

Management Scheme **for the Essex Estuaries European Marine Site**

The Essex Coast has for centuries been identified with its marshes and the birds that live there. Man's interactions with the coast have left their mark on both landscape and culture. Fishing, for the diverse fish species of the Greater Thames Estuary or for the oysters that inhabit its creeks has left a heritage of small coastal communities, of traditional fishing craft and a great love of sailing.

Farming has left a no less distinctive mark. From early times sea walls were built to enclose areas of marshland for the grazing of livestock, until by the 1950's a considerable percentage of the primeval salt marshes were enclosed and drained. These have become important areas for wildlife in themselves. More recently, modern agriculture has led to a shift from livestock to intensive arable farming behind the sea walls. Climate change has led to a further reduction in saltmarsh area through the erosion of saltings, putting further pressure on one of the last truly natural environments to be found.

With strong nature conservation legislation in place in the UK, attention is now focused on the development of more co-ordinated management arrangements for the mid Essex coast. This document contains draft proposals which aim to ensure the future of the key species and habitats which exist there.

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What is the 'Essex Estuaries European Marine Site'?

The Essex Estuaries European marine site is a nature conservation area of International and European importance for its birds, intertidal habitats and estuaries. It is part of the European Union's Natura 2000 network, and under UK law appropriate measures must be undertaken to secure its favourable condition.

The site comprises:

- Five intertidal Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which have been designated under the EC Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).
- Five Ramsar sites designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention)
- the candidate marine Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), which has been proposed under the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)

The Essex Estuaries European marine site is one of 64 European marine sites around the coast of the UK. Within the Greater Thames Estuary area, there are six other European marine sites: Stour and Orwell Estuaries (SPA); Hamford Water (SPA), Benfleet and Southend Marshes (SPA); Thames Estuary and Marshes (SPA); Swale and Medway includes the Swale SPA and the Medway Estuary and Marshes (SPA); and North-East Kent includes Thanet Coast cSAC; Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay (SPA); Sandwich Bay cSAC).

The Essex Estuaries European marine site covers approximately 500km². The geographical boundary extends from Shoeburyness in south Essex northwards to include the Crouch and Roach Estuaries as far as Battlesbridge, the Blackwater Estuary to Fullbridge, the Colne Estuary up to 200m south of the tidal barrier at Wivenhoe and then east to Lion Point at Jaywick. The landward boundary is the highest astronomical tide and the seaward boundary runs south from Jaywick skirting Maplin Sands to the east and south, to finish at Shoeburyness (refer Map 1).

Management Schemes have been proposed by government as an appropriate way to manage European marine sites. The idea behind a 'Management Scheme' is to have a management system in place - one that is responsive to changing pressures and circumstances. The main purpose of the Management Scheme is to ensure that the site is managed as one site, rather than a complex jigsaw of areas with uncoordinated management. The management jurisdictions covering this site are highly complex. There are 15 relevant authorities operating with the European marine site, covering both different geographical areas and statutory duties. The Management Scheme should promote joint working between authorities, where appropriate and subject to the limitations of their statutory powers and duties, landowners and other local stakeholders.

In addition to maintaining or enhancing the wildlife interest of the site, an important aim of the Management Scheme is to support the sustainable use of the site through good strategic planning. This is to ensure that the valuable natural resources of the area are there for the enjoyment and prosperity of both present and future generations.

The purpose of this document is to set out the scope of a management system for the Essex Estuaries European marine site. It contains information on:

- ❑ the **features of importance for nature conservation** (which are set out in detail separately in the statutory conservation advice for the site, produced according to Regulation 33 of the Habitats Regulations (1994), which can be viewed at www.essexestuaries.org.uk)
- ❑ the **duties** of the various relevant authorities (as set out in the Habitats Regulations), in relation to management schemes
- ❑ an **action plan**, which details the changes to site management which are necessary to meet objectives, and provides a system for monitoring and review

Box 1 - Relevant and competent authorities

The term 'competent authority' includes any statutory body or public office exercising legislative powers - on land or at sea.

The term 'relevant authority' is intended to identify those competent authorities with local powers or functions which have, or could have, an impact on the marine area within or adjacent to a European Marine Site. Relevant authorities also have powers to establish a Management Scheme for a European marine site.

All relevant authorities are also competent authorities.

Regulations 5 and 6 of the Habitats Regulations define these terms.

Reference: European Marine Sites in England and Wales. A guide to the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994; the Preparation and Application of Management Schemes. DETR 1998. ISBN 1 85112 087 4



Do we have to have a Management Scheme?

European marine sites are established as a result of European Directives. The intention of the Habitats Directive (1992) is to establish a network of sites designated for nature conservation throughout the European Union. The Habitats Directive also makes reference to the earlier Birds Directive (1979) and includes its provisions within its scope. The Habitats Regulations (1994) translate the provisions of the Habitats Directive into UK law.

For European marine sites the Habitats Regulations recognise that management is particularly difficult because of the complex administrative environment on the coast, and that statutory authorities must work together if the nature conservation status of the site, its 'favourable condition', is to be adequately safeguarded.

The Habitats Regulations assign a new duty to relevant authorities (something that must be done to comply with the law) to exercise their existing functions (activities for which authorities have powers and sometimes duties to carry out) for the purposes of securing compliance with the Habitats Directive.

Regulation 34(1) enables relevant authorities to establish Management Schemes for European marine sites. Government guidance (see reference in Box 1) makes it clear that for most European marine sites Management Schemes will be necessary. The Essex Estuaries European marine site is one of the largest and most complex in the UK, and there is no doubt that a Management Scheme is required. The relevant authorities for the site have agreed that a Management Scheme should be established.



Regulation 34(1) states that where Management Schemes exist relevant authorities are obliged to exercise their functions as set out in the schemes to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

Regulation 34(2) states that there should be only one Management Scheme for a European marine site. This means that the Management Scheme provides a mechanism for co-ordinating the content of existing plans and strategies, such as Shoreline Management Plans, local development documents¹ and future strategies so that they are consistent with the nature conservation objectives of the site.

What do authorities have to do?

Where competent authorities have functions which potentially impact upon marine conservation, they are legally bound to exercise the powers and duties (Regulation 33(3)) which they use to carry out those functions in a way that is compliant with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

Where these powers or duties relate to consents, authorisations, licences and permissions, specific procedures are set out in Regulations 48 to 53 which must be followed in order to comply with the law. These are set out in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 9.

¹ Local development documents include the Local Plans, (which will be replaced gradually by Local Development Frameworks from April 2004), Essex and Southend on Sea Waste Local Plan and Essex and Southend on Sea Minerals Local Plan

In relation to plans and projects an appropriate assessment is required by law for all European Sites. Under Regulation 48(1), an appropriate assessment needs to be undertaken in respect of any plan or project which:

- a. either alone or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site; and
- b. is not directly connected with the management of the site for nature conservation.

For more information about plans and projects see www.essexestuaries.org.uk

Where there is a Management Scheme in place each relevant authority is required to implement those actions identified in the scheme which fall within its remit (Regulation 34(1)).

Who has decided what actions are needed?

The Government has recommended that a Management Group (of relevant authorities) and Advisory Groups (of users) be established in order to oversee the preparation and implementation of the Management Scheme. This is to ensure that relevant authorities understand the nature conservation issues and make use of appropriate powers where necessary, and also that users are aware of the issues raised in the Management Scheme and have a role in developing and implementing solutions. The Essex Estuaries Management group comprises 15 relevant authorities, and advisory groups have been established for the Colne, Blackwater, and Crouch and Roach Estuaries, in recognition of the large size of the site. A list of representatives on each advisory group can be found at www.essexestuaries.org.uk or is available on request from the Essex Estuaries Initiative office.



Box 2 -The Relevant Authorities

- ❑ Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners
- ❑ Chelmsford Borough Council
- ❑ Colchester Borough Council
- ❑ Crouch Harbour Authority
- ❑ English Nature
- ❑ Environment Agency
- ❑ Essex County Council
- ❑ Maldon District Council
- ❑ Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners
- ❑ Port of London Authority
- ❑ Rochford District Council
- ❑ Southend on Sea Borough Council
- ❑ Tendring District Council
- ❑ Ministry of Defence
- ❑ Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee

The Management Group also includes observers. These organisations have been invited to take part because of their importance in management and or monitoring, even though they are not relevant authorities. At present they are the London Port Health Authority and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Fisheries Inspectorate based at Lowestoft.

The Management Group, comprising relevant authorities for the Essex Estuaries European marine site, has jointly agreed the actions contained within the Management Scheme. These actions have been identified through a lengthy process of analysis and consultation. English Nature has a duty under the Habitats Regulations (Regulation 33(2)) to provide statutory conservation advice for the site, and it is this advice which forms the basis for an assessment of the management requirements of the site. The citations for the site, which are essentially the reasons for designating the site, identify the most important conservation features present against a reference list of conservation features (habitats and species) of European importance (see Box 3).

Box 3 - Features for which the site has been selected

(See English Nature’s Conservation Advice and citations on website for additional information)

The conservation objective in relation to the features listed below is ‘subject to natural change, maintain [*the feature e.g. cordgrass swards*] in favourable condition’. The ‘favourable condition’ of a feature is set out in English Nature’s conservation advice, Regulation 33, in the form of a table comprising specific measurable indicators of condition.

Special Area of Conservation (SACs)

- Pioneer Saltmarsh
- Cordgrass swards
- Atlantic salt meadows
- Mediterranean saltmarsh scrubs
- Estuaries
- Intertidal mudflats and sandflats
- Subtidal sand banks



Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Species

1. Internationally important populations of regularly occurring Annex 1 species

- Sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*)
- Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
- Little tern (*Sterna albifrons*)
- Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)



2. Internationally important assemblages of waterfowl and seabirds
3. Internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory species

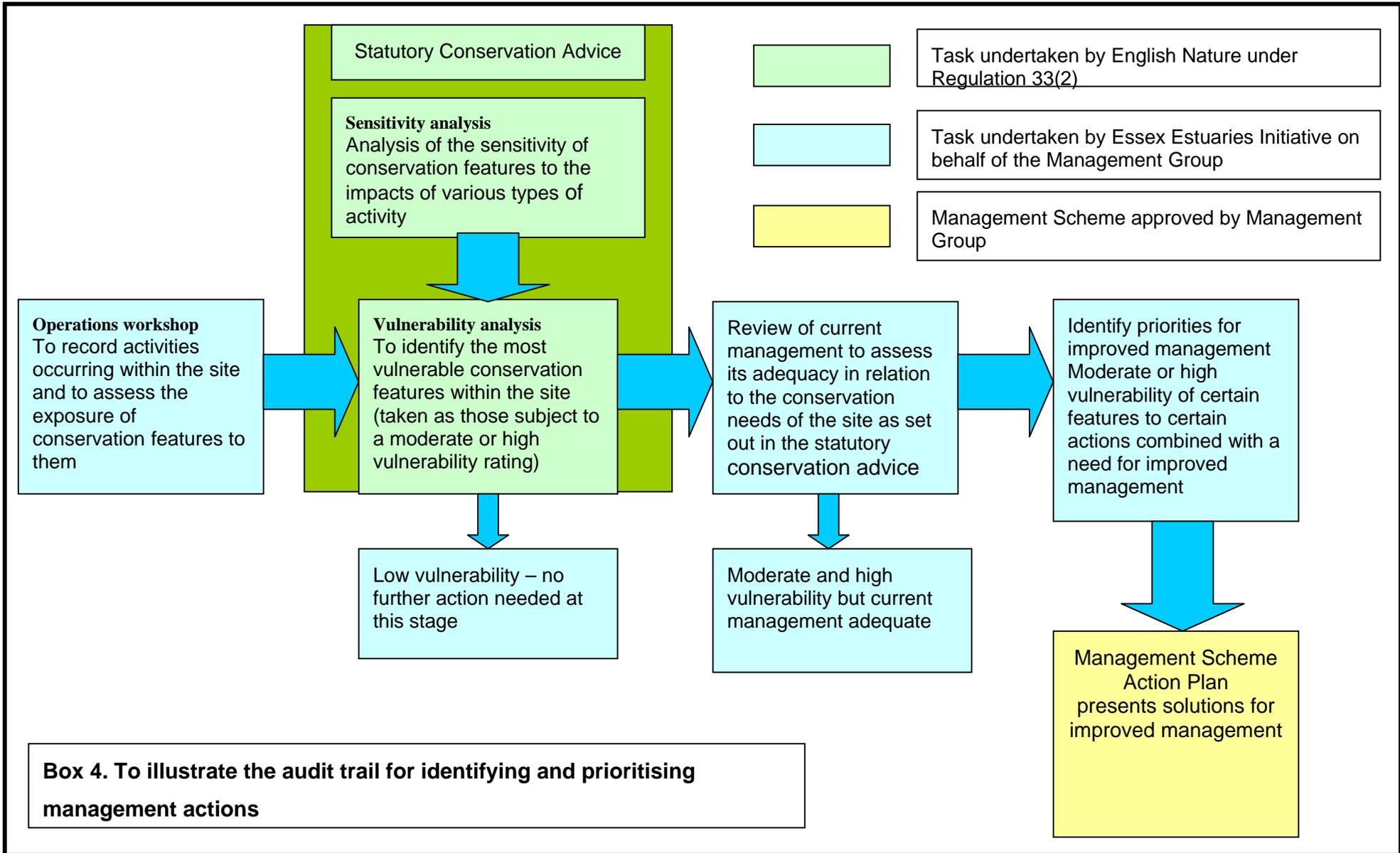
Habitats

- Shell, sand and gravel shores
- Boulder and cobble shores
- Intertidal mudflat and sandflats
- Saltmarsh
- Shallow coastal waters

The statutory conservation advice sets broad objectives for maintaining, subject to natural change, the favourable condition of individual features within the Essex Estuaries European marine site. It also analyses for each feature its **sensitivity** to a variety of human activities and operations, its **exposure** to particular categories of operation/activity and its consequent **vulnerability** to the range of human activities occurring within the site. The full documents can be downloaded from the Essex Estuaries Initiative website www.essexestuaries.org.uk.

The production of the statutory conservation advice, (Regulation 33 (June 2000)) involved two consultation elements. Firstly, an operations workshop was held with all the relevant authorities in order to gain a more accurate picture of the nature, scale and location of human activities within the site (refer to Box 4). Details are available on the Essex Estuaries Initiative website. English Nature then undertook a formal consultation with landowners and other interest groups in the spring of 2000. The statutory conservation advice for the Essex Estuaries European marine site was amended to include feedback from this second consultation.

English Nature's conservation advice provided the starting point for the development of the Management Scheme. The existing management measures for activities in the site were investigated and assessed against the conservation advice. In many cases the 'potentially damaging operations' identified in the conservation advice were found to be adequately managed and no further action was identified for these activities at this stage in the project. The process for identifying management actions is illustrated in Box 4.



Where further action was considered necessary, the Management Group considered the options available, consulted with the advisory groups and revised the proposed action plan as appropriate.

The value of having a Management Scheme lies in its objective of providing a co-ordinated approach to management, so that relevant authorities, landowners and users are working together towards the same objectives. There is a wide range of powers amongst the relevant authorities, which provide a suite of options for management. However, government guidance suggests that voluntary means should be used wherever possible in preference to statutory approaches.

Who is responsible for implementing the action plan?

The development of the Management Scheme has been undertaken by the Management Group. Officers of Colchester Borough Council, as lead authority, have co-ordinated the process through the Essex Estuaries Initiative (see Box 5 below).

However, no single authority has overall control of the process and the Management Group must work together to co-ordinate implementation of the scheme (within the limits of their individual powers and responsibilities). In the action plan an indication is given as to which authorities or organisations are best placed to lead on each action, but it is the responsibility of the Management Group as a whole to monitor the efficacy of implementation. Fundamental to this is the requirement for English Nature to monitor site condition and for the management group to monitor compliance with the Habitats Directive.

It is anticipated that some of the actions proposed will be best undertaken with the help of landowners and local user groups, and it may be appropriate to establish *ad hoc* working groups in this context. The local Estuary Partnerships on the Colne, Blackwater and Crouch and Roach are also likely to have a role in delivering local actions.

Box 5 - Estuary Partnerships

Estuary partnerships are forums which bring together regulators, organisations, landowners, users and businesses with the aim of jointly managing the estuary resource in a way that does not exhaust natural resources or cause severe ecological damage, but also takes account of the needs of local communities. In the Essex Estuaries European marine site there are a number of such partnerships. The Blackwater Project and the Colne Estuary Partnership have been established for some time and a new partnership is being developed on the Crouch and Roach Estuaries. The Essex Estuaries Initiative (EEI) is more closely related to the European Marine Site in geographical scope.

The coast is a dynamic natural environment and is constantly changing. Adapting to natural change is a challenge to all those involved in managing the coast. There are constant changes in society too, with new legislation to protect the natural environment and changing patterns of employment and lifestyle, which inevitably affect how we use the estuary resource. The groups and individuals involved in estuary partnerships can work together to:

- Raise awareness of these changes and their implications
- Develop and test new ways of working which take account of the changing nature of the environment, the economy and society.
- Support the development of joint management initiatives where appropriate

Action plan for the Essex Estuaries European marine site.

The table below contains information on proposed management actions for those features which have been identified as moderately or highly vulnerable to human activity in English Nature's statutory conservation advice. For details on where current management is adequate, see the full table on our website www.essexestuaries.org.uk. A glossary of acronyms and terms can be found at the end of the table.

Note on terminology: references to the Management Group are made in this action plan in respect of its role as a co-ordinating body. In most cases the work identified here will be undertaken by more specialist staff, or external experts.

Timescales and resources are indicated in the shaded boxes.

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
Boating and shipping	Physical damage by abrasion to saltmarsh	<p>The Management Group will identify areas where boat wash is likely to be the most significant cause of wave action on saltmarshes. Initial efforts will focus on developing a University student project to identify sheltered areas where natural wave action is of lesser importance (possibly using wind and wave data). A proposal for a monitoring programme will then be developed to assess levels of boating activity in these sheltered areas. The monitoring will differentiate between different types of craft according to their wash characteristics. Recommendations for future action will be made.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be taken forward as a student project</p> <p>Relevant Authorities will continue to enforce existing speed limits for boats and powered watercraft and promote voluntary boat registration schemes, where appropriate, to raise awareness of the importance for nature conservation of the responsible use of craft.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 Resources mostly in place through relevant authorities</p>	District/Borough and Unitary Councils, and Harbour Authorities	NT, RYA, EN, BACUAG & BACSPA

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>3. review the associated options for the beneficial use of dredgings within the site, in the context of the nature conservation interest of the site</p> <p>4. make recommendations for further action. As a point of good practice, recommendations will be made regarding consultation with the estuary users on proposals for foreshore recharge, and other uses of dredge spoil.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 Resources not yet identified</p> <p>Regarding the potential of maintenance dredging activity to smother mussel beds: refer to previous actions identified in relation to the 'impact of dredging on sub-tidal muddy sand (eelgrass)' on page 18.</p>		
	<p>Abrasion of rock communities/ mixed sediment communities</p>	<p>Regarding the potential of mooring chains of leisure craft to cause damage by abrasion to sub-features, the Management Group will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess extent of mooring areas and density within them against 1992 baseline. 2. If data does not exist then it will undertake a baseline survey. 	<p>Harbours (all), MDC,CBC</p>	<p>RYA,EN, BACUAG, BACSPA</p>

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>3. If extent of mooring areas or density within them has substantially increased since baseline, then the Management Group will determine the nature and scale of impact of mooring chain abrasion on the conservation features within the whole European marine site, and recommend appropriate management measures</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 </p>		
	<p>Cumulative impact of leisure boating-related development (bird disturbance, toxic contamination, non-toxic contamination, hydrodynamic impacts through construction, impacts of maintenance dredging)</p>	<p>The Management Group will:</p> <p>1. Assess the need for strategic plans for leisure boating / powered watercraft development use for each estuary system in the site and test the validity of the approach developed in the Colne Estuary Leisure Boating Study.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 <i>resources not yet identified</i></p> <p>2. Where appropriate, develop strategic plans for leisure boating / powered watercraft development making use of the powers available to the appropriate competent authorities.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 <i>resources not yet identified</i></p>	<p>District/Borough/Unitary planning authorities and all Harbour Authorities</p>	<p>RYA, BACUAG, BACSPA & EN</p> <p>RYA, BACUAG, BACSPA & EN</p>

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>3. Promote the use of codes of practice and environmental standards by boat/powered watercraft users, marina operators and other businesses.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 <i>Resources in place through existing staff and estuary projects</i></p> <p>4. Undertake studies to establish pattern of boat /powered watercraft use in relation to bird sensitivity (location/season/type of craft). Initially a scoping exercise to determine how this study should be undertaken in the context of the European marine site, considering whether studies should encompass the whole site or whether more focussed studies would nevertheless yield valid results.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 Will be undertaken on Colne Estuary as trial project as part of MAYA project</p>		<p>RYA, BACUAG, RSPB,EN</p> <p>RSPB, NT, RYA, BACUAG & BACSPA</p>
Agriculture, industrial and urban development	Non-toxic and toxic contamination of intertidal rock communities, shallow water mixed sediments, subtidal muddy	The Environment Agency will report to the Management Group on the likely ecological impact on designated features of the site of toxic and non-toxic diffuse contamination by 31 st December 2006 as part of the review of consents process. This report will give an indication of the relevant contributions of the diffuse inputs to recorded levels of contaminants	EA	Estuary Advisory Groups

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
	sand, intertidal sand and mud flats	<p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken as part of EA's review of consents</p> <p>The Management Group will agree an appropriate programme of action by 31st December 2007.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 resources will be identified at the appropriate time</p>	All relevant authorities	
Fishing	Damage to Sand and gravel, muddy sand, and mud communities through benthic trawling	<p>The Management Group will: Review nature and scale of fishing activity to establish 1992 baseline. Compare with current nature and scale of activity Recommend appropriate action</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 to be undertaken by Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee</p>	KESFC, Defra, CBC (in relation to Colne Estuary)	This review should be overseen by a steering group comprising a KESFC Fishery Officer, fishermen's representatives drawn from the KESFC, and representatives of other interest groups as appropriate.

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
	Reduction in abundance of cockles through overfishing	<p>The KESFC will propose to the Management Group a management framework for the cockle fishery which enables the nature conservation interest of the site to be taken into account.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 to be undertaken by Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee</p>	KEFSC	EN, Cockle Fishermen
Human activity on seawalls and foreshore	Bird disturbance	<p>1. English Nature will report to the Management Group on the status of wintering bird populations within the Essex Estuaries European marine site and advise whether management action is needed to address any adverse impacts (with reference to the British Trust for Ornithology 'Alerts ' system - which identifies species in decline on protected sites- and follow up investigative studies of site based issues to identify possible causes of decline).</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken with existing staff resources</p> <p>2. English Nature will investigate trends in breeding populations of Annex 1 species (<i>i.e.</i> listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive) for the purpose of identifying any requirement for management actions.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken with existing staff resources</p>	EN, ECC (re:footpaths)	RSPB, BTO

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>If necessary, proposals for seasonal and site specific public information will be proposed to the management group.</p> <p>3. The opportunity to develop circular footpath routes around the estuaries should be investigated as alternatives to sea wall routes at appropriate locations to address the issue of bird disturbance</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 </p> <p><i>Note: there are opportunities for constructive engagement of voluntary groups in this task. As the scope of investigative work is developed, agreements may be sought with relevant organisations to undertake appropriate aspects. Funding and co-ordination are particularly important issues.</i></p>	ECC	Essex coastal landowners, RSPB, NT
Military activity	Bird disturbance	<p>MoD to designate the Mid-Essex coast SPA as a low-flying avoidance area by December 31st 2005</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 </p> <p>Process to be identified</p>	MoD	

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
<p>Shoreline management for erosion protection and flood defence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical loss of saltmarsh, rock communities, intertidal mudflats and sand flats sub-features • Physical damage to saltmarsh, subtidal muddy sand, muddy sand, and mud sub-features 	<p>The Environment Agency is producing Estuarine Flood Management Strategies for Crouch and Roach Estuary system and the Blackwater and Colne in the European marine site, which will take account of defence economics, socio-economics, environmental gain and hydrodynamic stability. The aim is to plan for future flood management for timescales in excess of 50 years. Habitat creation is an integral element and the Environment Agency aims to review these strategies regularly to ensure that habitat creation is in line with Habitat Directive requirements both in terms of quality and quantity. The strategies will recommend one of the five generic management options for short stretches of coast, namely: hold the line (of defence); advance the line; retreat the line; do nothing; minimal intervention.</p> <p>Whilst these strategies are focussed on flood management, they will nevertheless be one of the primary mechanisms for ensuring that the favourable condition of the site is maintained.</p> <p>Therefore, the following actions will be undertaken under the auspices of the Management Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Management Group will engage with the consultative process in the development of the estuarine Flood Management Strategies and the SMP review, to ensure that resulting measures to restore and/or maintain favourable condition are inclusive and consistent with the recommendations of the 'Essex Coast and Estuaries' 	<p>EA, Local Planning Authorities, Mineral Planning Authorities, Waste Planning Authorities</p>	<p>RYA, BACUAG, Advisory Groups & Local Flood Defence Committee</p>

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>Coastal Habitat Management Plans (ChaMPs).</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken with existing staff resources</p> <p>2. English Nature, as a statutory consultee, will engage with the development of the estuarine Flood Management Strategies to ensure that habitat creation measures are in place to secure favourable condition of the European marine site.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken with existing staff resources</p> <p>3. The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a policy document for long term coastal defence management planning (20-100 years) and is intended to inform wider strategic planning. The second generation Essex SMP will be informed by the Flood Management Strategies for the Crouch and Roach, Blackwater and the Colne and the 'Essex Coast and Estuaries' ChaMPs for compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directive.</p> <p>The Management Group, through the relevant local planning authorities will seek to ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land use planning policies take full account of the recommendations of the Essex SMP, Flood 		

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>Management Strategies and the 'Essex Coast and Estuaries' CHaMP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Management Group through the statutory consultation process will also seek to influence Regional Policies on this issue. the planning authorities are encouraged to follow examples of good practice such as the Maldon District Draft Replacement Local Plan, Revised Deposit, January 2003 <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 ██████████ To be undertaken with existing staff resources</p> <p>In advance of the completion of the Estuary Flood Management Strategies and the implementation of the 'Essex Coast and Estuaries' CHaMP and revision of the SMP:</p> <p>1. The EA will implement a Habitat Creation Compensation Programme to address losses of European marine site habitat due to the impacts of coastal squeeze.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 ██████████ To be funded by DEFRA</p>		<p>EJCWC, Coastal Landowners</p>

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>2. A programme of communication actions will be implemented prior to the commencement of the SMP review process. It will be aimed at raising awareness amongst the full range of stakeholders. The programme will be linked to the Estuary Flood Management Strategies, and a community-based process undertaken to demonstrate the strategic context for individual schemes.</p> <p>This programme of work will be co-ordinated by the Management Group</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 </p> <p>To be undertaken by EA and Essex Estuaries Initiative</p> <p>3. The Management Group will identify any significant barriers to implementation and ensure that this information is fed through to the Environment Agency and Defra.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 </p> <p>To be undertaken within existing resources</p>		<p>Estuary Advisory Groups, Coastal landowners</p>

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		<p>To ensure implementation of the SMP:</p> <p>1. The Management Group will monitor progress towards implementation, initially through the ACAG sub-cell 3d group.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 To be undertaken within existing resources</p> <p>2. The Management Group will explore mechanisms for closer liaison with the Local Flood Defence Committee</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 <i>To be undertaken within existing resources</i></p>		
Identifying vulnerability of newly designated features		<p>1. EN will report to the Management Group on the proposed timescale for revising the Regulation 33 advice so as to incorporate the recently designated feature of 'subtidal sand banks'.</p> <p>2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 to be undertaken within existing resources</p> <p>2. The Management Group will identify appropriate solutions to any management issues arising from the revised conservation advice and review progress.</p>	EN All relevant authorities	Advisory Groups

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
		2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 Resource needs to be identified at the appropriate time		
Compliance and condition monitoring		The Management Group will investigate approaches to compliance monitoring, and adopt an appropriate monitoring programme. English Nature will report to the Management Group on its condition monitoring programme. EN will also be reporting to Joint Nature Conservation Council during this time 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 Resource needs to be identified	All relevant authorities EN	RSPB
Information Sharing		1. The Management Group will prepare a proposal to establish a system for improving access to information in relation to assessing plans and projects, particularly in relation to cumulative and in combination effects and undertaking appropriate assessments, condition and monitoring compliance monitoring and for the systems' continual updating 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 A prototype LIS will be developed as part of the 'Eurosion' Project	All relevant authorities	

Sector	Issues addressed (as identified in Statutory Conservation Advice)	Description of the actions which will be undertaken in response to the conservation advice	Relevant Authority	Other Interested Organisations
Implementation of the Management Scheme		The Management Group will agree, annually, a work programme (costed where possible) for implementation of the Management Scheme 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008  To be undertaken by the Essex Estuaries Initiative	All relevant authorities	Estuary Advisory Groups

Glossary

ACAG – Anglian Coastal Authorities Group

Appropriate Assessment – an assessment of the implications of a plan or a project against the conservation objectives

BACUAG - Blackwater and Colne Users Action Group

BACSPA - Blackwater and Colne Sailing Protection Association

BHC - Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners

CBC - Colchester Borough Council

CHA - Crouch Harbour Authority

CHaMPS - Coastal habitat management plans have been developed as part of the 'Living with the Sea' project. They provide a strategic overview of the conservation measures required to offset predicted losses of habitats of European interest.

Compliance monitoring – monitoring by relevant authorities to ensure that in exercising their functions they are compliant with the requirements of the Habitats Directive

Condition monitoring – scientifically monitoring the condition of the site and its features against the conservation objectives

Defra - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

EA - Environment Agency

EA review of consents - under the Habitats Regulations all Relevant Authorities should review any outstanding consents (i.e. those which have not been completed or those for on-going activities). For the EA this is an enormous programme of work which encompasses both consents to discharge and abstract.

ECC - Essex County Council

EI - Essex Estuaries Initiative

EN - English Nature

FMS - Flood management strategies

KESFC - Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee

LA - Local Authorities

LIS - Local Information System

MDC - Maldon District Council

MHIC - Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

MoD - Ministry of Defence

Natura 2000- Natura 2000 is the European Union-wide network of nature conservation sites designated or proposed for designation as either SPA'S or SAC's to protect the most seriously threatened habitats, plants and animals

PLA - Port of London Authority

RAMSAR– referring to a Wetland of International Importance, especially as waterfowl habitat designated under the Ramsar Convention

RSPB - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

RYA - Royal Yachting Association

SAC - Special Area of Conservation, a designation arising from the Habitats Directive

SMP - Shoreline Management Plan - sets out policies for coast protection and flood defence works for a 20 to 100 year term.

SPA - Special Protection Area for Wild Birds, a designation arising from the Birds Directive

SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest, notified for nature conservation or geological value under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
(a national designation)

WeBS - Wetlands Birds Survey, co-ordinated by the British Trust for Ornithology

The **features** of the site are those listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive and for which the site has been formally proposed to the European Commission by the UK Government.

Sub-features are biologically distinct components of a feature, and help to provide an appropriate level of detail for monitoring and for management.

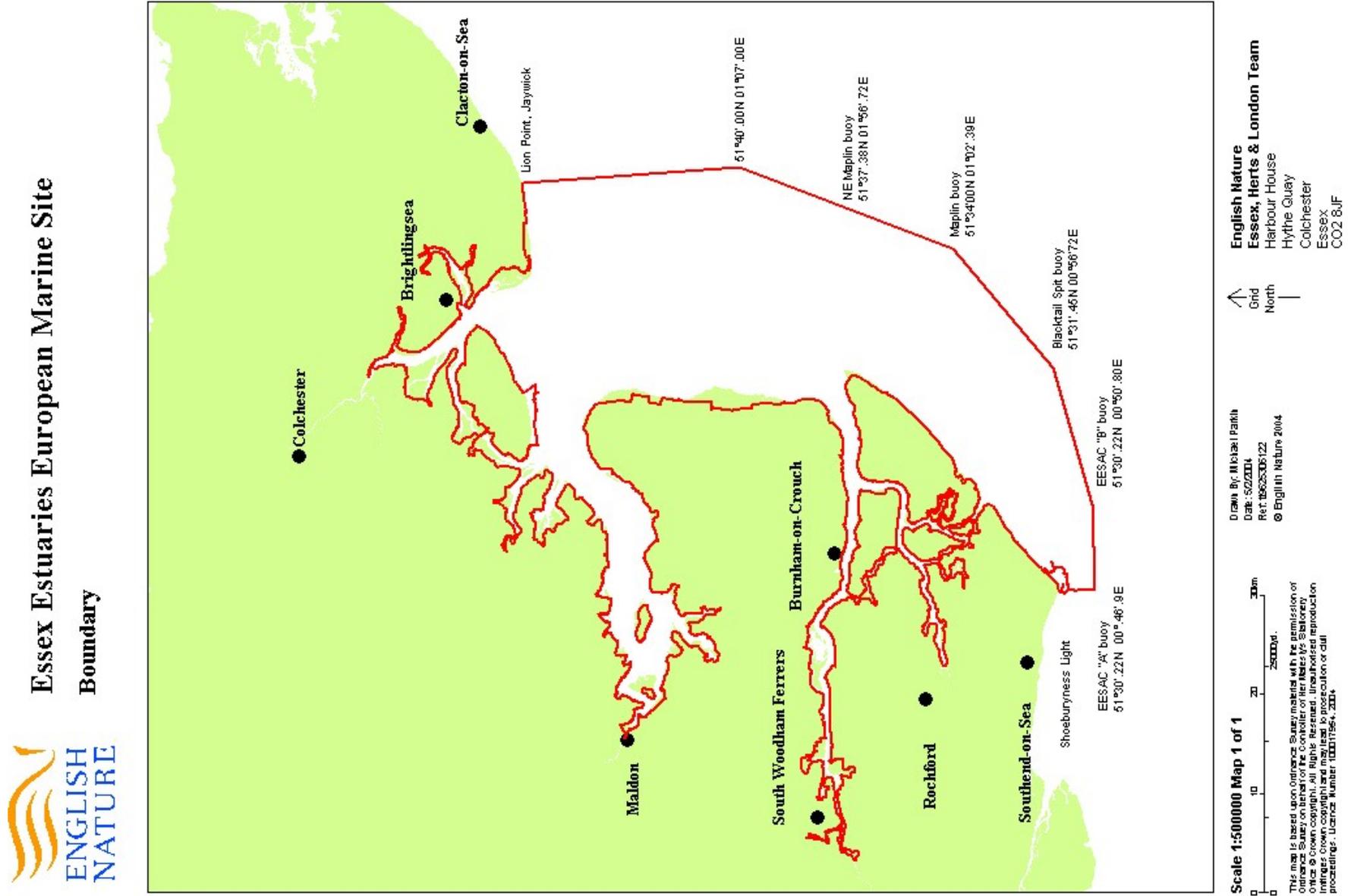
Categories of operation have been defined by English Nature, and provide a generic approach to looking at ways in which a feature may be caused to suffer, for example, physical loss. So activities such as removal to excavate a marina basin, or construction works, fall into the category of physical loss.

Potentially damaging operations are those which are identified in the Conservation Advice as occurring within the site and which have the potential to contribute to damage of a feature or sub-feature.

References

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. SI 2716 amended by SI 1997/3055 & SI 2000/192 (England only)
English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. Issued 14th June 2000.
Habitats Directive (1992) - EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
Birds Directive(1979) - EC Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds
Ramsar Convention (1971) - The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat
DEFRA EMS management guide

Map 1 - Geographical boundary of Essex Estuaries European marine site



Appendix 1 - Contact details for Relevant Authorities

Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners	Bernie Hetherington Brightlingsea Harbour Commissioners Harbour Office 4 Copperas Road Brightlingsea Essex CO7 0AP
Crouch Harbour Authority	Capt. Ian Bell Crouch Harbour Authority The Quay Burnham on Crouch Essex CM0 8AS
English Nature	Carol Reid Harbour House Hythe Quay Colchester Essex CO2 8JF
Environment Agency	Environment Agency Cobham Road Ipswich Suffolk 1P3 9JE

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Maldon Harbour Improvement Commissioners

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