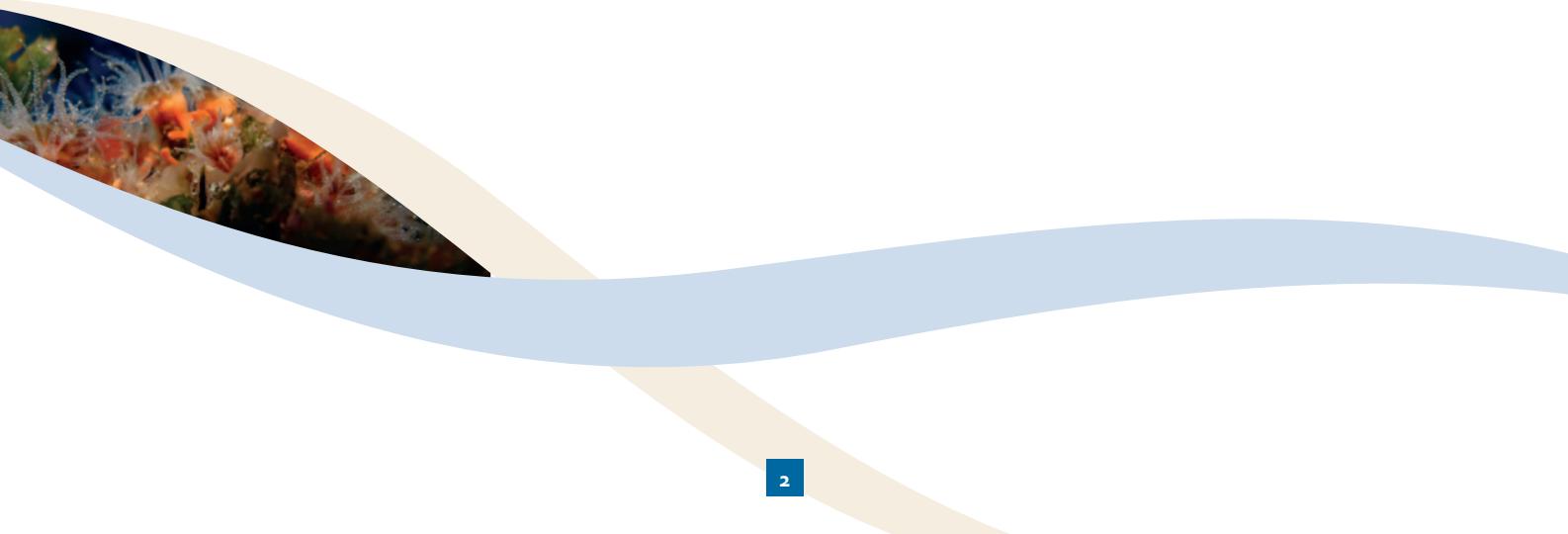
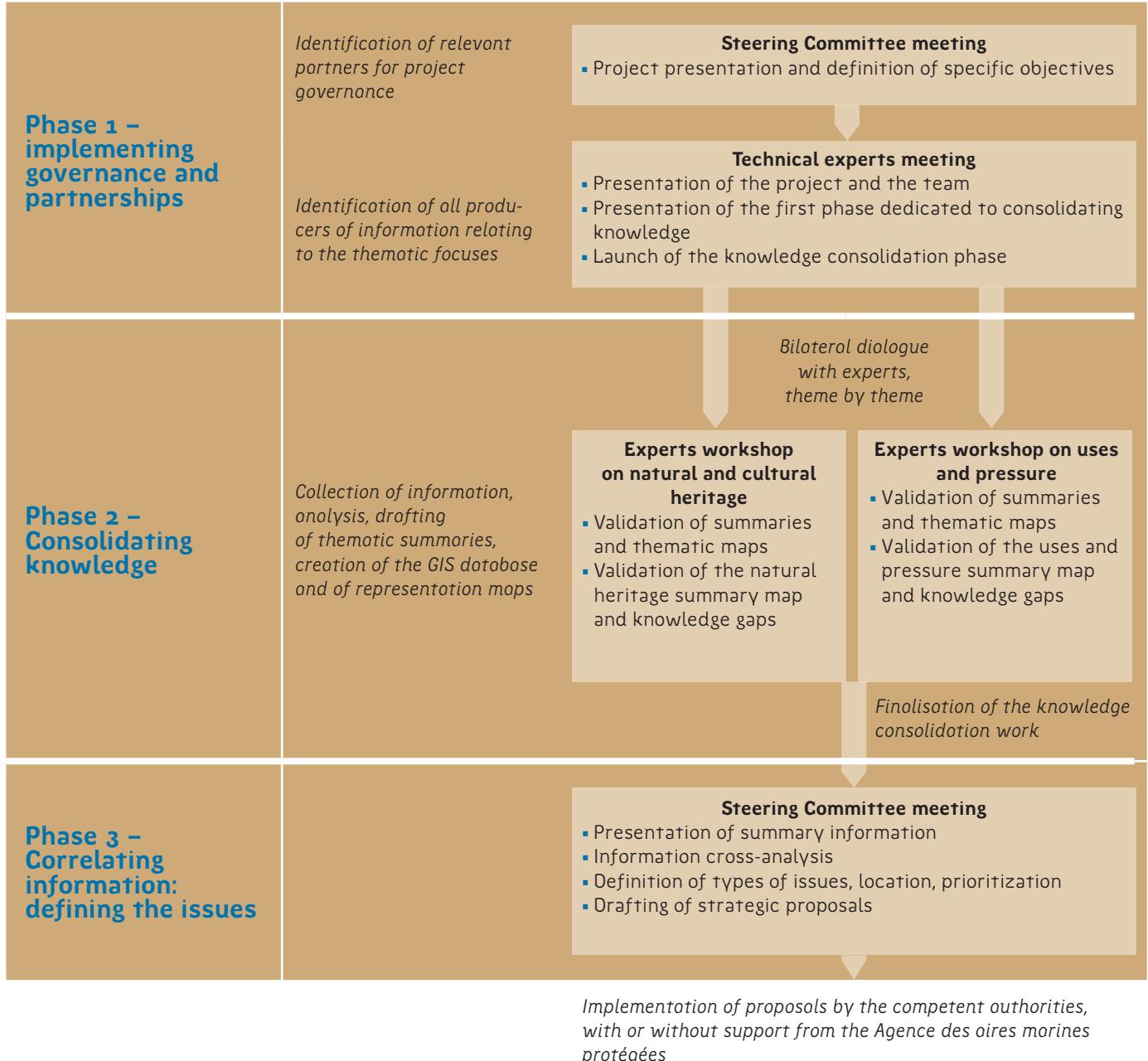




Strategic Regional Analyses



Stages of analysis



Objectives

The Agence des aires marines protégées (French marine protected area agency) is a public administrative body established in 2006, placed under the governance of the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy.

It is mainly responsible for establishing and managing a network of marine protected areas in French waters. To fulfil this role, the Agency does a **strategic regional** analysis to locate and qualify the issues facing the marine environment in a given region, to then propose an MPA establishment and management strategy suited to each marine region (in the ecological or administrative sense).

The specific objectives of each analysis are determined in conjunction with the competent authorities and local partners meeting as a steering committee. Depending on the extent of the goals, the analysis process may, or may not, include the following phases:

- consolidation of information available about the marine environment with three key focuses (ecosystem functioning, outstanding natural and cultural heritage, and uses),
- identification of knowledge gaps,
- qualification of issues at sea, location, prioritization,
- development of strategic proposals: creation or expansion of marine protected areas (with regard for systems already in place), knowledge acquisition, other management projects.

Depending on the exact content of the analysis (strategic dimension, analysis of an eco-region), the name used varies: regional analysis, strategic regional analysis or eco-regional analysis.

Several documents, considered as decision tools, may be produced (knowledge summary, summary reports on issues and proposals). These documents reflect a collective vision of the available information and the analysis thereof, the issues at sea and the possible actions in an area.

All the information summarized and produced is also centralized in a GIS database made available to partners at the end of the process.

By contributing to the establishment of marine protected areas which are spatialized measures, the strategic regional analysis process also provides input for broader marine area planning approaches aiming to develop strategies for maritime space use.



Method

The analysis process comprises several stages: consolidation of existing knowledge about the marine environment, then a cross-analysis of this information to identify issues at sea. Lastly, a third stage is required when the requested analysis includes proposing options for the establishment and management of marine protected areas. The entire process demands close consultation and possibly joint development with local stakeholders.

1. Knowledge consolidation

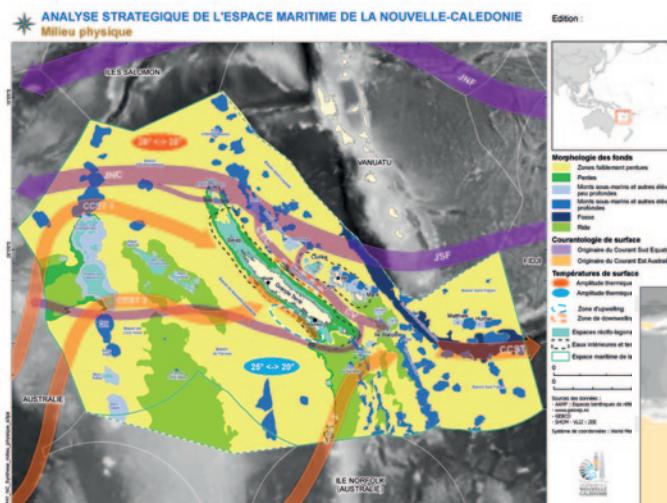
Existing and available information is collected by topic and then summarized, analysed and mapped with a prospective vision, according to three focuses.

1.1. The three analysis focuses

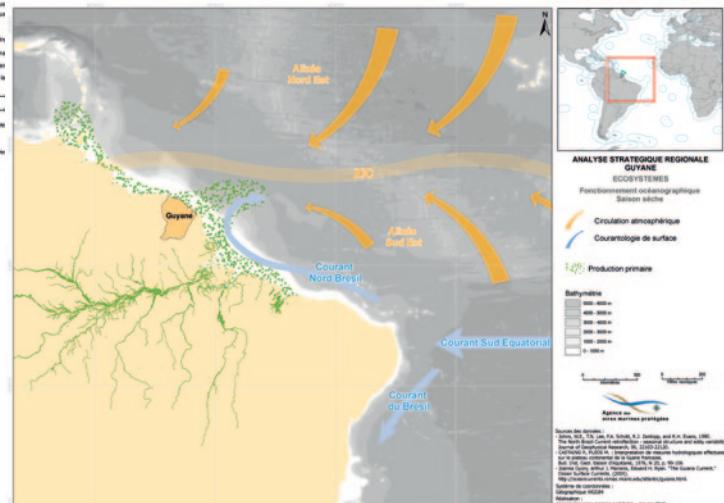
1.1.1. Ecosystem functioning

This ecosystem approach expands and completes the heritage point of view developed in 1.1.2. It aims to consider the ecological functions, i.e. the processes whereby ecosystems function and continue to function correctly.

Knowledge is gathered of the ecological dynamics and processes that will affect ecosystem functioning and therefore the communities of species (temperature, salinity, current patterns, sediment movements, etc.) as well as the major ecological functions that ecosystems or marine habitats perform (primary production areas, particle trapping, water purification, organic matter decomposition and nutrients recycling, essential habitats, etc.).



Processes related to ecosystem functioning:
New Caledonia and Guiana



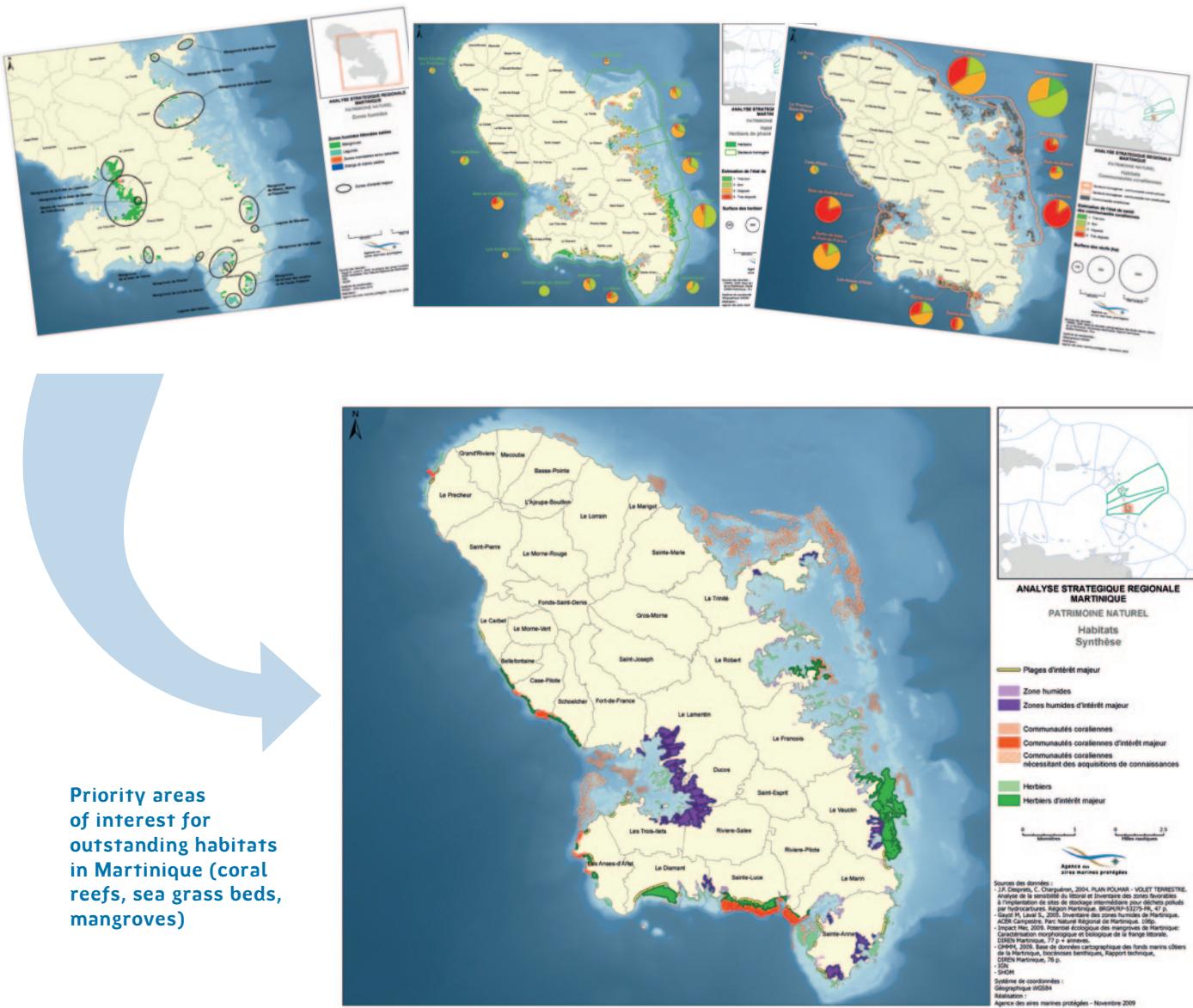
1.1.2. Outstanding natural and cultural heritage

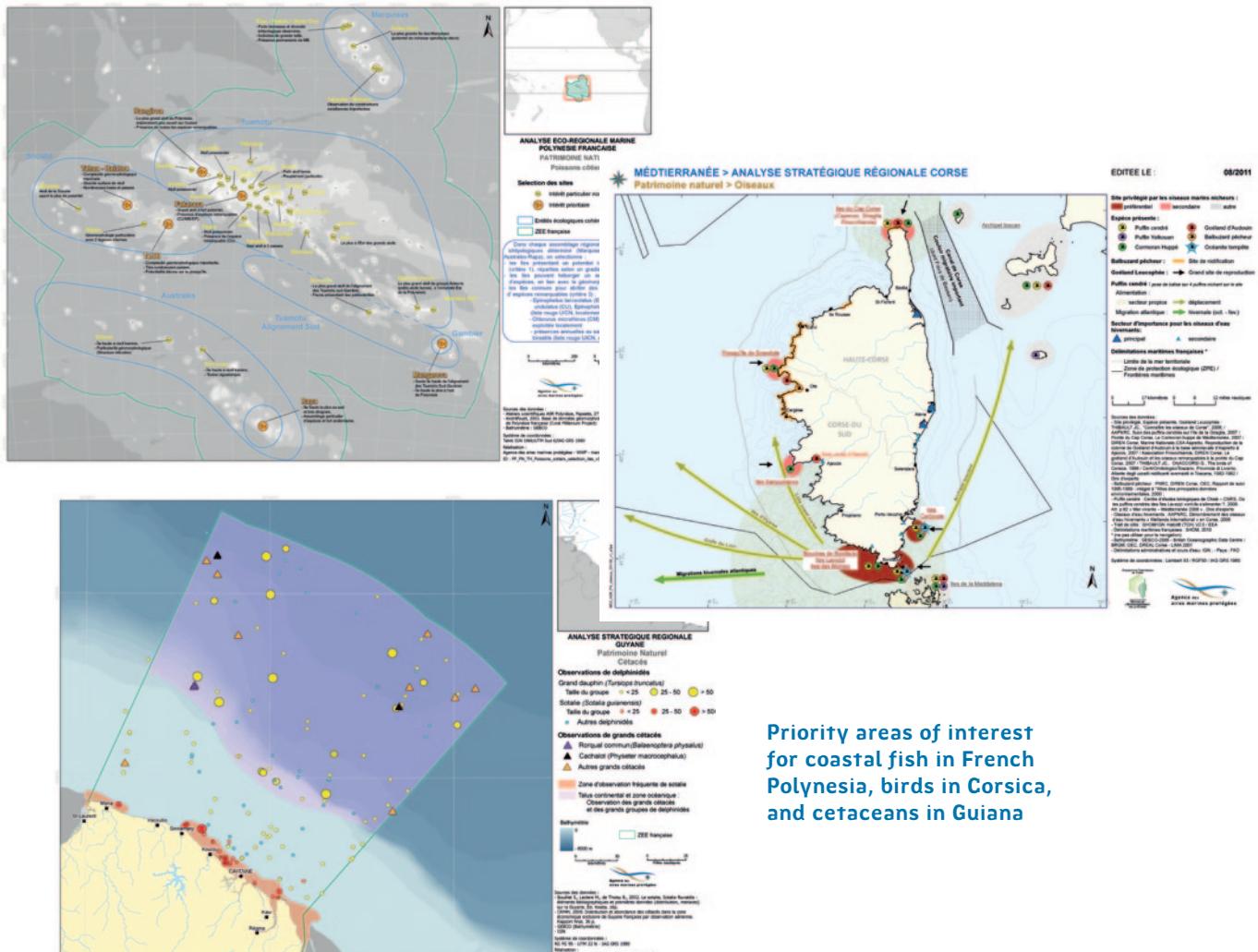
Outstanding heritage features reflect the obligations arising under French law, European law or France's international undertakings with respect to the preservation and management of natural and cultural heritage.

As regards natural heritage, this approach identifies key elements in terms of geographical distribution, biodiversity and abundance for so-called outstanding heritage features, i.e. habitats and species with national or international status, emblematic, rare or endangered species,

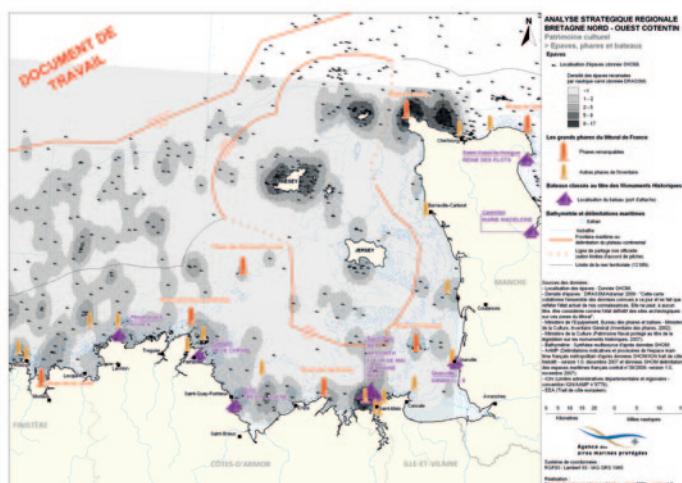
endemic species or taxonomic groups with a key functional role as engineer or keystone species (see box).

This heritage focus also takes account of maritime cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible. It identifies the elements that are listed for their archaeological and historical value (World Heritage Site, listed sites, historic monument, etc.) and elements that are important in historical heritage and local culture, including traditional practices.





Priority areas of interest for cultural heritage: Northern Brittany – Western Cotentin



Identification criteria of key features for outstanding natural heritage and ecosystems

The criteria used to identify key features for outstanding natural heritage and ecosystem functionality correspond to the criteria set forth by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (decision IX/20) for the designation of ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSA) requiring protection on the high seas and in deep environments.

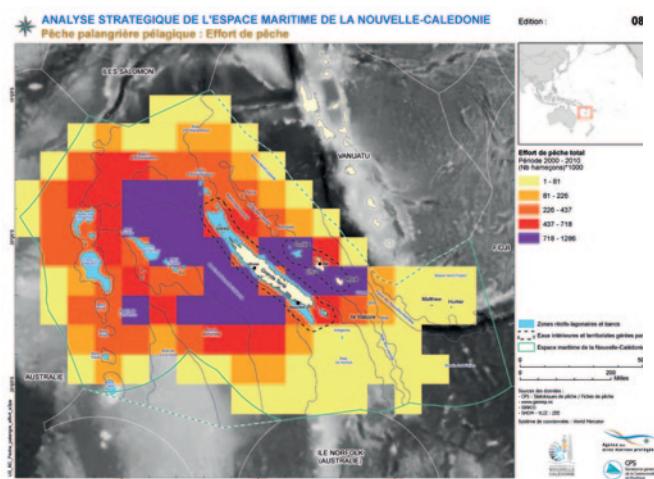
Searches for sites of primary importance for each of these criteria have been made based on information from available literature or on expert opinions.

Focus	Identification criteria of sites of primary importance	Corresponding EBSA criterion
Outstanding natural heritage	Search for sites of primary importance for species or habitats: rare, endemic, vulnerable, with listed status (IUCN, CITES, regional convention, European or national regulations), significant in terms of diversity and representativeness of populations or stocks, significant in terms of abundance.	(1) Uniqueness / rarity (3) Importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats (4) Vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity or slow recovery (6) Biological diversity
	Search for sectors featuring, for each theme (habitat/taxonomic group), the best ecological status or absence of pressure (naturalness)	(7) Naturalness
Ecosystem functionality	Search for known functional areas (nursery, feeding, spawning and breeding areas, etc.) for species	(2) Special importance for life-history stages of species
	Search for areas or habitats with high biological productivity or performing a known ecological function (purification, coastal protection, oxygen production, binding...)	(5) Biological productivity

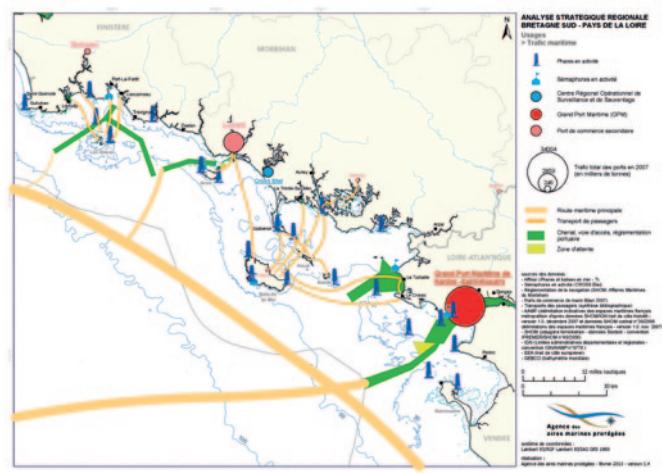
1.2. Uses

The spatial distribution and the intensity of human activities (fishing and aquaculture, water sports, transport, etc.) developing in the marine area is examined to identify zones facing major challenges in terms of marine space use and pressure on ecosystems induced by the activities. Where appropriate, the goal may also be to identify the socio-economic issues of certain activities or related conflicts of use.

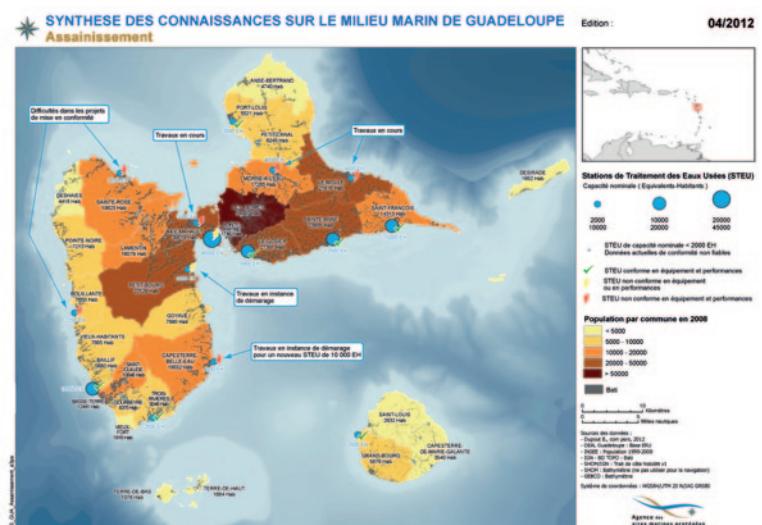
The spatial distribution of the main terrestrial activities bringing pressure to bear on the marine environment is also studied to identify areas subject to pollution or land-based disturbance (location of polluting factories, population density, design and compliance of sewer systems, cropping, etc.).



Uses at sea: longline fishing in New Caledonia, maritime traffic in Southern Brittany – Pays de Loire area



Land-based activities putting pressure on the sea: water purification in Guadeloupe



1.3. Body of information used

All existing and available data and information on the topics studied are listed. This may be raw or already processed data (reports, publications) which may be geo-located, or expert opinions where information is not in written form (scientists, societies, socio-professional players and government agencies). The information is harmonized, interpreted and summarised theme by theme in very close collaboration with experts. The heterogeneity and lack of spatial representativeness of information often involves significant homogenisation work.

When the analysis spans a vast area, priority is given to information representative of the entire territory.

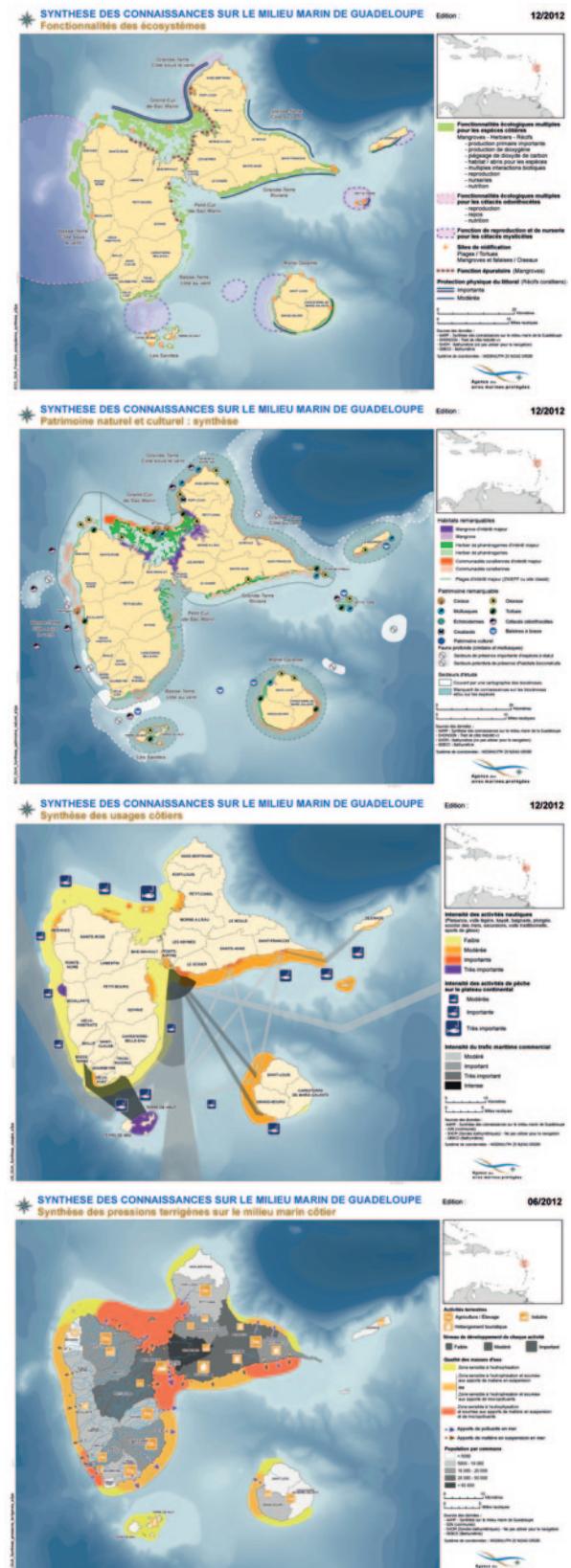
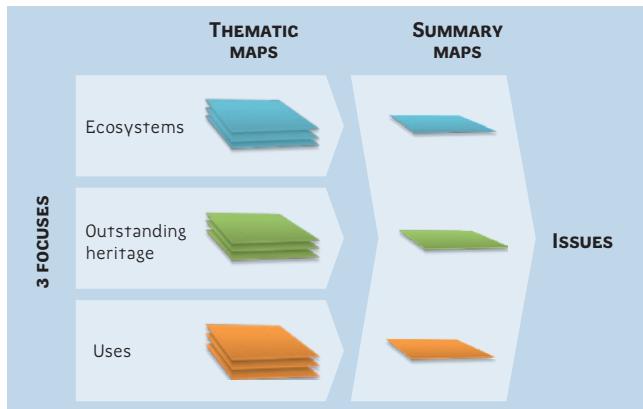
All information used is geo-referenced and centralized in a GIS database.

1.4. Development of summary maps

For each of the three focuses (ecosystems, outstanding heritage, uses), three summary maps are developed by superimposing the key data previously identified theme by theme.

Within the limits of available knowledge, we try to take into account notions of representativeness, connectivity, replication, and the sustainability of sectors in the identification of key heritage sites for each taxonomic group.

At this stage, it is often possible to intuitively distinguish areas that are ecologically or territorially coherent.



Summary maps - Guadeloupe: ecosystem functioning, natural heritage, uses at sea and land-based pressure

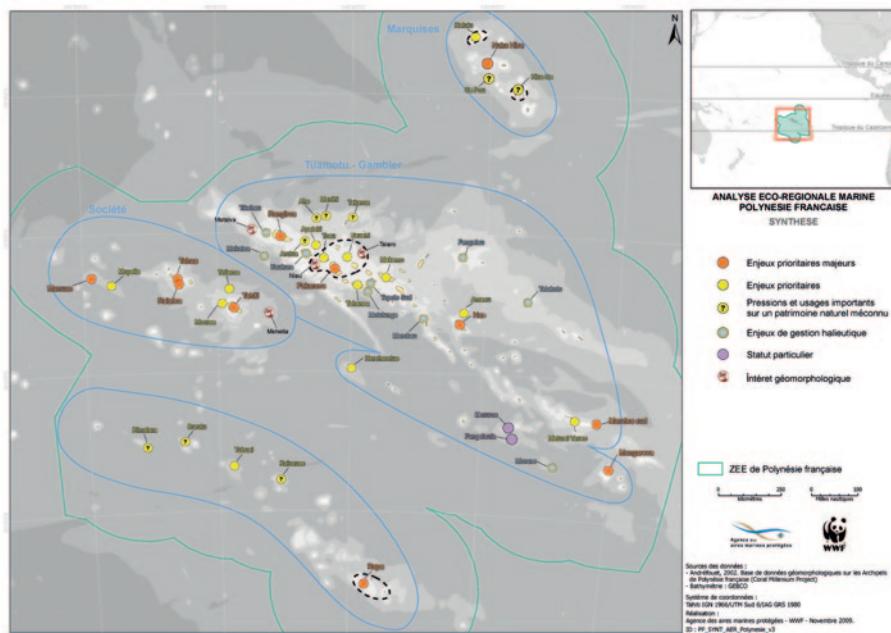
2. Correlating information: identifying issues and developing proposals

After validation by technical experts, the information summarized under these three focuses is correlated to qualify the various types of issues and to locate areas where issues are homogeneous. Depending on the areas, several kinds of issue can be identified (e.g. heritage conservation, uses management, fisheries, management of land pollution, etc.).

The issues occurring in each sector can then be completed and prioritized by assigning ad hoc ratings. This step of determining issues is conducted based on expert opinion in close cooperation with project partners, having regard for the information gathered.

Lastly, these sector-specific issues are compared with current protection measures and other planning approaches (sea enhancement schemes, ICZM, water planning and management schemes, etc.). Then, based on the specific needs of each area, components of a strategy for MPA establishment and management are proposed, including perimeter proposals for various marine protected area categories, and the acquisition of knowledge to fill gaps identified or collaborative environmental management projects.

French law provides for a number of marine protected area statuses corresponding to different levels of protection and different management methods and objectives: marine nature park, national park, nature reserve, biotope protection by-law, Natura 2000 site, statuses under regional seas conventions, RAMSAR sites, marine State property sites placed under the protection of the French Conservatoire du Littoral (coastal protection agency). When making its proposals for marine protected areas, the Agency takes the type of issues and other contextual elements into account to suggest the most appropriate tools.



Summary of issues identified for the French Polynesia islands



Fiche Secteur

Le Grand cul-de-sac Marin

Les enjeux

- Conservation et promotion naturel et patrimoine
- Maitrise des fondations des espaces marins
- Réduction des pollutions terrestres
- Réduction des conflits d'usages
- Réduction des risques de la mer
- Connaissance et protection marine

L'intégrité du Grand cul-de-sac Marin est classée dans une ZNIEFF2000 et se situe dans l'aire marine adjacente au Réseau de sites Ramsar. Il s'agit d'un site Natura 2000, site Ramsar et site Coopératif de la Charte des îles. C'est aussi un mélange de la baie à l'ouest et des îles et îlots à l'est. Ces deux ensembles appartiennent au territoire du Conservatoire du littoral qui sont concernés par les fonds marins appartenant au Conservatoire du littoral et à l'ensemble des îles et îlots qui appartiennent au Conservatoire du littoral et à la Fondation pour la protection des fonds marins. L'île de Porquerolles fait partie du réseau Natura 2000 et les îles et îlots font partie de la zone de protection de la ZNIEFF2000 et d'autre zones de protection non pas à la classement Ramsar.

Opérations régionales

- Générer, démonter et aménager des îles et îlots : travaillant avec les propriétaires pour la restauration des îles et îlots et pour la préservation des îles et îlots.
- Action de restauration des îles et îlots : action de restauration de l'île de Porquerolles et de l'île de la Madrague.
- Restaurer les îles et îlots : restaurer les îles et îlots pour leur donner une valeur patrimoniale et culturelle.
- Spécificité culturelle : faire faire des interventions sur les îles et îlots pour préserver la culture et la tradition.
- Protection et préservation : protéger les îles et îlots contre les impacts humains et préserver les îles et îlots pour la restauration et la conservation.
- Aide à l'attractivité touristique : aider à l'attractivité touristique des îles et îlots en créant des infrastructures et des équipements.
- Activités nautiques concentrées sur les îles : contribution des nautiques plurielles aux îles et îlots, tourisme nautique (plus de 10 000 visiteurs), balnéo.
- Préparer îles à la transition au niveau des îles : planification, réaménagement et déportes en respectueuses.
- Activités culturelles : faire évoluer les îles et îlots vers une intégration dans le territoire et l'espace.
- Histoire et cultures historiques bien connues au niveau des îles : patrimoine, îles d'ancêtres, compagnie nantaise.

Stratégies régionales

L'intégrité du Grand cul-de-sac Marin est classée dans une ZNIEFF2000 et se situe dans l'aire marine adjacente au Réseau de sites Ramsar. Il s'agit d'un site Natura 2000, site Ramsar et site Coopératif de la Charte des îles. C'est aussi un mélange de la baie à l'ouest et des îles et îlots à l'est. Ces deux ensembles appartiennent au territoire du Conservatoire du littoral qui sont concernés par les fonds marins appartenant au Conservatoire du littoral et à l'ensemble des îles et îlots qui appartiennent au Conservatoire du littoral et à la Fondation pour la protection des fonds marins. L'île de Porquerolles fait partie du réseau Natura 2000 et les îles et îlots font partie de la zone de protection de la ZNIEFF2000 et d'autre zones de protection non pas à la classement Ramsar.

Baie du Mont-Saint-Michel / Ouest Cotentin

Les enjeux

- Conserver, comprendre et préserver les écosystèmes aquatiques et terrestres : ramassage, élimination, collecte et recyclage des déchets marins et résidus de mer, fonds marins et îles marines.
- Maintenir la qualité de l'eau : préserver les eaux marines et marécaines marines.
- Améliorer la qualité de l'eau littorale et gérer les flux humides du production primaire et des exports à forte valeur.
- Lutter contre la prolifération de cyanophyctes et autres espèces invasives.
- Optimiser la lisibilité et la cohérence des politiques à l'échelle de la métropole et au niveau des îles et îlots.
- Assurer une coopération avec les îles anglo-normandes dans le cadre notamment des accords de la Baie de Granville et d'une concertation entre îles.
- Développer les ressources uniques du mer de Bayon intelligente.
- Mettre en cohérence la gestion des espèces amphibiennes d'abord (îles et îlots) et la maîtrise (aujourd'hui de la baie de Mont-Saint-Michel).
- Promouvoir les distances de pêche durable et d'exploitation pérenne : pêche côtière, aquaculture.

3. A shared diagnosis for collective proposals

The strategic regional analysis aims to achieve a shared diagnosis of issues arising in a maritime area. To do so, discussions and talks are held with the main players as part of a governance body and a panel of experts. Consultation and consensus-building are major focuses throughout the process.

- Decision-makers

The creation of a decision-making body is a key factor in good project governance. The steering committee brings together all the project partners and is placed under the leadership of the competent local authorities. It is mainly involved in defining the expectations of the analysis and then in identifying the issues, particularly if prioritization is required, and during the development of strategic proposals.

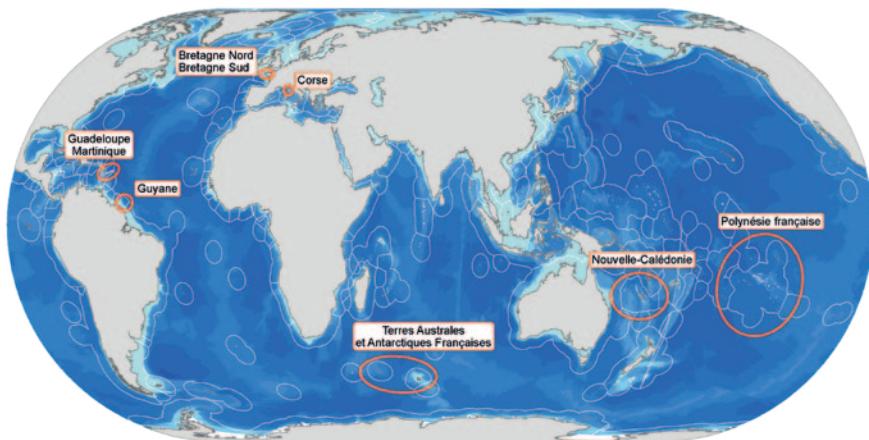
- Technical experts

All the technical experts identified for the consolidation of available knowledge are very closely involved. The experts in each topic studied are first asked to identify, interpret and process the information available individually, theme by theme, and then to collectively validate all the informa-

tion summarised as well as the thematic summary maps. There is often one workshop dedicated to information on heritage (natural and cultural) and ecosystem functions, and one workshop focusing on uses and pressure on the environment.

In the case of a vast marine expanse, often dependent on several countries, this analysis stage carried out in conjunction with technical experts may demand a special cooperation effort, including at international level.





Regional analyses have been conducted in mainland France and in overseas départements and territories. They have led to marine protected area projects, concerted management and coordination between existing management tools and knowledge acquisition.

For example, the analyses conducted in 2010 in French Polynesia and in Martinique have respectively led to a significant oceanographic mission to acquire knowledge about the marine environment of the Marquesas Islands, then to the project for the establishment of a vast marine protected area in the archipelago, and to the organisation of a task force for the creation of a marine nature park in Martinique. In Guiana, the analysis carried out in 2009 led to the development of a management project for coastal fisheries together with fishermen.

In mainland France, the performance of three analyses (in Corsica, Southern Brittany and Northern Brittany) led to

the adoption of a common strategy for marine protected areas by the Corsican authorities and the Government, a government strategy for the creation and management of marine protected areas in Brittany providing for the implementation of stronger protection tools, the study of a marine nature park project in the Normano-Breton Gulf, and the launch of extensive knowledge programmes.

Depending on the land surface concerned and the quantity of information available, the analysis work can take nine (Guiana, little information) to eighteen months or two years (French Polynesia, a vast territory). The team in charge must have both analytical and geomatic skills.

All the regional analyses conducted by the Agence des aires marines protégées are available on the Agency's website: <http://www.aires-marines.fr/Les-aires-marines-protegees/Analyses-strategiques-regionales>