

## Estuary & Coastal Management Schemes

Arising from European legislation, principally the Habitats (1992) and Birds (1994) Directives, U K Legislation requires the Development and Operation of Schemes of Management for all Designated Marine Sites.

Schemes must:

- Consider a range of subjects (eg agriculture & industrial development, human activity on sea walls, military activity, fishing & angling, shoreline management & flood protection and boating & shipping)
- Identify possible problems (eg damage to saltmarsh from wash, impact of dredging on sub-tidal mud, pollution, disturbance of birds and abrasion of sea-bed by anchor chains).
- Agree what action should be taken by whom.

Throughout the development of Schemes we have insisted that all claims to activities being a problem should be supported by scientific data. For example:

The final report of a 3 year bird disturbance study on the Stour & Orwell, has shown that walkers with and without dogs cause 55% of the total disturbance, and that whilst motor boats cause 16%, sailing boats (including those under power) cause <3%. Fast sudden movement or loud noises from any source are the primary causes of disturbance. **This demonstrates the importance of establishing scientific data over personal impressions or “received wisdom”.**