



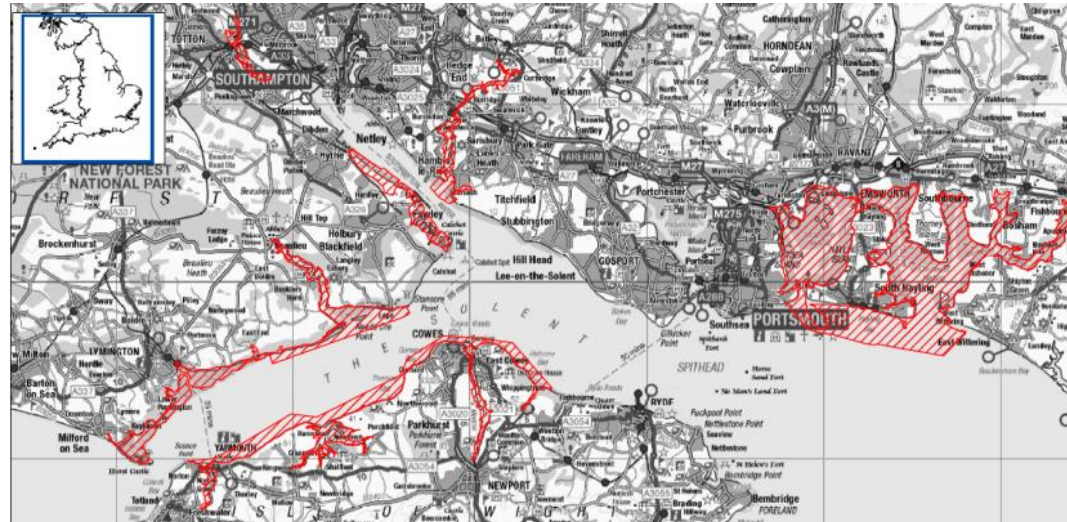
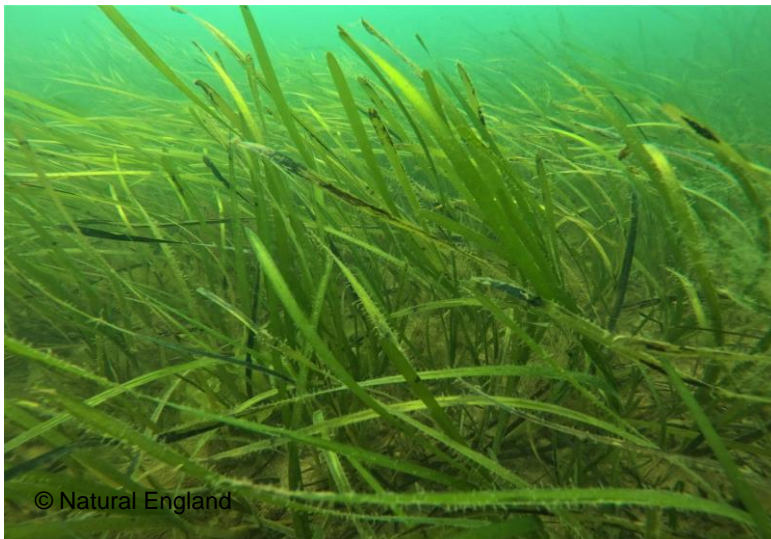
Condition of Marine Habitats within the Solent

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Marine Condition Assessment

- Requirement to report condition under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive
- Underpins advice on site management and casework.
- Alongside policy drivers - favourable condition of 70% of sites
- 2016 – assessment began for marine features of Solent SACs



Condition Assessment – Solent Maritime SAC

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Natural England Condition Assessment

Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation
(SAC)



June 2018

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Unfavourable Condition:

- Estuaries (inc Saltmarsh);
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide;
- Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time

Favourable Condition:

- Coastal Lagoons (Yar Bridge and Newtown Quay – IOW)
 - Threats – Water Quality and Non-Native Species

Not Assessed

- Vegetated Shingle (2 features)
- Shifting Dunes
- Desmoulin's whorl snail

Condition Assessment – Solent Maritime SAC

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Identified several reasons for unfavourable status

- **Elevated nutrient levels;**
- **Decrease in extent of habitats, notably saltmarsh and seagrass;**
- Low infaunal quality index (IQI) in intertidal and subtidal sediments;
- Elevated aqueous contaminants, most notably TBT

Further Study added **Invasive Non-Native Species**

Natural England Condition Assessment

Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation
(SAC)



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Elevated Nutrient Levels

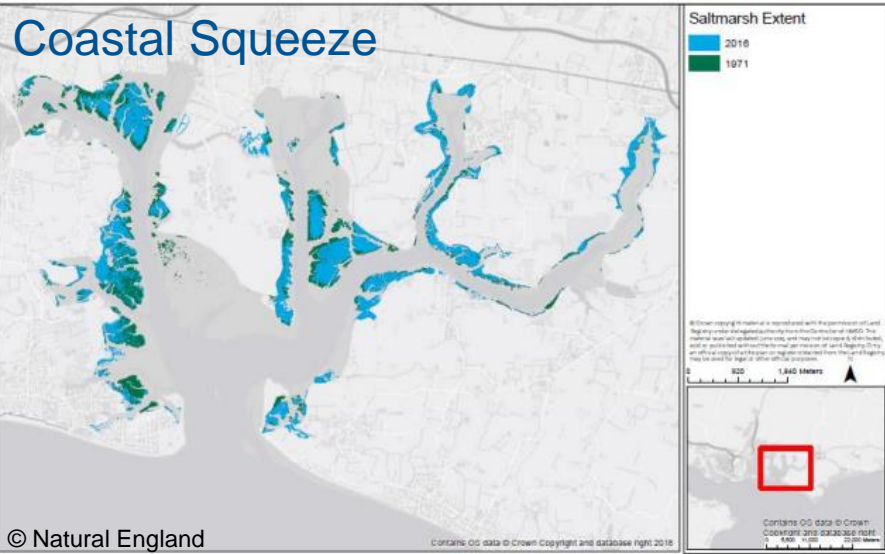


- Macroalgae growth
- Impact on invertebrates and bird feeding behaviour (IQI?)
- Turbidity
- Functioning of estuarine ecosystems

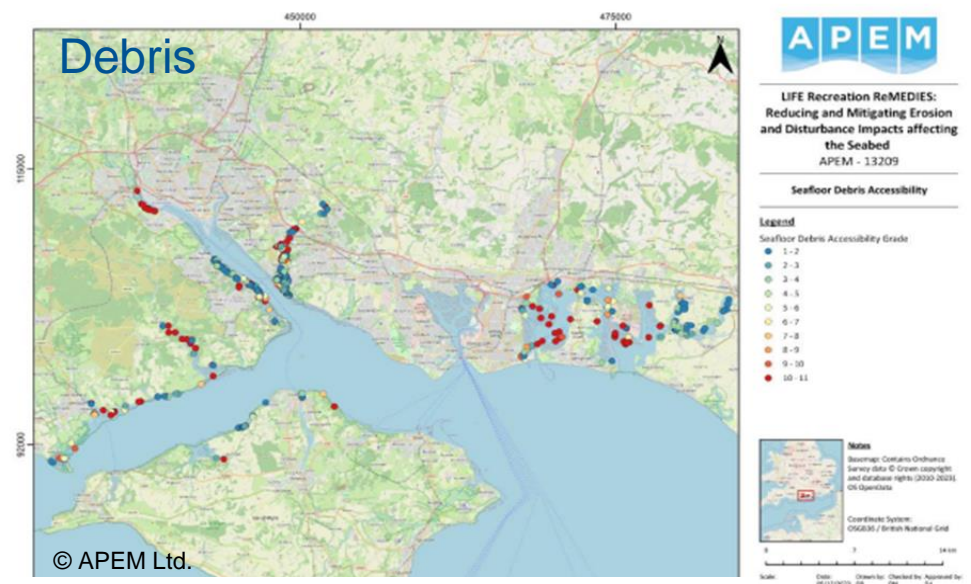


Loss of Habitat

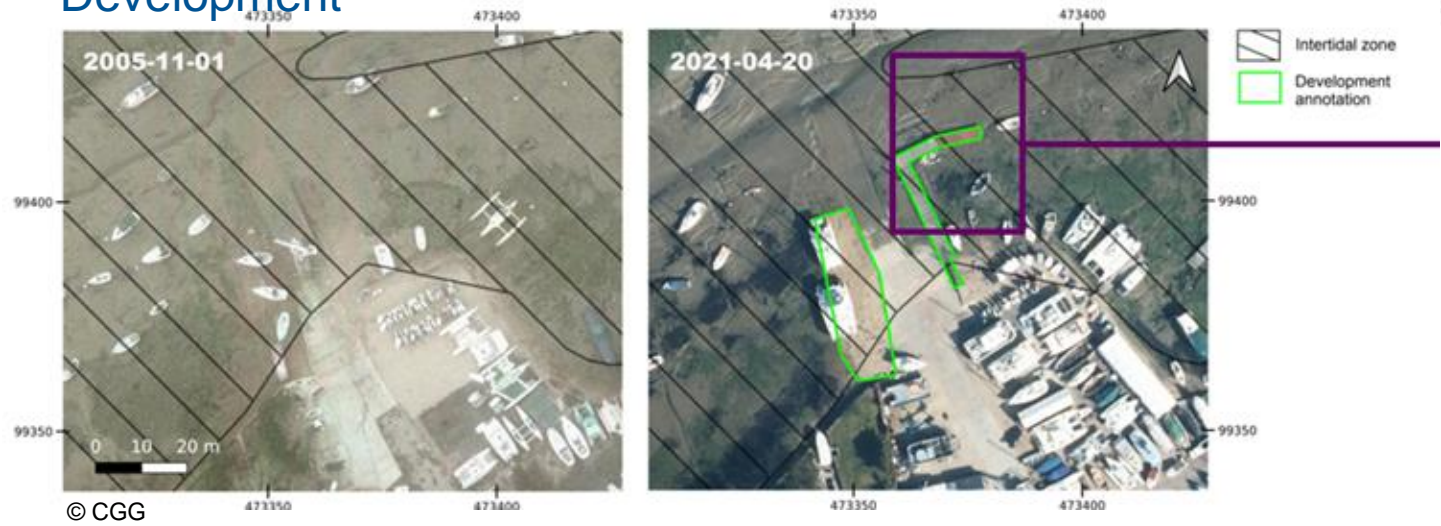
Coastal Squeeze



Debris



Development



Loss of Habitat – Abrasion Pressures



Including (but not limited to):

- Debris
- Recreational Activities: anchoring, mooring, trampling etc.
- Fisheries



Invasive Non-Native Species

2018



2022



Colonisation of Pacific oyster (*Magallana gigas*)

Condition Assessment – Other SACs

South Wight Maritime SAC

Favourable Condition:

- Reefs;
- Submerged or Partially Submerged Sea Caves;

But Threats:

- Smothering and Siltation Rate Changes
- Invasive Non-Native Species



Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC

Favourable Condition

But Threats:

- Water Quality
- Invasive Non-Native Species



Condition Assessment - SPAs



Primary

- Decreasing population abundance
- Decreasing extent of supporting habitat

Secondary

- Water quality
- Disturbance

Thank you

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