

Historic Seascape Characterisation

Understanding of the historic cultural dimension of our present coastal and marine landscape



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European Landscape Convention (ELC)

Entered into force in UK on 1 March 2007

ELC Articles:

define landscape as:

‘An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.’

Both culturally shaped and culturally perceived

recognise that landscape exists everywhere:

- urban, rural, peri-urban and semi-natural
- land, inland water **and marine**
- outstanding, everyday and degraded

ELC's marine scope effectively makes 'seascape' a subset of 'landscape':

that which is marine-located or is perceived as pertaining to the marine

Coastal land contains overlapping landscape and seascape perceptions

The basis of landscape perceptions differs markedly at sea from
on land
All landscape perception combines what we sense (sensory) with
what we know (cognitive)



On land, landscapes are indeed *sensed* largely visually from the
surface veneer
Only *perceived* as historic (or geological, ecological, literary, etc)
landscapes when our knowledge, experience and interests give
pattern and meaning to the sensory data
Landscape comprises far more than just 'views' or 'visual imagery'

The marine *visual* canvas doesn't generally present to our senses the imprints from cultural or natural processes



Wreath-laying:
HMS Royal
Oak,
Orkney

Such imprints *are* present but expressed very differently from on land, both in the environment and to our senses, with complex relationships often more spatially dynamic than on land

Seascape perceptions: more strongly cognitive than landscape perception

Historic Landscape and Seascape Characterisation (HLC & HSC)

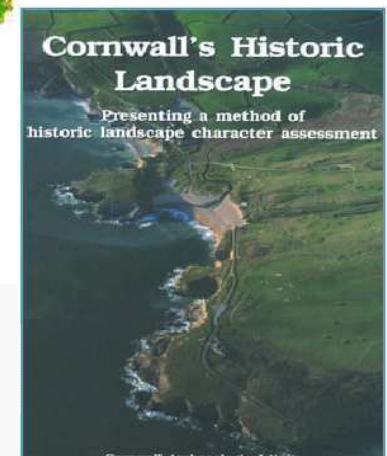
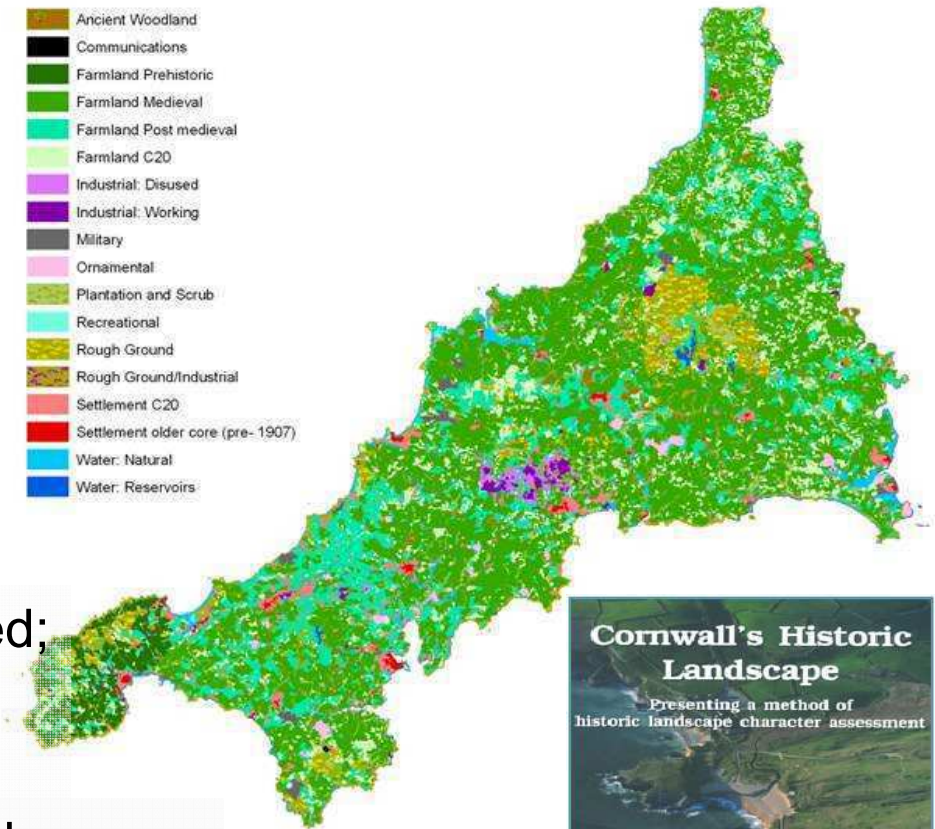
Comprehensive area-based portrayal of the dominant historic cultural processes shaping our *present* land- and sea- scape

- focus on typical not rare and special
- a cultural artefact, culturally perceived
- full area coverage, no blank spaces: all areas have historic land/seascape character
- GIS-based, queryable according to need; interoperable with other area-based environmental and planning data
- records 'previous HLC/HSC' where evidence exists

Primary aim: to inform the sustainable management of change

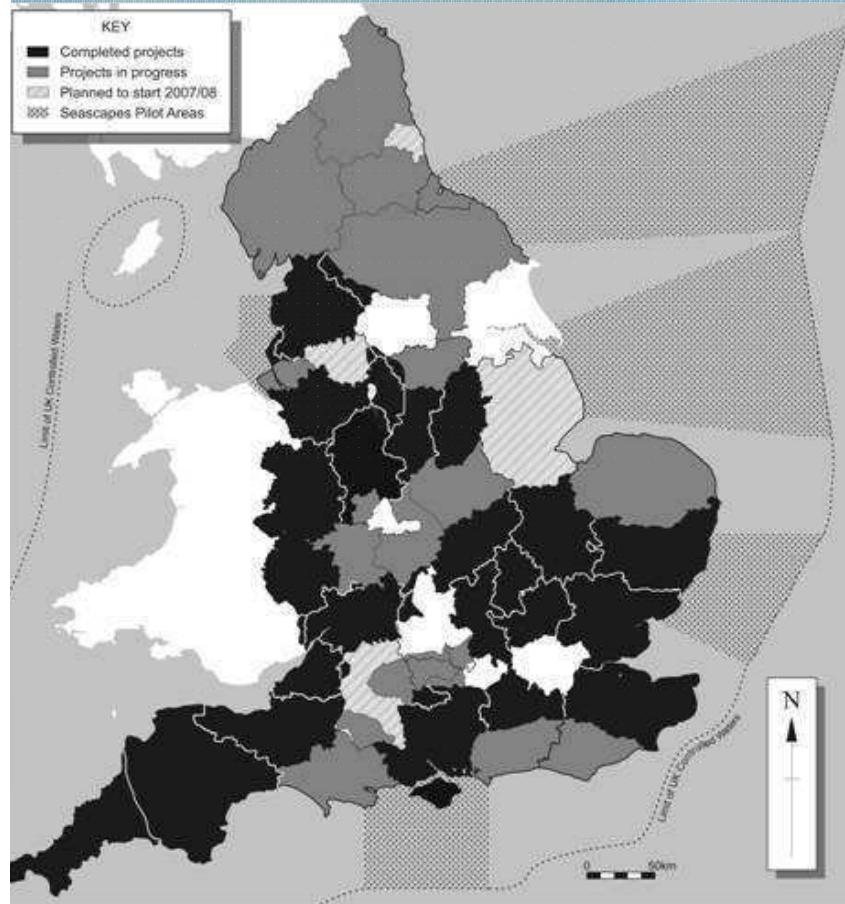
Recognises that change is inevitable for a healthy society but demonstrates the cultural landscape legibility that can enable future generations to build *their* identity, place and narratives from the

HLC Types 1994

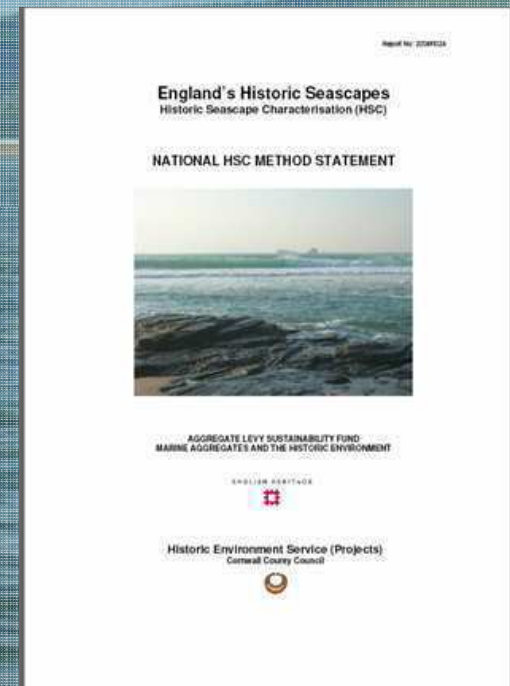


Historic Seascape Characterisation development 2004-

2008
HSC embodies same principles as HLC on land but needs to accommodate differences in coastal and marine expression



2004-2007: five projects piloted expressions of HC principles in coastal and marine contexts

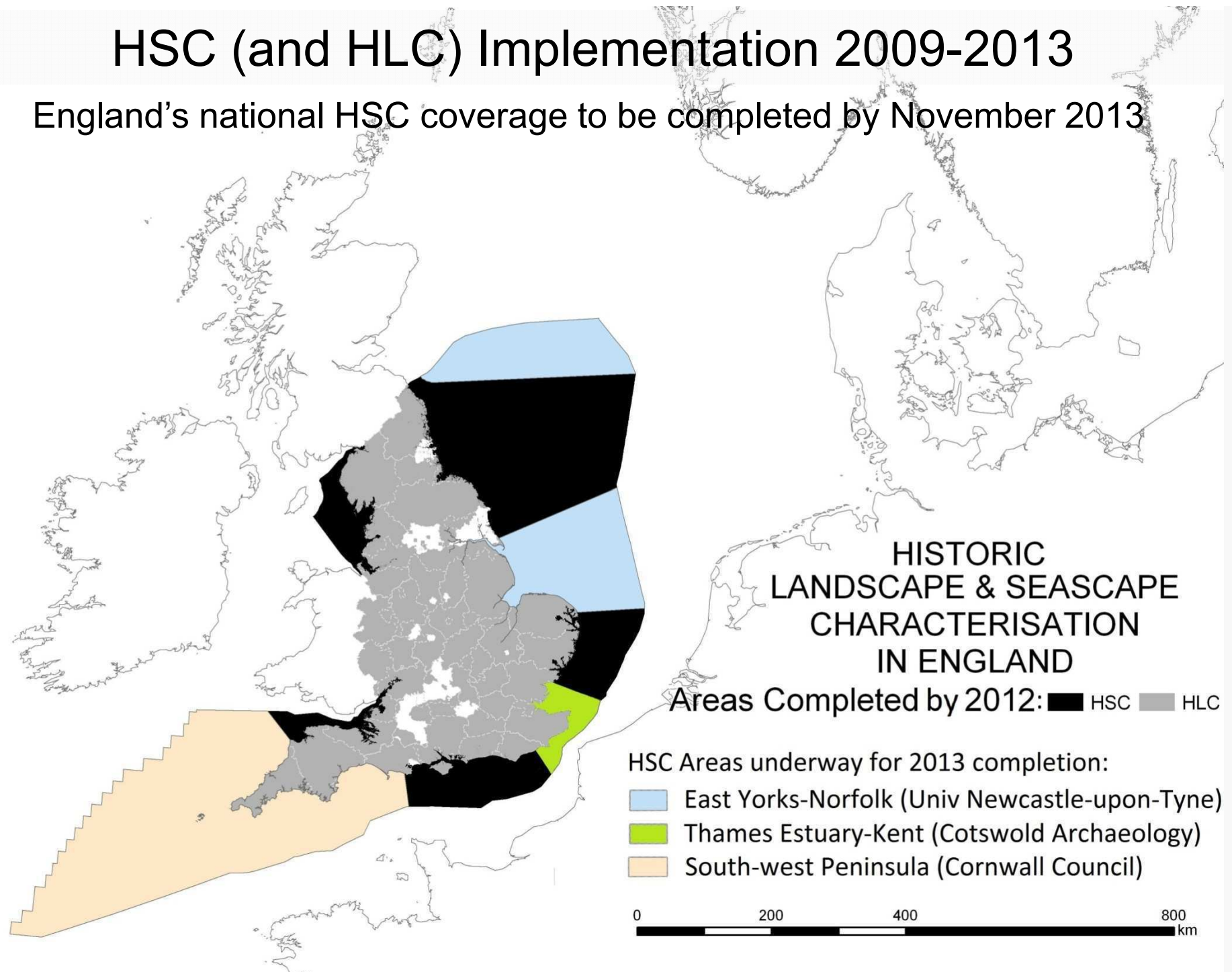


2007-2008: HSC Consolidation Project reviewed the pilots' outcomes to produce published national HSC Method Statement

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/seascapes/>

HSC (and HLC) Implementation 2009-2013

England's national HSC coverage to be completed by November 2013



layered three-dimensionality

Sea-floor HSC

Sub-seafloor HSC

Linked to the GIS mapping: HSC Character Type briefing texts consistently structured, in accessible language, giving national and regional perspectives on each HSC Character Type