

Appendix 14. Notes for referees

Referees are asked to check the accuracy of the information presented in the Key Information reviews and identify any omissions or ambiguities. Please pay particular attention to the assessment of sensitivity and recoverability. In addition, please indicate any missing information that would be important to the management, protection and conservation of the species or biotope under review.

Please annotate the hard copy of the review provided with your changes and comments. Please complete the relevant sections of the enclosed 'referees report' form.

From time-to-time, new information may become available and we may update text or adjust sensitivity or recoverability ratings. If those changes are substantial or significant, we will consult you. Please let us know if you wish to be consulted whatever changes are made.

General

The following notes outline the Biology & Sensitivity Key Information Sub-programme of *MarLIN* and the resultant Key Information reviews of species and biotopes.

- The Key Information reviews are designed to support environmental management and protection.
- The reviews are based on available scientific information, collated by the *MarLIN* team using the resources of the National Marine Biological Library at Plymouth.
- The reviews target the key information required to assess the sensitivity and recoverability of a species or biotope to environmental perturbation.
- The reviews are not designed to be complete scientific monographs on the species or biotope concerned.
- The reviews use defined categories (key words or terms with associated on-line glossaries) to produce concise, targeted information.
- "Additional information" is added where aspects of a species or biotopes ecology do not fit neatly within the defined categories. "Additional information" is also used to clarify ambiguous material or to add key information that would be omitted otherwise.
- Although concise and key worded, the quality and accuracy of the information is paramount.
- All references made in the text are listed, in short format, at the bottom of each page. The full reference is displayed on the Web site via a pop-up browser window. However, a hard copy of the full reference list for each species or biotope is supplied to referees.
- The reviews will be available to a wide audience through the Internet. Please note that the reviews are designed to be viewed on the Internet.
- All specific terms used in the Key Information reviews are defined in pop-up glossaries. Additional scientific terms are defined in our on-line general glossary. If you do not have ready access to the Internet, copies of our glossaries can be provided on floppy disk (3.5").

Page specific notes - species

1. Basic information - designed to give a short description and image of each species or biotope and is aimed at all users, including the general public.
2. Taxonomy - presents systematic and identification information.
 - *MarLIN* has adopted the MCS/Ulster Museum Species Directory as the standard taxonomic checklist (Howson & Picton, 1997). Recent changes can be indicated in the additional information, together with their authority.
 - Key identification features are listed, but are intended to allow the reader to distinguish a species but are not intended to be a definitive key.

3. Habitat preferences and distribution - the distribution maps are collated from various sources, which include the MNCR database (via MERMAID – www.jncc.gov.uk), relevant texts such as marine flora and fauna, published and un-published records.
4. Sensitivity and recoverability - the sensitivity and recoverability assessments are presented against each environmental factor in the form of a matrix. The rationale behind each assessment is presented under “ranks explained” on the following pages of printout (or by following the “click factor name to view rationale” link on-line). **The sensitivity and recoverability matrix and should be reviewed together with the rationale.**

Page specific notes - biotopes

1. Biotope classification - presents the position of the biotope under review within the MNCR biotope classification (Connor *et al.*, 1997a,b) and other classification schemes e.g. the European Nature Information System (EUNIS) Habitat classification (Davies & Moss, 1998).
2. Habitat preferences and distribution - the distribution maps are based primarily on the MNCR database, biotope manual (Connor *et al.*, 1997a,b), and MNCR area summaries, with the additional of recent published or un-published survey data.
3. Sensitivity and recoverability - the sensitivity and recoverability assessments are presented in matrix format as on the species pages (see above). In addition, the sensitivities and recoverabilities of the “species indicative of biotope sensitivity” are listed on the following pages of the printout and the full reviews can be viewed on-line on the *MarLIN* Web pages.

If you have any queries that are not addressed above, please do not hesitate to contact either Dr Harvey Tyler-Walters (h.tylerwalters@mba.ac.uk) or Dr Keith Hiscock (k.hiscock@mba.ac.uk).

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BIOLOGY AND SENSITIVITY KEY INFORMATION

Referees report

Species / biotope:

Referee:

Please annotate the paper copy of the web pages with your changes. Please attach further comments on additional sheets.

Overall assessment

	Yes	No	Notes
1. Is the information as accurate as possible (acceptable)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Is the information acceptable with your changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the research need to be undertaken again? (name required areas for re-assessment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is there insufficient information (in your opinion) to complete this biotope or species research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If the research needs to be undertaken again (option 3), please indicate the specific areas that require attention and, if possible, suggest sources of further information.

