A collaborative monitoring programme for seagrass health in the Southwest

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Biosciences

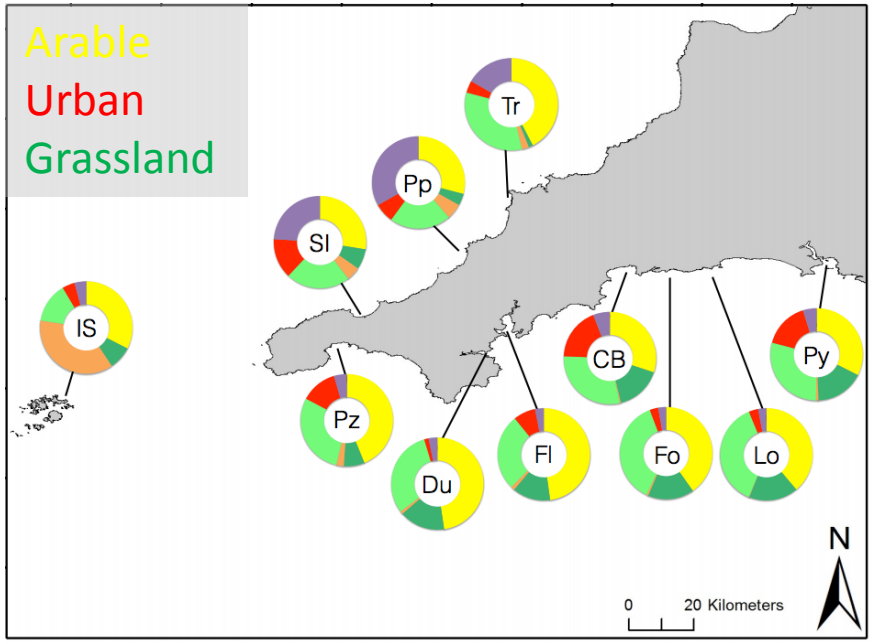
Seagrass

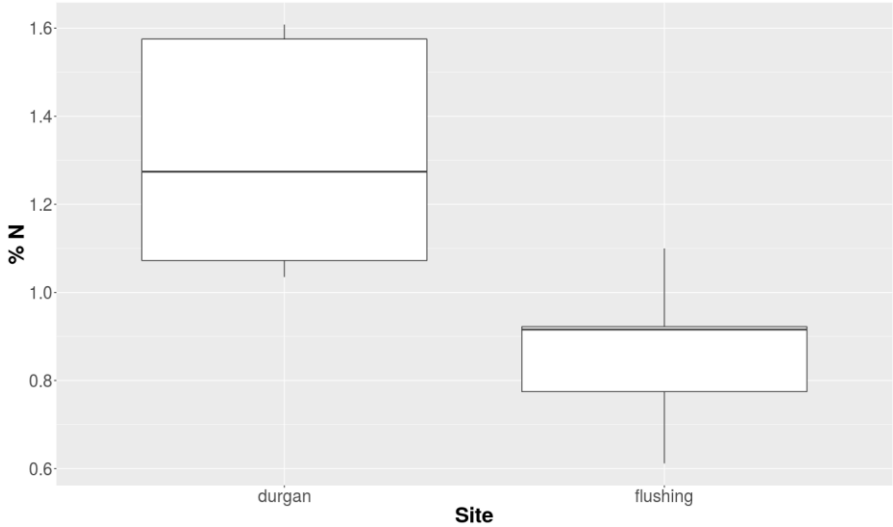
- Widespread globally and abundant in the UK in inter and subtidal coastal habitats
- Store ~15% of ocean sediment carbon
- Other habitat benefits: food source, biodiversity hotspots, reduced turbidity and sediment stabilization
- Seagrass beds are in global decline (~7% yr^{-1})
- Coastal development is mostly blamed but this covers a myriad of threats…

Student-led research projects

- Third year bioscience students honours project Dec-April to investigate local seagrass health…
- Two sites with hypothesised distinct nutrient loading around Falmouth: Flushing and Durgan

Local variability in land-use and runoff





Seagrass fine root nitrogen content at Durgan and Flushing

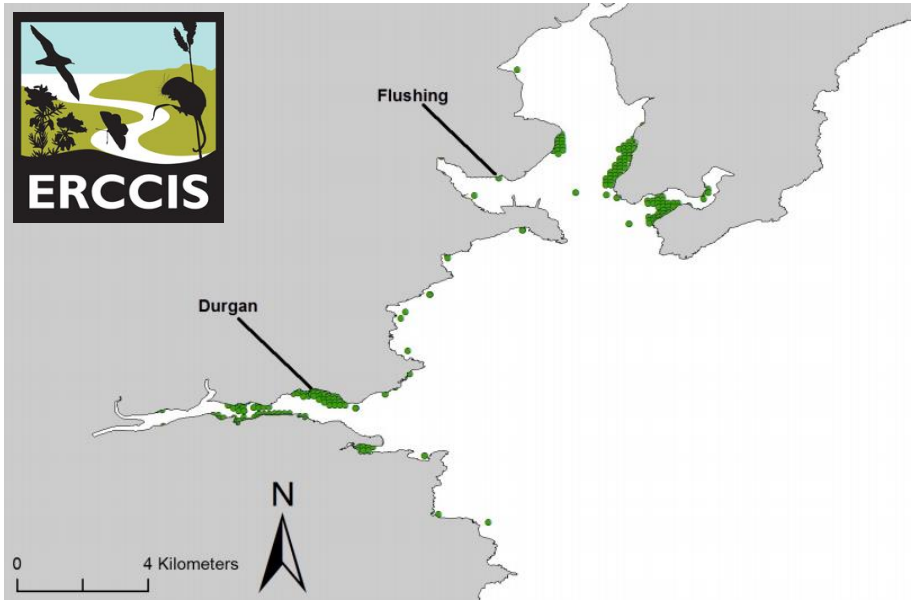
This further led to differences in blade size and photosynthetic capacity…

Next steps…

Student-led, long-term monitoring program for seagrass habitats across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Measured variables to include:
Area, Density, salinity, depth, temperature, sediment C, epiphyte cover, N isotope data and benthic community

Possible collaborative input on:
Isotope analyses, drone mapping, benthic diversity quantification/ID and carbon measurement



Thanks…

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