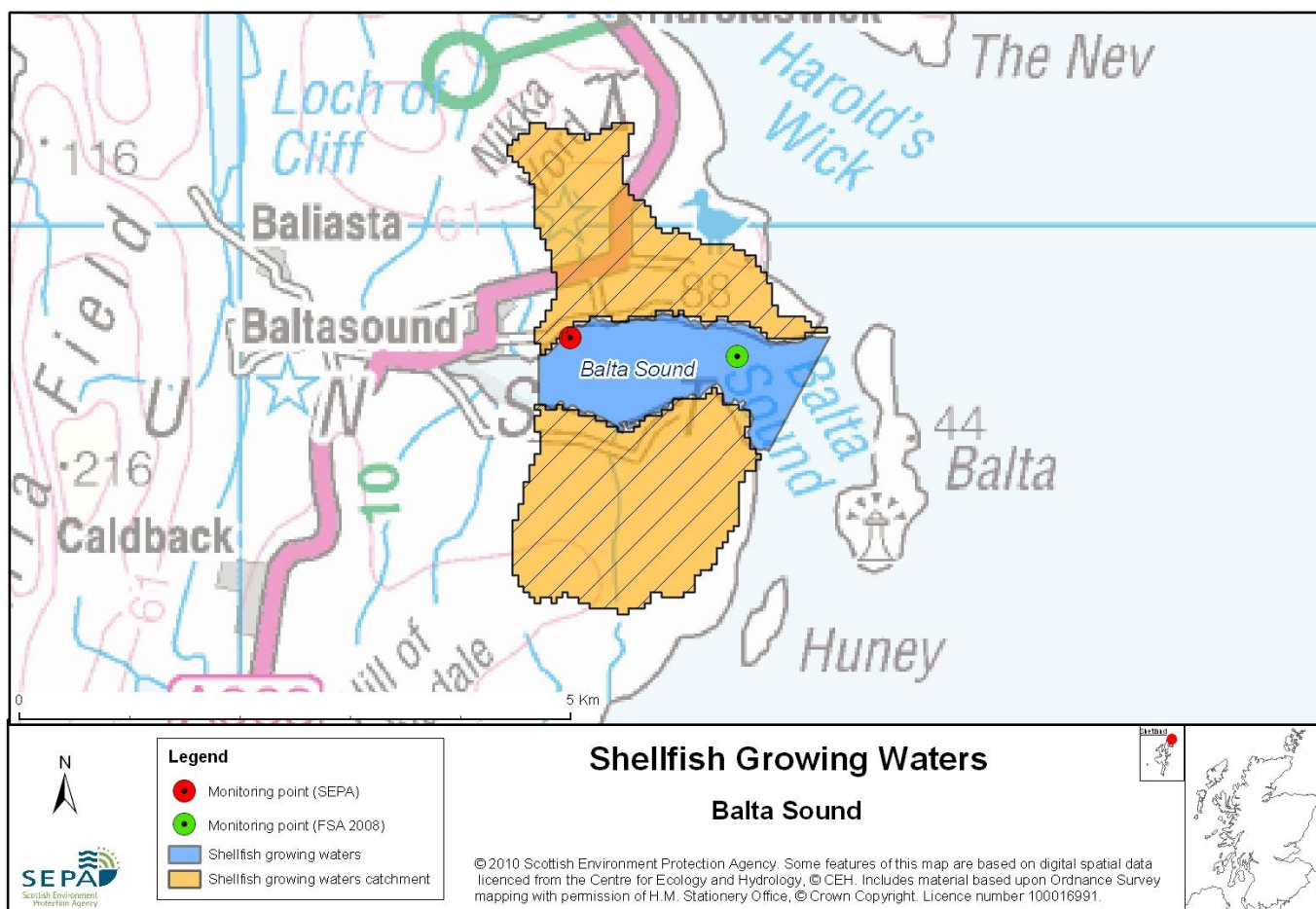


120 Balta Sound



Name	Balta Sound
Report Reference Number	120
WFD Code	UKS79923120
Local Information	An area bounded by lines drawn between HP6271008800 to HP6271008380 and HP6540009000 to HP6490008000, extending to MHWS.
Designated Area (km ²)	1.88
Year of Designation	2008
Sampling Points	Balta Sound at Bunes Pier - HP 63004 08980
Commencement of Monitoring	2008

120.1 Commercial Shellfish Interests

Baltasound is designated as a Shellfish Harvesting Area by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), for the production of common mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) and pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*).

Baltasound: Baltasound Harbour (Common mussels)

2011 = A - April to June

B - July to December

2011 = A - January to March

Baltasound (Pacific Oysters)

2011 = A - April to June

B - July to December

2012 = A - January to March

Category A sites are of the highest standard and means that shellfish can go directly for human consumption however category B requires that shellfish must be depurated, heat-treated or re-laid prior to human consumption.

FSA have carried out a sanitary survey for Balta Sound

For more information on Food Standards Agency Classification please visit:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/scotland/safetyhygienescot/shellmonitorscot/shellclassesscot/>

120.2 Bathymetric Information

The majority of Balta Sound is designated as part of the Shellfish Water, with a small area to the west out with the designation. Balta Sound has a total length of 2.9km and a maximum depth of 14m. The tidal range is 1.9m and there are no basins in this loch.

120.3 Conservation Designations

This Shellfish Water is designated as a Shellfish Harvesting Area by the Food Standards Agency (FSA)

National Nature Reserve (NNR) – [Keen of Hamar](#)

Designated 23/10/1975

Special Protection Area (SPA) – [Hermaness, Saxa Vord and Valla Field](#)

Designated 25/09/2009 for internationally important breeding bird species (Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), Great skua (*Stercorarius skua*), Guillemot (*Uria aalge*), Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*), Red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*), Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*),

This is also a **Water Dependent SPA**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – [Keen of Hamar](#)

Designated 17/03/2005 for internationally important habitats (Base-rich scree, dwarf upland shrub heath, Grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Hill of Colvadale and Sobul](#)

Designated 15/01/1987 for breeding birds species (Arctic skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*), Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)), vascular plants (Sandwort (*Arenaria norvegica*)), Habitat (Calaminarian grassland and serpentine heath)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Valla Field](#)

Designated 05/12/2000 for breeding bird species (Great skua (*Stercorarius skua*), Red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*))

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Skeo Taing to Clugan](#)

Designated 22/11/1990 for geology - Igneous petrology (Ordovician Igneous)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Balta](#)

Designated 25/01/1988 for geology (Coastal Geomorphology of Scotland)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Keen of Hamar](#)

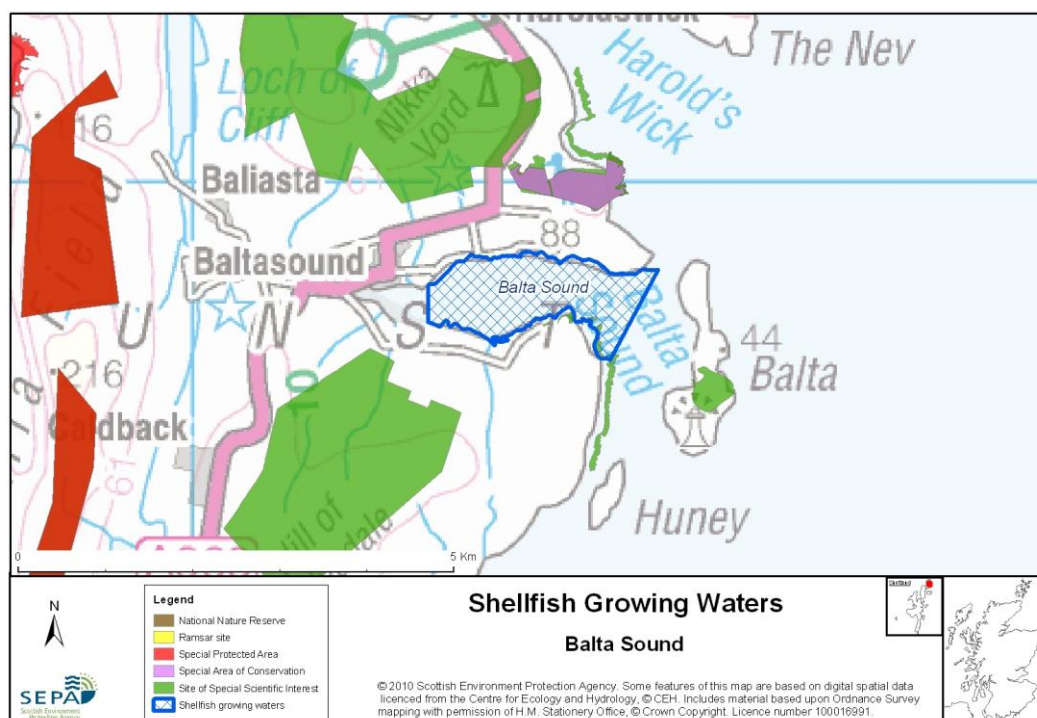
Designated 17/01/1985 for Calaminarian grassland and serpentine heath, Mineralogy of Scotland and Vascular plant assemblage

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Crussa Field and the Heogs](#)

Designated 26/03/1992 for breeding bird species (Arctic skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*), Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)), Calaminarian grassland and serpentine heath, Mineralogy of Scotland, Vascular plant assemblage

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – [Punds to Wick of Hagdale](#)

Designated 04/02/1994 for geology (Igneous petrology - Ordovician Igneous)



120.4 Topography and Land Use – Potential Diffuse Pollution Sources

The majority of the sound is surrounded by improved pasture land, on both sides of Balta Sound. There is a smaller area of Semi-natural grasslands on the southern coast of the south at the mouth of Balta Sound.

The most likely reason for the failing shellfish standards in this shellfish water is diffuse source pollution. This may be from sewage or livestock farming.

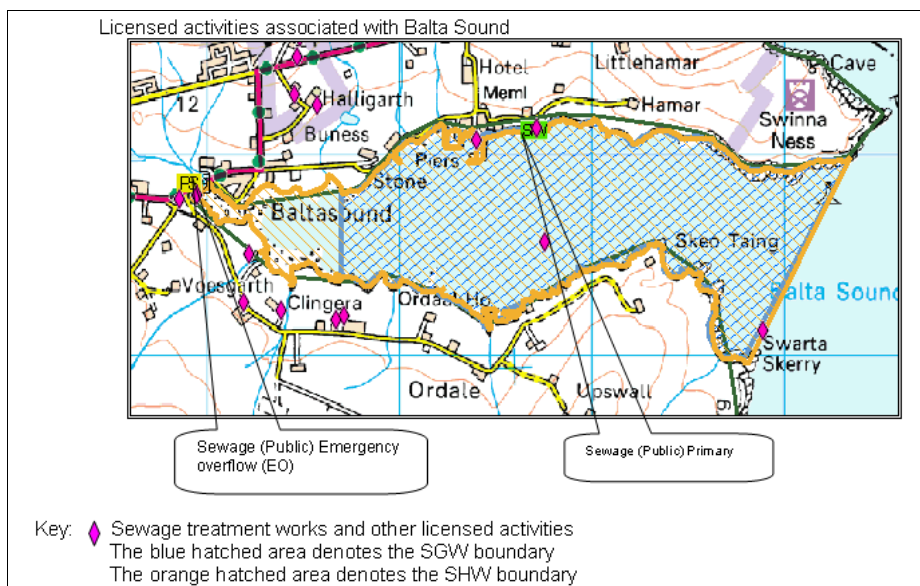
Bacterial source tracking may be required to determine the origin of the diffuse source pollution if shellfish standards continue to fail.

120.5 Point Source Discharge

There are a number of private sewage treatment works around Balta Sound as well as a couple of public sewage treatment works to the north and west of the loch.

There are two fish farms with the designated shellfish water (combined biomass of 570 tonnes) and two out with the shellfish water (combined biomass of 650 tonnes)

Category	Name	Consent No.	NGR	Biomass (t)	Additional Information
Fish Farm	North of Swarta Skerry site	CAR/L/1003067	HP 6499 0826	490	Within Shellfish Water
	West of Skeo Taing site (Balta Harbour)	CAR/L/1003870	HP 6380 0850	80	
	Balta Island site (Balta North and South)	CAR/L/1003872	HP 6580 0830	450	Out with Shellfish Water
	North of Huney site	CAR/L/1003871	HP 6490 0670	200	



120.6 Compliance Monitoring Regime

Site	Current Monitoring	Comments
Balta Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly for faecal coliforms in mussels Twice a year for metals in water Once every three years for metals and organohalogens in mussels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sampled by the FSA

120.7 Compliance History

UKS79923120 - Balta Sound				
	Compliance history for Waters and Biota, excluding faecal coliforms data			Compliance history for faecal coliforms
Year	Overall Result	Imperative	Guideline	Guideline
2008	Pass	No Data	No Data	Fail
2009	Fail	Fail ¹	Fail ¹	Fail
2010	Pass	Pass	Fail ²	Pass

¹ 2009 Nickel Failure for guideline and imperative standard results in overall failure - the only overall shellfish waters failure of 2009. ²Failure of guideline threshold for Nickel in 2010.

This shellfish waters has failed the Guideline standard for faecal coliforms for both 2008 and 2009. Fifty percent of samples failed in Balta Sound in 2009 with no direct seasonal trend; this water body also failed in thirty percent of the samples taken in 2008 with a significant seasonal fail in the 3rd quarter of the year.

120.8 Future Monitoring

The monitoring regime (120.6 Compliance Monitoring Regime) will be followed. In the event of any chemistry parameter failing to meet any EQS, the site will be revisited and resampled for the failed parameter.

Samplers are asked to identify any evidence of visible harm to the shellfish population at the site.

120.9 Improvement Actions

There are currently no improvement actions planned for this designated Shellfish Water.

The Shetland Coastal catchment is a 2nd cycle priority catchment, therefore all measures are required to be in place so that the Shellfish will pass by 2021.

WFD Objectives

Under the Water Framework Directive, the target objectives expect this shellfish water to Pass by 2015 (first River Basin Management Plan Cycle) for Imperative Shellfish Growing Water Standards, with high confidence.

The Guideline Shellfish Growing Water Standards are not predicted to pass until the second River Basin Management Plan Cycle.

Objective	First Cycle 2015	Confidence	Second Cycle 2021	Confidence	Third Cycle 2027	Confidence
Imperative Shellfish Growing Waters Standard	Pass by 2015	High	Pass by 2021	High	Pass by 2027	High
Guideline Shellfish Growing Waters Standard	Fail by 2015	Low	Pass by 2021	Low	Pass by 2027	Low

120.10 Summary of Actions

Action	Deadline
No improvement actions currently planned	N/A