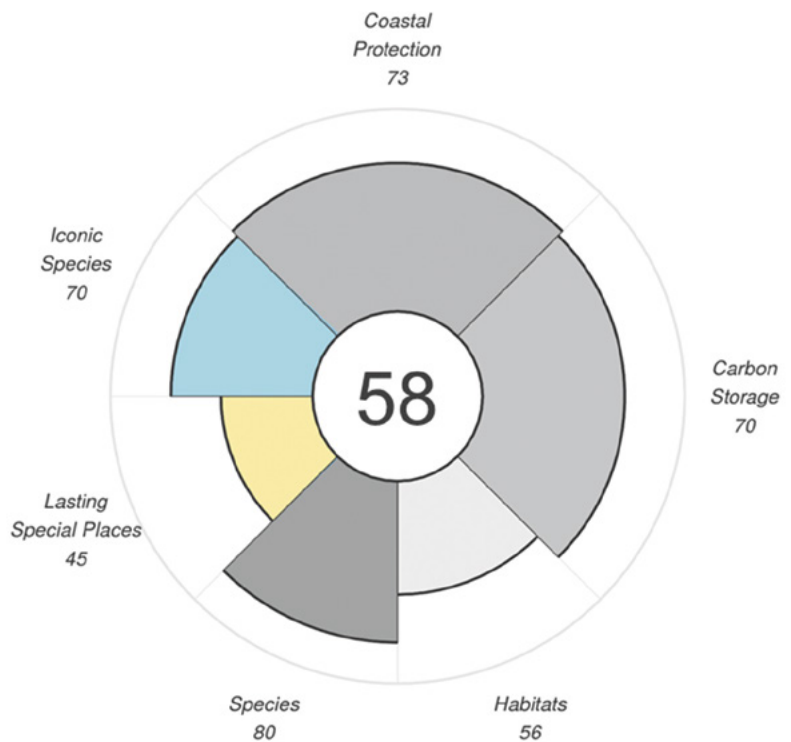


What can the Ocean Health Index tell us about Sense of Place and Wellbeing?

AUTHORS

Courtney Scarborough, Project Scientist, Ocean Health Index, National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis

Casey O'Hara, Researcher, Ocean Health Index, National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis



The overall Sense of Place score (58) is an average of an Iconic Species score (70) and a Lasting Special Places score (45).

How did the Ocean Health Index define Sense of Place?

Sense of Place: A healthy ocean provides a deep sense of identity and belonging through connections with our marine communities.

How did the Ocean Health Index measure Sense of Place?

The Ocean Health Index measured how well the ocean is providing a Sense of Place to the people of Howe Sound by measuring how well **iconic species** populations in the region are faring and how well the spe-

cial places around Howe Sound are being conserved through **marine and coastal protected areas**. Each one of these components contributed equally to the overall score of 58 out of 100.

TO MEASURE THE STATUS OF ICONIC SPECIES WE ASSESS THE THREAT TO SPECIES THAT ARE CULTURALLY OR SOCIALLY IMPORTANT TO HOWE SOUND.

First the Ocean Health Index team worked with CORI and other local community members to define a list of species that are iconic to the people of Howe Sound. Iconic Species are species that are special from a cultural perspective and symbolize the cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic benefits that people hold for a region, often bringing intangible benefits to coastal com-

munities and beyond. Once we had this complete list we used data from local, regional, and global sources to determine the conservation status of each species. To achieve a perfect score, all iconic species in the region should be listed as of “least concern,” meaning there is little risk of extinction.

ICONIC SPECIES INCLUDED IN THIS ASSESSMENT AND THEIR CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

LC	Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)
	Canada goose (<i>Branta canadensis</i>)
	Common Loon (<i>Gavia immer</i>)
	Harbor Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)
	Pink Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus gorboscha</i>)
NT/LC	White-Sided Dolphin (<i>Lagenorhynchus obliquoides</i>)
NT	Chinook Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>)
	Coho Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>)
	Sockeye Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i>)
VU	Gray Whale (<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>)
	Great Blue Heron (<i>Ardea herodias</i>)
	Harbor Porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)
	Humpback Whale (<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>)
	Marbled Murrelet (<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>)
EN/VU	Eulachon (<i>Thaleichthys pacificus</i>)
EN	Killer Whale, transient (<i>Orcinus orca</i>)
CR	Killer Whale, southern resident (<i>Orcinus orca</i>)
NE/DD	Pacific Herring (<i>Clupea pallasii</i>)*
	Pacific Sand Lance (<i>Ammodytes hexapterus</i>)*
	Surf Smelt (<i>Hypomesus pretiosus</i>)*

Species health



TO MEASURE THE STATUS OF MARINE AND COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS WE ASSESS THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS AROUND HOWE SOUND.

Here we looked at how much of the marine and coastal area within the Howe Sound region is designated as protected (Figure 1). In the marine environment 0.7% of Howe Sound is protected. To determine the terrestrial extent of protection we looked at the entire watershed around Howe Sound and the Squamish River. In the terrestrial environment 26.4% of Howe Sound is protected. We used an internationally established target of “30% of marine and coastal areas protected” as the benchmark for a perfect score for this measure.

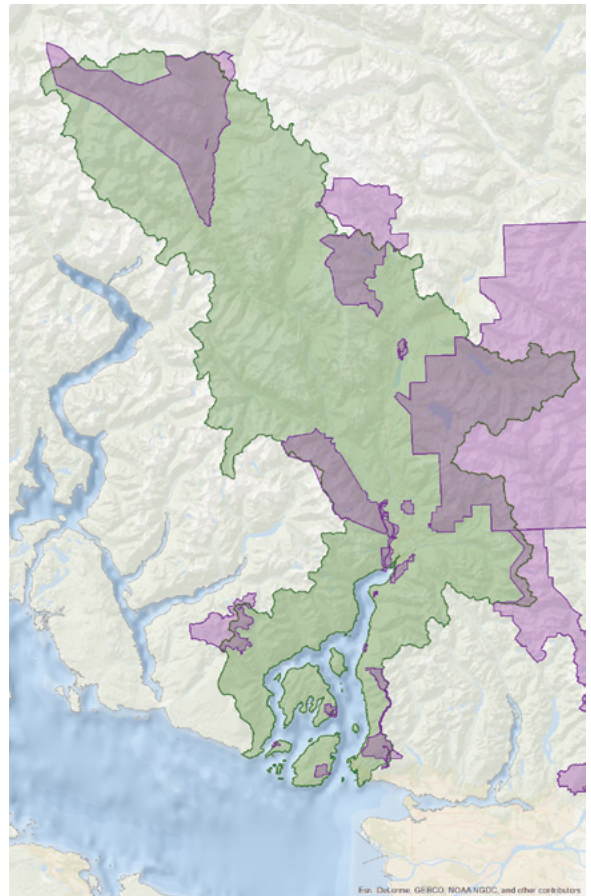


Figure 1. Marine and coastal protected areas (purple) throughout Howe Sound watersheds (green).