In Germany, due to the comparatively smaller marine area under its jurisdiction, OSPAR MPAs, collectively covering 16,885 km<sup>2</sup>, represent about 70% of its territorial waters and 30% of its Exclusive Economic Zone, and overall about 40% of its national waters. In contrast, coverage of national waters by OSPAR MPAs in France, Ireland, Spain and Portugal remains at 1.5%, 1%, 0.8% and 0.5%<sup>13</sup>, respectively. The proportion of Icelandic national waters covered by MPAs remains minimal, due to the extensive marine areas and the comparatively small sizes of its MPAs. No MPAs have so far been nominated by Belgium.

There has been an overall tendency by Contracting Parties to designate and nominate MPAs in nearshore areas. Of the 175 MPAs within national jurisdiction, the majority, i. e. 128 sites, have been designated in Contracting Parties' territorial waters. While 17 sites are situated crossing the borders between territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones, only 29 sites are situated entirely in the

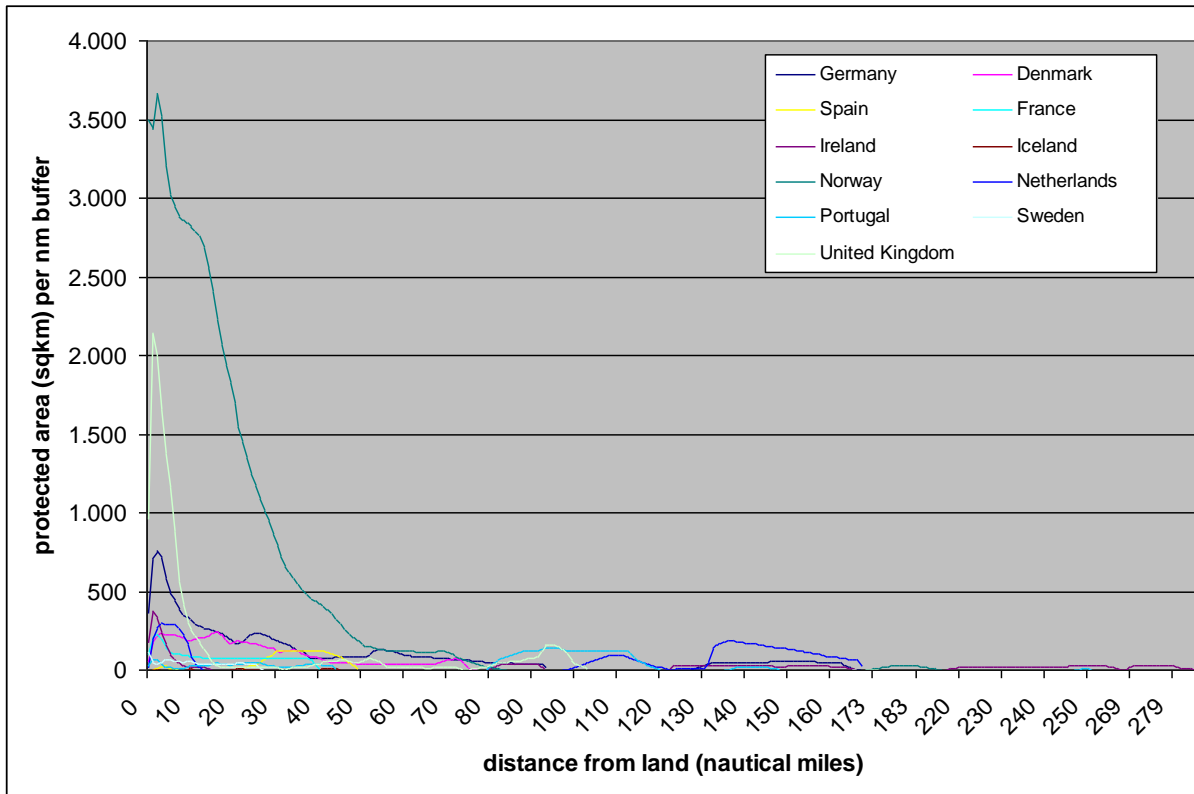
<sup>11</sup> Area calculations only consider national waters adjacent to mainland Denmark, excluding the marine areas of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands.

<sup>12</sup> The Netherlands determines a coverage of 15 % of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas in their national waters, excluding the estuaries.

<sup>13</sup> Area calculations only consider the marine areas adjacent to mainland Portugal and around the Azores archipelago in the OSPAR maritime area.

EEZ. One site has been designated by Portugal on its extended continental shelf. The remaining six MPAs have been established in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

Figure 5 illustrates that overall the marine area protected abruptly diminishes with the distance from the shoreline.



**Figure 5.** MPAs within national jurisdiction in relation to the distance from the shoreline (as of 31 December 2010)

**Overall good coverage of coastal waters**

As illustrated above, there is an imbalance regarding the overall distribution of MPAs, with a tendency towards nearshore sites.

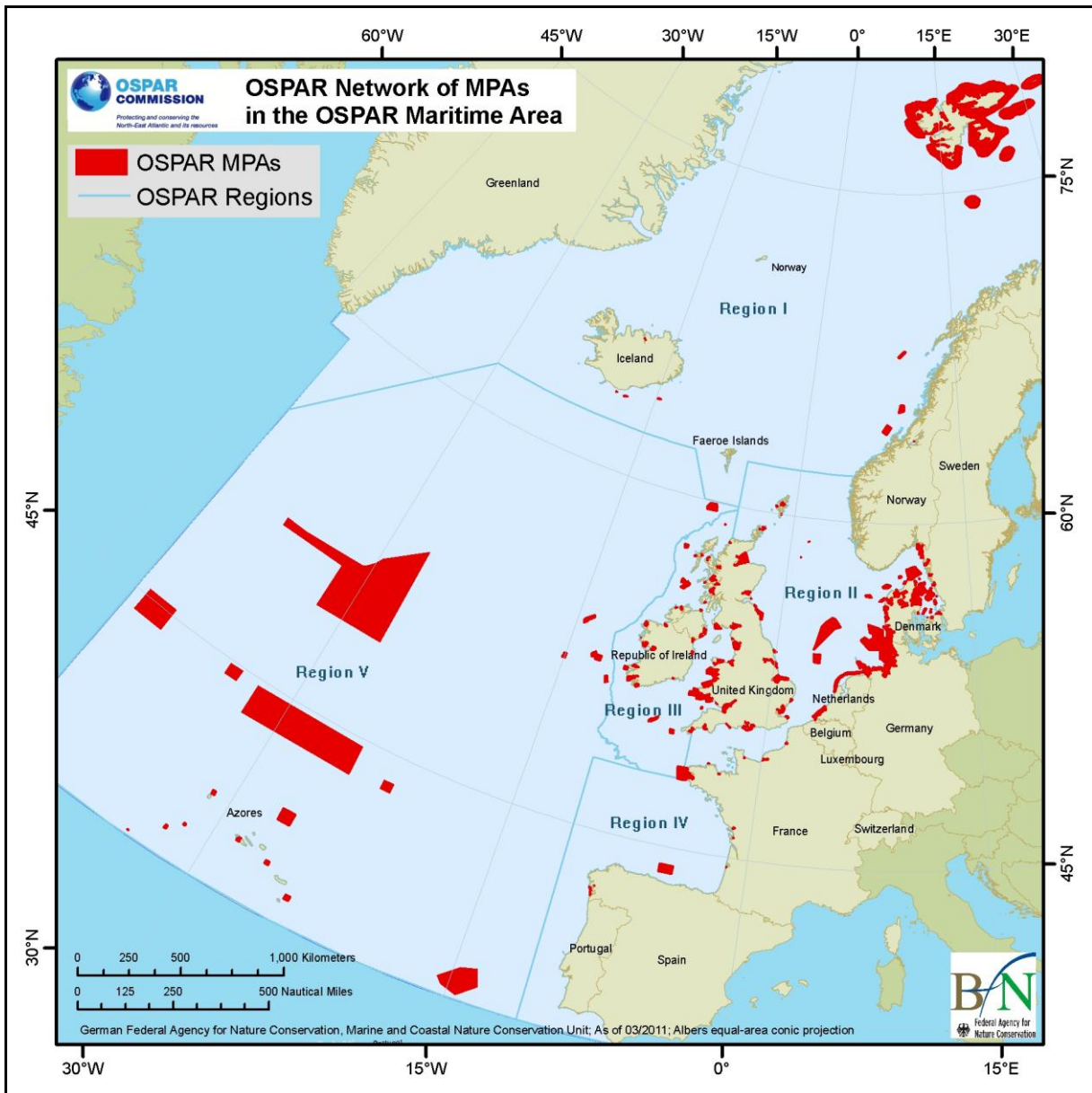
At the same time it should be noted that as a result overall about 14.1% (119,280 km<sup>2</sup>) of the territorial waters within the OSPAR maritime area are subject to Marine Protected Areas.

This seemingly good overall coverage of coastal waters is a result mainly of extensive MPAs designated in OSPAR Regions II (Greater North Sea) and III (Celtic Seas) and around the Svalbard archipelago in Region I. Consequently, however, MPA coverage of coastal waters in the remaining OSPAR (Sub-) Regions is substantially lower.

The lower overall MPA coverage in the North-East Atlantic (3.15%) is explained by the relatively small proportion of the Exclusive Economic Zones protected (33,462 km<sup>2</sup>, corresponding to 0.5% of all EEZ in the OSPAR maritime area) and, in general, the extensive areas in OSPAR Regions I (Arctic Waters), IV (Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast) and V (Wider Atlantic), including ABNJ, that are not subject to OSPAR MPAs.

**Distribution of MPAs across OSPAR Regions**

Figure 6 shows the Network of MPAs and the boundaries of the five OSPAR Regions.



**Figure 6.** Distribution of MPAs across OSPAR Regions<sup>14</sup>

As in Contracting Parties national waters, the distribution of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas across the OSPAR Regions is likewise imbalanced.

The Greater North Sea (OSPAR Region II) hosts the most sites and is the best represented Region in the Network of MPAs. It has the most riparian states of all OSPAR Regions and all but one have contributed sites to the Network. As a result of the sites nominated by Denmark, France, Germany, the

<sup>14</sup> For the purpose of visibility, OSPAR Marine Protected Areas within national jurisdiction have been slightly increased in this map. A number of the smaller sites otherwise would not be visible in this illustration showing almost the entire OSPAR maritime area.



Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, altogether 6.25% of the Greater North Sea are covered by the Network of MPAs.

The Wider Atlantic (OSPAR Region V) hosts all MPAs nominated by Portugal Azores, a number of sites designated by Ireland and one site nominated by the UK. No MPAs have yet been established in this Region by Iceland, the Faroe Islands/Denmark, Spain or mainland Portugal whose Exclusive Economic Zones extend into the Wider Atlantic. While the coverage of this Region by MPAs within national jurisdiction remains low, the establishment of six MPAs in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) in 2010 has substantially increased the area coverage of the MPA Network. With these additional sites the total MPA coverage in OSPAR Region V has increased to almost 296,000 km<sup>2</sup>, representing 4.65% of the Wider Atlantic.

In the Celtic Seas (OSPAR Region III), 3.53% are subject to OSPAR MPAs as a result of sites nominated by the two riparian states Ireland and the United Kingdom.

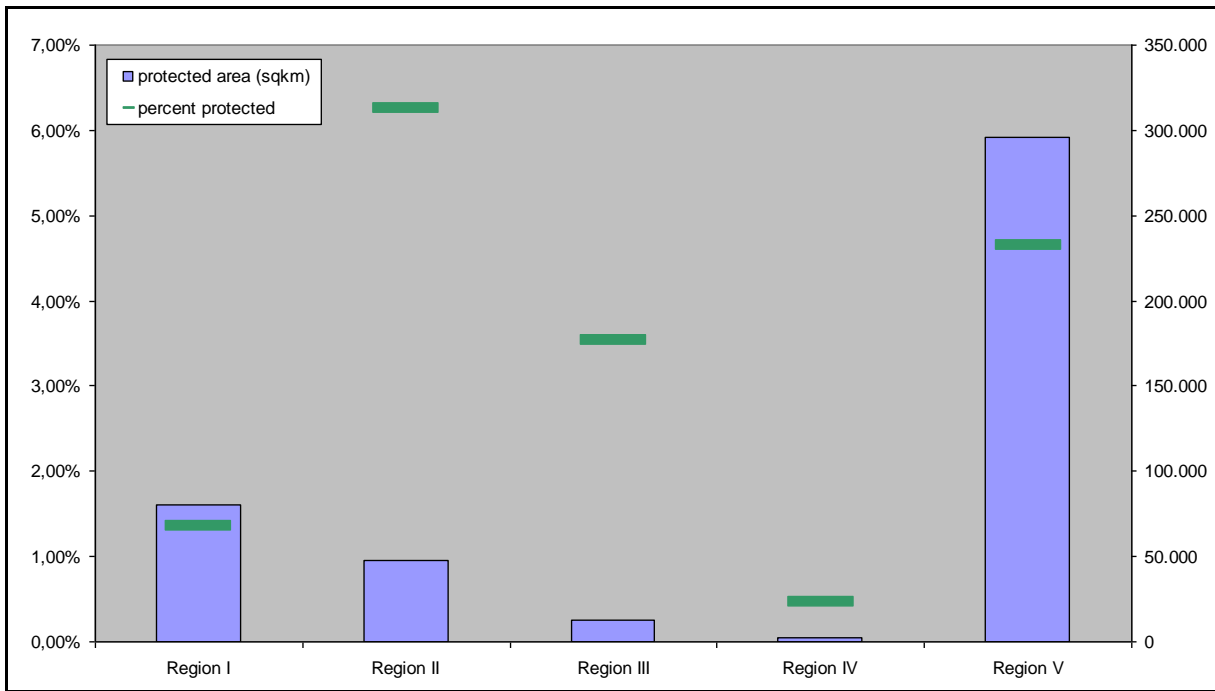
Coverage of the Arctic Waters (OSPAR Region I) by OSPAR MPAs is almost entirely due to the nomination of three extensive sites around the Svalbard archipelago by Norway. Although a larger total area is designated as OSPAR MPAs in the Arctic Waters than in the Regions II, III, and IV combined, these MPAs only represent about 1.36% of Region I, as is explained by its extensive size.

The Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast (OSPAR Region IV), with France, Portugal and Spain being the only riparian states, has the fewest MPAs and the smallest total area covered by the Network. With four sites selected by France, two by Spain and no site by mainland Portugal, only 0.47% of this Region is currently covered by the Network of MPAs.

**Table 2.** Coverage of OSPAR Regions by MPAs (as of 31 December 2010)

OSPAR Region		Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Total area covered by OSPAR MPAs (km <sup>2</sup> )	Proportion covered by OSPAR MPAs (%)
I	Arctic Waters	5,922,675	80,337	1.36 %
II	Greater North Sea	766,785	47,942	6.25 %
III	Celtic Seas	366,352	12,949	3.53 %
IV	Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast	539,228	2,511	0.47 %
V	Wider Atlantic	6,366,023	295,931	4.65 %
OSPAR maritime area		13,961,666	439,671	3.15 %





**Figure 7.** Coverage of OSPAR Regions by MPAs (as of 31 December 2010)

**Overall good coverage of the Greater North Sea, the Wider Atlantic, and the Celtic Seas**

It is worth noting that the coverage of the Greater North Sea (Region II), the Wider Atlantic (Region V), and the Celtic Seas (Region III) by the OSPAR Network of MPAs is comparatively good with 6.25%, 4.65% and 3.53% respectively.

This is the result of collective efforts by Contracting Parties bordering Regions II and III in selecting extensive areas to be included in the Network in the period 2005-2010, and of the designation of six extensive MPAs in ABNJ as collectively agreed by Contracting Parties in 2010.

The coverage of Arctic Waters (Region I) and the Bay of Biscay (Region IV) by the MPA Network, with 1.36% and 0.47% respectively, remains comparatively low.

## OSPAR Marine Protected Areas in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)

### Background

The OSPAR maritime area encompasses extensive areas in the Wider Atlantic (OSPAR Region V) and the Arctic Waters (OSPAR Region I) that are beyond the jurisdiction of coastal states. These areas, covering approximately 40% of the OSPAR maritime area, host extensive open-ocean and deep sea areas between the Svalbard archipelago and Iceland, and along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (MAR) between Iceland and Portugal Azores with abyssal plains to the east and west of the Ridge (see Figure 11).

The 2003 Ministerial Commitment to establish an ecologically coherent network of well-managed MPAs by 2010 included a clear remit to identify and designate MPAs in these areas, usually referred to as Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

The protection of the marine environment and biodiversity in ABNJ has in recent years also attracted great attention at the global level, in particular in the context of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the legal framework established by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). OSPAR has in this context assumed a pioneering role as a regional organisation to protect marine ecosystems and biodiversity in ABNJ.

Being aware of the shared responsibilities and the need for a collaborative approach, OSPAR has at the same time aimed at strengthening mutual exchange and cooperation with the various relevant international competent authorities responsible for the management of specific human activities in ABNJ, including the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NEAFC), the International Seabed Authority (ISA), and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

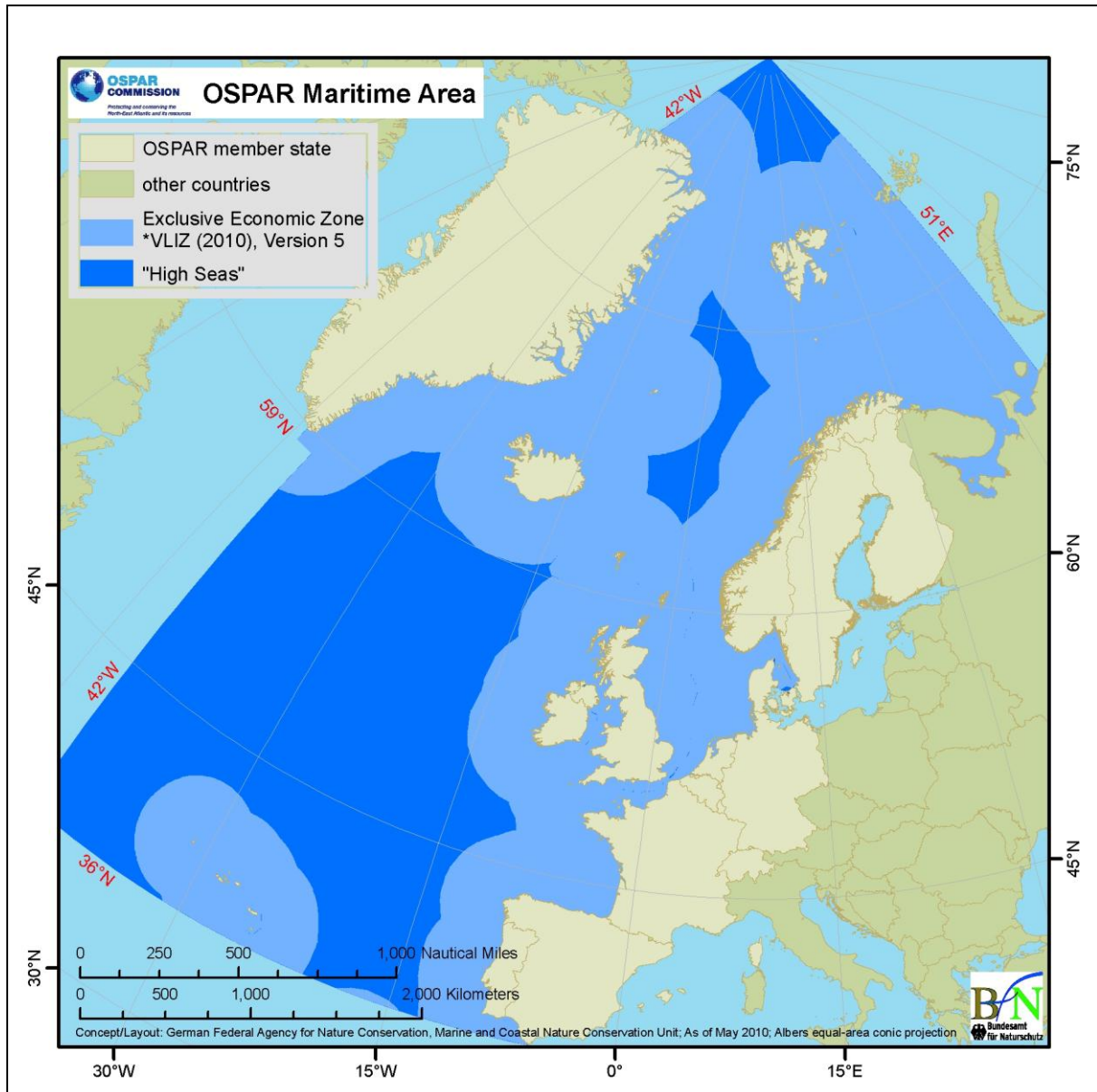
### Elaboration of proposals for OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ until 2010

Designation of a Marine Protected Area in an Area beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) in the North-East Atlantic requires collective agreement and action by the OSPAR Commission. Any proposal for an OSPAR MPA in ABNJ prepared by either a Contracting Party or a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) needs to be considered by all Contracting Parties.

In 2003, a map of the OSPAR maritime area has been prepared as a spatial planning tool indicating those areas that do not fall under any Contracting Party's jurisdiction and that therefore would be considered ABNJ (Figure 8). At that time<sup>15</sup>, ABNJ have been determined by the boundaries of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of Contracting Parties at 200 nautical miles from the shoreline. Other possible delimitations of CPs' EEZ were not taken into account.

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<sup>15</sup> It has to be noted that since 2003 a number of Contracting Parties have made submissions to the UN CLCS for an extension of the limits of their continental shelves. These submissions have substantially changed the jurisdiction in these areas; see Figure 10, below.



**Figure 8.** Areas beyond National Jurisdiction in the OSPAR maritime area (as defined in 2003)

#### **OSPAR MPA on an extended continental shelf of a Contracting Party**

Already in 2006 and in response to a proposal previously prepared by WWF, Portugal formally nominated the *Rainbow Hydrothermal Vent Field* as a Marine Protected Area to the OSPAR Network of MPAs. While this area has originally been considered to be an ABNJ, Portugal considered the site to be situated on its extended continental shelf, *i.e.* the natural submerged prolongation of the landmasses of the Azores Archipelago. Although a submission by Portugal for an extended continental shelf to be presented to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) was still in process, Portugal recognised its obligations under UNCLOS Article 192 to protect and preserve the marine environment, as well as the precautionary principle, and assumed responsibility for protecting this area even prior to the final conclusion of the CLCS.

Over the years, a number of proposals to designate OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ have been elaborated taking into account data and information collated within the frame of international research programmes in the North-East Atlantic (e.g. Mar-Eco, Eco-Mar). These proposals have originally been prepared by WWF (for the *Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone/Mid-Atlantic Ridge*) and the University of York<sup>16</sup>, subsequently reviewed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) in 2008 (ICES Advice 2008 Book 1), and gradually finalized by the relevant OSPAR bodies, namely the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Protected Areas (ICG-MPA), the Working Group on Marine Protected Areas, Species and Habitats (MASH) and the Biodiversity Committee (BDC).

As a result, the following marine areas have been identified as potential OSPAR Marine Protected Areas in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction of the OSPAR maritime area with a view that, collectively they form a network of sites covering representative areas of the different biogeographic regions and provinces of the Wider Atlantic (see Figure 9):

- *Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone/Mid-Atlantic Ridge*
- *Reykjanes Ridge*
- *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores*
- *Milne Seamount Complex*
- *Altair Seamount*
- *Antialtair Seamount*
- *Josephine Seamount Complex*

All these proposals have been supported by 'nomination proformas' setting out general information on the area concerned, detailed information on ecological and practical considerations in the selection of these sites, as well as suggestions for conservation objectives.

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<sup>16</sup> The University of York has been working on these proposals under a contract (2008-2010) provided by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).

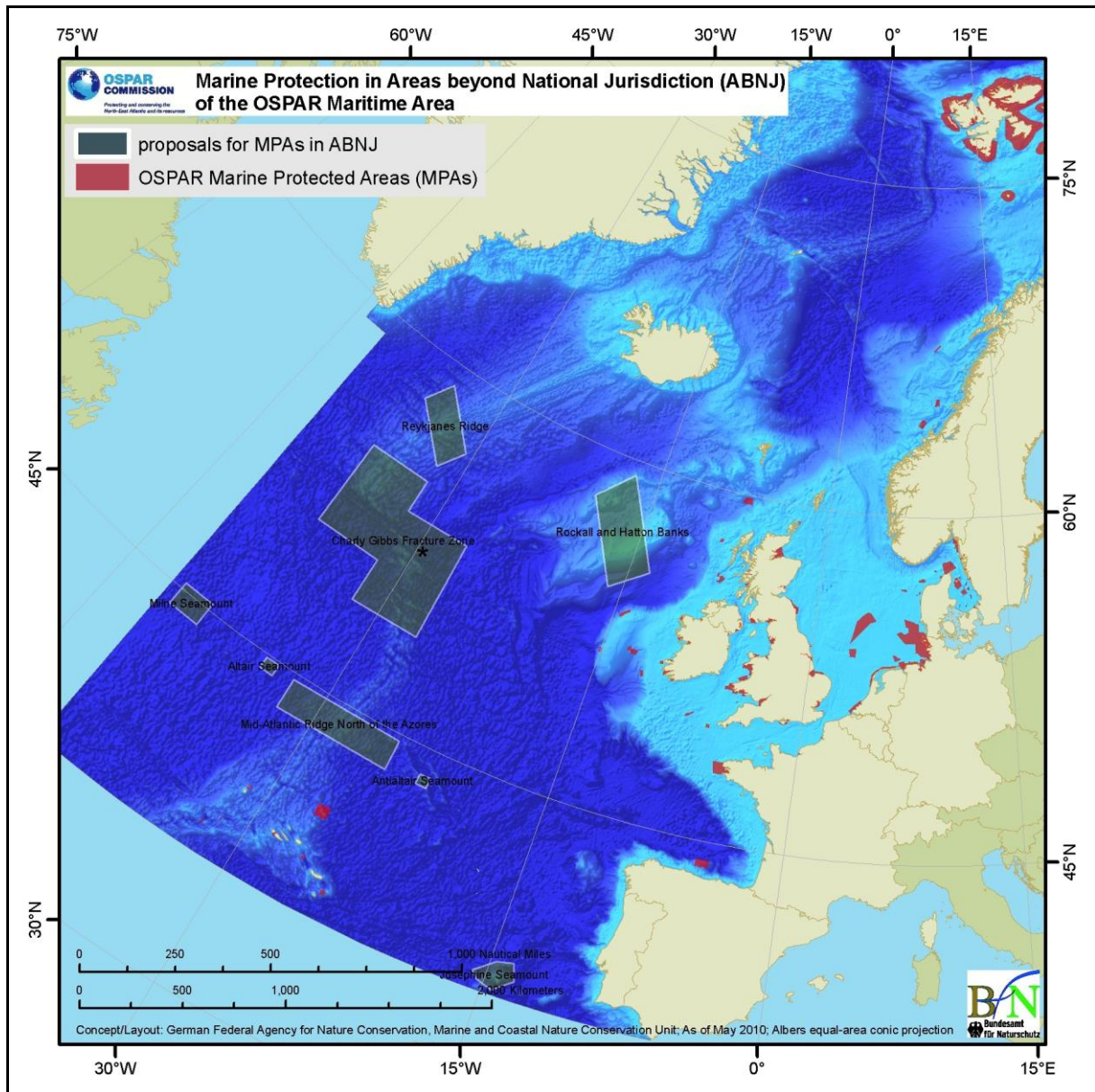


Figure 9. Marine areas proposed as OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ in 2008

Table 3. Milestones in the elaboration of proposals for OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ until 2010

2006	
MASH Working Group March 2007	1 <sup>st</sup> presentation of the nomination proforma for the <i>Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone</i> (CGFZ) as a potential MPA in ABNJ
2008	
OSPAR Commission June 2008	<i>Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone</i> (CGFZ) approved <i>in principle</i> as a potential MPA in ABNJ

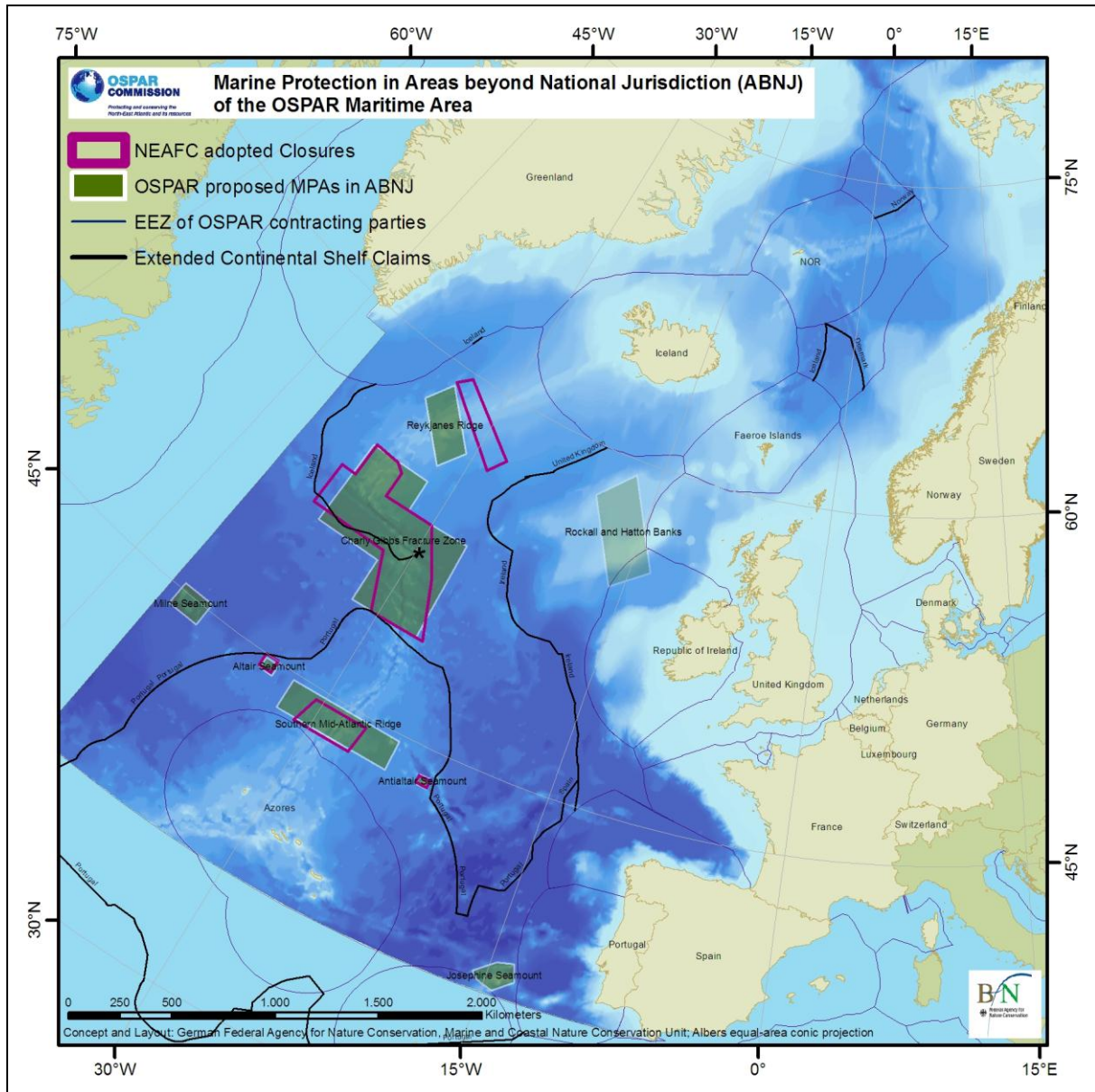


MASH Working Group October 2008	1 <sup>st</sup> presentation of nomination proformas for <i>Reykjanes Ridge, Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores, Milne Seamount Complex, Altair Seamount, Antialtair Seamount, and Josephine Seamount Complex</i> as potential OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ
	The <i>Rockall and Hatton Banks</i> proposal was set aside following concerns brought forward by the UK and Ireland, that the seabed within the proposed area was expected to be subject to submissions for an extended continental shelf by a number of States, namely the UK, Ireland, Iceland and Denmark (on behalf of the Faeroe Islands) and that it was not possible to say at this stage which of these four states (if any) may eventually assume sovereign rights over the continental shelf in the proposed area. Furthermore, the proposed sites for Rockall & Hatton Banks intruded into Irelands' national EEZ.
<b>2009</b>	
NEAFC Annual Meeting April 2009	The North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) decided to close five areas on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge to bottom fisheries with a view to protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in ABNJ of the North-East Atlantic (see Figure 10). Pursuant to the competence of NEAFC, this implies that fishing activities by vessels flying the flags of NEAFC Contracting Parties or Co-Operating Non-Contracting Parties, with fishing gear which is likely to contact the seafloor during the normal course of fishing operations, are prohibited within these areas. The combined size of the closed areas is estimated at 333,000 km <sup>2</sup> . As shown in Figure 10, these areas largely overlap with four of the proposed OSPAR MPAs ( <i>i.e. CGFZ, Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores, Altair Seamount, Antialtair Seamount</i> ), while the area closure by NEAFC on the <i>Reykjanes Ridge</i> lies next to the proposed MPA by OSPAR. No area has been closed to bottom fisheries by NEAFC in the proposed OSPAR MPAs <i>Milne Seamount Complex</i> and <i>Josephine Seamount Complex</i> .
OSPAR Commission June 2009	General and specific conservation objectives for the <i>CGFZ</i> agreed upon  <i>Reykjanes Ridge, Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores, Milne Seamount Complex, Altair Seamount, Antialtair Seamount, and Josephine Seamount Complex</i> approved <i>in principle</i> <sup>17</sup> as potential MPAs in ABNJ; general and specific conservation objectives for all areas agreed upon
OSPAR Contracting Parties Year-round	A number of OSPAR Contracting Parties made submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), pursuant to article 76, paragraph 8, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 10 December 1982, regarding the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles <sup>18</sup> . As a consequence, apart from the Milne Seamount Complex all other the areas proposed as OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ have been (partly) encompassed by the outer limits of the extended continental shelves as submitted by these Contracting Parties (see Figure 10).

<sup>17</sup> Until the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting in September 2010 the approval of these MPAs was subject to study reservations from some Contracting Parties.

<sup>18</sup> Visit [UN CLCS](#) for details of the submissions made in 2009 by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ireland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, and Spain.





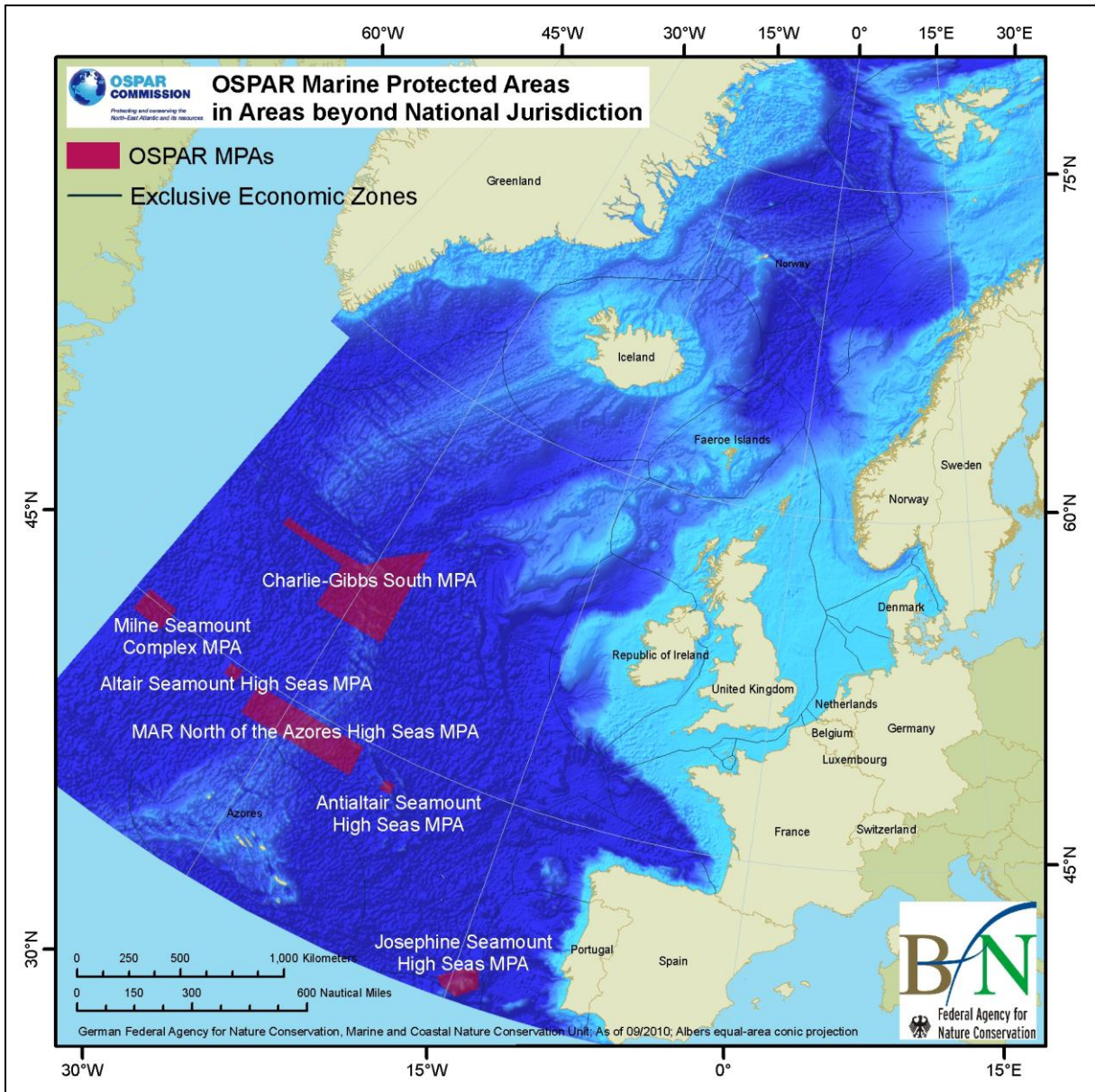
**Figure 10.** Submissions to the UN CLCS affecting the jurisdiction within the proposed MPAs

**Establishment of OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ at the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting in 2010**

Following years of collating and reviewing scientific information and data for the compilation of proposals for OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ, preparation of legal feasibility studies and consultations amongst Contracting Parties, six proposals have been presented to the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting 2010 (20-24 September, Bergen/Norway) for adoption.

Taking into account the complex situation regarding the jurisdiction over these areas that has arisen from the submission by some Contracting Parties regarding the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, the OSPAR Commission finally decided to collectively establish the following Marine Protected Areas in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction of the North-East Atlantic (see Figure 11):

- *Charlie-Gibbs South MPA* [145,400 km<sup>2</sup>]
- *Milne Seamount Complex MPA* [20,900 km<sup>2</sup>]
- *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores High Seas MPA* [93,400 km<sup>2</sup>]
- *Altair Seamount High Seas MPA* [4,400 km<sup>2</sup>]
- *Antialtair High Seas MPA* [2,800 km<sup>2</sup>]
- *Josephine Seamount Complex High Seas MPA* [19,300 km<sup>2</sup>]



**Figure 11.** OSPAR Marine Protected Areas in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction as established by the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting in September 2010

## Jurisdiction

The *Charlie-Gibbs South MPA* and the *Milne Seamount Complex MPA* are both situated entirely in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

The *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores High Seas MPA*, *Altair Seamount High Seas MPA*, *Antialtair High Seas MPA*, and the *Josephine Seamount Complex High Seas MPA* are all encompassed by the Portuguese submission on the establishment of the outer limits of its extended continental shelf. Portugal has expressed the intention to assume the responsibility to take measures for the protection of the sea floor and sub-sea floor within these areas. Upon invitation by Portugal, the OSPAR Commission agreed to collectively assume the responsibility to take measures accordingly for the protection of the superjacent water column (the 'High Seas') in these areas.

## Management

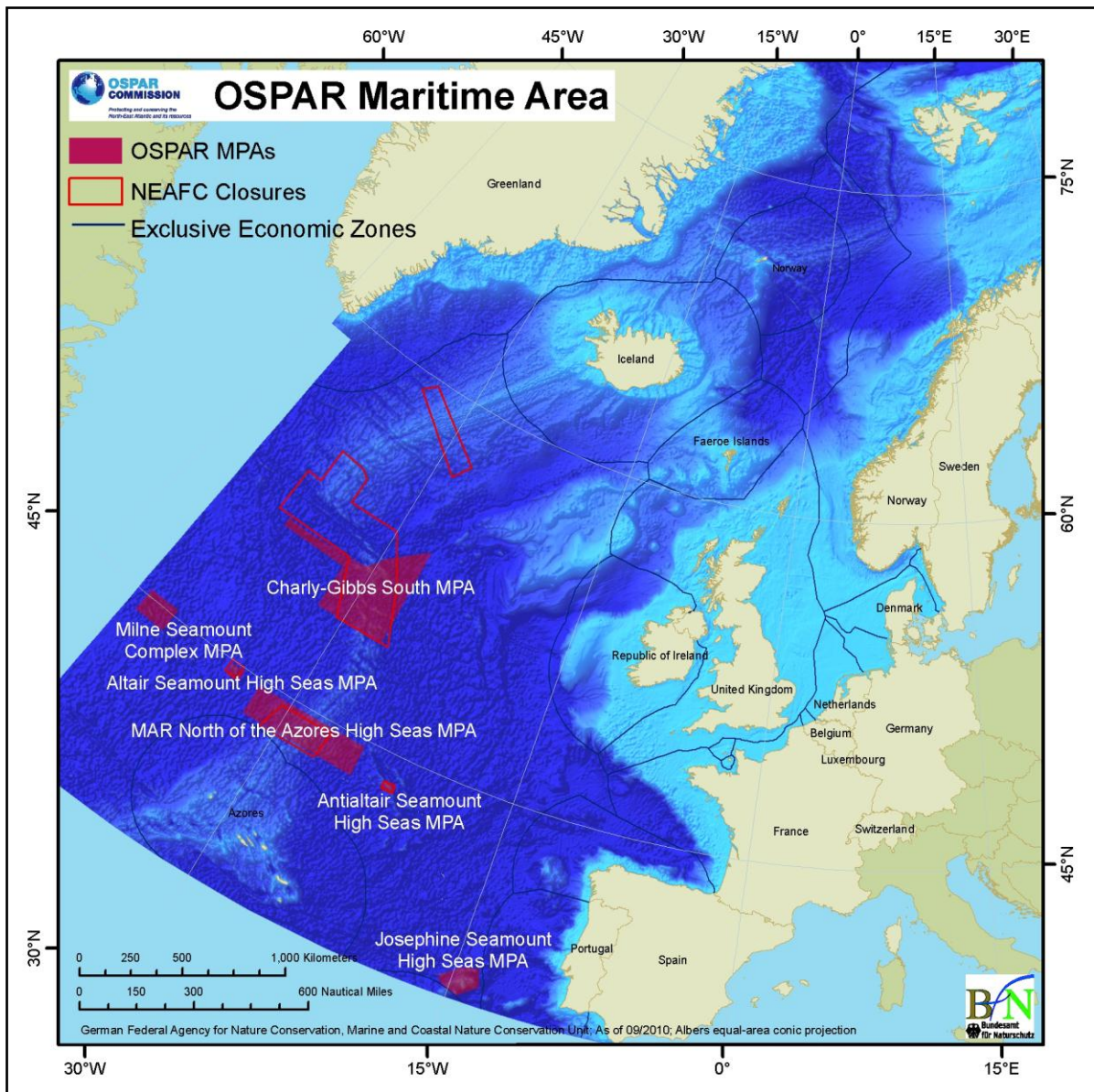
In conjunction with the establishment of these MPAs, the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting 2010 also agreed upon OSPAR Recommendations on the management for each of these areas. The purpose of these Recommendations is to guide OSPAR Contracting Parties in their actions and in the adoption of measures to protect and conserve the ecosystems and the biological diversity within the areas with a view to achieving the general and specific conservation objectives that have been endorsed for the MPAs.

- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Charlie-Gibbs South MPA](#)
- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Milne Seamount Complex MPA](#)
- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores High Seas MPA](#)
- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Altair Seamount High Seas MPA](#)
- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Antialtair High Seas MPA](#)
- [OSPAR Recommendation on the Management of the Josephine Seamount Complex High Seas MPA](#)

It has been recognized that a range of human activities occurring, or potentially occurring, in these areas are regulated in the respective frameworks of other competent authorities, including, in particular, fishing (North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission/NEAFC, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas/ICCAT, North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization/NASCO, North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission/NAMMCO, International Whaling Commission/IWC), shipping (International Maritime Organization/IMO), and extraction of mineral resources (International Seabed Authority/ISA). The OSPAR Commission therefore cooperates with these competent authorities, including through Memoranda of Understanding, to facilitate a collaborative management of OSPAR MPAs in ABNJ.

Four of the MPAs, *i.e.* *CG South MPA*, *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores*, and *Altair Seamount*, *Antialtair Seamount*, are - at least partially - already subject to specific fisheries management regulations as a result of the decision by NEAFC in 2009 to close specific areas on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge to bottom fisheries with a view to protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in the North-East Atlantic. Pursuant to the competence of NEAFC, this implies that fishing activities by vessels flying the flags of NEAFC Contracting Parties or Co-Operating Non-Contracting Parties, with fishing gear which is likely to contact the seafloor during the normal course of fishing operations, are (until 2015) prohibited within these areas (see Figure 12).





**Figure 12.** OSPAR Marine Protected Areas in ABNJ and areas closed to bottom-fisheries as adopted by NEAFC.

# Ecological Coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs

## Background

OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 sets out the aim to establish the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas and to ensure that by 2010 it is an *ecologically coherent network* of well-managed marine protected areas.

The concept of *ecological coherence* nowadays is commonly used in the context of establishing protected area networks. While it has already been referred to, in the EC Habitats Directive (1992) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) amongst others, it has been adopted by HELCOM and OSPAR in 2003 as an overarching concept for their respective efforts in establishing networks of MPAs. However, no specific definition for the term 'ecological coherence' has yet been formally agreed upon internationally and only a few theoretical concepts and practical approaches have been developed for an assessment of the ecological coherence of a network of MPAs.

In adopting the Joint OSPAR/HELCOM Work Programme on MPAs, in 2003 OSPAR and HELCOM agreed to develop common theoretical and practical aspects of what would constitute an ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas.

OSPAR and HELCOM have generally agreed that an ecological coherent network of MPAs

- interacts with and supports the wider environment;
- maintains the processes, functions, and structures of the intended protected features across their natural range; and
- functions synergistically as a whole, such that the individual protected sites benefit from each other to achieve the two objectives above.

Additionally, the network may also be designed to be resilient to changing conditions (e.g. climate change).

A number of propositions have been brought forward and discussed, both within OSPAR and HELCOM, on how to ensure and analyse the ecological coherence of MPA networks. It has been acknowledged that this is work in progress and that theoretical concepts as well as practical approaches and methods will need to be developed further and refined over time as the general knowledge of marine ecosystems and the availability of data on ecosystem components increase.

Within OSPAR the following theoretical and practical framework to address the ecological coherence of the MPA Network has so far been adopted:

- **Guidance on developing an ecologically coherent Network of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas;** (Reference Number: 2006-3)  
This document sets out 13 key principles to assist in interpreting the concept of an ecologically coherent network of MPAs in the context of the OSPAR maritime area.
- **Guidance for the design of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas: a self-assessment checklist;** (Reference Number: 2007-6)  
This document provides a checklist to assess the ecological coherence of a network of MPAs at different scales; e.g. local, regional, national, or international areas.
- **Background Document to support the assessment of whether the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas is ecologically coherent;** (Publication Number: 320/2007)

The Background Document summarises existing literature on ecological coherence of MPA networks, and describes possible criteria and guidelines for assessing whether the OSPAR Network is ecologically coherent. It builds upon the Guidance document on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR MPAs (Reference Number: 2006-3) and groups the 13 principles set out in the Guidance under four assessment criteria, which when taken together, are considered both necessary and sufficient to assess the ecological coherence of a MPA network. These main assessment criteria are

- Adequacy/Viability;
- Representativity;
- Replication;
- Connectivity.

In practice, these criteria should take into account the size of MPAs, the coverage of species and habitats by MPAs, the distribution of MPAs across biogeographic regions, the number of replicate sites for specific features of interest, as well as between-site connections at different scales.

Several eco-coherence principles, indicators and questions have been put forward in the above mentioned OSPAR documents. The Guidance document outlines thirteen principles; the Background Document outlines four criteria and 30 assessment guidelines; and the Self-Assessment lists five questions directly related to the eco-coherence criteria, three other questions regarding factors that influence eco-coherence, and three more questions regarding factors that influence the assessment of eco-coherence.

Over time though, OSPAR had to accept that a comprehensive analysis of the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs, as originally envisaged in the OSPAR Guidance, would for the time being not be possible due to the limited availability of ecological data, in particular on the distribution of species populations and habitats in the North-East Atlantic and their actual proportion being effectively covered by OSPAR MPAs.

From the overall set of responses to a data questionnaire sent out to Contracting Parties in 2007, and repeated annual requests (2008-2009) to provide relevant data, it has to be inferred that for many Contracting Parties bio-physical spatial data are not readily available and/or assembling them for use by OSPAR is not a priority.

Recognising this current lack of detailed ecological data, the need became apparent for practical approaches which can be applied in the absence of such data.

The Background Document (Publication Number: 320/2007) already noted that ecological coherence is a holistic concept reliant on many constituent parts, and that tests might rather indicate when it has *not* been perfectly achieved, *i.e.* some of the parts are missing or not functioning as they should. Thus, the degree to which an MPA network is – or is not – ecologically coherent must be stated as likelihood, based on a continuum of progressively more detailed tests, until a test is not met. It should therefore involve a process of staged assessments, beginning with an initial assessment that is straightforward and achievable.

In consequence and on the basis of previous work three initial spatial tests have been identified as a means of making an initial evaluation of whether the OSPAR Network of MPAs may be ecologically coherent or not. These tests, considered as a starting point to complement the guidelines and principles, are described in the:



- **Background Document on three initial spatial tests used for assessing the ecological coherence of the OSPAR MPA Network** (Publication Number: 360/2008)

This document describes three initial spatial tests which evaluate whether the network is:

- i) spatially well distributed, without more than a few gaps;
- ii) covers at least 3% of most (seven of the ten) relevant Dinter biogeographic provinces; and
- iii) represents most (70%) of the OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species (with limited home ranges), such that at least 5% [or at least three sites] of all areas in which they occur within each OSPAR Region is [are] protected.

These tests aim to identify whether an MPA network shows the first signs of ecological coherence. They should be seen as the first step in a multiple step assessment. However, until the MPA network has passed these three initial tests there is no need to scale up the assessment process.

These initial tests have already been applied in the 2007, 2008, and 2009/2010 OSPAR Reports on the progress made in developing the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas (Publication Numbers: 359/2008, 389/2009, and 493/2010 respectively). For an updated application of these tests on the MPA Network as of 31 December 2010, see “Three initial spatial tests looking at the ecological coherence of the OSPAR MPA Network”, below.

A secondary and wholly complementary approach to assessing ecological coherence has been developed that focuses on the way in which representative features (*i.e.* species and habitats) are incorporated within the OSPAR Network of MPAs. This approach is described in:

- **A matrix approach to assessing the ecological coherence of the OSPAR MPA Network** (MASH 08/5/6-E)

This matrix addresses six elements of network ecological coherence that have been recognised as important constituent parts:

- i) Features;
- ii) Representativity;
- iii) Replication;
- iv) Connectivity;
- v) Resilience; and
- vi) Adequacy/Viability.

It proposes clear success criteria that are required to assess the likelihood that these elements are adequately represented within the network, drawn from both agreed OSPAR guidance on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR MPAs (Reference Number: 2006-3), international scientific literature and expert judgement. This approach is envisaged to be applied at the OSPAR maritime area level as well as at a biogeographical level.

Effectively applying this matrix methodology requires, at least for some aspects of the assessment, comprehensive ecological data, e. g. regarding the distribution of populations of species and of habitats in the North-East Atlantic as well as information on the extent to which species and habitats are covered by OSPAR MPAs. The limited availability of such data within OSPAR Contracting Parties remains to be the main constraint regarding the application of this approach.

In order to obtain evidence regarding the practicability of this methodology, the Working Group on Marine Protected Areas, Species and Habitats (MASH) has in 2008 invited the United Kingdom and France to apply this matrix approach for an assessment of the ecological coherence of OSPAR MPAs in the English Channel as a test case. Conclusions on its trial application (BDC Programme of Work 2009/2010, Product 18) are, however, not yet available.

## Three initial spatial tests looking at the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs

The following three tests are considered as a first basic step in a multi-staged assessment procedure to assess the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs. They have been identified recognising the current lack of detailed ecological data and the need to apply approaches which can be applied in the absence of such data. Additional more sophisticated tests have to be developed and subsequently applied.

The tests are ordered according to ease of assessment, as well as descriptive power, and therefore should be applied in the order given. The numerical *threshold limits* suggested in these tests should not be confused with *targets*; they should rather be seen as cut-off points beneath which ecological coherence has clearly not been achieved. Further background on these tests is provided in OSPAR Publication 360/2008.

### **Test 1: Is the OSPAR MPA Network spatially well-distributed, without more than a few major gaps?**

Illustrations provided in the previous section of this report (see Figures 1, 2 and 6) on the spatial arrangement of the OSPAR Network of MPAs indicate that overall the sites are not yet spatially well-distributed across the OSPAR maritime area and its regions. The vast majority of sites is situated in coastal waters and clustered around the central latitudes. Offshore sites are generally still limited in number and sizes.

It should be noted however, that on a coarse scale OSPAR MPAs in the Greater North Sea, including the Kattegat and Skagerrak (OSPAR Region II) and the Celtic Seas (OSPAR Region III) are distributed fairly even along the coastlines throughout these Regions. Furthermore, the MPAs in the Azores archipelago can also generally be considered to be well-distributed. The Svalbard Archipelago in this context is unique as the entire territorial waters are covered by MPAs.

Applying the approximate *rules of thumb* guidance provided in the Background Document (360/2008) on what constitutes 'not more than a few major gaps'<sup>19</sup>, it might be inferred from the spatial arrangement of MPAs in Regions II, III and around the Azores archipelago, as well as of the MPAs in ABNJ in Region V, that the Network in these areas shows first signs of ecological coherence.

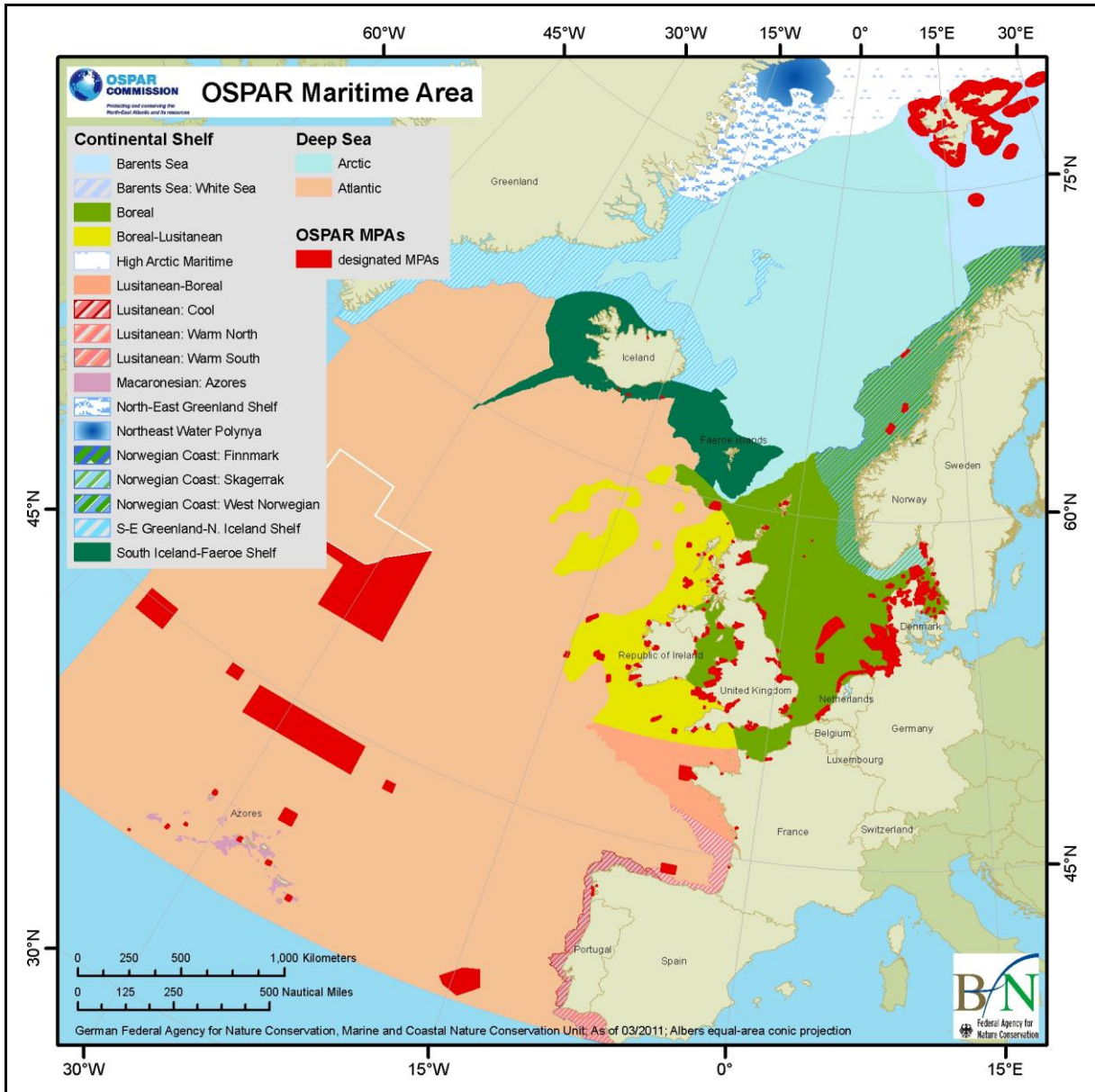
However, considering the vast areas in Regions I, IV and, more generally, in offshore areas throughout all the Regions that are not covered by MPAs, overall the Network of MPAs can not yet be judged to be well-distributed across the OSPAR maritime area. If the MPA Network is generally not well-distributed in space, then it is very likely not connected and/or representative, and probably is not replicated and/or adequate. Thus, it is very likely not ecologically coherent.

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<sup>19</sup> "Major gaps between MPAs": in coastline/near shore spaces wider than 250 km, offshore/EEZ spaces larger than 500 km diameter circle (~200 000 km<sup>2</sup>); in far offshore and high seas waters, spaces larger than approximately one million square kilometres (1 000 000 km<sup>2</sup>).

**Test 2: Does the OSPAR MPA Network cover at least 3% of most (seven of the ten) relevant Dinter biogeographic provinces?**<sup>20</sup>

The ten biogeographic provinces of the OSPAR maritime area relevant for this test have been marked in bold in Table 4 and are shown in Figure 13. Due to their ice cover and extreme remoteness, the remaining Dinter (sub-) provinces are not treated in this test. This test does not require usage of Dinter sub-provinces. Thus, the three Norwegian coastal sub-provinces are treated together as one province, as are the two Lusitanian sub-provinces. In addition, for the purpose of this initial test, the two temperate pelagic provinces (*Cool-temperate* and *Warm-temperate waters*) shall also be interpreted to include deeper waters and the seafloor. Hence, the Dinter pelagic and benthic classes have been assessed together.



**Figure 13.** MPA coverage in biogeographic provinces (according to the classification by Dinter, 2001) as of 31 December 2010.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Dinter 2001. Biogeography of the OSPAR Maritime Area. German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Bonn. 167 pp.

**Table 4.** MPA coverage in biogeographic provinces (according to the classification by Dinter, 2001)

REGION	SUBREGION	PROVINCE	Area protected (km <sup>2</sup> )	MPA coverage (%)
<b>(Holo) Pelagic</b>				
Arctic	---	---	76,019	2.28 %
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Cool-temperate Waters</b>	232,018	<b>3.48 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Warm-temperate Waters</b>	131,634	<b>3.73 %</b>
<b>Shelf &amp; Continental Slope</b>				
Arctic	---	North-East Greenland Shelf	0	0.00 %
Arctic	---	Northeast Water Polynya	0	0.00 %
Arctic	---	High Arctic Maritime	11,021	1.36 %
Arctic	---	Barents Sea	67,317	5.83 %
Arctic	---	<b>South-East Greenland - North Iceland Shelf</b>	0	<b>0.00 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Norwegian Coast (Finnmark &amp; Skagerrak &amp; West Norwegian)</b>	2,967	<b>0.73 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>South Iceland-Faeroe Shelf</b>	79	<b>0.03 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Boreal</b>	51,085	<b>7.23 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Boreal-Lusitanian</b>	8,893	<b>1.95 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Lusitanian-Boreal</b>	3,473	<b>2.31 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Lusitanian (Cool &amp; Warm)</b>	1,004	<b>0.85 %</b>
Atlantic	East Atlantic Temperate	<b>Macaronesian Azores</b>	812	<b>3.60 %</b>
<b>Deep Sea</b>				
Arctic	---	---	0	0.00%
Atlantic	---	---	294,402	4.21%

Only four of the ten biogeographic provinces considered in this test surpass the 3% threshold coverage by OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (marked in green): the two continental shelf provinces *Boreal* (7.23%) and *Macaronesian Azores* (3.60%) and the two pelagic provinces *Warm-temperate Waters* (3.73%) and *Cool-temperate Waters* (3.48%). Only two more of the relevant biogeographic provinces show more than one percent coverage, namely *Lusitanian-Boreal* (2.31%) and *Boreal-Lusitanian* (1.95%).

<sup>21</sup> For the purpose of visibility, OSPAR Marine Protected Areas (in red) have in this map been slightly increased. A number of the smaller sites otherwise would not be visible in this illustration showing (almost) the entire OSPAR Convention area.

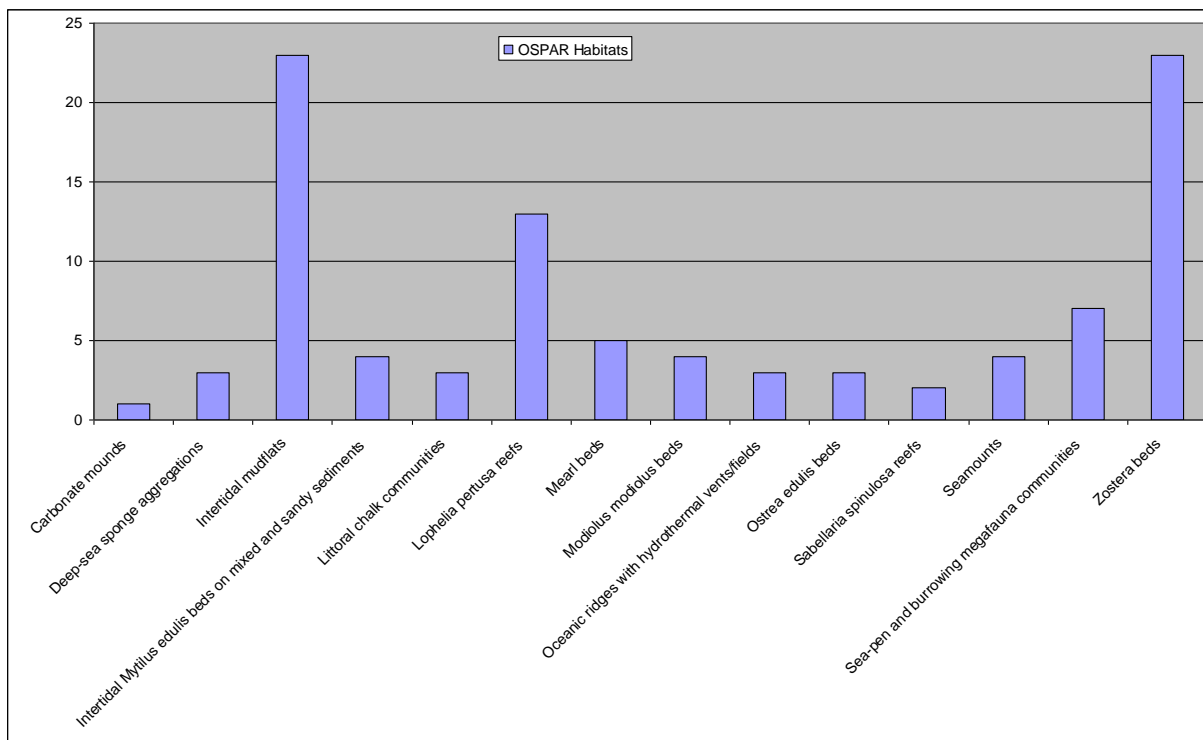
As most of the biogeographic provinces have less than 3% of their area covered by OSPAR MPAs, according to this test the Network can not yet considered to be covering adequate and/or representative proportions of the biogeographic variation in the North-East Atlantic, and hence not yet judged to be ecologically coherent in this respect.

**Test 3: Are most (70%) of the threatened and/or declining species and habitats<sup>22</sup> (with limited home ranges) represented in the OSPAR Network of MPAs, such that at least 5% [or at least three sites] of all areas in which they occur within each OSPAR Region is [are] protected?**

This test, including its square-bracketed text, could not be conducted as neither is comprehensive spatial data available regarding the distribution of species populations and habitats across the OSPAR maritime area, nor is the reporting by Contracting Parties complete with regards to the extent to which these features are subject to their respective MPAs.

Under these circumstances, no reliable conclusions can be drawn on the 'adequacy' or 'representativity' of the OSPAR Network of MPAs regarding the protection it provides for specific species or habitats identified by OSPAR to be under threat and/or in decline.

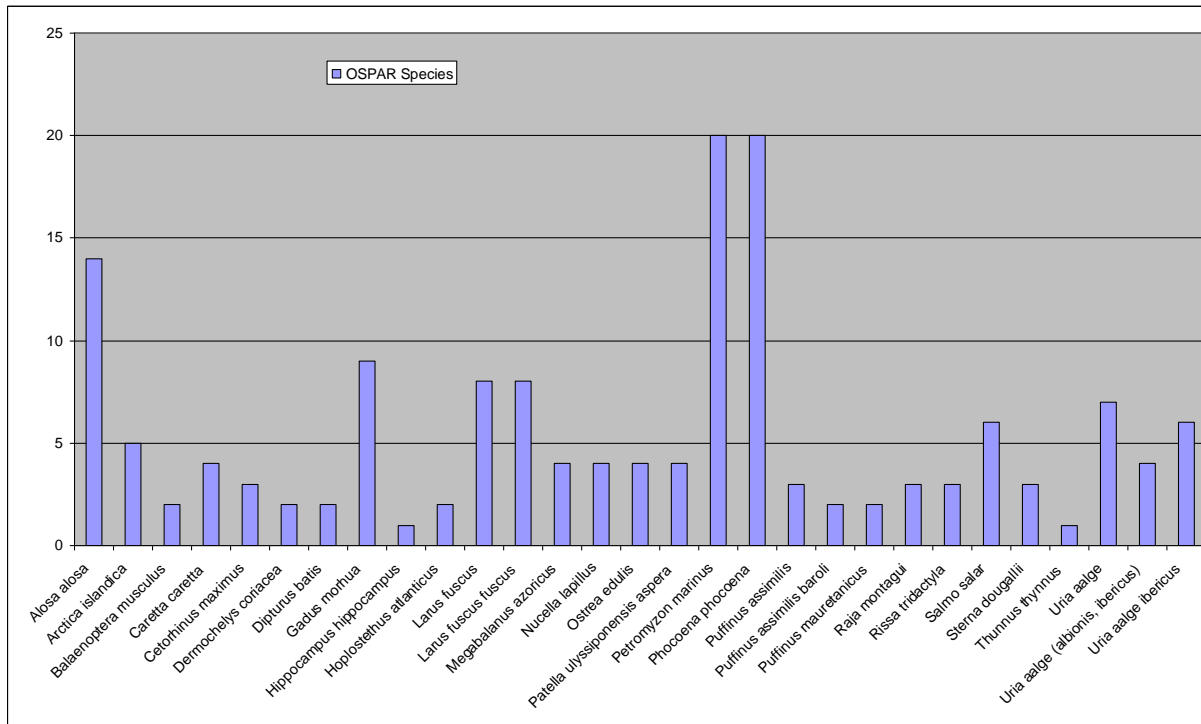
An evaluation of the information that has been provided so far by Contracting Parties on threatened and/or declining species and habitats occurring in their respective MPAs allows only a general overview of the respective numbers of MPAs designated for specific features.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 14.** Number of OSPAR MPAs hosting habitats listed by OSPAR as threatened and/or declining (as of May 2010)

<sup>22</sup> According to the OSPAR List of threatened and/or declining species and habitats (OSPAR Reference Number 2008-6)

<sup>23</sup> The evaluation has not yet taken into account the species and habitats protected by the MPAs in ABNJ as established in September 2010.



**Figure 15.** Number of OSPAR MPAs hosting species listed by OSPAR as threatened and/or declining (as of May 2010)

### Habitats

The relatively best represented habitats are Intertidal mudflats and *Zostera* beds, each found in 23 OSPAR MPAs. *Lophelia pertusa* reefs are protected in 13 sites throughout the North-East Atlantic. For all other threatened and/or declining habitats less than ten MPAs have been designated. The deep-sea habitats are found in less than five MPAs<sup>24</sup>. These findings coincide with the fact that most MPAs have been designated in coastal waters.

No MPA has yet been established for two of the habitats listed by OSPAR, namely Coral gardens and *Cymodocea* meadows.

### Species

The relatively best represented species are the Sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) and the Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), found in 20 MPAs each. The Allis shad (*Alosa alosa*) is found in 14 OSPAR MPAs. For all other threatened and/or declining species less than ten MPAs have been designated.

No MPA has yet been established for the following species listed by OSPAR as threatened and/or declining: Ivory gull (*Pagophila eburnea*); Steller's eider (*Polysticta stelleri*); Thick-billed murre (*Uria lomvia*); Sturgeon (*Acipenser sturio*); European eel (*Anguilla Anguilla*); Portuguese dogfish (*Centroscymnus coelolepis*); Gulper shark (*Centrophorus granulosus*); Leafscale gulper shark (*Centrophorus squamosus*); Houting (*Coregonus lavaretus oxyrinchus*); Long-snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus guttulatus*); Porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*); Thornback skate/ray (*Raja clavata*); White skate

<sup>24</sup> The evaluation has not yet taken into account the species and habitats protected by the MPAs in ABNJ as established in September 2010.



(*Rostroraja alba*); North-East Atlantic Spurdog (*Squalus acanthias*); Angel shark (*Squatina squatina*); Bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*); and Northern right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*).

In order to assess whether the level of protection for these species and habitats might be adequate, more data on the distribution of species populations and habitats throughout the OSPAR maritime area would be needed as a basis against which their proportion subject to MPAs can be assessed. In addition, also the effectiveness of management measures in place in each MPA, *i.e.* the actual protection provided for these features against potentially adverse effects of human activities in the respective site, would have to be taken into account.

### **Preliminary conclusions on the ecological coherence of the OSPAR MPA Network**

A comprehensive analysis of the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas is currently not possible due to the persistent lack of ecological data, particularly on the distribution of species populations and habitats in the North-East Atlantic. In the absence of such data, only basic approaches can be conducted that allow for an assessment to what extent the elements of ecological coherence have *not* been addressed in the Network of MPAs rather than to determine if they have appropriately been addressed.

For the time being, only coarse assessments of the spatial arrangement of the MPA Network can be applied. Results of initial spatial tests suggest that the OSPAR Network of MPAs currently is unlikely to be ecologically coherent as the distribution of OSPAR MPAs across OSPAR Regions and biogeographic regions and provinces in the North-East Atlantic remains uneven with the majority of sites situated generally in coastal waters, particularly in the Greater North Sea and the Celtic Seas. If the MPA Network is generally not well-distributed in space, then it is very likely not *connected* and/or *representative*, and probably not *replicated* and/or *adequate*.

This coarse evaluation, including the initial tests outlined above, has to be seen as a first basic step in a multi-staged assessment procedure to evaluate the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs. Along with additional ecological information and data, more sophisticated tests need be developed and subsequently applied.

### **Overlap between the networks of OSPAR MPAs and Natura 2000 sites**

Almost all of the MPAs so far reported to OSPAR by EU Member States largely overlap existing Natura 2000 sites. The nominations by Portugal Azores are an important exception, as four Portuguese sites are not included in the Natura 2000 network, and for the others, smaller Natura 2000 sites are nested within a larger OSPAR MPA. Furthermore, France and Spain in 2008 each have reported one MPA to OSPAR that has not (yet) been established as Natura 2000 site.

However, given that the marine geographical scope of the OSPAR Network is larger (including Areas beyond National Jurisdiction) than the EU marine waters area, and that the ecological criteria for MPA selection within OSPAR are broader (including a list of threatened and/or declining species and habitats that is different and adds to the relevant species and habitats listed in the EU Directives), it can be inferred that as long as nominations are mostly limited to existing Natura 2000 sites then it is unlikely that the OSPAR Network's ecological goals will be met.

It is also worth noting that only a few marine Natura 2000 sites (29 sites, collectively covering 3,754 km<sup>2</sup>) have not yet been included in the OSPAR Network of MPAs.<sup>25</sup> It can therefore be concluded, that

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<sup>25</sup> Based on a comparison of the OSPAR Network of MPAs and the listing of marine Natura 2000 sites as documented in November 2009 at the European Environment Agency (EEA); Source: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/natura-2000>

these networks from the perspective of EU Member States overlap to a very large extent and that consequently there is limited scope for enhancing the OSPAR Network by including the remaining Natura 2000 sites.

## Management of OSPAR MPAs

Within OSPAR, MPAs are understood as areas for which protective, conservation, restorative or precautionary measures have been instituted for the purpose of protecting and conserving species, habitats, ecosystems or ecological processes of the marine environment.

The OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 sets out the aim to establish the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas and to ensure that by 2010 it is an ecologically coherent network of *well-managed* marine protected areas.

Regarding the management of OSPAR MPAs, the Recommendation specified, amongst others, the following programmes and measures:

### *“3.3 The relevant Contracting Party should*

- a. “develop for each area selected [as an OSPAR MPA] a management plan, in accordance with the management guidelines<sup>26</sup>, to achieve the aims for which the area has been selected;*
- b. determine what management measures would be appropriate in the light of those guidelines, and either:*
  - (i) where it has the competence to adopt such measures, initiate the processes under its domestic legislation to establish such measures; or*
  - (ii) where the competence to adopt such measures lies with another authority or international organisation, or where the consent of an international organisation is needed for the adoption of such measures, take steps to seek the adoption by the international organisation of those measures or, as the case may be, the consent of the international organisation to those measures. Any cases covered by this sub-paragraph should be reported to the OSPAR Commission.”*

Furthermore, it sets out the following:

*“3.5 Where a Contracting Party is required, under the EC Birds Directive<sup>27</sup> or the EC Habitats Directive<sup>28</sup>, to designate any area in the maritime area (whether wholly or partly) as a Special Protection Area or a Special Area of Conservation;*

- a. the Contracting Party may report that area to the OSPAR Commission as a component of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas, as if the Contracting Party had selected it as such; but*
- b. the Contracting Party should be under no obligations under this Recommendation to take any action in respect of that area, subject to sub-paragraph (c) below; and*

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<sup>26</sup> OSPAR Guidelines for the Management of Marine Protected Areas in the OSPAR maritime area (Reference Number 2003-18); Amended by BDC 2006 (BDC 2006 Summary Record (BDC 0610/1) § 3.46) through the inclusion of Appendix 1.

<sup>27</sup> Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds.

<sup>28</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of habitats and wild fauna and flora.

- c. *where the Contracting Party has reported that area to the OSPAR Commission as a component of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas, it should send to the OSPAR Commission copies of any reports which it makes to the European Commission about that area.*"

With a view to support and harmonise efforts by Contracting Parties in establishing adequate management regimes for OSPAR MPAs, OSPAR has developed and agreed upon 'Guidelines for the Management of Marine Protected Areas in the OSPAR maritime area' (Reference Number 2003-18), as well as 'Guidance to assess the effectiveness of management of OSPAR MPAs: a self-assessment scorecard' (Reference Number 2007-5).

Although a conceptual framework for managing MPAs has been developed by OSPAR, until now it is not possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the extent to which the OSPAR Marine Protected Areas are actually 'well managed' by the concerned authorities. Generally, Contracting Parties have not submitted to OSPAR sufficiently detailed information on the management of their respective OSPAR MPAs that would allow for such an analysis.

On one hand, it has to be considered that a number of MPAs have only been established recently and therefore management plans for these sites are not yet available and/or management measures are not yet implemented. When nominating new sites to OSPAR most Contracting Parties have made references to on-going or envisaged national processes to develop management measures/plans for the respective MPAs. This is particularly the case for those OSPAR MPAs that are at the same time Natura 2000 sites.

Then again, for those OSPAR MPAs where management regimes are already in place but still no detailed reports have been submitted on the effectiveness of regulatory measures, it can be assumed that the provision of more detailed information has been hampered by limited resources (personnel/time) to process the information for submission to OSPAR or low degree of priority to attend to this subject.

## Summary Information on the Management of OSPAR MPAs as provided by Contracting Parties

### Denmark

The Danish OSPAR MPAs, all being Natura 2000 sites, will be subject to Natura 2000 management plans. Draft plans for the Natura 2000 sites existing in 2009 are sent for public consultation until April 2011. After the public consultation and subsequent processing of the comments received, the Natura 2000 management plans will be finalized. Management plans for the newly designated Natura 2000 sites will be drafted in the 2nd Plan period in 2015.

### France

No information has been made available on the management of the French OSPAR MPAs.

### Germany

Two of the OSPAR MPAs in German territorial waters, the *Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park* and the *Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park* are managed according to the national park act. Several management plans that cover different sectoral aspects exist, e.g. salt-marsh management, mussel fisheries management. An overall management plan, the Trilateral Wadden Sea

Plan (WSP)<sup>29</sup>, is being implemented by the three States bordering the Wadden Sea, *i. e.* Denmark, The Netherlands and Germany. The WSP entails the common policies, measures, projects and actions of the countries for their joint efforts to fulfil the ecological targets set for Wadden Sea. For the OSPAR MPA *Helgoland mit Helgoländer Felssockel* and the SPA within the OSPAR MPA *Oestliche Deutsche Bucht/Sylter Aussenriff* ordinances according to national law are implemented. Management plans for the remaining MPAs are currently being developed.

### **Iceland**

In the seven Icelandic OSPAR MPAs, human activities that might damage the area are prohibited or allowed by special permission only. Regulation 1140/2005 on conservation of coral areas along the south coast prohibits all fishing activities with bottom-contacting gears in those five Icelandic OSPAR MPAs that have been established specifically for the protection of coral reefs.

### **Ireland**

All OSPAR MPAs are subject to management requirements of the EC Habitats or Birds Directive.

### **The Netherlands**

A management plan for the *Voordelta* MPA has been finalised and is currently being implemented ([http://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/images/Beheerplan%20Voordelta\\_tcm174-192599.pdf](http://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/images/Beheerplan%20Voordelta_tcm174-192599.pdf)). Management plans for the other OSPAR MPAs are being prepared and will be finalised three years after their final designation in 2010 at the latest.

### **Norway**

*Selligrunnen* is temporary protected by the national Nature Conservation Act as a nature reserve (Norwegian regulation number 605, 08.06.2000 – “Forskrift om midlertidig vern av Selligrunnen naturreservat, Leksvik kommune, Nord-Trøndelag”). The purpose of the regulation is to protect corals and associated organisms in the area against all damage and destruction. All potentially damaging human activities are illegal. The OSPAR MPAs *Rostrevet*, *Sularevet Iverryggen*, *Tisler*, and *Fjellknausen* are all fisheries protected areas. Norwegian regulation number 1878, 22.12.2004 “Forskrift om utøvelse av fisket i sjøen” § 66 - states that the use of bottom trawl is illegal in this area. The three OSPAR MPAs around the *Svalbard* archipelago consist of four nature reserves and seven national parks, all of which have been established by separate national regulations. The degree of protection and restrictions varies between these areas. Svalbard and the sea territory out to 12 nm are protected through the Svalbard Environmental Act. Svalbard falls within the perimeter of the Barents Sea management plan. In addition, separate management plans for each of the national parks and nature reserves are, or will be, elaborated. The management of the *Ytre Hvaler* national park is described in national regulations. A management plan is currently being elaborated and a draft is expected to be finished by April 2010. The management plan process includes extensive consultations with stakeholders, and is based on methods developed by The Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP; [www.conservationmeasures.org](http://www.conservationmeasures.org)). *Ytre Hvaler National Park* and the *Kosterhavet* Marine National Park in Sweden were developed in close collaboration between the Norwegian and Swedish regional governmental offices. The management of the sites will also be co-ordinated between Norway and Sweden. The management of the national park is governed by the County Governor of Østfold as a temporary solution. A more permanent management scheme will be determined based on a model for management of protected areas currently under development by the Norwegian government.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/Plan.html>

## Portugal

The OSPAR MPA *Formigas Bank* is subject to legislation that prohibits almost all extractive activities in the area. Tuna fishing is still allowed under minor obligations. For the *Corvo Island and Faial-Pico Channel* a management plan is proposed. The area includes a no-take area declared under the regulation of limpet collection. Under the BIOMARE project, this area was declared a Long Term Biodiversity Research Site and an All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Site. The Portuguese law "DL no. 140/99" protects a fraction of the area in the *D. João de Castro Seamount* MPA as SCI. Under the BIOMARE project, this area was declared a Long Term Biodiversity Research Site. For the other sites, management proposals have been prepared, but no statutory management plans have yet been established.

## Spain

Management plans (Natural Resources Management Plans, Fisheries Management Plans) for the two MPAs, namely *El Cachucho* and *Islas Atlánticas*, are currently being developed in line with the EC Habitats and Birds Directive.

## Sweden

The *Kungsbacka Fjord* is protected as a nature reserve according to the Swedish Environmental Code and management measures, including a monitoring programme, will be introduced and implemented in the area according to the proposed management plan. Certain areas of the reserve are periodically closed for all activities and visitors. *Lilla Middelgrund* and *Fladen* should be managed as marine nature reserves with regulation against certain uses, such as windmill establishments, sand and gravel excavation and certain fishing practices. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected these MPAs as areas where no kind of exploitation should take place. *Nordre älv estuary* is a nature reserve according to the Swedish Environmental Code. The fishery is regulated according to the Fishery Act. There are temporal closures for net fishing in the inner part of the estuary with the aim of protecting salmon and trout. There is a bird protection area in the north western part of the estuary. A management plan for the whole area is being developed. The *Koster-Väderö archipelago* is already protected in accordance with the Fishery Act, with which the shrimp fishery has been restricted. Shrimp trawling (the only trawling permitted in the coastal zone) is restricted with the aim of protecting sensitive bottom habitats and also fish by the use of excluding devices. Although the *Koster-Väderö archipelago* is not a nature reserve, the Environmental Code (Chapter 7 §§ 27, 28 and 29) covers the area. It means that the area has a status as an area of protection to prevent and manage different activities that may cause a threat to the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species in the area. Furthermore, shore protection according to the Code with restrictions against *e.g.* building houses and constructions on the seaside and landside of the shoreline is in place. The *Koster-Väderö archipelago* and its characteristic landscape is a very popular tourist area in Sweden. Restrictions on *e.g.* outdoor recreation and sports may need to be addressed in the future. No management plan for the area has been developed so far. However, as set out in an agreement, fishermen have committed themselves to lift the trawl at certain places in the fishing area where the reefs are located. Monitoring of the compliance with this agreement is essential. The northern part of the area is bound to the Norwegian border and on the Norwegian side of the border the *Lophelia* reef and reef patches continues. Contact has been established with the Norwegian authorities with the aim to develop a scheme for a transboundary management of the area as a marine national park.

## UK

All OSPAR MPAs are subject to management requirements of the EC Habitats or Birds Directive. The UK will send to the OSPAR Commission any reports which it submits to the European Commission about these areas.



### **Preliminary conclusions on the Management of OSPAR MPAs**

A Marine Protected Area can be considered to be 'well-managed', if the respective management regime ensures that, ultimately, the objectives for which the site has been established are achieved. In the case of OSPAR MPAs, these objectives generally refer to protecting, maintaining and, where in the past impacts have occurred, restoring populations of species, habitats, ecosystems or ecological processes of the marine environment.

The situation and progress on ensuring effective management of OSPAR MPAs varies substantially among the different sites nominated by Contracting Parties. According to references made by CPs (general note during reporting and/or personal communication), quite a number of MPAs are subject to general or specific management regulations, including conservation objectives and management plans, but detailed information on the effectiveness of these measures has not been made available to OSPAR. For many sites though, management regimes, including management plans, are still in preparation and far from being effectively implemented. This can be explained to some extent by the fact that a number of OSPAR MPAs/Natura 2000 sites have only recently been established.

Considering that no reports have yet been made available to OSPAR providing evidence that the management of a specific OSPAR MPA has actually been successful in achieving the objectives of the site, it is not possible to state that OSPAR MPAs, generally, are 'well-managed'. This shall not mean that there are no well-managed MPAs included in the OSPAR Network, rather that documented evidence has not been available for this Report.

## Conclusions on the status of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas in 2010

- In the period 2005–2010 eleven of the twelve OSPAR Contracting Parties bordering the North-East Atlantic have selected and nominated MPAs for inclusion in the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas. The contributions by Contracting Parties differ substantially regarding distribution of sites across coastal and offshore waters as well as regarding overall coverage of their national waters by OSPAR MPAs.
- As of 31 December 2010, the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) comprises a total of 181 sites, including 175 MPAs situated within national waters of Contracting Parties and six MPAs in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). Collectively, these sites cover 439,679 km<sup>2</sup> or 3.15 % of the OSPAR maritime area.
- Distribution of MPAs across OSPAR Regions is imbalanced, as is the spreading of sites across coastal and offshore waters, resulting in major gaps of the Network of MPAs.
- The Greater North Sea, the Wider Atlantic and the Celtic Seas show an OSPAR MPA coverage of 6.25%, 4.65% and 3.53% respectively. While coverage of the Arctic Waters is at 1.36%, the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast has less than 1% protected by OSPAR MPAs.
- As the vast majority of sites have been designated in CPs' territorial waters, overall coverage of coastal waters by OSPAR MPAs is consequently higher at 14.1%. Overall coverage of offshore areas, *i.e.* the Exclusive Economic Zones of Contracting Parties, by OSPAR MPAs remains very low at 0.5%.
- MPA coverage of threatened and/or declining species and habitats listed by OSPAR varies substantially depending upon the feature. Whereas some features are specifically protected in >20 sites, a number of species and habitats are not at all protected by OSPAR MPAs yet.
- Comprehensive conclusions on the ecological coherence of the OSPAR Network of MPAs are currently not possible due to the unavailability of relevant ecological data on the distribution of species populations and habitats in the OSPAR maritime area. On the basis of initial tests assessing the spatial arrangement of the MPA Network and its components, as summarised above, the OSPAR Network of MPAs can not yet judged to be *ecologically coherent*.
- As no sufficiently detailed information on the management of sites has been made available by Contracting Parties, it remains impossible at this time to comprehensively conclude on the extent to which OSPAR MPAs are *well-managed*. While in general a number of sites are subject to management regimes, including conservation objectives, management plans and specific regulatory measures, no evidence on their effectiveness in achieving the goals for which these were established has been provided. Management plans and measures for the other sites are still being prepared.

# Annex I – List of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas

(as of 31 December 2010)

Contracting Party	OSPAR ID / Natura 2000	OSPAR MPA	Year of Nomination	Location	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Germany	O-DE-0916491	S-H Wadden Sea National Park	2005	Territorial Waters	4,603
	O-DE-1813491	S-H Seabird Protection Area	2005	Territorial Waters	1,618
	O-DE-2306301	Nationalpark Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer	2005	Territorial Waters	2,747
	O-DE-1003301	Doggerbank	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	1,696
	O-DE-1209301	Sylt.Aussenr.-Oestl.Dt.Bucht	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	5,596
	O-DE-2104301	Borkum-Riffgrund	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	625
Denmark	O-DK-003X202	Hesselø med omliggende stenrev	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	22
				Territorial Waters	20
	O-DK-00DX032	Farvandet nord for Anholt	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	2
				Territorial Waters	348
	O-DK-00DX146	Anholt og havet nord for	2007	Territorial Waters	132
	O-DK-00FX010	Strandenge på Læsø og havet syd herfor	2007	Territorial Waters	667
	O-DK-00FX257	Havet omkring Nordre Rønner	2007	Territorial Waters	186
	O-DK-00FX345	Læsø, sydlige del	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	104
				Territorial Waters	261
	O-DK-00VA247	Kims Top og den Kinesiske Mur	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	262
	O-DK-00VA248	Herthas Flak	2007	Territorial Waters	14
	O-DK-00VA249	Læsø Trindel og Tønneberg Banke	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	8
				Territorial Waters	79
	O-DK00VA257	Jyske Rev, Lillefiskerbanke	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	242
	O-DK00VA258	Store Rev	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	109
	O-DK00VA259	Gule Rev	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	435
				Territorial Waters	46
	O-DK-00VA299	Lysegrund	2009	Territorial Waters	32
	O-DK-00VA301	Lønstrup Rødgrund	2007	Territorial Waters	93
	O-DK-00VA302	Knudegrund	2007	Territorial Waters	8
	O-DK-00VA303	Schultz og Hastens Grund samt Briseis Flak	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	159
				Territorial Waters	50
	O-DK-00VA340	Sandbanker ud for Thyborøn	2007	Territorial Waters	64
	O-DK-00VA341	Sandbanker ud for Thorsminde	2007	Territorial Waters	64
	O-DK-00VA347	Sydlige Nordsø	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	2,438
				Territorial Waters	36
	O-DK00VA348	Thyborøn Stenvolde	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	42
				Territorial Waters	37
	O-DK-00EY133	Agger Tange, Nissum Bredning, Skibsted Fjord og Agerø	2009	Territorial Waters	257
	O-DK-00VA344	Ålborg Bugt, østlige del	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	239
Territorial Waters				1,544	
O-DK-00FX122	Ålborg Bugt, Randers Fjord og Mariager Fjord	2009	Territorial Waters	689	
O-DK-00EX026	Dråby Vig	2009	Territorial Waters	17	
O-DK-00VA330	Ebbeløkkerev	2009	Territorial Waters	1	

	O-DK-00VA171	Gilleleje Flak og Tragten	2009	Territorial Waters	151
	O-DK-005Y220	Havet og kysten mellem Hundested og Rørvig	2009	Territorial Waters	40
	O-DK-00FX113	Hirsholmene, havet vest herfor og Ellinge Å's udløb	2009	Territorial Waters	95
	O-DK-00DX322	Kobberhage kystarealer	2009	Territorial Waters	8
	O-DK-00EY124	Løgstør Bredning, Vejlerne og Bulbjerg	2009	Territorial Waters	450
	O-DK-00EY134	Lovns Bredning, Hjarbæk Fjord og Skals, Simested og Nørre Ådal, samt Skravad Bæk	2009	Territorial Waters	236
	O-DK-00EX258	Mågerodde og Karby Odde	2009	Territorial Waters	5
	O-DK-00FX123	Nibe Bredning, Halkær Ådal og Sønderup Ådal	2009	Territorial Waters	190
	O-DK-00CX160	Nissum Fjord	2009	Territorial Waters	110
	O-DK-00CY163	Ringkøbing Fjord og Nymindestrømmen	2009	Territorial Waters	278
	O-DK-00FX112	Skagens Gren og Skagerrak	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	1,412
				Territorial Waters	1,294
	O-DK-00CX161	Stadil Fjord og Vest Stadil Fjord	2009	Territorial Waters	69
	O-DK-00VA250	Store Middelgrund	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	21
	O-DK-00AY176	Vadehavet med Ribe Å, Tved Å og Varde Å vest for Varde	2009	Territorial Waters	1,354
	O-DK-00CY040	Venø, Venø Sund	2009	Territorial Waters	29
Spain	O-ES-0000001	Islas Atlanticas	2007	Territorial Waters	85
	O-ES-0002	El Cachucho	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	2,398
France	O-FR-0009	Iroise	2008	Territorial Waters	3,432
	O-FR-2210068	Baie de Somme	2005	Territorial Waters	34
	O-FR-2300121	Estuaire de la Seine	2005	Territorial Waters	85
	O-FR-2510046	Domaine de Beauguillot	2005	Territorial Waters	5
	O-FR-5300066	Baie de Saint-Brieuc	2005	Territorial Waters	11
	O-FR-5310011	Les Sept Iles	2005	Territorial Waters	3
	O-FR-5410028	Marais de Moeze	2005	Territorial Waters	2
	O-FR-7200679	Banc d'Arguin	2005	Territorial Waters	1
	O-FR-5200659	Baie de l'Aiguillon	2005	Territorial Waters	25
Republic of Ireland	O-IE-002965	Roaringwater Bay and Islands MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	143
	O-IE-002967	Malahide Estuary MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	8
	O-IE-002968	North Dublin Bay MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	15
	O-IE-002969	Galway Bay Complex MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	144
	O-IE-002971	Dundalk Bay MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	52
	O-IE-002972	Mullet/Blacksod Bay Complex MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	141
	O-IE-002973	Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	49
	O-IE-002974	Tramore Dunes and Backstrand MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	8
	O-IE-002978	Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West To Cloghane MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	116
	O-IE-002979	Kilkieran Bay and Islands MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	213
	O-IE-002980	Kenmare River MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	433
	O-IE-002981	Mulroy Bay MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	32
	O-IE-002984	Blasket Islands MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	227
	O-IE-002985	Kingstown Bay MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	1
	O-IE-002987	Belgica Mound Province MPA	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	411
	O-IE-002988	Hovland Mound Province MPA	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	1,087
	O-IE-002989	South-West Porcupine Bank MPA	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	329
	O-IE-002990	North-West Porcupine Bank MPA	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	716

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	O-IE-002997	Ballyness Bay MPA	2009	Territorial Waters	12
Iceland	O-IS-0001	Hornarfjardardjup, coral reef 1	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	8
	O-IS-0002	Hornarfjardardjup, coral reef 2	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	31
	O-IS-0003	Skaftardjup, coral reef 1	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	7
	O-IS-0004	Skaftardjup, coral reef 2	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	22
	O-IS-0005	Reynisdjup, coral reef	2008	Territorial Waters	9
	O-IS-0006	Hverastrytur i Eyjafirdi	2008	Territorial Waters	0
	O-IS-0007	Hverastrytur i Eyjafirdi, north of Armanesnöfum	2008	Territorial Waters	1
Norway	O-N-001	Selligrunnen	2005	Territorial Waters	1
	O-N-002	Rostrevet	2005	Exclusive Economic Zone	316
	O-N-003	Sularevet	2005	Exclusive Economic Zone	973
				Territorial Waters	12
	O-N-004	Iverryggen	2005	Exclusive Economic Zone	621
	O-N-010	Ytre Hvaler	2009	Territorial Waters	340
	O-N-007	Svalbard West	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	53
				Territorial Waters	11,731
	O-N-008	Svalbard East	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	108
Territorial Waters				63,640	
O-N-009	Bjørnøya	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	20	
			Territorial Waters	2,786	
Netherlands	O-NL-2003062	Noordzeekustzone	2009	Territorial Waters	1,416
	O-NL-2008001	Doggerbank	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	4,639
	O-NL-2008002	Klaverbank	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	1,240
	O-NL-2008003	Vlakte van de Raan	2009	Territorial Waters	199
	O-NL-4000017	Voordelta	2009	Territorial Waters	819
Portugal	O-PT-020001	Formigas Bank	2005	Territorial Waters	524
	O-PT-020005	Lucky Strike hydrothermal vent	2006	Exclusive Economic Zone	191
	O-PT-020006	Menez Gwen hydrothermal vent f	2006	Exclusive Economic Zone	95
	O-PT-020007	Rainbow hydrothermal vent fiel	2006	Extended Continental Shelf	22
	O-PT-020008	Sedlo Seamount	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	4,016
	O-PT-COR0001	Corvo Island	2006	Territorial Waters	257
	O-PT-FAI0005	Faial-Pico Channel	2006	Territorial Waters	240
	O-PT-MIG0022	D. Jo/Æo de Castro seamount	2006	Exclusive Economic Zone	354
Sweden	O-S-0510058	Kungsbackafjorden	2005	Territorial Waters	79
	O-S-0510126	Lilla Middelgrund	2005	Exclusive Economic Zone	89
				Territorial Waters	89
	O-S-0510127	Fladen	2005	Exclusive Economic Zone	8
				Territorial Waters	96
	O-S-0510186	Stora Middelgrund och Röde bank	2009	Exclusive Economic Zone	114
	O-S-0510187	Morups bank	2009	Territorial Waters	6
	O-S-0520043	Nordre älvs estuarium	2005	Territorial Waters	71
O-S-0520170	Kosterfjorden-Väderöfjorden	2005	Territorial Waters	592	
O-S-0520171	Gullmarsfjorden	2005	Territorial Waters	114	
United Kingdom	O-UK-0012566	Kenfig / Cynffig	2007	Territorial Waters	3
	O-UK-0012687	Yell Sound Coast	2007	Territorial Waters	8
	O-UK-0012694	Monach Islands	2007	Territorial Waters	33
	O-UK-0012696	North Rona	2007	Territorial Waters	5
	O-UK-0012711	Mousa	2007	Territorial Waters	5



O-UK-0012712	Cardigan Bay / Bae Ceredigion	2007	Territorial Waters	954
O-UK-0013025	Solway Firth	2007	Territorial Waters	424
O-UK-0013027	Morecambe Bay	2007	Territorial Waters	552
O-UK-0013030	Severn Estuary/ Môr Hafren	2008	Territorial Waters	723
O-UK-0013031	Drigg Coast	2007	Territorial Waters	7
O-UK-0013036	Flamborough Head	2007	Territorial Waters	62
O-UK-0013039	Luce Bay and Sands	2007	Territorial Waters	479
O-UK-0013107	Thanet Coast	2007	Territorial Waters	28
O-UK-0013111	Plymouth Sound & Estuaries	2007	Territorial Waters	57
O-UK-0013112	Fal & Helford	2007	Territorial Waters	62
O-UK-0013114	Lundy	2007	Territorial Waters	31
O-UK-0013116	Pembrokeshire Marine / Sir Benfro Forol	2007	Exclusive Economic Zone	119
			Territorial Waters	1,252
O-UK-0013117	Pen Llyn a'r Sarnau / Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau	2007	Territorial Waters	1,442
O-UK-0013690	Essex Estuaries	2007	Territorial Waters	382
O-UK-0013694	Isles of Scilly Complex	2007	Territorial Waters	267
O-UK-0013695	St. Kilda	2007	Territorial Waters	245
O-UK-0014787	Limestone Coast of South West Wales / Arfordir Calchfaen De Orllewin Cymru	2007	Territorial Waters	2
O-UK-0016612	Murlough SAC	2005	Territorial Waters	112
O-UK-0016618	Strangford Lough SAC	2005	Territorial Waters	149
O-UK-0017069	Papa Stour	2007	Territorial Waters	21
O-UK-0017070	Loch nam Madadh	2007	Territorial Waters	18
O-UK-0017072	Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast	2005	Territorial Waters	651
O-UK-0017075	The Wash & North Norfolk Coast	2007	Territorial Waters	1,044
O-UK-0017076	Chesil & The Fleet	2007	Territorial Waters	12
O-UK-0017077	Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh Reefs	2007	Territorial Waters	24
O-UK-0017096	Faray and Holm of Faray	2007	Territorial Waters	7
O-UK-0019802	Sound of Arisaig (Loch Ailort to Loch Ceann Traigh)	2007	Territorial Waters	46
O-UK-0019803	Sunart	2007	Territorial Waters	55
O-UK-0019806	Dornoch Firth and Morrich More	2007	Territorial Waters	69
O-UK-0019808	Moray Firth	2007	Territorial Waters	1,514
O-UK-0019839	Moine Mhor	2007	Territorial Waters	3
O-UK-0020020	Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries / Bae Caerfyrddin ac Aberoedd	2007	Territorial Waters	632
O-UK-0020025	Glannau Mon: Cors heli / Anglesey Coast: Saltmarsh	2007	Territorial Waters	9
O-UK-0030041	Firth of Lorn, Marine	2007	Territorial Waters	210
O-UK-0030055	Rathlin Island SAC	2005	Territorial Waters	31
O-UK-0030059	Solent Maritime	2007	Territorial Waters	93
O-UK-0030061	South Wight Maritime	2007	Territorial Waters	196
O-UK-0030067	South East Islay Skerries	2007	Territorial Waters	15
O-UK-0030069	Sanday	2007	Territorial Waters	110
O-UK-0030076	Alde-Ore & Butley Estuary	2005	Territorial Waters	11
O-UK-0030131	Dee Estuary/ Aber Dyfrdwy	2008	Territorial Waters	135
O-UK-0030170	Humber Estuary	2008	Territorial Waters	337
O-UK-0030172	Isle of May	2007	Territorial Waters	3
O-UK-0030182	Eileanan agus Sgeirean Lios mor	2007	Territorial Waters	11
O-UK-0030190	Loch Creran	2007	Territorial Waters	12

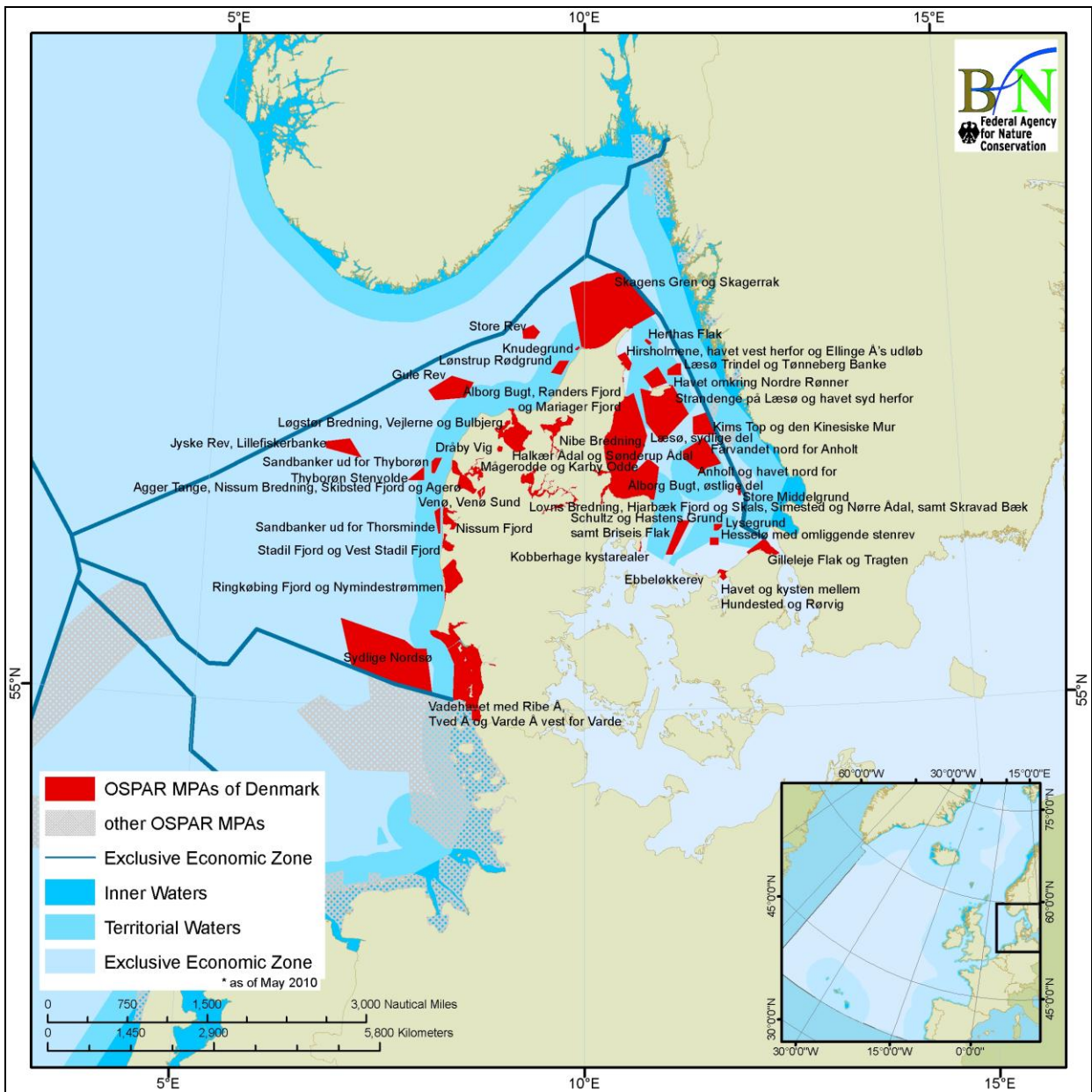
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	O-UK-0030192	Loch Laxford	2007	Territorial Waters	12
	O-UK-0030202	Y Fenai a Bae Conwy / Menai Strait and Conwy Bay	2007	Territorial Waters	265
	O-UK-0030209	Loch Moidart and Loch Shiel Woods	2007	Territorial Waters	3
	O-UK-0030230	Ascrib, Isay and Dunvegan	2007	Territorial Waters	26
	O-UK-0030273	Sullom Voe	2007	Territorial Waters	27
	O-UK-0030289	Treshnish Isles	2007	Territorial Waters	19
	O-UK-0030292	Tweed Estuary	2007	Territorial Waters	2
	O-UK-0030311	Firth of Tay and Eden Estuary	2007	Territorial Waters	151
	O-UK-0030317	Darwin Mounds	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	1,380
	O-UK-0030353	Haig Fras	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	481
	O-UK-0030354	Scanner Pockmark	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	3
	O-UK-0030357	Braemar Pockmarks	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	5
	O-UK-0030359	Stanton Banks	2008	Exclusive Economic Zone	818
ABNJ	O-ABNJ-001	Antialtair Seamount High Seas MPA	2010	High Seas	2,807
	O-ABNJ-002	Altair Seamount High Seas MPA	2010	High Seas	4,384
	O-ABNJ-003	Josephine Seamount High Seas MPA	2010	High Seas	19,371
	O-ABNJ-004	Milne Seamount Complex MPA	2010	ABNJ	20,912
	O-ABNJ-005	MAR north of the Azores High Seas MPA	2010	High Seas	93,415
	O-ABNJ-006	Charlie-Gibbs South MPA	2010	ABNJ	145,419
<b>Total</b>					<b>439,679</b>

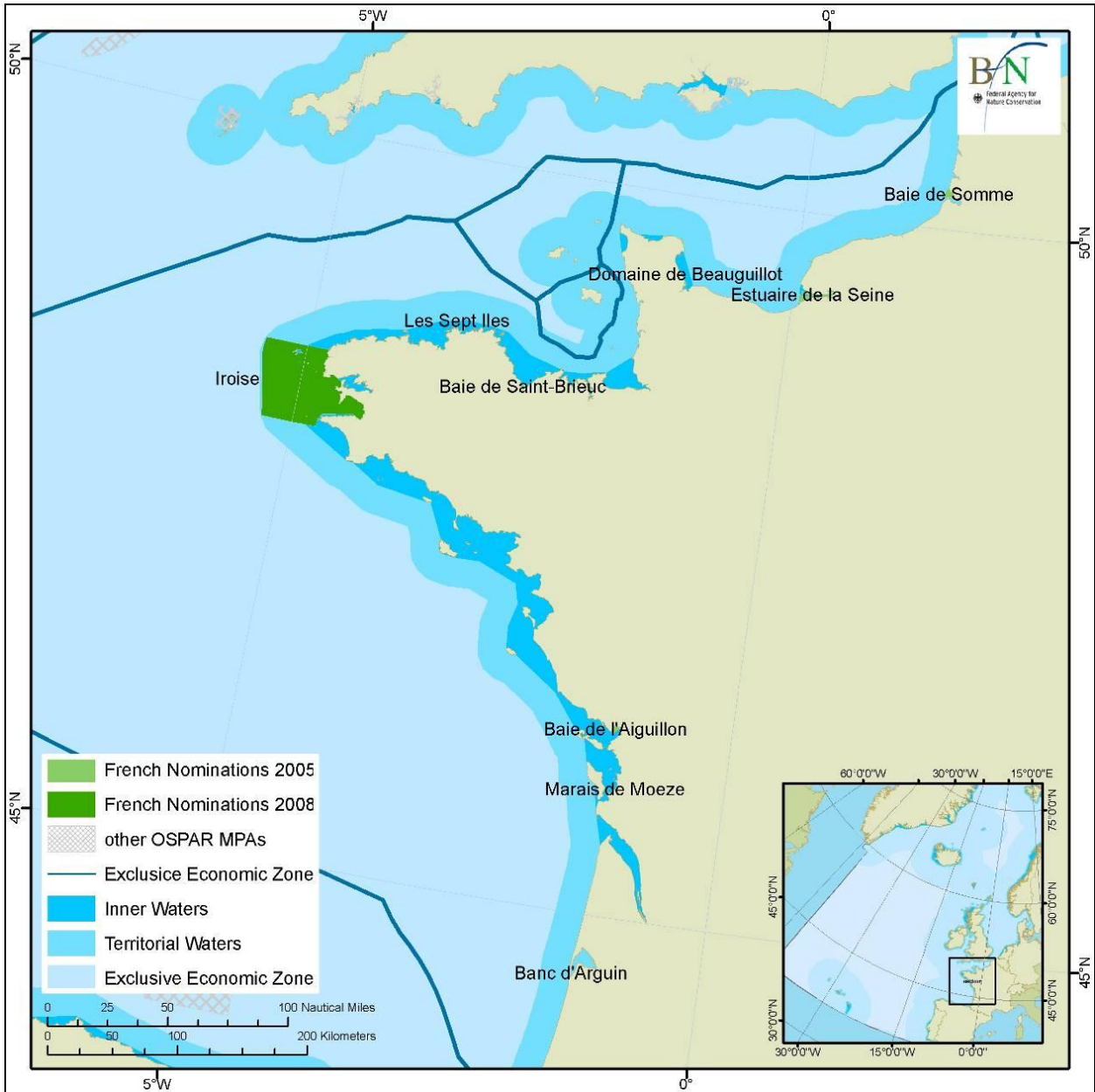
## Annex II – Illustrations of Contracting Parties’ national waters and OSPAR MPAs

(as of 31 December 2010)

## Denmark

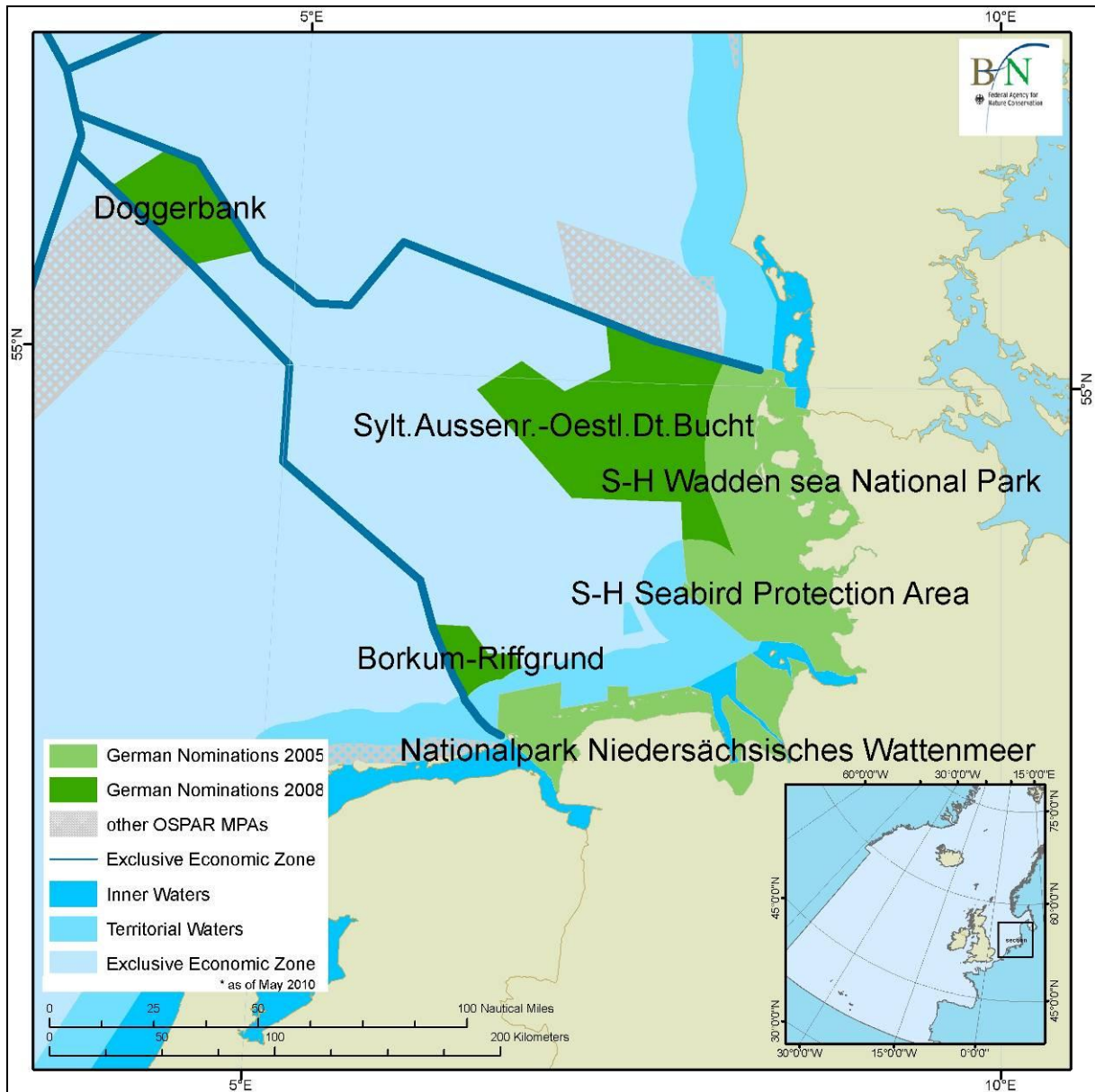


France

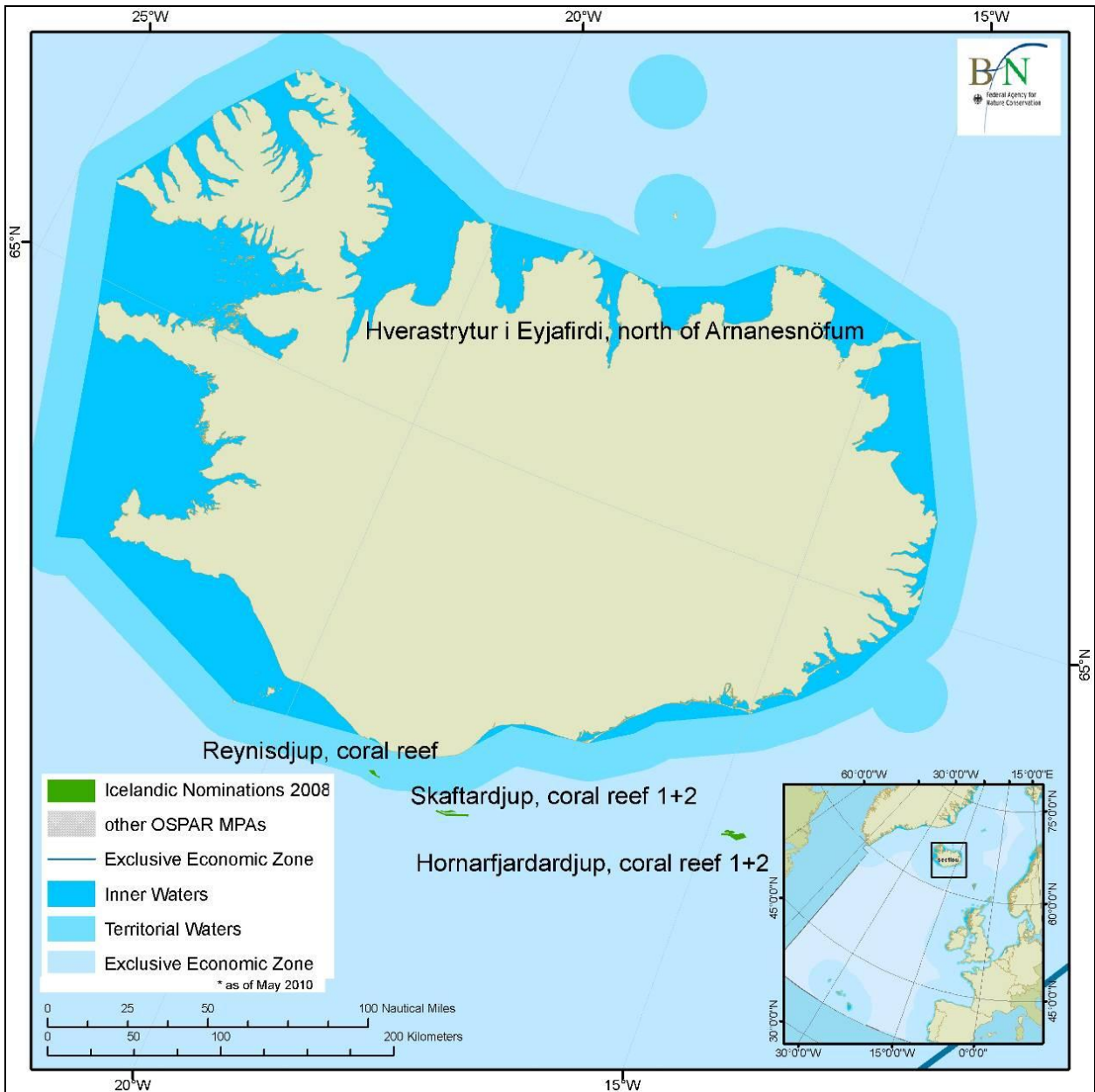




## Germany



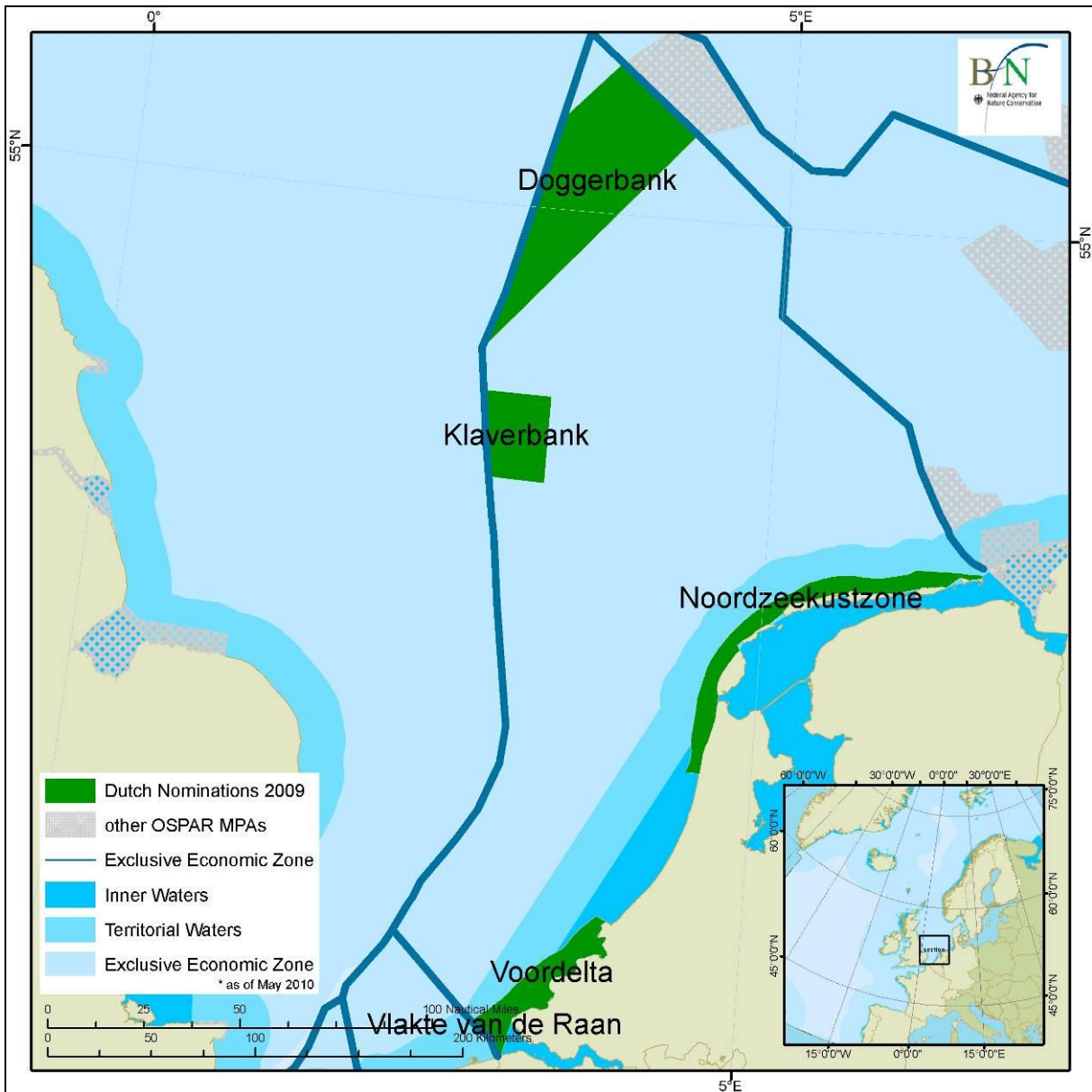
Iceland



## Ireland

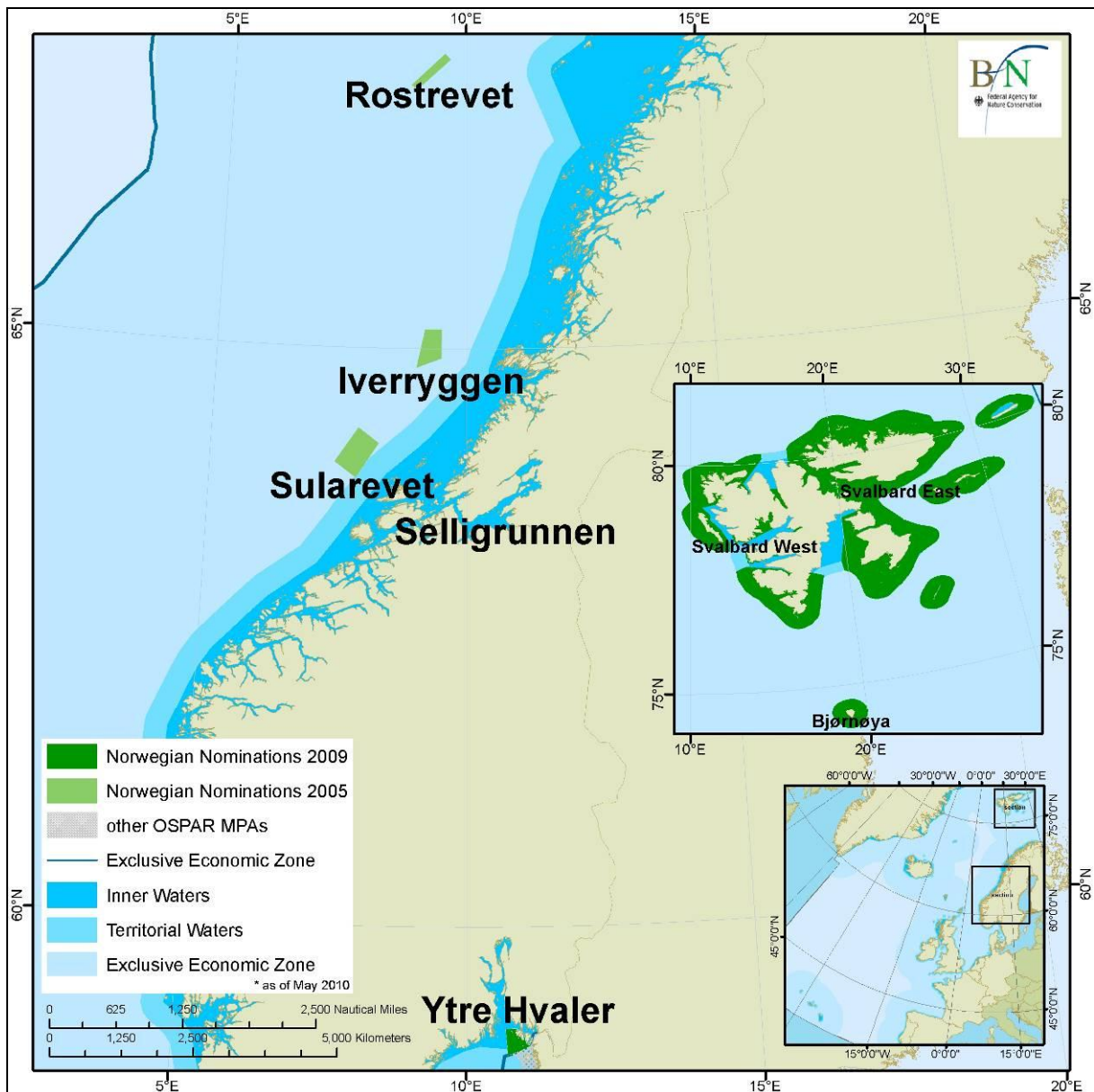


Netherlands



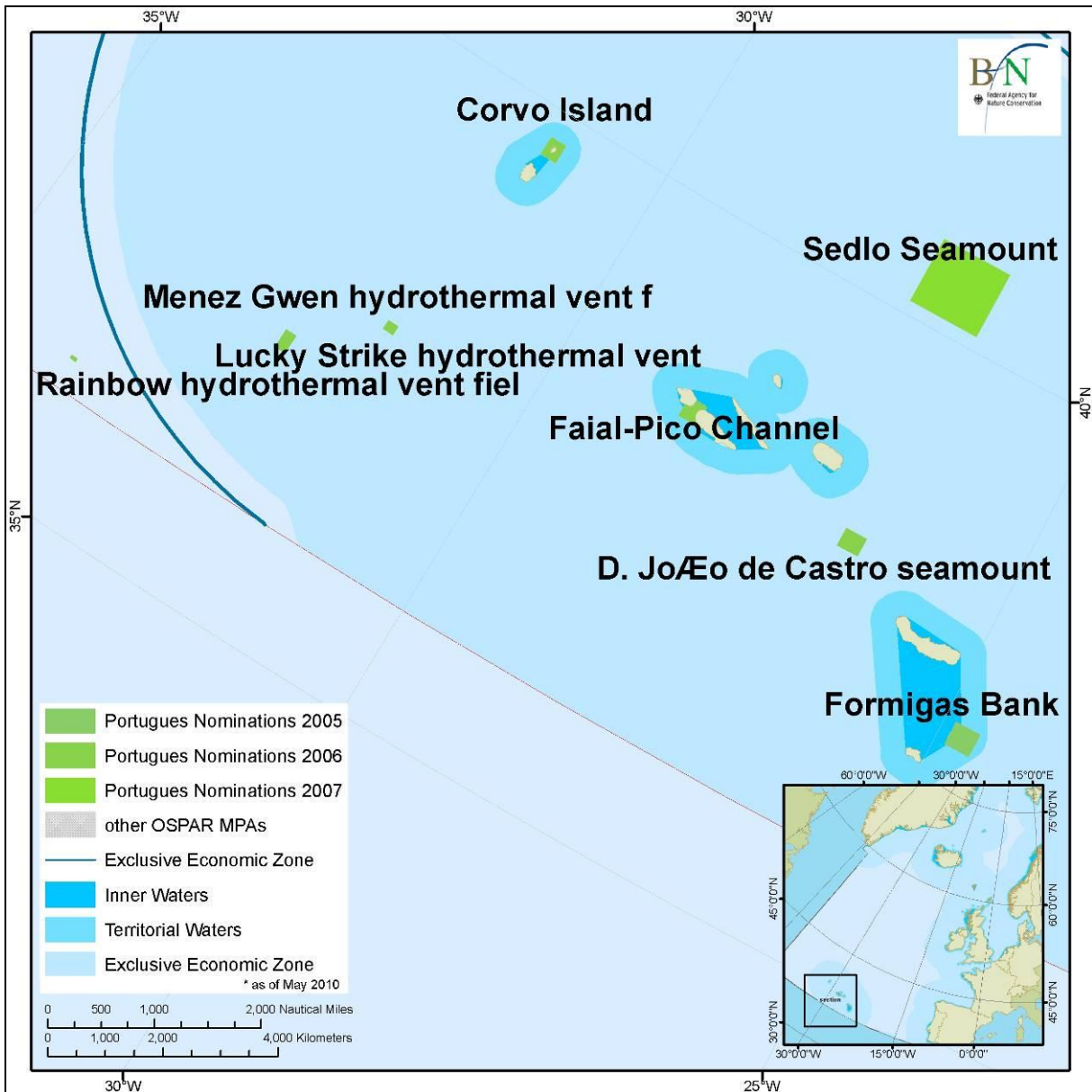


## Norway





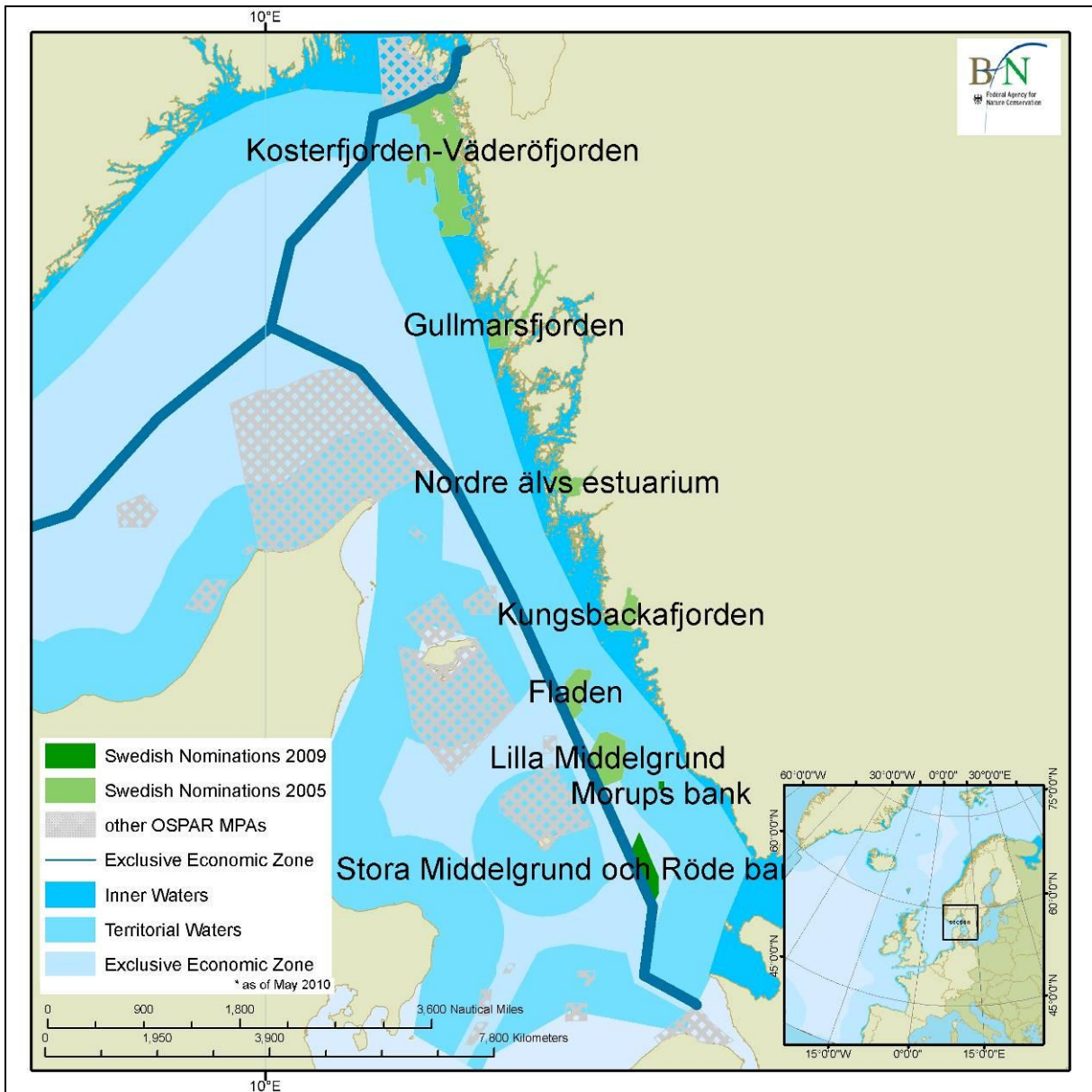
Portugal



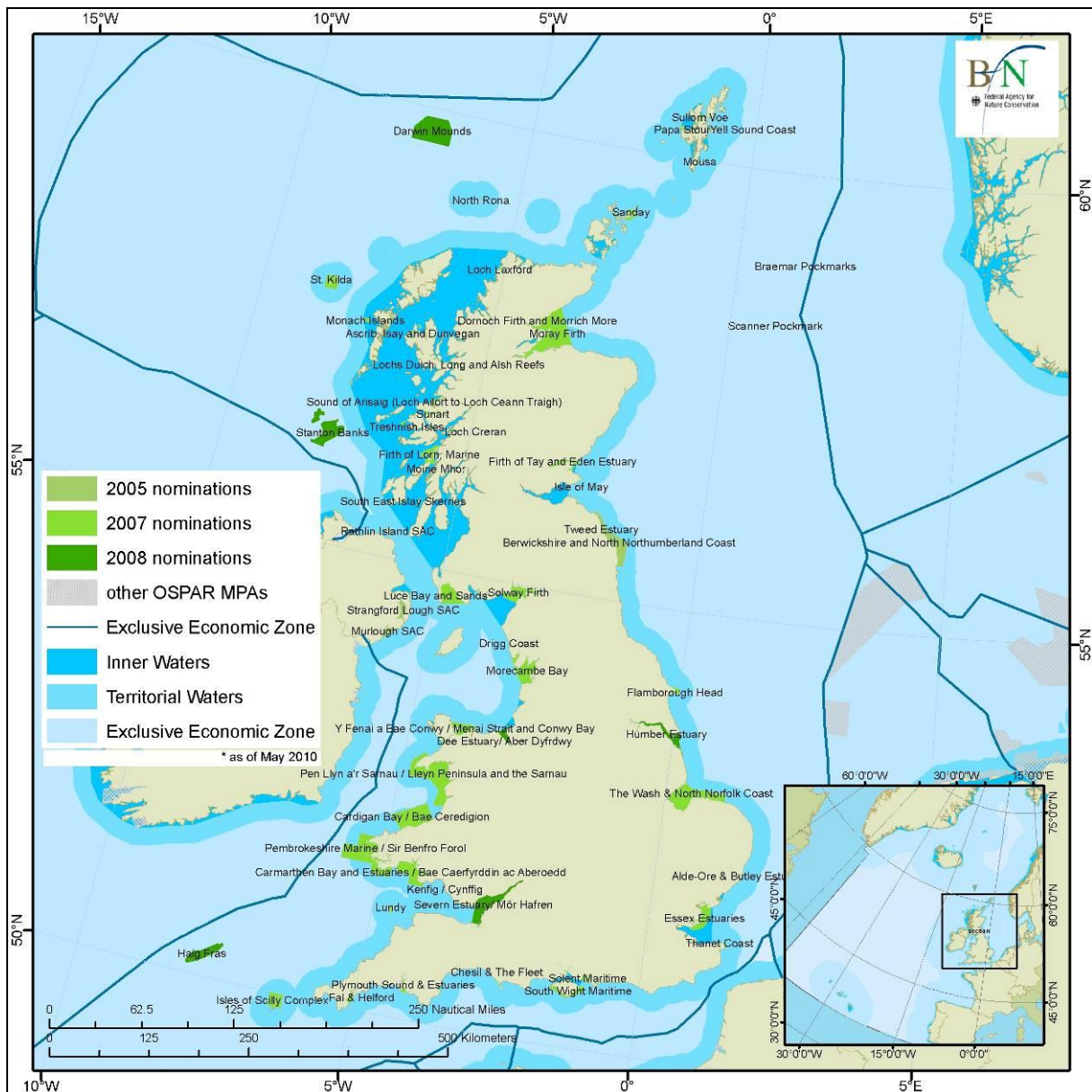
## Spain



Sweden



## United Kingdom





## Annex III – Evolution of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas

Annex III summarizes the gradual development of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas as a result of the selection and nomination of sites by Contracting Parties in the time period 2005–2010.

### 6th Reporting Period of new MPAs (1 June 2010 – 31 December 2010)

#### MPA nominations in 2010 – Part II

In the context of the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting 2010 (20-24 September, Bergen/Norway) OSPAR Contracting Parties have agreed to collectively establish six Marine Protected Areas in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) of the North-East Atlantic. These areas, *i.e.* *Charlie-Gibbs South MPA*, *Milne Seamount Complex MPA*, *Josephine Seamount High Seas MPA*, *Altair Seamount High Seas MPA*, *Antialtair High Seas MPA*, and the *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores High Seas MPA*, collectively cover about 285.000 km<sup>2</sup> within OSPAR Region V.

**Portugal** has at the same time announced the intention to designate and protect the sea floor and sub-sea floor within the areas of the *Josephine Seamount High Seas MPA*, *Altair Seamount High Seas MPA*, *Antialtair High Seas MPA*, and the *Mid-Atlantic Ridge north of the Azores High Seas MPA*, as components of the OSPAR Network of MPAs. These areas are subject to the submission of Portugal to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) regarding the establishment of the outer limits of the Portuguese continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured, in accordance with Article 76 and Annex II of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In accordance with Articles 76 and 77(3) of UNCLOS, the sovereign rights and the jurisdiction of Portugal are referred to the seabed and subsoil of the areas indicated in the Portuguese submission to the CLCS. With its submission Portugal also committed itself to the conservation of living resources and biodiversity in the continental shelf. This duty is concurrent with the protection and conservation of a set of OSPAR priority habitats: seamounts, cold water coral reefs, cold water coral gardens and sponge aggregations.

**Denmark** has rectified the information presented in the previous Status Report (Publication Number 493/2010) with regards to the MPAs nominated to OSPAR in 2009. The information has been revised accordingly in the relevant section below and taken into account in the analysis of the OSPAR MPA Network in the main sections of this report.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Reporting of new MPAs (1 January 2009 – 31 May 2010)

#### MPA nominations in 2010 – Part I

**Sweden** has contributed Natura 2000 sites to be included in the OSPAR Network of MPAs, collectively covering 726 km<sup>2</sup>.

On the west coast bordering Norway, Sweden has established the *Koster-Väderö Archipelago MPA*, covering 606 km<sup>2</sup> of territorial waters. The area is encompassing the Koster archipelago and the Väderö Islands and the 65 km long and up to 250 m deep Koster-Väderö Trough. Due to the influence by the Atlantic the area hosts a high diversity of biotopes and species. Of the 6000 marine species that have been identified in Kosterhavet, about 200 are found nowhere else in Sweden. In particular



there are very rich deep hard bottom habitats with the only known live *Lophelia* reef in Sweden at a depth of 80 m. Also kelp forests, maërl beds and soft corals are found within the MPA. Together with the OSPAR MPA *Ytre Hvaler* nominated by Norway, the area covers an entire ecosystem (see also information below on the MPA nominations by Norway in 2010).

With a view to protect and conserve a coastal bank area representative for the Swedish East coast in the Kattegat, the *Morups bank* MPA (5.67 km<sup>2</sup>) has been established. This relatively small bank is characterised by rock and stones with rich algae vegetation and rich fauna of polychaete worms, particularly at depths of 20 – 30 meters.

With a view to protect representative offshore banks in the eastern Kattegat, Sweden has nominated *Stora Middelgrund and Röde Bank* (114 km<sup>2</sup>). These banks still seem to have a rather intact ecological structure, providing potentially important seed areas for a variety of invertebrates associated with hard bottoms and kelp beds, as well as for fishes.

**Norway** has nominated the *Ytre Hvaler National Park* as an OSPAR MPA, covering 340 km<sup>2</sup> of the Hvaler-Fredrikstad archipelago, situated in the coastal areas of south eastern Norway. It hosts a rich diversity of species both on land and in the sea while being a popular recreational area. The national park includes terrestrial areas, but for the purpose of designating this area as an OSPAR MPA only the marine part of the national park has been included. The national park borders up to the *Kosterhavet Marine National Park* in Sweden. These national parks were established in close collaboration between the Norwegian and Swedish regional governments. The management of the sites will also be coordinated between Norway and Sweden. Due to the close relationship between the two areas they are now nominated to the OSPAR Network of MPAs as a jointly managed transboundary MPA. For practical reasons separate nomination proformas have been elaborated for the areas from each of the two Contracting Parties (see information above on the MPA nominations by Sweden in 2010). Two MPAs previously nominated by Norway, *i. e. Tisler* and *Fjellknausene* are now encompassed in the *Ytre Hvaler National Park*. These two areas therefore have been withdrawn from the OSPAR Network of MPAs as independent components, as they are now covered by the new Ytre Hvaler MPA.

### MPA nominations in 2009

**Ireland** has selected 19 Natura 2000 sites as a contribution to the OSPAR Network of MPAs. For a list of these sites, please see Annex I. The sites have been designated to protect particularly the following species and habitats that OSPAR has identified as being threatened or in decline: intertidal mudflats, *Lophelia pertusa* reefs, maërl beds, *Zostera* beds and Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*). The total area covered by these sites is 4,136 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 1593 km<sup>2</sup> are in Irish territorial waters and 2543 km<sup>2</sup> in the Exclusive Economic Zone. The sites are located to the north, south, east and west of Ireland and offshore on the edge of Ireland's inner Continental Shelf and contribute to the Network coverage in the Celtic Seas (OSPAR Region III). While no formal management plans have yet been prepared or implemented, management measures are already taken in these sites.

**Denmark** has decided to nominate all their marine Natura 2000 sites, which so far have not been reported to the OSPAR Commission, as components to the OSPAR Network of MPAs. Altogether 30 new sites have been nominated, while another four sites nominated in 2007 have been expanded. It should be noted that in the course of expanding previously nominated MPAs, names have been changed for two sites, with one of these now encompassing three individual sites nominated in 2007.

The **Netherlands** has nominated five Natura 2000 sites as components of the OSPAR Network of MPAs, together covering approximately 8 400 km<sup>2</sup> in the Greater North Sea (OSPAR Region II). Three of these sites are situated in the Dutch territorial waters, namely the *Noordzeekustzone* (ca. 1,400 km<sup>2</sup>), the *Voordelta* (ca. 900 km<sup>2</sup>), and the *Vlakte van de Raan* (226 km<sup>2</sup>). Two sites have been

designated in the Dutch Exclusive Economic Zone, namely the *Doggerbank* (4718 km<sup>2</sup>), and the *Klaverbank* (1 238 km<sup>2</sup>). All these areas will be designated according to Dutch legislation of the Nature Conservation Act and the Flora and Fauna Act in 2010. The management plan for the *Voordelta* has been finalised and is currently being implemented. Management plans for the other MPAs will be set at the latest three years after their designation in 2010.

**Norway** has nominated three sites covering a total area of 78 411 km<sup>2</sup> in the territorial waters around the Svalbard archipelago. The three areas, namely *Svalbard West* (20 033 km<sup>2</sup>), *Svalbard East* (55,573 km<sup>2</sup>) and *Bjørnøya* (2,805 km<sup>2</sup>) consist of the marine parts of four existing nature reserves and seven national parks within the archipelago. They are grouped into three OSPAR MPAs based on an evaluation of geography, biology and legal status of existing environmental protection measures. The major part of these sites is situated within the Barents Sea. The northern parts extend into the High Arctic maritime province. Each of the four nature reserves and seven national parks, from which the three OSPAR MPAs originate, is established by separate national regulations. The degree of protection and restrictions varies between the ten areas. Svalbard and the sea territory out to 12 nm are protected through the Svalbard Environmental Act. Svalbard falls within the perimeter of the Barents Sea management plan. In addition, separate management plans for each of the national parks and nature reserves are, or will be, elaborated. The nomination of these three MPAs by Norway has not only substantially increased the coverage of the OSPAR Network of MPAs in the Arctic Waters (OSPAR Region I) but also more than doubled the total coverage of the Network.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Reporting of MPAs (1 January 2008 – 31 December 2008)

**France** has nominated *La Mer d'Iroise*, off the coast of western Brittany, as a component to the OSPAR Network of MPAs. This site is situated in the coastal waters with a total area of 3431.75 km<sup>2</sup> extending across the boundaries of OSPAR Region II, the Greater North Sea (1758.43 km<sup>2</sup>) and OSPAR Region III, the Celtic Seas (1673.32 km<sup>2</sup>). It has not yet been reported as a Natura 2000 area. No information on management has been reported.

**Germany** has nominated an additional set of six MPAs<sup>30</sup> to the OSPAR Network of which three sites are located in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), namely the *Dogger Bank* (1,700 km<sup>2</sup>), the *Borkum Reef Ground* (625 km<sup>2</sup>) and the *Sylt Outer Reef – Eastern German Bight* (5,600 km<sup>2</sup>); while the other three sites are situated in territorial waters, namely the *Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park and adjacent Coastal Areas* (4,524.55 km<sup>2</sup>), the *Steingrund* (174.50 km<sup>2</sup>), and *Helgoland mit Helgoländer Felssockel* (55.09 km<sup>2</sup>). All of these sites have previously been established as Natura 2000 areas (SCI, SPA) and are located within OSPAR Region II, the Greater North Sea. The total area protected has in 2008 increased by 4723 km<sup>2</sup>. For the *Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park and adjacent Coastal Areas* for which (sectoral) national and an overall trilateral management plan(s) exist; for the OSPAR MPA *Helgoland mit Helgoländer Felssockel* and the SPA within the OSPAR MPA *Sylt Outer Reef – Eastern German Bight* ordinances according to national law are implemented. Management plans for the remaining sites are being prepared.

**Iceland** has nominated its first set of seven MPAs as components to the OSPAR Network, of which four sites are located in the Exclusive Economic Zone: namely *Hornafjarðardjúp Coral Reef 1* (7.89 km<sup>2</sup>), *Hornafjarðardjúp Coral Reef 2* (31.27 km<sup>2</sup>), *Skaftárdjúp Coral Reef 1* (7.36 km<sup>2</sup>), and *Skaftárdjúp Coral Reef 2* (22.31 km<sup>2</sup>), while the other three sites are situated in the coastal waters, namely

<sup>30</sup> It has to be noted that the MPA *Sylt Outer Reef – Eastern German Bight* incorporates and thus supersedes the SPA *Eastern German Bight*, which was nominated to OSPAR during 2005. This (old) smaller site now lies inside the newly designated larger OSPAR MPA, and therefore OSPAR was invited to remove the former from the OSPAR MPA list and database. A similar situation applies with regard to the MPAs nominated in coastal waters. They are either within (*Steingrund*) or extend (*Helgoland mit Helgoländer Felssockel*) the previously nominated *Seabird Protection Area Helgoland* or extend the *Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park (Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park and adjacent Coastal Areas)*.

*Eyjafjörður Hydrothermal Vents 1* (0.12 km<sup>2</sup>), *Eyjafjörður Hydrothermal Vents 2* (0.56 km<sup>2</sup>), and *Reynisdjúp Coral Reef* (9.45 km<sup>2</sup>). All of these MPAs are within OSPAR Region I, the Arctic, and together cover an area of about 78.96 km<sup>2</sup>. No information on management has been reported.

**Spain** has nominated *El Cachucho* (2349,66 km<sup>2</sup>), also known as the *Le Danois Bank*, to the OSPAR Network of MPAs. This site is situated in Spain's Exclusive Economic Zone about 65 km off the northern coast of the Iberian Peninsula in the Cantabrian Sea. It is located within OSPAR Region IV, the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast. This MPA has also been proposed as a site of Special Community Importance (SCI) for the European Network Natura 2000. The relevant authorities are in the process of establishing natural resources and fishing management plans for the area.

The **United Kingdom** has nominated a set of eight additional SACs as components to the OSPAR Network of MPAs, all of which have become Natura 2000 sites since 2005. This includes five offshore/EEZ SACs, namely *Braemar Pockmarks* (5.18 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region II), *Scanner Pockmarks* (3.35 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region II), *Haig Fras* (481.34 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region III), *Stanton Banks* (817.87 km<sup>2</sup>; III) and *Darwin Mounds* (1,377.26 km<sup>2</sup>; V) and three inshore/coastal waters SACs, namely *Severn Estuary* (721.96 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region III), *Dee Estuary* (134.47 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region III) and *Humber Estuary* (336.40 km<sup>2</sup>; OSPAR Region II). These sites together cover an area of about 3,877.83 km<sup>2</sup>. For all of these MPAs, management measures, arising from requirements of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, are being developed and taken forward.

### 3rd Annual Reporting of MPAs (1 January 2007 – 31 December 2007)

In the 2007 reporting period, new MPAs nominated by Denmark, Spain and Portugal increased the number of sites from 87 to 106 with an area increase from 26,619 km<sup>2</sup> to 38 178 km<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, the UK withdrew one site previously nominated and recalculated its total area coverage by MPAs.

**Denmark** reported its first OSPAR MPAs, 18 sites totalling 5,398.66 km<sup>2</sup>. Seven of the 18 sites are within their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). All of these MPAs are Natura 2000 sites with the same boundaries. Please refer to Annex I with regards to their names and further details.

**Spain** likewise reported its first OSPAR MPA, a conglomerate of four sites under the name *Islas Atlánticas de Galicia*, totalling 85.42 km<sup>2</sup> in territorial waters. This MPA is a Natura 2000 site, with similar boundaries, but somewhat larger (85.24 km<sup>2</sup> vs. 71.38 km<sup>2</sup>).

**Portugal** reported its eighth and at the same time largest site, the *Sedlo Seamount* with an area of 4,012.53 km<sup>2</sup>, increasing the total area being protected to 5,698.25 km<sup>2</sup>. This MPA is situated within the Portuguese EEZ, but it is not a Natura 2000 site at all. As noted in the 2006 Status Report, of the EU Member States, only Portugal Azores has nominated sites that are not wholly Natura 2000 sites, which was an important development. Of the eight Portuguese sites, four are not Natura 2000 at all, and the remaining four are larger and more extensive than the smaller Natura 2000 sites contained within them.

The **United Kingdom** submitted updated GIS files and provided area calculations for all of its sites, except for its three Northern Ireland MPAs. One site was withdrawn, due to its negligible marine area, reducing the total number of UK sites to 55. However, with renewed calculations, the total area of the UK sites increased from the 2005 estimation of 9,858.41 km<sup>2</sup> to 11,921.27 km<sup>2</sup>.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reporting of MPAs (10 April 2006 – 31 December 2006)

In the 2006 reporting period, new MPAs nominated by Portugal increased the number of sites from 81 to 87, and the total Network area increased from 25 426 km<sup>2</sup> to 26,619 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Portugal** reported six additional areas as components of the OSPAR Network of MPAs. These MPAs are situated in the waters surrounding the Azores, of which two sites (*Faial-Pico channel, Corvo Island*) are in territorial waters, three in the EEZ (*D. João de Castro Seamount, Lucky Strike Hydrothermal Vent Field, Menez Gwen Hydrothermal Vent Field*), and one on the extended continental shelf (*Rainbow Hydrothermal Vent Field*). This amounts to 497.42 km<sup>2</sup> in territorial waters, 640.88 km<sup>2</sup> in Portugal's EEZ, and 22.15 km<sup>2</sup> on the extended continental shelf, totalling 1160.45 km<sup>2</sup>. Only Portugal has nominated an MPA on the continental shelf beyond the EEZ.

It should be noted that due to the extension of the first year's reporting deadline, most of the MPAs in the initial report were actually put forward in the period between January and April 2006. This meant that the second reporting period was less than a calendar year.

### Initial Reporting of MPAs (2005 - 9 April 2006)

The 2005 MPA nominations are summarized below in the order they were received.

#### Portugal:

One site, *Formigas/Dollabarot Bank*, within the waters of the Azores, was reported to MASH 2005. It was the first OSPAR MPA nomination. It is a nature reserve with a delimited area of 525.27 km<sup>2</sup>, extending to below 1,500 m in depth. Of that, 36.28 km<sup>2</sup> is also a Natura 2000 site, down to the 200 m isobath.

#### Norway:

Six sites were reported in December 2005. The six sites are: *Selligrunnen* (Nature Reserve), *Røstrevet, Sularevet, Iverryggen, Tisler, and Fjellknausene*, the latter five of which have fisheries closures to bottom-tending gear. The six in total cover an area of about 1,905.39 km<sup>2</sup>.

#### Germany:

Two extensive sites were reported in January 2006, and two more in April 2006. The sites are: *Helgoland Seabird Protected Area* (a Natura 2000 SPA), *Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea* (National Park and Natura 2000 SCI), *SPA-Eastern German Bight* (Natura 2000 SPA), and *Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park* (Natura 2000 SPA and SAC). The sites comprise a total of 11,922.78 km<sup>2</sup>. In all, more than 90% of German coastal waters are also OSPAR MPAs, with large sections of the EEZ waters included as well.

#### Sweden:

Six sites were reported in January 2006: *Koster-Väderö Archipelago* (some enhanced protections including fisheries restrictions), *Gullmarn Fjord* (also with enhanced protections), *Nordre Älv Estuary* (fisheries closures), *Kungsbacka Fjord* (nature reserve), *Fladen*, and *Lilla Middelgrund*. The six sites overlap Natura 2000 sites, and cover a total of 971.77 km<sup>2</sup>. *Fladen* and *Lilla Middelgrund* both have portions extending into the EEZ (37.62 km<sup>2</sup> and 159.21 km<sup>2</sup>, respectively).

#### UK:

Fifty-six sites were reported as OSPAR MPAs in January 06. All sites are also Natura SACs, and total 11 921.27 km<sup>2</sup>. Please refer to Annex I with regards to their names and details.

#### France:

Eight sites were reported in March 2006: *Réserve Naturelle Nationale de la Baie de Somme, Réserve Naturelle de l'Estuaire de la Seine, Réserve Naturelle Nationale du Domaine de Beauguillot, Réserve Naturelle de la Baie de l'Aiguillon, Réserve Naturelle de la baie de Saint Brieuç, Archipel des Sept îles, Réserve Naturelle de Moëze-Oléron, and Réserve Naturelle du Banc d'Arguin*. They are all Natura 2000 sites and together cover an area of about 274.53 km<sup>2</sup>.



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ISBN 978-1-907390-89-0  
Publication Number: 548/2011

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