OUT OF THE BLUE

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OUT OF THE BLUE

‘Instead of acting as they have for millennia, as carbon sinks, many of our close inshore areas and sea-lochs are, due to disturbance associated with using mobile dredge and trawl gears, likely to be some of Scotland’s most significant sources of carbon release!’

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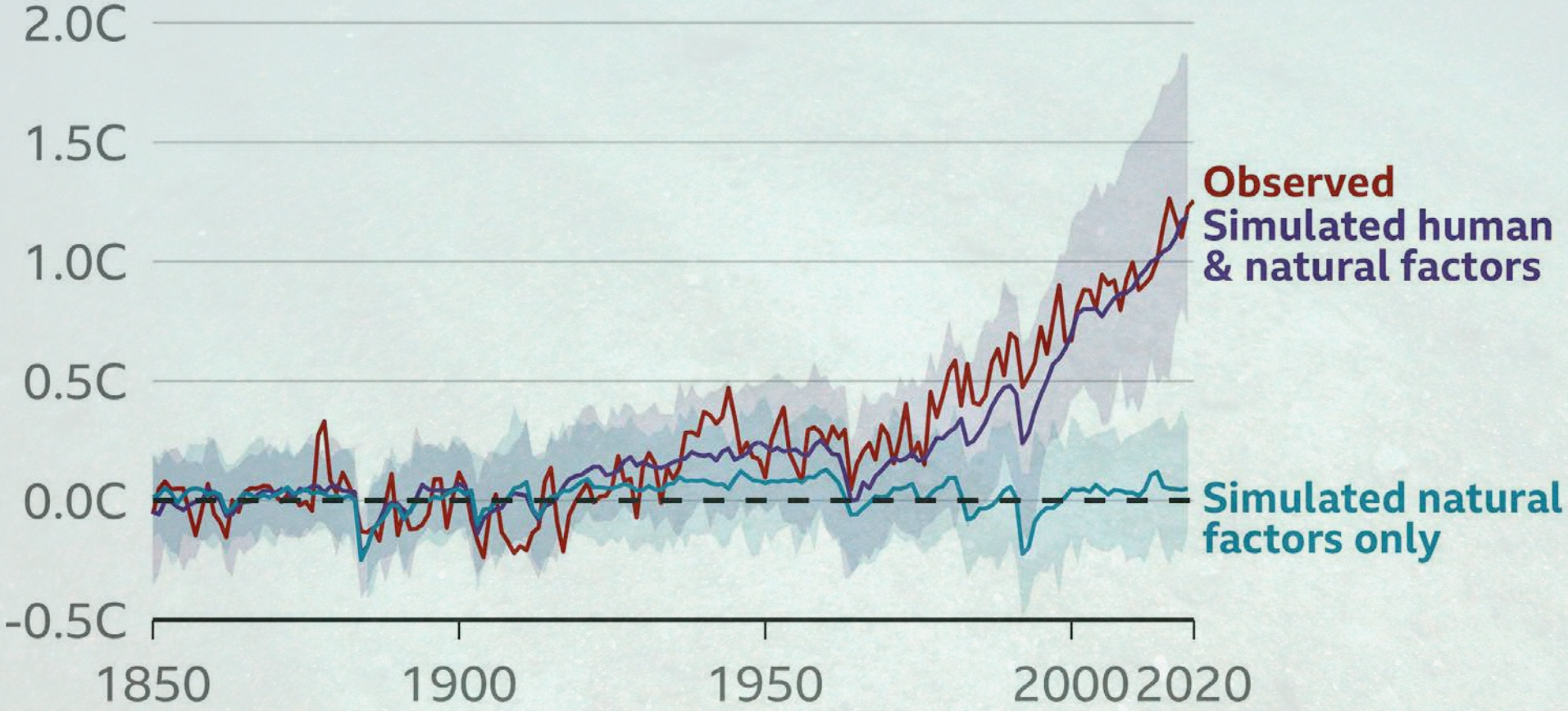
Human influence has warmed the climate

Change in average global temperature relative to 1850-1900, showing observed temperatures and computer simulations



Note: Shaded areas show possible range for simulated scenarios

Source: IPCC, 2021: Summary for Policymakers

BBC

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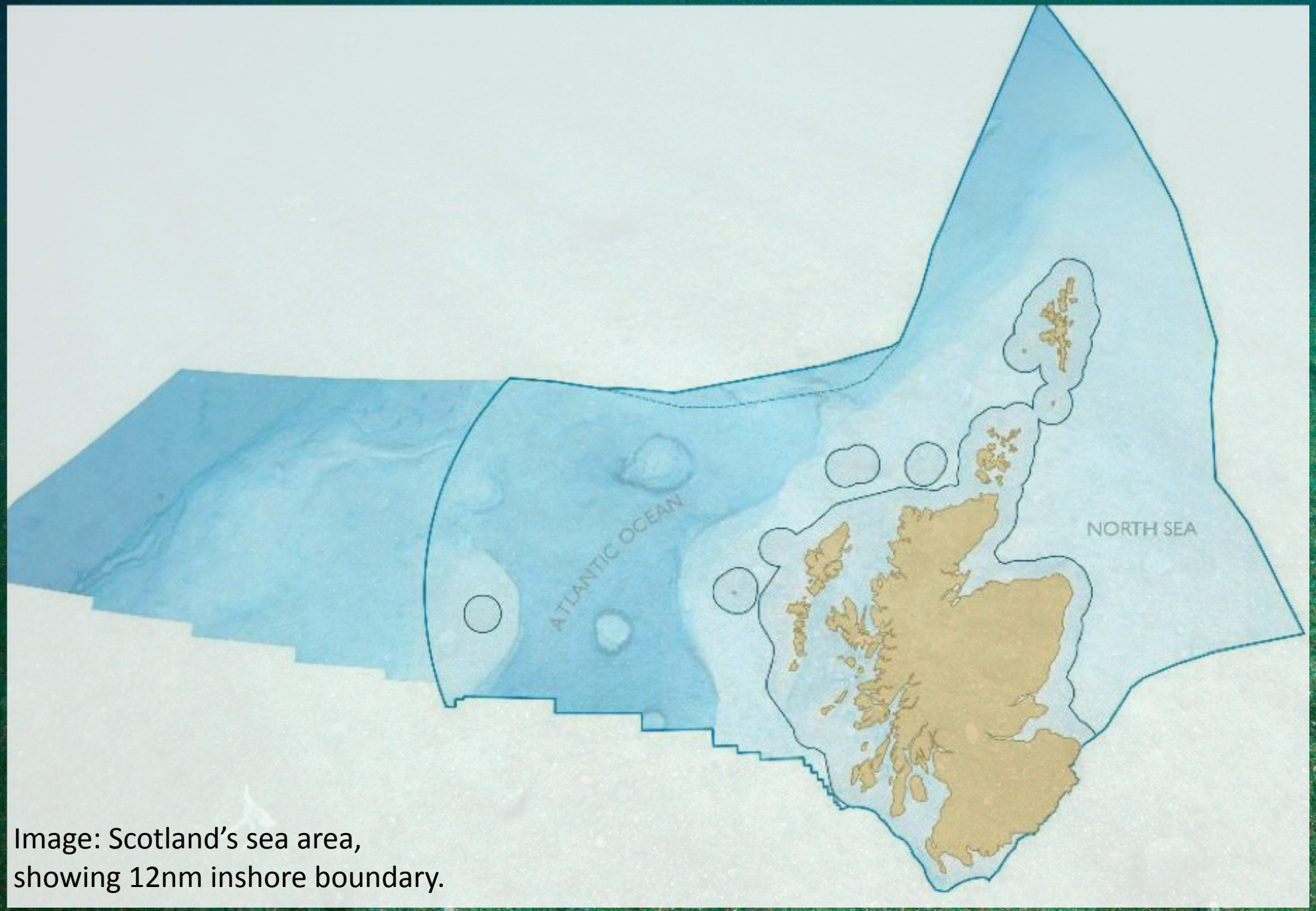

Image: Scotland's sea area,
showing 12nm inshore boundary.

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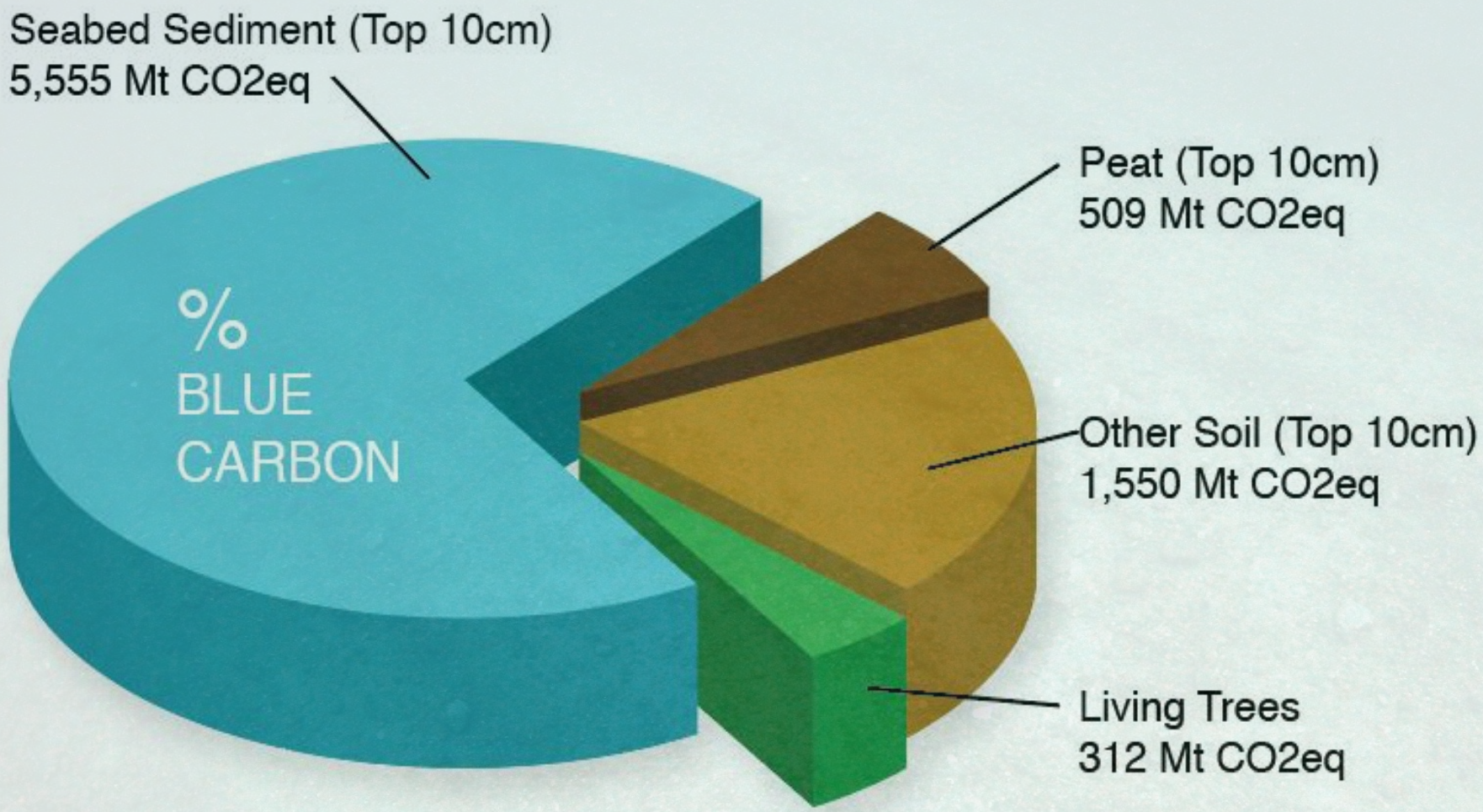

Image: Overall carbon stored, Scotland. Blue carbon is 70%.
Source: Marine Scotland

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A healthy diverse habitat stores organic carbon. Curled octopus amongst a Horse Mussel bed, surrounded by Brittlestars, Shetland. Photo: Richard Shucksmith

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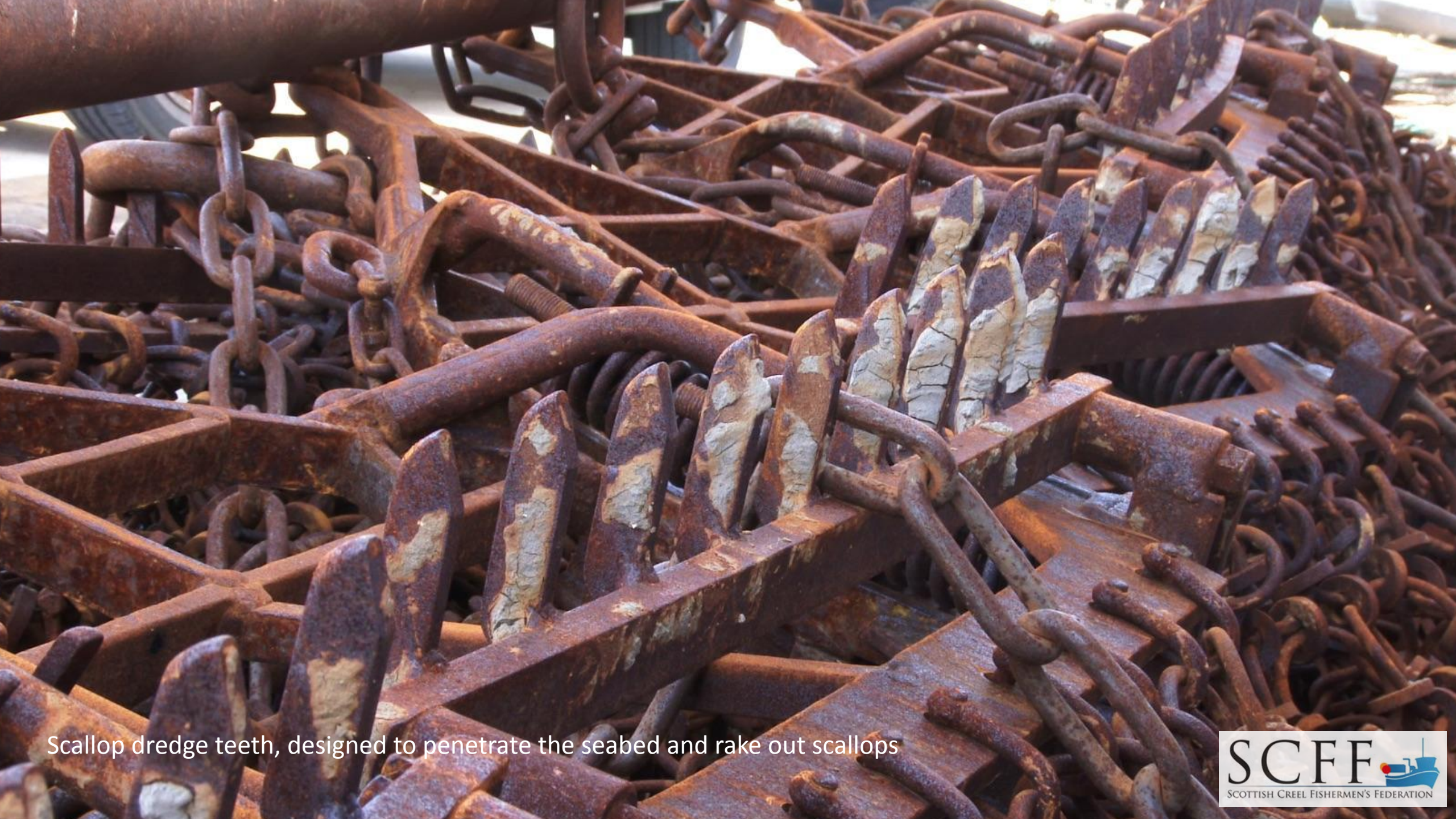

Scallop dredge teeth, designed to penetrate the seabed and rake out scallops

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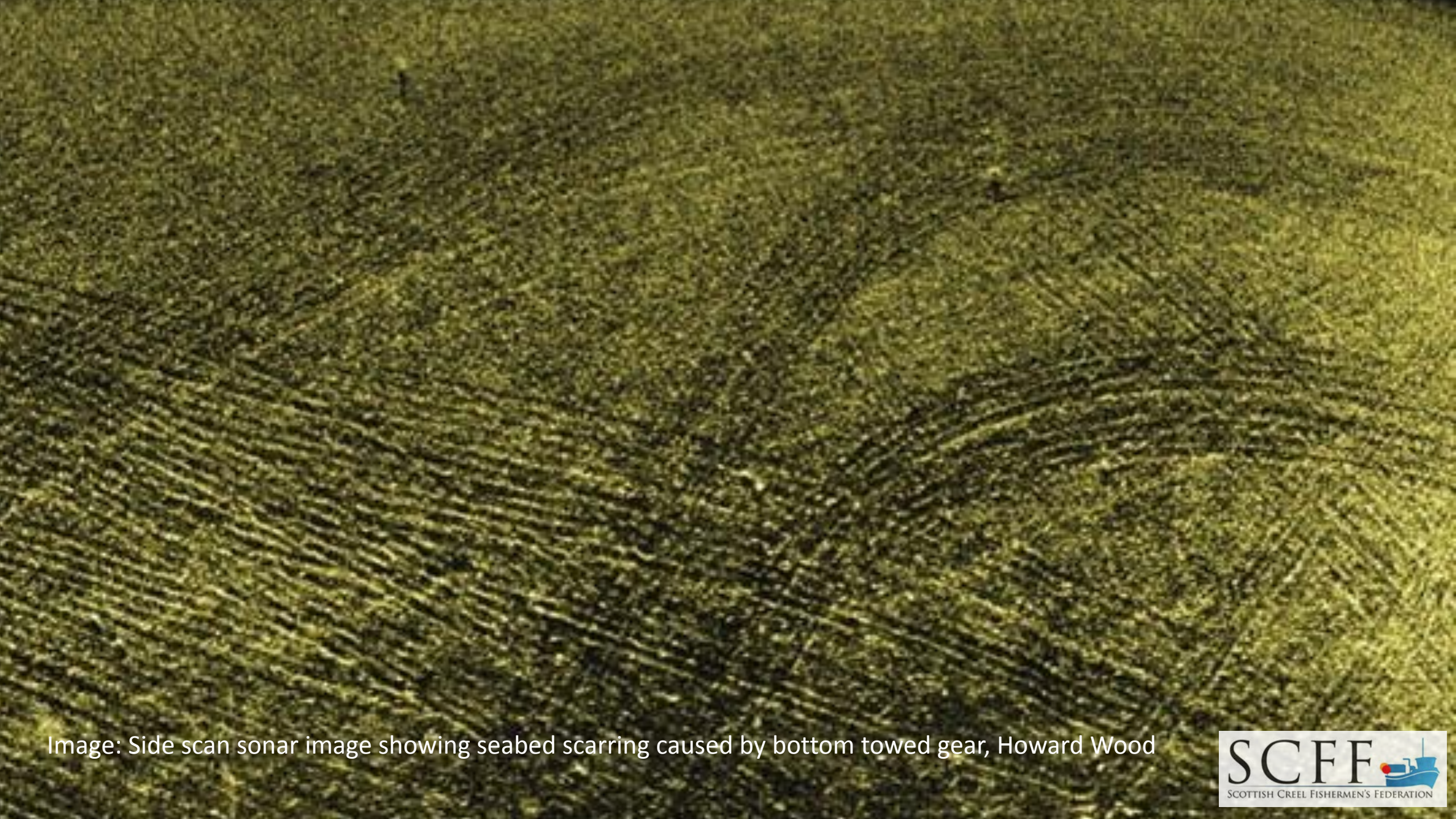

Image: Side scan sonar image showing seabed scarring caused by bottom towed gear, Howard Wood

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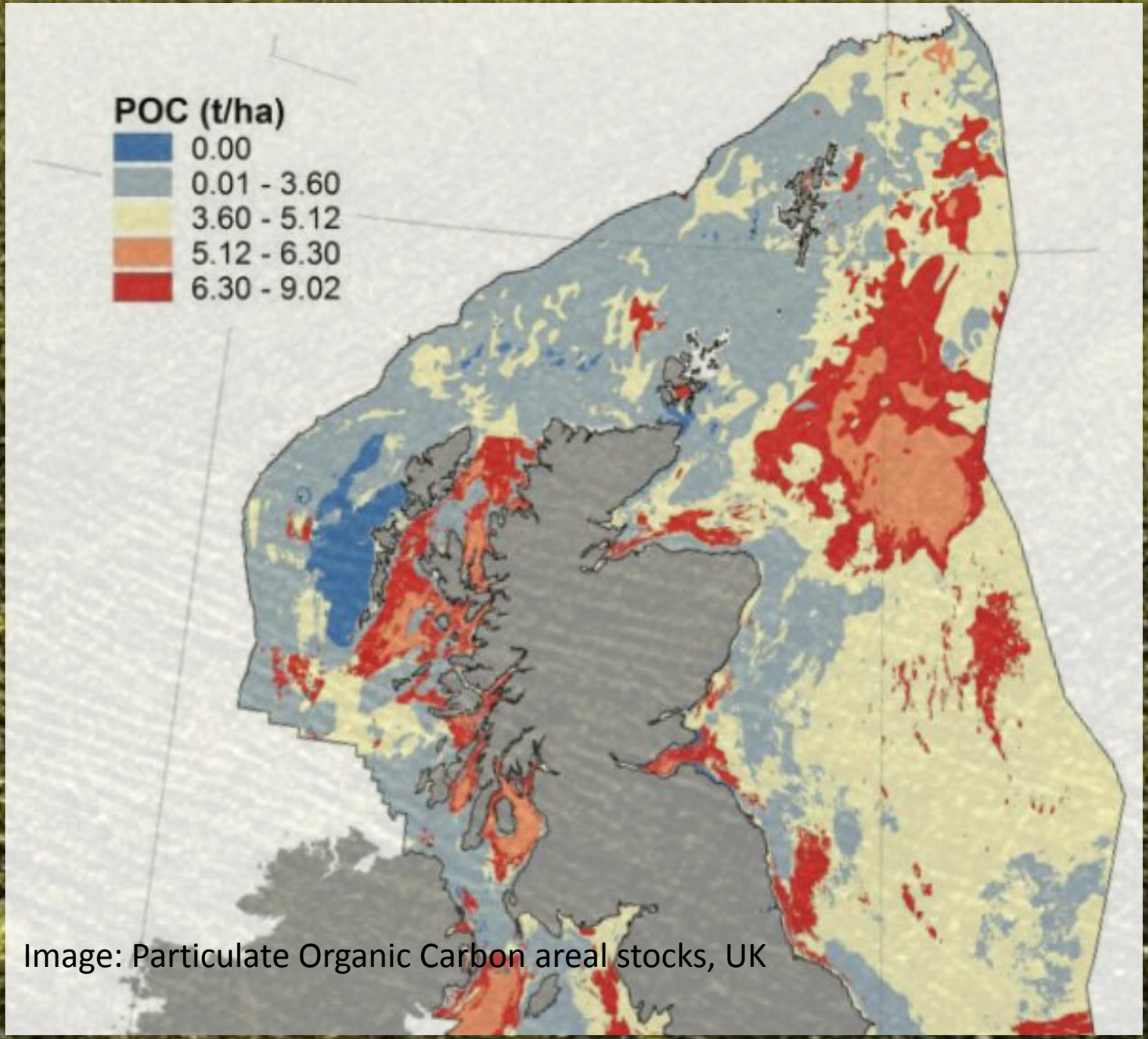

Image: Particulate Organic Carbon areal stocks, UK

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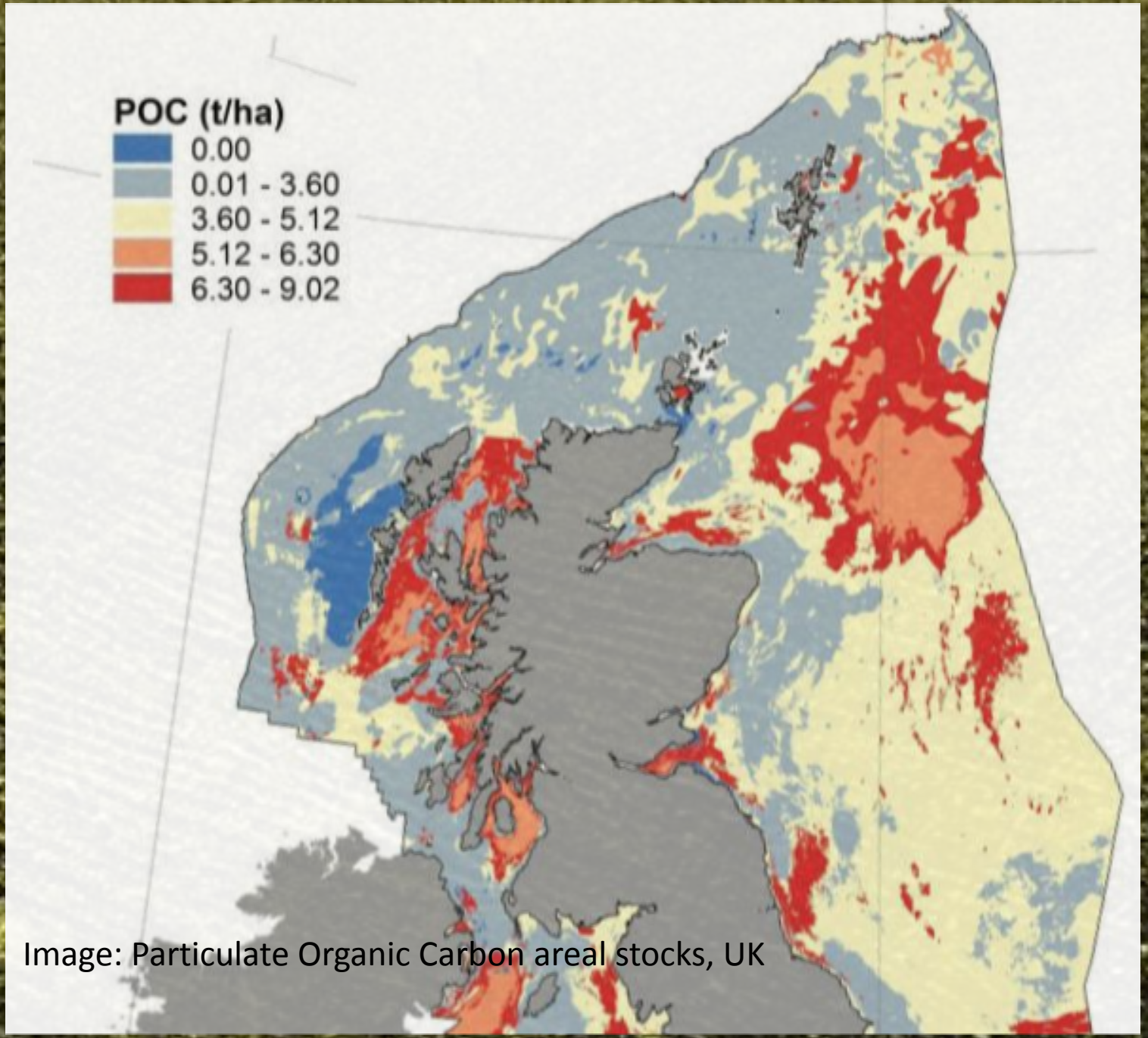

Image: Particulate Organic Carbon areal stocks, UK

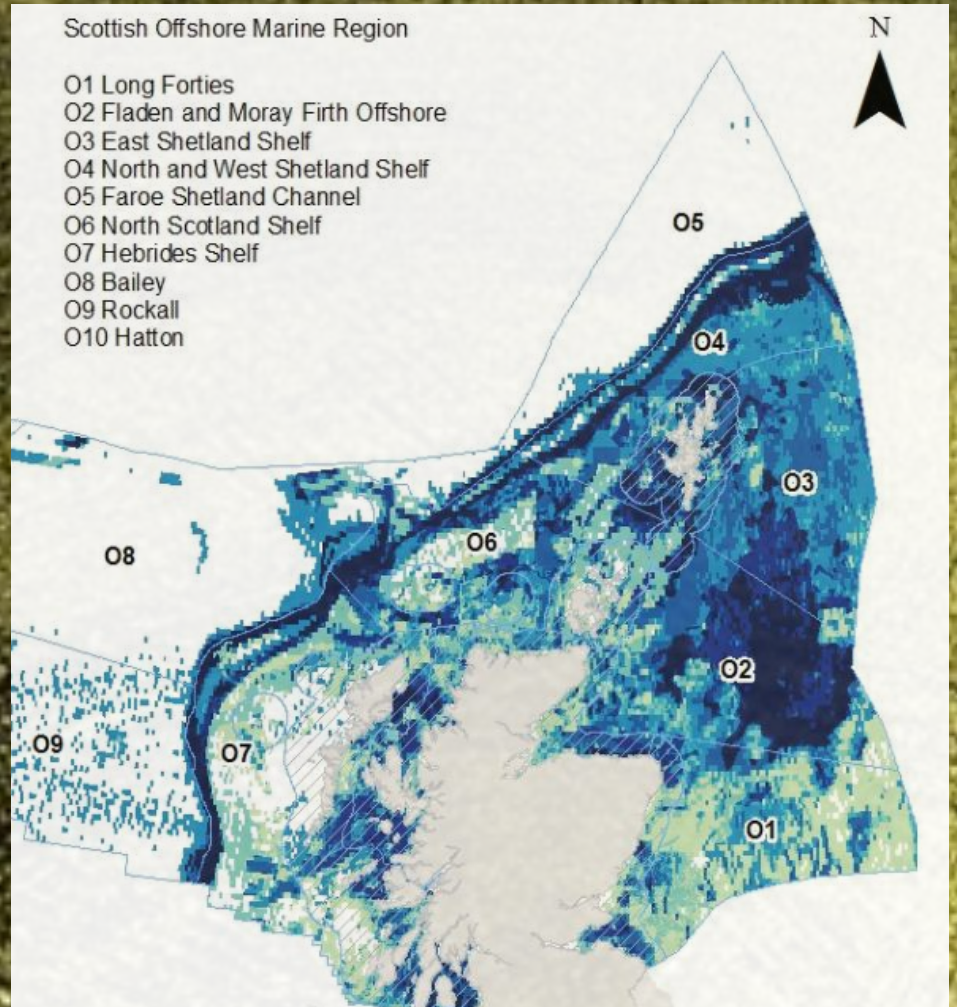

Image: Disturbance from combined surface and subsurface abrasion from bottom fisheries

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A dredge scarred seabed with little life remaining and little to attract new inhabitants.
Photo: Howard Wood/Arran COAST.

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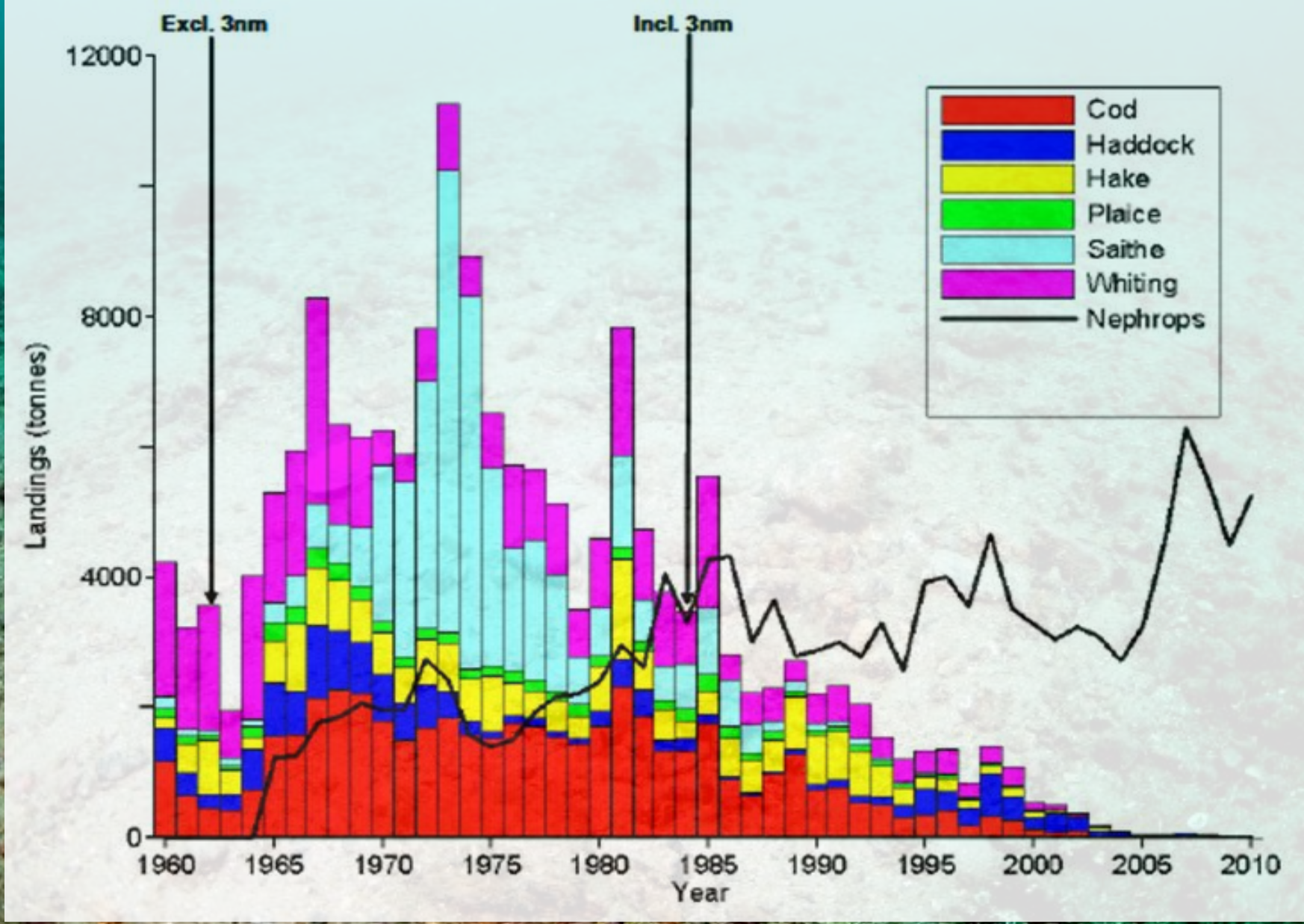

Summary of landings of demersal fish species from the Clyde Sea. Years when the Clyde opened to trawling, excluding the area within 3 nm from the coast (1962), and including within 3nm (1984) are highlighted

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Flame shells are reeef forming –hundreds of nests can combine to form a dense bed, which raises and stabilises the seabed and makes it more attractive to many other creatures. Photo: Graham Saunders

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A healthy Serpulid Worm reef supporting diverse species.
Photo: Graham Saunders

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A Blue Mussel bed stabilises the seabed and begins to provide a secure habitat for other creatures.

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Seagrass has excellent carbon sequestration properties it provides food, nursery and spawning habitat for a plethora of species

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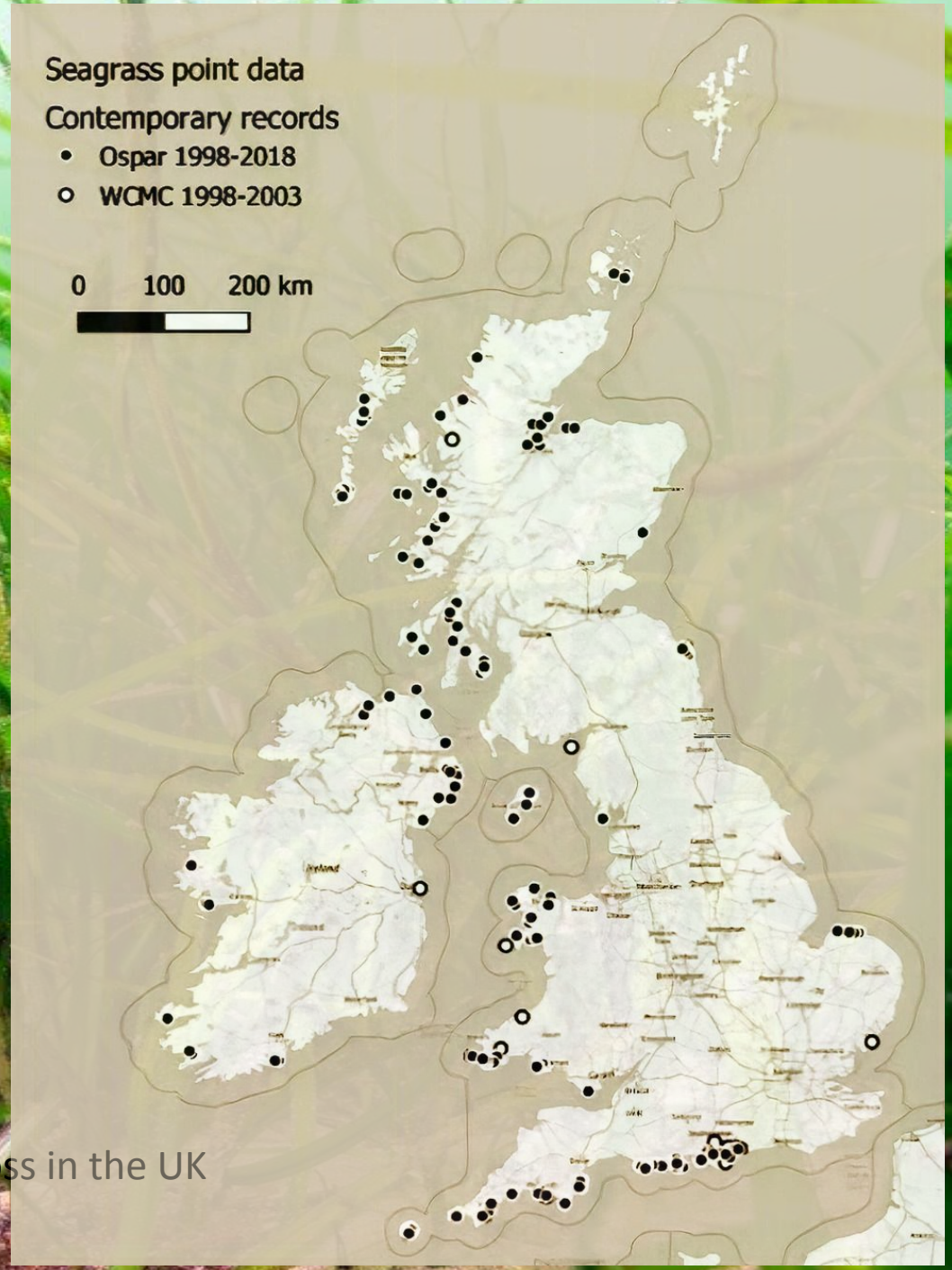

Image: Historic analysis of seagrass loss in the UK

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The red dots show completely unprotected Priority Marine Features. The green dots show protected or partially protected PMFs - though a significant number of these still allow towed gear through part of the year, making the partial protection largely futile.

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Documents produced by the SCFF include the MISALLOCATION, MISMANAGEMENT and the 3 MILE LIMIT reports.

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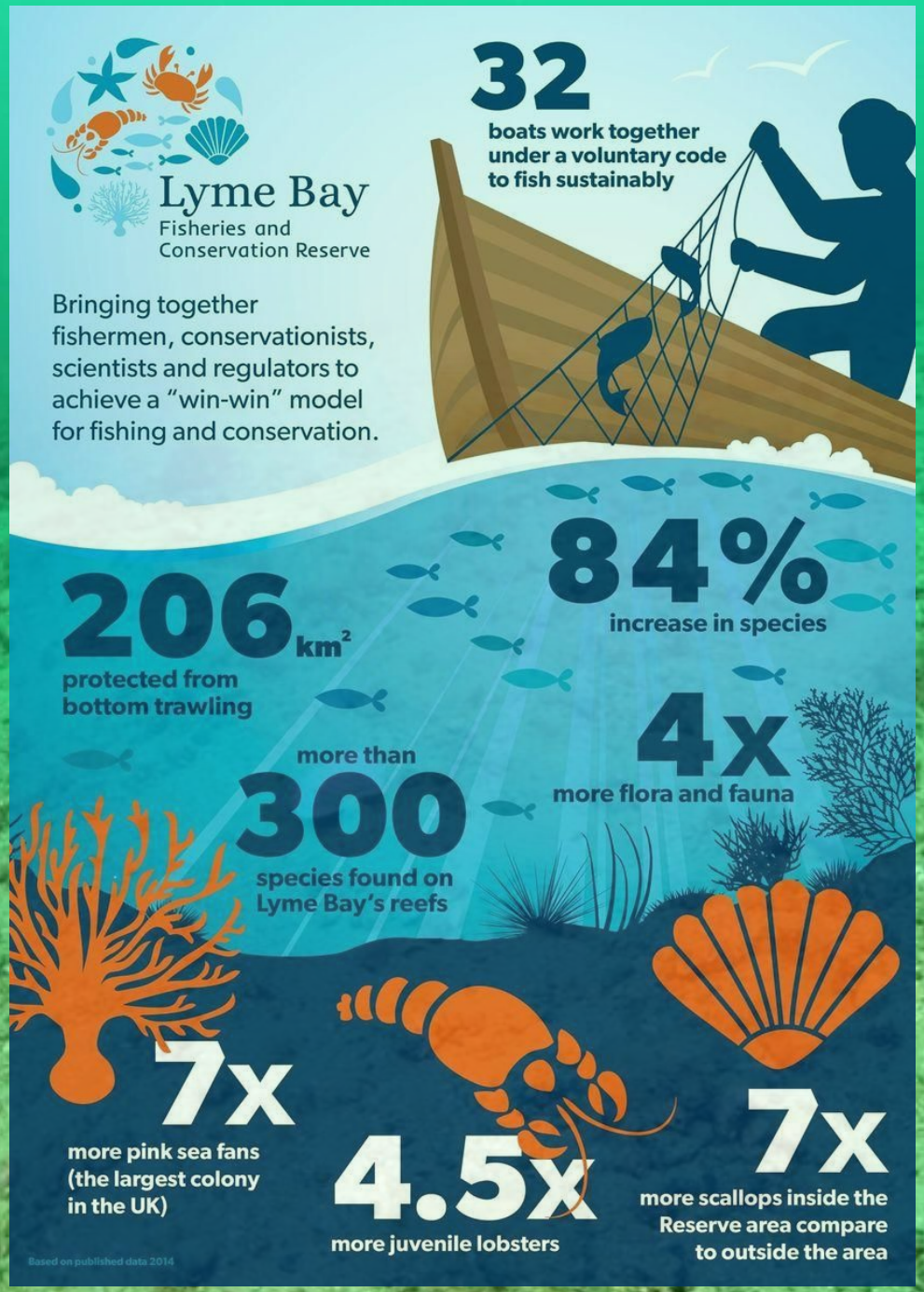
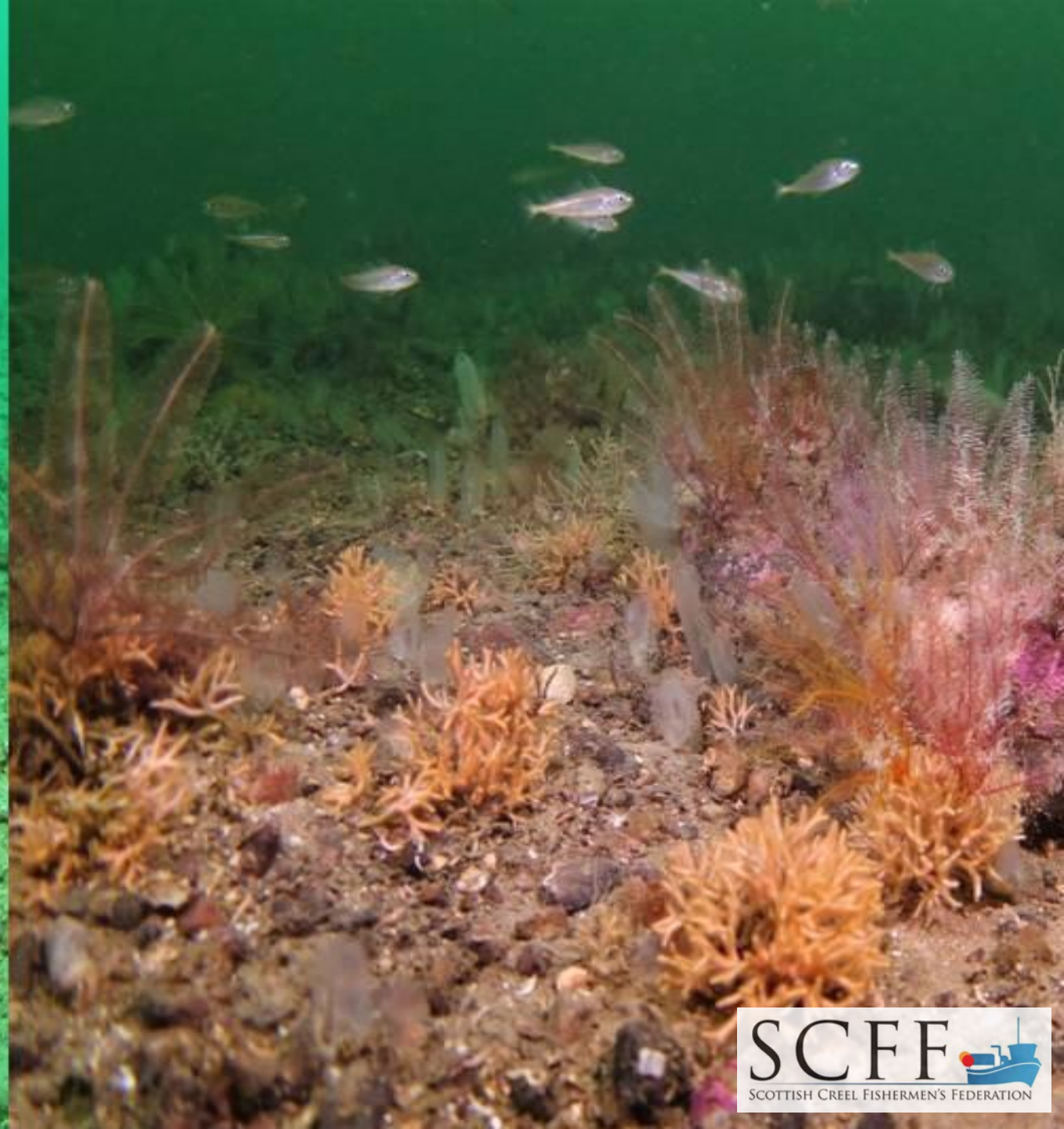

Lyme Bay
Fisheries and Conservation Reserve
Bringing together fishermen, conservationists, scientists and regulators to achieve a "win-win" model for fishing and conservation.
32
boats work together under a voluntary code to fish sustainably
206 km²
protected from bottom trawling
84%
increase in species
4x
more flora and fauna
more than
300
species found on Lyme Bay's reefs
7x
more pink sea fans (the largest colony in the UK)
4.5x
more juvenile lobsters
7x
more scallops inside the Reserve area compare to outside the area
Based on published data 2014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Trawl damaged Serpulid Reef

Healthy reef supporting diverse life.

One of the biggest contributions that Scotland can make to meet the challenges of the biodiversity and climate crisis is to introduce, with urgency, a prohibition on bottom towed fishing gears in our inshore waters.

Are the Scottish Government ready to do what they committed to in 2010?

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