

North Devon's UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Juliet Bidgood, Vice Chair - 12th July 2012



"world class by nature"



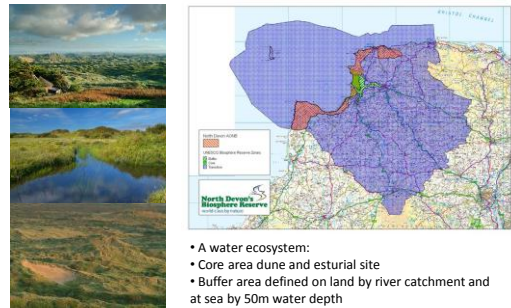
The designation: origins and purpose

- UNESCO Biosphere Reserves established 1976
- Created in 2002 preparing to celebrate 10th anniversary
- Unique to England as the first 'modern' designation

• "actively seeks to balance the needs of natural and human environments through sustainable development"



Geographical extent of the Biosphere



- A water ecosystem:
- Core area dune and estuarial site
- Buffer area defined on land by river catchment and at sea by 50m water depth

The Biosphere Reserve Partnership



A multi disciplinary partnership: local authorities, built and natural environment agencies, forestry, farming and fisheries representatives, businesses and community groups, arts organisations and education providers.

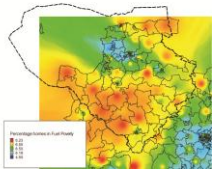
Environmental and land use attributes



- Population 155,000
- Area of 3,850 km²
- 95% open land
- Remote from national infrastructure "extreme rural"
- Agriculture, tourism and service industries (public sector)
- Also some smart industries; pharmaceuticals, leisure and high value food production.
- Low wage economy – need for economic development.



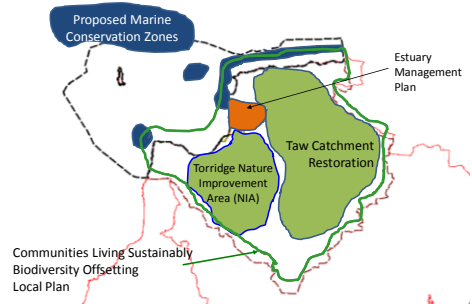
Challenges and opportunities



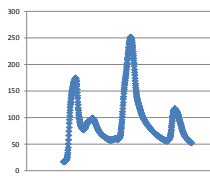
- **Challenges:**
- Related to low wages/rurality vulnerabilities to fuel and food poverty
- Fuel price increases and impact on cost of goods and services
- Climate change risks and 'ecosystem failure'; increased flooding and extreme weather events

- **Opportunities:**
- Lead exemplary community and sustainable development
- Internalise and 'green' economies
- Reduce exposure to risk through deploying ecosystem services approach

Current landscape scale projects



An example of ecosystem failure



Hydrograph of Taw at Umberleigh 6th Oct 1988

- Surges in water run off due to lack of attenuation in uplands
- Increased silt and pollution running into rivers affecting water quality



Winter rain present and c2050(±10) (UKCP09)

