



# Objective 30%: why involving recreational anglers is key for the success of Marine Protected Areas

*Marine Protected Areas in the EU and reaching the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy Target*

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# The Benefits of MPAs



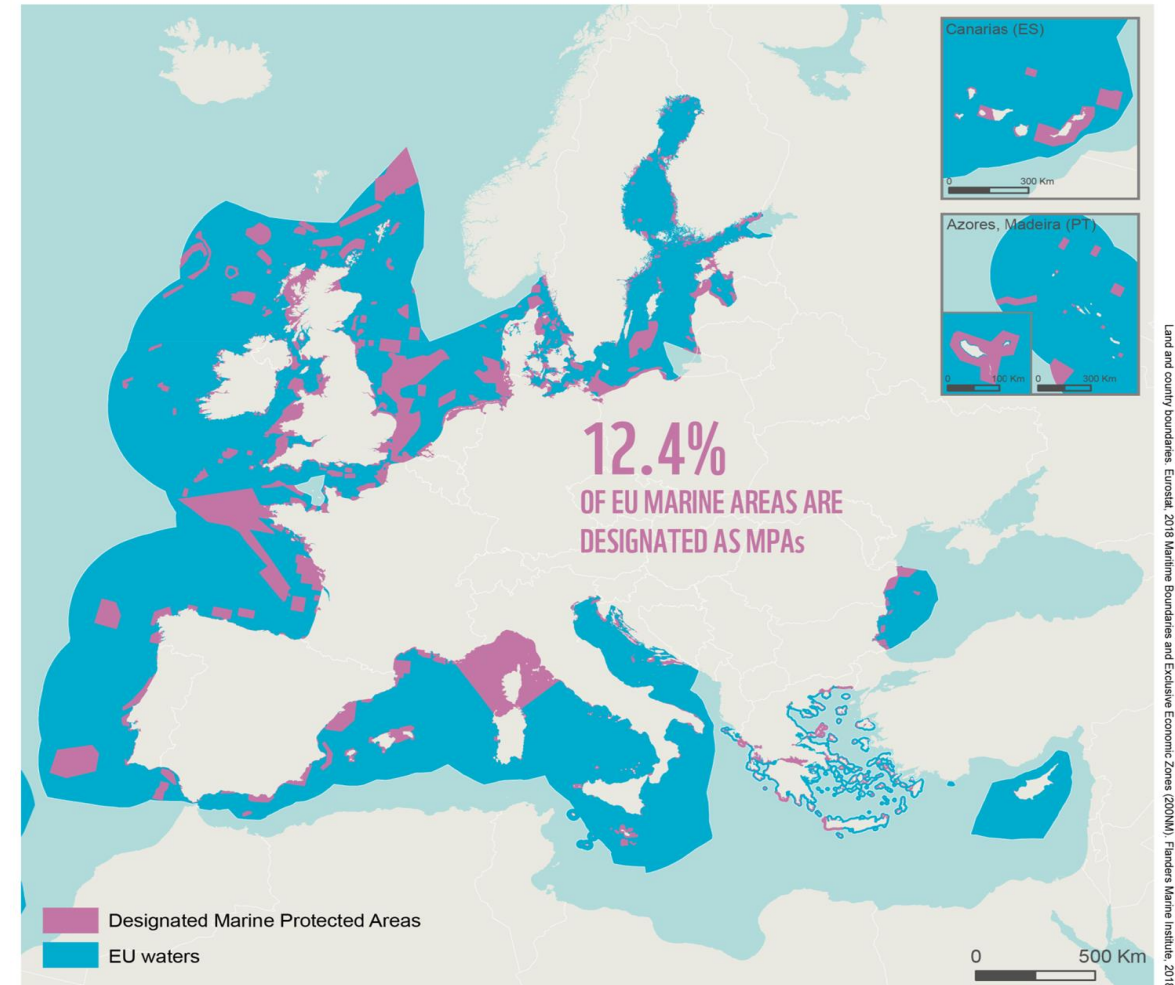
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are scientifically demonstrated to be efficient and cost-effective tools for protecting marine ecosystems, alleviating the impacts of climate change and human pressures, reinforcing ecosystem resilience and improving the capacity of habitats to act as a blue carbon sink.
- Well-managed MPAs support large fish populations and diversity, bringing food and economic security to people
- MPAs foster human well-being by providing thriving coastal and marine environments
- Healthy coastal habitats like seagrasses, dune systems, mud and mangroves protect against coastal erosion and extreme weather caused by climate change
- Good MPA planning fosters dialogue between diverse users and stakeholders of marine spaces



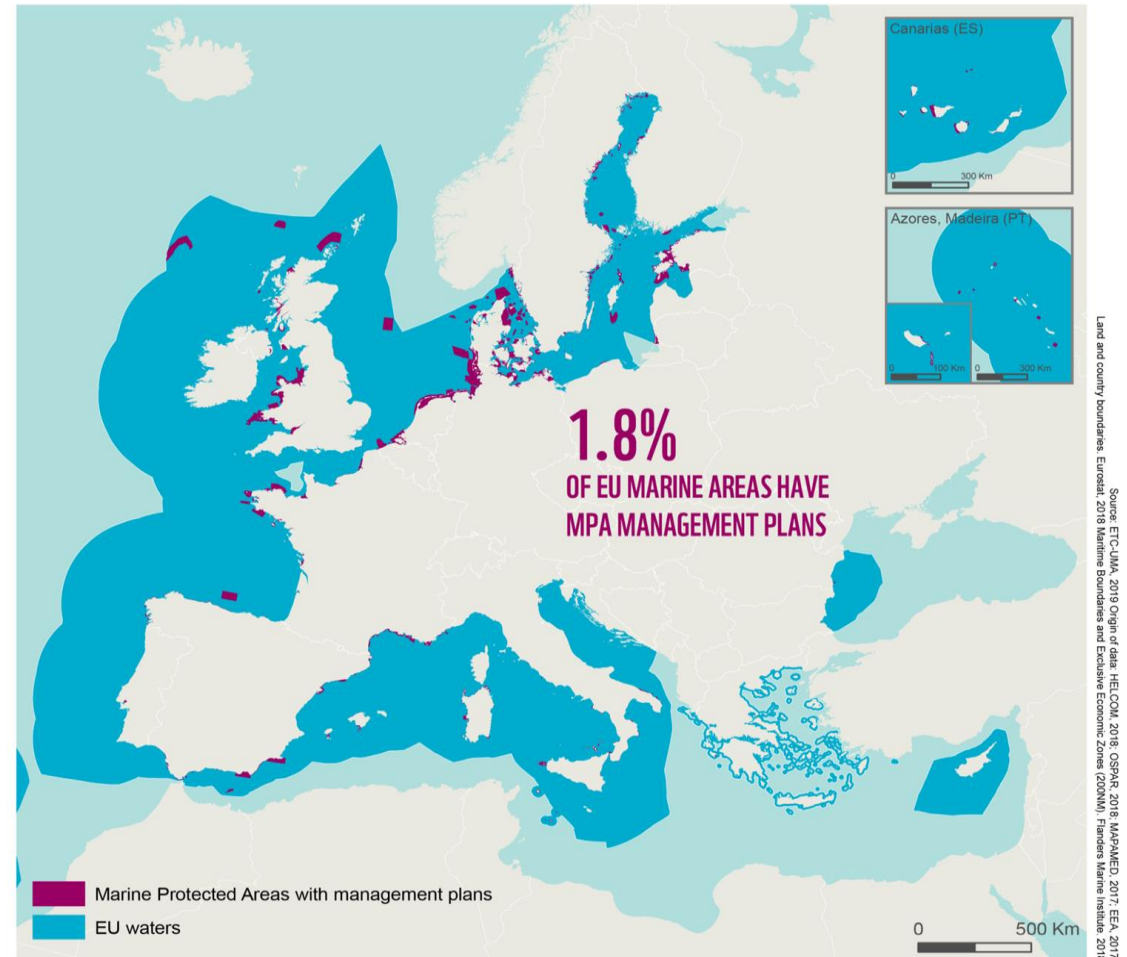
# Paper Parks



- Marine Natura 2000 sites have been established to protect threatened habitats and species in the EU.
- Paper parks have become a major obstacle in achieving GES in the absence of MPAs that provide meaningful protection and effective management to marine biodiversity in European Seas
- In WWF 2019 report on Protecting Our Ocean: Europe's Challenges to Meet the 2020 Deadlines, supported by data from HELCOM it was revealed that 12.4% of the EU marine area being designated for protection.



- In the final year before the 2020 deadline for 10% of the ocean to be protected, (Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi target 11 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14), European seas remain in a poor state and significantly lack appropriate biodiversity protection.
- European MPAs are not actually protecting marine biodiversity against exploitative activities
- Almost half of the EU's marine Member States had no or hardly any management plans in place
- In 2020, the European Court of Auditors and the European Environment Agency, identified that there has been a lack of an effective, well-managed and well-connected network of MPAs

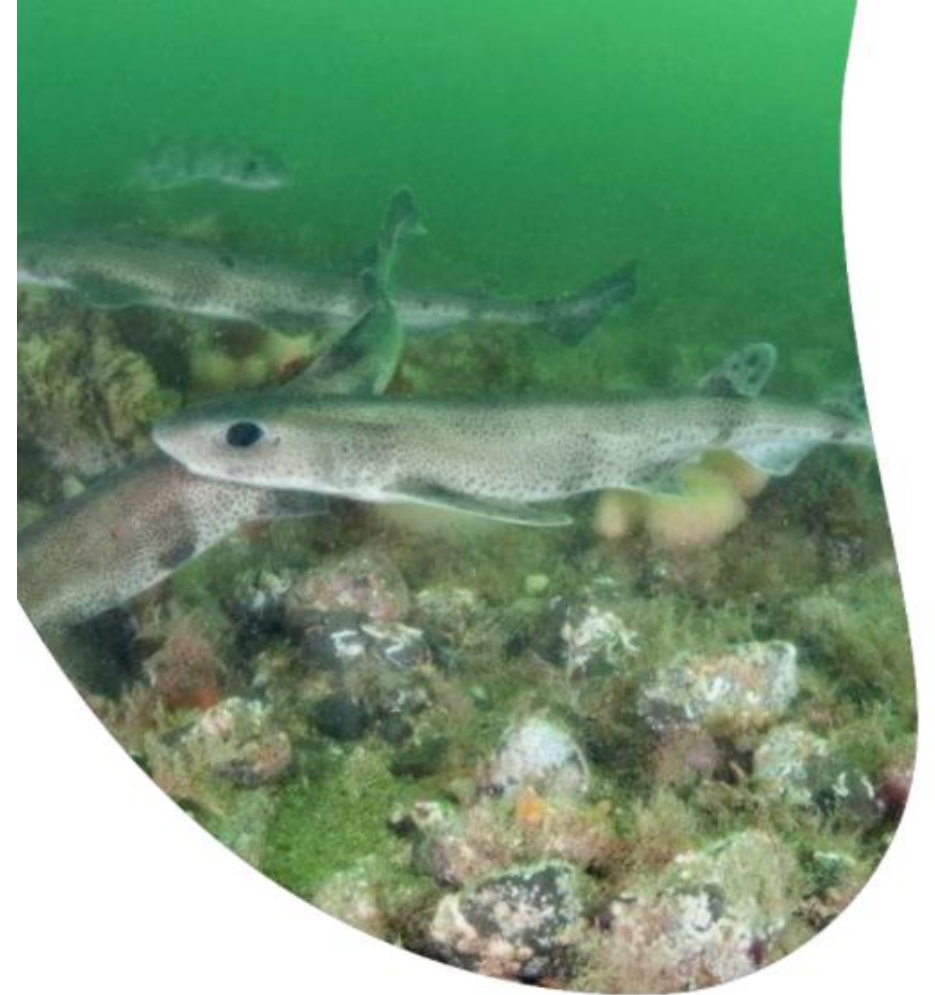


Today, only 1.8% of the European Union (EU) marine area is covered by MPAs with management plans, despite 12.4% of the EU marine area being designated for protection.

# (continued)



- According to a recent report on the largest network of European MPAs (Natura 2000, comprising 3449 MPAs) and 13 human activities that represent direct threats to marine species and habitats in Europe.
  - As of early 2018, 85% of EU MPAs had no management plan in place.
  - EU network of MPAs covered 12.4% of EU seas, only 1.8% of EU seas were part of MPAs with management plans in place.
  - For 95% of the total protected area in the Mediterranean Sea (73% of the MPAs), no differences exist between the regulations imposed inside MPAs, compared with those outside.
  - Only five out of 73 offshore MPAs in the UK ‘may be’ progressing towards their conservation targets, while 21 are ‘unlikely’ to be. Only two have long-term site condition monitoring available.
  - In 2017, 59% of European MPAs were commercially trawled, and 38% were subject to a higher trawling intensity than outside protected areas.
  - In the Dogger Bank Natura 2000 area some Member States have continued with harmful bottom trawling which is in breach of the Habitats Directive and even after nearly 10 years there are no management measures for fishing activities.



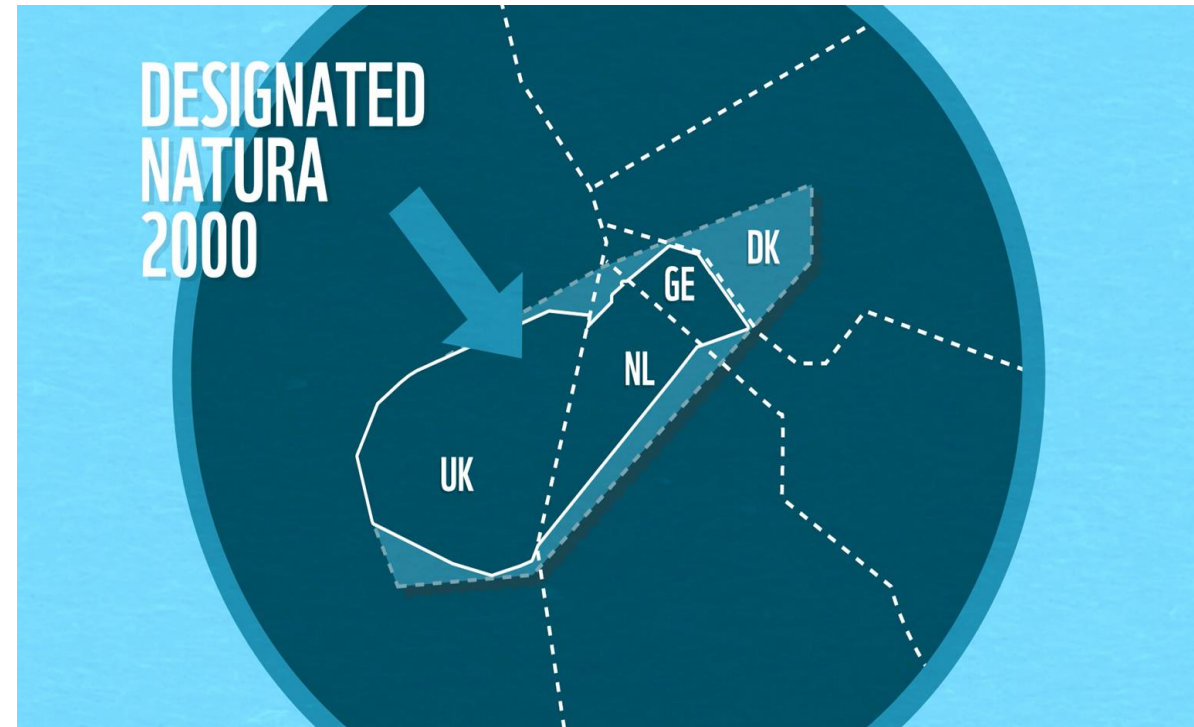
-WWF 2019, *Protecting Our Ocean: Europe's Challenges to Meet the 2020 Deadlines*,  
-Claudet, J., et al., 2020. *Underprotected Marine Protected Areas in a Global Biodiversity Hotspot*. *One Earth*, 2(4): 380-384.  
-Oceana, 2020, *Unmanaged=Unprotected: Europe's marine paper parks*  
-Greenpeace. 2020, *Bright Blue Seas: The need to properly protect our offshore marine protected areas*. Greenpeace UK. 31 pp.  
-Dureuil, M., et al., 2018, *Elevated trawling inside protected areas undermines conservation outcomes in a global fishing hot spot*. *Science*, 362(6421): 1403-1407

# Example of Bad Practice : Dogger Bank



- The Dogger Bank, a submerged sandbank and transboundary Natura 2000 area, is located in the shallow waters of the central North Sea, spread across the offshore waters of the Netherlands, UK, Germany and Denmark.
- The British, Dutch and German governments have each designated their parts as a Natura 2000, with the intention to protect the sandbank ecosystem, harbour porpoises and seals in the area; only Denmark abstained from designation.
- Harmful mobile bottom contacting fishing techniques to this day have been permitted in the EU areas of the Dogger Bank while the UK has drafted measures.
- The measures by UK announced earlier this year included a ban on trawling and dredging from the Dogger Bank.
- Member States have been lagging in comparison

## Decision makers not listening to the science



*Dogger Bank Member State distribution*

-WWF 2019, *Protecting Our Ocean: Europe's Challenges to Meet the 2020 Deadlines*,  
-Claudet, J., et al., 2020. *Underprotected Marine Protected Areas in a Global Biodiversity Hotspot*. *One Earth*, 2(4): 380-384.  
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# Examples of Best Practice for MPAs



## **Côte Bleue Marine Park: 37 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL COOPERATION WITH LOCAL FISHERS**

- Set up in 1983 Côte Bleue Marine Park is located close to Marseille in France and is part of the Natura 2000 network.
- Sustainable development of small scale fishing activities, protect environment, scientific research and raise public awareness about environmental issues.
- Two strictly protected areas(“no-take zones”):
- Fishing, dredging, anchoring and scuba diving are forbidden.
- Several studies have shown the ‘reserve effect’ being demonstrated by the fish specie in no-take zones.
- The fishing yield has also increased sevenfold since the creation of the no-take reserve of Couronne.
- Involvement of fishers effective in ensuring sustainable artisanal fishing activities.



**Côte Bleue Marine Park, France**

© Côte Bleue Marine Park/ WWF

**Decision makers listened to scientists and local stakeholders**



# Towards the 2030 Targets



- In 2020, the European Commission adopted new 2030 EU Biodiversity Strategy which was agreed and supported by the European Council in their conclusions in October 2020.

## EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

**Protected area targets: key commitments by 2030**

1. **Legally protect** a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and **30% of EU's sea area** as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network, and integrate ecological corridors.
2. **Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's protected areas**, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests.
3. **Effectively manage** all protected areas, with clear **conservation objectives and conservation measures**, and **monitor** these areas appropriately.



- In parallel the Commission will also introduce a new nature restoration law which will be introduced in the foreseeable future.

# (continued)



- As part of the 2030 objectives the EU will commit to the following as part of the new Biodiversity Strategy to safeguard marine ecosystems:
  - A new action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems.
  - Legally binding restoration targets
  - Achieving good environmental status of marine ecosystems, including through strictly protected areas, must involve the restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems as well as important fish spawning and nursery areas
- Role of the European Commission and Member States

## → Who should do what?

European Commission	Member States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in agreement with Member States, puts forward <b>criteria and guidance</b> for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identification and designation of additional protected areas</li><li>• definition of “strict protection”</li><li>• appropriate management planning</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>identify potential areas to be protected</b></li><li>• <b>designate additional protected areas</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to complete the Natura 2000 network</li><li>• under national protection schemes</li></ul></li><li>• <b>demonstrate significant progress</b> in coverage by new protected areas by 2023</li></ul>



# Lessons learned



- The full implementation of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directives is essential.
- Lessons from 2020:
  - EU's actions had not restored seas to good environmental status, nor fishing to sustainable levels in all seas.
  - EU protection rules have not led to the recovery of significant ecosystems and habitats.
  - The European Court of Auditors and the European Environment Agency, identified a lack of an effective, well-managed and well-connected network of MPAs.
    - As a result, they concluded that there is limited protection of marine biodiversity and that the network of marine protected areas was not representative of the EU's diverse seas and sometimes provided little protection.
  - Transform Paper Parks into effective and equitably managed and connected marine protected areas.

# Recommendations



- **Protect at least 30% of our ocean under effective MPAs**, including 10% strictly protected, with fully implemented management plans, monitoring and transparent reporting.
- Ensure that MPAs conserve biodiversity through restoring and maintaining ecosystems to **enhance ecosystem functionality**, thereby alleviating the impacts of climate change.
- Ensure that MPAs are designated in **ecologically meaningful locations**, work as a well-connected and coherent network, and account for predicted shifts in the geographic distribution of species caused by climate change.
- Ensure that the **main priority of all MPAs is conservation of biodiversity and restoration of ecosystems**, not economic growth of marine industries or industrial carbon offset schemes. A sustainable blue economy and economic opportunities for coastal communities are welcome added benefits of MPAs.
- **Equality and inclusiveness**, raise awareness on environmental issues, and to create local ownership and co-management schemes for the relevant communities whereby the management of natural resources is a shared responsibility.
- Develop MPAs in the broader framework of **ecosystem-based Marine Spatial Planning**: ensure space for nature and take the limited carrying capacities of our ocean into account when planning for sustainable marine economic activities.

