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Towards Good Environmental Status

*A Network of Marine Protected Areas for the North Sea
- Summary Version -*





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Authors: Sabine Christiansen

Editor: Stephan Lutter, WWF Germany

Coordination: Heike Mühdorfer, WWF Germany

Contact: Stephan Lutter, WWF Germany, International WWF Centre for Marine Conservation, Hamburg, E-mail: stephan.lutter@wwf.de

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Foreword

The North Sea ecosystems today are driven by human impact rather than natural variability. Fisheries, shipping, extractive industrial uses, spatial needs for renewable energy and indirect impacts caused by marine pollution, invasive species and climate change are leaving a significant anthropogenic footprint. Hence, the potential for restoration and recovery is tremendous. Where habitats and species still occur at patterns and quality close to their natural range, distribution and status, there is an urgent need to preserve such features for future generations, and maintain ecosystem functions as well as ecological goods and services for the people depending on them.

To reverse this situation, North Sea states' governments and stakeholders have taken onboard important and ambitious commitments to, *inter alia*:

- Complete the Natura 2000 network based on the provisions of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives soonest;
- Secure favourable conservation status in this context;
- Establish an ecologically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas (MPAs) by 2010 as agreed in the context of the OSPAR Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic;
- Afford effective protection for threatened and/or declining Species and Habitats identified by OSPAR;
- Meet a set of defined Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs) as set out by OSPAR;
- Improve their marine spatial planning systems, including transboundary co-operation; and
- Take measures to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) by 2020 as required by the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) which entered force in 2008.

This report intends to inform the overall process towards Good Environmental Status with particular focus on the role of marine protected areas. It is led by the following conservation vision:

The North Sea ecosystems mirror species compositions and habitat qualities, as well as food web structure, function and processes driven by natural variability rather than human impact. The North Sea is valued by people as a unique and rich marine ecosystem, a source of healthy food, recreation, culture and livelihoods, and serving as a pillar for the region's economic well-being.

As a step to approach this vision, this report concentrates on the selection, nomination and designation of protected areas in the first place, including identifying the gaps in governmental designations and serving as a piece of shadow information for governments and intergovernmental bodies concerned. However, this does not go without looking into management perspectives and consequences. While other organisations and institutions promote the establishment of large “no-go” areas, WWF supports the development and integration of sites and measures fitting the specific objectives and necessities. Fisheries are considered the biggest single threat to marine biodiversity and, hence are the one human activity that needs the most attention when it comes to the implementation of protective measure in conservation MPAs. The following points shall give a first indication of criteria for fisheries measures in Natura 2000 sites, the most important framework for conservation in the European Union:

- WWF does not promote a no-fishing policy in Natura 2000 sites. However, certain areas should be established, in which no human activities take place and human influence is reduced to an absolute minimum. Such areas will be essential components of a regime to achieve a “Good Environmental Status” of our seas and crucial for research.
- WWF believes that in order to achieve the favourable conservation status Member States are to reach for their Natura 2000 and OSPAR sites, bottom trawling will need to be excluded from those sites established or nominated to protect the habitat and/or associated fauna.
- In other parts of MPAs, sustainable fisheries (and other use) will be possible, under very strict conditions. For example, set nets can have negative impact on harbour porpoises. They will have to be excluded from those sites established or nominated to protect the harbour porpoise or additional measures (like pingers) have to be used.
- Within MPAs there has to be a limit on fishing intensity, to prevent cumulative negative impact in light of the additional human activities mentioned above.

Bearing in mind that pilot management schemes are already underway in certain parts of the North Sea, including existing Natura 2000 sites and/or OSPAR MPAs, WWF remains committed to constructively inform and assist that important follow up process.

Stephan Lutter

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1 Introduction and message

1.1 Introduction

„The marine environment is a precious heritage that must be protected, preserved and, where practicable, restored with the ultimate aim of maintaining biodiversity and providing diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive“ (Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Recital 3)

For the next decades, the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD, 2008)¹ will set the political framework and direction for action: delivering “Good Environmental Status” of the North Sea.

The North Sea has much to offer: it is or at least was rich in natural resources like fish, shellfish and algae, it is one of the globally most important places for oil and gas production, and increasingly for power generation from wind, currents and tides.

In line with the EU Lisbon Strategy, which primarily aims to increase the European economic competitiveness on the global markets, many people and interest groups consider the North Sea to be a mere extension of the coastal states’ territory, ready for being used for economic profit. This involves the placement of ever more structures such as production platforms and wind farms together with pipelines and cables, aquaculture installations etc. In addition, the North Sea provides the basis for industries such as the maritime transport sector, tourism, sediment aggregate extraction, fishing and aquaculture. And it is still used as a dump site, sometimes illegally, for dredged materials, ships waste and litter. Riverine discharges still enrich the North Sea with nutrients, heavy metals and organic pollutants.

Further to the direct benefits and use provided by the North Sea, its ecosystems have an important role to play in regional and global processes such as atmospheric and climate regulation, nutrient cycling, carbon sink and sources of sediment for coastal processes. For science recreation and tourism, it is a resource for learning, studying and understanding.

Therefore, the North Sea generates a considerable value in goods and services, the value created by fishing being only a minor fraction of the overall value generation. However, unlike most other industries profiting from the North Sea’s goods and services, sustainable fishing depends on an intact ecosystem.

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:164:0019:0040:EN:PDF>

These ecosystems and the living resources they produce are under high pressure, and, in particular, the fish stocks are in strong widescale decline, as summarised by Laffoley and Tasker (2007): fishing is considered to be the most significant human activity causing change, and reducing the resilience of the marine environment to other pressures, such as climate change. Stock sizes have been reduced to below safe biological limits, the intraspecific genetic pool has been modified and the fishing of non-target species and impacts on habitats interferes with ecosystem functioning.

So there is a considerable gap between the ambitious objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and today’s reality. However, in concert with tools developed by OSPAR (e.g. Ecological Quality Objectives, OSPAR 2009), the MSFD outlines all relevant tools for making progress towards “Good Environmental Status”, i.e. it

- Recognises the important contribution made by marine protected areas (MPAs), including areas already designated or to be designated under the EU Habitats² and Birds³ Directives and under international or regional agreements to which the European Community or Member States are Parties⁴(§6);
- Reaffirms the will to proceed towards the **creation of coherent and representative networks of Marine Protected Areas** as signed up for at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and in the Convention on Biological Diversity, approved by Council Decision 93/626/EEC (1); and
- Explicitly refers to limiting the collective pressure on the ecosystems to levels which do not compromise the achievement of Good Environmental Status and the capacity of the ecosystem (Art. 1 §3).

Some general ideas about what constitutes a “Good Environmental Status (GES)” are given in Annex 1, MSFD, including for example:

„Biological diversity is maintained. The quality and occurrence of habitats and the distribution and abundance of species are in line with prevailing physiographic, geographic and climatic conditions.“ (1)

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992

³ Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979

⁴ e.g. OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 on a Network of Marine Protected Areas <http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Recommendations/or03-03e.doc>

„All elements of the marine food webs, to the extent that they are known, occur at normal abundance and diversity and levels capable of ensuring the longterm abundance of the species and the retention of their full reproductive capacity“ (4).

For each region and subregion, the riparian member states shall agree on the characteristics of the GES and by reason of the transboundary nature of the marine environment, Member States should cooperate to ensure the coordinated development of marine strategies for each marine region or subregion (§13).

In order to achieve GES, an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities has to be applied, and the MSFD makes clear (Recital 8) that *while enabling a sustainable use of marine goods and services, priority should be given to achieving or maintaining good environmental status in the Community’s marine environment, to continuing its protection and preservation, and to preventing subsequent deterioration.*

The EU Integrated Maritime Policy (2007) takes up the need for regional cooperation and requests common principles and guidelines for national maritime spatial planning, *a fundamental tool for sustainable development of marine areas and coastal regions, and for the restoration of Europe’s seas to environmental health.*

1.2 MPAs in the framework of an ecosystem approach and spatial planning

Holistic, cross-sectoral maritime spatial planning is one of the delivery tools of an ecosystem based management (...). Therefore, MPAs, their conservation goals and spatial needs have to be at the heart of an integrated regional spatial planning process which aims to minimise conflicts between particular conservation requirements of MPAs and sustainable uses.

The conservation direction cannot be to return to some vague historic state but must look forward to a future where human impacts on the ecosystem are minimised, in particular those increasing (eutrophication), decreasing (pollution) or removing (fishing) some parts of it to an extent where the balance in the food webs is manipulated. The overall goal must be to reverse the trend of the still increasing spatial use and disruption of the North Sea ecosystems towards establishing truly sustainable (long term ecologically and economically viable) human practices everywhere, for delivering a maximum of goods and services (Fig.1.1).

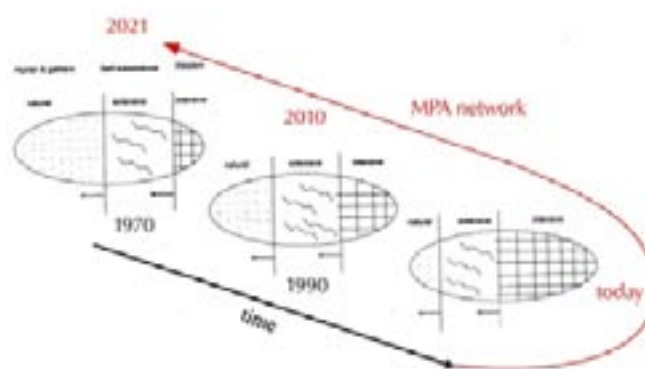


Fig. 1.1: The development of human use of natural goods of the North Sea over time: Today, most of the North Sea is intensively used (cross-hatched, including some of the fishing activities), some extensively (hatched), and a very few places remain inaccessible (white)⁵

In terms of management practice, a zoning approach of the marine space to particular uses and ecological functions is the way forward. Apart from zones for particular uses, this will have to comprise zones for restoration and conservation of marine (sub)ecosystems, with a limited access regime up to areas fully closed for extractive uses (marine reserves and reference areas). Different levels of management action may thus be required inside as well as outside designated marine protected areas.

A zoning approach can therefore open the avenue for designating particular management zones, regulated by controlled access regimes for all sectors. Such a system is comparable to spatial use and allocation on land (and for most uses within national jurisdiction at sea) and has the advantage of providing access rather than prohibiting access. Rights can be granted based on a truly integrated assessment of environmental impacts, with conservation priorities being observed.

A network of marine protected areas (MPAs) is one of the most important tools available for achieving GES at least in some core areas within the time frame set. Provided the MPA management system allows for achieving the conservation objectives, their contribution will be a.o. (English Nature 2003):

- The recovery of ecosystem structure and function across the range of subsystems;
- The maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem goods and services;
- Sustainability, insurance and risk management by ensuring a backup against management failures outside the network; and

⁵ Figure modified after figure in SEBI Expert Group “Sustainable Management” draft report 2006)

- Reference to deliver areas that have recovered to a degree that tells us how and what the marine environment should actually look like.

The ecologically coherent network of well-managed MPAs as aspired to be established in 2010 by OSPAR and HELCOM will consist of the European Natura 2000 network comprising protected areas for a selected subset of species and habitats, and additional MPAs according to the criteria set by the conventions. To date, not a single MPA has been nominated to OSPAR which does not in the first place fulfil the criteria of the EU Habitats or Birds Directives. Nor have original Natura 2000 sites been nominated with a set of wider conservation objectives (OSPAR BDC 09/5/4 Rev.1-E) such as for the protection of species and habitats under threat and or decline listed by OSPAR⁶.

In line with the approach taken by the EU Habitats and Birds Directives and OSPAR, we only consider areas designated for wider nature conservation as MPAs here. However, there are also other types of MPAs such as temporal or métier-specific fisheries closures as part of the commercial fisheries management regime, areas of archaeological interest, military exercise areas, and safety zones around marine structures which act as *de facto* reserves.

Given the longterm ecosystem changes already caused by in particular bottom trawling activities in the North Sea (Chapter 3), it will be essential to limit access to and fishing effort exercised in MPAs in order to achieve the nature conservation goals, in particular also for achieving „favourable conservation status“ in the Natura 2000 areas. OSPAR has not yet set out particular conservation objectives for its MPAs.

However, as essential as developing an effective management regime for the individual MPA will it be to establish regional integrative management strategies to prevent the displacement of fishing effort. The overall need to reduce fishing effort and fleet size should be instrumental to guiding the solution finding.

1.3 OSPAR network principles

OSPAR MPAs individually and collectively aim to „protect, conserve and restore species, habitats and ecological processes which are adversely affected as a result of human activities“, „prevent degradation of and damage to species, habitats and ecological processes following the precautionary principle“ and protect and conserve areas that best represent the range of species, habitats and ecological processes in the OSPAR area.” (OSPAR 2003-17)⁷

OSPAR has developed guidance on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR marine protected areas (OSPAR 2006-3)⁸. The document specifies that a network is characterised by a coherence in purpose and by the connections between its constituent parts. Networks can also be designed to be resilient to changing conditions.

- A network’s constituent parts should firstly be identified on the basis of criteria which aim to support the purpose of the network.
- The development of an ecologically coherent network of MPAs should take account of the relationships and interactions between marine species and their environment both in the establishment of its purpose and in the criteria by which the constituent elements are identified.
- A functioning ecologically coherent network of MPAs should interact with, and support, the wider environment as well as other MPAs although this is dependent on appropriate management to support good ecosystem health and function within and outside the MPAs.

The principles set out for selecting sites as part of the ecologically coherent network of MPAs include:

- Representation of species (both mobile and sessile), habitats (both pelagic and benthic by EUNIS habitat classes), and ecological processes;
- Representation of biogeographic units;
- Adequacy, threatened and/or declining species and habitats to be represented with 20-60 % of the existing population/habitat extent, representative features with 20 % /(not binding);

⁶ http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/08-06e_OSPAR%20List%20species%20and%20habitats.doc

⁷ OSPAR Guidelines for the Identification and Selection of MPAs in the OSPAR Maritime Area. http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/03-17e_Guidelines%20identification%20MPA%20update%202007.doc

⁸ http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/06-03e_Guidance%20ecol%20coherence%20MPA%20network.doc

- Connectivity; and
- Resilience - as a management target.
- Replication of habitats, species and ecological processes is considered desirable where possible.
- The size of the site should reflect the integrity and spatial need of the feature to be protected and enable successful management.
- The management shall ensure the protection of the features for which the sites were selected, and the functioning of an ecologically coherent network.

So far, these principles and the related scorecard for the assessment of the ecological coherence achieved (OSPAR 2007-6)⁹ cannot be applied, as the number of nominations for OSPAR MPAs in the North Sea outside territorial waters is very limited. However, they will provide an important tool for assessing the qualities of the OSPAR network of MPAs in 2010.

1.4 The objective of the report

This report takes stock of the progress achieved so far by national governments around the North Sea at designating, and selecting sites as a contribution to a national and regional, ecologically coherent and representative network of MPAs. As this progress is limited still, we want to provide an inspiring look into the future: what might an ecologically coherent and representative network of (well-managed) marine protected areas look like? How could the currently designated and selected set of MPAs be developed further so that the principles of a functioning network, connectivity, replication, representation are realised?

WWF (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, UK, Norway and Sweden), the North Sea Foundation (NSF) and a Belgian NGO coalition led by Natuurpunt (hereafter the NGO coalition) recognise that the establishment of an ecologically coherent, representative network of MPAs in the North Sea is a scientific and management challenge and will be an ongoing exercise for many years. The first step in the process is the designation of Natura 2000 and OSPAR areas. The North Sea states are currently working on it, especially on Natura 2000. The aim of this report is **to accelerate this process and in particular, to point out the need for designating MPAs according to OSPAR criteria**

⁹ OSPAR (2007-6) Guidance for the design of the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas: a self-assessment checklist http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/07-06e_Guidance%20MPA%20ecocoh%20self%20assessmt%20chcklist.doc

and complementary specially managed areas (Blue Belts) with a view to achieving GES and halting the decline of biodiversity.

Therefore, the NGO coalition launched several national studies, investigating the potential for further offshore marine protected areas eligible under the criteria of the European Habitats Directive and for OSPAR MPAs:

- Belgium: Slabbinck et al. (2008) recommend additional Natura 2000 and OSPAR MPAs in Belgian waters. Natuurpunt (BirdLife International), North Sea Foundation (NSF) and Kustvereniging.
- Denmark: Andersen (2008) recommends sites in the Danish North Sea EEZ which are eligible under the EU Habitats Directive. Report to WWF Denmark¹⁰.
- Germany: Finger (2005), Deppe (2006) and Koschinski (2006) recommend additional Natura 2000 and OSPAR MPAs in the German North Sea EEZ. Reports to WWF Germany.
- The Netherlands: Hugenholtz (2008) and North Sea Foundation (NSF) recommend additional Natura 2000 and OSPAR MPAs in the Dutch North Sea EEZ. Report to WWF Netherlands¹¹ and NSF brochure¹².
- United Kingdom: Gubbay (2007) compiles all work done by JNCC and recommends additional OSPAR MPA. Report to WWF Germany (unpublished).

This report synthesises the national MPA proposals from the perspective of the Greater North Sea and its ecological subregions, namely the Southern North Sea, the Northern North Sea, the Norwegian Trench and Skagerrak region and the Scottish Continental Shelf and Faroe-Shetland Channel. Neither the English Channel nor the Kattegat are included in this report's scope. It was felt necessary to subdivide the Greater North Sea into ecological subunits based on their distinct ecological qualities (see chapter 4) in order to make an assessment of ecological coherence possible. The subregions are based on previous proposals such as from the UK (DEFRA 2005).

¹⁰ <http://www.wwf.dk/dk/Materiale/Files/Nyheder/Nyhed+4.+jan.+2008.+Rapport+An+Assessment+of+the+need+for+and+Feasibility+of+Nominating+Ad>

¹¹ http://assets.panda.org/downloads/the_dutch_case_a_network_of_marine_protected_areas_by_e_hugenholtz_2008.pdf

¹² http://www.noordzee.nl/dossiers_artikelen.php?mainID=6&subID=5

In addition to the individual MPAs proposed, representation and coherence of the set of sites shall be achieved by integrating the MPAs as core zones into wider „Blue Belts“, specially managed areas comparable to IUCN management category VI. This approach reflects one possible strategy for developing a network of MPAs. Due to limitations in data availability, it was compiled in a knowledge-based, non-systematic manner. In particular the MPAs proposed for protecting species and habitats on the OSPAR List must be taken as showcases, rather than a fully comprehensive set of proposals.

1.5 Selection principles applied

The principles applied when selecting sites for a North Sea MPA Network include:

- A network of ecologically coherent and representative MPAs has to be selected and assessed on the basis of an ecoregional unit, in this case the Greater North Sea and its ecological subregions (Southern North Sea, Northern North Sea, Scottish Continental Shelf, Norwegian Trench and Skagerrak).
- The selection criteria are ecological qualities and functions of the site. As a starting point, criteria of Natura 2000 and OSPAR have been applied.
- The network reflects the continuity of habitats and ecological processes from the coast to deep water/ the continental shelf.
- Transboundary MPAs reflect the continuity of marine habitats and species.
- The individual sites which make up the MPA network need to be sufficiently large to ensure the maintenance recovery of the local ecosystem at/to a state which is characteristic of an environment of minimised anthropogenic impacts.
- Connectivity and replication will be implicitly achieved, via the size of the sites, supported by the Blue Belts.

The final aim is that the MPA networks established will represent:

- Typical examples of all natural habitats/biotopes;
- All essential ecological processes in the water column and on the seafloor that drive the ecosystem;
- Essential habitats for migratory and mobile species.

In practical terms, the MPA network selection process departs from the stock of sites already designated, selected or proposed by the national governments and their advisory bodies, respectively, as well as proposals made by NGOs and other stakeholders. Therefore, for the Southern North Sea, highest priority was given to establishing a Natura 2000 shadowlist which is as comprehensive as possible. For other parts of the North Sea subject to Community legislation this is more difficult to achieve due to wide gaps in research.

The proposed MPA network is based on the nature conservation aspects covered by the Natura 2000 and OSPAR selection criteria only. In that sense, fishes are included only in so far as they are a) listed by OSPAR as under threat and/or decline and b) not highly mobile but rather living associated to a particular habitat. This is the main difference to the MPA network proposal made by Greenpeace (2006) and Roberts and Mason (2008) which explicitly include the objective to establish marine reserves for the restoration of commercially targeted fish stocks.

Therefore, this report elaborates on a network proposal on three different levels elements based on:

1. **Natura 2000** areas as eligible under the EU Habitats Directive (based on best available knowledge);
2. Supplemented by showcase examples of MPAs for the protection of species and habitats on the **OSPAR list**¹³, e.g.
 - Spurdog (*Squalus acanthias*)
 - Porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*)
 - Deep sea sponge aggregations
 - *Lophelia pertusa* reefs
 - *Modiolus modiolus* beds
 - *Ostrea edulis* beds
 - *Sabellaria spinulosa* reefs
 - Seapen and burrowing megafauna; and
3. Completed by a first draft of “Blue Belts”.

For a fully coherent proposal, additional sites for the protection of seabirds at sea and for recovering mobile fish species back to biologically safe stock levels will need to be added, spatial overlap and synergies will need to be explored.

¹³ http://www.ospar.org/documents/DBASE/DECRECS/Agreements/08-06e_OSPAR%20List%20species%20and%20habitats.doc

1.6 Blue Belts

Blue Belts are meant to be specially managed areas which not necessarily have to be designated as MPA, but are comparable to IUCN category IV-VI management zones (Dudley 2008, see Annex for explanation).

The criteria used for placing the Blue Belts were:

- Representation and connectivity - by ranging from the coasts offshore, from shallow to deep water, they include as much habitat heterogeneity as possible and provide an ecological link between the habitats represented in individual MPAs; and
- Importance for OSPAR listed species and habitats.

The Blue Belts extend the representativity of habitats encompassed beyond the criteria used for designating the MPAs. Therefore, they bridge the gap between the selective demands for the conservation of individual species and habitats as formulated by the EU Habitats Directive, and the more generalistic view expressed by OSPAR (Recommendation 2003/3) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to establish an ecologically coherent, representative network of MPAs covering all waters.

We want the Blue Belts to be priority areas for the conservation of species and habitats towards achieving a “Good Environmental Status” of the North Sea:

- **Buffer zones** around the designated MPAs;
- Priority areas for delivering **transboundary spatial planning** and MPA management;
- **Best environmental practice** zones; and
- Priority areas for delivery of good environmental status.

1.7 The management system envisaged

This layered approach can fit within a spatial planning procedures framework. Thus:

- An ecologically coherent network of MPAs consisting of Natura 2000, OSPAR sites and any additional national designations which are clearly MPAs (either multi-use or highly protected) delivers the core protection zones.

- A series of North Sea Blue Belts (specially managed areas), will provide priority areas for targeted management, i.e. to protect the OSPAR listed habitats and species from further impacts. Being managed for example to allow only MSC certified or otherwise environmentally friendly fisheries („Smart Gear“) they provide buffer zones around the designated MPAs.
- The wider North Sea will need to be managed on a precautionary basis, allowing for sustainability of ecosystems and uses. Marine spatial planning may be a tool to achieve a balance of interests.

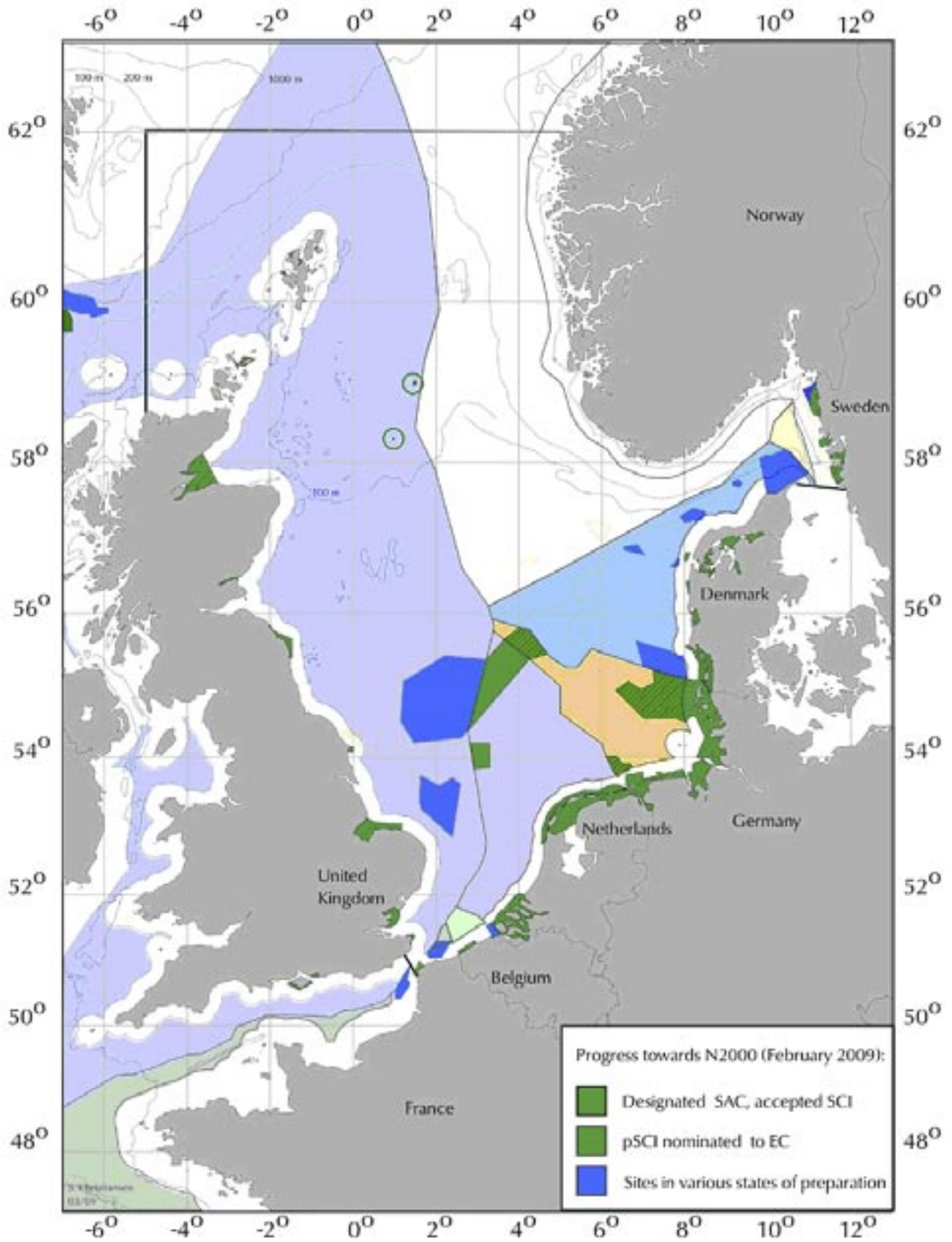
This approach can be seen as a **starting point for the transfer process towards regaining a good environmental status of the North Sea**. Ultimately, all over the North Sea, human uses should be compatible with thriving, mainly naturally driven marine ecosystems. Laffoley and Tasker (2007), focussing primarily on fishing, provide a list of broad objectives for the ecosystem that need to be achieved while managing human activities in the marine environment:

- To ensure that ecological processes in the sea are not compromised by human activities;
- To ensure that management is conducted at spatial and temporal scales that maintain marine biological diversity;
- To maintain viable populations of all native marine species in functioning biological communities;
- To include within a spectrum of protected areas, representatives of all marine habitat types across their natural range of variation; and
- To accommodate human uses of the seas and the economic, social and cultural aspirations of people, within these constraints.

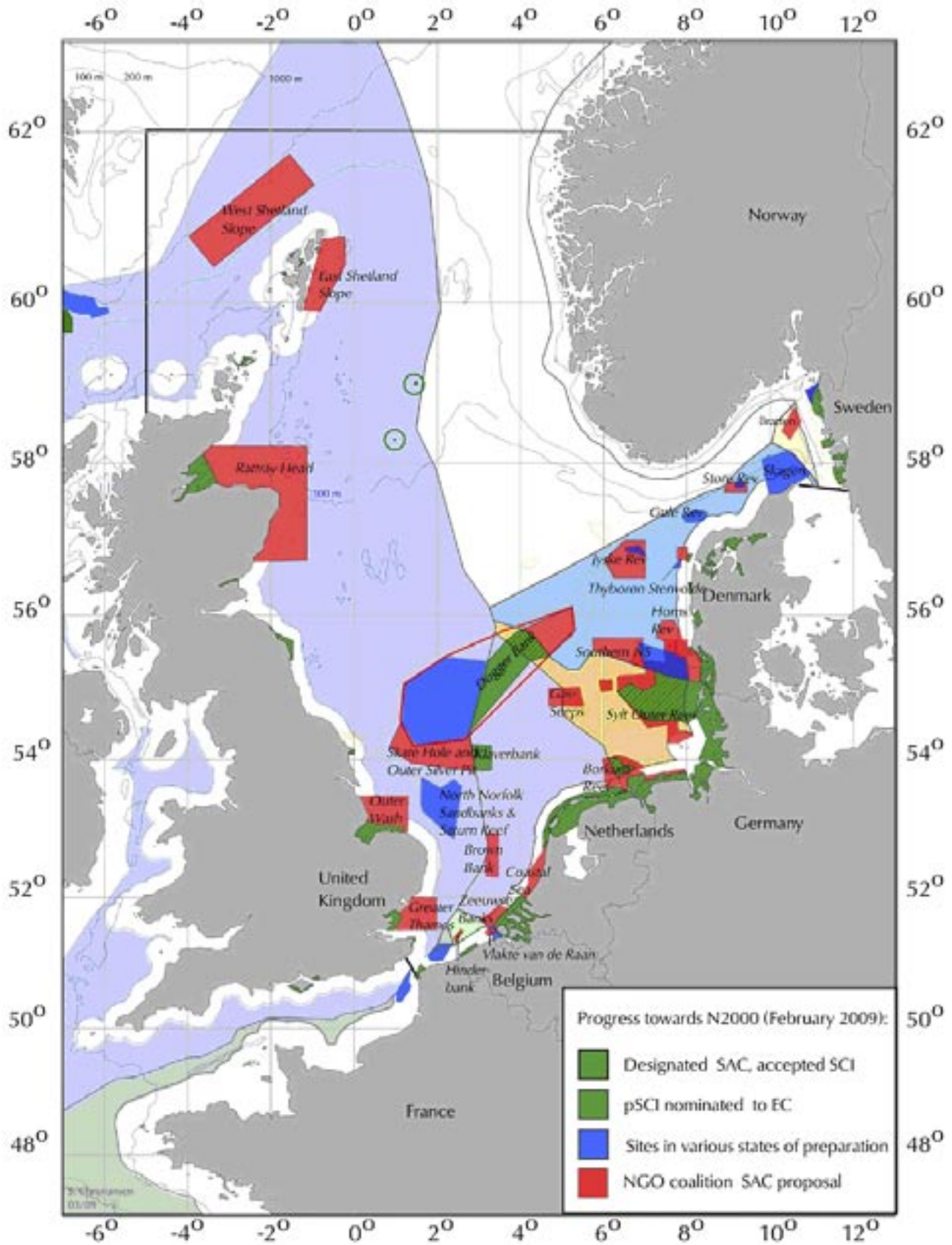
As becomes clear from the above, the designation and effective management towards a favourable conservation status of marine protected areas can only be one among several tools employed to work towards the good environmental status of the North Sea.

2 The proposed North Sea MPA network maps

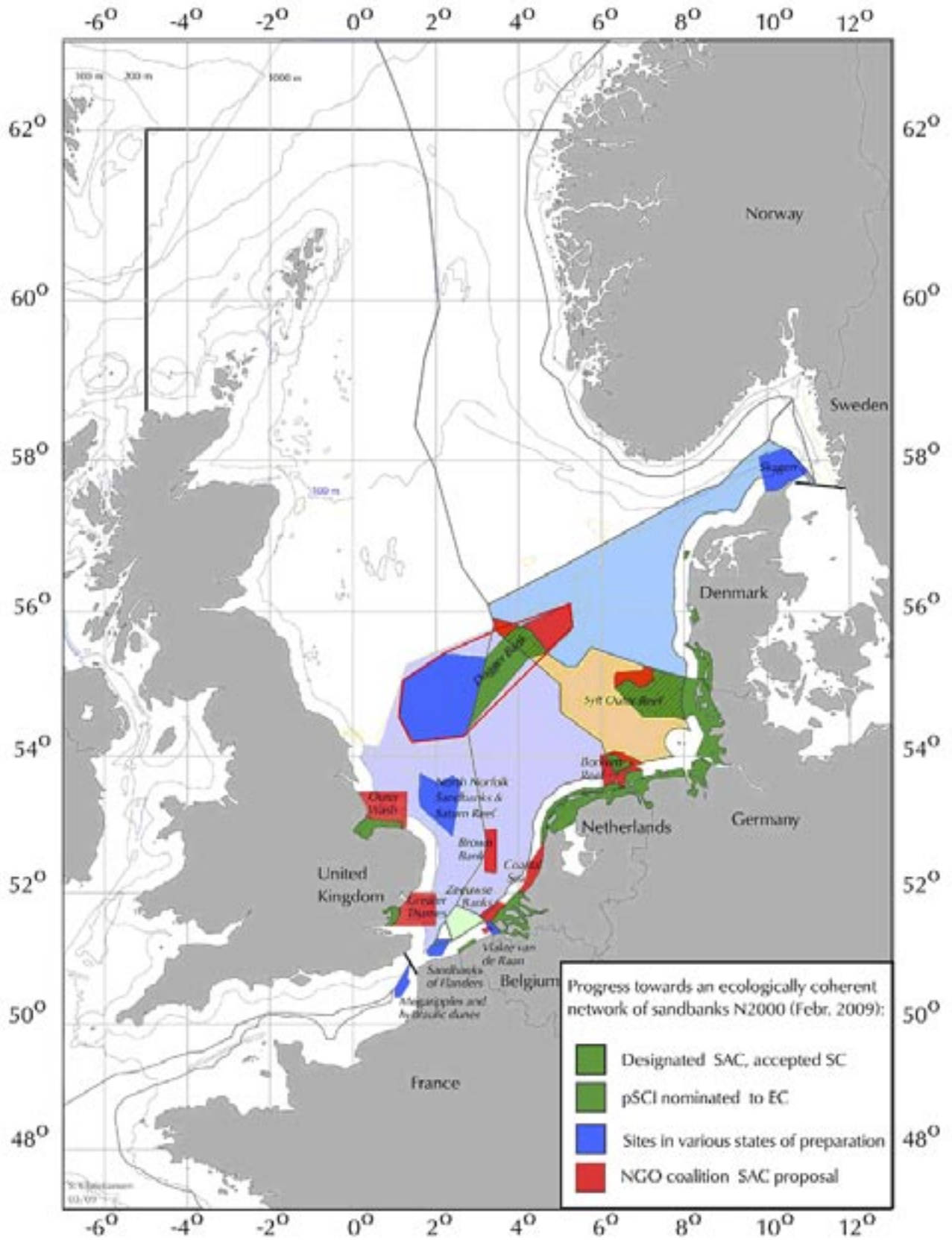
2.1 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Progress of national governments



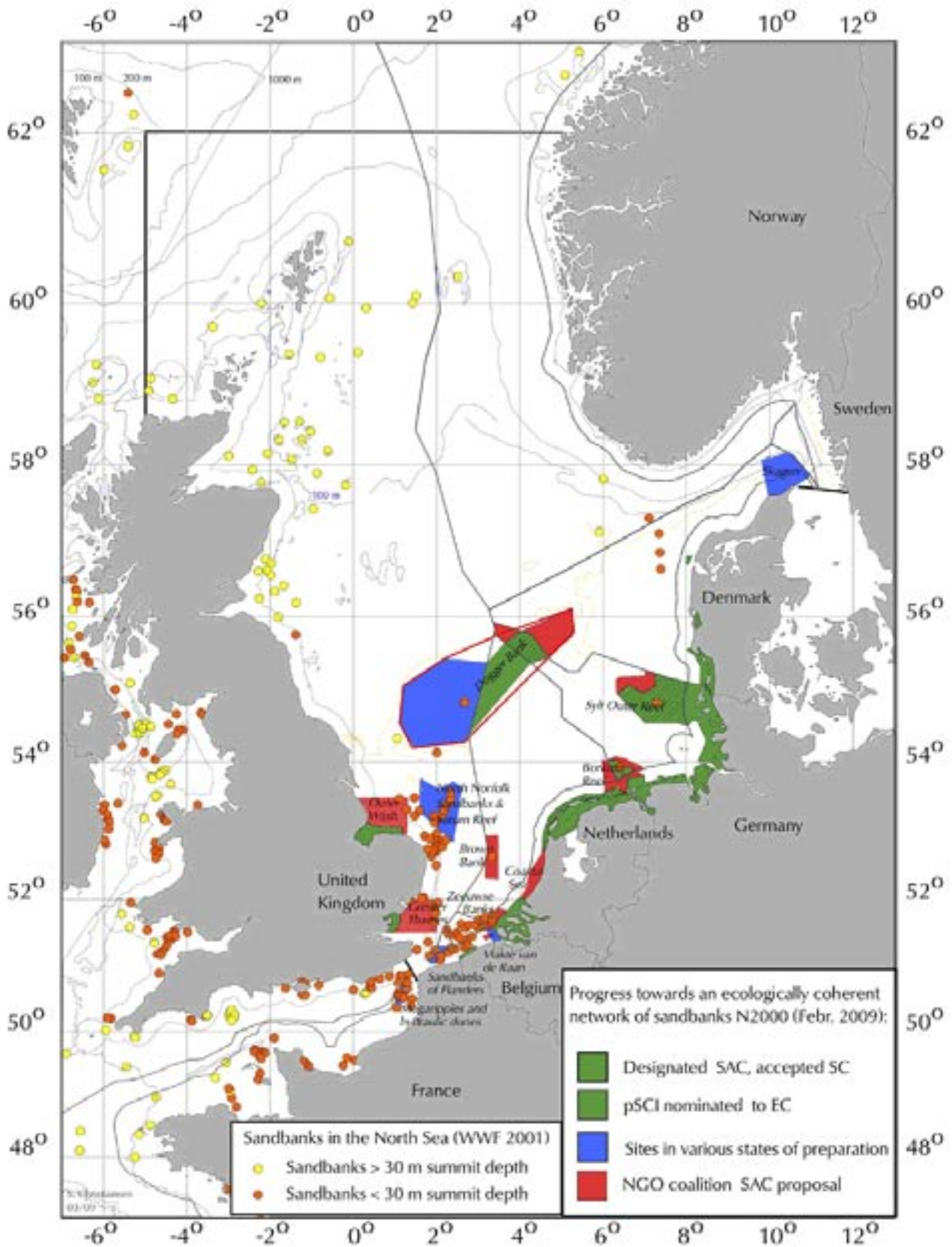
2.2 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Progress of national governments and additional NGO proposals



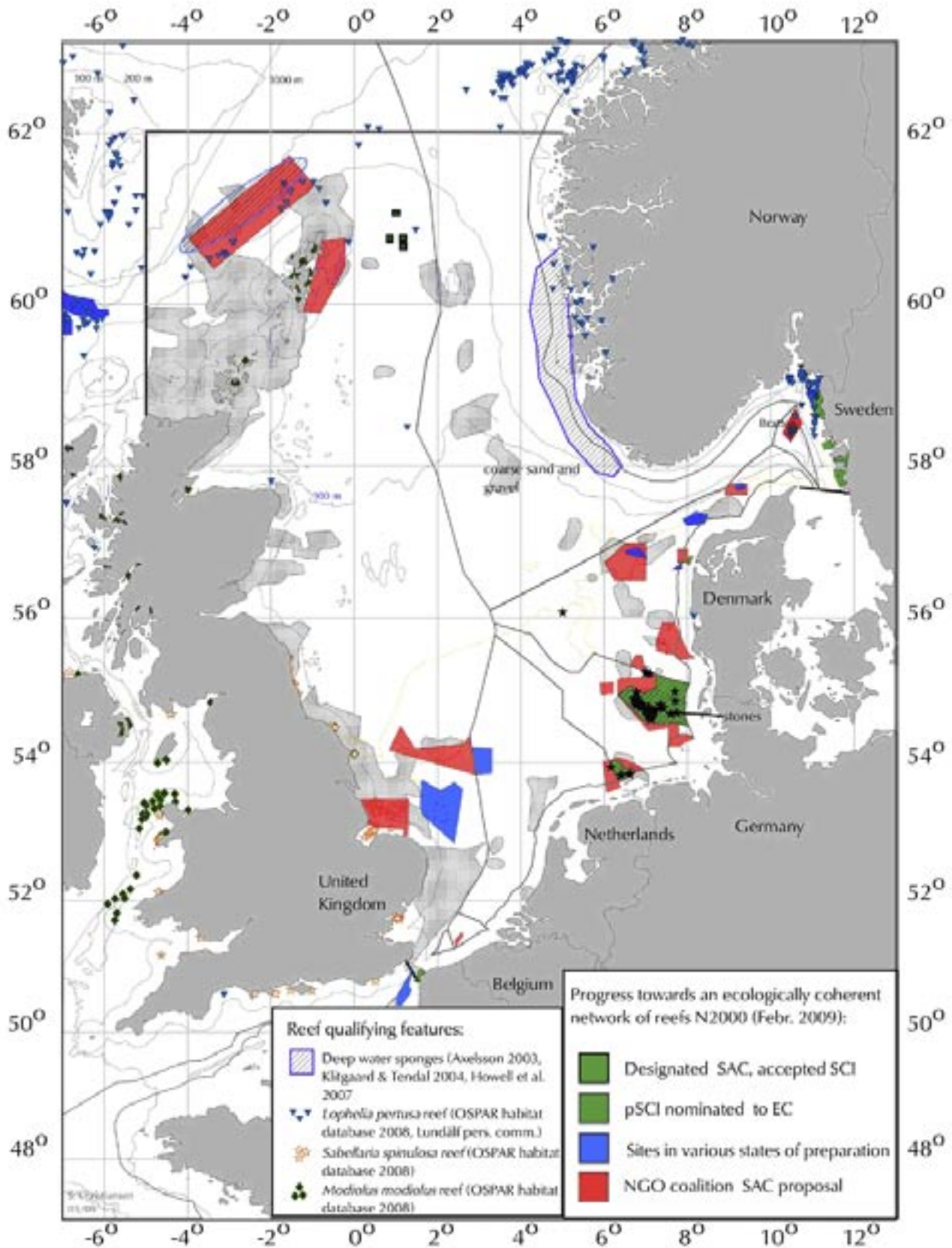
2.3 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Sandbanks. Progress of national governments and additional NGO proposals



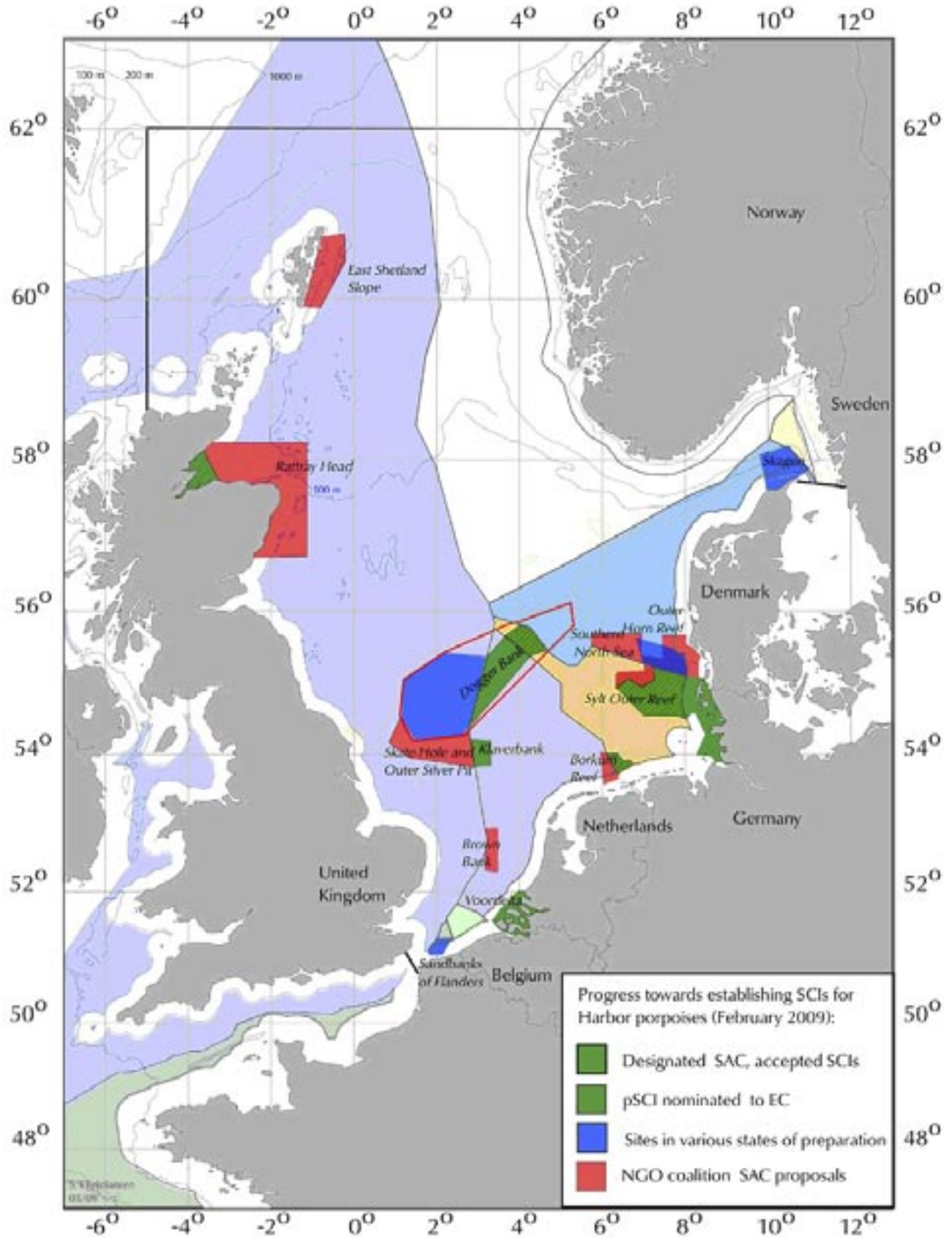
2.4 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Sandbanks.
Supportive information



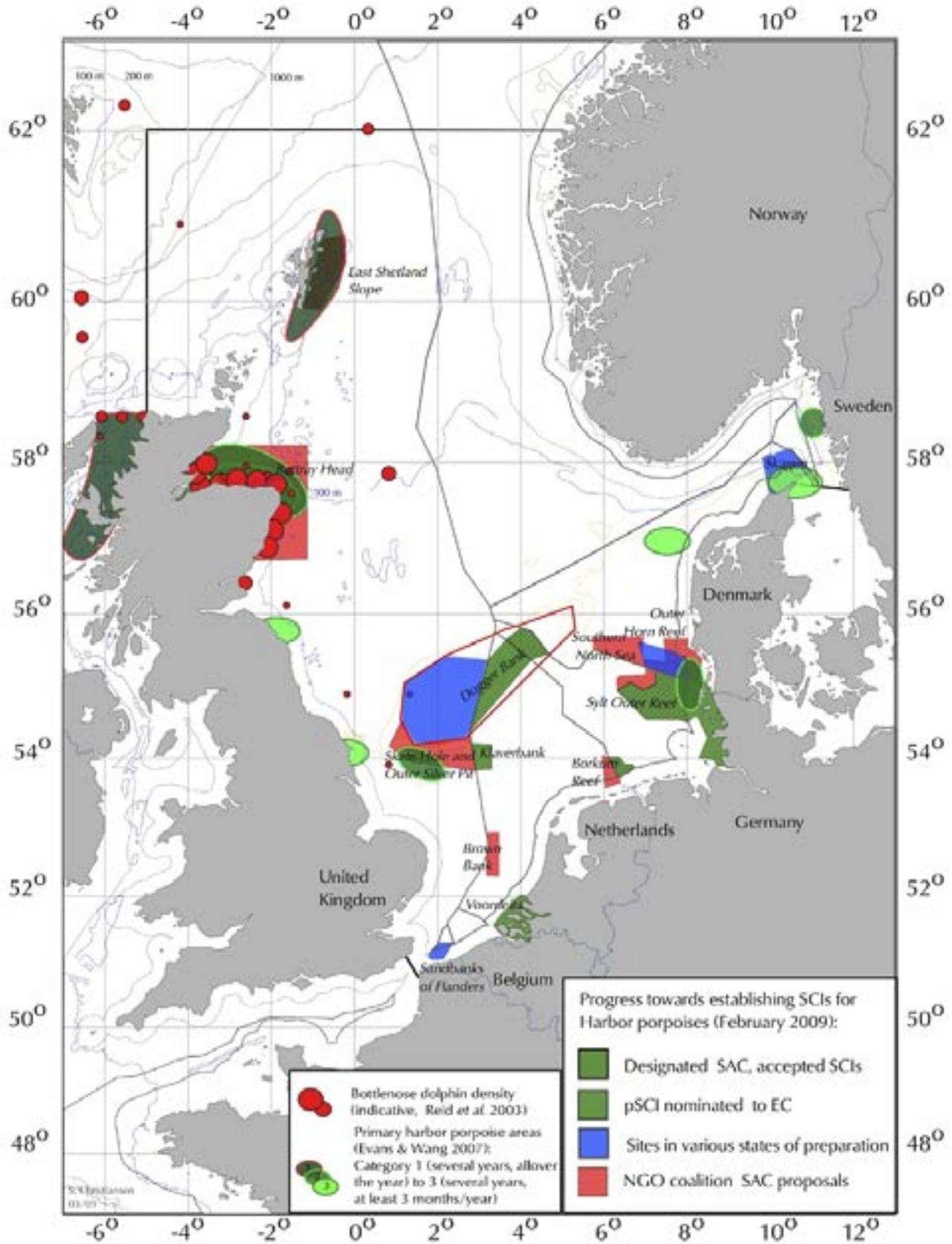
2.6 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Reefs. Supportive information



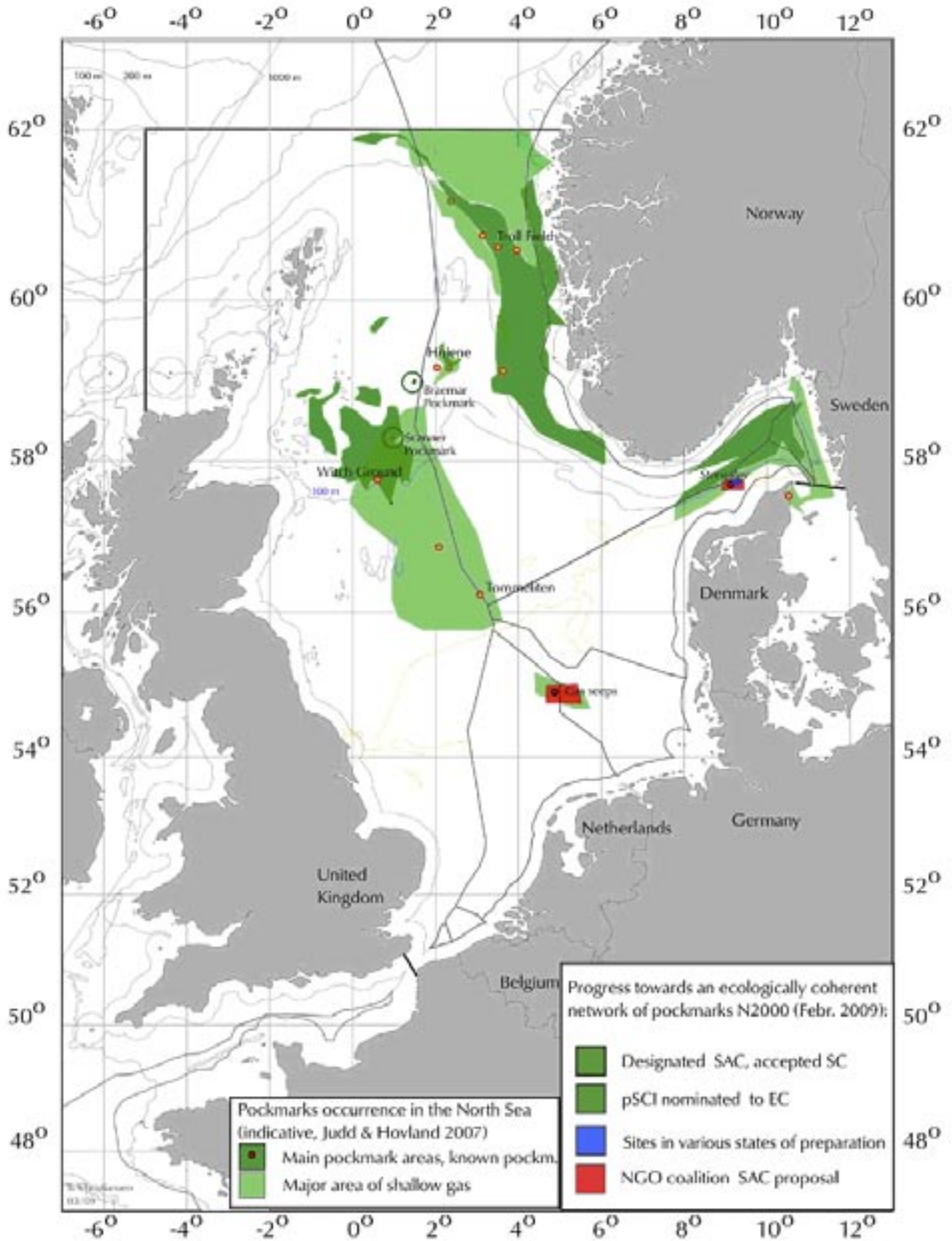
2.7 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Harbour porpoise. Progress of national governments and additional NGO proposals



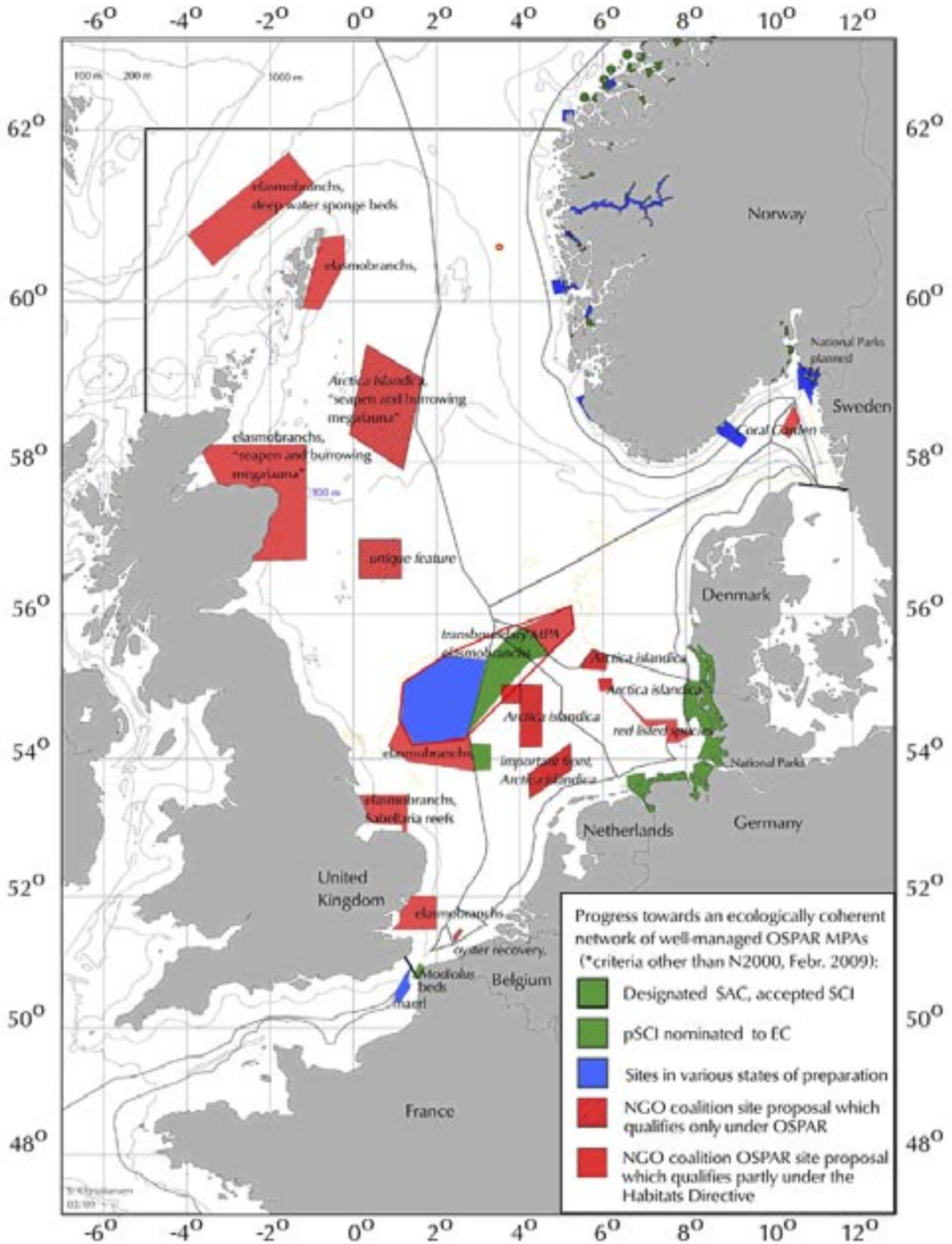
2.8 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Harbour porpoise.
Supportive information



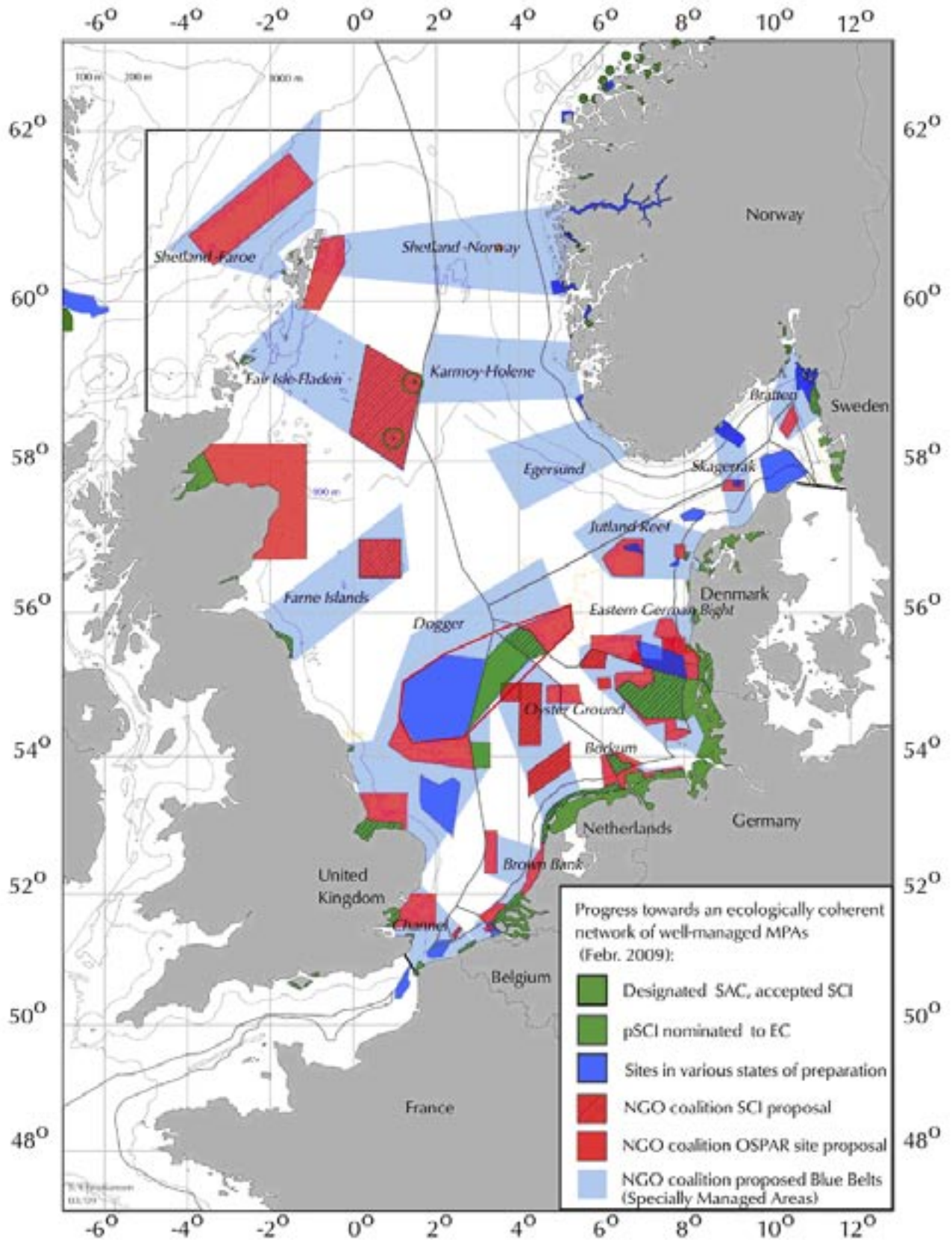
2.9 North Sea MPA network 2009 - Habitats Directive. Structures made by leaking gases. Supportive information



2.10 North Sea MPA network 2009 - OSPAR MPAs. Conservation objectives not covered by the EU Habitats Directive



2.11 Towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs - Blue Belts to complement MPAs





WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 90 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by

- conserving the world's biological diversity,
- ensuring that the use of renewable resources is sustainable and
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

WWF Germany

Rebstöcker Straße 55
D-60326 Frankfurt a. M.
Germany
Tel.: +49 69 79144 - 10
Fax: +49 69 79144 - 231
E-Mail: info@wwf.de

**International WWF Centre
for Marine Conservation**

Hongkongstr. 7
D-20457 Hamburg
Germany
Tel.: +49 40 / 5 30 200 - 0
Fax: +49 40 / 5 30 200 - 112
E-Mail: hamburg@wwf.de

www.wwf.de