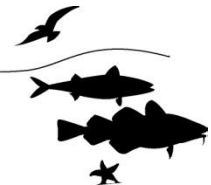


# Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)

## What it means for the RACs

Maurice Clarke

Marine Institute Ireland  
responsible for MSFD biodiversity in Ireland  
chair OSPAR Fish EG



# Summary

- MSFD what is it?
- OSPAR and MSFD
- Achievement of “GES” Good environmental status
  - D1 Biodiversity
  - D3 Commercial fisheries
  - D4 Food-webs
  - D6 Sea floor integrity

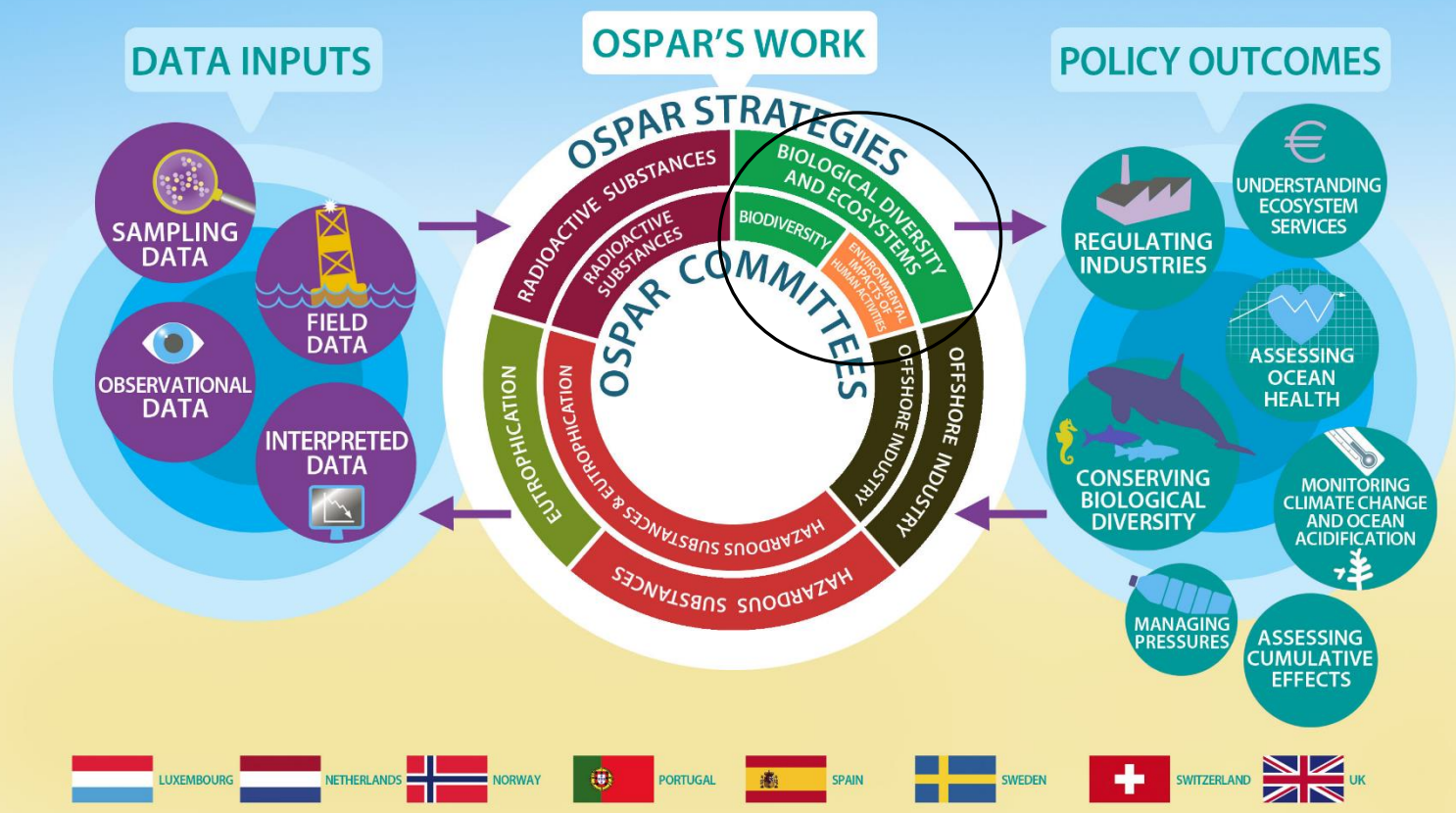
# Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)

How EU Member States develop marine strategies

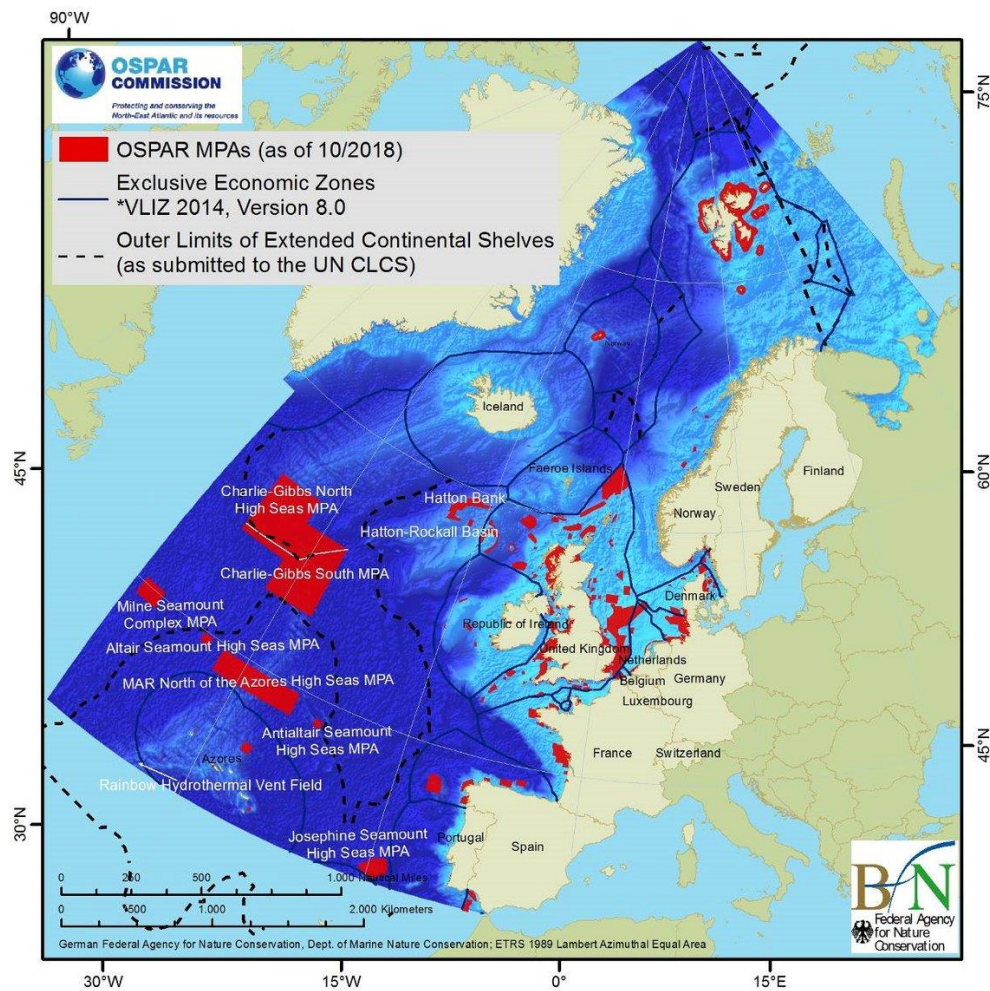


# MSFD through OSPAR “Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic”

WORKING TOGETHER IN 15 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND THE EU

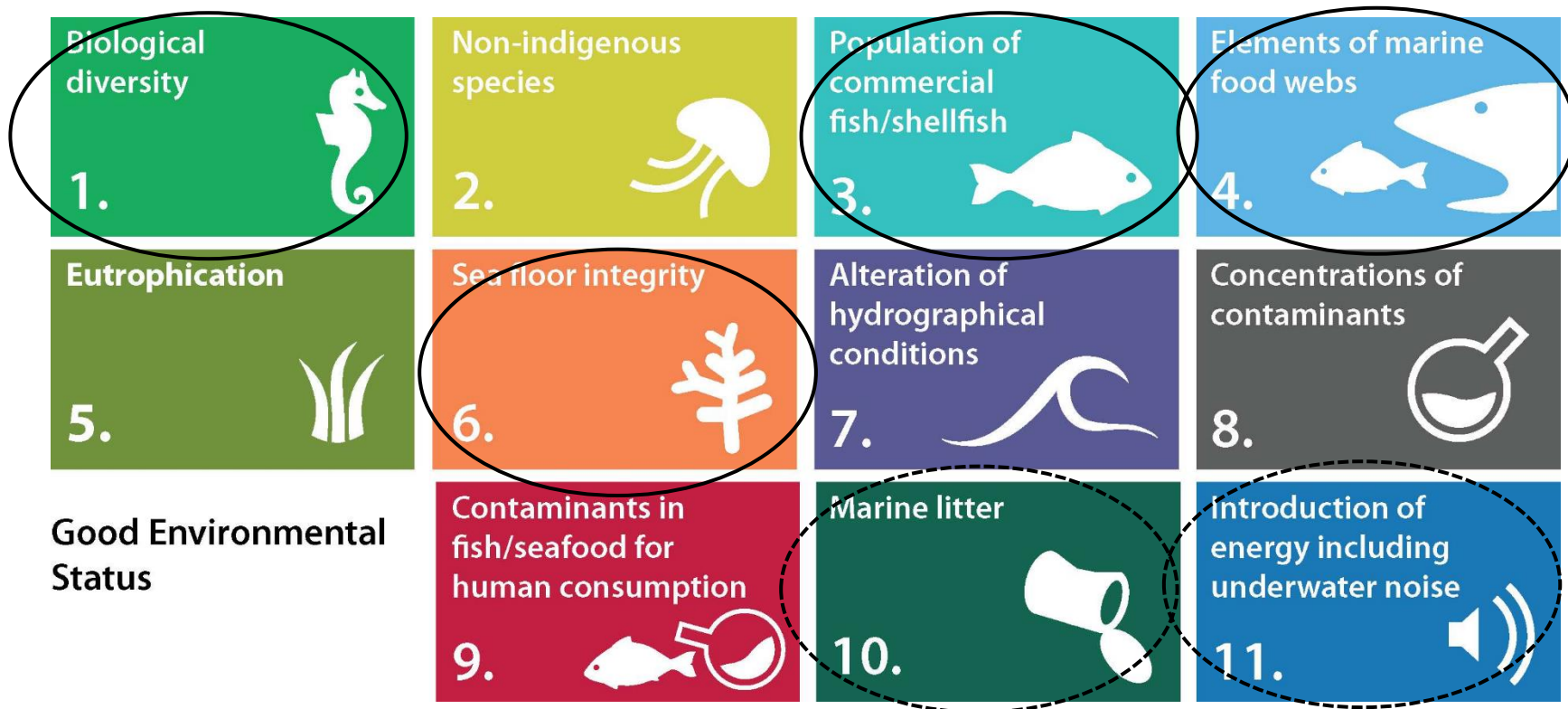


# OSPAR, MSFD and the UK





# MSFD

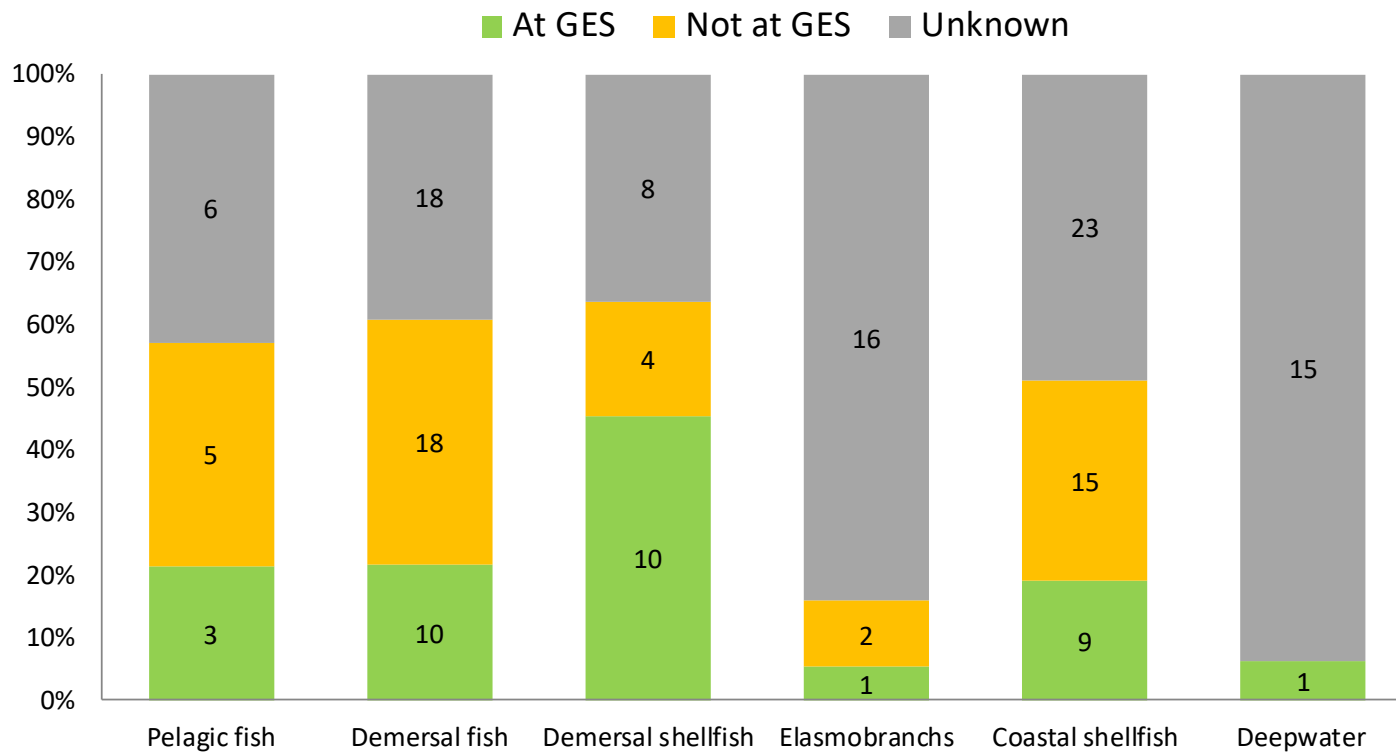


## D3 Commercial fisheries

The **Fishing mortality** rate of populations of commercially exploited species is at or below levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

The Spawning Stock **Biomass** of populations of commercially-exploited species are above biomass levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

## D3 Commercial fisheries





## D1 Biodiversity

The mortality rate per species from incidental **by-catch** is below levels which threaten the species, such that its long-term viability is ensured.

The population **abundance** of the species is not adversely affected due to anthropogenic pressures, such that its long-term viability is ensured.

The species distributional **range** and, where relevant, pattern is in line with prevailing physiographic, geographic and climatic conditions.

The **habitat** for the species has the necessary extent and condition to support the different stages in the life history of the species.

## D1 Biodiversity

The mortality rate per species from incidental **by-catch** is below levels which threaten the species, such that its long-term viability is ensured.

Key collaboration with RACs, scientists and managers: e.g. through new EU LIFE project bid entitled “CIBBRiNA”

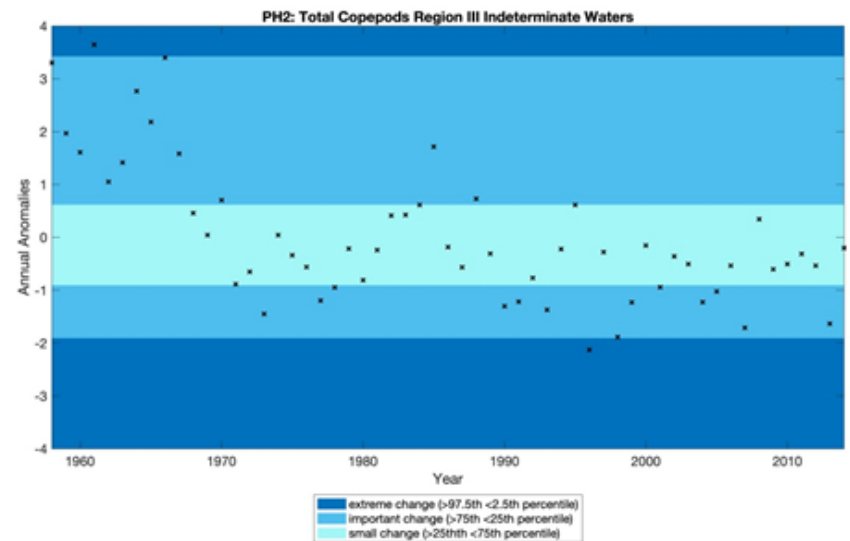
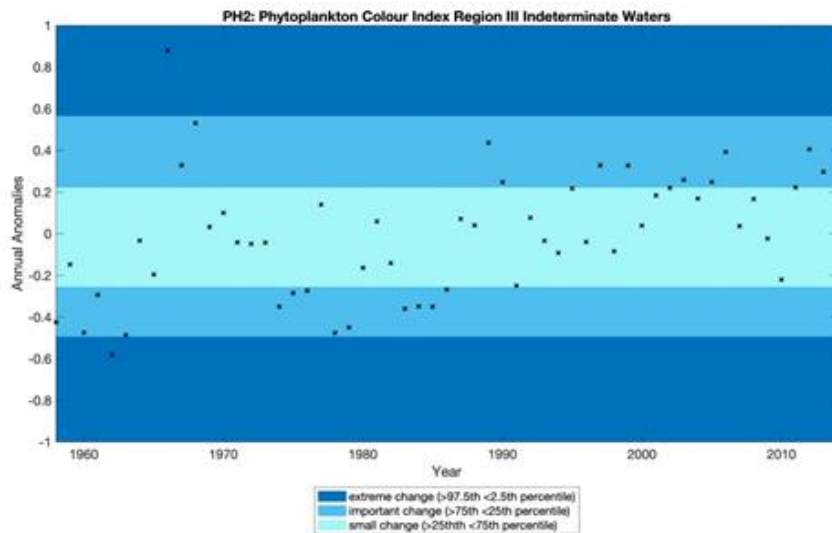


## D4 Food webs

The **diversity** (species composition and their relative abundance) of the trophic guild is not adversely affected due to anthropogenic pressures.

The balance of total abundance **between** the trophic guilds is not adversely affected due to anthropogenic pressures.

## D4 Food webs



Phytoplankton biomass: increase since the mid 1980s (left).

Zooplankton biomass: overall decline particularly since the late 1980s (right).

## D6 Sea floor integrity

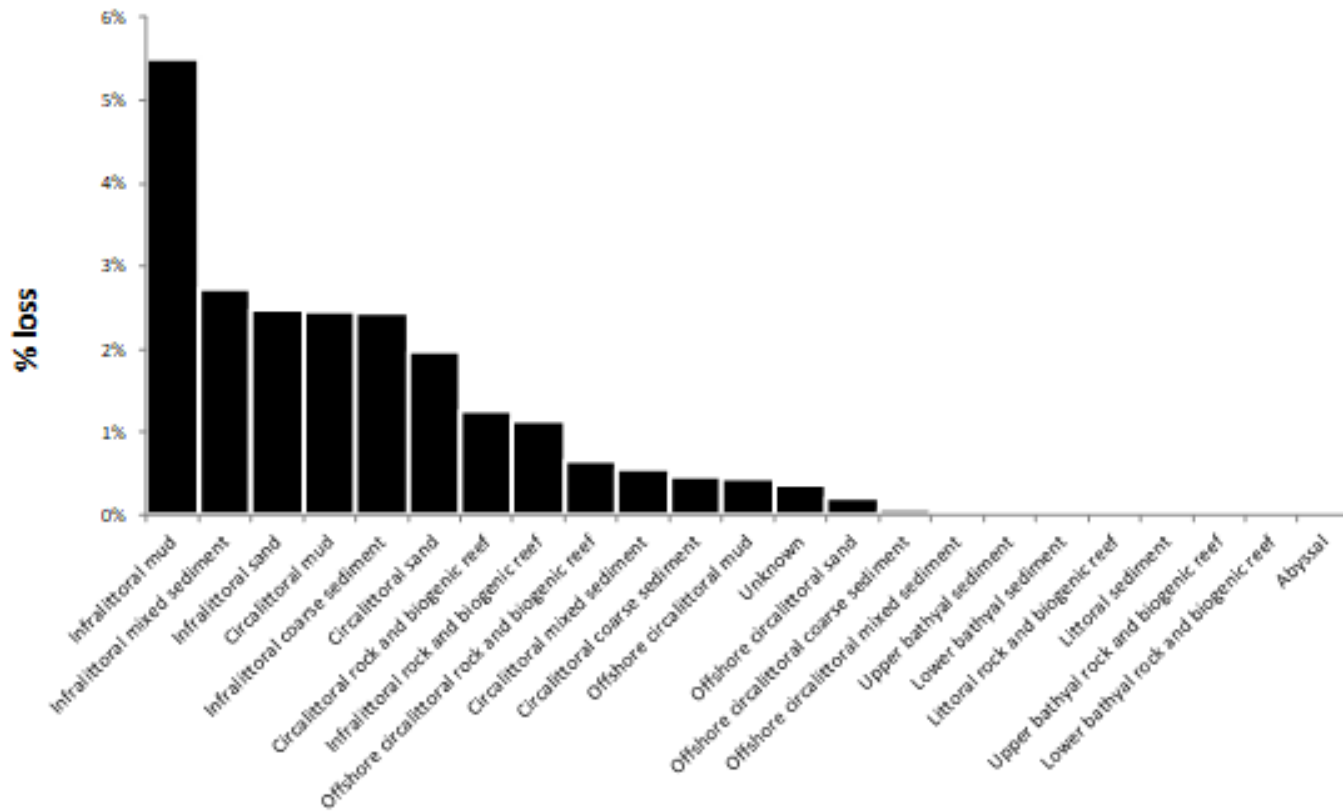
The spatial extent and distribution of physical loss (permanent change) of the natural seabed is at a level that ensures that the structure and functions of the ecosystems, and benthic ecosystems, in particular, are not adversely affected

The spatial extent and distribution of physical disturbance pressures on the seabed is at a level that ensures that the structure and functions of the ecosystems, and benthic ecosystems, in particular, are not adversely affected.

The extent of loss of the habitat type, resulting from anthropogenic pressures, does not exceed a specified proportion of the natural extent of the habitat type in the assessment area.

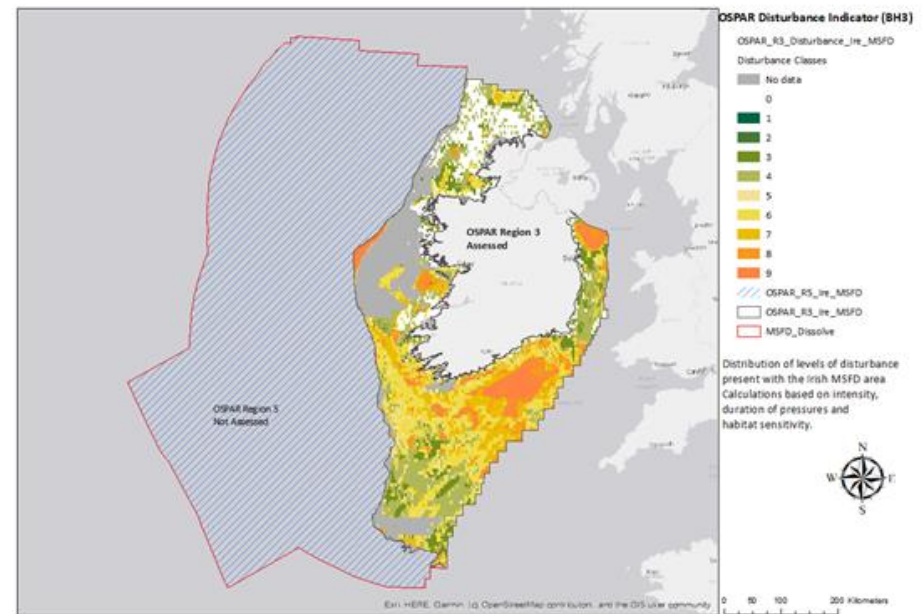
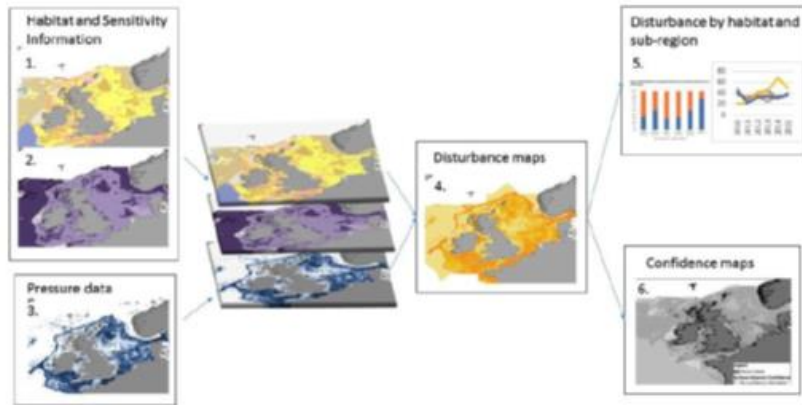
The extent of adverse effects from anthropogenic pressures on the condition of the habitat type, including alteration to its biotic and abiotic structure and its functions, does not exceed a specified

## D6 Seafloor integrity: physical loss





## D6: Physical disturbance



Thresholds under development x% of each habitat without loss, x% of each habitat without disturbance

## MSFD Cycle and deliverables

- 2021/2022: Programme of [management] measures
  - 2024: Reporting assessment against GES results
  - 2026: Reporting monitoring programmes
  - 2027: Programme of [management] measures
- Marine Protected Areas are the only explicit management measure in the MSFD

## Conclusions

- CFP is nested within MSFD, and CFP takes precedence in terms of commercial fisheries
- RACs advice should be very important to MSFD
- RACs have an obvious interest in the programme of measures
- D1 By-catch is an area where RACs could add value
- D6 sea floor has implications for marine spatial planning, protection of benthic habitats etc.
- D4 of fundamental importance, but is it operational?