

# Research and analysis: R086 – The location, condition and features of significant sites for habitat creation or restoration

*Updated:* Detail updated

## **Requirement overview**

### **Requirement detail**

The MMO has identified that there is a need to increase the amount of evidence in relation to:

- a) creating a national dataset showing the type and location of sites with potential to become significant habitats
- b) using this information and an analysis of existing policy and delivery initiatives to assess what role there may be for marine planning and marine licensing in either safeguarding these sites or advising applicants of their existence, in relation to individual applications.

This has been highlighted as an issue through marine planning stakeholder engagement. The intended result is to try and improve the environmental policy provision in marine plans and contribute more to environmental protection, whilst helping the economy to flourish. This will improve the ability of regulators and others (such as statutory advisors or those using the marine area) to simply and efficiently understand the potential of sites to create habitat or for it to be restored. This could either be as stand-alone projects or part of development applications, once it is clear that all other parts of the processes relating to the Habitats and Wilds Birds Directives have been satisfactorily completed.

### **MMO use**

**Marine Planning:** This work will assist with the continued improvement to the delivery of legal obligations relating to marine plans and will investigate the potential for specific plan policies related to habitat restoration and conversion.

**Marine Licensing:** This work will assist both marine licensing case officers and applicants try to ensure an innovative sustainable development approach.

### **External interest**

Natural England, Cefas, Environment Agency