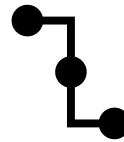


Exploring the potential of OECCMs in the Baltic Sea Region

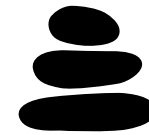
Where do we want to be?



30% coverage by 2030.



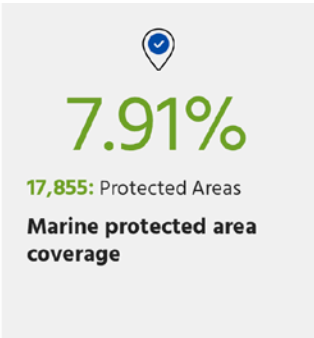
Fully coherent
conservation network.



Ecosystem Approach
(and ecosystem-based
management).



Protectedplanet.net



Statistics updated: November 2021



By Jannica Haldin, HELCOM
Tuesday, November 23, 2021

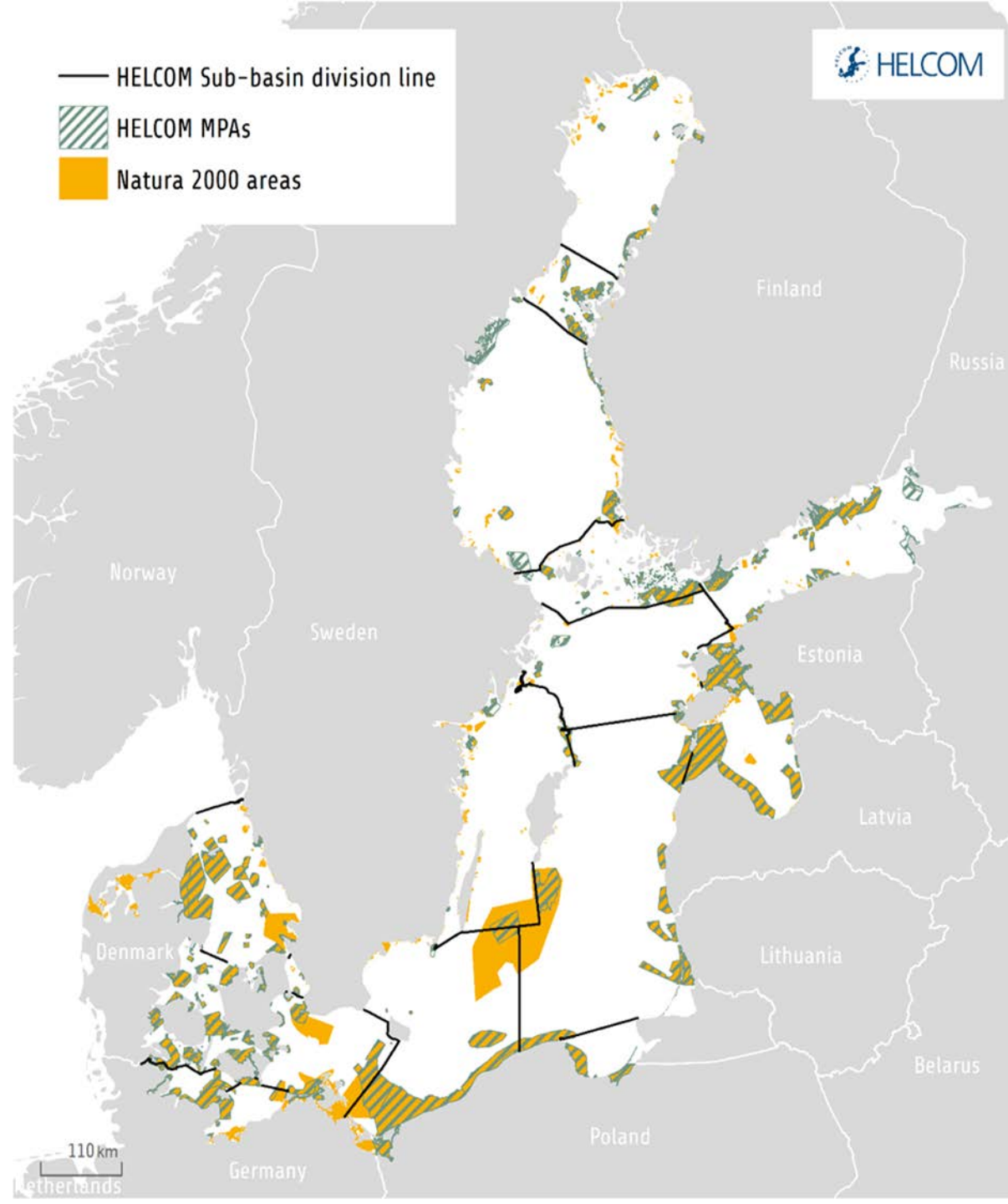
Where are we now?

+ 10% target was reached in 2010.

+ 178 HELCOM MPAs,
~60.000km² of which about 90%
is marine area.

+ Covers ~13% of the entire Baltic Sea,
with a coverage of up to 17%
when all conservation schemes
are accounted for.

By Jannica Haldin, HELCOM
Tuesday, November 23, 2021



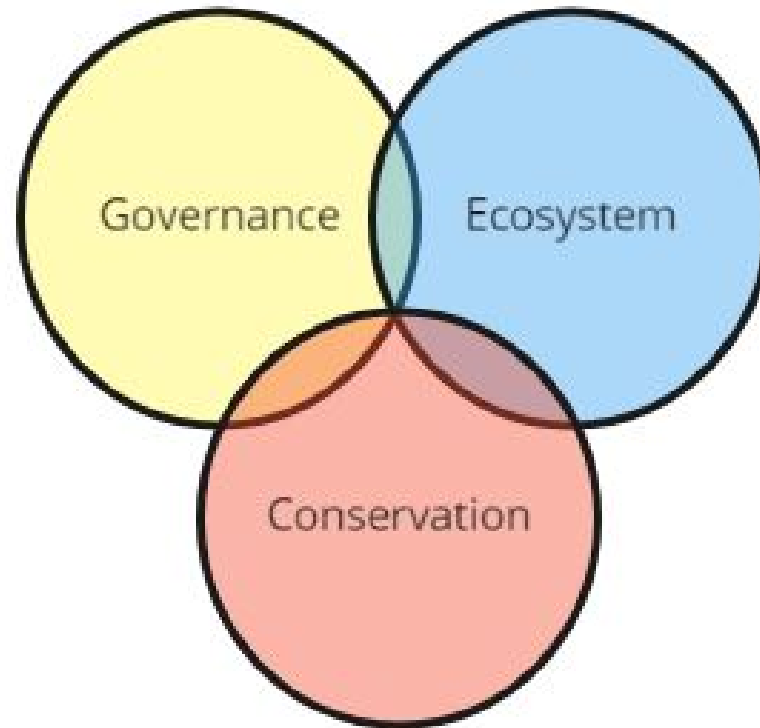
Why do we need OECMs?

- Significant opportunity to recognise de facto effective long-term **conservation that is taking place outside MPAs under a range of governance and management regimes, implemented by a diverse set of actors.**
 - OECMs will often be pre-existing measures that have not historically been recognised for their conservation values.
 - Provides a way to bridge conservation with other management e.g. MSP.

Possible benefits of recognising OECMs

- Because they are based on existing management, OECMs are recognised rather than designated, i.e. **they are existing management systems that already provide effective biodiversity conservation.**
- However, some places identified as ‘potential OECMs’ which almost but not quite meet the definition might require some management changes to reach full OECM status.

Possible benefits of recognising OECMs



Possible governance benefits of recognising OECMs

- Recognition of areas that deliver conservation outcomes but have been excluded from the mainstream conservation agenda.
- Promote diverse and equitable governance, e.g. recognition of OECMs could help engage a diversity of actors in local-to-international conservation processes.
- A more diverse and inclusive discussion on conservation, e.g. with the fishing industry.
- Provide appropriate support to OECM areas, increasing biodiversity monitoring and rule enforcement.
- Recognizing might increase governance authorities' sense of responsibility for the areas.
- Improve the areas chances to attract funding from national or international bodies.
- Recognition could incentivize managers to maintain their current practices over the long-term.

Possible governance benefits of recognising OECMs

- Increase opportunities to meet all elements of CBD Target 11, SDGs, EU BDS and BSAP:
 - Increased protection for important areas of biodiversity, KBAs
 - Ecological Representation
 - Connectivity
 - Species communities at risk
 - Adapting to climate change

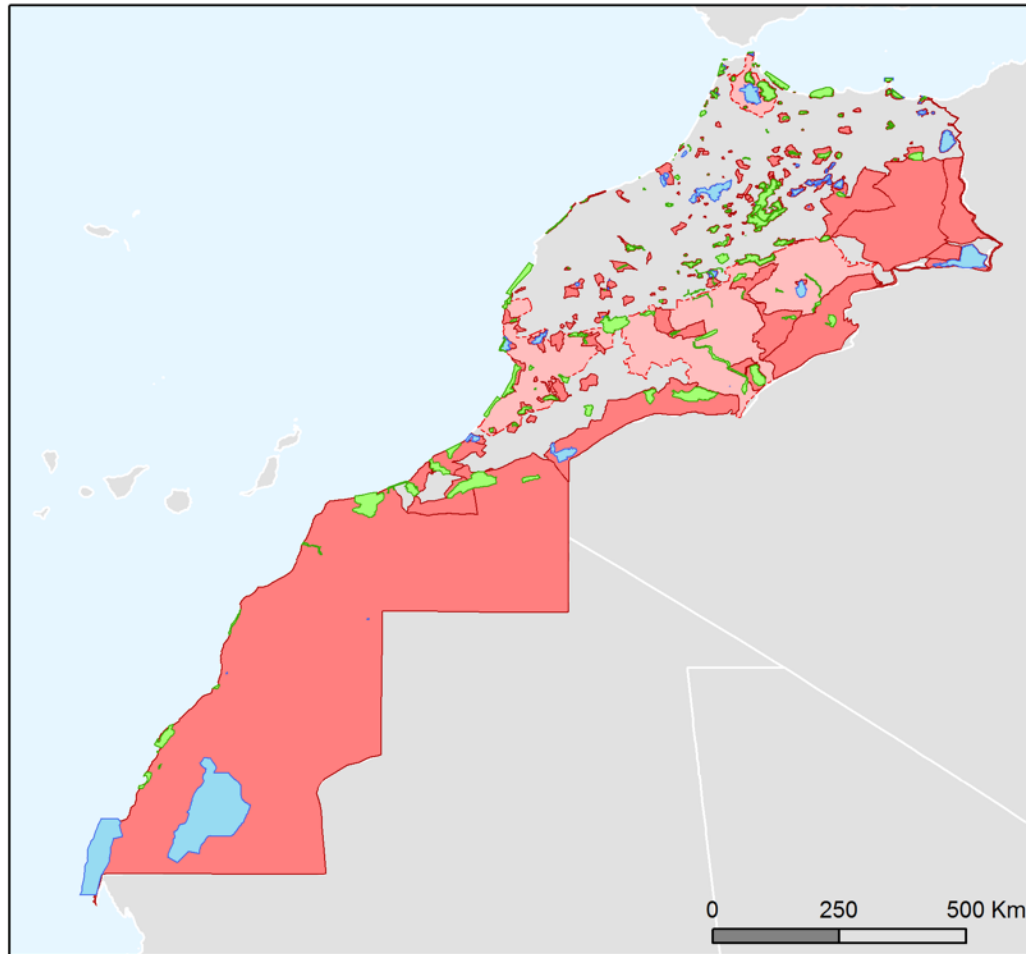
Possible ecological benefits of recognising OECMs

- OECMs has the potential to promote effective conservation of biodiversity through:
 - recognizing conservation initiatives outside formal PA;
 - improving management and restoration initiatives;
 - assuring long-term conservation
- Support areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Broaden ecological representativeness.
- Deepen connectivity across systems of protected and conserved areas and integrate them into the wider landscape and seascape.
- Could serve the purposes of protecting high-threat regions and improving ecological representativeness, connectivity, and landscape integration.

How can OECMs support an MPA network

- OECMs complement protected areas through sustained, positive conservation outcomes, even though they may be managed primarily for other reasons.
- OECMs have the potential to generate a range of positive conservation outcomes, such as:
 - Conserving important ecosystems, habitats and wildlife corridors;
 - Supporting the recovery of threatened species;
 - Maintaining ecosystem functions and securing ecosystem services;
 - Enhancing resilience against threats;
 - Retaining and connecting remnants of fragmented ecosystems within developed landscapes.
 - Protecting highly threatened regions, improving the ecological representativeness of MPA networks;
 - Complementing MPA coverage;
 - Bring new or existing areas that are important for biodiversity conservation into overall conservation planning to prevent them from being lost or degraded.
 - They enable diverse actors not usually associated with conservation to be more formally recognised for their contributions to biodiversity

Recognition of ECAs improves the qualitative elements of AT11



- Designated protected areas
- Proposed protected areas
- Potential OECMs: UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserves
- Potential OECMs: Permanent Hunting Reserve

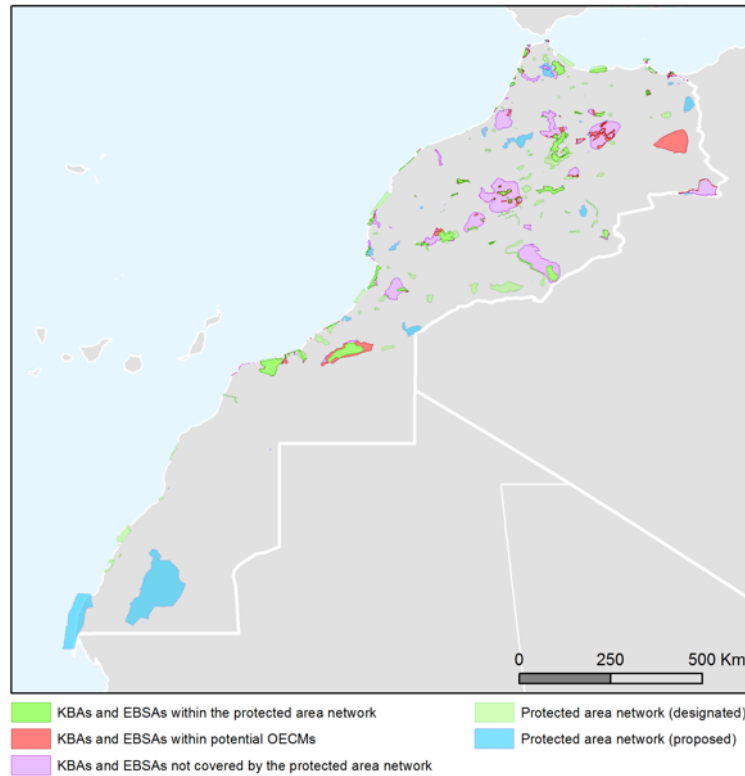
Analysis of potential OECMs in Morocco

- Biosphere Reserves
- Permanent Hunting Reserves
- Coverage increases from 4.27% to over 70% (terrestrial)

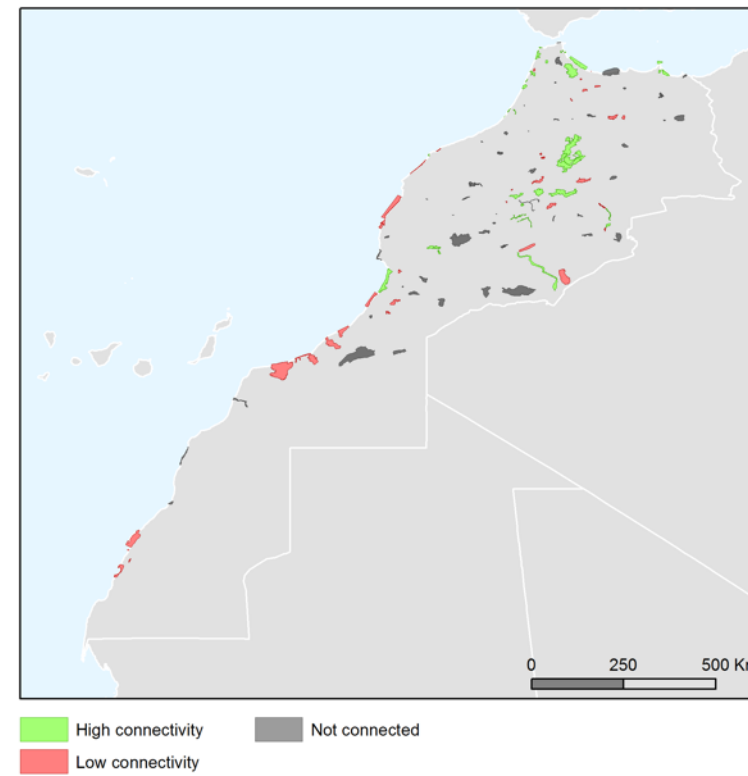
This analysis was possible thanks to the support of:



But, it's not only coverage!



Percentage of KBA protected would increase from **24.01%** to **65.34%**.



current network relatively well connected with 52.60% of protected polygons within 20km from another one would rise to **69.23%**.

This analysis was possible thanks to the support of:



Improved representativity of key habitats

Ecosystem type	Representativity within existing PAs (%)	Representativity within existing and proposed PAs (%)	Representativity within existing and proposed PAs and potential OECMs (%)
Closed forest	20.96	29.27	56.77
Open forest	7.45	12.04	33.65
Shrubs	3.99	6.50	44.30
Herbaceous vegetation	4.08	5.56	51.93
Cropland	1.06	1.72	10.44
Bare / sparse vegetation	1.87	6.01	91.39
Permanent water bodies	35.13	35.49	60.90
Herbaceous wetland	77.53	79.01	84.53

Improved representativity for all ecosystem types (**all but one would exceed 30%**)

This analysis was possible thanks to the support of:



Convention on
Biological Diversity



Potential challenges

Lack of information

- Data and knowledge limitations can make identification of appropriate areas a challenge.
- The impacts and implications of OECM have not yet been assessed.
- Due to the limited available data, the true degree to which OECMs influence connectivity is currently minimal.
- Challenges associated with assessing effectiveness.

Resource related challenges

- OECMs should receive new and additional funding without drawing on funds currently used to support PAs.
- Additional resources to identify, recognize, report, or monitor OECMs

Potential challenges

Governance related challenges

- ‘New framework’ can create strains at the local to national levels, and may (initially) cause confusion.
- Capacity building on recognizing and reporting OECMs, as well as legislative and institutional reforms, may be required.
- OECMs can artificially inflating progress towards coverage targets and exacerbate an unhelpful focus on the percentage coverage element.
- Recognition of areas that do not meet the IUCN OECM guidelines, or countries which do not follow the guidelines appropriately, could lead to the incorporation of areas of low biodiversity value or effectiveness.
- Difficulty in assuring long-term effectiveness for temporal measures.
- Challenges associated with assessing effectiveness.
 - Lack of effective monitoring tools for OECMs.
 - Variation in governance causes challenges for monitoring.

Exploring the potential of OECMs in the Baltic Sea Region

Potential benefits?

- What OECMs do you think we might have in the Baltic?
- How do you think they could contribute to achieving regional conservation and development objectives?

Potential challenges?

- What main challenges do you see in understanding and applying the OECM definition and criteria?
- What main challenges do you see for establishing processes for recognizing and reporting OECMs?

Thank you for your attention!

