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Abstract

Effective decision-making is underpinned by quality-assured data and good data management practices. The integration of such data into policies related to Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (SOPM) is essential. Practical applications in Ireland include supporting the Marine Spatial Planning through new offshore renewable energy designation and informing the designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Reinforced by programmes from the IODE, and in pursuing relevant accreditations and certifications to ensure best practice, the Marine Institute plays a key role in providing high-quality, standardised ocean data to support evidence-based decision making in Ireland.

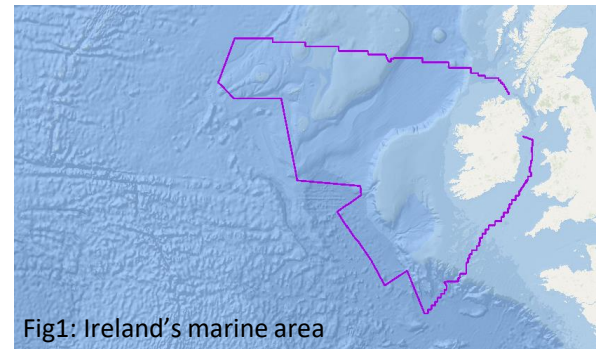
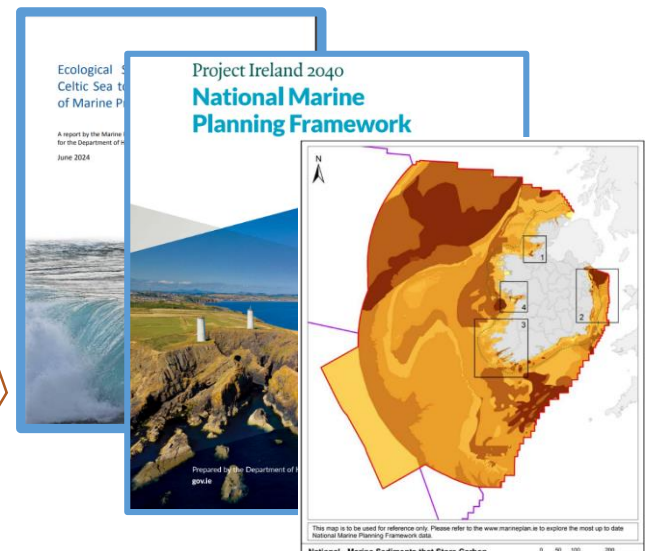
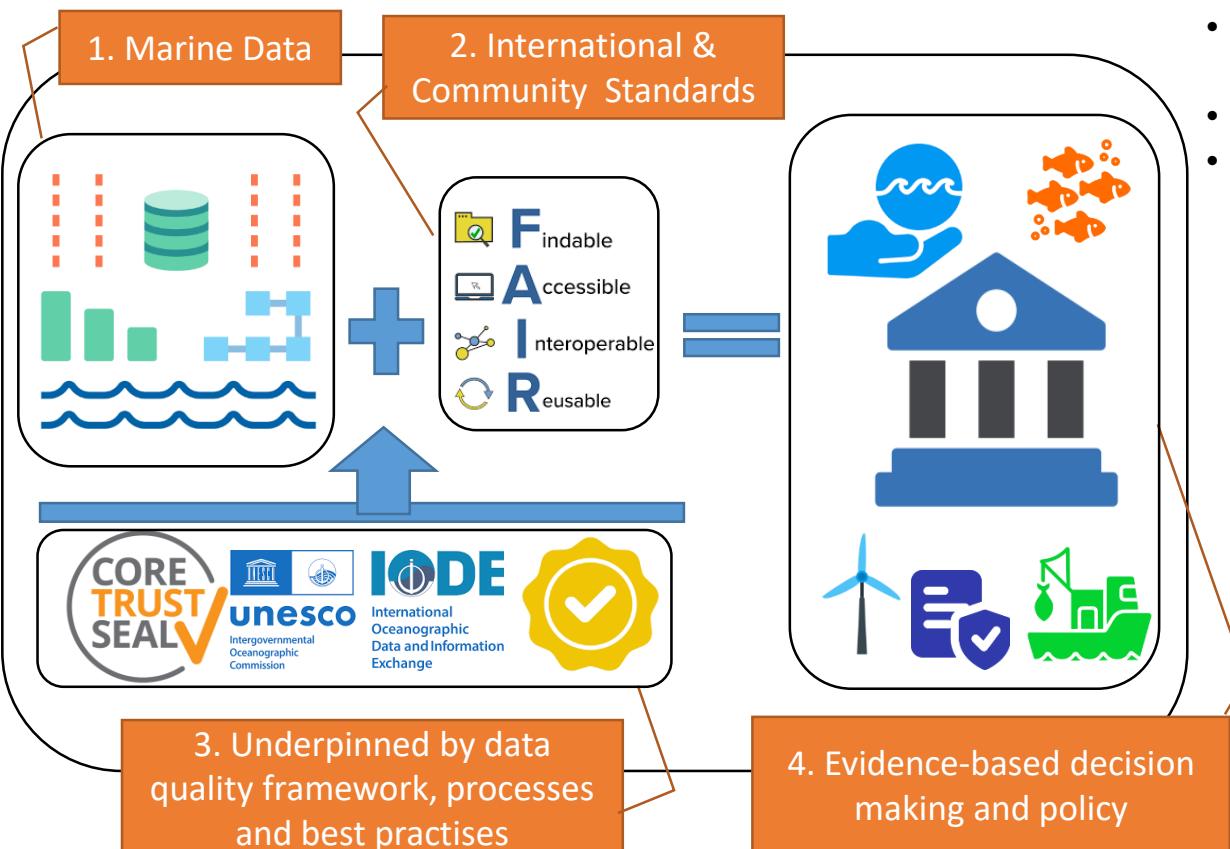


Fig1: Ireland's marine area

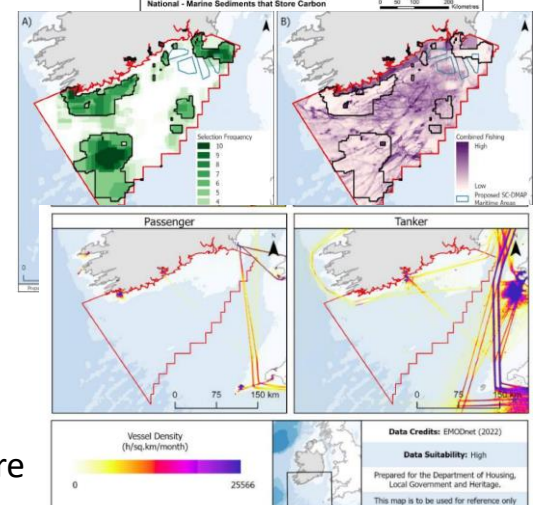
The Role of the Marine Institute

- Provision and management of marine data
- Ireland's marine state agency providing scientific and technical advice to policymakers
- Ireland's NODC
- Collaborates with national and international partners to enhance the marine evidence base



Applications in Ireland

- **National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)** - Ireland's Marine Spatial Plan - the collection, collation, validation, and analysis of new and existing spatial datasets enabled the creation of a variety of decision-support products, publicly available for use in policy.
- **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** – Irish & Celtic Sea Sensitivity Study to Inform Future Designation of MPAs in Ireland. Based on best available data and evidence, conservation prioritization analysis was carried out to identify areas of high and low priority for protection, while minimising impacts on current and proposed future sectoral activities.
- **Offshore Renewable Energy** - South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan - a new offshore renewable energy designation based on high-quality marine data and advice.



Conclusion

Quality-assured, integrated marine data underpins Ireland's ability to make informed, sustainable policy decisions. Supporting accredited frameworks and certifications play a key role in defining the policies and practices needed to deliver a transparent, integrated and robust evidence base that enhances confidence in the analyses and information available to guide decision-making for sustainable marine management and development.

References

- National Marine Planning Framework, Project Ireland 2040. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (2021).
- Ecological Sensitivity Analysis of the Celtic Sea to inform future designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (2024).
- South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan : Maritime Area identification A report for Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (2024).