

Dumfries & Galloway

- Solway
- Coast
- And
- Marine
- Project

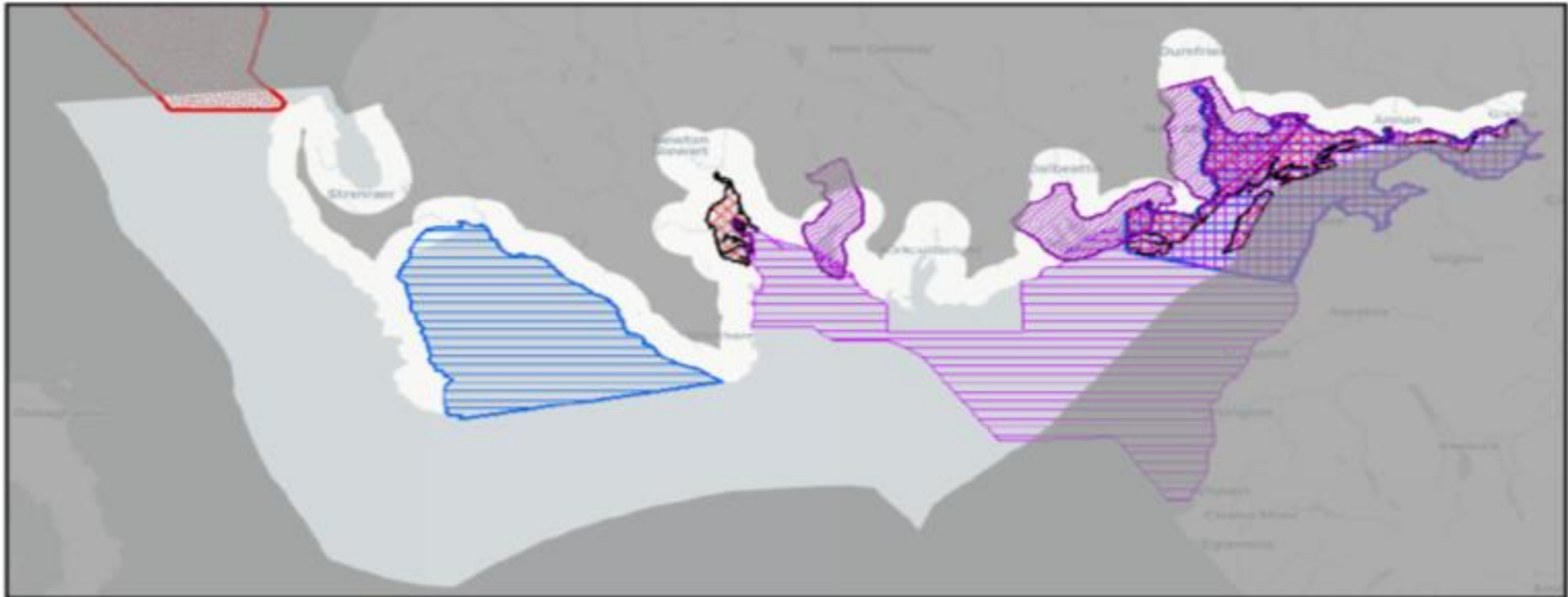




Source: Solway Firth Partnership. Map for illustrative purposes only. Solway Firth Partnership covers the whole Solway Marine Region (Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015) and the English side of the Solway Firth out to St Bees Head

Aim of SCAMP

‘To be at the forefront of practical research, development and restoration of marine and coastal habitats in the Solway Firth, for carbon sequestration, biodiversity, community and economic benefit’



Source: NMPI

-  **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**
-  **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**
-  **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**
-  **Proposed Special Protection Areas for Scottish Marine Birds (pSPAs)**
-  **National Scenic Areas (NSAs)**
-  **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)**

Current position

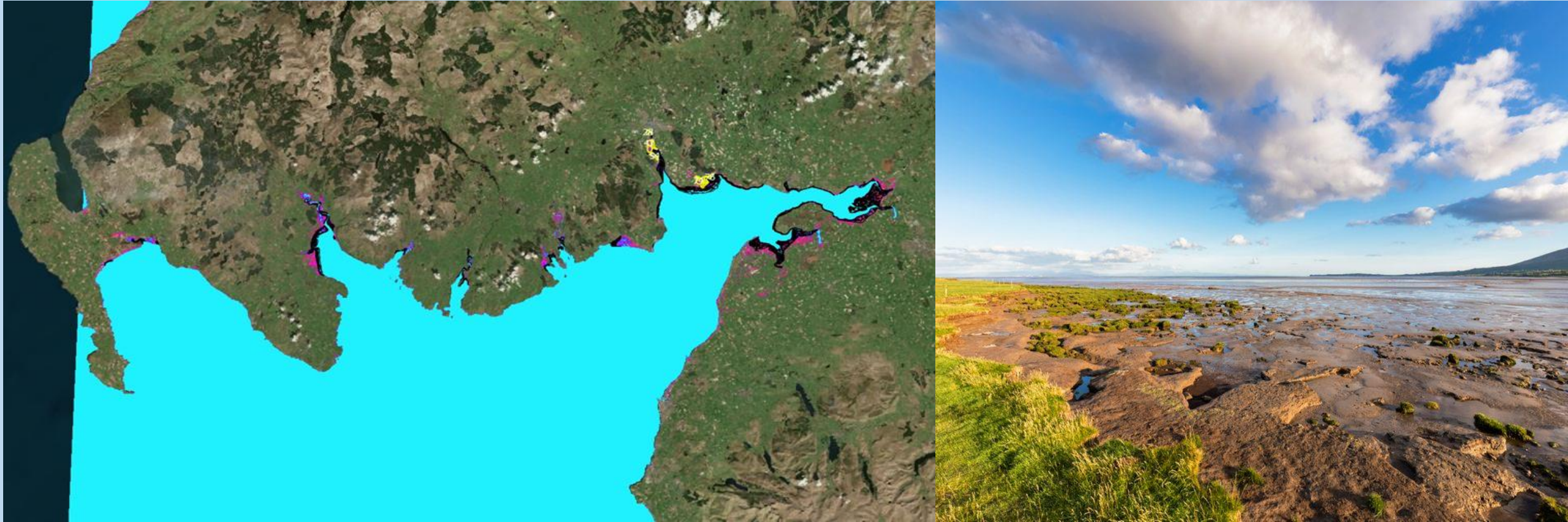
- Borderlands development and baseline survey work
 - Saltmarsh expansion suitability survey
 - Seagrass extent and condition survey
 - Native oyster bed extent survey
 - Mini buoy deployment at 3 sites
- Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Project (Solway Coast and Marine Pilot Project - SCAMPP)
 - Build a Marine Research Centre in Stranraer
 - Develop and test new innovative techniques for habitat restoration
 - 8 year project
 - Innovation & Economic benefit focus
- Roll out of the wider Solway Coast and Marine Project (SCAMP)
 - Initial project development about to start

Solway Coast and Marine project

Objectives

- To build on the learning and experience from the Borderlands Pilot Project via the Marine Research Centre and scale up Solway habitat restoration
- Marine habitat restoration – sea grass & oysters, coastal habitats – saltmarsh and wetlands
- Maritime/coast/temperate rain forest type woodland development along the coast
- Coastal infrastructure -Carparking/interpretation/access infrastructure to facilitate community and visitor engagement with the restored habitats including the completion of the North Solway Coast Path
- Associated community education/ training/engagement programme which could include a path construction training programme associated with the development of the coast path
- Working with marine and coastal businesses to improve economic performance whilst sustaining natural capital
- Coastal resilience
- Potential for a wide number of partners, funders and interventions including private sector funding

Salt Marsh



- *'saltmarshes of Dumfries and Galloway hold the largest quantity of carbon of any of Scotland's local authorities (41% of total Scottish surficial saltmarsh soil OC stock).'* Austin et al (2021)



- Wigtown Bay
- Mersehead
- Caerlaverock

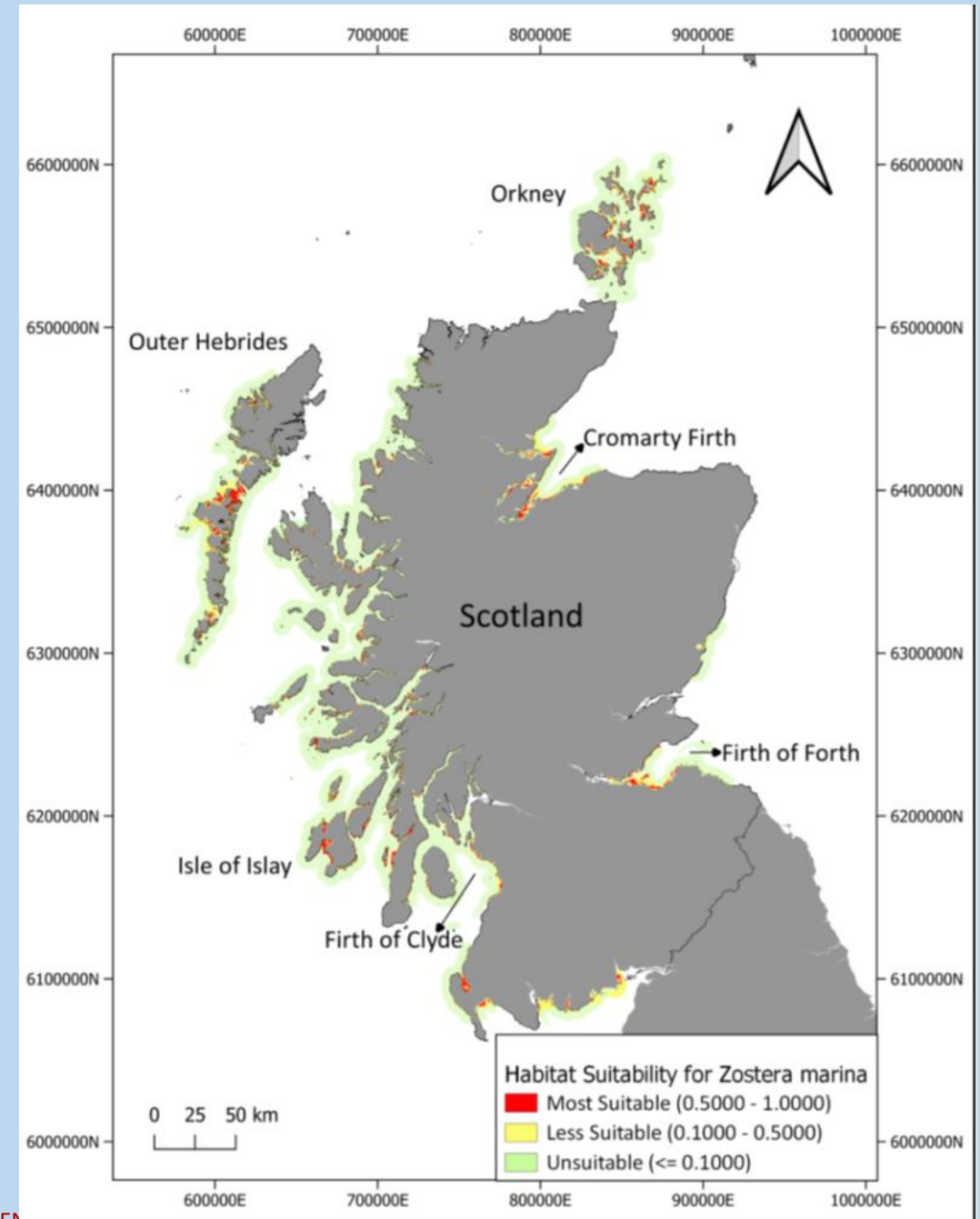
Opportunities for saltmarsh expansion were highlighted in the RSPB Seas of Change paper.

In the Solway the report identified 910 hectares of potential inter-tidal habitat creation/expansion, 28.1% of Scotland's total

Sea Grass



Zostera Marina at Rough Island



Seagrass beds in the Solway are a Priority Marine Feature, and species are *Zostera Marina* (including *Zostera Angustifolia*) and *Zostera Noltii*. The former is predominately sublittoral, and the latter occurs intertidally.



‘Submerged aquatic habitats such as seagrass and oyster reefs remove about £73 million worth of nitrogen, phosphorus and carbon every year, while wetlands such as saltmarsh and reedbeds remove about £168 million per year (University of Portsmouth, 2020)

Current work - baseline

- Salt Marsh expansion opportunities report
- Intertidal Seagrass survey – location, extent and density plus seed carrying condition
- Sea Grass micropropagation experiments
- Deployments of ‘mini bouys’ with Glasgow university
- RIBA stage 2 design work for research centre
- Programme and Business justification case to be submitted to UK & Scottish Governments for Borderlands funding
- Purchase of equipment
- Community engagement
- Ongoing networking
- Development of the wider SCAMP project



Future Programme

- Timescales
 - Borderlands
 - Programme Business case to Governments end November
 - Business justification case to government end March
 - Building RIBA stage 2 Jan 2023
 - Project start July 2023
 - Recruit new Project Manager July 2023
 - Development work on wider project
 - Official committee approval hopefully Jan 2023
 - Partnership development Feb 2023
 - Desk top feasibility stage commenced March 2023
- Finances
 - Borderlands investment £2M
 - Wider project multi million – TBC

Conclusion

- Borderlands to set the foundations for significant expansion in activity and investment in the marine and coastal habitats in the Solway
- The Marine Research centre to provide a focal point and underpinning research to ensure this activity supports and promotes cost effective restoration
- Networks with academics and other restoration projects gives opportunities to advance understanding and develop techniques
- Wider restoration project provides opportunity to scale up, evaluate and refine interventions

