Multi-Media Enhancement

To accompany the final broad character polygons and descriptions a multi-media element has been developed which integrates into the final product images from the Solent Seascapes and references to where you can find out further information.

Show me an Example of Seascapes

So, what does the Solent Seascapes product look like and how easy is it to use? This example of using Seascapes shows you what to expect.

Step One - Entering the Seascapes Product

The 'front end' of Solent Seascapes looks like this. You see the whole of the region split into colour coded areas. To look in detail at a particular area click on the polygon.
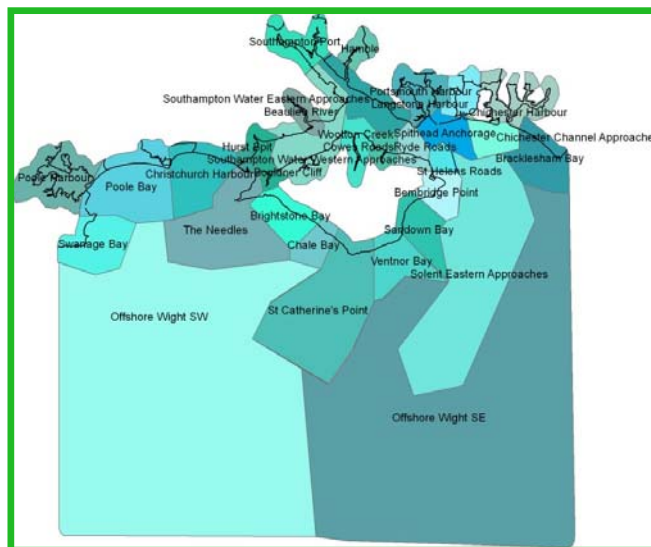

Figure 3.1 – The 'front end' of Seascapes product

Step Two – Viewing Information

You have entered a particular Seascapes area and a document has appeared which includes:
Text Description – this text has been created using data from the four different Seascapes layers, it will reflect both the modern and past use of the area and the range of archaeological and historical features found within it.

Figure 3.2 Example extract Seascape polygon text description

to providing integrated marine spatial planning. The historic environment must play a key role alongside other marine issues and stakeholders in this emerging management structure for the marine zone. Seascapes can help facilitate the integration of historic environment data through providing a spatial approach.

Informing Management Plans

Although the offshore zone is not well covered in terms of management frameworks, this situation improves closer to the shore in coastal, intertidal and estuarine environments. A range of planning and management approaches have been developed for a variety of specific concerns. Seascapes is well placed to add an enhanced marine heritage dimension to such plans, many of which are subject to review and revision processes that provides an opportunity to include new or updated knowledge or understanding to future decision making (see case study examples).

Case Study - Local Management - Port and Estuary Management Plans

The Hamble Estuary Management Plan was produced in 2003 in response to the need for the integrated management of the coastal zone and to ensure the sustainable use and development of the Hamble Estuary. Archaeology is represented in this plan through policies under the headings of promote, protect and provide information. At the time the plan was drafted the knowledge of the archaeological resource was improving due to intertidal investigations, and quite a number of sites had been recognised and recorded in and around the river.

Hampshire County Council was one of the first to complete terrestrial HLC. This data has been considered during the Seascapes project along with site specific information to help form the broad character areas. This added level of data allows the marine heritage of the Hamble Estuary to be placed in its wider context and can be used to
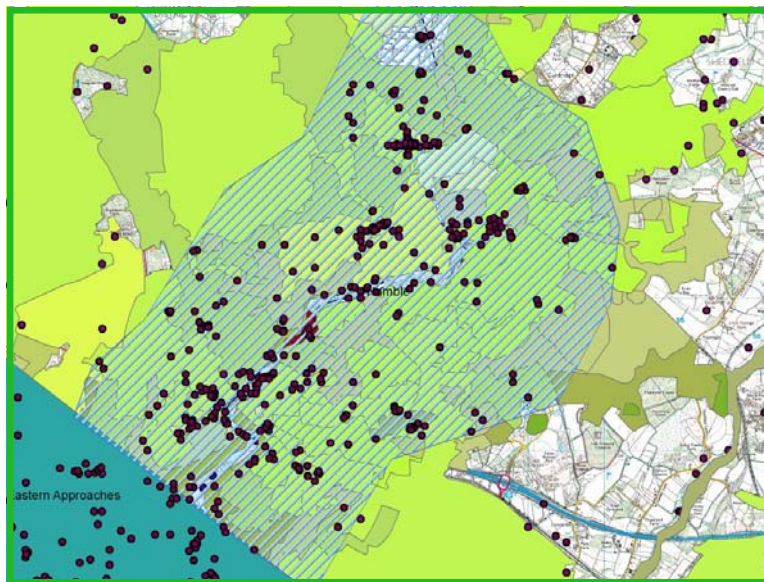

Figure 4.2 – Image showing terrestrial HLC's, Seapscapes polygons and HER data

The Seascapes project is timely in relation to the commissioning of the review of Shoreline Mangement Plans. These plans are focused on coastal defence and aim to identify issues and concerns that may be impacted by future changes. Archaeology and heritage did not feature prominently in the initial round of SMP's. This is surprising due to number of significant archaeological sites around the coast which are impacted by coastal change and due to the potential of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental material to act as an archive of information that can inform on the scale and pace of sea level and coastal change.

Due to the development of marine archaeological data gathering in the past ten years the Round Two revisions of the shoreline management plans now have more information on the resource which can be incorporated into the process. In addition to increased baseline data Seascapes, in conjunction with the land-based HLC, can begin to feed in more contextual information on the character and nature of the resource. An example of this is the stretch of coastline between Chichester Harbour entrance and Selsey Bill, figure 4.3 brings together data from the coastal and near-shore zone, Shoreline management units and the seascapes character polygon.
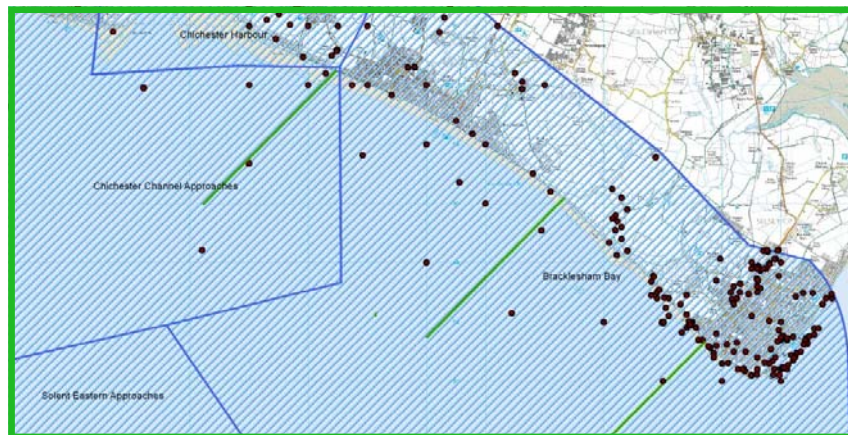

Figure 4.3 – Image showing maritime HER data, Seascapes polygons and shoreline management units between Chichester Harbour entrance and Selsey

A Predictive Role?

Terrestrial HLC has been used to begin to predict where certain types of archaeological sites and finds may be encountered. By using evidence of where it is known that an extensive archaeological resource within a particular environmental and/ or physical setting has been used to develop a 'character type' it is possible to start looking for similar settings or 'character types' to prioritise them for prospection and potential. Conversely, an understanding of the historical development of an area can indicate likely areas of destruction of earlier material, for example along dredged channels of various dates. In this way HLC begins to take on a predictive role. In the marine environment this may be more of an interpretive stretch at the moment due to the levels of information that we have available and the resulting 'coarse-ness' of the Seascapes interpretation, however, the same principles should be able to be applied in the future as quantative methods for modelling archaeological potential develop.

We know that Seascapes can't and won't answer all management demands and queries for the marine zone, however, in comparison to relying on point data, it is a distinct advantage to be able to consider the marine historic environment from a holistic, area-based perspective.

5. Who will be Interested in Solent Seascapes?

Although the section above on what Seascapes can do has focused on uses in terms of heritage management, there are also a wide range of potential uses and applications for the Seascapes product.

Potential Seascapes Users

Heritage managers – Local Authority Curators and Historic Environment Records; English Heritage Maritime Archaeology, Characterisation and Regional Teams and the National Monuments Record Maritime Section; National Trust and other non-governmental conservation bodies.

Regulators and marine planners – A variety of government departments who deal with marine and maritime issues will be interested in the Seascapes product, these may include: DTI, DCMS, Future MMO, Defra, Natural England. Other organisations might include the Crown Estate and Environment Agency.

Contractors – units and organisations undertaking development related work, whether that is heritage regeneration projects, desk based assessments or strategic planning.

Developers and marine industry – companies or organisations could consult the Seascapes characterisation to help in the assessment of areas that could be suitable for development or use such as marinas, ports or dredging to gauge the potential affects on the historic character of an area and help in future risk management for projects. Examples might be those involved in oil and gas extraction, renewable energies, fisheries or marine aggregates.

Researchers – Universities, local societies and independent researchers.

The public: Coastal communities and coastal users; walkers, sailors, divers, recreational fishing, tourists.

Case Study - Future Marine Designation

Heritage organisations will be interested in Seascapes when responding to proposed changes to the marine designation system which are to be outlined in the DCMS White Paper 'Heritage Protection for the 21st Century'. The move to consider a broader definition of 'marine historic assets' with the potential to designate wider areas of the seabed will be able to draw on the character definitions produced for seascapes when assessing the significance of individual sites and areas within the broader sea area.

Traditionally the only marine cultural heritage designations have been through the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 which is based on individual historic wreck sites and protects an area around them. This legislation is now out of date and the proposed changes to marine designation will allow a much more holistic view of the cultural heritage.

Seascapes can be used by divers who want to find out more about the historic character of an area in which individual dive sites are situated.

The popular dive site of HMS *Velox* is situated off the East of the Isle of Wight, it represents the remains of this experimental turbine powered destroyer, which was built in 1902 and sunk by a mine in 1915.

Viewing the descriptive text for the Seascapes polygon for 'Bembridge Point' reveals further information on the character of the area including the sea surface, seabed surface and seabed subsurface.
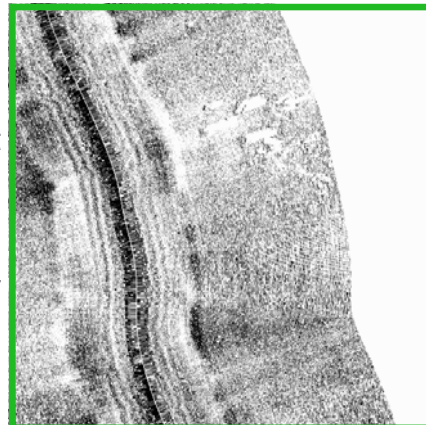

Figure 5.1 HMS Velox – the remains of which are a popular dive site off the North East coast of the Isle of Wight.

6. What next for Seascapes?

Refining Seascapes and considering use in other areas of the coast

There have now been five separate trials of the Seascapes methodology in areas around the UK coast (figure 6.1). Each project has had different marine and coastal environments to deal with and an equally varied set of marine data. English Heritage will now be considering the outcomes of all five of the Pilot projects to assess how best to consolidate the application of Historic Landscape Characterisation to the marine zone.

Updating through changing interpretations

As Seascapes is an interpretation of the historic character of the marine zone based on currently available data, as the quantity and quality of the available data improves it will be necessary to update the Seascapes characterisation. This is particularly important considering the fast pace at which approaches to management, research and interpretation of the marine zone is changing.

Figure 6.1 – Image showing location of all five Seascapes Pilot Projects

Future improvements?

The Solent Seascapes project has been undertaken in a twelve month period. This is a short space of time considering the scale of the area, complexity of issues with available data and challenges of adapting a methodology developed for the terrestrial area for use at sea. There is a lot more that could be done with Solent Seascapes. This project has provided a broad overview of principle Character Areas. With further application the resolution of this product could be increased to provide more detailed characterisations.

ENGLISH HERITAGE

7. Where can I find out more about Seascapes and Historic Landscape Characterisation?

There are a number of websites where you can find out more:

English Heritage – www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage Maritime Team - www.english-heritage.org.uk/maritime

English Heritage Promoting Characterisation - www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.1292

Welsh Historic Landscape Characterisation - http://www.acadat.com/projects/HistoricLandscapeCharacterisation.htm

Hampshire's Historic Landscape - www.hants.gov.uk/landscape/

Isle of Wight Historic Landscape Characterisation Project - www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/Archaeology/Projects/Historic_Landscape_Characterisation/

West Sussex Historic landscape characterisation - www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/heritage-wildlife-and-landscape/west-sussex-character-project/historic-landscape-characterisation-of-sussex-hlc.en;jsessionid=aeiMKpA3tDe4

England's Historic Seascapes Programme - www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.001002003008006

Liverpool Bay Seascapes Pilot - www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/marine/eh/seascapes/

Solent & Isle of Wight Seascapes Pilot - www.solentseascapes.org.uk