

Specification



The Specification

Project Title:	Solway Coast and Marine Project – Opportunity Mapping of Seagrass along Dumfries and Galloway Solway Coast
Service:	Environment Team
Project Owner:	Nick Chisholm

1	INTRODUCTION
<p>Dumfries and Galloway Council and its partners in the Solway Coast and Marine Project – Landscape Connections (SCAMP) wishes to appoint a qualified and experienced consultant to collect data and map areas suitable for intertidal and subtidal seagrass <i>Zostera marina</i> and <i>Zostera noltii</i> meadow expansion/reintroduction in the Solway along the Dumfries and Galloway Coast.</p> <p>The report and digital mapping of key environmental variables and constraints to seagrass meadow restoration will be based on existing available data plus a literature review. Where data gaps are identified, the consultant will need to define the additional data collection action required and where SCAMP can assist to infill data.</p> <p>The successful consultant will provide digital mapping at high enough resolution to be meaningful at a local scale to aid potential restoration effort.</p> <p>The report will form part of Phase 1 Development of SCAMP and the results will be used to support the delivery stage application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.</p>	

2	BACKGROUND
<p>Seagrass Opportunity Mapping on the Dumfries and Galloway Solway Coast Phase 1 Development report and digital mapping is expected to be undertaken between May 2026 – November 2026</p> <p>Value of this Contract is up to max £19,950 (excluding VAT)</p> <p>Seagrass Opportunity Mapping on the Dumfries and Galloway Solway Coast is part of Phase 1 Development of the Solway Coast and Marine Project (SCAMP). The report and mapping will guide seagrass meadow restoration by identifying suitable locations for potential restoration.</p> <p>SCAMP will deliver an 8-year holistic seascape programme to understand, conserve and develop the potential of the natural, cultural and built heritage for the people of the Solway Firth. It will focus a range of large-scale interventions and activities to deliver a coherent, and co-ordinated approach to reconnect people to the amazing Solway Firth seascape. The project will leave the Solway Firth better understood, protected and will maximise the potential of the</p>	

seascape to respond to today's nature and climate crises. Much of our work will involve new and novel ways of working, research and development, citizen science and co-design.

Seagrass populations face significant threats, and their conservation is hindered by limited research and historical losses.

In 2022/23, the Solway Firth Partnership commissioned a detailed survey to examine the distribution, reproductive capacity, and health of the intertidal seagrass meadows on the coast of Dumfries and Galloway. The survey revealed that these intertidal seagrass beds are among the largest in Scotland and the UK spanning 9.28 square kilometres in the Solway and 0.792 square kilometres in Loch Ryan. These represent a significant increase in seagrass coverage over the past two decades. The recovery in Loch Ryan can be largely credited to improvements in water quality, including the end of dredging, while the resurgence of seagrass in the Solway Firth is attributed to the halt of mechanical cockling in the early 1990s.

In 2025/26 NatureScot commissioned a study to identify Characterisation of the Solway Scottish Marine Region in relation to Seagrass Restoration Planning. The study concluded that restoration of intertidal seagrass could be undertaken in sheltered muddy areas and subtidal seagrass within shallow habitats in Loch Ryan and the outer Solway Firth in mud and sandy sediments.

Now that baseline surveys and studies have been completed for the Solway coast it is an ideal time to carry out an opportunity mapping exercise to establish the full range of sites which have the carrying capacity for restoration of seagrass. This will inform potential restoration efforts in the delivery phase of the project.

3 SPECIFICATION

We are seeking a consultant to deliver a report and digital mapping of key environmental variables and constraints to seagrass meadow restoration on the Dumfries and Galloway Solway coast. The mapping should include a subset identifying suitable locations at high enough resolution to be meaningful at a local scale to aid potential restoration effort.

Work will include literature review, fieldwork and obtaining data sets required to map factors including but not limited to:

- Evidence of historic and current range
- Protection from destructive fishing methods
- Absence of dredging and extractive practices
- Sedimentation rate
- Invasive species including cordgrass and wireweed
- Pollution levels including sewage and inorganic nutrients
- Disease
- Substrate suitability
- Water and intertidal zone temperature summer / winter extremes
- Salinity range and freshwater input
- Seabed mobility / turbidity / wave exposure
- Current directions and tidal stream strength
- Water PH

Contract administration

We anticipate monthly, or as required, online or in person meetings between SCAMP and the consultant that will include a progress report and identify issues and opportunities.

Outputs

- Initial meeting agreeing environmental variables and constraints to be mapped, data gaps and fieldwork to be scoped and agreed.
- Literature review report.
- Seagrass Opportunity Mapping on the Dumfries and Galloway Solway Coast report
- Digital mapping including a subset of suitable locations for restoration.

Time scale

- Initial meeting July 2026
- Literature review August 2026
- Draft report and digital mapping presentation September 2026
- Final report and digital mapping November 2026

To guide the consultant, we have provided the following supporting documents:

Pricing schedule document – to be completed by the consultant

Pricing Guide: Consultants are invited to submit a fixed fee tender as described in this briefing document and the submission will be assessed on a quality/price (70/30%) basis.

Budget

The budget for the opportunity mapping of intertidal seagrass is a maximum of £19,950 ex VAT.

4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are looking for an individual, team or organisation with:

- Experience of working on / delivering environmental consultation work – including working on seagrass and / or habitat restoration programmes (especially coast and marine).
- Familiarity with the Solway coast.
- Ability to travel to and around the project area.
- Strong track record of producing clear, well written, high-quality reports.

Insurance

The Consultants must confirm and evidence that they have the appropriate Employers Liability Insurance (£5 Million), Public Liability Insurance (£5 Million) and Professional Indemnity (£1 Million).

Questions to be submitted via email to: nick.chisholm@dumgal.gov.uk or Karen.Morley@dumgal.gov.uk

Council contact details

Nick Chisholm
 SCAMP Coordinator
 Dumfries & Galloway Council
Nick.Chisholm@dumgal.gov.uk

5	SUSTAINABILITY
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Our Council has adopted a ***Sustainable Procurement Policy***, tenders should include a statement as to their approach to carbon reduction, fairtrade and community benefit.

It is a condition of this tender that contractors shall pay the real living wage to all employees working on the contract and provide an 'effective voice' channel. Tenders should be prepared to evidence this if required.

Reference:	DGC-SCAMP-20260502
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