

> BETTER DATA, BETTER SCIENCE,  
IMPROVED DECISIONS <

SeaZone



## CHARACTERISING OUR HISTORIC SEASCAPE

The coastal and marine landscape, the 'seascape', is shaped both by natural processes which shape the coastal, intertidal and marine zones, and by the imprint of past and present human activities which combine to create its historic character.

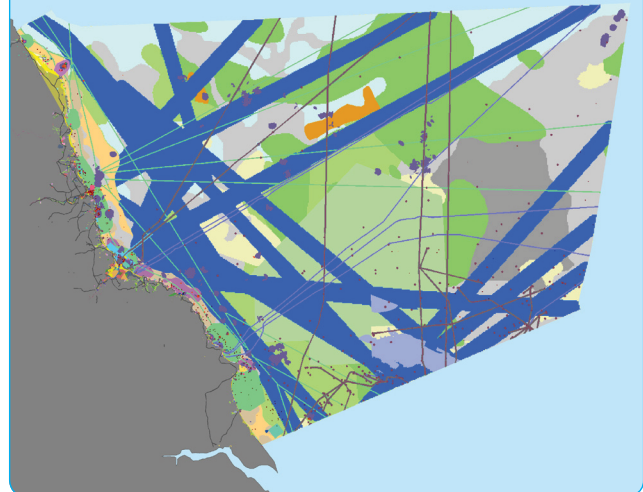
Historic Seascape Characterisation (HSC) presents an archaeological understanding of the historic cultural dimension of our coasts and seas, identifying and mapping areas whose present character has been shaped by similar dominant cultural processes. In doing so, it complements a closely similar approach, Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), already widely implemented by English Heritage on land.

Following rigorous testing, a nationally-applicable approach for characterising our historic seascape using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was published in 2008 and is now being applied around England's coasts and seas through a series of projects. The GIS mapping of historic seascape character can be interrogated in many different ways to meet the needs of a range of applications. It is also supported by text and imagery which can deliver its cultural perspectives to wider audiences as a multimedia resource.

The resulting outputs are designed to inform the management of change affecting our coasts and seas with an understanding of the past and current cultural processes that have shaped the present, whether highly regarded or not. Alongside that, HSC offers a powerful tool for raising public awareness of man's long relationship with the sea and improving engagement with action to achieve a more sustainable, culturally distinctive future.

HSC and HLC offer a stronger basis for shaping sustainable seascapes and landscapes for the future. In a broader sense too, HSC's comprehensive coverage of cultural processes and human activities allows it to enrich our perspective on whichever parts of the coast and sea are familiar to us.

>> HSC Demonstrating the Method Results



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## Historic Seascape Characterisation (HSC)

English Heritage is applying HSC across England's coastal, intertidal and marine areas, and adjacent UK Controlled Waters. The first implementation of the HSC method is now completed across an extensive area off North East England. Four further projects have now been commissioned under the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund, covering all coastal and marine areas from Newport (Norfolk) to Clacton; Hastings to Purbeck, and for the English sectors of the Irish Sea, the Severn Estuary and the Bristol Channel.

## Applications of HSC

The availability of HSC will have immediate application and benefit for:

- Informing the management of change affecting coastal and marine historic environment everywhere
- Contributing directly to the development and review of Marine Plans
- Enabling the historic dimension of our coastal and marine areas to play their full part in forward planning for a sustainable future landscape and seascape by Government, its Agencies and all interested parties
- Providing more contextualised responses to the marine aggregates extraction licensing process
- Facilitating consideration of the cultural heritage in conjunction with natural environment and other themes using interoperable map-based representations of similar format and scale.
- Promoting the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) approaches by adding cultural process to the range of available interoperable environmental databases.
- Informing the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) review process
- Outreach and education: raising public awareness and engagement with the historic cultural character of coastal and marine areas, their relevance to our lives and identity, and the roles we all play in shaping their sustainable future.

## SeaZone's role in HSC

Since 2008, SeaZone has been commissioned by English Heritage to undertake several collaborative projects contributing to an eventual national HSC database covering England's coastal and marine areas and adjacent waters. The first such project, in association with Maritime Archaeology Ltd, covered North Eastern coasts and seas and was the first to implement the HSC methodology.

SeaZone have now been commissioned to complete, by March 2011, two of the four further areas currently being undertaken: one of these, HSC: Bristol Channel and Severn Estuary is in collaboration with Historic Environment, Cornwall Council. The other, HSC: Hastings to Purbeck and Adjacent Waters is in collaboration with Maritime Archaeology Ltd.

SeaZone, MA Ltd and Cornwall Council are using in-house expertise in GIS, HSC and database development to apply the national HSC methodology in close communication with English Heritage's Characterisation Team.

## >> HSC Project Areas



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## >> For more information

For further information on the SeaZone projects, please contact Olivia Merritt (olivia.merritt@seazone.com) at SeaZone. For queries regarding Historic Seascape Characterisation, please contact Dave Hooley (DHooley@english-heritage.org) at English heritage or access the English Heritage website for further information on HSC go to <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation>

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

