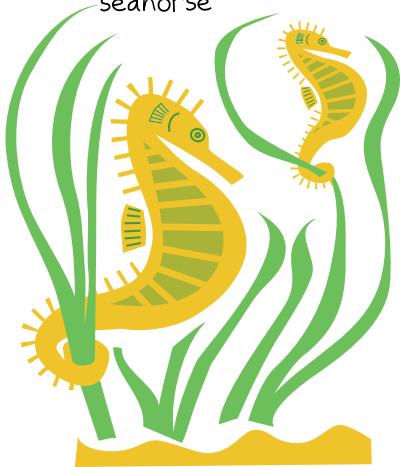


# Achieving Living Seas



Our seas are in trouble. For centuries we have taken the seas' riches for granted, taking too much with too little care. Only 2% of UK seas are protected for wildlife, and less than 0.001% is fully protected from all damaging activities. Through new laws and with your help we have the opportunity to ensure our marine environment receives the protection it needs.

spiny seahorse



## Marine conservation – why now

Our seas support and enhance our quality of life, providing us with resources (food, oxygen, materials for construction) as well as a place to relax. So what are we doing to protect them for the future? Continued over-exploitation will leave behind a barren wasteland; brightly coloured reefs will be devoid of wildlife; and fish suppers will become a rarity.

How do we prevent this? During 2009 the Marine and Coastal Access Act brought in new laws allowing the creation of network of MPAs in English and Welsh inshore and offshore waters. But we need to ensure this gives our seas the protection they need.

## Living Seas – our vision for the future

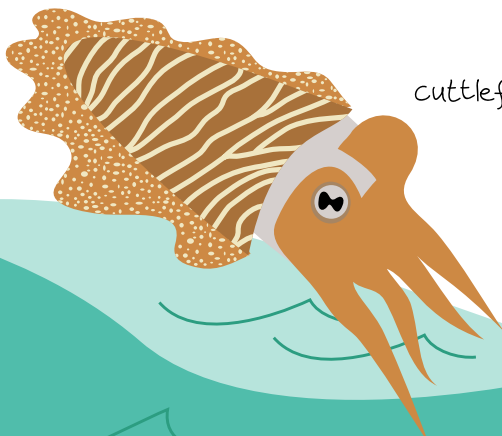
The principle of The Wildlife Trusts Living Seas vision is that wildlife thrives, from the depths of the ocean to the coastal shallows. In Living Seas:

- Wildlife and habitats are recovering from past decline as our use of the seas' resources becomes environmentally sustainable.
- The natural environment is adapting well to a changing climate, and ocean processes are helping to slow down climate change.
- People are inspired by marine wildlife and value the sea for the many ways in which it supports our quality of life.

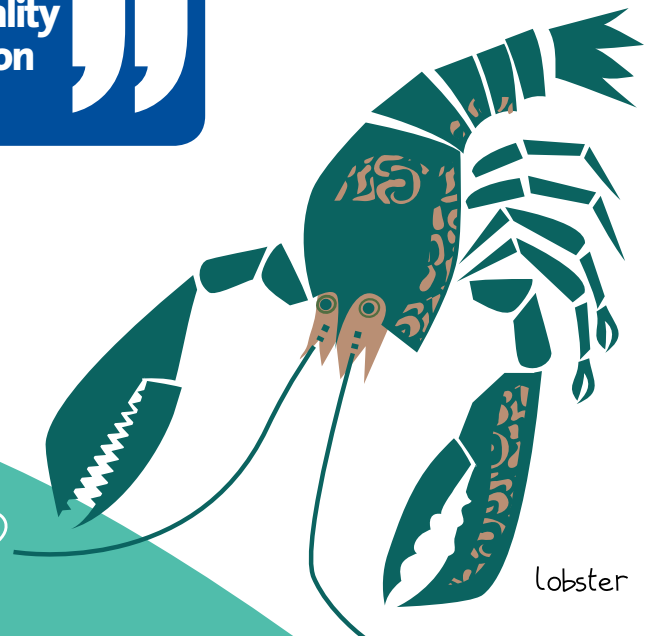
### WHY WE NEED TO ACT

“Our seas support and enhance our quality of life... but continued over-exploitation will leave behind a barren wasteland.”

cuttlefish



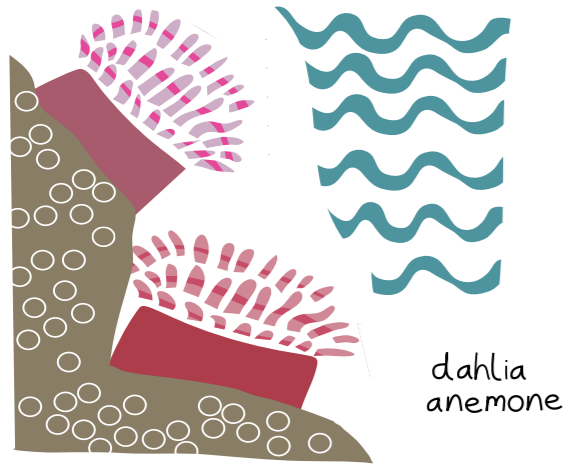
lobster



## Our MPA Network – what is it?

MPAs (Marine Protected Areas) are sites in which human activities are restricted to varying degrees. They are a tried and tested means of safeguarding important habitats and wildlife. They protect wildlife within their boundaries and allow nature to recover and thrive. In many cases, they have an influence beyond their boundaries too, as the abundant wildlife spills out into the surrounding sea.

Carefully designed and well managed networks bring even greater benefits. Networks can boost the health of the marine environment as a whole, helping it recover from past impacts and enabling it to sustain current pressures. To achieve this, MPA networks must include sites that protect rare and threatened wildlife, as well as examples of the whole range of 'typical' habitats and wildlife found in healthy seas. MPAs are the heart of marine nature conservation.



## What protected sites already exist?

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) – designated for a narrow range of habitats and species protected by European law.
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs) – designated for birds, as required by law under the European Wild Birds Directive.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest – designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, to protect nationally important species, habitats and geological features.

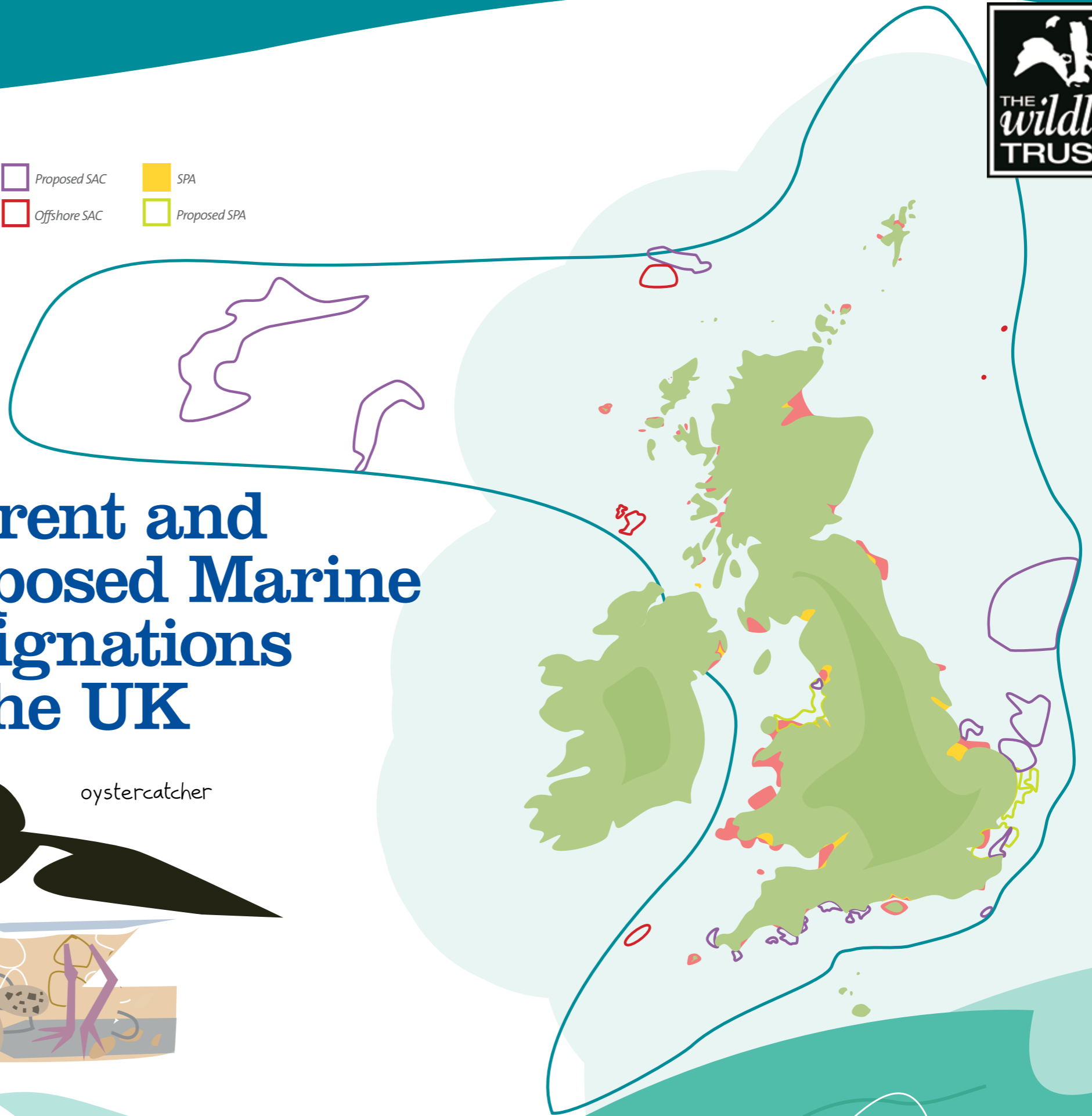
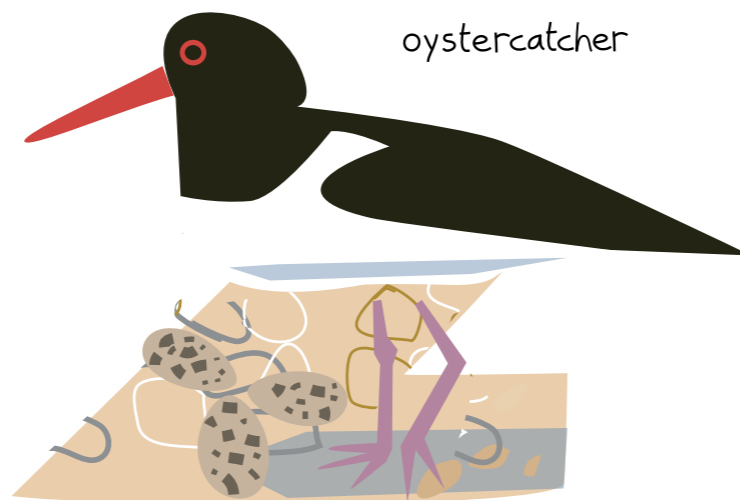
## Why is current protection not enough?

Our existing MPA network consists of over 150 sites (see illustration). So why is marine life still declining? The SACs and SPAs only protect a few kinds of habitats and species listed in European legislation, meaning the majority of our UK wildlife remains unprotected. Meanwhile, by law the Sites of Special Scientific Interest can only protect wildlife on the shore, and cannot extend into deeper water. A new approach is urgently needed.

### Key



# Current and Proposed Marine Designations in the UK



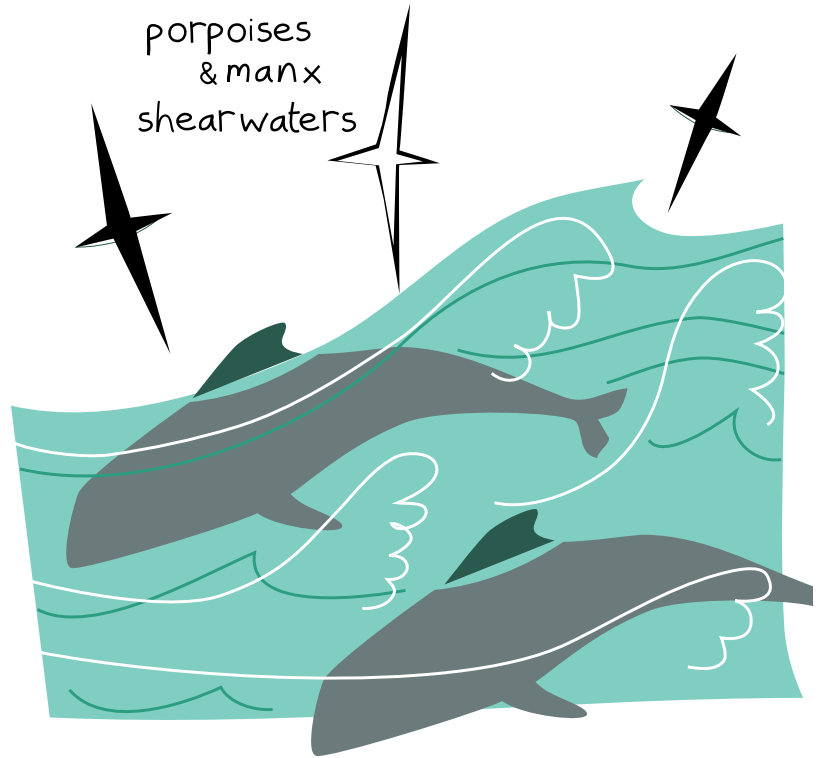
## THE NEW APPROACH

“ Marine Conservation Zones will protect places that are of national importance for their marine wildlife, habitats and geology. ”

### What new sites are going to be created?

Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) are an exciting new approach which will protect places that are of national importance for their marine wildlife, habitats and geology. They will be selected to protect a range of marine wildlife, including those considered rare and threatened. Within these sites it will also be possible to create highly protected areas where no potentially damaging activity can occur.

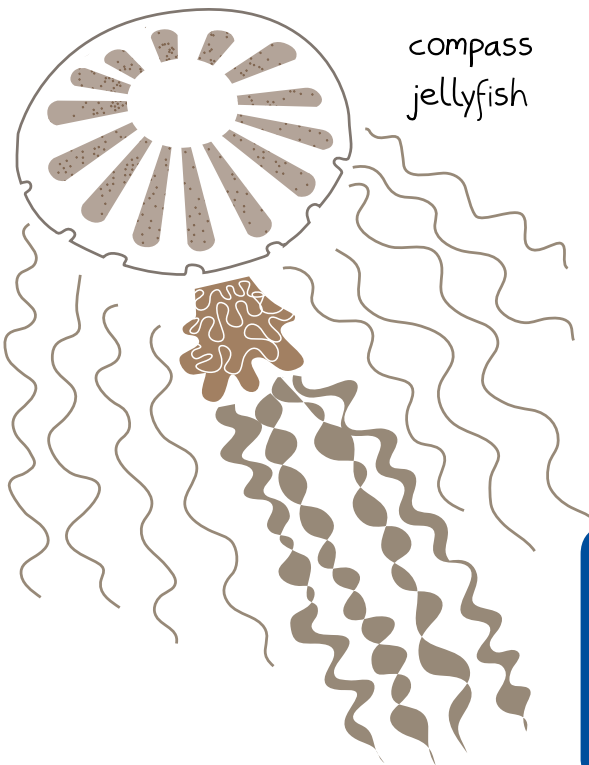
MCZs (a type of Marine Protected Area), introduced through the Marine and Coastal Access Act, will be established through a process which allows all sea users and conservationists to get involved in deciding which places should be protected. During this process The Wildlife Trusts will act as marine champions, ensuring the network is established with the needs of wildlife at the forefront.



### How will our MPA network be established?

Four regional projects have been created within the North Sea, Eastern Channel, South West of England and the Irish Sea to select MCZs so as to create an effective MPA network. The deadline for recommending the MCZ sites is 2011.

The Wildlife Trusts will work alongside these projects, ensuring they deliver protection for wildlife and help achieve our vision of Living Seas. As a voluntary organisation, we can openly voice our concerns and respond rapidly to changing situations.



### Join us on our journey towards Living Seas.

Get outside and explore the marine environment, tell others about it, visit [www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org). Send us underwater photographs and stories about the sea, visit a coastal nature reserve, take part in an event or volunteer and help us gather information highlighting marine environments in need of protection.

artwork:- [www.gregpoole.co.uk](http://www.gregpoole.co.uk)



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