Version 1.1, Revised: 10/06/2015
Lead Author: Helen Ellwood & Graeme Duncan, JNCC

OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitat map integrating data originating from maps from various field surveys

Type	Composite of multiple datasets	**Scale**	Various
Coverage	UK intertidal and subtidal (where data available)	**Shape type**	Polygons
Current version	2014 (released June 2015)	**Previous version**	2013
Classification system	Habitats on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species and habitats.		
Purpose	To present the best available information on the distribution of OSPAR habitats in UK waters. Created for use in assessments, reporting and marine spatial planning.		
Specification	Process should be repeatable, transparent, easy to explain and understand, objective, fully documented, appropriate for the variety of OSPAR habitats and appropriate for the UK, intertidal and subtidal areas. The final product should contain no conflicting overlapping data.		
Data sources	Habitat maps created from intertidal and subtidal field survey data.		

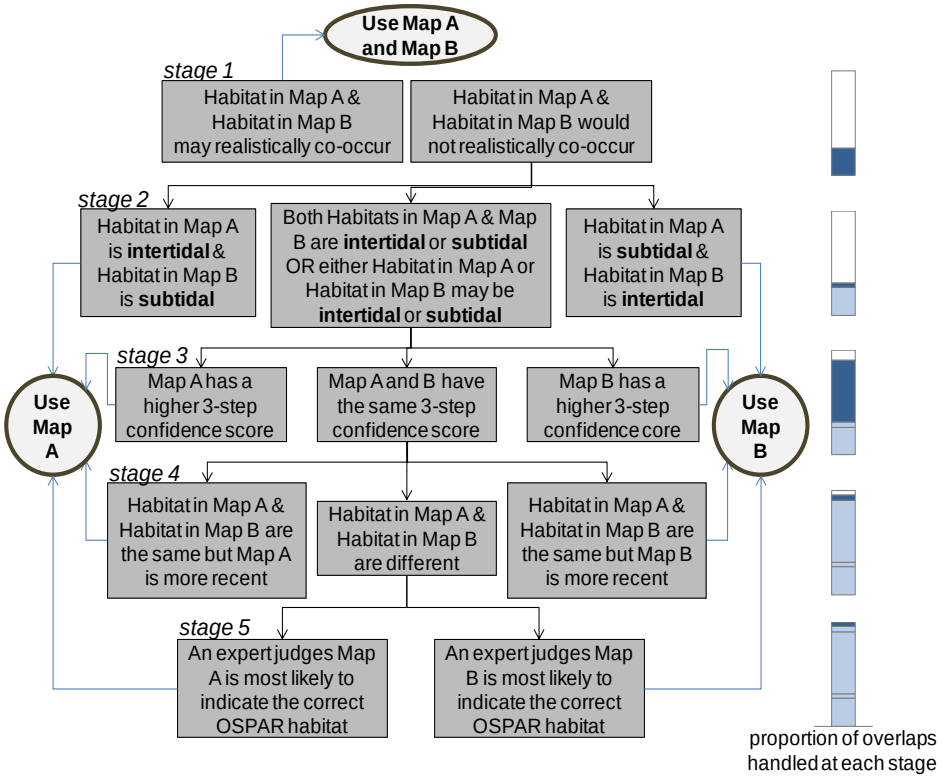
Before the available data could be combined into a single layer a rule-based approach was applied to select higher quality data in areas of overlap. The process includes a 5-stage decision tree to follow for each pair of maps with an area of overlap and a 3-step confidence assessment for each map.

3-step confidence assessment: A qualitative score indicating the likelihood of a particular habitat being correctly mapped within a study area was calculated by scoring 3 factors likely to have a large effect on the overall accuracy of the habitat assignments:

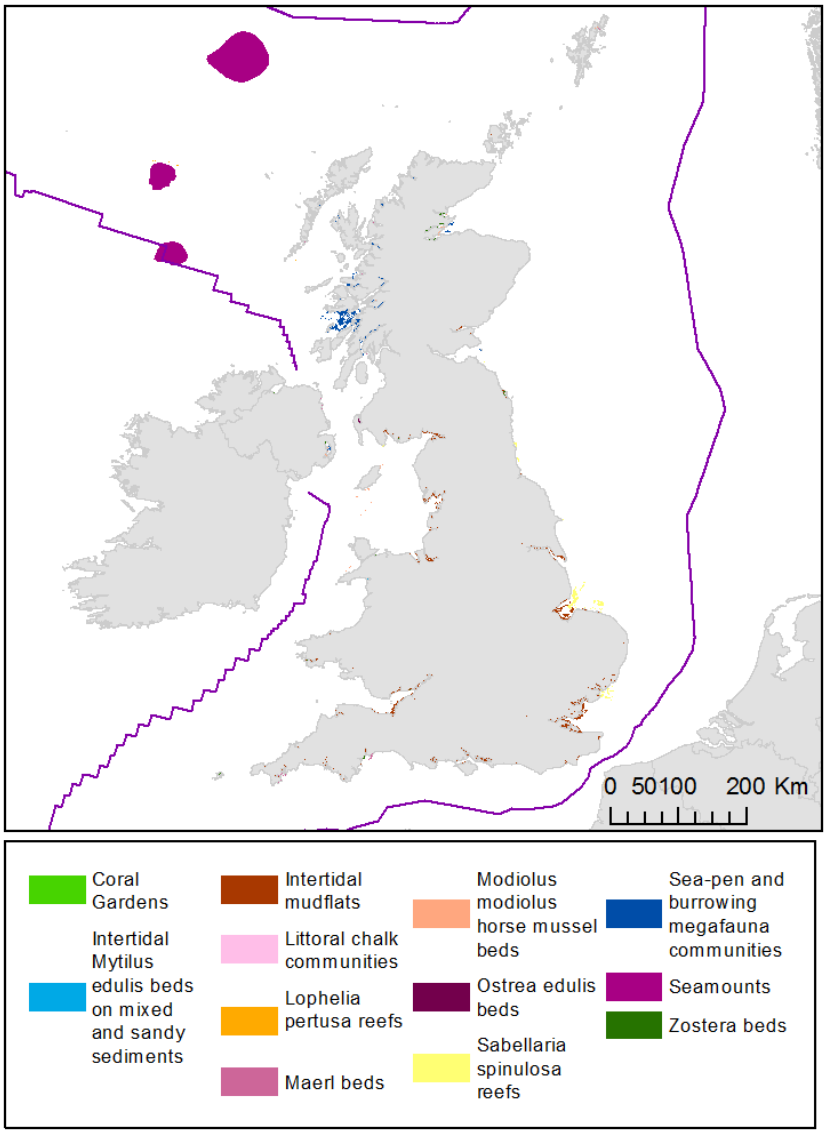
1. Remote sensing coverage (0, 1 or 2 points)
2. Amount of sampling (0 or 1 point)
3. Distinctness of class boundaries, if remote sensing used (0 or 1 point)

The final score for each map is between 0 and 4 with 4 representing the 'best' type of map. Note, however, that this is a qualitative assessment, therefore a score of 4 does not equate to a perfect or 100 % accurate map.

5-stage decision tree: Followed for each area of overlap between 2 maps:



Note that stage 1 permits certain habitat overlaps as these would be possible in reality, for example "Seamounts" and "*Lophelia pertusa* reefs".



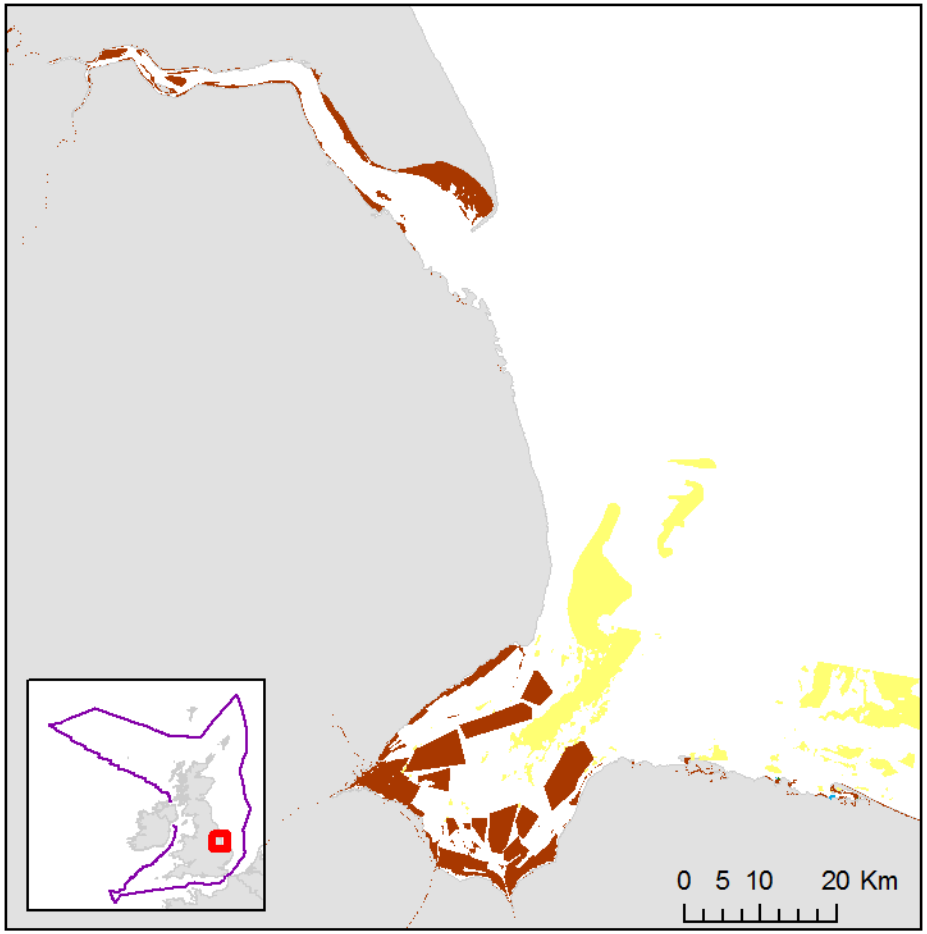


Figure: Left: composite OSPAR habitat map for the UK. Right: close-up example OSPAR habitat data in the Wash and the Humber Estuary. The legend applies to both figures.

For descriptions of the OSPAR habitats see: http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/08-06e_OSPAR%20List%20species%20and%20habitats.doc

Please refer to the full-length report for all references, justification, full method and evaluation of the benefits and limitations of the product.