

# National Parks and Wildlife Service

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## *Conservation Objectives Series*

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Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC 000181



*An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta*  

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*Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*



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## Introduction

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

A site-specific conservation objective aims to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at that site.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

### Notes/Guidelines:

1. The targets given in these conservation objectives are based on best available information at the time of writing. As more information becomes available, targets for attributes may change. These will be updated periodically, as necessary.
2. An appropriate assessment based on these conservation objectives will remain valid even if the targets are subsequently updated, providing they were the most recent objectives available when the assessment was carried out. It is essential that the date and version are included when objectives are cited.
3. Assessments cannot consider an attribute in isolation from the others listed for that habitat or species, or for other habitats and species listed for that site. A plan or project with an apparently small impact on one attribute may have a significant impact on another.
4. Please note that the maps included in this document do not necessarily show the entire extent of the habitats and species for which the site is listed. This should be borne in mind when appropriate assessments are being carried out.
5. When using these objectives, it is essential that the relevant backing/supporting documents are consulted, particularly where instructed in the targets or notes for a particular attribute.

## Qualifying Interests

*\* indicates a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive*

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000181	Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC
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1170	Reefs
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**Please note that this SAC overlaps with Rathlin O'Birne Island SPA (004120) and adjoins Slieve League SAC (000189). See map 2. The conservation objectives for this site should be used in conjunction with those for the overlapping and adjacent sites as appropriate.**

## Supporting documents, relevant reports & publications

*Supporting documents, NPWS reports and publications are available for download from: [www.npws.ie/Publications](http://www.npws.ie/Publications)*

### NPWS Documents

**Year :** 2014  
**Title :** Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC (site code: 181) Conservation objectives supporting document-marine habitats V1  
**Author :** NPWS  
**Series :** Conservation objectives supporting document

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### Other References

**Year :** 1997  
**Title :** The BioMar biotope viewer: a guide to marine habitats, fauna and flora in Britain and Ireland  
**Author :** Picton, B.E.; Costello, M.J.  
**Series :** Environmental Science Unit, Trinity College Dublin

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**Year :** 2012  
**Title :** Intertidal and subtidal reef survey of Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC  
**Author :** MERC  
**Series :** Unpublished report to the Marine Institute and NPWS

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## Spatial data sources

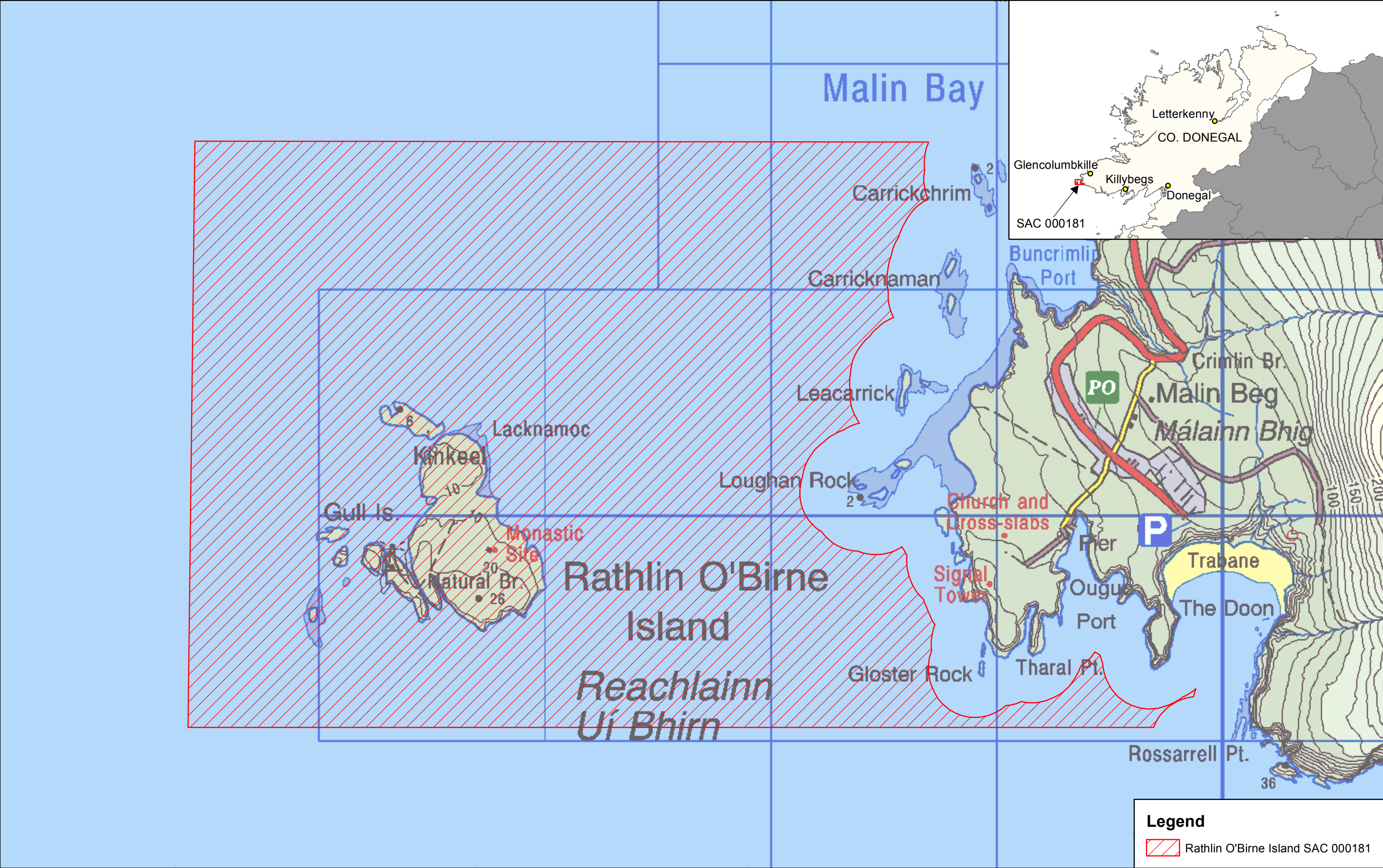
<b>Year :</b>	Interpolated 2014
<b>Title :</b>	1996 BioMar survey; 2012 reef survey
<b>GIS Operations :</b>	Polygon feature classes from marine community types base data sub-divided based on interpolation of marine survey data. Expert opinion used as necessary to resolve any issues arising
<b>Used For :</b>	1170, marine community types (maps 3 and 4)
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<b>Year :</b>	2005
<b>Title :</b>	OSi Discovery series vector data
<b>GIS Operations :</b>	High water mark (HWM) and low water mark (LWM) polyline feature classes converted into polygon feature classes and combined; EU Annex I Saltmarsh and Coastal data erased out if present
<b>Used For :</b>	Marine community types base data (map 4)
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## Conservation Objectives for : Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC [000181]

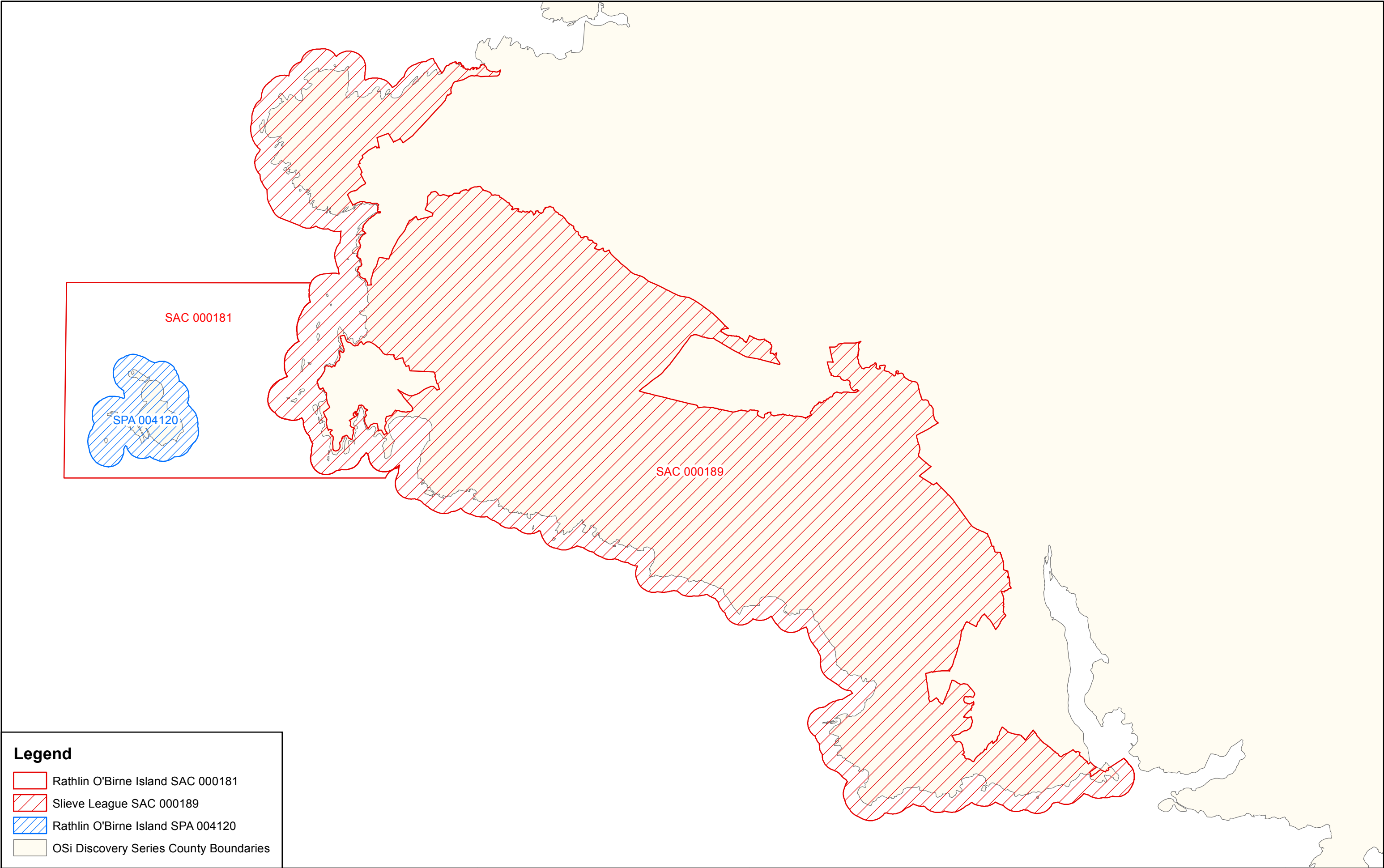
### 1170 Reefs

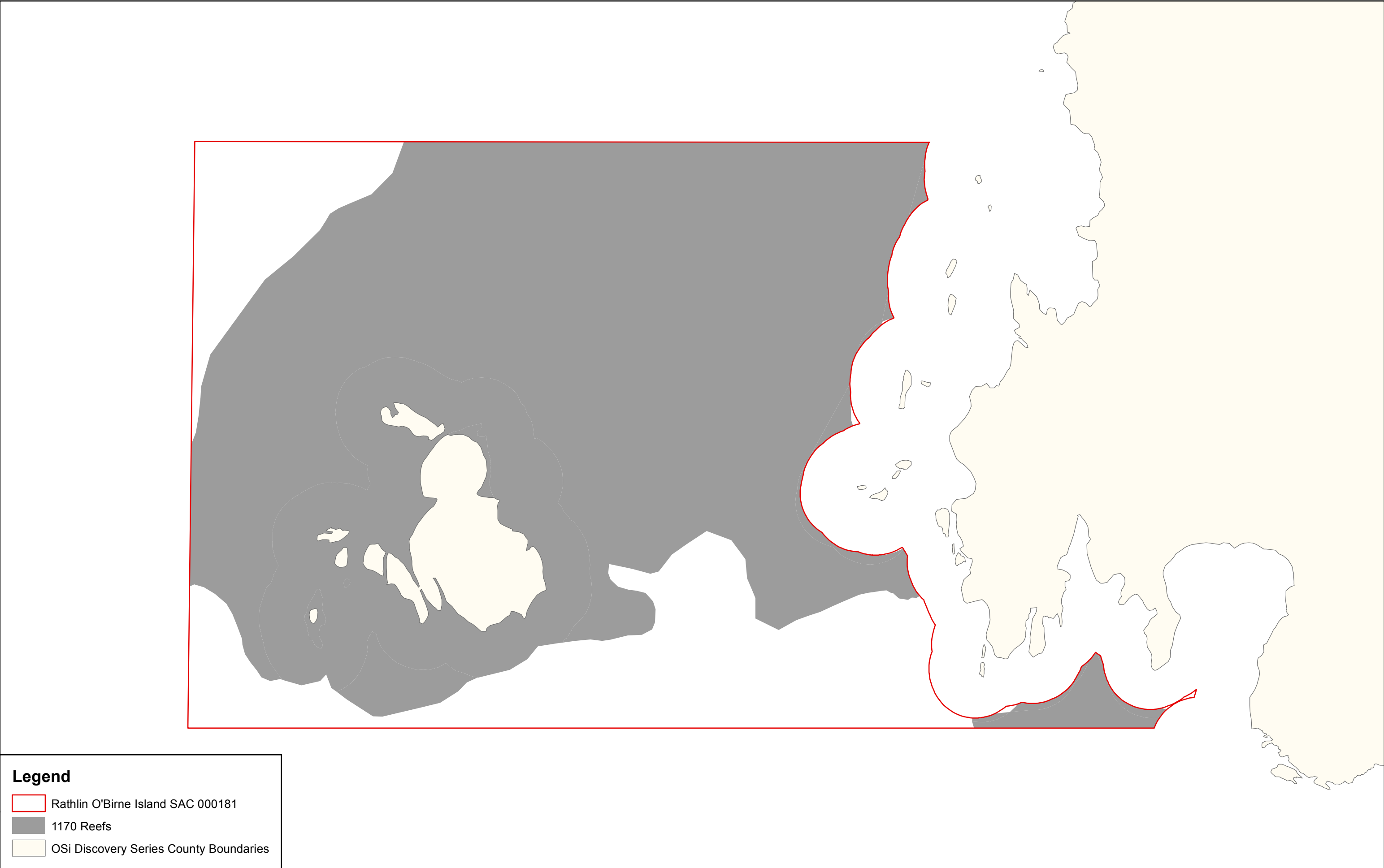
**To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Reefs in Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC, which is defined by the following list of attributes and targets:**

Attribute	Measure	Target	Notes
Habitat area	Hectares	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. See map 3	Habitat area estimated as 584ha from a 1996 BioMar survey (Picton and Costello, 1997) and a 2012 reef survey (MERC, 2012)
Distribution	Occurrence	The distribution of reefs remains stable, subject to natural processes. See map 3 for mapped distribution	Based on information from a 1996 BioMar survey (Picton and Costello, 1997) and a 2012 reef survey (MERC, 2012)
Community structure	Biological composition	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Exposed intertidal reef community; Exposed subtidal reef community complex. See map 4	Mapping based on information from a 1996 BioMar survey (Picton and Costello, 1997) and a 2012 reef survey (MERC, 2012). See marine supporting document for further details









**Legend**

- Rathlin O'Birne Island SAC 000181
- 1170 Reefs
- OSi Discovery Series County Boundaries

