Clyde Regional Marine Plan Consultation Draft



Clyde Marine Planning Partnership

Developing a Regional Marine Plan for the Clyde



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Foreword

The Clyde Marine Region is one of Scotland's most diverse and intensively used marine areas, with a rich history of industrial development, tourism, fisheries, recreation and aquaculture. It is also home to valuable ecosystems as well as a variety of communities, who all benefit from the resources and services provided by the marine environment.

Over recent decades, there has been an increasing awareness and motivation to ensure sustainable management of the Clyde Marine Region. The Firth of Clyde Forum, a voluntary partnership between a range of stakeholders including local authorities, fisheries groups, environmental NGOs, recreational bodies and community interests, was established in 1994. It evolved into the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (CMPP) in 2016, which was assigned the delegated responsibility to facilitate the development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan (CRMP or the Plan) on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

The CRMP will be the first statutory regional marine plan for the Clyde, introducing policies that are tailored to recognise the ecological, economic and social context of the Clyde Marine Region. It provides a coherent, localised policy framework to be used by decision makers in the determination of granting licences, permissions and consents relevant to developments and use of the Clyde Marine Region. The development of the CRMP reflects the collective efforts of many individuals and stakeholders over a number of years, and it is a true testament to the benefits of partnership working.

The CRMP sets out the vision of a healthy, resilient, and productive marine environment, one that supports thriving communities, enables sustainable development, and protects the natural and cultural assets that make the Clyde Marine Region unique. As the pressure on marine space continues to grow, and the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss continue to deepen, our responsibility to ensure the sustainable management of the Clyde Marine Region has reached a critical point. The CRMP represents a significant step forward in that endeavour. It offers clarity, direction and a shared purpose, helping to ensure that the choices we make today contribute to a sustainable and prosperous future.

Professor Anthony Gallagher

Chair of the CMPP

Section 1: Introduction



Gourock.



Campbeltown on the Kintyre Peninsula.

Vision, Aims and Guiding Principles

Our 20-year Vision

The marine and coastal[1] environment of the Clyde Marine Region is clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse, with fair access for all. It is managed to ensure sustainable multiple use which enables nature to flourish and supports thriving resilient local communities.

Aims[2]

The aims were identified as four priority areas to help guide policy development. The application of the policies will achieve the aims. Each of the Plan policies identifies the aim/s to which the policy seeks to contribute towards. Through the achievement of the aims, the 20-year vision for the Clyde Marine Region will be successful.

Aim 1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation CCM CCA

- Contribute to Scotland's transition to a low-carbon economy.
- Support resilient local communities in the Clyde Marine Region to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change.
- Promote the use of marine and coastal assets in the Clyde Marine Region to respond to climate change issues.

[1] The term 'marine and coastal' within this Plan applies to all parts of the Clyde Marine Region and all types of coastline, including the Clyde estuary and any developed coastal edge which may be referred to as the 'River Clyde' area within Local Development Plans.
[2]All aims have equal priority and should be considered by the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership in combination with each other; one does not have precedence over the other.

Aim 2: Sustainable Development 

- Provide a policy and planning framework for safe and sustainable development and use which encourages innovation and attracts future investment in marine and coastal assets in the Clyde Marine Region.
- Provide a plan for decision makers to have regard to when responding to or discussing proposals with marine developers. The plan provides identification of localities of most and least constraint, including consideration of potential environmental factors and sectoral interactions.
- Underpin the regeneration of urban coastal areas and support a sustainable economy in rural coastal areas.

Aim 3: Healthy and biologically diverse marine and coastal environment 

- Maintain and enhance the health of the Clyde Marine Region, including biodiversity and the landscape/seascape, by protecting and improving its natural resources.
- Ensure that development and use of marine and coastal resources contribute to the protection and enhancement of the Marine Protected Area network[3], and identify other opportunities for environmental enhancement.
- Ensure that developments and use of marine and coastal resources contribute to protection and enhancement of the Clyde Marine Region's Priority Marine Features[4].

Aim 4: Wellbeing of communities 

- Promote sustainable and socially inclusive development and use of marine and coastal resources, including through improvements in access.
- Support the connection of people to the Clyde Marine Region through cultural heritage, work opportunities, educational initiatives and recreational pursuits.
- Contribute to the wellbeing and cultural diversity of local communities.

Guiding Principles

The Plan's vision, aims, objectives, policies and recommendations have been developed in accordance with a set of overarching Guiding Principles (GPs) which act as a top-level filter for plan development. The GPs were drafted to provide information on the development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan (CRMP) and context for the basis of policy development. GP1, GP2 and GP3 represent fundamental aspects of marine planning as already set out in global agreements and EU, UK and Scottish strategies and plans. GP4 and GP5 establish the tone of the Plan.

GP1: Sustainable Development[5]

Five principles form the basis for sustainable development: **achieving a sustainable economy**, **promoting good governance** and **using sound science responsibly** are essential to the creation and maintenance of a **strong, healthy and just society** capable of **living within environmental limits**[6]. The Clyde Marine Region can contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

[3] The Marine Protected Area (MPA) network Includes Nature Conservation MPAs, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ramsar sites.
[4] Priority Marine Features are marine habitats and species considered to be of national conservation importance. The full list can be accessed on the NatureScot website (https://bit.ly/2tzU7Td).
[5] Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
[6] Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development (https://bit.ly/4eQYg8W)

(SDGs) which aim to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all and include SDG14 relating to 'Life Below Water'[7]. The Plan can support delivery of the Scottish Government's new National Outcomes[8] in particular the Connected, Prosperous and Sustainable outcomes. The precautionary principle[9] is applied consistently in accordance with the Scottish Government's Guiding Principles on the Environment[10].

GP2: Support delivery of Good Environmental Status

The UK Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 require the UK to take measures to support the achievement or maintenance of Good Environmental Status (GES) of the marine environment through the implementation of the UK Marine Strategy[11]. There has been some progress towards achievement of GES since 2012, but the latest assessment shows that more needs to be done[12]. The most recent measures the UK will use to support progress towards GES were published in 2025 and form part of the 3rd cycle (2024-2030)[13].. Whilst the assessment is done at a much wider scale than the Clyde Marine Region, this Plan can help support delivery of GES. The international coordination of the UK Marine Strategy with neighbouring countries is undertaken through the OSPAR Convention[14] and the Clyde Marine Region falls within the OSPAR Celtic seas region of the North East Atlantic marine region for reporting and monitoring[15].

GP3: Ecosystem Approach

The Ecosystem Approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in an equitable way. It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems. The Ecosystem Approach has 12 principles[16]. In simple terms, it means that we should understand how nature works, take account of the benefits that nature provides to people, and involve people in decision-making.

GP4: Adding value, not complexity.

The Plan identifies factors and issues that should be taken into account by those proposing developments and use in the Clyde Marine Region and considers spatial elements where possible. It supports delivery of the National Marine Plan (NMP)[17] in a local context, so aims to minimise complexity, increase efficiency and enable the most socially, economically and environmentally sustainable outcomes for the Region.

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[7] United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (https://bit.ly/30TLEq8).
[8] The National Outcomes have been developed to achieve delivery of the National Performance Framework (NPF). The NPF aims to get everyone in Scotland working together across business, society and government. Regional Marine Plans are specifically noted within the Scottish Government Economic Action Plan as being able to focus on specific rural issues in their region, with regard to the marine and coastal economy and communities. As of 2026, the NPF is being reviewed (https://bit.ly/48JyiAV)
[9] The precautionary principle relates to risk management whereby decision-making authorities must act cautiously to avoid serious or irreversible damage to the environment or human health in situations where the scientific evidence is not certain. Application must be proportionate to the level of protection required and the risk posed and should be based on a process that is transparent and accountable to stakeholders.
[10] The five guiding principles on the environment are set out in s13(1) of the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 (https://bit.ly/4emrQmC)
[11] The Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 (https://bit.ly/48EFyhn)
[12] Marine Strategy Part One: Update (2026) (https://bit.ly/4d3qOtT)
[13] Marine Strategy Part Three: 2025 UK Programme of Measures (2025) (https://bit.ly/42Nj1LT)
[14] OSPAR Convention (https://bit.ly/48FYfBp)
[15] Region III: Celtic Seas, OSPAR (https://bit.ly/4tkHSBJ)
[16] Convention on Biological Diversity – 12 principles of the ecosystem approach (https://bit.ly/2tzUs8r)
[17] Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015 (https://bit.ly/3aAoTvN)

GP5: Multiple responsible use of marine space

The Plan supports and promotes responsible and sustainable multiple use within and between sectors. Combining compatible activities in the same space can serve to share and reduce costs, generate further synergies between those activities, and reduce impacts on the environment. However, the Plan acknowledges that tensions may arise between developments and use of the Clyde Marine Region.



Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) on the Isle of Arran

Background

Context

Demands on the use of our seas and coastline are increasing, resulting in a rise in pressures on the marine environment. People and organisations must work together to ensure the sustainable use of marine resources.

Scotland's NMP sets out strategic policies for the sustainable use of Scotland's marine resources out to 200 nautical miles. The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010[18] allows for Regional Marine Plans to be developed to take account of '…the physical, environmental, social, cultural and economic characteristics of the Scottish marine region to which the Plan applies and of the living resources which the region supports,' for inshore waters out to 12 nautical miles.

The CRMP provides a planning framework for marine activity in the Clyde Marine Region. The CRMP is underpinned by the statutory obligation that public authorities are required by the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 to take authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with the appropriate marine plans, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Public authorities are also required to have regard to the appropriate marine plans in making any other decision which relates to the exercise by them of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the Scottish marine area.

The appropriate marine plans are the National Marine Plan which is in effect, and for decisions that relate to a Scottish marine region, any regional marine plan which is in effect for the region. Once adopted, the CRMP will support the delivery of Scotland's NMP in a regional context and decision

[18] s5 Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (http://bit.ly/47N3dvT)

makers must take the CRMP into account during the decision-making process, enabling delivery of the Plan's long-term vision and aims.

This consultation draft has been amended based on the feedback received on the pre-consultation draft[19]. Responses and comments to this formal consultation will guide final plan development before it is submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval and adoption.

The Clyde Marine Region

The Clyde Marine Region area extends from the Normal Tidal Limit of the River Clyde in Glasgow City centre, seawards to the outer firth in Argyll and Ayrshire and includes the Clyde's sea lochs, as defined by the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015[20] (see Map 1).

The Firth of Clyde was formed as a consequence of glacial action and is essentially a large fjord separated from the Irish Sea by a broad underwater sill, the Clyde Sea Sill. Since the retreat of the ice around 10,000 years ago, Western Scotland has slowly been rising, relative to sea level. This process has contributed to the formation of raised beaches along parts of the Clyde coast, which are a prominent feature of the coastline between Girvan and Ballantrae and around Largs. An assessment[21] in 2020 shows that in Scotland, sea-level rise is outpacing vertical land 'rebound', increasing erosion rates and all of Scotland's firths will be exposed to increased erosion rates due to sea-level rise. The area is renowned for its stunning scenery, including the Kyles of Bute and North Arran National Scenic Areas, and its sheltered waters which are perfect for marine tourism and recreation.

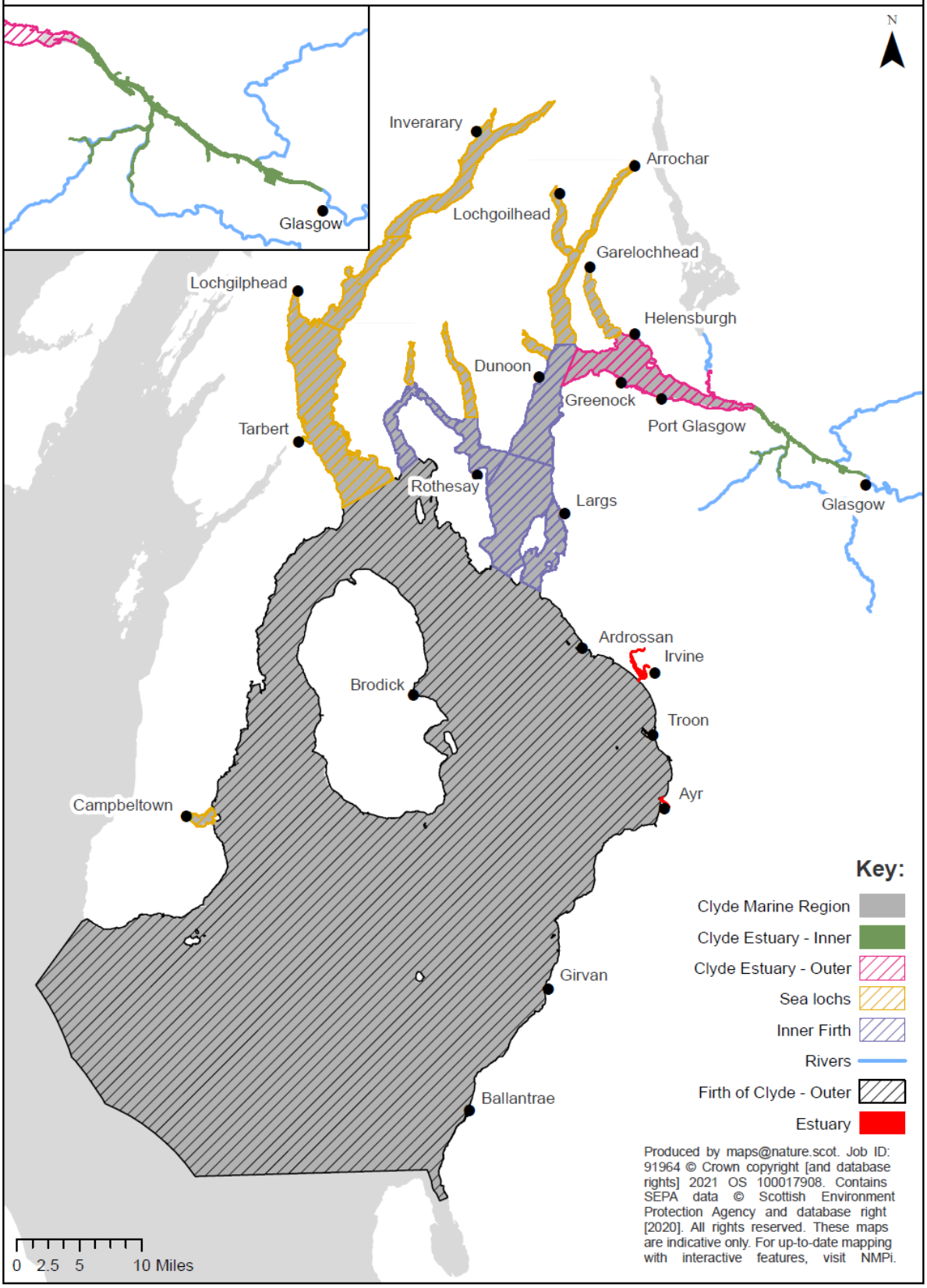
The Clyde supports a rich variety of wildlife. For example, the inner Clyde estuary regularly supports a wintering population of 20,000 waders (such as oystercatchers and curlew) waterfowl (such as ducks and swans) and seabirds (such as gulls and cormorants). The upwelling of nutrients during the summer months provides rich feeding grounds for large mobile species, such as minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) and basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*). Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) are commonly found in the Clyde throughout the year. Diadromous fish are present in the Region, such as Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), which migrate between freshwater and seawater at different parts of their lifecycle.

Synonymous with the Clyde is shipbuilding. At its peak, over 100,000 people were working in 38 shipyards along the Clyde and in 1900, almost one in five boats afloat around the world had been built on the Clyde[22]. While naval shipbuilding has recently seen some revival, the massive decline of the historically famous Clyde shipbuilding industry in the second half of the 20th century left numerous derelict dry docks along the heavily industrialised Glasgow riverfront and Clyde Estuary.

The Clyde remains a vital focus for the economy, be it in supporting the fisheries industry, aquaculture or defence activities. The Region is also an important recreational and cultural resource for those who live around its shores and those who are visiting.

[19] Clyde Regional Marine Plan pre-consultation draft (https://bit.ly/44hjkQ8)
[20] Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015 (https://bit.ly/3BYAF56)
[21] Marine Climate change Impacts Partnership Report Card 2020 (https://bit.ly/4wbTWb5)
[22] Glasgow's Clydeside (https://bit.ly/3P8bSTh)

Map 1. The Clyde Marine Region



The Clyde Marine Planning Partnership

The Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (CMPP) was established in February 2016. Scottish Ministers delegated[23] the task of developing the Regional Marine Plan to the CMPP in March 2017. Over 20 Members covering a wide range of interests, including public authorities, nature conservation, fisheries, aquaculture and recreation[24] were directly involved in development of the Plan.

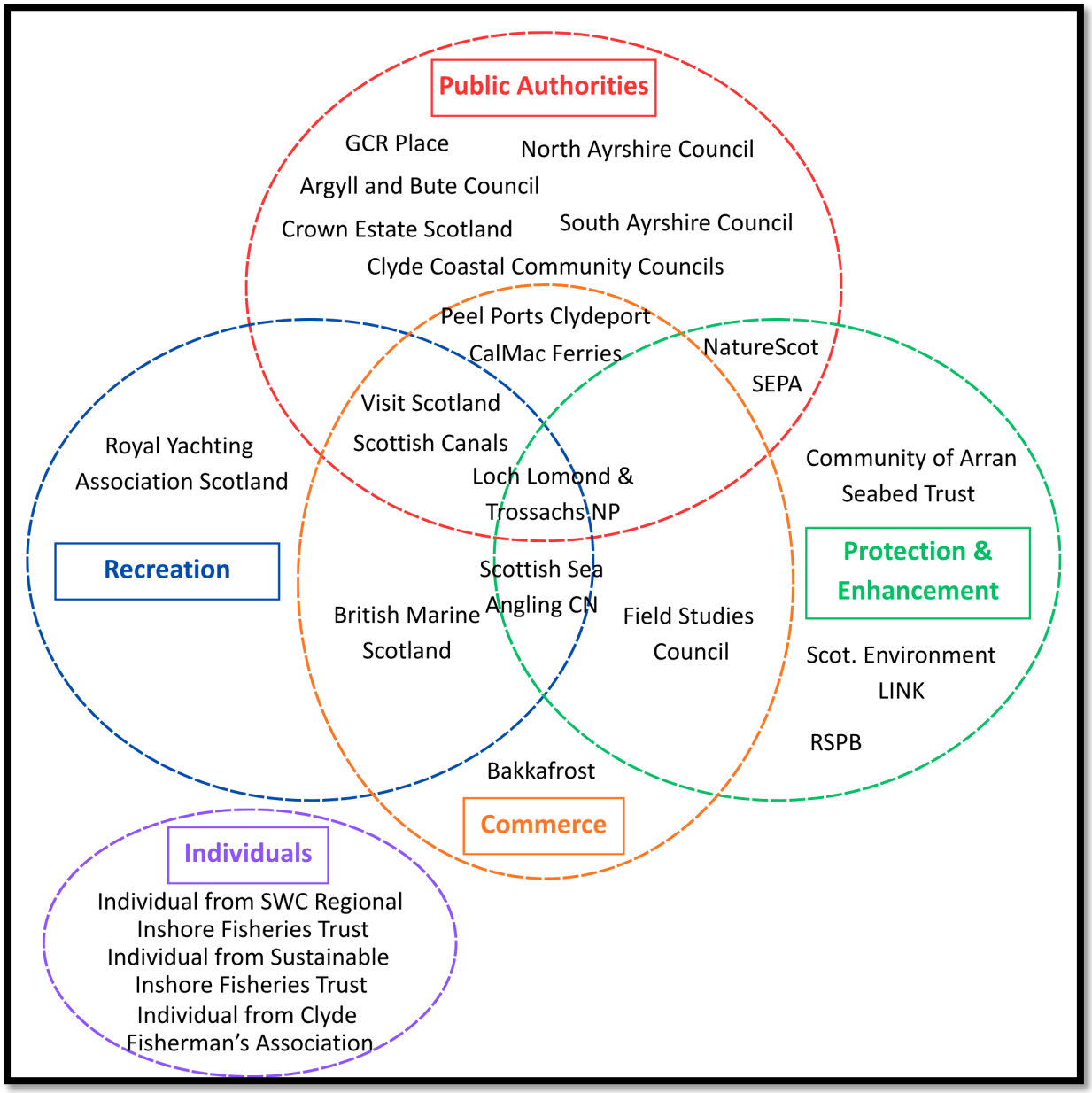


Figure 1: Diagram of CMPP members and their category

Involvement of stakeholders has been, and will continue to be, central to the development and implementation of the Plan. Members of the CMPP are varied and range from organisations with statutory responsibility to any organisation or individual involved in a development or an activity in

[23] The Delegation of Functions (Regional Marine Plan for the Scottish Marine Region for the Clyde) Direction 2017 (https://bit.ly/42iohqE)
[24] About the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership (https://bit.ly/2RHQpid).

the marine and coastal area. A wide range of interests and sectors are represented on the CMPP, and they all have a role to play in delivering the vision and aims of this Plan.

Another key part of plan development has been the wider engagement that has taken place to involve as many other people and organisations in policy development and, particularly, engage with the public as much as possible. Workshops, working group meetings and a pre-consultation have been carried out to inform development of this draft Plan. The public and stakeholders have been encouraged to take a full and active part in developing the Plan by responding to consultations. Full details of the process are set out in the Statement of Public Participation[25].

Development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan

There are several stages of development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan. The Plan is currently at the statutory 16 week consultation stage. See the diagram below for an illustration of the stages that have taken place, and the stages that will follow the statutory 16 week consultation.

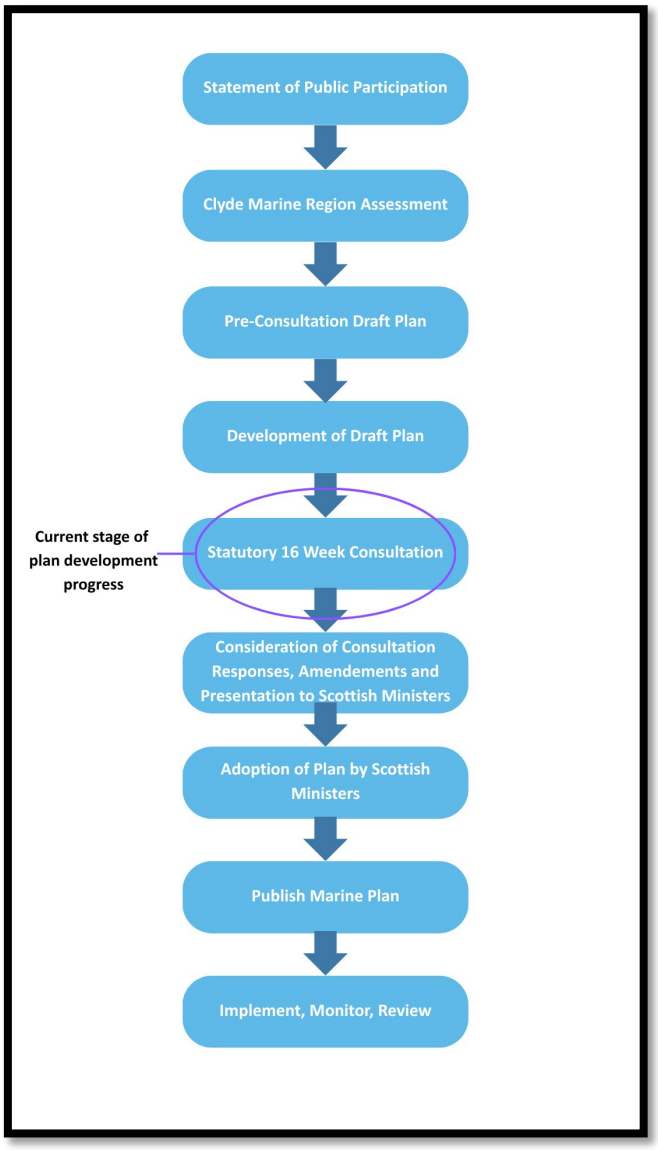


Figure 2: Diagram illustrating the stages of plan development.

[25] Clyde Regional Marine Plan Statement of Public Participation (https://bit.ly/37mmId0).

Clyde Marine Region Assessment

As part of the plan development process, the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 requires an '…assessment of the condition of the Scottish marine area or, as the case may be, Scottish marine region at the time of the plan's preparation' and 'a summary of significant pressures and the impact of human activity on the area or region'[26]. This stage of the process was completed in February 2018 with the publication of the Clyde Marine Region Assessment (the Assessment) and associated Topic Sheets[27]. The Assessment provided baseline information on the condition of the Region at the time and identified themes to be considered during the development of the CRMP. The assessment has informed the core principles of the plan, and where significant changes are anticipated, more recent evidence has been incorporated where appropriate.

The Assessment is organised into four sections, each highlighting the main issues in the Region which can be summarised as follows:

- The physical condition of the Region considers seabed geology and sediments, water circulation, coastal change and landscape/seascape. The future impacts of climate change and sea-level rise were identified as the main issues of concern with low/medium and high concern respectively.
- The clean and safe section considers water quality, the presence of hazardous substances, microbiological contamination, eutrophication, oil and chemical spills, dissolved oxygen, marine litter and noise. The main areas of concern were present in the Clyde estuary, inner firth, Holy Loch and Garroch Head where historic input of hazardous substances was still evident; and there was some concern around the status of dissolved oxygen in the inner estuary[28].
- The healthy and biologically diverse section provides an overview of the status of habitats and species. Those of some or many concern included: intertidal rock and sediments; biogenic reefs; shallow and shelf subtidal sediment habitats; marine fish and shellfish; sharks, skates and rays; whales, dolphins and porpoises; and seabirds and waterbirds. The confidence level of these assessments was either high or medium, except for cetaceans, where the confidence level was low.
- The fourth section relates to economic and productive activities taking place within the Region. These were not assessed, but an economic summary of each of the main sectors was provided considering factors such as employment, turnover and the value of various industries.

A range of research and knowledge gaps have been identified throughout the plan development process[29]. A detailed list of research priorities is provided on the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership website[30]. Activities which contribute data and further knowledge on the following areas relevant to the Clyde Marine Region are encouraged:

- Climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation
- Historic environment and cultural heritage
- Marine and coastal species, habitats and ecosystems
- Eradicating non-native species and preventing their spread

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[26] s.5(4) Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (http://bit.ly/47N3dvT)
[27] Clyde Marine Region Assessment and Topic Sheets (https://bit.ly/2TOPeAf).
[28] More recent data on the water status of the Region can be found in the Water Classification Hub on SEPA's website, which includes the latest Shellfish Water Protection Area and Bathing Water classifications (https://bit.ly/4dn4zQS). Further results on contaminants can be found in the Scottish Marine Assessment 2020, where heavy metal Chromium VI was found to be double the level permitted by the Environmental Quality Standards in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
[29] Gaps identified during the drafting of the Assessment can be found in Section 7 in the Assessment (2017) (https://bit.ly/3eZ9FTo).
[30] Research priorities on CMPP website (https://bit.ly/3EHloBW).

- Amount and type of marine litter and areas of accumulation
- Fish stocks and distributions.

Policy development

Following the publication of the Assessment, the CMPP considered the main issues in light of international legislation, the UK Marine Policy Statement[31], the NMP and the responsibilities of other regulatory bodies, with a view to further supporting improvement of the key indicators of the Assessment through policy in the CRMP. Sectoral working groups and specific workshops on environmental issues were held. This enabled wider stakeholders, members of industry and users of the Region to contribute to a broad discussion on policy development. Starting with the issues and pressures identified in the Assessment, these discussions identified aims and objectives for each of the relevant areas, bringing in the perspectives and considerations of wider stakeholders. This process facilitated the drafting of early objectives and policies.

A socio-economic review was undertaken to consider relevant strategies, policies and reports; its findings were considered when developing policies[32]. The cumulative outputs of these work streams contributed to the pre-consultation draft CRMP. A pre-consultation was held from 18th March – 27th May 2019, which provided an opportunity for stakeholders to view and comment on an early draft of the Plan. During these ten weeks, 28 events were held across the Region to discuss the draft Plan and encourage participation in the pre-consultation. Overall, 49 responses were returned, and this feedback informed further policy development and work on the Plan to allow for consideration of wider views. The pre-consultation feedback highlighted that more substantial work was required for the re-drafting of three chapters: Natural Heritage, Sea Fisheries and Aquaculture. Workshops were arranged to discuss these chapters with Clyde Marine Planning Partnership Members, the Clyde 2020 group[33] and wider sectoral stakeholders; outputs were also taken into consideration in re-drafting of the Plan. During Plan development, two public dialogue[34] exercises were undertaken to enable more detailed conversation with those people not usually involved in marine planning. This work also informed policy development.

[31] UK Marine Policy Statement 2010 (https://bit.ly/36gcr0V).
[32] Socio-Economic Regeneration in the Clyde Marine Region – A Review of Economic Development Strategies, Policies & Reports (2018) (https://bit.ly/38Ezbcm).
[33] Clyde 2020 project (https://bit.ly/2HaBvw2).
[34] Public Dialogue public engagement (https://bit.ly/2H0jDny).

Using this Regional Marine Plan

Role of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan

The CRMP has been prepared to guide decision making that will contribute to the sustainable use of our marine resources. It provides a plan-led approach to the management of the region's coastal and marine waters and aims to facilitate an integrated and informed decision-making process.

The Plan policies aim to inform relevant decision making and are to guide public authorities, regulators, consenting authorities, planners and marine users to make decisions on sustainable development and use in the Clyde Marine Region (see Map 1) and to contribute towards the delivery of the Plan objectives.

It is for the relevant decision maker to determine which policy, policies, or component of a policy, are relevant to a specific decision and what weight to attach to policies on a case-by-case basis. The Plan policies should not be considered or applied in isolation, they should be read as a whole. The Plan policies should be applied proportionately by decision makers.

This Plan and its policies only apply to matters within the devolved competence of the Scottish Ministers. Any activities that are classified as reserved matters are out with the scope of this Plan.

Throughout this plan, the terms 'development,' 'use' and 'marine users' are used to assist in the setting and context of policies. For this purpose, within the CRMP, the following definitions apply:

Developments: These require consent from a public authority and include new development and use; maintenance activities and works; and alterations, extensions or changes in material use.

Use: This can be categorised into

(i) use that is or will be authorised and/or enforced by a public authority, and
(ii) use that relates to general use of the marine environment, including all legitimate use not specifically addressed by a public right of use.

This plan encourages all uses of the Clyde Marine Region to be carried out in line with the aims, objectives and policies of this plan.

Marine Users: This refers to all legitimate users of the Clyde Marine Region, both those requiring consent and those not requiring consent, which includes people using the marine and coastal area for recreational activities. Where policies show 'support' for a development or activity, that 'support' within the policies is by the CMPP and not with regards to national policy or the decision maker.

Relationship with other plans and regulations

The CRMP must conform with Scotland's NMP and the UK Marine Policy Statement. The Plan does not replace or remove existing regulatory regimes or legislative requirements. It provides a consistent overarching framework to be used when reaching decisions about development and use in the Clyde Marine Region. The Plan will operate within the context of, and seeks alignment with, both statutory and non-statutory plans. This includes but is not limited to; the National Planning Framework[35], the Scottish National Adaptation Plan[36], Local Development Plans[37], City Region and

[35] National Planning Framework 4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)
[36] Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 (https://bit.ly/42irlh3)
[37] See The Relationship between the Statutory Land Use Planning System and Marine Planning and Licensing, Circular 1/2015 (https://bit.ly/2GhXQYc).

Growth Deals[38], Clyde Mission[39], River Basin Management Plans[40], Flood Risk Management Plans[41], Inshore Fisheries Group Management Plans[42], Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans[43] and Coastal Change Adaptation Plans[44].

The Plan will indicate in relevant sections where there are links to other plans, regulations or good practice initiatives pertinent to the Clyde Marine Region.

The Clyde Marine Region borders the Solway and Argyll Scottish Marine Regions and the Northern Ireland marine area. These marine areas do not yet have established marine plans for this plan to consider within its development.

Marine Licensing

Certain developments and use in the Clyde Marine Region require a licence from the Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team on behalf of Scottish Ministers before they can be carried out[45]. These activities include the construction, alteration or improvement of works, dredging activity and the deposit or removal of substances and objects in the sea, amongst other things. Wellboat licensing was transferred to SEPA in November 2020.

Following the delegation, the CMPP is a statutory consultee for marine pre-application consultations and marine licensing applications in the Clyde Marine Region. The Partnership will provide advice and comments to applicants and the Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) in line with relevant objectives and policies, which will include this Plan once it has been adopted by Scottish Ministers.

Other licensing and authorisation decisions in the marine environment

It should be noted that marine fish farming (finfish and shellfish) developments require planning permission from Planning Authorities under the land use planning system. There are some developments and/or use that are exempt from marine licensing. An example that is of particular interest to the Clyde Marine Region would be moorings laid on behalf of or approved by a harbour authority. The Clyde Moorings Committee approves moorings within the Clydeport area of jurisdiction.

It should be noted that for any operations affecting any SSSI in the Clyde Marine Region must seek consent from NatureScot. An HRA must be carried out by the competent authority before granting consent for operations affecting the SPA and the Ramsar Site.

Marine Directorate – Licensing Operations Team is currently the only Licensing Authority operating under the terms of the Marine (Scotland) Act (2010). However, other organisations do issue consents to third parties intending to undertake certain works in relation to the marine and coastal environment. This includes the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Clydeport Operations Ltd. (for their area of jurisdiction), CMAL (for Brodick and Largs harbours only) and Crown Estate Scotland. These

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[38] City Region and Growth Deals are agreements designed to deliver long-term strategies to improve economies. In the Clyde Marine Region, there are currently three Deals in place: Glasgow City Region Deal (https://bit.ly/4fc62HO), Ayrshire Growth Deal (https://bit.ly/4f6vgr8) and Argyll and Bute Rural Growth Deal (https://bit.ly/40eHWYC).

[39] Place-based approach to maximise the full potential of the Clyde (Inner Firth from South Lanarkshire to Inverclyde on both sides of the Clyde), launched by the Scottish Government in 2020.

[40] River Basin Management Plans (https://bit.ly/4tU5zBJ)

[41] Flood Risk Management Plans (https://bit.ly/4d4fX3X)

[42] Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (https://bit.ly/4nmJeuf)

[43] Integrated Coastal Zone Management is primarily delivered through NMP, however there are examples in the Clyde Marine Regions of ICZM Plans for certain areas such as Loch Etive (https://bit.ly/3QR7LLS) and Loch Fyne (https://bit.ly/4tX7cij)

[44] North Ayrshire has produced their Plan (https://bit.ly/42V25mA), whilst Argyll and Bute (https://bit.ly/4zZsTAL) and South Ayrshire Plans (https://bit.ly/48s5aNL) are currently in development

[45] Further information on marine licensing in Scotland (https://bit.ly/2NRYCPY).

organisations must take any authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with appropriate marine plans, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise (section 15 of the Act).

The Clyde Marine Planning Partnership is not a statutory consultee on decisions out with those relating to a marine licence application. The processes of the Port Authorities, Clyde Moorings Committee and Crown Estate Scotland usually take place in conjunction with the Marine Licence Application process and in discussion with Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team. The marine licensing provisions of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 do not apply (MSA, section 34) to any activity relating to the reserved matter of defence. The MOD undertakes a process which mirrors the marine licensing and EIA processes that would be required for non-defence marine construction projects in Scotland.

Approach to objectives, policies and recommendations

Each chapter contains objectives which support the overall vision and aims of the Plan, followed by policies and recommendations which support delivery of the objectives.

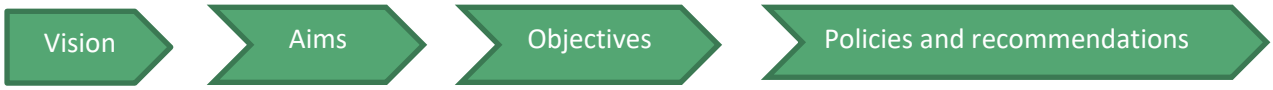


Figure 3: Flow chart displaying process of development.

Objectives

The Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 states that a regional marine plan must set 'economic, social and marine ecosystem objectives, and objectives relating to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change'. It is also useful to indicate where the objectives consider land-sea interactions or sectoral interactions. This Plan identifies which objectives relate to which theme by using the following icons:

Table 1: Icons	
£	Economic
	Social
	Marine Ecosystem
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation (preventing/reducing greenhouse gas emissions)
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation (adapting to the effects of climate change)
	Land/Sea Interactions
	Sectoral Interactions

A monitoring and evaluation plan will be developed upon adoption of the CRMP that will review the effectiveness of the CRMP and its policies.

Policies

Policies within this Plan are for the use of public authorities to inform decision-making when responding to marine developers and for other marine users to understand how the policies support the sustainable development and use of the Clyde Marine Region. The policies do not aim to repeat

what is in the NMP or in other legislation and regulation; they aim to add value based on issues identified by the Clyde Marine Region Assessment and to deliver the vision, aims and objectives of the Plan. Where other legislation and regulation are included, this is due to the importance of that legislation in supporting the aims and objectives of the Plan or in addressing issues identified in the Assessment. Policies often refer to 'developments and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region' in order to ensure that land-sea interactions are fully covered in decision-making.

Application of policies

Not all policies will be relevant to all proposals and if a proposal is in line with one policy it does not mean that it is in line with the Plan as a whole. Rather, proposals must align or be in accordance with the Plan overall unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Applicants should provide sufficient and appropriate supporting information based on sound evidence to demonstrate that their proposal is aligned with the Plan. Early engagement with public authorities, the CMPP and relevant stakeholders will help to ensure that proposals are in accordance with this Plan.

The policy sections are for use in the determination of applications by relevant decision makers. The policies should be read as a whole, and it is for the relevant decision maker to determine what weight to attach to policies on a case by case basis. Where a policy states that a proposal for development and/or use will be supported, it is in principle, and it is for the decision maker to take into account all other relevant policies.

The Plan policies should be applied proportionately by public authority decision makers. Decision makers need to consider whether the type, location and/or scale of a development and/or use, and its associated impacts or effects, justify the application of a specific policy or a provision within a policy.

Recommendations for marine users/local management

The Clyde Marine Region Assessment identified pressures on the Region's marine and coastal environment, such as marine litter and the spread of non-native species, which cannot be addressed through public authority decision-making alone. Recommendations for marine users/local management are included throughout the Plan to inform the general management of all activities within the Region, including those which are not managed through planning or licensing, such as marine and coastal sport, recreation and tourism. Implementation of these recommendations by marine users at the local level has a significant role in driving protection and enhancement of the marine and coastal environment and ensuring sustainable activities take place.

These recommendations are not enforced or funded by public authorities and will not be subject to the monitoring and reporting obligations under section 16 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, but are developed and promoted by a wide range of organisations, some of which are Members of the CMPP.

User guidance

This Plan should be read and used as a whole and in conjunction with the NMP.

The general policies within the second section of the Plan are considered cross-cutting, as they are all potentially relevant to any proposal and should be adhered to in advance of the relevant sectoral policy.

The sectoral policies within the third section of the Plan relate to the key current economic activities taking place in the Clyde Marine Region. These policies provide a framework to ensure that the

economic, social and environmental benefits are delivered for each sector. All developments and/or use should take account of chapter 9, which applies to all sectors.

Proposed developments and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region must comply with existing legislative and regulatory requirements. For further information on legislative requirements and consenting authorities, see Annex 1. Those proposing developments and/or use are strongly advised to consult with the relevant consenting authorities as early as possible in the development of any marine and coastal proposal.

These decision-making regimes are the primary mechanism for implementing the Plan's objectives and policies. Proposals will be supported where they are in accordance with all relevant policies of the:

- NMP
- NPF4
- Relevant LDPs and their supporting technical notes

The flowchart below outlines the series of steps that applicants should consider and follow when working on a proposal for development and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region:

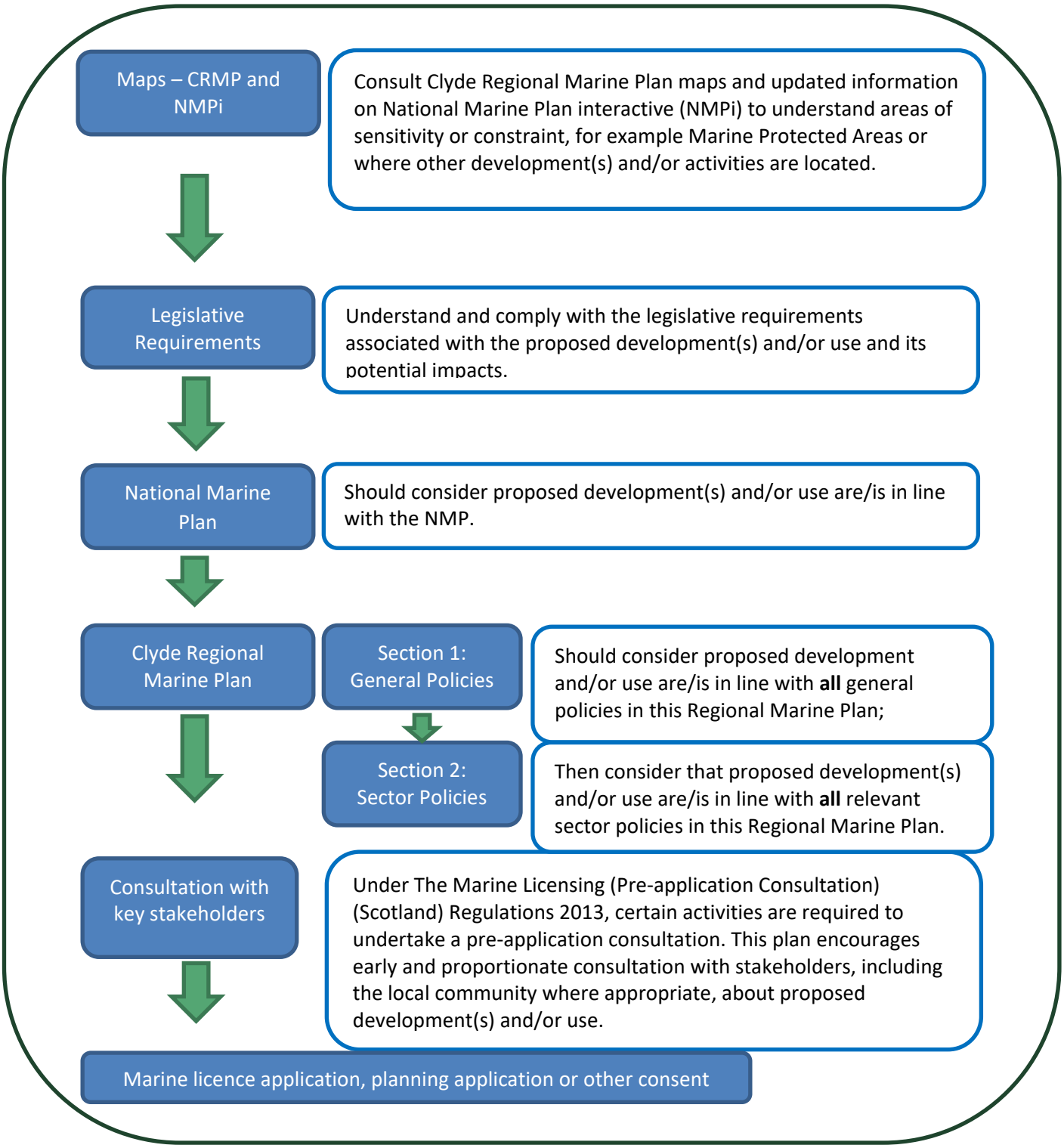


Figure 4: Flowchart illustrating the steps that applicants should consider for any proposals for development and/or use within the Clyde Marine Region

This Plan also contains recommendations which can be used by all marine users to ensure that they are contributing to the safe and sustainable use of the Clyde Marine Region.

Each chapter in the Plan follows the same format, which includes:

- A **context** which sets out a summary of the main information relevant to the chapter. More information on each of the chapters can be found within the Clyde Marine Region Assessment.
- **Objectives and policies**: objectives provide a measurable strategic aim or goal for each policy area; policies which will support delivery of the objectives are set out underneath.
- In some chapters **Recommendations for marine users/local management** provide considerations and best practice information relating to the chapter which will also support delivery of the objectives.
- **Maps** are included highlighting spatial information relevant to the chapter. For the latest available spatial data, see National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi)[46]. It is recommended that NMPi is used in conjunction with this Plan.
- Links to **further information** relating to the chapter.

Marine and land use planning alignment

Marine Directorate, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, has the primary responsibility for marine planning, conservation and licensing for Scotland's seas (this includes the area submerged at Mean High Water Spring tide out to 200 nautical miles, including estuaries, rivers or channels as far as the tide flows - this is known as the Normal Tidal Limit). Land use planning authorities are responsible for all land use planning matters down to Mean Low Water Springs and for marine fish farming (finfish and shellfish) out to twelve nautical miles where planning consent is required. In the intertidal zone, between low and high-water spring tides, land use planning authority overlaps with Marine Directorate's responsibilities for the marine area.

All proposals for development and/or use within the Clyde Marine Region should consider the linkages between land and sea and take account of the terrestrial planning frameworks (NPF4 and LDPs) where applicable.

[46] National Marine Plan interactive (https://bit.ly/2UlYHiS).

Relationship between marine and land use planning policy

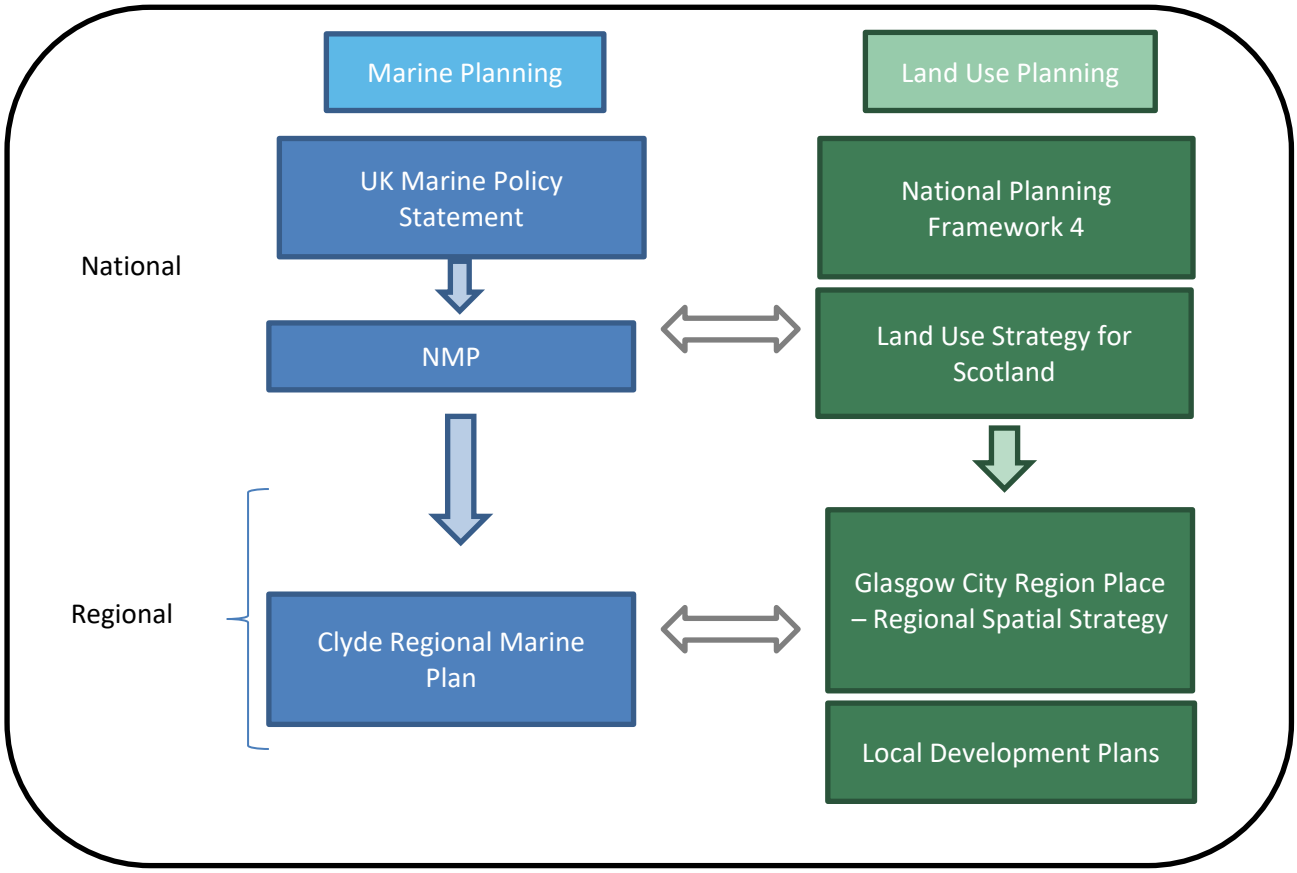


Figure 5: Diagram illustrating the relationship between marine and land use planning policy.

Many coastal zone developments and use in the terrestrial environment have links to the marine economy and can have potential impacts on marine and coastal natural, historic and cultural heritage. Proposals for developments and use across the land-sea interface, as well as aquaculture operations, often need to obtain planning permission, a marine licence and other consents and licences relating to their proposed development and operations. It is important that land use and marine planning is joined up both in strategic planning terms, but also for licensing and consents for individual applications. This should ensure that developers receive early feedback on proposed developments and/or use relating to both terrestrial and marine matters[47].

It should be noted that, following a review of the land use planning system, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 was passed by the Scottish Parliament in June 2019. National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was then adopted in 2023. It sets out the spatial principles, regional priorities, national development and national planning policy, replacing National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy.

Land use planning authorities within the Clyde Marine Region

Marine and coastal zone development are subject to both marine and land use planning policy[48]. Within the Clyde Marine Region there are eight Local Authorities and a National Park.

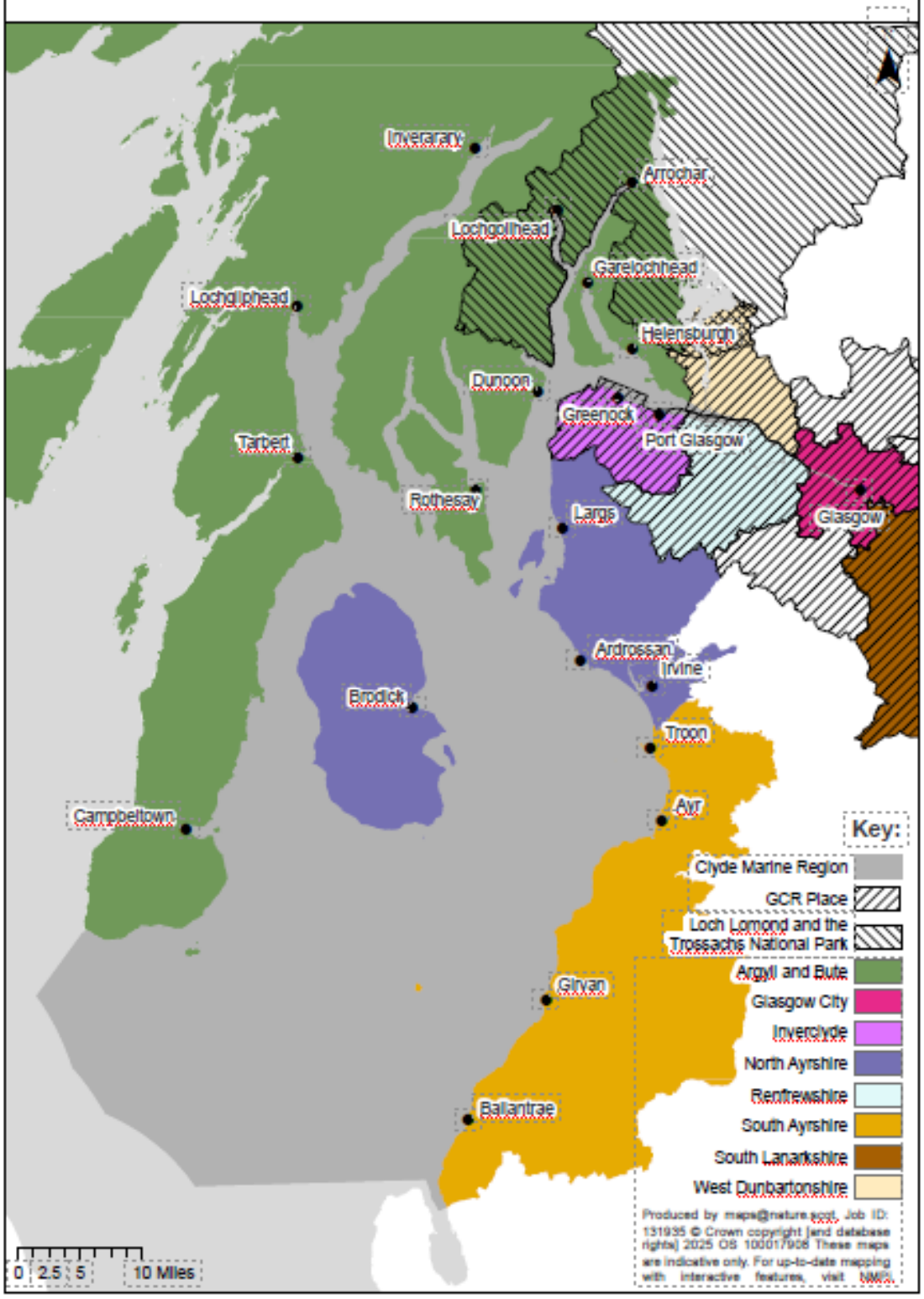
[47] For further information, see Planning Circular 1/2015: The relationship between the statutory land use planning system and marine planning and licensing (https://bit.ly/39nMTki).
[48] The Town and Country Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, require Strategic Development Plans and Local Development Plans to have regard to marine plans (https://bit.ly/4d2Nr1u)

The CMPP will work with its planning authorities to develop guidance documents to support decision-making in relation to this CRMP. The Regional Spatial Strategy, Local Development Plans and related Supplementary Guidance relevant to the Clyde Marine Region can be found on the relevant Planning Authority's website:

- Glasgow City Region Place – Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) will set out the vision and spatial planning strategy for key strategic land uses and development issues in the Glasgow City Region. It will consider cross boundary matters and Local Development Plans will have regard to the RSS. (http://bit.ly/3SQe1kU)
- Argyll and Bute (https://bit.ly/42M0a3P)
- Glasgow City (https://bit.ly/40oPBDL)
- Inverclyde (https://bit.ly/4f2SoXJ)
- Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (https://bit.ly/2sTWIXI)
- North Ayrshire (https://bit.ly/4hA341Y)
- Renfrewshire (https://bit.ly/4ngoO6b)
- South Ayrshire (https://bit.ly/4e8GPNz)
- South Lanarkshire (https://bit.ly/4n9ITLc)
- West Dunbartonshire (https://bit.ly/3YnHcOy)

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Map 2. Land use planning authorities within the Clyde Marine Region



Monitoring and Review

Once the Plan is adopted, the CMPP will review the impact of the Plan and whether progress is being made towards achieving its objectives and improving the indicators from the Assessment. In accordance with relevant duties, the CRMP will be kept under review and a report detailing this review will be published a minimum of every three years from the date of the Plan's adoption[49]. Scottish Ministers will then consider and decide if the Plan needs to be amended or replaced[50]. The Plan will be kept under review with regards to the effects of the policies, their effectiveness in securing the Plan's objectives, progress towards objectives, progress towards Marine Policy Statement objectives and progress towards the objectives set out in the NMP.

The review process will be informed by an appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework, which will be developed at the time of adoption. All objectives will be measured by:

(1) Monitoring how objectives and policies are taken into account in the marine licence process (and in town and country planning determination processes where known), and
(2) assessing the state of the marine environment through the next iteration of the Clyde Marine Region Assessment. Additional measurements, such as key indicators relating to the condition of the Clyde Marine Region in terms of 'Clean and Safe', 'Healthy and Diverse' and 'Productive', are included below relevant objectives within each chapter.

Clyde Regional Marine Plan Action Plan

An Action Plan has been developed alongside the CRMP to inform and prioritise future work of the CMPP staff, members, subgroup(s) and other stakeholders, in line with the objectives of the CRMP. The Action Plan is not a statutory document. It is currently in draft form and will need to be finalised by the CMPP. The draft document can be found on the CMPP website[51]. Funding needs to be sourced to support the Action Plan.

Once the CRMP is finalised and adopted by Scottish Ministers, delivery of the Action Plan will serve to:

- support Plan policy by providing further guidance on emerging issues to developers, decision-makers and users of the Clyde Marine Region;
- respond to pre-consultation feedback where further research/data/mapping is required;
- support implementation of the CRMP;
- support ongoing adaptive management of marine-related issues; and
- inform future iterations of the Plan by providing better spatial or other information.

[49] S61 Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (https://bit.ly/4f3XZQn)
[50] S16 (4) MSA - After publishing a report under subsection (3), the Scottish Ministers must decide whether or not to amend or replace the national marine plan or (as the case may be) the regional marine plan (https://bit.ly/4d9FlUX)
[51] Clyde 2020 – Action Plan (https://bit.ly/4f050iA).

Section 2: General Policies



Wemyss Bay as seen from a CalMac ferry travelling to the Isle of Bute.

General Policy 1: Climate Change



Oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*) at a salt marsh on the Isle of Arran.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Human activities which release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere are the major cause of the observed average increase in global temperatures over the last century. The increase in sea temperature in the Clyde Marine Region over the last 25 years has been between 0.4°C and 0.5°C per decade[52]. This warming of the oceans, combined with melting land ice, is leading to a rise in sea-level. Warmer sea temperatures continue to melt sea ice which creates a positive feedback mechanism. Reduced sea ice cover accelerates the rate of ocean warming because more energy is absorbed by water that is no longer covered by ice. Changes in Arctic sea ice cover also have the potential to affect atmospheric circulation which could impact the UK's climate[53]. An increase in the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide has led to increased ocean acidification. These chemical and physical changes are likely to have impacts on marine and coastal life, such as plankton species and communities which sustain marine ecosystems.

Climate change will also have impacts on coastal communities and infrastructure – see Chapter 4: Coastal Processes, Coastal Flood and Storm Damage. NPF4 introduced policies to ensure that any development proposals give significant weight to the climate and nature crises, alongside mitigating and adapting to climate change[54]. It is important that those proposing developments and use in the Clyde Marine Region contribute to a reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), and that they are resilient to current and future climate change risks and opportunities (adaptation), proportionate to the scale of development and/or use. Supporting and maintaining ecosystem functions enables resilience to climate change for people, biodiversity and the environment. It is also important that human activities do not impact on species and habitats that may be sensitive to future impacts of climate change. For example, some species with affinities for colder conditions may move northwards as the sea warms.

Carbon stores can be found in sediment, seaweed, seagrass, saltmarsh and animals (for example in carbon-based structures such as shells and coral). The Clyde Marine Region contains examples of all of these carbon stores (See Maps CC 1 & CC 2). Examples of many of the most important stores occur within the Marine Protected Area network (see Chapter 5: Natural Heritage), which provides some protection. It is important to avoid damage to significant carbon stores, including those that do not occur within the Marine Protected Area network. Threats to carbon stores can include the physical disturbance of seabed sediments, habitat loss, increased turbidity, increased seawater temperatures and ocean acidification. These threats can affect the ability of plants to photosynthesise and of some organisms to form carbon-based structures like shells and maerl. Species near the edges of their thermally limited geographical ranges may also be threatened.

[52] Section 3 of the Clyde Marine Region Assessment (2017) (https://bit.ly/3UrVjkE).
[53] Marine Climate Change Impacts: Report Card 2020 (https://bit.ly/3Uu1gO5).
[54] Policy 1 and 2, NPF4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)

Objectives

	**Objective CC 1**	Development(s) and use in the Clyde Marine Region are carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2045.
	**Objective CC 2**	Natural carbon stores and the associated benefits and services they provide are maintained and enhanced in the Clyde Marine Region.

Policies

Supports Obj CC 1 Supports Aim 1, 2, 3 and 4.	**Policy CC 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered appropriate and proportionate measures to: a) minimise emissions of greenhouse gases over the lifespan of the proposal; b) adapt to the current and future likely impacts of climate change over the full lifespan of any proposal, including any decommissioning/remediation required; and c) support or increase sustainable transport use and local transport solutions if applicable.
Supports Obj CC 2 Supports Aim 1 and 3.	**Policy CC 2**	Proposals for development and/or use should consider their potential impact on carbon stores, including those in intertidal habitats in the Clyde Marine Region. Where significant impact or damage to a recognised carbon store (see Maps CC 1 & 2) may occur, proposals for development and/or use should follow the mitigation hierarchy[55] to reduce potential impact.
Supports Obj CC 2 Supports Aim 1 and 3.	**Policy CC 3**	Proposals for development and/or use are encouraged to deliver positive effects on the capacity of recognised carbon stores (as identified in the Scottish Blue Carbon Action Plan)[56] including to support their expansion
Supports Obj CC 2 Supports Aim 1 and 3.	**Policy CC 4**	Proposals for the enhancement of marine and coastal natural carbon stores, such as habitat restoration or creation and native species restoration, and proposals for other nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change will be supported where they demonstrate consideration of potential climate change impacts of the proposal.

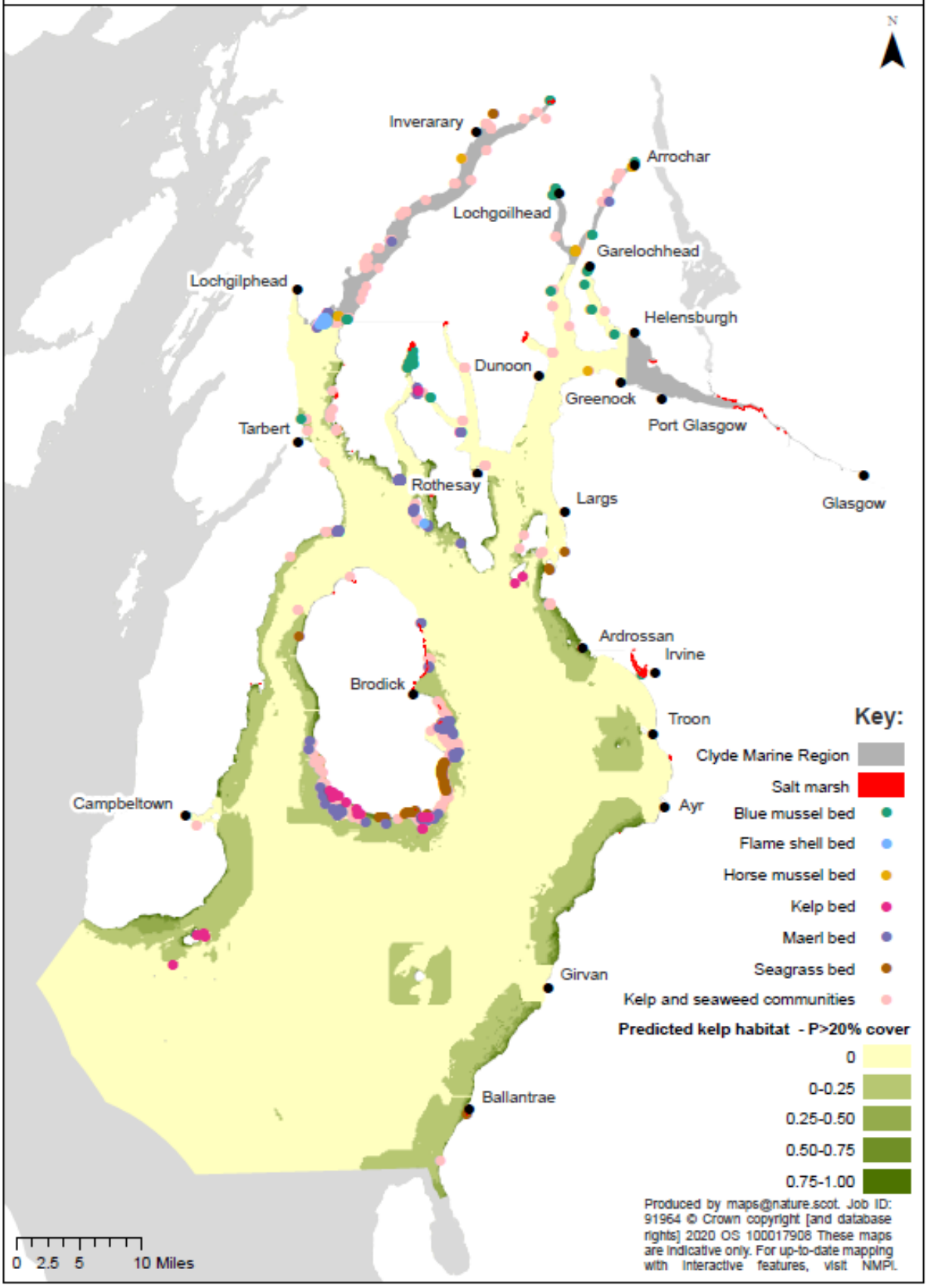
[55] The mitigation hierarchy is a tool applied to minimise the negative impacts on biodiversity from development(s) and/or use. This tool can also be used to mitigate other negative impacts, such as those on carbon stores. The steps of the hierarchy include avoidance, minimisation, rehabilitation/restoration and offsetting.

[56] Scottish Government Blue Carbon Action Plan 2025 (https://bit.ly/3NqDFh3)

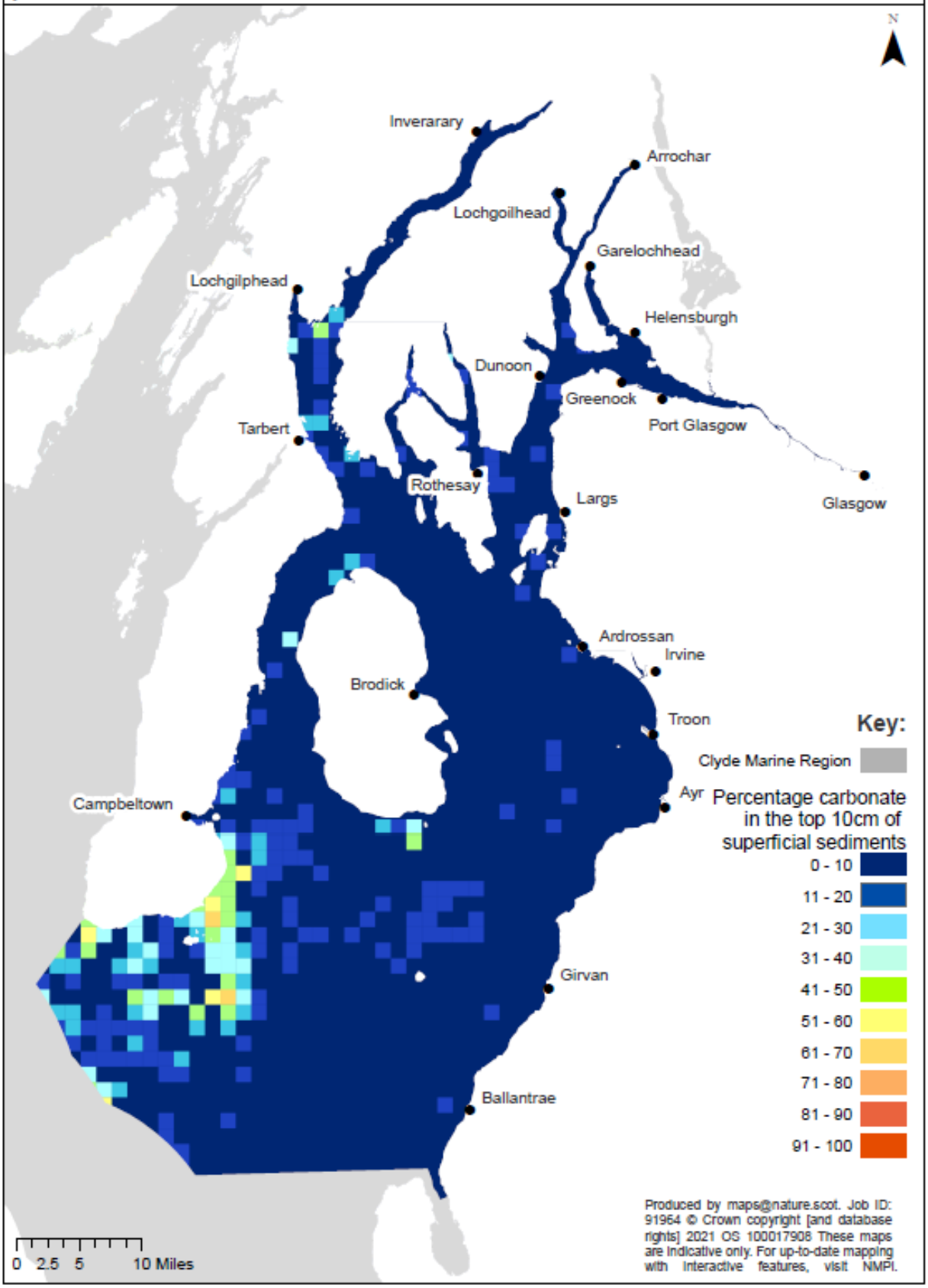
Support Obj CC1 Supports Aim 1 and 3	**Policy CC 5**	Proposals for nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change are encouraged and will be supported where they demonstrate appropriate consideration of the effects of the proposal on the wider ecosystem.

Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj CC 3	**Recommendation CC 1**	Developments are encouraged to promote climate justice and help society and the environment to be more resilient to the current and future likely impacts of climate change.

Map CC 1. Carbon stores in the Clyde Marine Region – Related habitats and species



Map CC 2. Percentage of carbonate in the top 10 cm of superficial sediments. Data is interpolated from the British Geological Survey sediment records and describes the potential for carbon stores.



Further information

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a Special Report in October 2018 (https://bit.ly/38vhoEv) alongside a Summary to Policymakers (https://bit.ly/3efF7MB).
- The Met Office provides UK Climate Projections (https://bit.ly/38yVkcc).
- The UK Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership provides co-ordinated advice on climate change impacts and adaptation around our coast and seas from scientists, government, its agencies and non-governmental organisations (https://bit.ly/37mCFjv).
- Adaptation Scotland provides advice and support to help Scotland be prepared and resilient to the effects of climate change (https://bit.ly/2GcPSj5).
- Scotland's National Adaptation programme 2024-2029, is a five-year programme to prepare Scotland for the challenges it will face as the climate continues to change (https://bit.ly/42irIh3)
- Scottish Government Blue Carbon Action Plan 2025 (https://bit.ly/3NqDFh3)
- Climate Ready Clyde provides a strategic approach, working in partnership with other organisations, to create a vision and action plan for climate change adaptation in the Glasgow City Region (https://bit.ly/2RDtzs4).
- Tidal Flooding on the Clyde Options Analysis and Scoping of Adaptation Pathways (2022) (https://bit.ly/3OIxbL5)
- For updated figures on carbon stored within Scottish marine sediments, please refer to Re-Evaluating Scotland's Sedimentary Carbon Stocks (2020) (https://bit.ly/2wDKmEY).
- NatureScot published a literature review of the current evidence for Scotland's blue carbon habitats in 2023 (https://bit.ly/4uMMSB7)
- A Compendium of Marine Related Carbon Stores, Sequestrations and Emissions (2020) is a report which assembles quantitative estimates of marine carbon stores, sequestration rates and emissions rates relevant to Scotland (https://bit.ly/34xfySD).
- Infrastructure and climate change: main climate-related risks to the UK's economic infrastructure, measures to reduce these risks and the main challenges to implementing resilience measures (2020) (https://bit.ly/2VzKVZC).
- Marine Directorate Assessment: Natural Capital, Ecosystem Services and the Blue Economy (2020) (https://bit.ly/3DJQ1aH).

General Policy 2: Historic Environment

Clyde Marine Region Context

The historic environment includes all aspects resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, encompassing all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged. Cultural heritage is the legacy of customs, practices, values and objects that is inherited from past generations and can include non-structural (e.g. artwork, boats and equipment) and intangible heritage (e.g. art, songs and traditional maritime activities).



Lochranza Castle on the Isle of Arran.

The Clyde Marine Region has a rich maritime history linked to its industrial past, fishing activity and destination as a key shipping port. The historic environment and cultural heritage cover both sea- and land-based activities. Our built heritage includes maritime wrecks, historic buildings and sites, maritime and heritage museums, historic ports, docks, quays, warehouses, cranes and can also include submerged paleo-landscape features[57]. The historic environment and cultural assets in the Region make a notable contribution to visitor and tourism experiences, as well as providing an educational resource and contributing to the sense of place. The preservation of these assets helps to foster the historical and cultural identity of the Clyde Marine Region. It is important to understand each site, including its setting, as well as its conservation requirements, in order to understand the effect that any development and/or use may have. In the Region, there is a Historic Marine Protected Area designated to preserve what is believed to be the wrecked vessel of the Clyde built paddle steamer Iona I, a marine historic asset of national importance (see Map HE 1).

This chapter applies to designated and non-designated heritage assets and sites. Development at these sites may also be subject to separate consenting processes (see Annex 2). Spatial data and information on designated sites can be accessed through Scotland's Environment Web[58]. The National Record of the Historic Environment[59] and relevant local authority Historic Environment Records also provide important records of non-designated sites which may provide a useful source of additional information. Proposals should refer to national policy and guidance set by Historic Environment Scotland[60], as well as have regard where relevant to NPF4[61] and the appropriate local development plan.

For more information on historic environment management and consenting processes, see Annex 2.

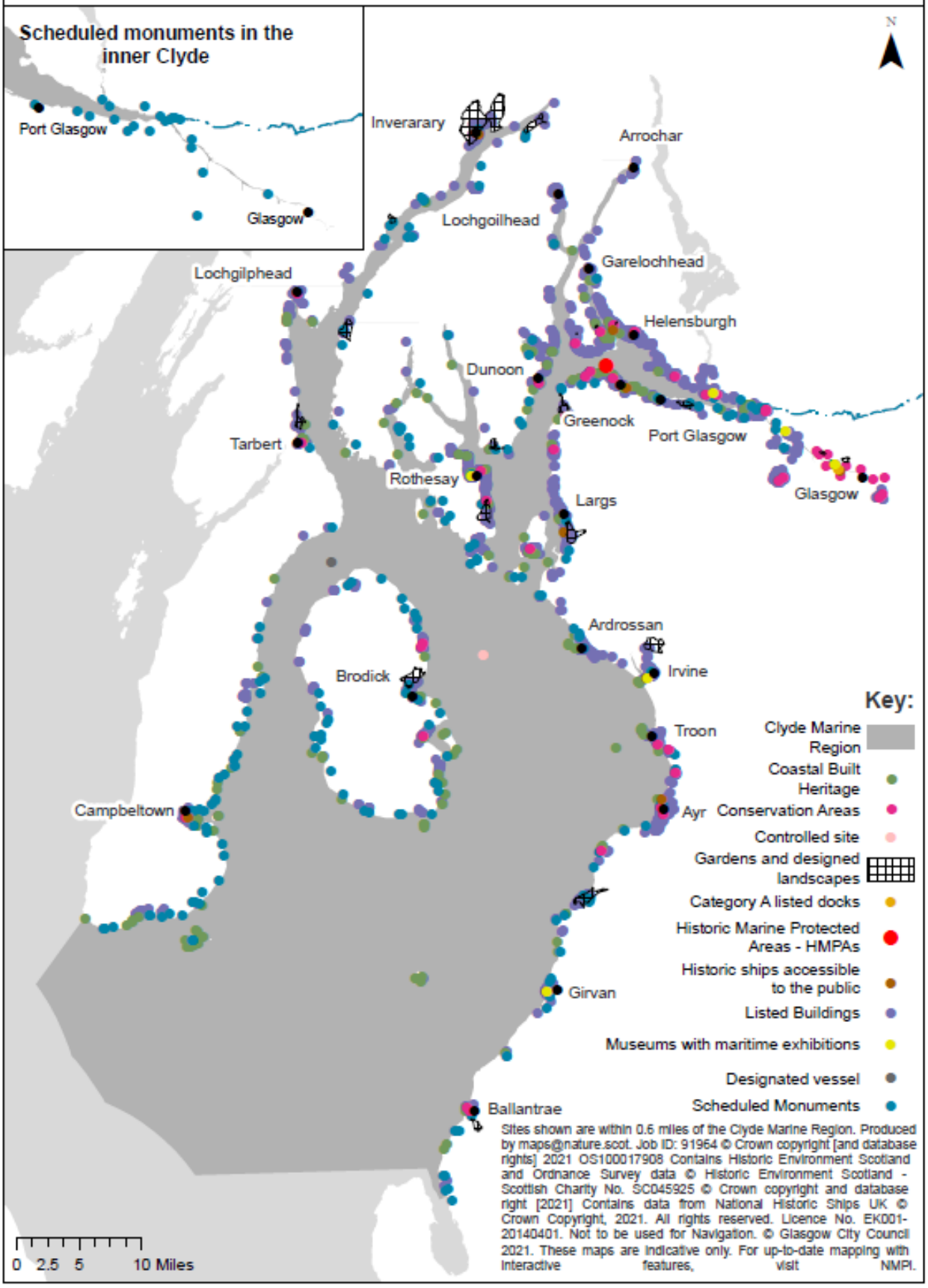
[57] Sea level was up to 45 m lower 10,000 years ago so there may be surviving prehistoric archaeology now situated under water.
[58] Scotland's Environment Web (https://bit.ly/4fg4jkJ)
[59] National Record of the Historic Environment (https://bit.ly/4e45oLn).
[60] Planning and Guidance, Historic Environment Scotland (https://bit.ly/4d3vsYy)
[61] Historic Assets and Places, NPF4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)

Objectives		
	**Objective HE 1**	Marine and coastal historic environment and cultural assets in the Clyde Marine Region, whether visible, buried, submerged or intangible, are valued, protected and enhanced.
	**Objective HE 2**	People's knowledge and experience of the marine and coastal historic environment is enhanced through improved awareness of the historic environment and cultural assets of the Clyde Marine Region.
Policies		
Supports Obj HE 1 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy HE 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should protect, and where appropriate, enhance marine and coastal historic environment and cultural assets, their context and accessibility[62]. If detrimental impact on historic environment and cultural assets is unavoidable, development(s) and/or use should: a) demonstrate that alternative proposals have been explored; b) minimise impacts on these assets; and c) ensure mitigation measures are in place.
Supports Obj HE 1 Supports Aim 2, 3 and 4	**Policy HE 2**	Proposals for development and/or use are encouraged to identify opportunities for enhancement of historic environment and cultural assets and/or their accessibility.

Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports HE 2	**Recommendation HE 1**	Efforts should be made to protect and promote non-structural and intangible marine and coastal cultural heritage. For example, through museums, visitor centres, festivals, or incorporation into development proposals.

[62] Proposals that may affect the marine and coastal historic environment should take account of The Historic Environment Policy for Scotland and the Conserving Our Underwater Heritage Guidance.

Map HE 1. Historical and cultural assets in and around the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Historic Environment Scotland (https://bit.ly/2Gi0Dk8) resources including:
    - The Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (2019) is a policy statement directing decision-making that affects the historic environment (https://bit.ly/2NRDfOm),
    - Conserving Our Underwater Heritage (2025) (https://bit.ly/42RGlYU)
    - 'Our Past, Our Future': The Strategy for Scotland's Historic Environment (2023) (https://bit.ly/4uubrl0)
    - Historic Environment Scotland Circular: Regulations and Procedures (2019) (https://bit.ly/2TQC6L4),
    - Guidelines on the selection, designation and management of Historic Marine Protected Areas (https://bit.ly/3b6RNn9),
    - HES Heritage Portal (https://bit.ly/31k3qa7),
    - HES Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes (https://bit.ly/31vxj7E),
    - Pastmap (https://bit.ly/3nWq3sP),
    - Corporate Plan 2025-2028 (https://bit.ly/49fi7LM), and
    - Trove National Record of the Historic Environment (http://bit.ly/46ISkuQ)
- A series of Managing Change documents provide non-statutory guidance for managing the changing historic environment and applying Government policies (https://bit.ly/2TNIJxC)
- Local Development Plan and any accompanying supplementary guidance or strategy: of the relevant Planning Authority (see page 20).
- Institute for Archaeologists: Standard and Guidance for Nautical Archaeological Recording and Reconstruction (https://bit.ly/48Jt4oP)
- West of Scotland Archaeology Service maintains the Historic Environment Record, a complete record of all known archaeological sites, finds, fieldwork and research for the West of Scotland, for most of the planning authorities in the Clyde Marine Region (https://bit.ly/3aR2qdM)
- British Sub-Aqua Club provides guidance on preserving maritime heritage; visit the Respect our wrecks page (https://bit.ly/2O26fTF)
- SCAPE (The Scottish Coastal Archaeology and the Problem of Erosion) charity research, conserves and promotes the archaeology of Scotland's coast (https://bit.ly/2Rvturv)
- Map your heritage portal, created by PERICLES, allows you to view and add data related to maritime cultural heritage (https://bit.ly/3hdLbXE). PERICLES is an EU-funded research and innovation project running from 2018 – 2021 to promote sustainable, participatory governance of cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions, including the west coast of Scotland.

General Policy 3: Landscape/Seascape

Clyde Marine Region Context


Lochgoilhead on the Cowal peninsula.

Whilst the term 'landscape' may be well understood, the term 'seascape' is less known. Seascape refers to an 'area as perceived by people, from land, sea, or air, where the sea is a key element of the physical environment'[63]. It is important to protect or enhance the landscape/seascape qualities of an area, as they provide part of our spectacular scenery and contribute significantly to a sense of place, supporting wellbeing and quality of life. Developments and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region have the potential to positively or negatively impact the landscape/seascape. Impacts are specific to a particular development or activity, its location and setting. For the purposes of this Plan, references to seascape should be taken as meaning landscapes with views of the coast or sea, and the adjacent marine environment with cultural, historical and archaeological links with each other[64].

The Clyde Marine Region is unique in Scotland in terms of the amount and expanse of sea broadly contained by the mainland, extending northwards from Ayrshire round to the Mull of Kintyre. The variety of seascapes can be seen when travelling northwards through the Region from open sea, sounds or straits and lochs that make up the inner channels. The quality of the Clyde Marine Region's landscape has been recognised nationally by the designation of National Scenic Areas (NSAs) and a National Park – Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park (LLTNP). The NSAs are focussed in the northern and central parts of the Region and include North Arran NSA and Kyles of Bute NSA. The Wild Land Areas (WLAs), North Arran and Waterhead Moor-Muirshiel, are also recognised as nationally important landscapes. Locally important landscapes are recognised by the designation of Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) or equivalent local landscape designations as defined in the relevant Local Development Plan. Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park includes areas of coastline and coastal views and is Scotland's largest Regional Park. All these nationally and locally important landscapes benefit from the seascape setting of the Clyde Marine Region as highlighted in their special qualities or citations (See Map SCAPE 1).

The Seascape/Landscape Assessment of the Firth of Clyde was prepared in 2013 for the then Firth of Clyde Forum to identify key coastal characteristics and their sensitivities to development or change; it also identifies different types of coastline (see Map SCAPE 2). The terminology used for different types of coastline in the Seascape/Landscape Assessment may differ from the terminology used in Local Development Plans. The Seascape/Landscape Assessment forms the baseline for sensitivity/capacity for Seascape Landscape Visual Impact Assessments of specific coastal zone and marine development proposals (including for example aquaculture and marine renewables). The Coastal Character Assessment Guidance developed by Scottish Natural Heritage (now NatureScot) presents a methodology for Coastal Character Assessment that complements terrestrial Landscape Character Assessment. This should be followed where further assessment is required.

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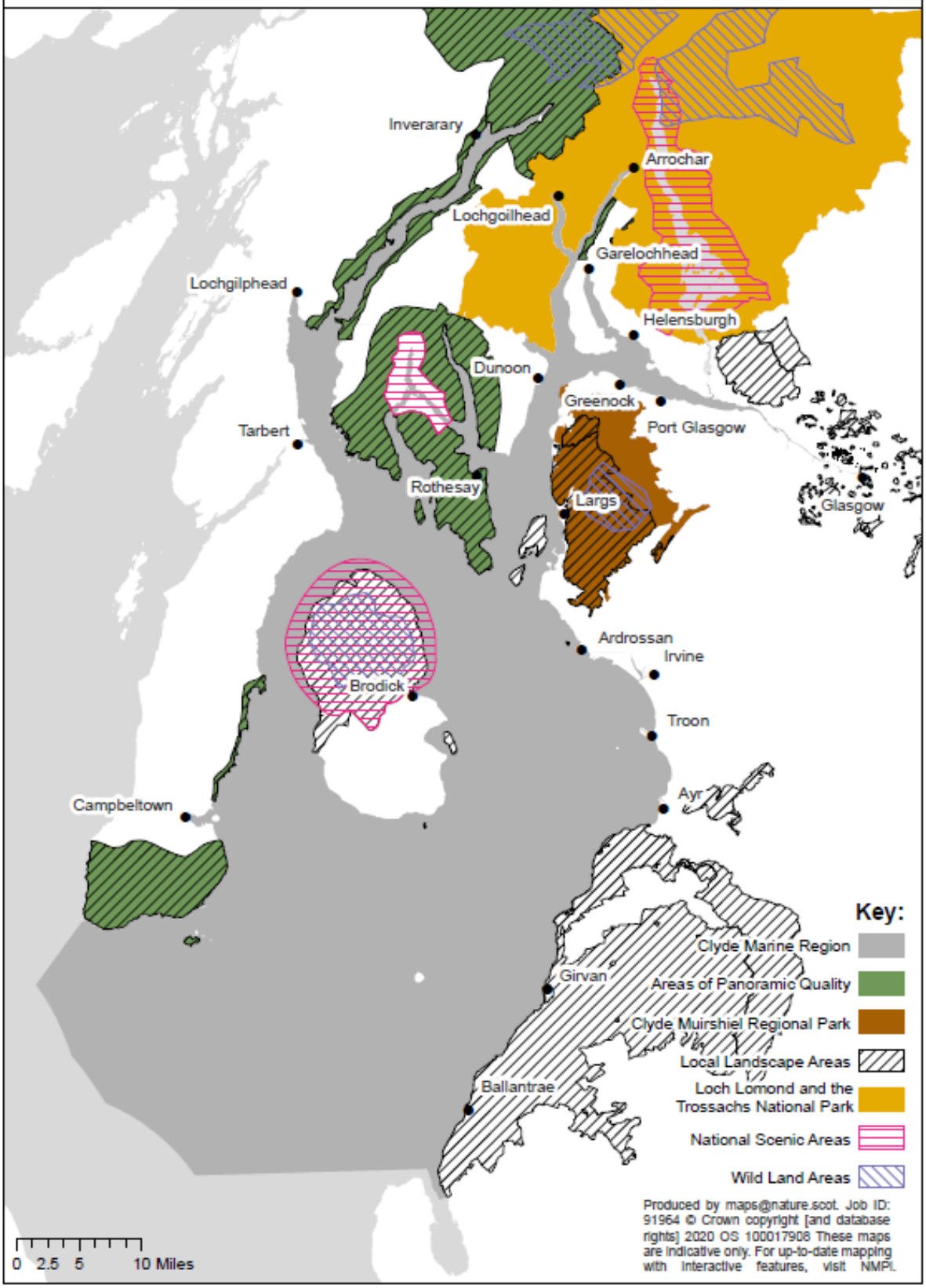
[63] European Landscape Convention 2000 (https://bit.ly/40e1oVu).
[64] UK Marine Policy Statement 2011 (https://bit.ly/3C6JBp5).

Objectives		
	**Objective SCAPE 1**	Nationally and locally important landscape/seascape character of the Clyde Marine Region is protected and enhanced, at both a wider and a local level, to contribute to the quality of life and wellbeing of local communities and visitors.
Policies		
Supports Obj SCAPE 1 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy SCAPE 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered, where appropriate: a) the Seascape/Landscape Assessment of the Firth of Clyde, the relevant planning authority Landscape Assessments and other relevant Strategic Development Frameworks, character appraisals or supporting documentation; b) how the proposal takes into account its effects on the existing character, experience and quality of the landscape/seascape. Where negative or intrusive visual effects are likely, steps should be taken to avoid or minimise effects. This includes developed, altered and cultural landscapes as well as natural areas; and c) a high standard of design, in terms of siting, scale, colour, materials and form to ensure the development or coastal use change will be accommodated within specific landscape and seascape types (as shown in Map SCAPE 2).
Supports Obj SCAPE 1 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy SCAPE 2**	Proposals for development and/or use in the Inner Clyde estuary should consider how the proposal takes into account its effects on the distinctive character of the River Clyde[65] Development Corridor[66].
Supports Obj SCAPE 1 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy SCAPE 3**	Proposals for development and/or use that affect National Scenic Areas, National and Regional Parks, or Local Landscape Areas should demonstrate that they have considered that: a) they will not adversely affect the integrity of the area or its special qualities for which it has been designated; or b) any such adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance (or local importance for Local Landscape Areas). It should be considered whether or not a Design Statement is required to support a proposal for development or use that affects a National Scenic Area or National or Regional Park.

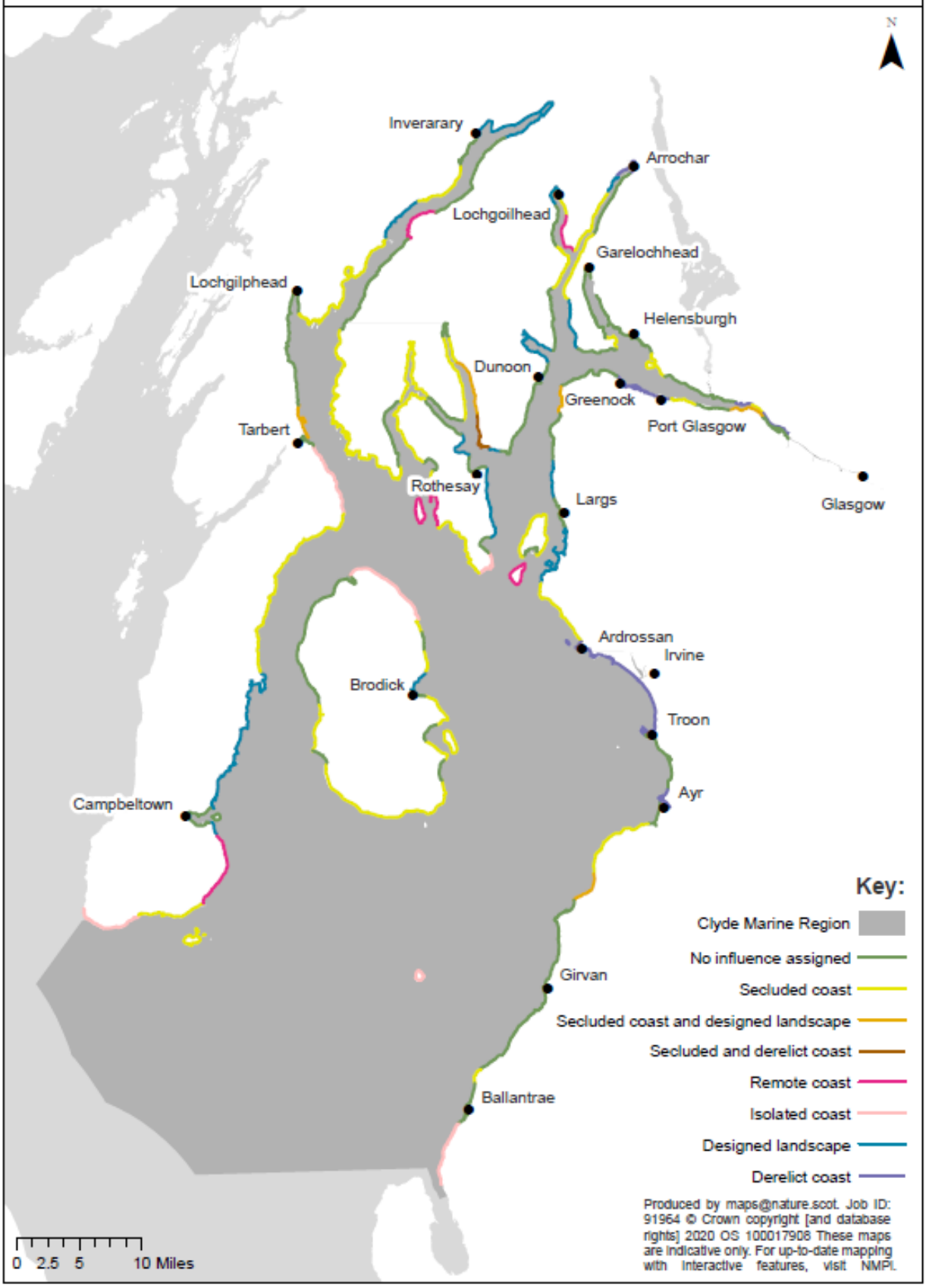
[65] Local Development Plans refer to the Inner Clyde estuary as the River Clyde
[66] River Clyde Development Corridor Strategic Development Framework (https://bit.ly/4puDZci)

Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj SCAPE 1	**Recommendation rSCAPE 1**	Efforts should be made to maintain developments, infrastructure and facilities in a coastal or marine location in such a way that they do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape/seascape qualities of an area.

Map SCAPE 1. Important landscapes/seascapes around the Clyde Marine Region



Map SCAPE 2. Landscape/Seascape Assessment for the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Clyde Marine Planning Partnership: 'Seascape/Landscape Assessment of the Firth of Clyde', carried out on behalf of the Firth of Clyde Forum (2013) (https://bit.ly/37yU7l1).
- NatureScot: Landscape policy and guidance (https://bit.ly/2t42Xbv), including guidance on wild land (https://bit.ly/34FNqNb) and Coastal Character Assessments (https://bit.ly/2tMTohC).
- Local Development Plan landscape policies and supporting guidance are available on the relevant Local Authority website – see page 20.

General Policy 4:
Coastal Processes, Coastal Flood and Storm Damage

Flood Risk Management Plans[67] coordinate efforts at the national level to tackle flooding in Scotland, including flooding at the coast. Local Flood Risk Management Plans[68] have been developed in parallel and provide additional local detail on funding and a timetable for actions. The National Flood Resilience Strategy[69] was published in 2024 and sets out a vision for building flood resilience in Scotland through to 2045 and beyond.



Saltmarsh habitat near Bowling.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Sea-level rise will increasingly affect many parts of the Clyde Marine Region's coast, bringing increased risks of estuarine and coastal erosion and flooding. In some places this may threaten coastal communities, important infrastructure, and natural assets. Cumulative sea-level rise is projected to be at least 85 cm higher in 2100 than in 2017 around the Region[70]. At the coast the impacts may be further exacerbated through increased storm wave heights and increases in river and surface water flooding. Natural coasts dynamically respond to these risks and can sometimes offer the best management options if enough space is available. For example, in places around the Region, the coastal zone acts to help protect against the increased threat of coastal flooding. The coastal zone should therefore be considered as a resource extending across the land-sea interface. As land use planning extends to Mean Low Water Springs and marine planning reaches Mean High Water Springs, it is important that both planning regimes co-ordinate policy within the coastal zone. NPF4 recognises that coastal development proposals will only be supported where they are deemed to be viable in the face of climate change projections[71]. In order to improve coastal resilience, land use development plans and open space strategies should consider the coastal zone as a unit and take into account the potential impacts of current and future sea-level rise, storminess and coastal erosion risk when developing or adjusting the zoning and strategic development vision for coastal areas. Where possible, low-lying areas of vacant and derelict coastline should be assessed for their potential to provide space for settlements and natural ecosystems to adapt to climate change[72]. Authorities are encouraged to develop strategies for pro-active management to reduce the risk of coastal erosion and flooding, for example through integration of coastal change adaptation planning into land use planning and development frameworks.

The Clyde Marine Region has many different types of coast; parts of the Region have artificial structures such as quay walls whilst in other places natural features, such as rocky shores, provide

[67] Flood Risk Management Plans (https://bit.ly/4d4fX3X)
[68] Scotland has been divided into 14 Local Plan Districts, and a Flood Risk Management Plan has been prepared for each district. Local Flood Risk Management Plans have been published by the local authority who is nominated as the lead local authority for the Local Plan District. These plans will explain in more detail how and when the action set out in the plans, for 2022-2028 will be delivered.
[69] The National Flood Resilience Strategy (2024) (https://bit.ly/4euISzx)
[70] UK Climate Projections 18 (https://bit.ly/3BX45AG)
[71] Policy 10, NPF4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)
[72] For example, the Impacts of sea-level rise and storm surges due to climate change in the Firth of Clyde report (2017) considered future managed realignment opportunities at: Inner Clyde North, Inner Clyde South, Newshot Island and Holy Loch (https://bit.ly/2U3T2Oj).

coastal defence Saltmarsh, beaches or sand dunes also provide coastal defences in places, but can continually change through natural processes. Safeguarding areas where there are natural assets, such as saltmarsh or sand dunes, allows nature to provide coastal flood and storm alleviation along with other benefits which include water purification, fish and shellfish nurseries, carbon sequestration (see Chapter 1: Climate Change) and opportunities for recreation and tourism. It is important to ensure that these habitats can adapt to climate change but also to allow space for this adaptation further inland as appropriate. The Clyde Marine Region has several existing flood and storm damage alleviation schemes in place though these may stop functioning effectively at some point in the future. Where it is not possible to use natural assets for coastal flood and storm alleviation, it is recommended that measures to enhance the biodiversity value of traditional hard engineering solutions are used wherever possible.

Objective		
	**Objective CP 1**	Development(s) and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region are resilient to the dynamic nature of the coast, including the impacts of climate change, using natural assets[73] and soft engineering where possible.
Policies		
Supports Obj CP 1 Supports Aim 1, 2, 3 and 4	**Policy CP 1**	Proposals for development and/or use below the Mean High-Water Springs should demonstrate that they have considered the following, proportionate to the scale of development: a) the latest available UKCP[74] sea-level rise and flood risk projections, and wave overtopping impacts where possible, relevant to the full lifespan of the proposal, including any decommissioning/remediation required; b) broader future climate projections and risks and opportunities identified within the UK national, regional and local climate change risk assessments; c) the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's Development Management Guidance, the relevant Local Flood Risk Management Plan and any relevant Coastal Change Adaptation Plan; d) sediment dynamics within the relevant coastal cell, including historical trends as indicated in outputs of the Dynamic Coast project and current or future anticipated dynamics, e) any potential exacerbation of flooding or coastal erosion in the wider area; f) protection and use of natural assets for coastal protection, including through options for managed realignment and beach nourishment, and allowing space for the natural assets themselves to adapt to climate change; and

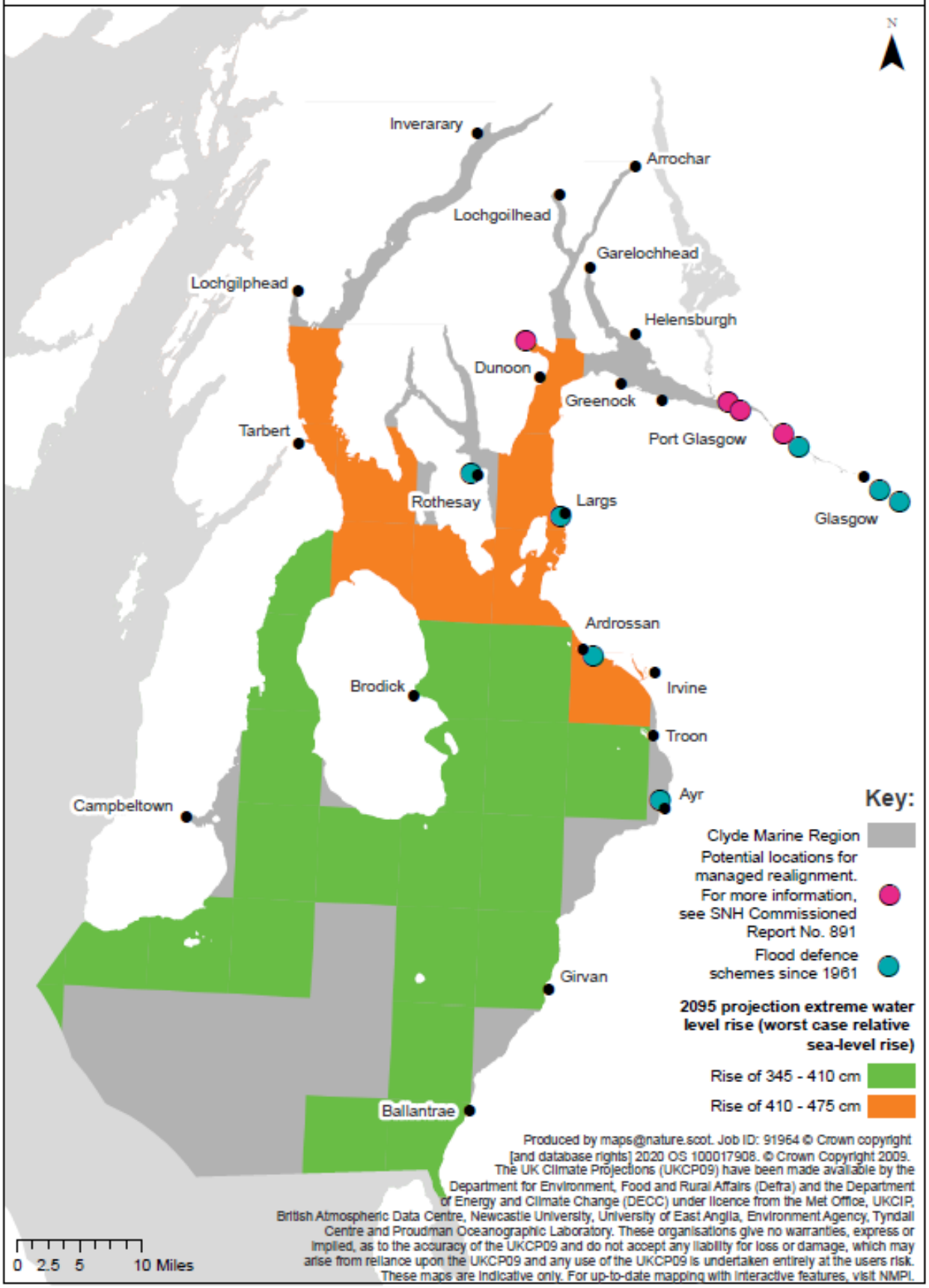
[73] E.g. saltmarsh, sand dunes and mudflats
[74] UK Climate Projections (https://bit.ly/2topQGF)

		g) opportunities for Integrated Green Grey Infrastructure[75] where natural assets cannot be used for flood alleviation.
Supports Obj CP 1 Supports Aim 1, 2, 3 and 4	**Policy CP 2**	Natural or artificial coastal zone and marine features which provide or could provide flood defence in the future should not be removed without due consideration of future flood risk. Removal of artificial coastal defence materials should only be supported when it can be demonstrated that there are no significant adverse impacts for the environment. Proposals for the removal of artificial coastal defence materials should demonstrate that they have considered positive impacts for the environment, for example where removal may offer a realignment option to allow accommodation space for natural coastal readjustment, habitat restoration and improved long-term resilience.
Supports Obj CP 1 Supports Aim 1, 2, 3 and 4	**Policy CP 3**	The installation of new or replacement flood defences, coastal erosion and flooding alleviation works will be encouraged if coastal erosion or flooding threatens existing public infrastructure, important built development, including historic environment features, and where relocation options are not feasible.
Supports Obj CP 1 Supports Aim 1, 2, 3 and 4	**Policy CP 4**	For large marine and coastal infrastructure projects below the Mean High Water Springs that involve an element of lock-in or irreversibility, a climate change risk assessment (detailing flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure[76]) should be undertaken and proportionate adaptation features should be included within the proposal in line with best practice guidelines.

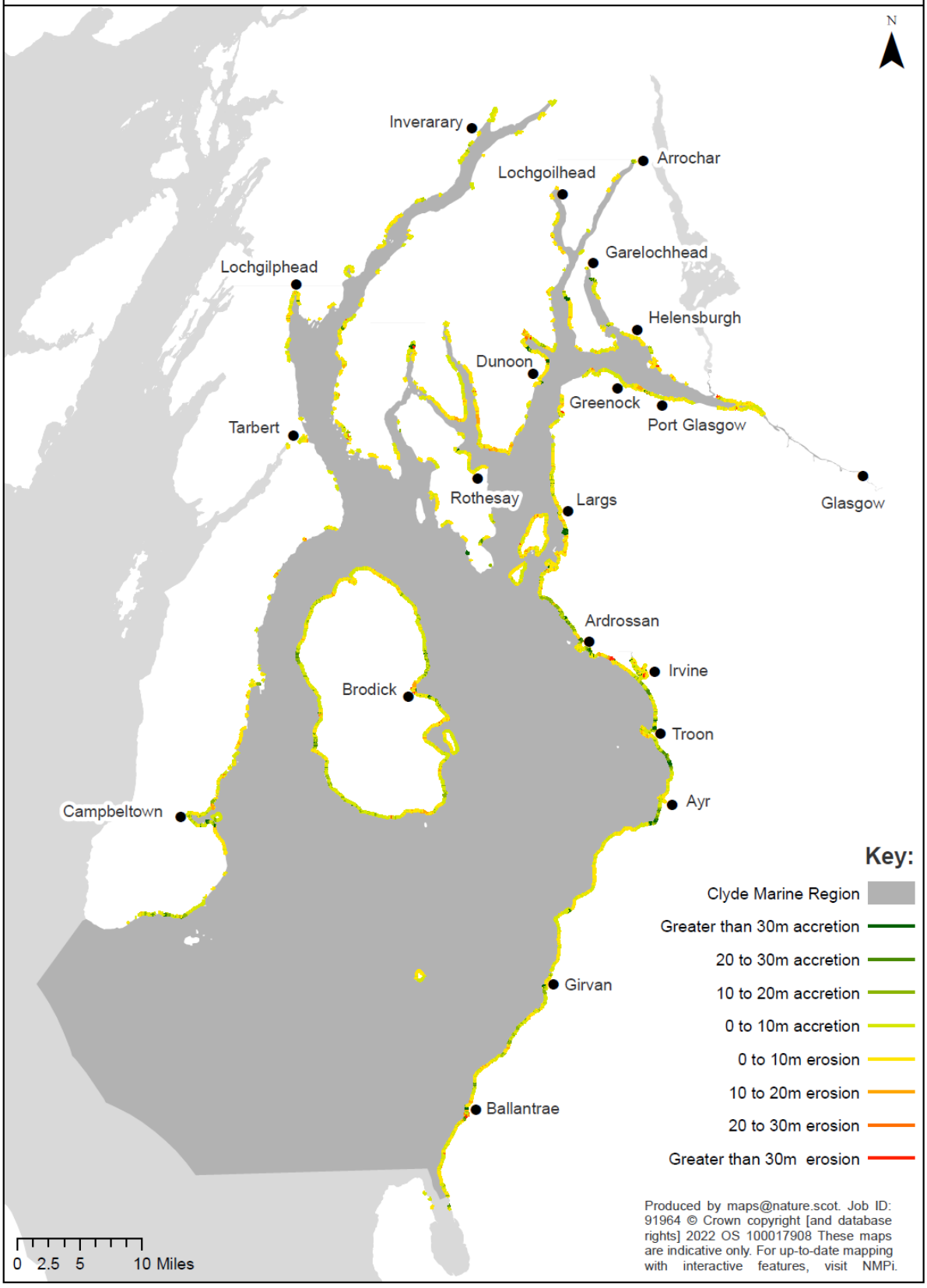
Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj CP 1	**Recommendation CP 1**	Communication and connectivity between marine users and land users is encouraged to ensure that the coastal zone is managed and protected appropriately.

[75] Integrated Green Grey Infrastructure refers to greening the greyest parts of our towns, cities or coasts that must remain largely grey for their primary function.
[76] UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 (https://bit.ly/3GQ7uiN)

Map CP 1. Sea-level rise, existing flood defence schemes and potential locations for managed realignment



Map CP 2. Dynamic Coast National Coastal Change Assessment coastal position projections



Further information

- The Dynamic Coast project provides a publicly available evidence base of coastal change across Scotland *via* 240 site summaries and public web maps. The mapped data is available to download into dedicated mapping systems making it possible for local authorities and others to use the data (https://bit.ly/37BlT02).
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency's Planning Guidance and Advice Notes (https://bit.ly/4thxVok) Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders – SEPA requirements for undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment (https://bit.ly/2uIRIW8).
- NatureScot commissioned report No. 891: Impacts of sea-level rise and storm surges due to climate change in the Firth of Clyde (2017) (https://bit.ly/2vp9m1C).
- UK Climate Projections website (https://bit.ly/2uDSX9d).
- Local Plan Districts listed on SEPA's website for Flood Risk Management Plans (https://bit.ly/4d4fX3X)
- Climate Ready Clyde (https://bit.ly/2O5XPuJ), in particular the Climate Risk and Opportunity Assessment (2018) (https://bit.ly/3NCCG9J).
- Naylor, LA., Kippen, H, Coombes, MA., et al. (2017). Greening the Grey: a framework for integrated green grey infrastructure (IGGI). A University of Glasgow report. Appendix 4: Coastal (https://bit.ly/37Cq5gm).
- Ecostructure (Climate Change Adaptation through Ecologically-Sensitive Coastal Infrastructure) project outputs (https://bit.ly/3Yc0je4).

General Policy 5: Natural Heritage


A common seal (*Phoca vitulina*) near the Isle of Arran.

On a global scale, recent assessments have found that 'nature and its vital contributions to people, which together embody biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are deteriorating worldwide'[77]. The Convention on Biological Diversity set 20 global targets, known as the Aichi Targets, to be met by 2020. Scotland was found to have met nine of the targets, with progress being made on the remaining eleven, but insufficient to meet the target by 2020[78]. In 2020, The Environment Strategy for Scotland was published, and it sets out an ambitious vision to restore nature and half biodiversity loss by 2045[79]. Steps to achieve that vision are set out in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, with one of the four outcomes targeting the health, condition and resilience of marine and coastal environments[80]. Good progress has been made in achieving some of the actions[81] such as the publication of the Scottish Seabird Conservation Action Plan in 2024[82] and the UK Cetacean Conservation Strategy in 2025[83]. However, the latest State of the Nature Report shows that the pressures on the marine environment remain significant, with evidence of change in pelagic habitats and plankton communities, and an average decline of 49% in seabirds[84]. In 2026, an update on progress towards achieving Good Environmental Status (GES) was published. The data found that out of 11 descriptors, GES was met in 2, and was partially met, not met or uncertain in the remaining 9[85]. Efforts are being made to address biodiversity loss, but it's evident more must be done. In NPF4, development proposals which will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment will not be supported, demonstrating the emphasis on protecting our natural heritage[86]. The Plan has scope to support the actions set out in the Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan as it informs decision making and guides development and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region.

Applicants requiring a marine licence may also require other consents or to carry out certain assessments. For guidance on national and regional authorisation, enforcement and assessments, see Annex 1.

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[77] Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) (https://bit.ly/2RyJDwt).
[78] Scotland's Biodiversity Progress to 2020 Aichi Targets – Final Report (https://bit.ly/42gN7r0)
[79] The Vision is 'By 2045: By restoring nature and ending Scotland's contribution to climate change, our country is transformed for the better – helping to secure the wellbeing of our people and planet for generations to come' (2020) (https://bit.ly/4cUsiI1)
[80] Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (https://bit.ly/419arGy)
[81] Scottish Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2024-2030 (2024) (https://bit.ly/4uorlxl)
[82] Scottish Seabird Conservation Action Plan (2024) (https://bit.ly/4wc73sy)
[83] UK Cetacean Conservation Strategy (2025) (https://bit.ly/42bDmKG)
[84] Scotland findings in State of Nature Report (2023) (https://bit.ly/4dtgDjr)
[85] UK Marine Strategy Part One: Updated assessment and Good Environmental Status (2026) (https://bit.ly/4d3qOtT)
[86] Policy 4 NPF4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)

Clyde Marine Region Context

Healthy and functioning ecosystems and biodiversity play vital roles in human existence and good quality of life. Many activities and businesses in the Clyde Marine Region are reliant on healthy ecosystems but may also negatively impact some elements of natural heritage that underpin ecosystem function. Examples include habitat and species loss, environmental disturbance and degradation, the introduction of invasive non-native species and/or as a direct or indirect driver of climate change. While some species can adapt to and even take advantage of human activities, the majority cannot. Species, habitats and their physical environments provide a range of ecosystem services that deliver tangible benefits that society relies on, such as the provision of fish and shellfish, storm protection, carbon capture, nutrient cycling and breakdown of waste. Other important benefits include recreation, enjoyment of seascape and landscape character and a sense of place – all of which contribute to wellbeing and, in many cases, also support economic activities dependent on these opportunities.

While the Clyde Marine Region is home to a diverse range of marine and coastal habitats and species, the Clyde Marine Region Assessment[87] shows that many of these were in poor condition (this assessment was published in 2017). This is leading to a reduced provision of ecosystem services and, consequently, undermining the capacity of the environment to support sustainable economic activities. As noted in the Assessment, species and habitats of particular concern within the Clyde Marine Region include: intertidal rock and sediments, biogenic reefs; shallow and shelf subtidal sediment habitats; marine fish and shellfish; sharks, skates and rays; whales, dolphins and porpoises; and seabirds and waterbirds. This Plan aims to protect and enhance the Region's marine environment ensuring that species and habitats, contribute fully as part of a well-functioning ecosystems that supports and provides services and benefits in the future.

Many species and habitats are protected by national and international legislation. Anyone proposing development(s) and/or use of the Clyde Marine Region should be aware of existing legislation, in addition to the policies in this Plan[88]. One of the main mechanisms of conservation in the Region is through designated sites which are part of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) network (see Map NH 1 and Table 1)[89]. Designation of these sites, together with their effective conservation and/or management objectives[90], can make an important contribution to help counteract the effect of human activities and protect and enhance ecosystem health and function.

Some notable habitats and species in the Region are classified as Priority Marine Features[91] (PMFs), including maerl beds (*Phymatolithon calcareum, Lithothamnion glaciale* and *Lithotamnion corralloides*), seagrass beds (*Zostera noltii*, *Zostera marina, Zostera angustifolia* and *Ruppia maritima*) and flame shell beds (*Limaria hians*). These habitats provide shelter and protection to many other species and provide nursery areas for a range of fish and shellfish species, including

[87] The Clyde Marine Region Assessment (2017) provides an overview of the condition of habitats and species in the Region; including the ecosystem services and benefits provided. (https://bit.ly/37KK8cB)

[88] This includes, but is not limited to Habitats Directive, The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). People participating in any activities taking place on the shoreline must be aware that it is an offence to disturb many species, and in particular of the potential to cause disturbance to ground nesting birds and harass hauled out seals and are required to take appropriate action to avoid this.

[89] The Marine Protected Area (MPA) network includes Nature Conservation MPAs, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Ramsar sites.

[90] SPA conservation objectives, NCMPA Management advice/options and SSSI citations and site management statements sites are available to view on SiteLink (https://bit.ly/2V2a53g).

[91] PMFs are a prioritised list of marine habitats and species considered to be of national conservation importance; many are found in the Clyde Marine Region. They provide a focus for conservation action and marine planning. In the Clyde, some PMFs are only protected through MPA designations. PMFs are also protected under other legislation, designations or international agreements, including: the Habitats Directive, Wildlife and Countryside Act, CITES, OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species, IUCN Global Red list status.

commercially important species. The broad PMF habitat type 'burrowed mud' is widespread around the Region and supports many burrowing species like Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), fireworks anemone (*Pachycerianthus multiplicatus*) and the tall sea pen (*Funiculina quadrangularis*).

The upwelling of nutrients during the summer months provides rich feeding grounds for large mobile species, such as minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) and basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*). Harbour porpoises (*Phocoena phocoena*) are commonly found in the Clyde throughout the year, particularly around the inner Firth. Other mobile species within the Region include diadromous fish, such as Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) which migrate between freshwater and seawater at different parts of their lifecycle, and sharks, skates and rays (elasmobranchs), such as spurdog/spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*). The area is home to a variety of bird species, some of which are features of Special Protection Areas within the Clyde, such as gannets (*Morus bassanus*) on Ailsa Craig and redshanks (*Tringa totanus*) on the intertidal mudflats of the Inner Clyde estuary. There are particular challenges associated with protecting populations of migratory species because the limiting factors may lie outwith the Clyde Marine Region. Rising sea temperature is also a significant consideration for the future health of the Clyde as an increase in sea temperature will likely change the abundance and distribution of species[92], including non-native and invasive species.

Objectives		
	Objective NH 1	The overall health of marine and coastal ecosystems of the Clyde Marine Region and the ecosystem services they provide are protected and enhanced, particularly with regard to achieving the conservation and/or management objectives for the relevant Marine Protected Area network sites, other coastal designated sites, Priority Marine Features (irrespective of location), and other protected habitats and species.
	Objective NH 2	Development and use of the marine and coastal environment, in combination with measures to protect habitats and species, have an overall positive impact on biodiversity and the health of the Clyde ecosystem.
CCA	**Objective NH 3**	Knowledge and data on marine and coastal species, habitats and ecosystems within the Clyde Marine Region are improved to identify opportunities for their protection and enhancement and to inform sustainable development.
Policies		
Supports Obj NH 1 – 3 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy NH 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should: a) consider, where appropriate the potential for cumulative impacts affecting the marine and coastal environment; and b) not result in significant adverse impacts on the national status of Priority Marine Features.
Supports Obj NH 1 – 3	**Policy NH 2**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate, where appropriate, that they have considered:

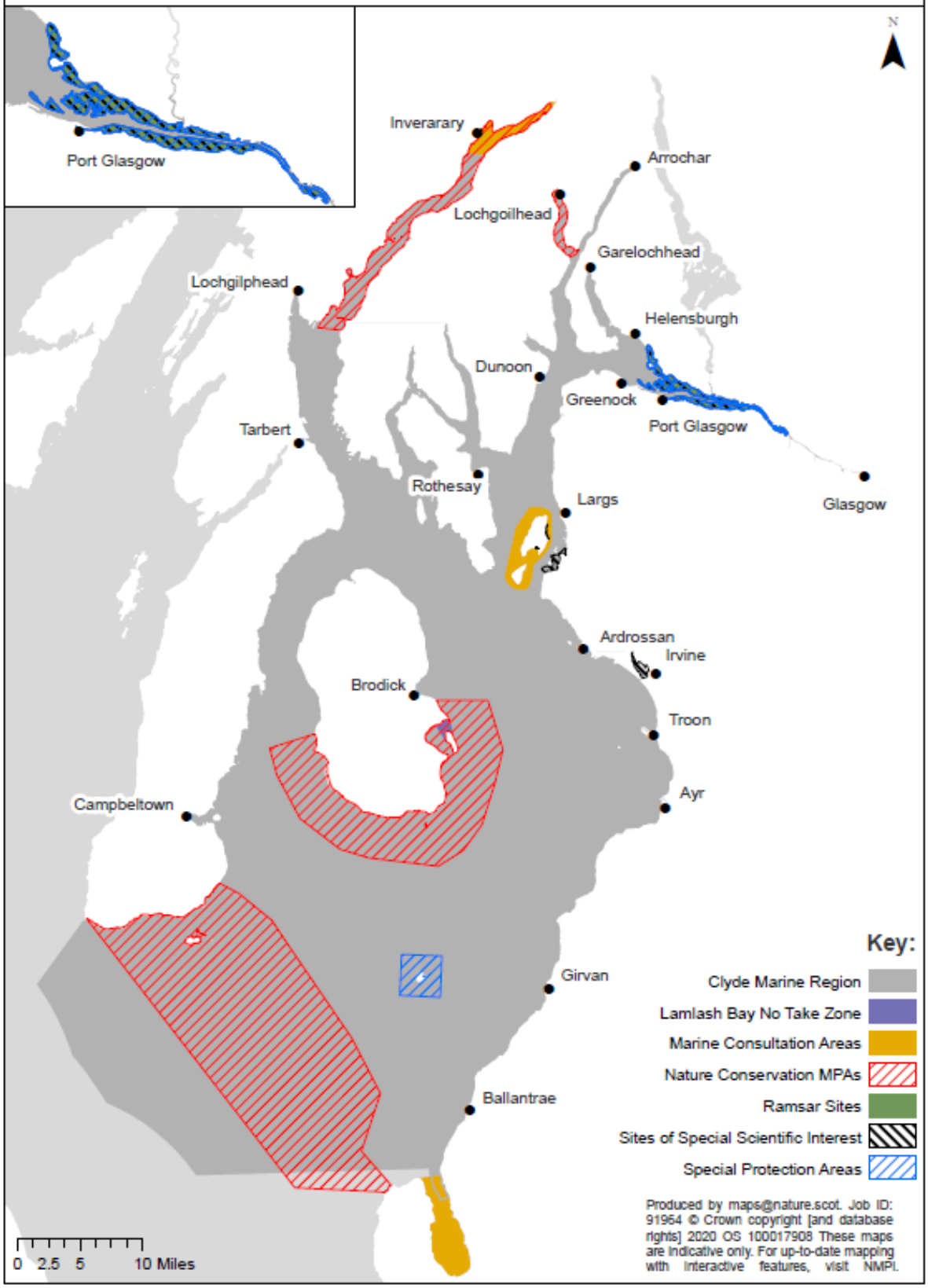
[92] MCCIP Report Card 2020 (https://bit.ly/3Uu1gO5), please note many of the predictions are only made with medium confidence.

Supports Aim 2 and 3		a) relevant conservation objectives[93] and status of relevant Marine Protected Area network sites (Map NH 1 and Table 1), and other coastal designated sites (Map NH 2 and Table 1) and European sites; b) the actions identified in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy[94].
Supports Obj NH 1-2 Supports Aim 3	**Policy NH 3**	Proposals for biodiversity and/or ecosystem enhancement will be encouraged where they align with the other policies within this Plan, demonstrate consideration of the effects of the proposal on the wider ecosystem and take potential climate change impacts on the proposal into account.
Supports Obj NH 1 & 2 Supports Aim 3	**Policy NH 4**	Proposals for development and/or use that may limit the ability of diadromous fish species and other mobile species to migrate safely through the Clyde Marine Region should demonstrate that they have considered if suitable mitigation measures are in place.

Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj NH 1 & 2	**Recommendation rNH 1**	Where a licence is not required, users carrying out small-scale hand cutting and/or gathering of seaweed are encouraged to consider the potential ecological cumulative impacts of multiple harvesting activities within proximity to each other. Communication between users carrying out seaweed harvesting operations within proximity to each other is encouraged.

[93] This information for each of the designated sites is available on SiteLink (https://bit.ly/37v12eZ). Note there is no specific management advice/guidance for the Inner Clyde RAMSAR site, however the boundaries of the Inner Clyde SPA and SSSI are coincident and the SPA Conservation Objectives and SSSI Citation and Operations Requiring Consent should be used.
[94] Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (https://bit.ly/38KmkWc).

Map NH 1. Marine Protected Area Network within the Clyde Marine Region (incl. Marine Consultation Areas)



Marine Consultation Areas are identified by NatureScot as deserving particular distinction in respect of the quality and sensitivity of the marine environment within them. Their selection encourages coastal communities and management bodies to be aware of marine conservation issues in the area.

Map NH 2. Other relevant coastal sites in the Clyde Marine Region that are not included in the Marine Protected Area network

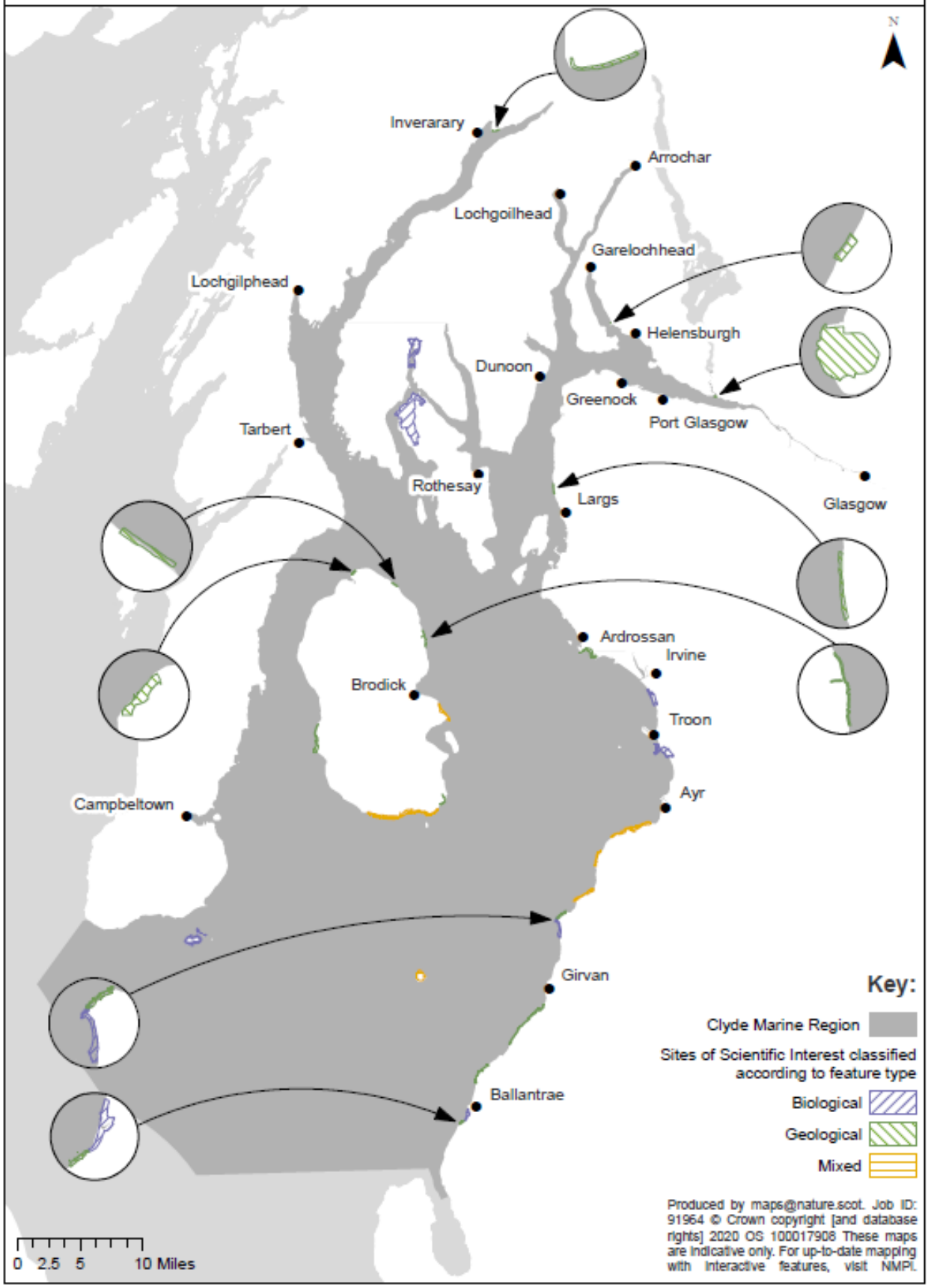


Table 2 –Relevant nature conservation designated sites to be considered by development(s) and use within/adjacent to the Clyde Marine Region

	Designation	Site name
Sites that contribute to the Marine Protected Area network in the Clyde Marine Region[95]		
1.	RAMSAR	Inner Clyde
2.	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Inner Clyde
3.	SPA	Ailsa Craig
4.	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NCMPA)	Clyde Sea Sill
5.	NCMPA	South Arran
6.	NCMPA	Upper Loch Fyne and Loch Goil
7.	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Inner Clyde
8.	SSSI	Ailsa Craig
9.	SSSI	Ballochmartin Bay
10.	SSSI	Kames Bay
11.	SSSI	Southannan Sands
12.	SSSI	Bogside Flats
Other relevant coastal sites within the Clyde Marine Region **These are located at the coast and are designated for geological features and biological features that are marine and/or coastal, or features that are reliant on the marine and/or coastal environment**		
13.	SSSI – Biological	Sanda Islands
14.	SSSI – Biological	Ruel Estuary
15.	SSSI – Biological	North end of Bute
16.	SSSI – Biological	Western Gailes
17.	SSSI – Biological	Troon Golf links and Foreshore
18.	SSSI – Biological	Turnberry Dunes
19.	SSSI – Biological	Ballantrae Shingle Beach
20.	SSSI – Geological	Strone Point, North Loch Fyne
21.	SSSI – Geological	Rhu Point
22.	SSSI – Geological	Dumbarton Rock
23.	SSSI – Geological	Largs Coast section
24.	SSSI – Geological	Ardrossan to Saltcoats coast
25.	SSSI – Geological	Turnberry Lighthouse to Port Murray
26.	SSSI – Geological	Girvan to Ballantrae Coast
27.	SSSI – Geological	Scavoch
28.	SSSI – Geological	North Newton Shore
29.	SSSI – Geological	Laggan
30.	SSSI – Geological	Corrie foreshore and Limestone Mines
31.	SSSI – Geological	South Coast of Arran
32.	SSSI – Geological	Dippin Head
33.	SSSI – Geological	Drumadoon - Tormore
34.	SSSI – Mixed	Maidens to Doonfoot
35.	SSSI – Mixed	Ailsa Craig
36.	SSSI - Mixed	Clauchlands Point - Corrygills

[95] The Historic Marine Protected Area Iona I is also part of the Marine Protected Area Network in the Clyde Marine Region, but it is not relevant to the policies within this chapter.

More information on each of these sites is available at: https://bit.ly/37v12eZ.

Management advice for NCMPAs is available here:

- South Arran MPA (https://bit.ly/4iTIHNe)
- Upper Loch Fyne and Loch Goil (https://bit.ly/3E98l1t)
- Clyde Sea Sill management (https://bit.ly/4chNQMM)

Management advice for the Ailsa Craig SPA is available here (https://bit.ly/4gLb2Hg)

Further information

- NatureScot (https://bit.ly/3aP5xTH) is the public body responsible for natural heritage in Scotland.
- Marine Directorate (https://bit.ly/3Um4qTO) is the government agency responsible for the integrated management of Scotland's seas. Marine Directorate have provided guidance for the protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance for Scottish Inshore Waters (https://bit.ly/3NKAUmV).
- Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code (https://bit.ly/2RyVgn8) provides guidance to those watching marine wildlife or who may encounter it during other marine and coastal activities.
- Scottish Outdoor Access Code (https://bit.ly/2vqYmkh) provides guidance on looking after the environment when you are outdoors.
- Planning Authority Biodiversity information:
    - Argyll and Bute Council (https://bit.ly/2O7H95Q)
    - Glasgow City Council (https://bit.ly/2vvYFul)
    - Inverclyde Council (https://bit.ly/2RRyxRW)
    - Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park (https://bit.ly/2tPMUyw)
    - North Ayrshire Council (https://bit.ly/3YfZX6t)
    - Renfrewshire Council (https://bit.ly/4whhzPl)
    - South Ayrshire Council (https://bit.ly/3Um4RNW)
    - South Lanarkshire Council (https://bit.ly/2XySd1A)
    - West Dunbartonshire Council (https://bit.ly/4eYLt1S)
- Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Biodiversity. This guidance sets out the Scottish Ministers' expectations for implementing NPF4 policies which support the cross-cutting NPF4 outcome 'improving biodiversity' (https://bit.ly/4cUtnQ5)
- The Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FEAST - https://bit.ly/3NEvEkO) has been developed by JNCC, NatureScot and Marine Directorate and the tool enables users to explore what is known about MPA protected feature sensitivity to pressures and the marine activities that can cause them.
- The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (https://bit.ly/419arGy)
- Information on the Conservation of Wild Salmon and specific regulations, is available on the Scottish Government website (https://bit.ly/4fhtFi2).
- The Ramsar convention seeks contracting parties to adopt the 'wise use' of wetlands approach (https://bit.ly/2RTooo0). This approach delivers conservation and sustainable use of wetland and the services they provide, for the benefit of people and nature.
- Priority Marine Features (PMFs) (https://bit.ly/2uIslno). Some PMFs are protected separately through other legislation or other designations, such as the Habitats Directive, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species, Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat/species and the International Union for Conservation of Nature Global Red list status.

- The Green Blue is a joint environment programme between the Royal Yachting Association and British Marine, which aims to inspire sustainable recreational boating for cleaner, healthier waters (https://bit.ly/2O64Awo).
- The Scottish Government has developed guidance in relation to the offence of seal harassment at designated seal haul-out sites (https://bit.ly/48jL8UU).

General Policy 6: Non-Native Species



Carpet sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) covering blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) found in Loch Fyne.

Non-native species are those that have been intentionally or unintentionally introduced outside their native range, often as an outcome of human activity. Once established, if these species threaten biodiversity and/or cause economic damage, they are referred to as 'invasive'. The annual cost of invasive non-native species to marine-based industries (e.g. shipping and aquaculture) in Scotland is estimated to be £7m[96]. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the leading legislation in Scotland for addressing non-native species. The Non-Native Species: Code of Practice sets out guidance on how to ensure that non-native species do not cause harm to Scotland's environment[97].

Clyde Marine Region Context

The Clyde Marine Region is known to have 12 marine non-native species and the arrival of other species, which are already present in other parts of the UK and Ireland, is likely. Under the Water Framework Directive, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) report on several non-native species which are present in the Clyde Marine Region and classify water bodies according to pressures, such as non-native species (see Map NNS 1). These include leathery sea squirt (*Styela clava*), carpet sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*), Chinese mitten crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*), wireweed (*Sargassum muticum*) and common cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*). Also present in the Clyde Marine Region are: a non-native bryozoan (*Tricelleria inopinata*), a hydroid (*Cordylophora caspia*), the acorn barnacle (*Semibalanus balanoides*), an orange sheath tunicate (*Botrylloides violaceus*), green sea fingers (*Codium fragile fragile*), Japanese skeleton shrimp (*Caprella mutica*), and orange tipped sea squirt (*Corella eumyota*). Non-native species are extremely difficult, and often impossible, to eradicate once established, so for these species good biosecurity is paramount. It should be noted that, whilst not a marine species, Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) is spread by the sea along the Clyde coastline. In addition, American mink (*Neovison vison*) habitat is often alongside water bodies, including coastlines, and this species has a detrimental impact on some ground nesting birds and water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*).

Island ecosystems, being relatively isolated from mainland areas, are highly vulnerable to the impacts of non-native species. This includes both plants and animals. In particular, the introduction by people (deliberate or accidental) of predatory mammals including cats, rats and mice on islands can impact seabird populations and other ground nesting birds such as breeding waders. For example, the population of puffins (*Fratercula arctica*) on Ailsa Craig is now recovering following the removal of rats from the island[98].

Aquaculture of non-native species can provide economic value, for example rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*). When non-native fish and shellfish are

[96] Clyde Marine Region Assessment (2017) (https://bit.ly/2TQNxCg)
[97] Non-native Species: code of practice (2012) (https://bit.ly/36BjTnx)
[98] Ailsa Craig: Before and After the Eradication of Rats in 1991 (https://bit.ly/43JbVsU)

introduced to properly secured enclosures or closed water bodies, they are not considered as 'released' non-native species[99]. Some operators rear all-female or sterile triploid strains which are unlikely to spawn if they escape from farms. Pacific oysters are not considered to be a release, as Scottish waters are currently too cold for spat to settle and spawn. There are concerns that warming sea temperatures may result in the Pacific oyster being able to recruit in parts of the UK, including in Northern Ireland, by 2040; this could lead to the species becoming invasive[100]. Future management of oyster farming should consider the impacts of climate change on oyster reproduction. The Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement[101] is in place to minimise the risk of spreading non-native species. The Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture has set out the intention to develop a Code of Good Practice for seaweed cultivation[102].

Good biosecurity practice should consider the international standards set out by the Convention on Biological Diversity: prevention of introduction and establishment of non-native species is the best option, ecologically and economically; for newly arriving species early warning and rapid response (eradication) is the next priority; and long-term control measures (including restoration of the original native wildlife) should be strategic and planned. The public can also play a role in reducing the risk of spread by being aware of and applying good practice, for example when moving equipment for recreational activities.

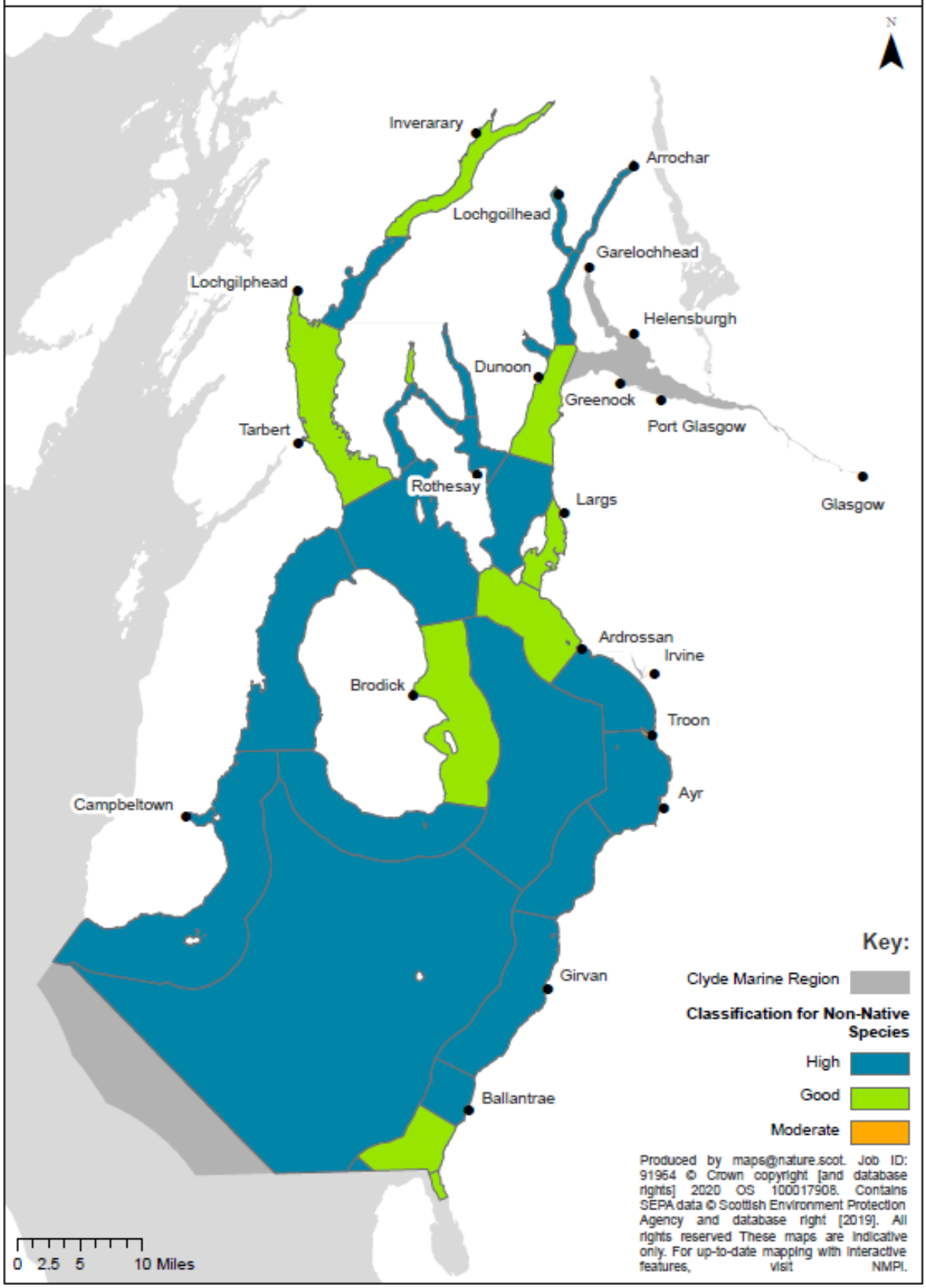
Objective		
	Objective NNS 1	The risk of introduction and spread of non-native species is reduced in the Clyde Marine Region through improved management of the known pathways. The impacts of non-native species on both the ecosystem and the economy are minimised.
Policy		
Supports Obj NNS 1 Supports Aim 3	**Policy NNS 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered that they have minimised the risk of introducing or spreading non-native species affecting seabirds and/or the ecological or recreational value of coastal habitats. Proposals should refer to the Scottish Government's Non-Native Species: Code of Practice[103]. Where relevant, a site- or operation-based biosecurity plan should be developed in line with best practice Marine Biosecurity Planning guidance.

[99] Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (https://bit.ly/3Yfo19z)
[100] Marine Climate Change Impact Partnership – Climate Change Report Card 2020 (https://bit.ly/3Uu1gO5).
[101] Scottish Government information on cultivating seaweed (https://bit.ly/2vqZXGN).
[102] Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture 2023 (https://bit.ly/4crGdVK)
[103] Scottish Government's Non-Native Species: Code of Practice (https://bit.ly/3Yr5W8J)

Recommendations for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj NNS 1	**Recommendation rNNS 1**	Initiatives are encouraged to research, eradicate and/or prevent the spread of non-native species.
Supports Obj NNS 1	**Recommendation rNNS 2**	All marine users in the Clyde Marine Region should make every effort to: a) conform to the Scottish Government Code of Practice on Non-native species[104], the voluntary Clyde Marine Region Biosecurity Plan[105] and, where relevant, the voluntary Loch Fyne Community Biosecurity Plan[106], b) proactively consider the risk of introducing or spreading non-native species, c) put in place biosecurity management measures to minimise the risk of introducing or spreading non-native species, and d) where relevant, develop a site-, event- or operation-based biosecurity plan in line with best practice Marine Biosecurity Planning guidance.

[104] Scottish Government's Non-Native Species: Code of Practice (https://bit.ly/3Yr5W8J)
[105] Voluntary Clyde Marine Region Biosecurity Plan (https://bit.ly/4ffX7VH)
[106] Voluntary Loch Fyne Community Biosecurity Plan (https://bit.ly/34JUtEF)

Map NNS 1. Scottish Environmental Protection Agency water body classification relating to marine non-native species



Further information

- To report sightings of suspected non-native species, please visit Scotland's Environment Invasive non-native species website (https://bit.ly/36E3i2a) or call Scotland's Environmental and Rural Services (SEARS) Helpline on 0845 230 2050.
- The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Ballast Waste Management (BWM) Convention was adopted to improve the global regulation of the transfer of non-native species. The IMO provides a list of guidelines and guidance documents related to the BMW Convention (https://bit.ly/3NEafs1).
- Marine Directorate: Marine Invasive Non-Native Species information page (https://bit.ly/2GxdOOf).
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency: The river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district: 2015–2027, Chapter 8 Pressures from the spread of invasive non-native species (https://bit.ly/36x7m4t).
- The Code of Practice on Non-Native Species for Scotland (https://bit.ly/36BjTnx).
- Voluntary Clyde Marine Region Biosecurity Plan (https://bit.ly/4ffX7VH). Contact the CMPP to obtain posters to enable marine users to identify non-native species.
- The voluntary Loch Fyne Community Biosecurity Plan (https://bit.ly/34JUtEF) was developed in partnership with stakeholders in Loch Fyne and provides best practice guidance on identifying threats and mitigating actions against carpet sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*), which is present in the Loch. The actions listed in the Plan are also useful against other marine invasive species.
- Marine Biosecurity Planning (2014) (https://bit.ly/49hANuk)
- The Great Britain Non-Native Species Secretariat (GBNNSS) has responsibility for helping to coordinate the approach to invasive non-native species in Great Britain (https://bit.ly/4cVvWRZ). The GBNNSS promotes best practice guidelines for water users to prevent the spread of non-native species, known as Check, Clean, Dry (https://bit.ly/36AAtUj):
    - **Check** your equipment, boat, and clothing after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.
    - **Clean** everything thoroughly as soon as you can, paying attention to areas that are damp or hard to access. Use hot water if possible.
    - **Dry** everything for as long as you can before using elsewhere as some invasive plants and animals can survive for over two weeks in damp conditions.

General Policy 7: Marine Litter


A beach clean on the Kintyre Peninsula.

This chapter contributes to achieving the strategic directions set out within the Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland[107]; where objectives contribute to a specific strategic direction, this is indicated in brackets. The Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland works in coordination with Scotland's National Litter and Flytipping Strategy[108], and is also relevant to delivering Scotland's Circular Economy Waste Route Map to 2030[109], part of which aims to maximise the reuse, recycling and recovery of resources instead of treating them as waste.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Marine Litter is defined as: 'any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment'[110]. Marine litter is found across the Clyde Marine Region (See Map ML 1). Shallow coastal areas of depths less than 40 m have a much greater abundance of marine litter than deeper waters[111]. Greater abundances of marine litter have been found in bays which are more sheltered. This is reflected in the Clyde Marine Region where, due to the prevailing south westerly winds, litter congregation areas or 'sinks' are found in sheltered areas at the top of the Clyde Sea lochs and also south-facing shores, such as Helensburgh, Arrochar and Lochgoilhead[112]. It is thought that 62,000 pieces of litter a year gather at the litter sink in Arrochar[113].

The Clyde Marine Region has the second highest average beach litter loading[114]. The majority of marine litter found is made up of plastic and sanitary items[115]. Other items such as paper, metal and glass are also present but at much smaller proportions[116]. Plastic items make up the majority of litter found and will persist in the environment for hundreds of years. All plastics progressively fragment into microplastics through mechanical action and photo degradation, which are harmful to both marine and human life. However, evidence shows that the number of plastic bags and plastic bottles found remains low and constant after 2013. Whilst at a lower level than plastic items, sanitary items are trending upwards at the fastest rate with the highest proportion in Scotland found in the Clyde Marine Region[117]. Marine litter related to angling, fishing and shipping are also increasing, whilst indicators related to syringes and smoking debris are also showing signs of a steady incline[118].

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[107] Marine litter strategy for Scotland (https://bit.ly/4w5UFdI)
[108] National Litter and Flytipping Strategy (https://bit.ly/47QeWJ5)
[109] Scotland Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030 (https://bit.ly/41awA7p)
[110] UN Environment Programme, Marine litter definition (https://bit.ly/4wgbsLa)
[111] Marine debris, a growing problem: Sources, distribution, composition and impacts by Stelios Katsanevakis (2008) in *Marine Pollution: New Research*. Nova Science Publishers pp 53-100
[112] A video was developed to illustrate how litter moves around the inner firth and estuary, eventually congregating in litter sinks (https://bit.ly/4e1OVaO)
[113] The Arrochar Litter Sink - Marine Directorate Science Topic Sheet 98 (https://bit.ly/3pTMAIE)
[114] Beach Litter, Scottish Marine Assessment (2020) (https://bit.ly/42K0GiF)
[115] Beach Litter, Scottish Marine Assessment (2020) (https://bit.ly/42K0GiF)
[116] Beach Litter, Scottish Marine Assessment (2020) (https://bit.ly/42K0GiF)
[117] Beach Litter, Scottish Marine Assessment (2020) (https://bit.ly/42K0GiF)
[118] Pilot Scottish Beach Litter Performance Indicators (2020) (https://bit.ly/2S4C3ZE).

However, progress has been made in some areas. Indicators related to drinks cans, food packaging and balloons are also decreasing[119].

Abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear, also known as ghost gear, is another problematic form of marine litter that can have unwanted impacts on the ecosystem as the ghost gear continues to catch marine life. Ongoing initiatives that help tackle this issue include the Ghost Gear Initiative[120], which Scotland signed up to in 2017, and KIMO Fishing for Litter. KIMO Fishing for Litter supports the fishing industry in removing marine litter from the sea and seabed. Harbours in Troon, Girvan, Rothesay, Tarbert, and Campbeltown are currently participating in this project[121].

It is important to note that approximately 80% of marine litter comes from terrestrial sources. As such, this plan takes a broad approach to policy, which takes into account terrestrial sources, as this is essential in order to prevent litter entering the marine environment. One way this can occur is by litter entering inland watercourses and ending up in the marine environment. In the region, a number of volunteers, community groups and charities carry out beach and riverine cleans, some over a long period of time.

Objectives		
	**Objective ML 1**	Development(s) and/or use does not contribute to marine litter in the Clyde Marine Region (SD2[122]).
	**Objective ML 2**	Development(s) and/or use seek to contribute to the circular economy (SD3[123]).
	**Objective ML 3**	An increase in beach and riverine cleaning activities and data collected through such activities which contribute to the evidence base on marine litter (SD1&4[124]) within the Clyde Marine Region.
Policies		
Supports Obj ML 1, 2 & 3 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy ML 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should consider the inclusion of a litter minimisation and management plan for its lifespan of the proposal, having regard to the following elements where appropriate: construction, active use and any decommissioning/remediation required. Where a plan is not included, proposals should demonstrate proportionate measures to avoid release of litter throughout the lifespan of the proposal.

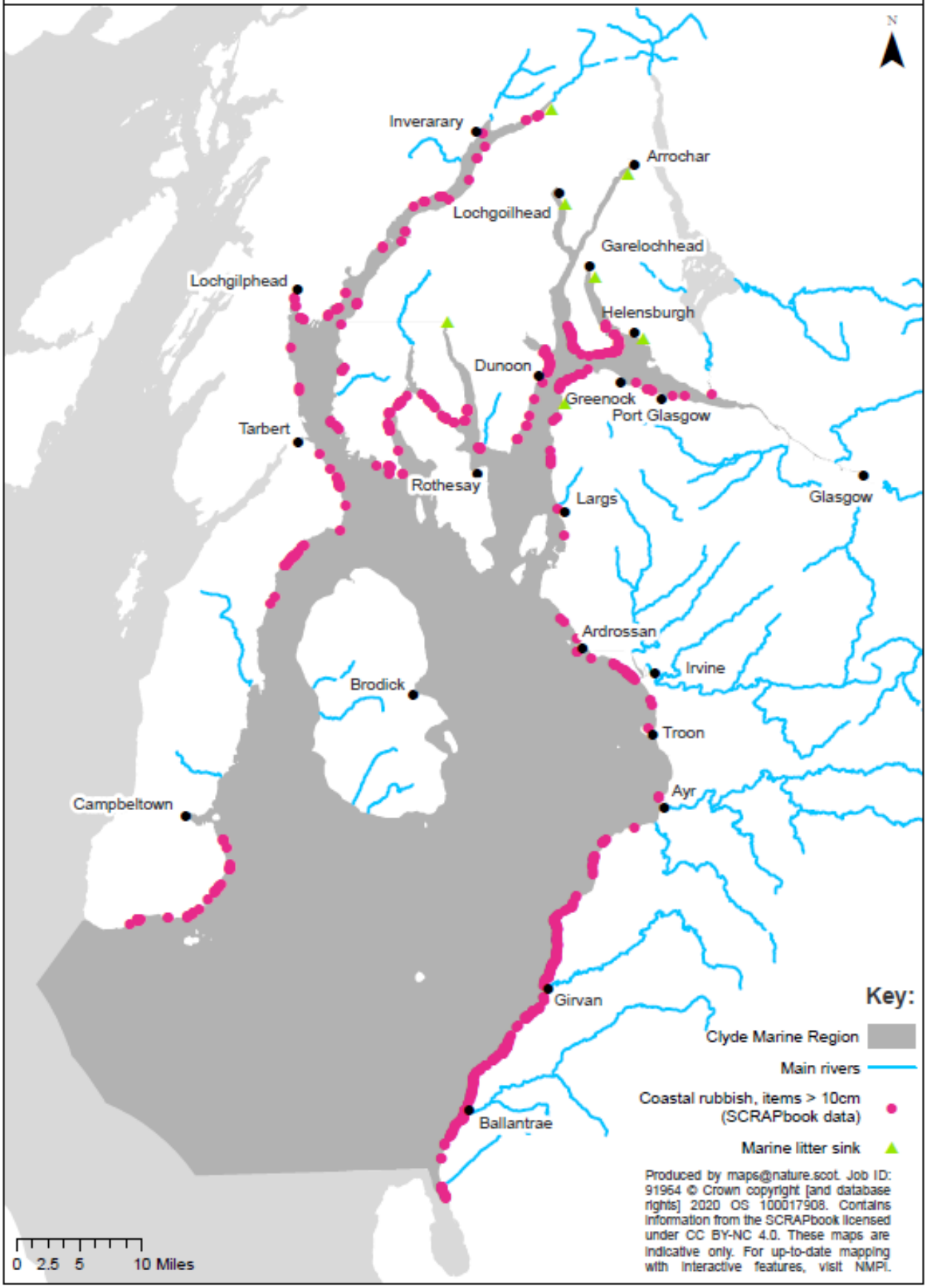
[119] Pilot Scottish Beach Litter Performance Indicators (2020) (https://bit.ly/2S4C3ZE)
[120] The Global Ghost Gear Initiative (https://bit.ly/4d5OFcd)
[121] Fishing For Litter Scotland – Scottish harbours (https://bit.ly/3UgMQ3t).
[122] Strategic Direction 2 - Reduce marine and coastal based sources of litter, with a focus on the most problematic sources, in coordination with land sourced litter being reduced by the national litter and fly-tipping strategy.
[123] Strategic Direction 3 - Contribute to a low carbon economy by treating 'waste as a resource' and seizing the economic and environmental opportunities associated with the Zero Waste Plan.
[124] Strategic Direction 4: Improve monitoring at a Scottish scale and develop measures for strategy evaluation.

Supports Obj ML 1, 2 & 3 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy ML 2**	Wastewater infrastructure should be designed, wherever practicable, to reduce the risk of litter entering the marine environment through watercourses or any other pathway.

Recommendations for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj ML 1	**Recommendation rML 1**	Through the Fishing for Litter scheme, or other similar schemes, port or harbour operators are encouraged to provide facilities to fishing vessels to dispose of any litter collected.
Supports Obj ML 1	**Recommendation rML 2**	Businesses and organisations managing or handling plastic pellets, flakes or powders (nurdles), including shippers, transporters and recyclers, should adopt best practice guidance to prevent these plastics from entering waste water treatment systems and/or the marine environment.
Supports Obj ML 1 and 2	**Recommendation rML 3**	Development(s) and/or use in the marine and coastal environment should take measures to address marine litter entering the marine environment and should consider opportunities to contribute to the circular economy, for example by recycling old equipment. Initiatives which facilitate this are supported.
Supports Obj ML 1 and 3	**Recommendation rML 4**	The Coastal Litter Management Guidelines for Duty Bodies[125] should be followed in carrying out beach cleaning operations. The support by public authorities of local community beach cleaning is encouraged where appropriate.

[125] Coastal Litter Management Guidelines for Duty Bodies Firth of Clyde Forum 2012 (https://bit.ly/2RWC8yd)

Map ML 1. Main rivers feeding into the Clyde Marine Region and the location of coastal rubbish and marine litter sinks around the Region



Further information

- Coastal Litter Management Guidelines for Duty Bodies Firth of Clyde Forum (2012) (https://bit.ly/2RWC8yd)
- The Scottish Government updated the Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland in 2022 to build on the positive work already achieved, and continue to provide a strategic approach to reducing the amount of marine litter in our seas (https://bit.ly/4v44c4w).
- National Litter and Flytipping Strategy and National Litter and Flytipping Action Plan 2023-2024 (https://bit.ly/4e2lc1e).
- The Marine Conservation Society (https://bit.ly/37xuZuS) and its annual Beachwatch beach cleaning campaign (https://bit.ly/40iF64R).
- Keep Scotland Beautiful is a charity that campaigns, educates and acts on a range of local, national and global sustainability issues, including marine litter (https://bit.ly/37CtX0K). Upstream Battle is a campaign tackling the source of marine litter along the length of the river Clyde and its tributaries (https://bit.ly/37C86q7).
- Scotland Circular Economy and Waste Route Map to 2030 (https://bit.ly/41awA7p) Zero Waste Scotland works to enable change around issues such as food waste, sustainability and helping Scotland move towards a Circular Economy (https://bit.ly/2u2Z0Er).
- Fidra is a Scottish environmental charity that runs various projects around marine litter, in particular The Great Nurdle Hunt (https://bit.ly/2RDEsvk) and The Cotton Bud Project (https://bit.ly/4duwPkx)
- Operation Clean Sweep is an initiative created by the plastics industry to reduce plastic pellet loss to the environment (https://bit.ly/2RWlFdC). It is international and, in the UK, it is led by the British Plastics Federation.
- SCRAPBook used aerial photography to identify marine litter across the Scottish coastline. Coastal rubbish aerial photography locations are available on NMPi (https://bit.ly/2K5xlqR).
- Fishing For Litter, led by KIMO (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) is an innovative project working with fishers to reduce marine litter (https://bit.ly/3J9Qdlm).
- Scotland signed up to the Global Ghost Gear Initiative in 2017 (https://bit.ly/2tNJ0WR). Ghost Fishing UK aims to remove abandoned, lost and discarded gear from the marine environment (https://bit.ly/4fiRI0d). Report ghost gear sightings here (https://bit.ly/3BVJ35v).

General Policy 8:
Connecting People to the Clyde Marine Region

Clyde Marine Region Context

People living by and visiting the Clyde Marine Region rely on a healthy and resilient marine and coastal environment for a range of activities and functions. Employment, recreation and tourism, transportation, natural sea defence, historical and cultural experiences, and research and education opportunities are of value to the communities and visitors of the Region. Some communities have a strong historical connection with the Region as a result of the role played in supporting important maritime industries like shipbuilding and fishing. The Clyde's past continues to influence community identities and how people view the Clyde.



A community beach clean.

Although coastal communities around the Region are in close proximity to the water, some feel disconnected from the Clyde because it is perceived as a barrier – for example by some Glasgow communities or those who are more geographically isolated and rely on ferry connections. Much of the diverse marine life found below water is out of sight and inaccessible to most people, leading to a lack of understanding and awareness, which can contribute towards a sense of disconnection. Enhancing people's interest, awareness and/or knowledge of the Region, its heritage and the opportunities it may provide could help address communities' desires to feel more connected to the Clyde Marine Region[126]. This in turn will benefit the communities and the marine environment.

Coastal communities around the Clyde Marine Region are diverse. The majority of towns, such as Helensburgh, Gourock, Largs and Troon, are characterised by an older age profile amongst the population[127]. Other towns are characterised by their reliance on employment in manufacturing, retail, wholesale, transport and administration like Greenock and Ayr, or the importance of the fishing industry in towns like Campbeltown and Tarbert. There is also a military community based in Garelochhead[128] (see Map CONNECT 1). Glasgow, a major conurbation and the largest city in Scotland, originated at an important crossing point in the river Clyde and developed into a major port. The Region has a mix of rural and urban populations[129]. These diverse communities are interested in how the marine environment is being used and are often able to offer valuable knowledge and perspectives specific to their locality[130]. For example, the needs of island

[126] Delivery of public dialogue process to aid the development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan (2018) (https://bit.ly/2RX53T0) and The EMFF Clyde-wide Public Dialogue Report (2020) (https://bit.ly/2RJctd3).
[127] Scotland's Census 2002 – Rounded population estimates (https://bit.ly/4u8mK2w)
[128] Duffy, P. D., and T. A. Stojanovic (2018) The Potential for Assemblage Thinking in Population Geography: Assembling Population, Space and Place. Population, Space and Place 24 (3) e2097 (https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2097)
[129] Defining Scotland by Rurality (https://bit.ly/2RZygwl).
[130] Delivery of public dialogue process to aid the development of the Clyde Regional Marine Plan (2018) (https://bit.ly/2RX53T0) and The EMFF Clyde-wide Public Dialogue Report (2020) (https://bit.ly/2RJctd3). Feedback from the general public during the pre-consultation, both at events and through responses.

communities are different from the needs of urban communities[131]. Communities can therefore add great value when they are involved in decision-making processes, ensuring their views are considered in relevant planning and licensing decisions.

People around the Clyde Marine Region play a valuable role in supporting the marine and coastal environment and the local economy. There are a range of ongoing community initiatives, projects and interest groups conducting activities that help deliver the aims of this Plan. For example, communities actively organise and take part in beach cleans, such as Beachwatch events[132]; they responsibly use the Clyde for recreational purposes – the Firth of Clyde Coastal Rowing Club received a Green Flag award in 2019[133] which recognises their work to improve the environment; they support the circular economy – the Isle of Arran was awarded 'Plastic Free Community' status in 2019[134]; and they celebrate the Clyde's seafood heritage through events like the Tarbert Seafood Festival and the Festival of the Sea run by the Clyde Fishermen's Trust.

Place names show that people of the Region were once Gaelic speaking due to the area historically being in the eastern part of the Gaelic kingdom Dalriada, which was founded in the 5th century. The number of Gaelic speakers has declined seriously since the start of the 20th century, although its importance as a component of cultural heritage has been recognised more recently through the number of schools offering Gaelic Medium Education in the area, and the Gaelic Language Plans of the Scottish Government, Argyll and Bute Council, and the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Fishing and travel by sea were important to the original Gaelic-speaking communities and this is reflected in their musical heritage, which includes the Gaelic songs sung at the National Mòd which is hosted approximately every six years in Dunoon.

Objectives		
	**Objective CONNECT 1**	Local communities and marine users are meaningfully engaged in the decision-making process for proposals in the Clyde Marine Region.
	**Objective CONNECT 2**	People's knowledge and enjoyment of the Clyde Marine Region is improved through sustainable and responsible use and/or experience of the natural environment, its historic environment and cultural assets and locally farmed or sourced products. This leads to an improvement in people's ocean literacy[135], sense of place, health & wellbeing and supports the local economy.
	**Objective CONNECT 3**	Responsible public access to the marine and coastal environment is improved in the Clyde Marine Region.
Policies		

[131] The National Islands Plan (2019) (https://bit.ly/31qsl7V).
[132] Beachwatch beach clean events (https://bit.ly/40iF64R).
[133] Firth of Clyde Coastal Rowing Club (https://bit.ly/3Uihc5V).
[134] Think About Plastic (https://bit.ly/3AcWBJm).
[135] "Ocean literacy is defined as an understanding of the ocean's influence on you, and your influence on the ocean. Ocean literacy is a way not only to increase the awareness of the public about the oceans, but it is an approach to encourage all citizens and stakeholders to have a more responsible and informed behaviour towards the ocean and its resources." – Ocean Literacy, UNESCO (https://bit.ly/2wKkDL9).

Supports Obj CONNECT 1 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy CONNECT 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered taking a proportionate approach to the following: a) engagement with stakeholders from relevant sectors, especially where there might be direct interactions between different uses and/or developments; and b) where relevant, the general public has been informed and consulted during development of the proposal, particularly if the proposal could significantly impact local communities.
Supports Obj CONNECT 2 & 3 Supports Aim 2, 3 and 4	**Policy CONNECT 2**	Proposals for development and/or use which create and/or maintain coastal trails, paths and walkways, particularly those which connect coastal sites of local importance, are encouraged. These should be designed to prevent impacts on sensitive natural and cultural heritage.
Supports Obj CONNECT 2 & 3 Supports Aim 4	**Policy CONNECT 3**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered, where applicable, that: a) access rights to the marine environment are retained and improved; and b) access to the shore and water is optimised for sport, recreation and tourism, and safety issues have been addressed.

Recommendations for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj CONNECT 1	**Recommendation rCONNECT 1**	All marine users and the general public are encouraged to engage with formal consultation processes in public authority decision-making about development(s) and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region. This can be achieved individually or as a member of a community, interest or sports groups.
Supports Obj CONNECT 2 and 3	**Recommendation rCONNECT 2**	All users of the Clyde Marine Region should follow guidance set out in relevant codes and best practice guidelines, which include but are not limited to: *Natural Heritage* • Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code • A Guide to Best Practice for Watching Marine Wildlife • Scottish Outdoor Access Code • Scottish Entanglement Alliance Best Practice Guide for Fishermen *Non-Native Species* • Scottish Government Code of Practice on Non-Native Species • 'Check Clean Dry' Guidance *Sport, Recreation and Tourism* • Clyde Leisure Navigation Guide • The Green Guide to Coastal Boating

		• Catch and Release: A Guide to Best Practice • Outdoor events in Scotland – Guidance for organisers and land managers
Supports Obj CONNECT 2	**Recommendation rCONNECT 3**	Activities are encouraged which give opportunities for marine users, including the general public, to collect data (e.g. through citizen science projects).
Supports Obj CONNECT 2	**Recommendation rCONNECT 4**	Activities and experiences are encouraged which engage with those people living in and/or visiting the Clyde Marine Region to improve their interest, awareness and/or knowledge of the Region's natural heritage, historic environment, cultural heritage including the Gaelic language, and/or marine sport and recreation opportunities. Activities and experiences should be accessible to all, including those with protected characteristics, should help overcome physical, cultural and economic barriers to participation and should encourage independent living.
Supports Obj CONNECT 2	**Recommendation rCONNECT 5**	Activities are encouraged which engage local communities in identifying areas of marine litter accumulation, carrying out beach cleans, and/or communicating issues relating to marine litter. Beach clean organisers are encouraged to contribute to data collecting initiatives. This includes but is not limited to: the Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch campaign, Fidra's 'Great Nurdle Hunt' data collection project and Keep Scotland Beautiful initiatives, such as Upstream Battle.
Supports Obj CONNECT 2	**Recommendation rCONNECT 6**	Initiatives are encouraged to supply sustainable aquaculture and fisheries products from the Clyde Marine Region to local shops and restaurants to promote the 'Clyde brand' and enhance experiences for local people and visitors to the Region.

Further information

- Map your heritage portal, created by PERICLES, allows you to view and add data related to maritime cultural heritage (https://bit.ly/3hdLbXE). PERICLES is an EU-funded research and innovation project running from 2018 – 2021 to promote sustainable, participatory governance of cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions, including the west coast of Scotland.

To support responsible use of the Clyde Marine Region:

Natural Heritage

- Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code (https://bit.ly/4wgfDGW)
- A Guide to Best Practice for Watching Marine Wildlife (https://bit.ly/4tmJieT)
- Scottish Outdoor Access Code (https://bit.ly/3aTVXyM)
- Scottish Entanglement Alliance Best Practice Guide for Fishermen (https://bit.ly/48o9ixq)
- Skate Spotter (https://bit.ly/2GyUbp2)
- Sea Angling Diary (https://bit.ly/36FaRFL)

Historic Environment

- Canmore (https://bit.ly/2GxP2xC)
- Our Place in Time (https://bit.ly/2ZR8bb6)
- HES Heritage Portal (https://bit.ly/31k3qa7)
- HES Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes (https://bit.ly/31vxj7E)
- Pastmap (https://bit.ly/3nWq3sP)
- Dictionary of Scottish Architects (https://bit.ly/3q8QzlA)

Non-Native Species

- Code of Practice on Non-Native Species (https://bit.ly/2RExMgt)
- 'Check, Clean, Dry' Guidance (https://bit.ly/2GyuXac)

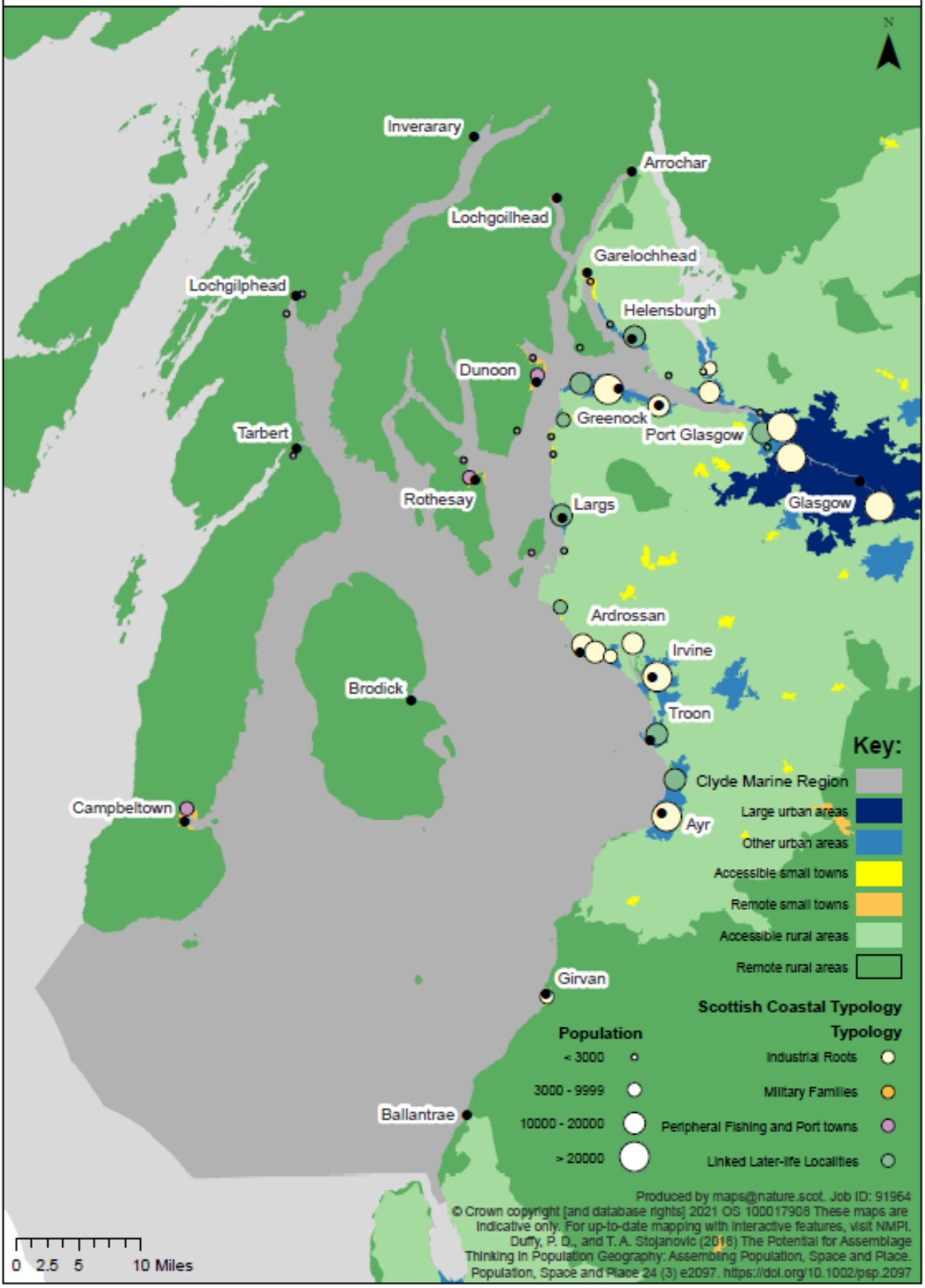
Marine Litter

- Marine Conservation Society Beachwatch (https://bit.ly/2GyUvnK)
- Upstream Battle (https://bit.ly/2U50dpl)
- Fidra's Great Nurdle Hunt (https://bit.ly/3aRi4Gh)

Sport, Recreation and Tourism

- Clyde Leisure Navigation Guide (https://bit.ly/3Yj68qg)
- The Green Guide to Coastal Boating (https://bit.ly/48nqTpB)
- Catch and Release (https://bit.ly/3NDx13d)
- Outdoor events in Scotland – Guidance for organisers and land managers (https://bit.ly/391LiAF)

Map CONNECT 1: Coastal communities around the Clyde Marine Region



Section 3: Sector Policies

Note that all General Policies must be considered in advance of Sector Policies, and Sector Policy 1 must be considered by all sectors.



Fishing boats at Tarbert Harbour.

Sector Policy 1: All Sectors

The Scottish Government launched their Blue Economy Vision in 2022[136]. It identifies 6 outcomes up to 2045 that will deliver long term aspirations for the marine environment, whilst ensuring that it encompasses economic growth and social inclusion and wellbeing. The accompanying document, Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy Approach, was published later that year[137]. Successful delivery of the Blue Economy Vision will require collective action from the public and private sectors, voluntary organisation, community groups and the general public.



Cloch lighthouse three miles south-west of Gourock.

Clyde Marine Region Context

The environment in the Clyde Marine Region supports many activities and provides benefits to society and the economy. The Region is an important recreational and cultural resource for the many hundreds of thousands of people who live around its shores and for visitors from further afield. Fish stocks have supported the development of the fishing industry at many settlements along the shores of the Clyde. The finfish farming industry relies on the ability of the environment to support their activities, for example by breaking down waste and purifying the water. The Region remains a focus for shipping and defence activities due to its natural sheltered deep water harbours. As sectors continue to grow and new sectors emerge, it is important that activities are carried out in a responsible and sustainable way that ensures we protect and enhance the environment as well as continue to enjoy the many benefits it provides. Cumulative impacts on the environment may occur as developments and use within sectors or across multiple sectors increase. Safe and appropriate multiple use of infrastructure and the marine area is essential to support future sustainable development and use, and can be achieved through the avoidance, minimisation and mitigation of negative impacts on other users, and taking advantage of synergies and partnerships where these are available.

All sectors should be consulted in the decision-making process and share data and information in relation to their own activities, where possible. It is also important to ensure that decisions on land at the coast are joined up with decisions in the marine area, enabling important infrastructure to be available in the right place on land to support marine activities and vice versa.

Applicants needing a marine licence may also require other consents. For guidance on national and regional authorisation, enforcement and assessments, see Annex 1.

[136] Scotland's Blue Economy Vision (2022) (https://bit.ly/4mR0TtG)
[137] Delivering Scotland's Blue Economy Approach (2022) (https://bit.ly/4ektrK8)

Objectives

	**Objective SEC 1**	Encourage the safe and appropriate multiple use of infrastructure and the marine spatial area between sectors[138] in the Clyde Marine Region, including local collaboration across and within sectors.
	**Objective SEC 2**	Ensure infrastructure, such as ports and harbours and those related to supply chain, adequately support sectors operating in the Clyde Marine Region, including onward links to the transport network outwith the Region. Any development aligns with the integrated transport objectives in the relevant Local Development Plan.
	**Objective SEC 3**	The availability of and access to knowledge and data which inform sustainable development, identify opportunities for protection and enhancement and strengthen our understanding of cumulative impacts and mitigation measures are improved in the Clyde Marine Region.
	**Objective SEC 4**	Cumulative impacts of development(s) and use in the Clyde Marine Region are mitigated.

Policies

Supports Obj SEC 1-4 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy SEC 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered: a) Avoiding or appropriately mitigating any adverse impacts on the efficient and safe movement or navigation of vessels around the Region, to and from strategic freight hubs, ports, harbours, marinas, moorings and anchorages, including ferry operations; b) demonstrating operational and/or technical mitigation where a proposals' benefits may outweigh navigational interference; c) the cumulative impacts of the proposal, both within and between sectors where possible; d) potential synergies and partnerships with other sectors; e) avoiding, minimising or mitigating any negative impact on other marine users; and f) avoiding any unacceptable burdens on existing infrastructure and services that cannot be resolved.
Supports Obj SEC 1 & 2 Supports Aim 2, 3 and 4	**Policy SEC 2**	Proposals for development and/or use are encouraged where they: a) provide important supply chain services for marine sectors; b) promote any opportunities for shared use of infrastructure and/or marine spatial area and collaboration between and within sectors; c) improve connectivity around the Clyde Marine Region, for example through multi-modal journey planning and active travel, taking into account different types of activity as well as different types of transport and links to other marine regions; or d) provide social, health & wellbeing and economic benefits to local communities and/or more widely, for example through the regeneration of coastal areas, particularly brownfield sites, and/or the diversification of the rural marine economy.

[138] Combining compatible activities in the same marine space can serve to share and reduce costs, protect the environment and generate further synergies between those activities making the best possible use of new technologies and innovations.

Recommendations for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj SEC 3	**Recommendation rSEC 1**	Efforts should be made by organisations and marine users to share data, which is not commercially sensitive, related to their activities in the marine and coastal environment to central databases and support open data initiatives to facilitate partnership working and increase knowledge of the Clyde Marine Region.
Supports Obj SEC 1	**Recommendation rSEC 2**	Efforts should be made by organisations to communicate with other relevant marine users where possible when they are planning to undertake works, including emergency works, in the Clyde Marine Region.
Supports Obj SEC 2	**Recommendation rSEC 3**	Efforts should be made by public authorities to work with sectoral interests and infrastructure owners to ensure that infrastructure is in place at ports and harbours, piers and slipways to support future sectoral requirements, including onward links to transport networks.

Further information

- Multi-Use in European Seas (MUSES) Project Case Study on the west coast of Scotland (https://bit.ly/3efYgOB).
- Marine Licensing: Applicant Guidance (https://bit.ly/4tprRKG)

Sector Policy 2: Sea Fisheries


Fishing boats in Tarbert Harbour.

Scotland's Fisheries Management Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's approach to manage sea fisheries in Scotland in partnership with our stakeholders through 'co-management' and in a way that balances environmental, social, and economic interests. The Fisheries Management Strategy[139] prioritises the preservation and sustenance of marine ecosystems and supporting jobs and livelihoods in the communities who rely on them. An Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement (IFMI) Programme of work is also underway to develop a more agile and response inshore fisheries management in Scotland[140]. The call for evidence for the new framework has closed and the findings have been published[141]. At the time of this plan's development, it is expected that a public consultation on inshore fisheries management proposals will take place and new proposals for the framework will take account of the feedback received.

The South West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (SWCRIFG) [142] ,a non-statutory body, is part of the Regional Inshore Fisheries Groups (RIFGs) network. The network was established to strengthen the management of Scotland's inshore fisheries and to provide opportunities for commercial inshore fisheries to have a focussed voice in wider marine management. The Network's Operational Plan was updated in 2025[143] which applies across all regions. It outlines the Network's strategic objectives and national outputs.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Sea fisheries encompasses all commercial fishing activity within inshore waters including trawling, dredging, pots/creels/traps, diving and line fishing. Most commercial fishing activity within the Clyde Marine Region is undertaken by vessels under 15 m and is focused on the trawl and creel fishery for Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), also known as prawns, langoustine, scampi or Dublin Bay prawn. King scallops (*Pecten maximus*), and now rarely queen scallops (*Aequipecten opercularis*), are also taken, mainly by dredging vessels (See Maps FISH 1-3). There are also creel fisheries for brown crab (*Cancer pagurus*), velvet crab (*Necora puber*), European lobsters (*Homarus gammarus*) and a small trap fishery for wrasse (*Labridae*). There is a dive fishery for a range of shellfish, and scientific trials of electrofishing for razor clams (*Ensis arcuatus*). Landings in the Clyde Marine Region are made by boats registered in Scotland and Northern Ireland and, to a lesser degree, the Isle of Man and other parts of the UK. Total Scottish direct employment in the fisheries sector in 2024 was 3,375 jobs, of which activity in the Campbeltown and Ayr Sea Fisheries Statistical Districts accounted for

[139] Future of Fisheries Management Strategy 2020-2030 (https://bit.ly/3wezUho) and Delivery Plan Update 2025 (https://bit.ly/3QMchvd)
[140] This is a commitment in the Programme for Government 2025-26 under 'Supporting our Rural Economy' (https://bit.ly/48zSUeN)
[141] Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement: Call for Evidence Analysis Report (2025) (https://bit.ly/4tCSoFf)
[142] South West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group (https://bit.ly/3Uof9x3).
[143] Scotland's Regional Inshore Fisheries Groups Network Operational Plan 2025 (https://bit.ly/4u0sL1s)

14.5% (543 jobs)[144]. Value of landings in 2024 for the same districts was £26M[145]. The sector remains important for supporting both direct and supply chain employment, including processing, haulage and export, particularly within more rural communities, such as the Kintyre peninsula, but also in other communities in Ayrshire, Lanarkshire and Glasgow.

The Clyde Marine Region Assessment (this assessment was published in 2017) identifies many concerns for fish and shellfish populations and highlights the decline in historic fisheries for herring and groundfish such as cod. Historically, the Clyde Marine Region was renowned for its herring (*Clupea harengus*) fishery and the reasons for the collapse of the fishery are not known. Other fisheries for cod (*Gadus morhua*), hake (*Merluccius merluccius*), saithe (*Pollachius virens*) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) peaked from the 1960s to the 1980s; however, landings of these stocks declined over the following years. Assessment of available survey data up to 2009 identified that rather than commercial species being entirely removed from the Clyde, the biomass of the six main commercial species in the late 2000s was approximately double that prior to the onset of trawling in the 1960s. However, the fish community was characterised by a reduced dominance of large commercial species and an increase in the stock of whiting, made up of mostly young individuals[146]. There are now fewer large adult finfish, meaning that many are below the size that can be legally caught and sold commercially.

In a PhD thesis published in 2025, the findings highlighted that bycatch discarding is a principal factor in shaping the fish populations, and meaningful recovery of fish stocks will require significantly lower fishing mortality[147]. However, it was acknowledged that there were limitations with the data used and further research is required to fill in gaps in knowledge and understanding. Brown crab, velvet crab and European lobster are currently fished close to or above FMSY (fishing at Maximum Sustainable Yield) in the Clyde and more data is needed to assess the state of king scallop stocks[148]. It is envisaged that as survey coverage becomes more standardised from year to year and the time series increases in length, there should be sufficient data to provide a stock assessment for king scallops in this area. King scallop landings have decreased from 400 tonnes in the late 1970s to 133 tonnes in 2022[149].

Over time, fishing infrastructure in the Clyde has changed; there has been a reduction in processing plants, access to ice and boat servicing facilities is limited, and harbours like Ayr and Troon no longer support local fish markets[150]. The Clyde fishing fleet is primarily composed of small to medium boats, many of which are several decades old and mostly fish inshore[151].

Fisheries Management

There are ongoing initiatives to improve the health of stocks through catch limits and quotas, landing obligations[152], gear selectivity and area/temporal management. Fish quotas are the amounts of fish of different species that may be legally landed in the UK and the Scottish Government

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[144] Scottish sea fisheries statistics 2024 (https://bit.ly/3ZLrrBY). Figures are recorded according to Sea Fisheries Statistical Districts, so they do not accurately reflect the geographic area of the Clyde Marine Region. The Campbeltown district includes part of Argyll.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Clyde Ecosystem Review 2012 (https://bit.ly/4tfUyej)
[147] The Role of Discarding in the Dynamics of the Demersal Fish Community of the Firth of Clyde by Ana Adao (2025) (https://bit.ly/3R3HUjP)
[148] Fish and Shellfish Stocks 2016, Marine Directorate Science (https://bit.ly/3YhaK0g).
[149] Scottish scallop stocks: results of 2023 stock assessments (https://bit.ly/4akrB8n)
[150] Communication from Clyde Fishermen's Association
[151] Communication from Clyde Fishermen's Association
[152] All species of fish and shellfish that are quota regulated must be landed. For more information, visit landing obligation guidance on the Marine Directorate website (https://bit.ly/4fkEkc5).

allocates quota to Scottish fishers[153]. There is regulation in the Clyde regarding the size of vessel, and type of fishing gear that may be used in various fisheries. New voluntary measures were introduced in 2026 for the Firth of Clyde cod box including a voluntary seasonal closure in place between the 28th February and the 1st April, covering both static and mobile gear, an expanded science programme, and revised administrative licence conditions to limit access to the wider Firth of Clyde[154]. The Fisheries Management Strategy committed to implementing a catching policy which would aim to reduce unwanted catches of fish and bycatch of sensitive marine species. The proposals were set out in Scotland's Future Catching Policy which went out to consultation in February 2026[155]. Marine Directorate Compliance is responsible for monitoring and inspection at sea and in ports to ensure that marine and fishing laws are not breached. There are ongoing stock assessments at the larger ICES[156] area level to measure the health of finfish stocks and there are stock assessments at the Clyde level for most shellfish stocks.

The plan supports actions which will help to move towards achieving FSMY (fishing at Maximum Sustainable Yield) for those stocks which are currently fished above this level and also actions which help to sustain and increase stocks. Via the proposed IFMI programme, there is a move to strengthen strategic decision making at the regional level, and support regional variation to enable more flexible management of inshore fisheries. However due to the complex nature of fisheries management, some aspects will follow a national approach.

Appropriate vessel tracking and monitoring is being rolled out to fishing vessels. Legislation was passed mandating the use of Remote Electronic Monitoring on scallop vessels from June 2024 and on pelagic fishing vessels from March 2026[157]. This will provide improved information on the footprint of inshore fishing.

The following objectives will be met by consideration of the accompanying recommendations and through collaborative working between the CMPP, Marine Directorate, the South West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group, fisheries representatives and other parties, which will support accredited research that informs the management of commercial fisheries in the Clyde Marine Region.

Objectives	
Objective FISH 1	A sustainable, diverse and resilient marine ecosystem which enables a wide range of long-term environmentally sustainable fishing opportunities in the Clyde Marine Region, supplying both local and other markets.
Objective FISH 2	Fisheries operate and are managed to achieve economic, social and employment benefits and contribute to the availability of food supplies.

[153] For further information on the quota system see 'Allocating and Managing Scotland's Quota' on the Marine Directorate website (https://bit.ly/4egecyd).
[154] Scottish Government sets new Firth of Clyde Cod Protection Measures (https://bit.ly/4w74IiB)
[155] Scotland's Future Catching Policy; Selectivity Proposals Consultation 2026 (https://bit.ly/3Pkhl9w)
[156] International Council for the Exploration of the Sea: an intergovernmental marine science organization, meeting societal needs for impartial evidence on the state and sustainable use of our seas and oceans.
[157] The Sea Fisheries (Remote Electronic Monitoring and Regulation of Scallop Fishing) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 (https://bit.ly/4axm2mW)

	**Objective FISH 3**	All fisheries in the Clyde Marine Region are managed to restore and maintain populations of harvested species above biomass levels capable of producing Maximum Sustainable Yield, based on the best available scientific advice. Fisheries operate at an appropriate level with respect to stock and environmental considerations.
	**Objective FISH 4**	Fisheries adapt to changes in species distribution and abundance due to climate change in the Clyde Marine Region.
	**Objective FISH 5**	Bycatch of non-target species in the Clyde Marine Region is avoided or reduced.
	**Objective FISH 6**	Fisheries spatial management protects and enhances areas of importance to fisheries activities, including fish habitats such as nursery areas and spawning grounds.
	**Objective FISH 7**	Knowledge and data on fish stocks and areas of importance to fisheries activities are improved within the Clyde Marine Region to inform sustainable fisheries and to ensure that interactions with other marine users are well managed.

Policies

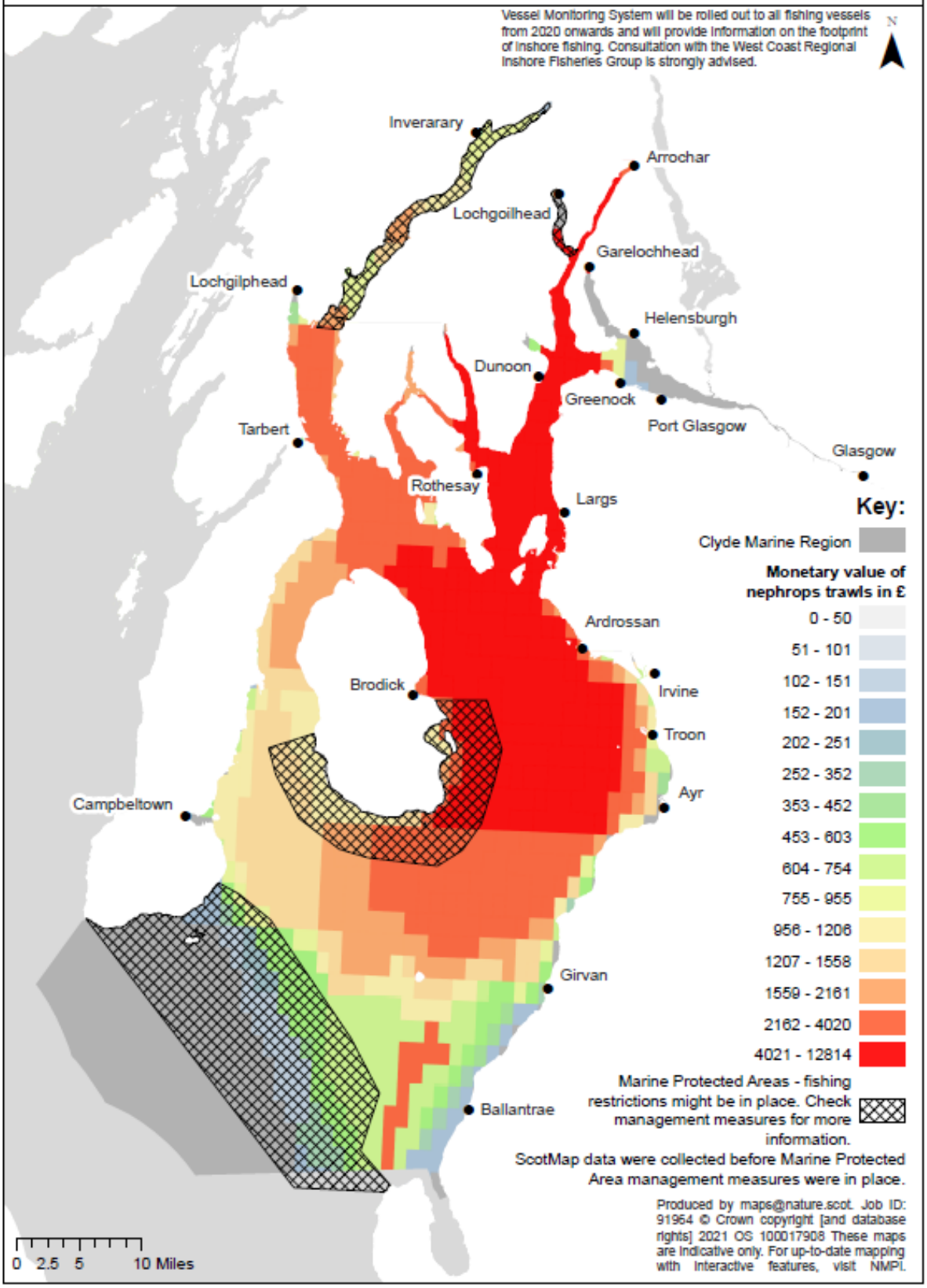
Supports Obj FISH 1-3, 5&6 Supports Aim 2, 3 and 4	**Policy FISH 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should avoid, minimise and/or appropriately mitigate significant adverse impacts: a) on commercial fishing opportunities, taking into account seasonality and the year-round operation of the affected fishery; and b) on nursery, spawning and feeding areas for commercially fished species, and associated habitats and species.
Supports Obj FISH 1&2 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy FISH 2**	Proposals for development and/or use should consider, where appropriate, the potential for significant adverse impacts on the social, cultural and economic importance of fishing, in particular to fragile communities.
Supports Obj FISH 1&7 Supports Aim 3 and 4	**Policy FISH 3**	The appropriate fishing agencies, organisation and/or fishers that use an area that could be affected by a proposed development should be consulted at an early stage in the site-selection, design and planning process.

Recommendations for marine users/local management

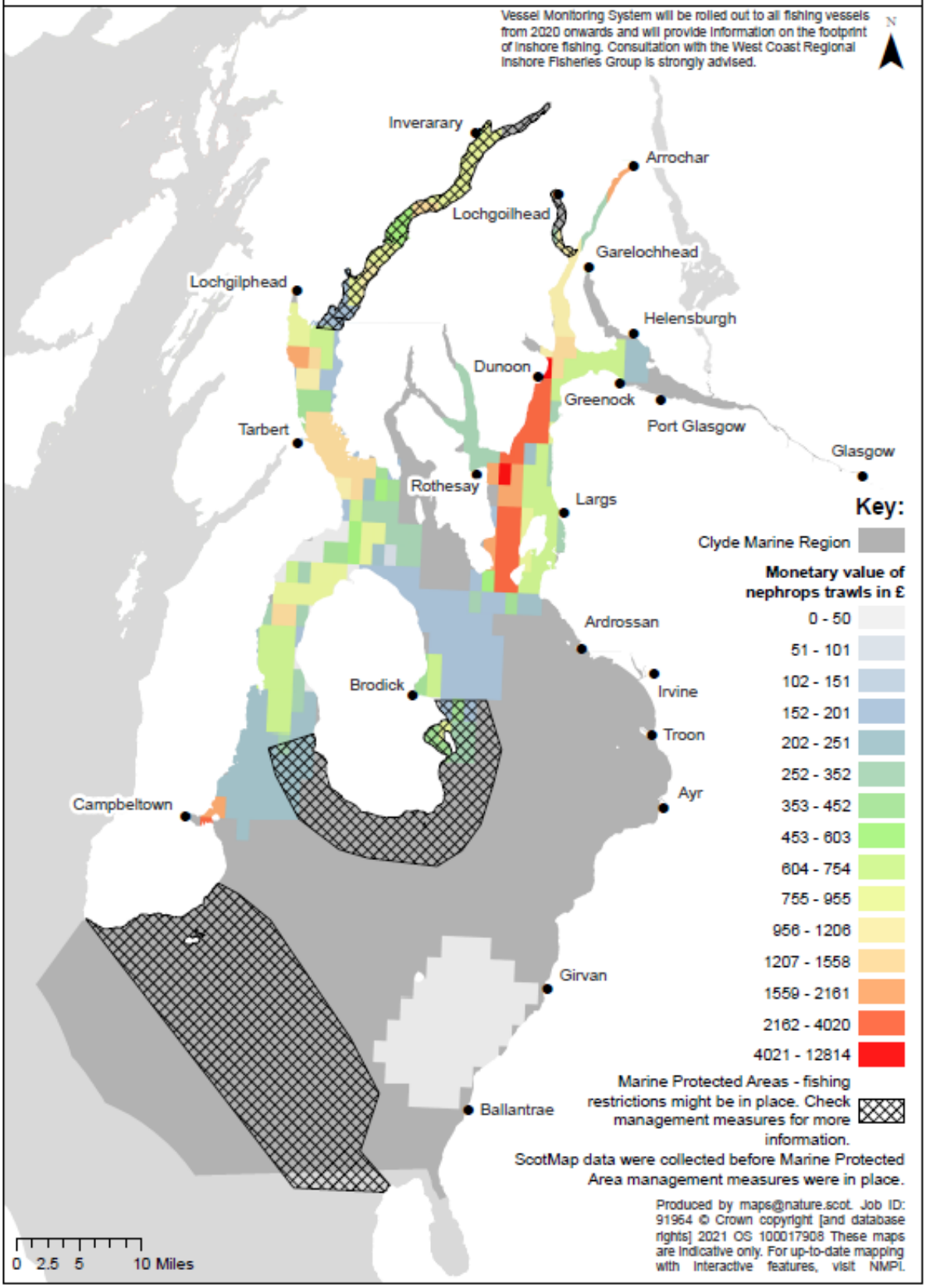
Supports Obj FISH 1-4	**Recommendation rFISH 1**	Scientific research and practical measures to enable fisheries management to contribute to the protection and enhancement of marine ecosystems are encouraged. This includes, but is not limited to: a) studies to consider pressures on harvested stocks such as food web interaction and climate change,

		b) improved understanding of the habitats and areas that support fisheries including pressure/state relationships and ecosystem role/function, and c) continued monitoring of seabed habitats and species which are sensitive to fishing activity.
Supports Obj FISH 1	**Recommendation rFISH 2**	Fishers should follow the Scottish Entanglement Alliance best practice guidelines to reduce the risk of marine animals becoming entangled in fishing gear.
Supports Obj 1&2	**Recommendation rFISH 3**	Fishers should follow best practice guidelines in relation to static gear buoy markings in order to reduce the likelihood of adverse interactions with other marine users including fellow fishermen.
Supports Obj 1&2	**Recommendation rFISH 4**	Commercial fishing should seek to benefit the socio-economic and cultural basis of the Clyde region through links to employment, marketing, tourism/leisure and the seafood sector.

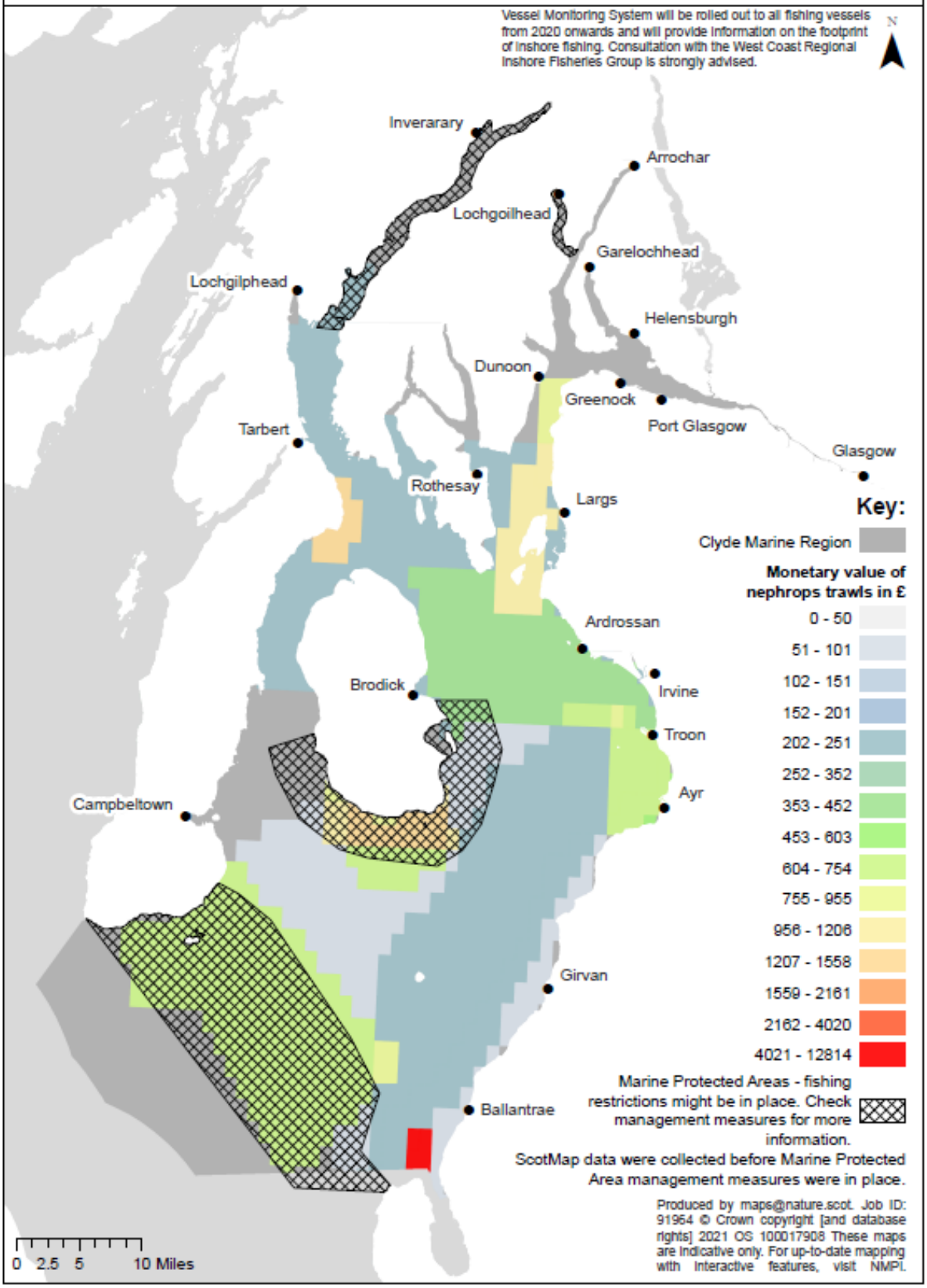
Map FISH 1. Monetary value (£) of nephrops trawls in the Clyde Marine Region using ScotMap data



Map FISH 2. Monetary value (£) of nephrops pots in the Clyde Marine Region using ScotMap data



Map FISH 3. Monetary value (£) of scallop dredges in the Clyde Marine Region using ScotMap data



Further information

- Future of Fisheries Management Strategy (https://bit.ly/3wezUho).
- UK Fisheries Act 2020 (https://bit.ly/37njquZ), which provides wide ranging powers to all four UK administrations.
- Marine Directorate: Scottish Inshore Sea Fisheries Strategy 2015 (https://bit.ly/2t35iDo).
- Marine Directorate consulted on a National Discussion Paper about 'Future Management of Sea Fisheries in Scotland' until 7 June 2019 (https://bit.ly/4eV1k1j).
- Inshore Fisheries Management Improvement: call for evidence report analysis (2025) (https://bit.ly/4tCSoFf)
- West Coast Regional Inshore Fisheries Group: Fisheries Management Plan 2021 (https://bit.ly/4dZqFG7).
- Marking of Creels (Scotland) Order 2020 (https://bit.ly/2VdUhdr).
- '*The condition of seabed habitats, fish and shellfish of the Clyde Marine Region*' document and animations produced by the Clyde 2020 initiative (https://bit.ly/2RBlNQy).
- Marine Directorate provide guidelines for marking static fishing gear (https://bit.ly/2S4tRsf).
- Seafish supports a range of working groups and initiatives, such as the Fisheries Management and Innovation Group (https://bit.ly/3AcTjps) and Project UK Fisheries Improvements (https://bit.ly/4eRW6n4), to improve efficiency and raise standards across the seafood industry.
- Scottish Entanglement Alliance (https://bit.ly/2RDfxrx) including best practice guide for fishermen in resources (https://bit.ly/40iH0lZ).
- Scotland signed up to the Global Ghost Gear Initiative in 2017 (https://bit.ly/2RBX2nw).
- Marine Directorate – Cod spawning grounds (https://bit.ly/3YF1p3L), Haddock spawning grounds (https://bit.ly/3AcgVKV), Cod and Haddock nursery grounds (https://bit.ly/40BW6Ub), Herring and Mackerel spawning grounds (https://bit.ly/4fh8rRI), Herring and Mackerel nursery grounds (https://bit.ly/3NEFDH2), Fisheries Sensitivity Maps (https://bit.ly/4eVMHuB). All also available on NMPi.
- Fisheries Policies Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Change and Ocean Acidification (2024) (https://bit.ly/4tg0iUc)

Sector Policy 3: Aquaculture


An open net salmon farm in Loch Fyne.

The Scottish Government supports the Aquaculture Industry Leadership Group as it works to deliver the industry's growth strategy by 2030[158], while their Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture was published in 2023 and sets out the Scottish Government's ambitions for the finfish, shellfish and seaweed farming sectors, and the wider aquaculture supply chain until 2045[159]. An external review of the regulatory processes for aquaculture was published in 2022[160], which set out a number of recommendations to allow for sustainable aquaculture development and were taken under consideration when drafting the Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture.

The Scottish Government provides locational guidance on the environmental suitability of sea lochs for fish farming (see Map AQUA 1). Only proposals for finfish and shellfish farming are considered by Planning Authorities. A marine licence for navigational purposes is usually required for the installation of equipment for finfish, shellfish and seaweed farms. Finfish farms also require an additional environmental licence for farm discharges into the water environment, including those from wellboats. SEPA works closely with the finfish farming industry to prevent impacts from exceeding defined chemical and biological standards by using predictive models and undertaking site testing at the relevant stages of permit regulation: pre application, application, issue of permits, compliance and enforcement[161]. Finfish and shellfish farms also require Aquaculture Production Business (APB) authorisation from Marine Directorate Science – Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI).

Please also see Annex 1 for further guidance on national and regional authorisation, enforcement and assessments required for aquaculture.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Aquaculture is the production of farmed marine species such as finfish, shellfish and seaweed within controlled installations. Currently, finfish is primarily farmed in open net pens and shellfish is farmed on lines, trestles or ground lays. Seaweed cultivation is an emerging industry. Shellfish farming and seaweed cultivation may provide ecosystem services during the production cycle such as the removal of excess nutrients in the water, capturing carbon and providing a substrate for biodiversity.

Aquaculture makes a significant contribution to the economy of the Clyde, providing year round jobs in more remote rural and coastal communities. Direct employment and some support services are important for certain areas, such as the Cowal and Kintyre peninsulas. Wider supply chain activities,

[158] Aquaculture Growth to 2030 (2016) (https://bit.ly/4wfiQGz)
[159] Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture 2023 (https://bit.ly/4crGdVK)
[160] A Review of the Aquaculture Regulatory Process in Scotland (2022) (https://bit.ly/4d62l73)
[161] SEPA Overview of regulatory framework (https://bit.ly/3ch90dz).

including the processing of products, benefit those areas where such activities are located, with these tending to be in more urban locations around Glasgow.

Within the Clyde Marine Region, the aquaculture sector comprises finfish farming for Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and sea trout (*Salmo trutta*), and shellfish farming for blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*), oysters and scallops. Finfish farming accounts for a majority of the production sites, with activity concentrated on salmon farming in and around Loch Fyne and Loch Striven. The sea lochs in the Clyde Marine Region are currently identified by the Scottish Government as Category 3 areas[162]. Finfish farming can also occur outside categorised areas (see Map AQUA 1). The value of salmon farming in the Clyde and Argyll[163] Marine Regions was around £227 in 2022, which represented 18.5% of total Scottish production[164].

Shellfish farming in the Clyde Marine Region is generally smaller scale, single owner businesses. Again, activity is largely concentrated in Loch Fyne and Loch Striven. Farmed species include the blue mussel, Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*), native oyster *(Ostrea edulis*) and the queen scallop (*Aequipecten opercularis*). The value of mussel production in the Clyde and Argyll Marine Regions[165] was just under £0.5M in 2022, which represents around 5.5% of Scottish mussel production[166]. The value of Pacific oyster production in the Clyde Marine Region was £139,810 in 2022 (8.3% of Scottish production) and the value of queen scallops in the Clyde and West Highlands Marine Regions[167] was £78 in 2022 (0.06% of Scottish production)[168]. There are six Shellfish Water Protected Areas within the Clyde Marine Region and one which straddles the boundary between the Clyde and Solway Marine Regions (See Map AQUA 2). Four of these SWPAs have recently been reclassified using available data and are currently at 'Good' status. Two of these SWPAs have insufficient production data to be classified. None of these SWPA's in the Clyde Marine Region are deemed to be 'not at target objective'.

Objectives	
Objective AQUA 1	Sustainable development and diversification of the aquaculture sector in appropriate locations within the environmental carrying capacity [169] of the Clyde Marine Region, providing socio-economic benefits to rural areas and islands and supporting the wider supply chain in Scotland.
Objective AQUA 2	Aquaculture development actively contributes to the protection and enhancement of the marine environment in the Clyde Marine Region by undertaking action and/or research & development initiatives which support sustainable development of the sector, including climate change mitigation and adaptation.
Policies	

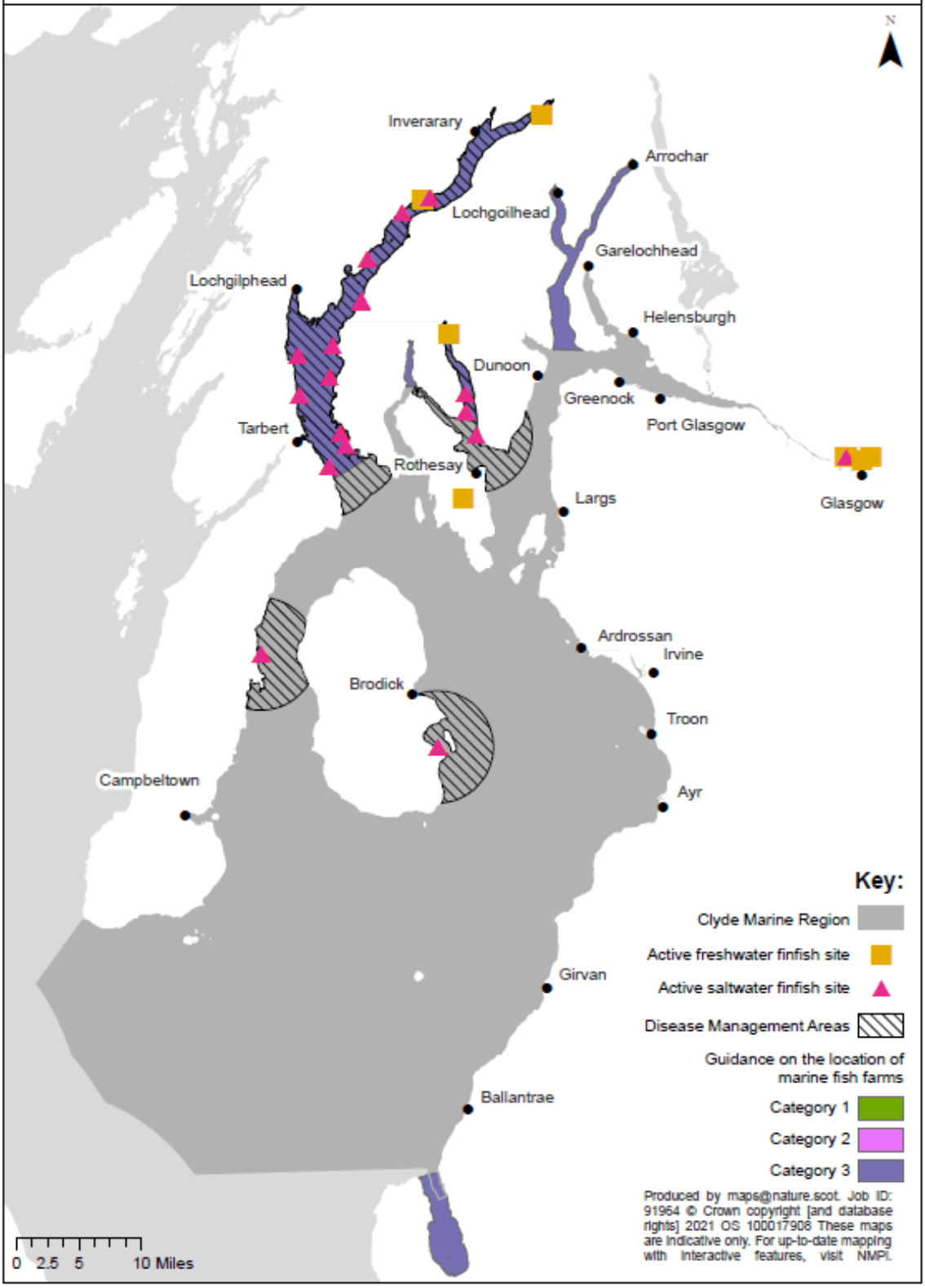
[162] Category 3 Areas: where there appear to be better prospects of satisfying nutrient loading and benthic impact requirements, although detailed circumstances will always need to be examined carefully. See Locational Guidelines for the Authorisation of Marine Fish Farms in Scottish Waters (https://bit.ly/3tMmhoT).
[163] Data for Clyde and Argyll Marine Regions have been merged due to commercial confidentiality. The value of salmon farming in the Clyde alone is likely approximately half of the value of salmon farming in the Clyde and Argyll Marine Regions.
[164] Scottish fish farm production survey 2022, Appendix 3 (https://bit.ly/4tmXl47)
[165] Data for Clyde and Argyll Marine Regions have been merged due to commercial confidentiality.
[166] Scottish fish farm production survey 2022, Appendix 2 (https://bit.ly/4etXn6w)
[167] Data for Clyde and West Highlands Marine Regions have been merged due to commercial confidentiality.
[168] Scottish shellfish farm production survey 2022, Appendix 2 (https://bit.ly/4etXn6w)
[169] The amount of finfish aquaculture which a region can support without environmental degradation and taking the cumulative effects of aquaculture activities into account. Note that this relates to finfish aquaculture as the 'carrying capacity' for shellfish is based on algal production in a particular area.

FINFISH		
Supports Obj AQUA 1 Supports Aim 3	**Policy AQUA 1**	Proposals for finfish farming development should have regard to: a) the Technical Standard for open net Finfish Aquaculture[170] and any future Technical Standard for open net, semi-closed or closed systems; and b) the requirements outlined in the mandatory control measures for the live capture of Scottish wild wrasse for salmon farms and any future fisheries management or legislation regarding cleaner fish.
Supports Obj AQUA 2 Supports Aim 3	**Policy AQUA 2**	Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered site management actions or initiatives to improve sea lice and disease management, and to reduce the risk of fish escapes.
SHELLFISH		
Supports Obj AQUA 1 Supports Aim 2 and 3	**Policy AQUA 4**	Proposals for mussel farms should be considered where they support delivery of the policy outcomes of NPF4 through policy 32 on aquaculture[171].
SEAWEED CULTIVATION		
Supports Obj AQUA 1 Supports Aim 3	**Policy AQUA 5**	Proposals for seaweed cultivation should have regard to the latest Scottish Government Seaweed Cultivation Policy Statement[172] and any subsequent guidance and/or planning requirements.
Supports Obj AQUA 2 Supports Aim 3	**Policy AQUA 6**	Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered that there is no artificial nutrient enrichment of the marine environment to aid production.

Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj AQUA 1	**Recommendation rAQUA 1**	Initiatives are encouraged by land and homeowners and public authorities to reduce diffuse pollution and point source pollution from entering water bodies, which can negatively impact water quality, particularly within Shellfish Water Protected Areas.

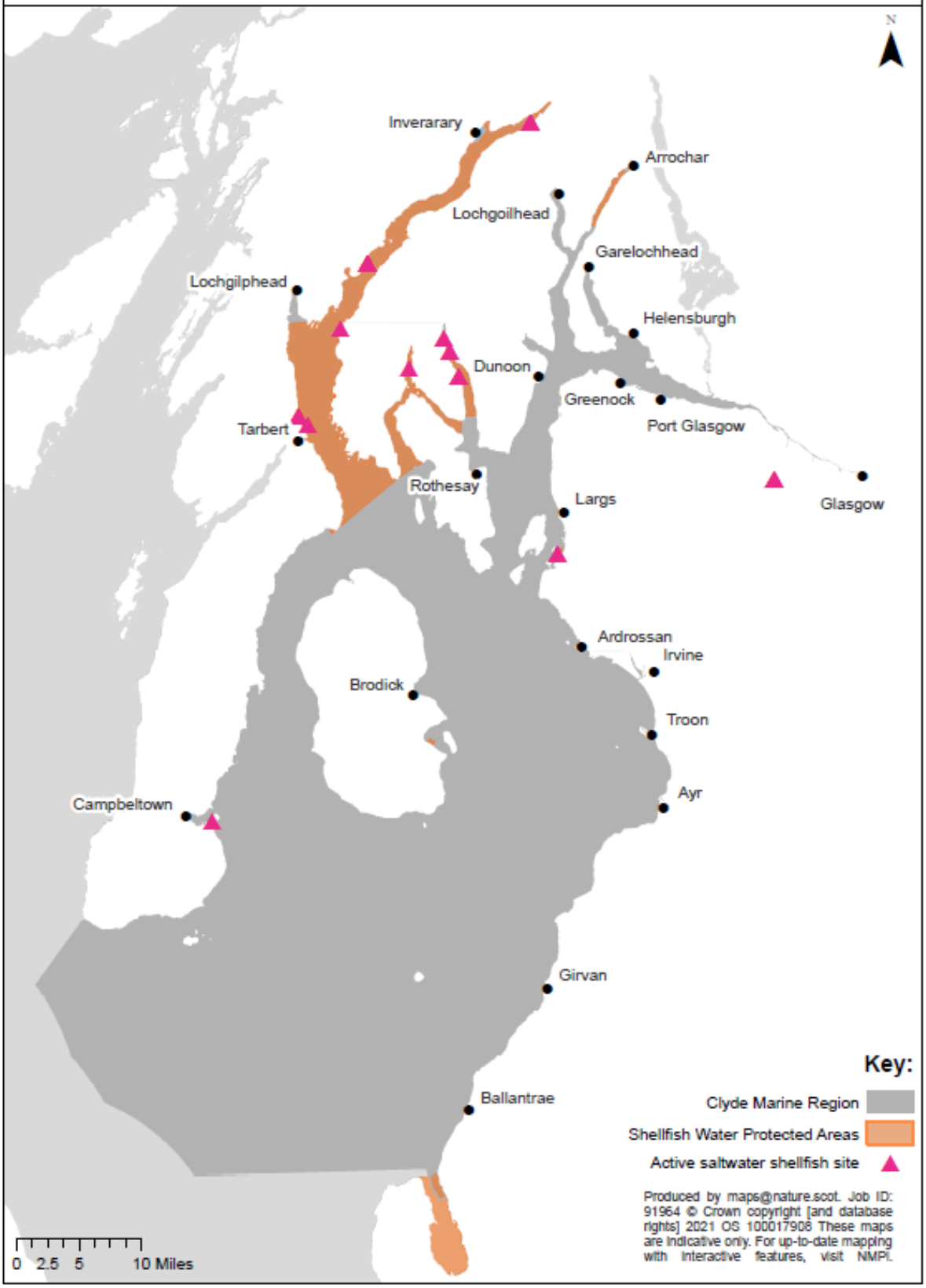
[170] The Standard determines technical requirements for fish farm equipment in Scotland and applies to all species of finfish.
[171] Policy 32, NPF4 (https://bit.ly/3Rjhhra)
[172] Scottish's Government: Seaweed Review Statement: February 2022 (https://bit.ly/4uwopPj)

Map AQUA 1. Finfish aquaculture sites and designations in the Clyde Marine Region



Category 1, 2 and 3 areas are designated on the basis of predictive modelling to estimate nutrient enhancement and benthic impact on sea lochs or similar water bodies supporting aquaculture. Category 1 areas are considered to be the most environmentally sensitive to further fish farming development due to high predicted levels of nutrient enhancement and/or benthic impact. Category 3 areas have better prospects of satisfying nutrient loading and benthic impact requirements, although detailed circumstances will always need to be examined carefully (https://bit.ly/4yHqg5v).

Map AQUA 2. Shellfish aquaculture sites and designations in the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Vision for Sustainable Aquaculture (2023) (https://bit.ly/4crGdVK)
- Planning Circular 1/2015: relationship between the statutory land use planning system and marine planning and licensing: Aquaculture (https://bit.ly/2S4mFMu).
- Scottish Government: Aquaculture Planning and Consenting webpage (https://bit.ly/2vzRdhN) and Permitted Development guidance (2018) (https://bit.ly/3MHZkf6).
- Scotland's 10 Year Farmed Fish Health Framework (2018) (https://bit.ly/2tbdxNZ).
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency: Aquaculture (https://bit.ly/4vTKWY0)
- NatureScot: Visualisations for aquaculture: guidance note (2018) (https://bit.ly/38O4YYv).
- NatureScot: Standing Advice for Seaweed Aquaculture (farming/cultivation) (https://bit.ly/4eFy3KH)
- Argyll and Bute: Local Development Plan 2 (https://bit.ly/42M0a3P)
- North Ayrshire: Local Development Plan 2 (https://bit.ly/3NECDu9).
- South Ayrshire: Local Development Plan 2 (https://bit.ly/4e8GPNz)
- The Aquaculture Working Arrangement sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of each of the statutory consultees in relation to aquaculture planning applications (https://bit.ly/3I5ABhf).
- Code of Good Practice for Scottish Finfish Aquaculture (https://bit.ly/3MBJjHI).
- Aquaculture Code of Practice: Containment of and prevention of escape of fish-on-fish farms in relation to marine mammal interactions (https://bit.ly/3KyZjZb).
- The Scottish Government carried out a consultation on whether to introduce mandatory measures to control the harvesting of live wrasse for the salmon farming industry (2020) (https://bit.ly/2K7TULG). Consultation analysis is available at (https://bit.ly/3mJmuqE)
- Scottish Government: Seaweed Review Statement: February 2022 (https://bit.ly/4uwopPj)
- Argyll and Bute – Seaweed Farming Feasibility Study for Argyll and Bute (2019) (https://bit.ly/4ncsrKd)
- Crown Estate Scotland: Shellfish Critical Mass Development Plan Pilot Report – Clyde (2019) (https://bit.ly/4fg5AIt).
- Scottish Government - Aquaculture: external review of the current regulatory processes involved in fish farming (https://bit.ly/368uETr).
- End-of-life Fishing and Aquaculture Gear, 2026 (https://bit.ly/4wdzNBg)
- Scottish Shellfish Farm Production Survey 2024 (https://bit.ly/42SQnJc)

Sector Policy 4:
Sport, Recreation and Tourism

The Clyde Moorings Committee, acting under Deed of Appointment from Crown Estate Scotland, administers applications for moorings within the Clydeport area of jurisdiction. It aims to allocate available resource equitably, avoiding conflict with existing activities or structures and ensuring protection of the marine environment.


Recreational boats at the Clyde Marina in Ardrossan.

Clyde Marine Region Context

'Sport, recreation and tourism' is a broad sector combining marine and coastal-based sport, recreation and tourism activities, including accommodation and food and beverage providers. The Clyde Marine Region is of strategic importance in terms of boating on the west coast of Scotland and the Crinan Canal and the Forth and Clyde Canal provide non-marine connections to other regions. The Region's deep, sheltered waters and islands make it an ideal location for sailing and power boating; there are around 6500 resident and visitor berths/moorings[173]. Numerous other water sports also take place, including diving, surfing, wind and kite surfing, kayaking and paddle boarding (See Maps SRT 1-3). Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park are also areas of focus for recreational activity.

In terms of contribution to the economy, marine tourism in the Clyde Marine Region was £135M GVA in 2021, 27% of the total Scottish marine tourism GVA that year[174]. and employment was 7,200[175]. Marine sport, recreation and tourism can act as a driver to support economic regeneration in coastal and island economies. The contribution of marine tourism to island, rural and fragile communities is well recognised[176].

Sea and land-based fishing/angling is a long established activity. However, deterioration in the fish stock profile and changes to legislation have meant there has been a decline in activity[177]. High release rates are probably driven by the behavioural change of anglers who are now more likely to release stock due to an improved understanding of the threat to these species.

Coastal paths and beaches are available for sport and recreation, contributing to the health and wellbeing of local communities and visitors alike (See Map SRT 2). Wildlife watching is becoming increasingly popular and represents an important recreational activity in the Region. Associated with all of these activities is wider tourism in the Clyde Marine Region through the provision of accommodation, food and beverage.

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[173] Clyde Marine Region and Solway Firth combined, SMA (2020) (https://bit.ly/3RrLOmH)
[174] Scotland's Marine Economic Statistics 2021 (https://bit.ly/3PWS3OH)
[175] Scotland's marine economic statistics 2017, Section 11 Marine Tourism, Table 17 (https://bit.ly/4uAVeL3)
[176] Giant Opportunities 2026-2030: A Strategic Framework for Scotland's Marine Tourism Sector (https://bit.ly/48IRdf9)
[177] The Scottish salmon and sea trout fishery statistics 2025 show Scotland's figures for reported catch (https://bit.ly/4wvNV9o) and the supplementary tables show a further breakdown (https://bit.ly/4nhW0u0)

Due to its accessibility, the Region is popular with people from Scotland and visitors from elsewhere, both as a day trip destination and for longer visits. The Region has good transport links with the rest of Scotland's central belt, two international airports and numerous ferry routes. The seafood offering in local bars and restaurants is an important consideration for some visitors to the Region. Greenock is a key port for visiting cruise liners. The Field Studies Council operating from Millport on Cumbrae has a history as a marine research station and now attracts visitors to a range of courses. For many years, people have enjoyed taking a trip 'doon the watter' to coastal areas of the Clyde Marine Region.

Objectives		
	**Objective SRT 1**	The Clyde Marine Region provides world class sustainable sport, recreation and tourism experiences for local people and visitors. The social benefits, including health and wellbeing, economic benefits and environmental benefits (through protection and enhancement of unique, natural resources which attract visitors and which are relied upon for recreational activities) generated by this sector are protected and spread across residents, local communities and beyond.
	**Objective SRT 2**	Public access to the sea is improved in the Clyde Marine Region, along with supporting infrastructure and facilities. .
Policies		
Supports Obj SRT 1 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy SRT 1**	Proposals for development and/or use relating to sustainable, marine-related sport, recreation and tourism facilities are particularly encouraged where they: a) facilitate multiple use by providing hubs for marine sport, recreation and tourism; b) diversify the sports, recreation and tourism offering, c) demonstrate a link to transport networks in line with active and sustainable travel objectives; d) promote wildlife tourism and/or ecotourism, e) provide an increase in the number and quality of step ashore[178] facilities in the Region; f) provide effective pump out, wash down and waste management facilities for boat users; or g) use mooring systems with low environmental impact, such as Environmentally Friendly Moorings/Advanced Mooring Systems.
Supports Obj SRT 2 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy SRT 2**	Proposals should be supported for the introduction, maintenance and improvement of the network of public slipways[179] and shoreside infrastructure, along with supporting facilities where appropriate and where unacceptable adverse impacts on the environment and amenities are mitigated, below the Mean High-Water Springs, across the Clyde Marine Region.

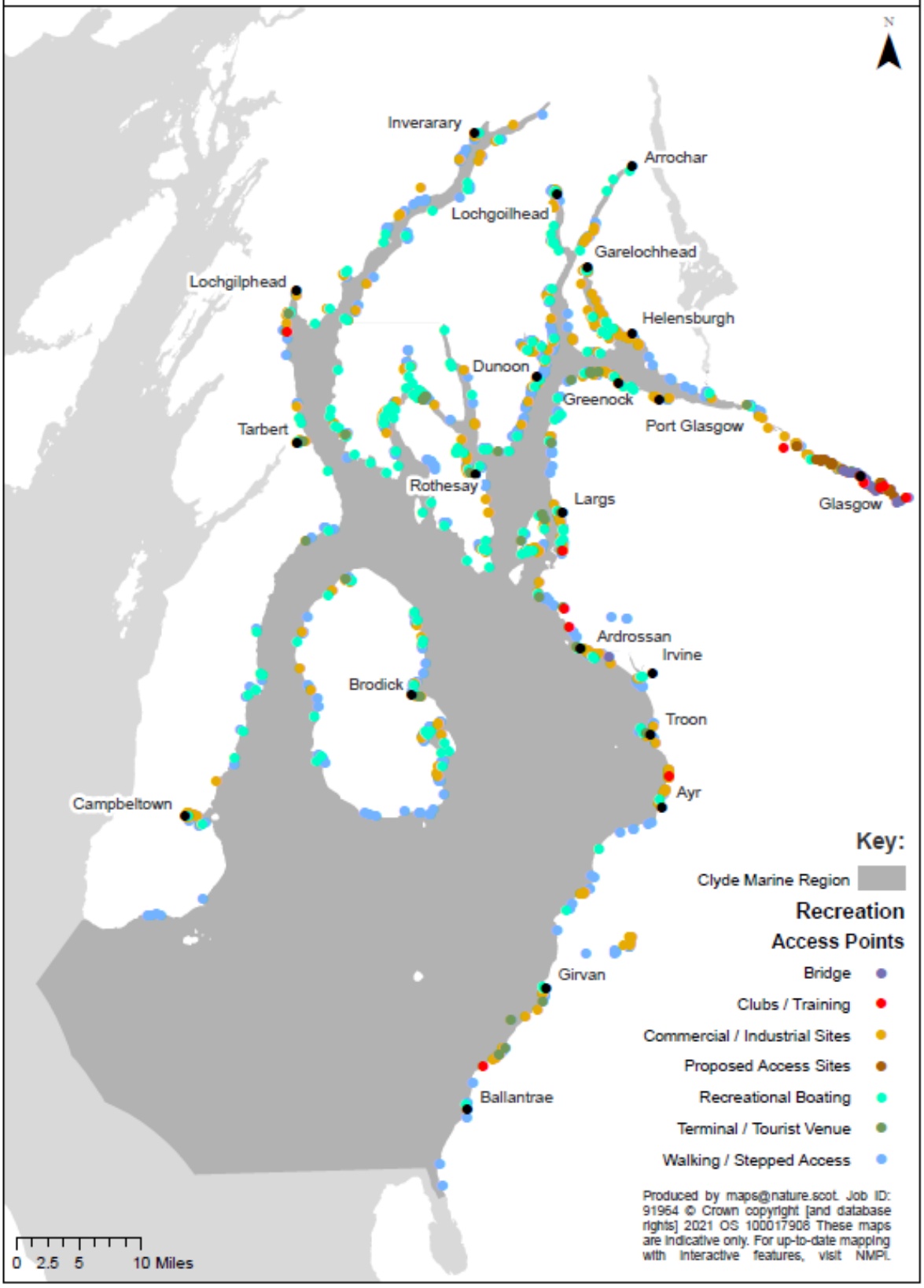
[178] Step ashore facilities e.g. pontoons and landing stages, services for boaters, public facilities, commercial opportunities and shore access
[179] Public slipways are considered to be slipways where fees and/or permits are not required.

Supports Obj SRT 1 Supports Aim 4	**Policy SRT 3**	National and international sport, recreational and tourism events for all recreational vessels are supported in the Clyde Marine Region where organisers of such events: a) should undertake a risk assessment to identify likely significant impacts on protected areas and species; b) should collaborate with and seek advice from relevant authorities, (e.g. NatureScot) to acquire licences where needed and to identify and implement appropriate mitigation measures in a timely manner in advance of any event taking place; and c) should inform the relevant Statutory Harbour Authority of the nature and details of the event in a timely manner in advance of the event taking place.

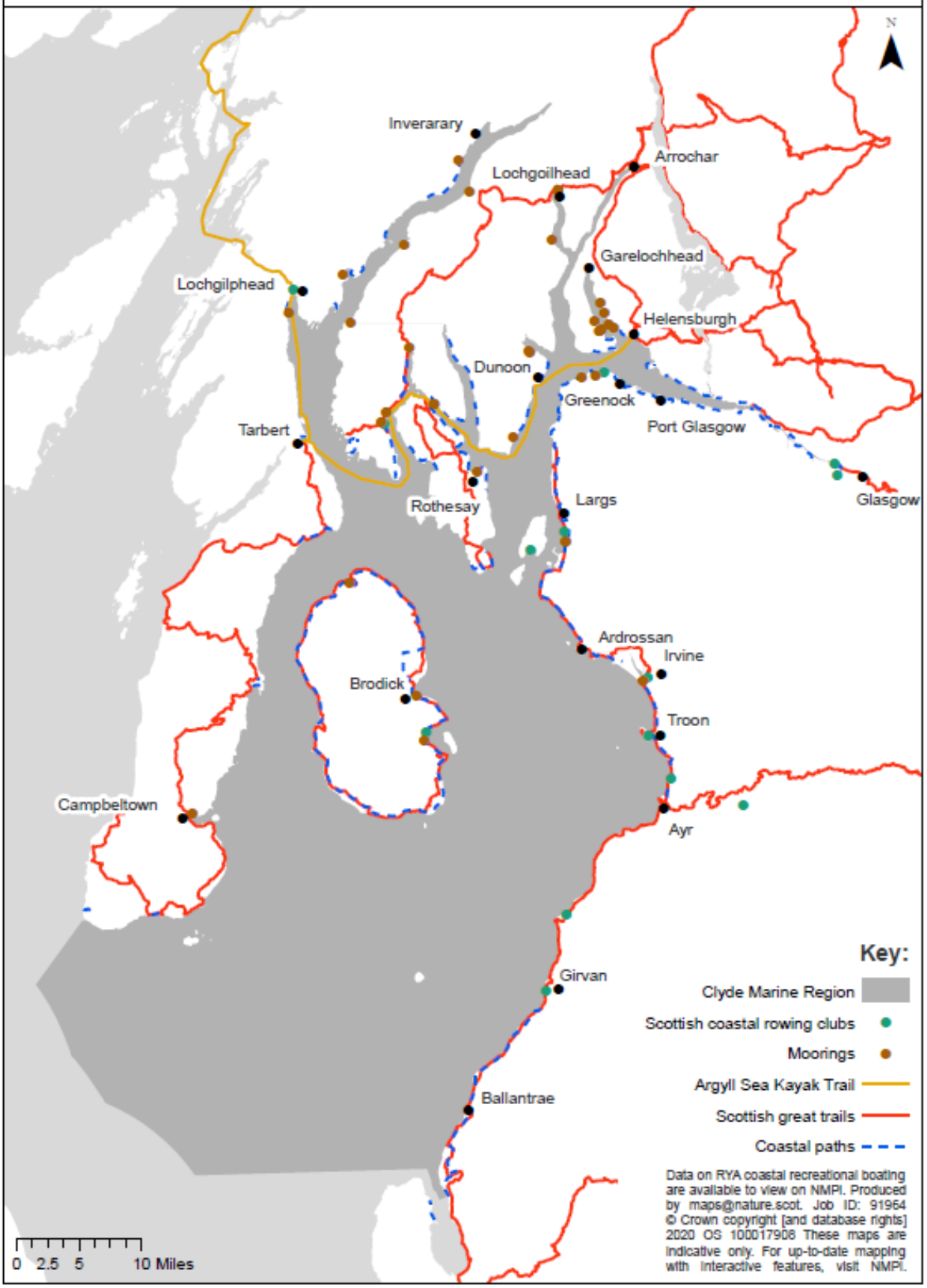
Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj SRT 1	**Recommendation rSRT 1**	All wildlife cruise tour operators operating within the Clyde Marine Region should be WiSe scheme certified[180].

[180] The WiSe Scheme (https://bit.ly/42Vza1O) is a UK national training scheme to promote responsible wildlife-watching and minimise disturbance to marine wildlife.

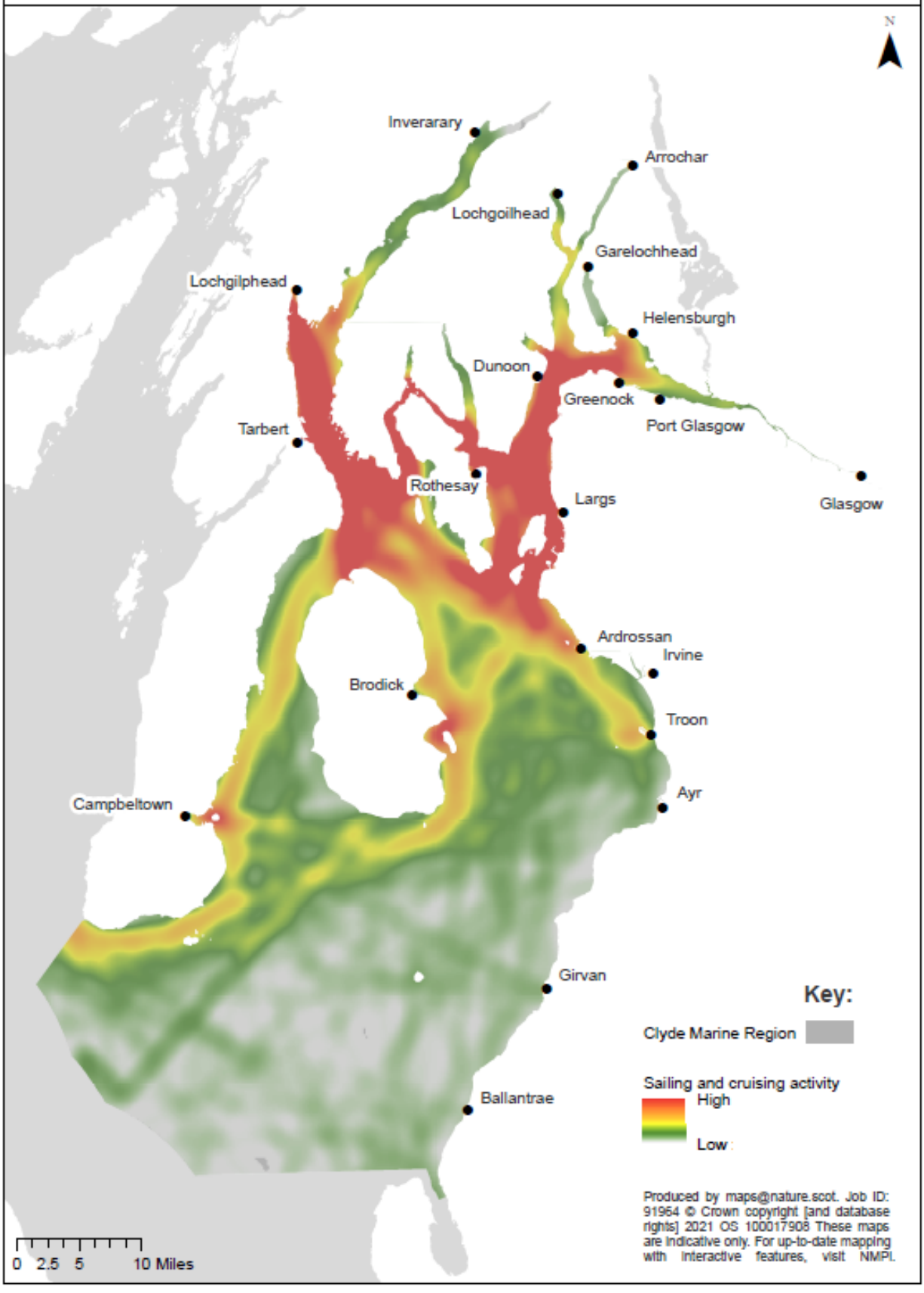
Map SRT 1. Marine, sport and recreation access points in the Clyde Marine Region



Map SRT 2. Kayak trail, sailing infrastructure, Scottish coastal rowing clubs and coastal paths in the Clyde Marine Region



Map SRT 3. Heat map showing sailing and cruising activity in the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- The Land Reform Act 2003 (https://bit.ly/4lhURky) created public rights of access, extending to beaches and foreshore.
- The Scottish Outdoor Access Code (https://bit.ly/4lgtDLl).
- Scotland Outlook 2030 is Scotland's future tourism strategy to support Scotland in becoming the world leader in sustainable tourism (https://bit.ly/38NkfIs).
- 'Giant Opportunities' (https://bit.ly/3UnGC1P): builds on 'Awakening the Giant' and 'Giant Strides' which were Scotland's first and second Marine Tourism Strategies.
- Scotland's National Tourism Strategy (https://bit.ly/3OMd3aY),
- Destination Climate Action Plan (2023) developed by VisitScotland, sets out actions to assist and promote sustainable and responsible growth in Scotland's visitor economy (https://bit.ly/4feBbdE).
- NatureScot: Marine Wildlife Watching Code (https://bit.ly/36Eok0T) and Outdoor Access Code (https://bit.ly/2RFM9AQ).
- The Green Blue is a joint environment programme created by the Royal Yachting Association and British Marine (https://bit.ly/3NHXBIF).
- Crown Estate Scotland operates a licensing system for moorings, read more about this process here (https://bit.ly/3Un3oXA).
- Clydeport, a Statutory Harbour Authority covering a large part of the Clyde Marine Region produce the 'Clyde leisure Navigation Guide' (https://bit.ly/3Yj68qg); it is now in its 5th edition.
- Long Distance Coastal walks within the Clyde Marine Region: Arran Coastal Way (https://bit.ly/2RKKomj), Ayrshire Coastal Path (https://bit.ly/2vDLKXj), Inverclyde Coastal Path (https://bit.ly/2vEOL9N), West Island Way on the Isle of Bute (https://bit.ly/2OgUA3z), Clyde Coastal Path (https://bit.ly/4hmCIQE), Cowal Way (https://bit.ly/37NiCv0), Kintyre Way (https://bit.ly/4d619AI)
- The draft Outdoor Recreation Plan for Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park – Active Park, Health People (https://bit.ly/31cEUUh).
- Information on recreational sea angling: Marine Directorate recreational sea angling salmon and sea trout catches data (https://bit.ly/2th3BT9).
- Spring Conservation Measures (https://bit.ly/2SgdHxe) for salmon and the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Regulations 2016 (https://bit.ly/4eEmJPj)
- Catch and Release: A Guide to Best Practice for recreational sea anglers (https://bit.ly/3NDx13d).
- The Sea Angling Diary Project (https://bit.ly/2S1bOmI).
- Outdoor events in Scotland – Guidance for organisers and land managers (https://bit.ly/391LiAF).

Sector Policy 5:
Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency is the UK Regulator for shipping, with responsibility for implementing international maritime law, and ensuring port and flag state control, including the monitoring of vessels to meet international and UK standards. Development of the Islands Connectivity Plan[181] is underway, which will set out how ferry services, supported by other transport modes, will be delivered and strengthened. A public consultation was held in 2024, followed by the publication of the Strategic Approach[182] and the Vessels and Ports Plan[183].



A Caledonian MacBrayne ferry travelling to Rothesay.

Clyde Marine Region Context

This chapter covers developments and use associated with vehicle/passenger ferries, cruise vessels, ships and commercial freight operations, along with the ports, harbours and other infrastructure that support these activities (See Maps SHIP 1-3). It also covers dredging and the deposit or use of dredged materials.

Ferries are vital to the communities around the Clyde Marine Region. 2.7 million[184] passengers use ferry services connecting communities in the Clyde and providing links to the islands of Arran, Bute and Cumbrae. The Clyde Marine Region is a popular cruise destination, where the majority of cruise ships dock at Greenock Ocean Terminal.

Ports in the Region have played a significant role in growing the heavy industry and exporting base of Scotland's economy. Many of the coastal towns of the Clyde were established and grew on the back of activity at the ports. Clydeport Operations Ltd. is the Statutory Harbour Authority for 450 square miles of the Clyde Marine Region and owners/operators of several port terminals and passenger facilities (See Map SHIP 1). Clydeport annually handles nearly 15.4 million tonnes of cargo of a range of products and commodities[185]. Other significant ports in the Clyde Marine Region, at Troon and Ayr, are operated by Associated British Ports. Boat and servicing yards play an important role in supporting the local economy. For example, the boat yard in Girvan is one of only three in the UK to repair, service and refit Royal National Lifeboat Institution vessels.

The deep-water port at Hunterston, which is able to handle modern ships of any size, and Finnart oil terminal in Loch Long, which can accommodate Very Large Crude Carriers and Ultra Large Crude Carriers, are two of the largest facilities in the Region. The sector supports rural and primary industries through the transfer of bulk cargo, such as timber, aggregates and grain. TimberLINK

[181] Islands Connectivity Plan (https://bit.ly/4mJWx7C)
[182] Strategic Approach (2025) (https://bit.ly/4eI1FHn)
[183] Vessel and Ports Plan (2025) (https://bit.ly/3Ql8ox4)
[184] Scottish Transport Statistics 2024. Ferry routes included in this figure: Wemyss Bay – Rothesay, Ardrossan – Brodick, Claonaig – Lochranza, Largs – Cumbrae, Colintraive – Rhubodach, Tarbert – Portavadie, Ardrossan – Campbeltown, Gourock – Dunoon. (https://bit.ly/47N9eaV).
[185] Peelports (https://bit.ly/4s0jExd)

operates at various sites across the Region, supporting the movement of around 100,000 tonnes of timber from Argyll ports to wood processing plants in Ayrshire[186] (See Map SHIP 2). Additionally, the use of floating pier facilities, such as at Ardcastle on Loch Fyne and a timber carrying landing craft, enable the movement of additional timber to markets both within and outwith the Clyde. The landing craft has enabled access to hard-to-reach timber including in Loch Goil, Loch Striven and Arran, to date. The Clyde Marine Region supports shipments of timber to other parts of Scotland and to export markets.

Vessels generate emissions of sulphur dioxides, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and carbon dioxide as a result of the fuel used. These emissions can be significant, especially in areas with heavy marine traffic, and contribute towards air pollution and increasing greenhouse gas emissions. To reduce the impact that vessels have on air quality and climate change, the International Maritime Organisation introduced a 0.5 % global sulphur cap on vessel fuel in 2020[187]. To meet these regulations, vessels will need to either use fuel that is low in sulphur or install exhaust gas cleaning systems which are designed to remove sulphur oxides from the ship's engine and boiler exhaust gases[188].

Harbour authorities in the Clyde Marine Region are indicated in Map SHIP 1. Proposals requiring a marine licence may also need to obtain a licence from the Statutory Harbour Authority, for example a Works or Dredging Licence.

Objectives	
	Objective SHIP 1 Collaborative efforts to promote the Clyde Marine Region as a tourist destination are continued by supporting sustainable development of the market for cruise ships and smaller cruise vessels, whilst seeking opportunities for related socioeconomic activity.
CCM CCA	**Objective SHIP 2** An increase in the use of ports, harbours and other coastal facilities in the Clyde Marine Region for the construction, servicing, decommissioning and recycling of marine structures and vessels, particularly where activities contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
CCM	**Objective SHIP 3** Connectivity is improved and sustainable transport[189] by sea is increased within the Clyde Marine Region and beyond.
CCA	**Objective SHIP 4** Opportunities for associated environmental enhancement are explored where capital or maintenance dredging is proposed in the Clyde Marine Region.
Policies	

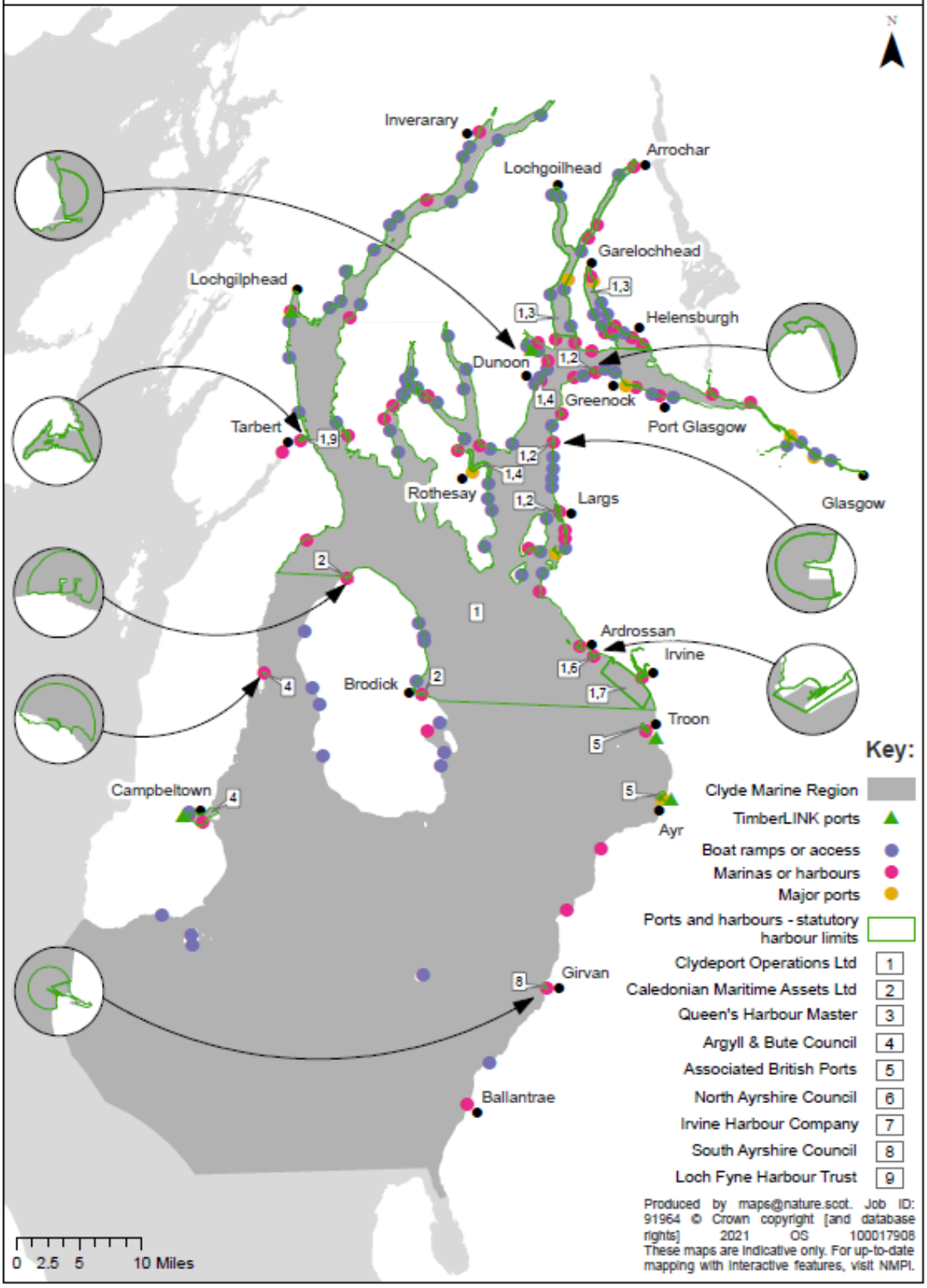
[186] Scottish Forestry - The TimberLINK shipping service ships 80-100,000 tonnes per annum across the Clyde. The landing craft transports an additional 20-40,000 tonnes to ports in Ayrshire across the Firth of Clyde.
[187] Frequently Asked Questions on the 2020 global sulphur limit – International Maritime Organisation (https://bit.ly/40hbHZ2).
[188] Sulphur 2020 – cutting sulphur oxide emissions (https://bit.ly/2UdJy1r)
[189] Reducing the environmental, social and economic impact of travel by promoting and facilitating people and organisations to use more sustainable and active forms of travel.

Supports Obj SHIP 1 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy SHIP 1**	Proposals for development and/or use should be supported that encourage the sustainable growth of the cruise market for ships of around 150 m at appropriate locations, in particular at Dunoon, Rothesay, Helensburgh, Inveraray, Troon, Brodick, Fairlie, Holy Loch, Irvine, Greenock, Ayr, Ardrossan and Hunterston, and where the proposal demonstrates strong links to supporting sustainable tourism, including wildlife tourism, in the local area.
Supports Obj SHIP 2 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy SHIP 2**	Proposals for development and/or use should be supported for the construction, servicing, decommissioning and recycling of large marine structures and vessels at appropriate locations, in particular at Campbeltown, Greenock, Hunterston, Troon, and Ayr, and where the proposal demonstrates a positive impact on the regeneration of local areas.
Supports Obj SHIP 3 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy SHIP 3**	Proposals for development and/or use will be supported, particularly where they deliver more sustainable transport, in relation to: a) ferry or related shoreside infrastructure initiatives that improve connectivity to the Kintyre peninsula, the Cowal peninsula and islands of Arran, Bute or the Cumbraes; b) ferry or related shoreside infrastructure initiatives that improve connectivity between the Kintyre peninsula and Northern Ireland, c) infrastructure relating to supporting bulk freight by sea; and/or d) movement connections along, to and across the Clyde estuary.
Supports Obj SHIP 5 Supports Aim 2, 3 and 4	**Policy SHIP 4**	Proposals for capital and/or maintenance dredging activities should demonstrate that they have considered practicable and cost-effective environmental enhancement measures, such as beneficial use of dredged material or dredging methods that retain sediment in the natural system, and how these measures will be delivered, where this is practicable.
Supports Obj SHIP 1 Supports Aim 1 and 3	**Policy SHIP 5**	Proposals for new or upgraded infrastructure related to the powering of vessels, such as shoreside power facilities, or treatment of waste from closed loop exhaust gas cleaning systems or similar, will be supported where the infrastructure proposal demonstrates a long-term contribution to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and/or a reduction in pollution from wastewater in the Clyde Marine Region.

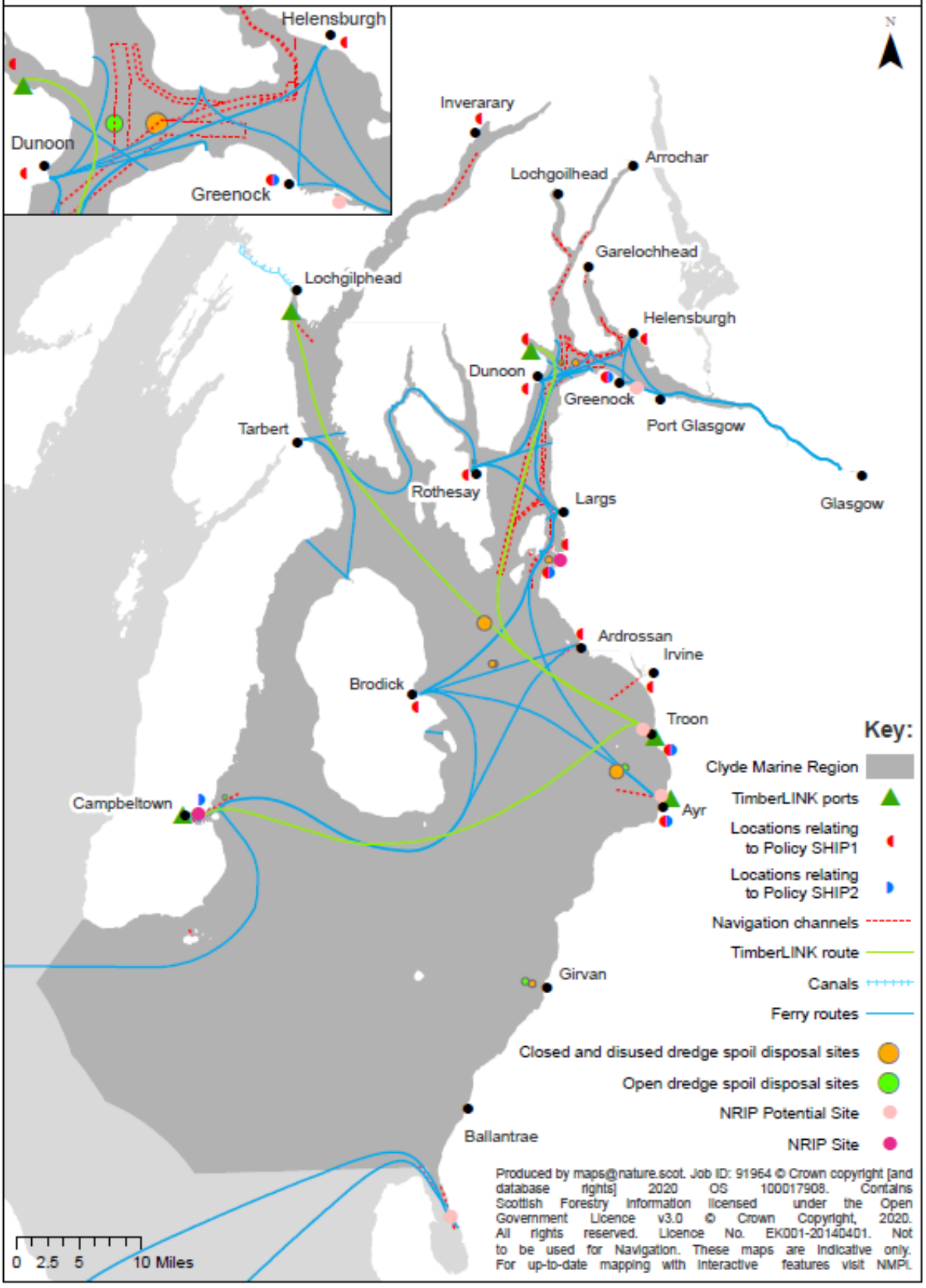
Recommendations for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj SHIP 1	**Recommendation rSHIP 1**	The use of compliant fuel[190] is encouraged in the Clyde Marine Region. If an exhaust gas cleaning system is fitted, it should be used in closed loop mode. Large parts of the navigable Clyde are dredged; therefore, until there is sufficient evidence to be confident that the use of open loop scrubbers will not impact negatively on sediment quality (and hence on the ability to dispose of dredged sediment to sea), open loop scrubbers or hybrid scrubbers in open loop mode are not recommended for use in the Clyde Marine Region. This applies in transit, at berth and at anchorage. The waste from the exhaust gas cleaning system should only be disposed at ports where appropriate reception facilities are available.

[190] Fuel which is low in sulphur.

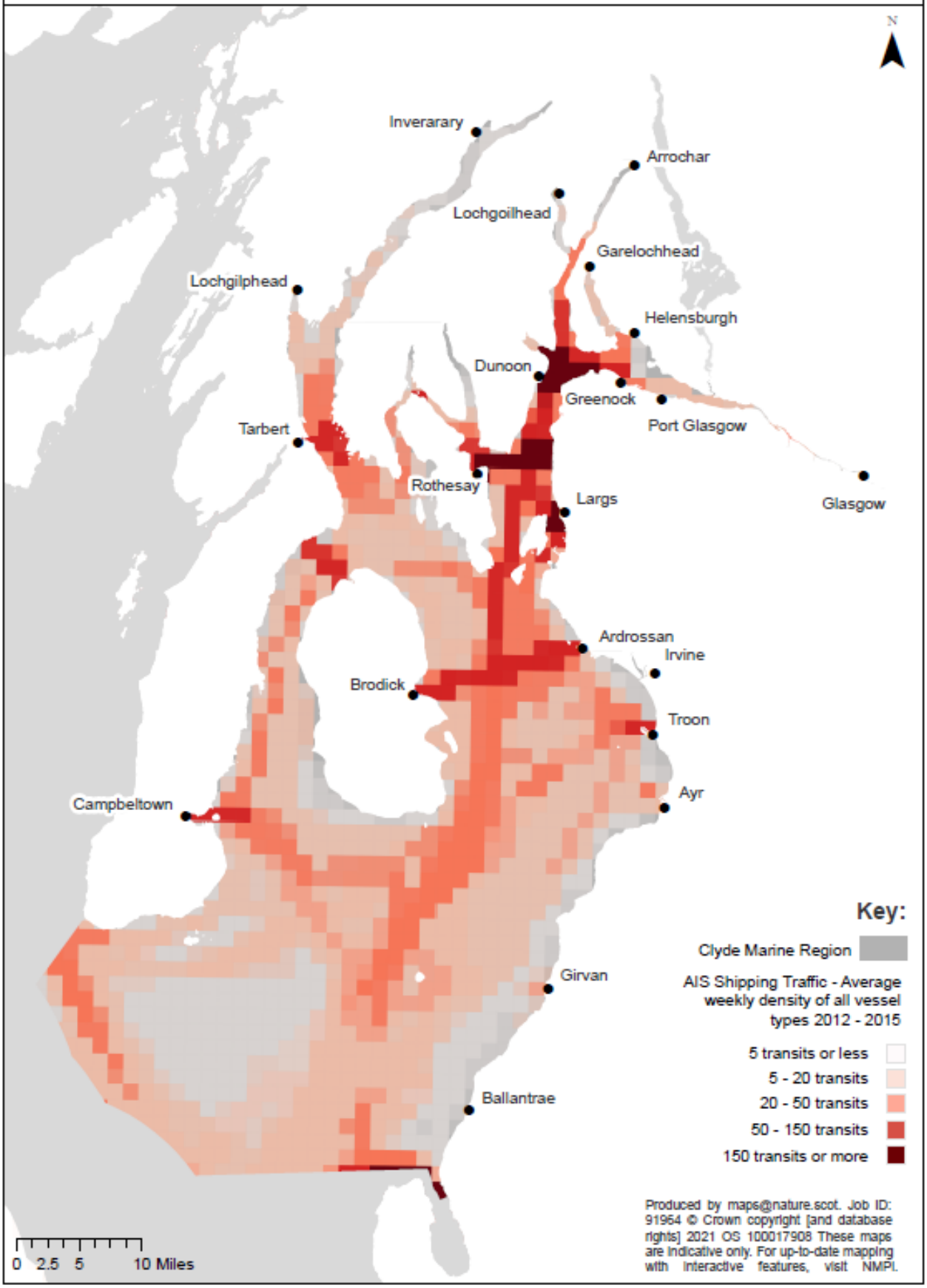
Map SHIP 1. Harbour Authorities and main shipping infrastructure in the Clyde Marine Region



Map SHIP 2. Main transport networks, National Renewable Infrastructure Plan sites (NRIPs), dredge spoil disposal sites and locations relating to policy SHIP 1 and SHIP 2



Map SHIP 3. Shipping density in the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Marine information for Clydeport Statutory Harbour Authority (https://bit.ly/2UdzZRJ).
- Clyde Leisure Navigation Guide (fifth edition), issued by Peel Ports Clydeport (https://bit.ly/3Yj68qg).
- Notices and information about Piers and Harbours owned and managed by Argyll and Bute Council (https://bit.ly/2UcZD9a).
- Tarbert Harbour Authority (https://bit.ly/2S4HFD4).
- Holy Loch Port (https://bit.ly/38ZHQGn).
- Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd, for harbours, piers and slipways at Brodick, Lochranza, Rhubodach, Cumbrae, Largs, Wemyss Bay, Gourock, Colintraive and Claonaig (https://bit.ly/2tbZxmW).
- The UK Government prepared A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (2018) (https://bit.ly/36G3Rc1) alongside the Port Marine Safety Code (2016) (https://bit.ly/2tYANPI).
- Islands Connectivity Plan – Transport Scotland (https://bit.ly/4mJWx7C)
- Strategic Approach – Islands Connectivity Plan – Transport Scotland (2024) (https://bit.ly/4eI1FHn)
- The Vessels and Ports Plan – Islands Connectivity Plan – Transport Scotland (2024) (https://bit.ly/3Ql8ox4)

Sector Policy 6:
Energy, Subsea Cables and Pipelines


Scottish and Southern Energy test turbines at Hunterston.

Licensing and regulation for oil and gas exploration, extraction and decommissioning is the responsibility of the UK Government, through the North Sea Transition Authority, beyond the Scottish onshore area. The environmental regulations relating to emissions and discharges do not apply in internal or controlled waters (0-3 nautical miles) where competence in relation to pollution rests with the Scottish Government. A licence is also required from Crown Estate Scotland which gives a developer the property rights they need to lay, maintain and operate cables and pipelines on the seabed up to 12 nautical miles from the shore[191].

Any deposit, removal or dredging carried out for the purpose of executing emergency inspection or repair works to a cable is exempt from the marine licensing regime with approval by Scottish Ministers. Otherwise, cable replacement or protection works and new cable installation are subject to the marine licensing process.

Clyde Marine Region Context

This chapter includes energy generation, pipelines and power and telecommunication infrastructure/cables. As with the whole of this plan, policies within this chapter only apply to matters within the devolved competence of the Scottish Ministers.

There has been no extraction of fossil fuels within the Clyde Marine Region to date. While there are no active commercial offshore wind and marine renewable energy schemes in the Clyde Marine Region, one draft tidal option is located to the south of the Kintyre peninsula. The National Offshore Wind Turbine Test facility at Hunterston was the UK's only onshore test facility for offshore wind turbines; the test turbines at this site were decommissioned in 2018 and 2019. Ayr, Troon and Inchgreen have been identified as potential support sites for marine renewables, providing operations and maintenance (see Map ENCA 1). Hunterston B nuclear power station's decommissioning process has moved from defueling to the next stage, with the site's licence transferred from EDF Energy to Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) in April 2026[192]; its coastal location is important for access to water from the Clyde for industrial cooling.

Finnart Oil Terminal, a petrochemical transfer facility located on the eastern shore of Loch Long, is capable of receiving Very Large Crude Carriers and Ultra Large Crude Carriers. There are two land-based pipelines that transport crude oil across Scotland to the Grangemouth refinery and return the refined products for export.

Subsea cables (power transmission and telecommunications) are a key component of the Clyde Marine Region's enabling infrastructure. These subsea cables are of recognised national and

[191] Cables and Pipelines, Crown Estate Scotland (https://bit.ly/4tZ7zZ2)
[192] UK Government News Article (2026) (https://bit.ly/3OU5yOY)

international economic importance, providing power and broadband connectivity to businesses and households on the mainland, the islands and further afield.

Objectives		
	Objective ENCA 1	The Clyde Marine Region plays its part in the transition to a decarbonised Scottish Economy while ensuring energy security. Offshore energy generation is essential to securing long term benefits and jobs for local communities and contributing to energy security. This includes the use of marine wind, wave and tidal renewable energy sources in the Clyde Marine Region.
	Objective ENCA 2	The laying, replacement and maintenance of important subsea cables and pipelines in the Clyde Marine Region is undertaken with due consideration of all marine users.
Policies		
Supports Obj ENCA 1 Supports Aim 2 and 4	**Policy ENCA 1**	Proposals for development and/or use relating to offshore wind and marine renewable energy, including test facilities, should demonstrate that they have considered that: a) proposals for commercial-scale developments[193] are sited in draft Plan Option areas identified through the Sectoral Marine Plan process (see Map ENCA 1 and further information section below); b) due regard has been paid to relevant factors in the Sectoral Marine Plans and supporting documentation/assessments (as appropriate); c) proposals for small-scale offshore wind developments undertake early and proactive engagement with relevant public authorities and relevant stakeholders; and d) where applicable, detailed infrastructure restoration and maintenance plans are included for the full lifespan of any proposal, including any decommissioning/remediation required.
Supports Obj ENCA 1 Supports Aim 1	**Policy ENCA 2**	Proposals for development and/or use should demonstrate that they have considered that they contribute to a sustainable, secure and inclusive energy transition, taking account of our Climate Change Policies and in line with statutory marine and land use planning policy, environmental regulations and industry best practice.

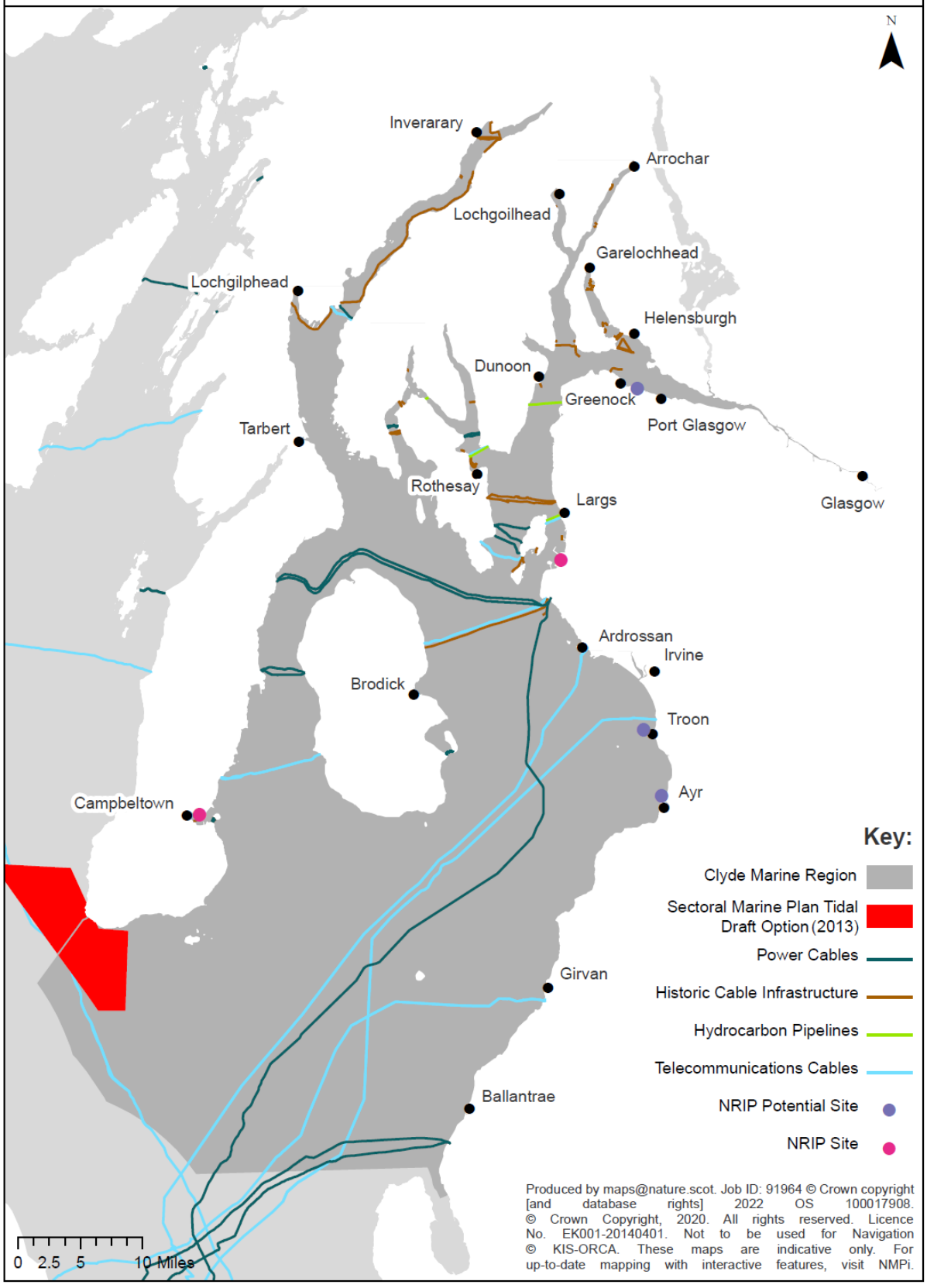
Recommendation for marine users/local management		
Supports Obj ENCA 2	**Recommendation rENCA 1**	The laying, replacement and maintenance of communication and power cables and any oil and gas pipelines is encouraged where: a) existing routes and landing points are used where practicable, and/or

[193] For the purposes of sectoral marine planning for offshore wind projects, commercial-scale developments are defined as projects capable of generating more than 100 MW of electricity (https://bit.ly/48si8dS). For the purposes of wave (https://bit.ly/3F0nT2z /) and tidal (https://bit.ly/3nXc4TH) energy, commercial-scale developments are defined as projects with a capacity of over 30 MW.

	b) the required mitigation and monitoring plans are produced[194].

[194] Marine Licensing and Consenting: Mitigation and Monitoring Plans (https://bit.ly/49frYRN)

Map ENCA 1. Energy infrastructure and National Renewable Infrastructure Plan sites (NRIPs) within the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Offshore Wind Energy – Sectoral Marine Plan 2025: Consultation (https://bit.ly/4d6pyaJ) and Consultation analysis report (https://bit.ly/42hOMfZ)
- Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind Energy 2020 (https://bit.ly/4dal3dH)
- The Marine Licensing (Exempted Activities) (Scottish Offshore Region) Order 2011 (Amended 2012) (https://bit.ly/31dWxmU).
- European Subsea Cables Association (ESCA) guidelines (https://bit.ly/2vEQtIf). The ESCA supports a project, KIS-ORCA (Kingfisher Information Services Offshore Renewables and Cable Awareness) (https://bit.ly/3A8YRkV), to increase cable awareness (https://bit.ly/38ZfA75) and to improve cable safety by providing freely available charts and emergency procedures (https://bit.ly/2RNrdZ3).
- National Renewables Infrastructure Plan (https://bit.ly/4dZN2eG).
- The Scottish Energy Strategy, published in 2017, is Scotland's first energy strategy and sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the future energy system in Scotland (https://bit.ly/3aYdAOb).
- The Fishing Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables Group (FLOWW) provide Best Practice Guidance for Offshore Renewables Developments: Recommendations for Fisheries Disruption Settlements and Community Funds (2015) (https://bit.ly/4wheBKI) and Best Practice Guidance for Offshore Renewables Developments: Recommendations for Fisheries Liaison (2025) (https://bit.ly/4ezE6AB)
- NatureScot guidance on Good Practice during Wind Farm Construction (https://bit.ly/2GGeIrN).

Sector 7: Defence

Defence is a reserved matter for the UK Parliament. The operational requirements of defence must be taken into account within marine planning. Marine licensing provisions and Health, Safety and Environmental Protection legislation do not apply to the MoD. However, when undertaking development and/or use in the Clyde Marine Region, the MoD carries out a process known as dis-application which mirrors the marine licensing and Environmental Impact Assessment processes that would be required for non-defence related developments and/or use.



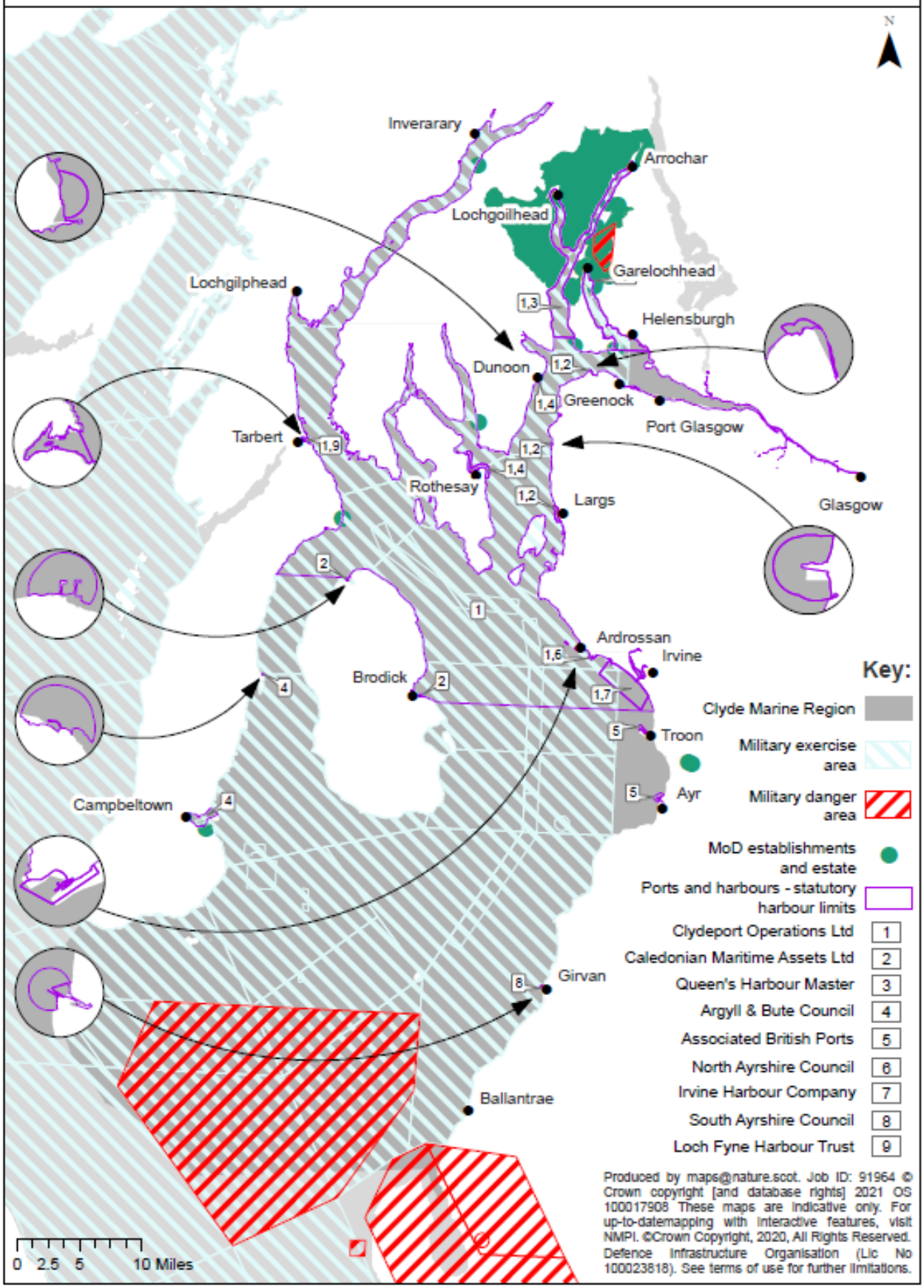
His Majesty's Naval Base Clyde at Faslane on Gare Loch.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Ministry of Defence (MoD) activities in the Clyde Marine Region are concentrated at His Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde at Faslane, home to the core of the UK Submarine Service. It is the second largest single site employer in Scotland and supports around 11,000 direct and indirect jobs[195]. There is a Naval Armaments Depot located nearby at Coulport, with the associated Glen Mallan ammunition jetty. The Clyde Marine Region is used for training, for conducting naval exercises and by military vessels including submarines. HMNB Clyde and Clydeport are both Statutory Harbour Authorities within Gare Loch, Loch Long and Loch Goil, with overlapping jurisdiction (See Map DEF 1).

[195] UK Defence Journal, 2023 (http://bit.ly/439ZENG)

Map DEF 1. Ministry of Defence infrastructure in the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- Notices and other information for safe navigation in Gare Loch and Loch Long (https://bit.ly/3NFPFYo).
- Ministry of Defence UK Code of Practice on Fishing Vessel Avoidance (1999) (https://bit.ly/3b0Ueb2).
- Ministry of Defence Guidance on Fishing Vessels Operating in Submarine Exercise Areas (https://bit.ly/2uM7v6X).
- Policy Statement by the Secretary of State for Defence on Health, Safety and Environmental Protection in Defence (2018) (https://bit.ly/2GIhPiO).

Sector Policy 8: Marine Aggregates

Crown Estate Scotland manages the majority of mineral rights to the seabed out to the edge of the continental shelf. Marine aggregate removal is regulated by Scottish Ministers, with activities requiring a licence from the Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team.

Clyde Marine Region Context

As with the whole of this plan, Policies within this chapter only apply to matters within the devolved competence of the Scottish Ministers.



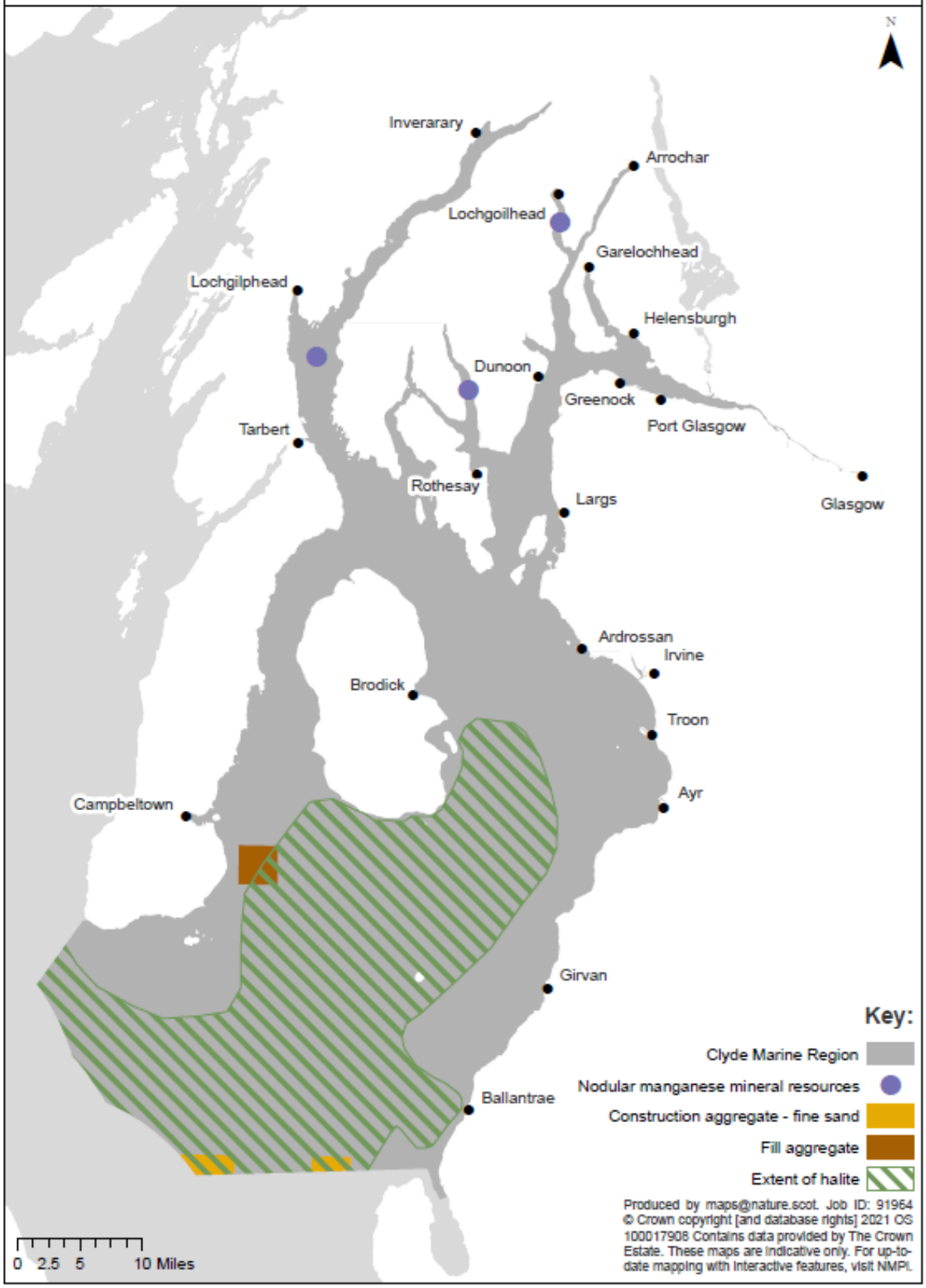
Halite – a type of marine aggregate found in the Clyde.

Marine aggregates are naturally occurring sand, gravel or crushed rock used in construction, principally as a component of concrete, or for land reclamation and coastal defence. Minerals are also found as nodules or crystals.

The British Geological Survey maps mineral resources (see Map AGG 1), but, as this process is desk-based, verification on site is required to establish any potential for extraction. The Clyde Marine Region has few aggregate resources; manganese nodules are known to exist in the sea lochs and halite, or salt rock, is expected to be present in the North Channel and into the Clyde Marine Region. There is presently no demand for extraction of aggregates in the Clyde Marine Region. Significant technological and economic changes may lead to a demand in future.

Objective		
	Objective AGG 1	Marine aggregate resources are safeguarded in the Clyde Marine Region, and any future exploitation is in line with legislation, in particular regarding potential environmental impact.
Policy		
Supports Obj AGG 1 Supports Aim 3	**Policy AGG 1**	Proposals for the extraction of marine aggregates should demonstrate that they have considered: a) providing a description of the alternatives that have been considered, such as alternative sources or materials, including dredged material; and b) demonstrating that marine aggregate extraction is an essential part of the proposed project. Where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required, the proposal should demonstrate that it has considered an assessment of the physical effects of the operation, including any implications for coastal sediment dynamics.

Map AGG 1. Metallic mineral, sand gravel and evaporite (halite) resources in the Clyde Marine Region



Further information

- British Marine Aggregates Producers Association (https://bit.ly/4uAwjHB)
- The Environmental Impact Assessment and Natural Habitats (Extraction of Minerals by Marine Dredging) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 (https://bit.ly/2RHx4ir).



Dumbarton Castle, located on Dumbarton Rock

Annex 1 – Guidance on national and regional authorisation, enforcement and assessments

Table 1: National and regional authorisation, enforcement and assessments that applicants should be aware of.

Disclaimer: this list is provided for guidance only and is not a full interpretation of any legislation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any application is in full accordance with all relevant legislation.

Enforcement/Assessment	Competent Authority	Further information
Planning Permission and related consents	Planning Authority	For a full list of the planning authorities in the Clyde Marine Region, see page 13 of this Plan. Applies to land use planning[196] and finfish and shellfish aquaculture (excl. seaweed cultivation and harvesting which may require a marine licence).
Works Licence, Dredging Licence	Statutory Harbour Authority	Any works or dredging activities which are to be carried out within harbour or port limits may require a works or dredging licence. Developers should contact the relevant Harbour Authority. Peel Ports Clydeport is the Statutory Harbour Authority responsible for much of the Clyde Marine Region from Glasgow, in the sea lochs and out to Arran. The King's Harbour Master has overlapping jurisdiction in Gare Loch, Loch Long and Loch Goil (Ministry of Defence facilities). Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd has licensing powers for Brodick and Largs.

[196] Terrestrial planning is land to Mean Low Water Springs, Marine is sea to Mean High Water Springs

Enforcement/Assessment	Competent Authority	Further information
Marine Licence (including Pre-Application consultation where applicable)[197]	Marine Directorate -Licensing Operations Team	Certain activities require a marine licence before they can be carried out. These activities include the construction, alteration or improvement of works, dredging activity and the deposit or removal of substances and objects in the sea, amongst other things. Certain activities, usually large projects, are also required to carry out a public pre-application consultation, enabling local communities and other interested parties to comment on a project at an early stage.
Seabed Lease Agreement, Licences and Consents[198] Mooring Licence[199]	Crown Estate Scotland Clyde Moorings Committee within Clydeport Statutory Harbour Authority jurisdiction	Crown Estate Scotland manages activities and developments that use the foreshore and seabed by issuing leases, licences and consents. Three different mooring licences are used: individual, commercial and associations.
Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations[200] registration or permit	Scottish Environment Protection Agency	The regulations apply to all industrial activities, water activities, waste activities and radioactive substances. There are four different types of authorisations. For low-risk activities, general binding rules and notification apply. Applications for a registration or permit apply to higher-risk or complex activities that require a decision to be made by SEPA.[201]
Environmental Impact Assessment[202]	Planning Authorities Marine Directorate Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. (reserved matters)	It is a matter for the competent authorities noted to consider whether a proposed development requires EIA. To request a screening opinion, developers should contact the relevant competent authority. If it is considered that significant environmental cumulative effects resulting from a proposal to modify and/or extend any finfish farm are likely to be mitigated, then applications can be considered appropriately through the submission of further information rather than a full EIA.
Habitats Regulations Appraisal, and where necessary Appropriate Assessment[203]	Planning Authorities Marine Directorate Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (CAR) NatureScot Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. (reserved matters)	Natura sites are a network of protected areas that are internationally important for threatened habitats and species. All competent authorities must consider whether any plan or project will have a 'likely significant effect' on a Natura site. If so, an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out.
Marine European Protected Species licence[204]	Commercial activities – Marine Directorate Scientific research or conservation – NatureScot	Certain marine species are under strict protection - whales, dolphins and porpoises as well as marine turtles, the Atlantic sturgeon and otter (additional protections also apply to their holts or other breeding sites or resting place), and a licence is required before certain activities can take place.
Authorisation in relation to species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981[167]	NatureScot	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: It is an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally (or recklessly) kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 of the Act – this includes basking shark and fan mussel. It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while in use or being built or to take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

[197] Marine Licensing in Scotland (https://bit.ly/31cHauJ).
[198] Marine Works, Crown Estate Scotland (https://bit.ly/3AcnPje).
[199] Marine Leisure, Crown Estate Scotland (https://bit.ly/3Un3oXA).
[200] The Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 (https://bit.ly/41IOyOD)
[201] Types of Authorisations, SEPA (https://bit.ly/4g6Eura)
[202] Scottish Government, Environmental assessment (https://bit.ly/392tTYj).
[203] NatureScot Habitats Regulations Appraisal guidance (https://bit.ly/391WRHP).
[204] NatureScot Species licensing information (https://bit.ly/2RT64wE).

Enforcement/Assessment	Competent Authority	Further information
Seal Licence[205]	Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team	It is an offence to kill, injure or take a seal at any time of year, except to alleviate suffering or where licensed to do so. Marine Directorate issues relevant licences and regular reporting is required.
Section 36 consent[206]	Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team	Applications concerning marine energy infrastructure, including subsea cables, wave, tidal and offshore wind electricity generating stations, are approved by Marine Directorate, which also provides guidance on monitoring watercourses in relation to onshore energy developments. Certain electricity generating stations cannot be constructed, extended or operated without a section 36 consent.
Authorisation to operate an Aquaculture Production Business[207]	Marine Directorate Science Fish Health Inspectorate	Authorisations are issued to businesses which rear, keep or cultivate aquaculture animals subject to certain conditions designed to ensure the animals are healthy, including through the prevention and control of certain diseases.

[205] Scottish Government Seal Licensing: Guidance and Forms (https://bit.ly/2RULjQK).
[206] Scottish Government Marine Renewable Energy (https://bit.ly/3sVSIlv).
[207] Aquaculture Production Business: Forms and Guidance (https://bit.ly/3KvBfWY).

Annex 2 – Historic environment management and consenting processes

NPF4 considers the historic environment as a key cultural and economic asset and a source of inspiration that should be seen as integral to creating successful places. Strategic and local development plans should protect and promote their significant historic environment assets. They should take account of the capacity of settlements and surrounding areas to accommodate development without damage to their historic significance. Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) is a policy statement for decision-making for the whole of the historic environment. Culture-led regeneration can have a profound impact on the wellbeing of a community in terms of the physical look and feel of a place and can also attract visitors, which in turn can bolster the local economy and sense of pride or ownership. Enhancement and climate adaptation of the historic environment can also play a role through various actions including effective maintenance, restoration and conversion, and creative and informed approaches to new development.

Table 2: Heritage or conservation designations used to safeguard important places.

Designation	Relevant Legislation	Terrestrial/Marine	Consenting Authority
Historic Marine Protected Area	Marine (Scotland) Act 2010	Marine	Marine Directorate
Scheduled Monument	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Terrestrial & Marine	Historic Environment Scotland
Protected Place (wrecks designated by name)	Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	Terrestrial & Marine	Ministry of Defence
Controlled Site	Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	Marine	Ministry of Defence
World Heritage Sites	UNESCO World Heritage Convention	Terrestrial & Marine	No additional consents required, but consult Historic Environment Scotland
Listed buildings	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997	Terrestrial and to the low water mark (e.g. harbours)	Planning Authority
Conservation Areas	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997	Terrestrial	Planning Authority
Gardens & Designed Landscapes	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Terrestrial	No additional consents required, but consult Historic Environment Scotland
Battlefields	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Terrestrial	No additional consents required, but consult Historic Environment Scotland



Glossary

Access Rights	The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (which came into force in 2005) gives everyone rights of access over land and inland water throughout Scotland, subject to specific exclusions set out in the Act and as long as they behave responsibly.
Aquaculture	Aquaculture is the production of farmed marine species such as finfish, shellfish and seaweed within controlled installations.
Best Practicable Environmental Option	Part of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and is a key principle for reducing pollution from industrial and other processes and improving waste management.
Biosecurity	Procedures or measures to prevent damage caused by biological or biochemical substances.
Brownfield site	Often a site that has previously been developed and has the potential to be redeveloped.
Carbon stores	Natural resources that may have slow sequestration rates but have accumulated large amounts of carbon over time.
Circular economy	An alternative concept to the traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) that aims to use resources for as long as possible and to recover and regenerate them once they reach the end of their life.
Climate change adaptation	Adapting to the effects of climate change.
Climate change mitigation	Reducing our contribution to climate change.
Clyde Marine Region	The area defined at Article 8 of the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015 (SSI 2015/193) within the boundaries of the Scottish marine area (that is within the seaward limits of Scottish territorial waters (0-12 nautical miles)).
Coast	The edge or margin where the land meets water, be that natural or artificial land.

Coastal Character Assessment	Process of identifying and describing Scotland's diverse coastline.
Coastal/Coastal Zone	The coastal zone extends across the land-sea interface and includes different types of artificial coast (e.g. artificial structures like quay walls) and natural coast (e.g. rocky shores). The developed coastline in the inner Clyde estuary is considered part of the coastal zone. The landward boundary will be dictated by the extent to which the land is affected by coastal processes, the inter-visibility between land and sea, and the potential for developments or use to adversely affect the special qualities of the coast.
Controlled Site	An area around wrecked military vessels protected by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) through the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. Controlled Sites are specified in the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 (Designation of Vessels and Controlled Sites) Order 2012. A licence is required from the MOD to access or disturb the area in any way.
Cumulative Impacts	The combined effects of multiple past, present and future activities or projects on the environment
Design statement	An explanation for the chosen design solution for a development and why it is the most suitable option.
Developments	These require consent from a public authority and include new development and use; maintenance activities and works; and alterations, extensions or changes in material use.
Development and/or use	Any development or activity that requires authorisations from a public authority and falls within devolved competencies e.g. 'licensable marine activities' identified under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and activities licensed under the Environment Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018
Devolved competencies	Matters within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament and/or the executive competence of the Scottish Ministers
Dredging	Includes using any device to move any material (whether or not suspended in water) from one part of the sea or seabed to another part.
Ecosystem approach	A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in an equitable way.
Environmental carrying capacity	The amount of aquaculture which a region can support without environmental degradation and taking cumulative effects into account.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	An assessment to identify the environmental impacts of a development. An EIA is only a statutory obligation if the works are schedule I or schedule II works which are screened in (they may be screened out); EIAs do not apply to all licensable activities.
EU Habitats Directive	Adopted in 1992 to protect rare, threatened or endemic species found throughout the European Union.
EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive	Adopted in 2008 to improve the protection of European marine environments.
EU Water Framework Directive	Adopted in 2000 and sets the objectives for the future of water protection throughout the EU.
European Protected Species	Animal or plant species that are protected through the Habitats Directive.

Flood Risk Management Plan	Identify flood risks from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs, and how risk management authorities will collaborate with communities to manage flood risk.
Good Environmental Status (GES)	Defined by the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive as the environmental status of marine waters that provide clean, healthy and productive ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas.
Greenhouse gases	Gases that absorb infrared radiation and contribute to the greenhouse effect. Carbon dioxide and chlorofluorocarbons are examples of greenhouse gases.
Historic Environment Record	Information service that provides access to resources relating to local archaeological sites and finds, historic buildings and historic landscapes in a defined geographic area.
Historic Marine Protected Area	Areas with important Scottish marine heritage assets such as remains of ships and aircrafts lost at sea, harbours, lighthouses and other structures relating to transport and trade by sea, and remains of human settlements at the coastal fringe.
Independent living	Independent living means all disabled people having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, work and in the community. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life.
Inshore waters	Waters within 12 nautical miles of the coast.
Integrated Green Grey Infrastructure	Greening the greyest parts of our towns, cities or coasts that must remain largely grey for their primary function.
Intertidal	Coastal area between the mean high-water level and the mean low water level.
Invasive non-native species	Non-native species that threaten biodiversity and/or cause damage.
Irreversibility	Significant long-term impacts
Landscape	The European landscape convention defines landscape as an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction natural and/or human factors. It is an expanse of scenery and objects which can be seen in a single view.
Land/sea interactions	The interaction between the use of land and the sea, including the impacts from terrestrial and marine activities. Integrating these interactions is an important part of coastal management and spatial planning.
Land use planning	Refers to all elements of the land use planning system, such as the National Planning Framework, Local Development Plans and land use plans.
Local Development Plan (LDP)	Developed by local planning authorities to assign development sites and sites to be protected. LDPs are required for each Scottish council area.
Local Landscape Area (LLA)	A designation to protect a landscape from inappropriate development.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	A protected area because of its special natural interest and/or educational value. Sites of Special Scientific Interest and/or Natura sites may be found within LNRs.
Lock in	An instance of becoming unalterable, unmovable or rigid
Managed realignment	A tool to reduce coastal flooding and erosion by deliberately changing flood defences to allow flooding of a defended area.

Marine aggregates	Naturally occurring sand, gravel or crushed rock, including minerals formed as nodules or crystals, used in construction. Key component of concrete.
Marine licence	A licence for a 'licensable marine activity' as set out in Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010.
Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland	National measures to minimise the amount of litter entering the Scottish marine and coastal environment.
Marine Protected Area (MPA)	A tool to safeguard areas of the marine environment, support their sustainable use and ensure they remain healthy and productive.
Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)	The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs defines an MSP as a strategic plan for regulating, managing and protecting the marine environment that addresses the multiple, cumulative and potentially conflicting uses of the sea.
Marine Strategy Regulations 2010	The EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive transposed into UK legislation.
Marine Users	All legitimate users of the Clyde Marine Region, both those requiring consent and those not requiring consent, which includes people using the marine and coastal area for recreational activities.
Mean High Water Springs	On average, the highest water level that spring tides reach.
Mean Low Water Springs	On average, the lowest water level that spring tides reach.
Maximum Sustainable Yield	The maximum long-term average yield which can be sustained for a stock under normal exploitation patterns.
National Marine Plan (NMP)	The NMP sets out the national framework for the management of the Scottish marine environment.
National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi)	National Marine Plan interactive is an online, interactive tool developed by Marine Directorate to support marine planning.
National Scenic Area (NSA)	An area of outstanding scenic value in a national context.
Natural capital	Natural assets, including rivers, oceans, forests, minerals, soil, air and all living things.
Nautical miles	Unit of length used in marine navigation where one nautical mile is equal to 1.15 statute miles and 1.85 kilometres.
Non-native species	Species that have been intentionally or unintentionally introduced outside of their native range as a consequence to human activity.
Ocean acidification	Significant changes in the chemistry of the ocean when carbon dioxide gas is absorbed by the ocean and reacts with seawater to produce acid.
Ocean literacy	Ocean literacy is defined as an understanding of the ocean's influence on you, and your influence on the ocean. Ocean literacy is a way not only to increase the awareness of the public about the oceans, but it is an approach to encourage all citizens and stakeholders to have more responsible and informed behaviour towards the ocean and its resources.
Positive effects on biodiversity	When development leaves biodiversity in a better state than before.
Precautionary principle	Preventive measures are to be taken when there are reasonable grounds for concern that human activities may bring about hazards to human health, harm living resources and marine ecosystems, damage amenities or interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea, even when there is no conclusive evidence of a causal relationship.

Pre-production plastic pellets (nurdles)	Raw plastic before it has been made into an end use item such as a plastic bag, bottle or toy.
Priority Marine Feature (PMF)	Prioritised marine habitats and species considered to be of national conservation importance.
Protected characteristics	Characteristics protected through the Equality Act 2010. These include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
Protected Place	The site of a military aircraft which crashed in service and certain military vessels protected by the Ministry of Defence through the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986. Protected Places are specified in the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 (Designation of Vessels and Controlled Sites) Order 2012.
Quality of life	The standard of health, comfort and happiness experienced by an individual or group.
Ramsar site	A wetland designated to be of international importance to sustain biodiversity under the Ramsar convention.
Regional Spatial Strategy	Prepared by Glasgow City Region Place for the eight local authorities within Glasgow City Region.
River Basin Management Plan	Identify how stakeholders will work together to protect and improve the water environment including rivers, lakes, estuaries, coasts and groundwater.
Scheduled Monument	Archaeological sites, buildings or structures of national or international importance. The purpose of scheduling is to secure long term legal protection of the monument *in situ* and as far as possible in its existing state and within an appropriate setting.
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Scotland's principal environmental regulator, protecting and improving Scotland's environment.
Seascape	An area as perceived by people, from land, sea, or air, where the sea is a key element of the physical environment.
Seascape Landscape Visual Impact Assessment	Assessment to identify the effects of a development on views and visual amenities.
Sectoral interactions	The interaction between two or more economic sectors.
Sediment dynamics	The formation, distribution and movement of sediments, including erosion and accretion.
	Identify sustainable long-term coastal policies to reduce risks to people, property and the historic and natural environment.
Significant Impacts	A large, noticeable and important effect or consequence that changes a feature, system or situation, that results in substantial harm.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Conservation designation for a nationally protected area containing biological or geological features of special interest.
Soft engineering	Use of the natural environment to help reduce coastal erosion and river flooding.
Special Protected Area (SPA)	Protected sites classified according to the EC Birds Directive. SPAs are important habitats for rare and migratory birds within the EU.
Special Qualities	The characteristics that make a designation special. Characteristics can include landscape and views, geology and geography, biodiversity and rare species, and archaeology and history.
Step Ashore	Step ashore facilities e.g. pontoons and landing stages, services for boaters, public facilities, commercial opportunities and shore access

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The assessment of plans, programmes and strategies to identify, report and propose mitigation measures, and monitor environmental their environmental impacts.
Sustainable development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Sustainable transport	Reducing the environmental, social and economic impact of travel by promoting and facilitating people and organisations to use more sustainable and active forms of travel.
UK Marine Policy Statement	Framework for preparing Marine Plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment.
Use	Use is categorised into (i) use that is or will be authorised and/or enforced by a public authority, and (ii) use that relates to general use of the marine environment, including all legitimate use that is not specifically addressed by right of use.
Wellbeing	The state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. Also understood as a positive state for individuals and societies, influenced by social, economic, and environmental factors, and encompassing quality of life and purpose
Wild Land Area (WLA)	Nationally important (not a statutory designation) areas of the most extensive areas of high wildness.



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