

Building climate resilience by focusing on habitats that benefit critical species

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Point Blue

Conservation science
for a healthy planet.

Background

The marine environment along the west coast of the United States is known as the California Current Ecosystem

- highly productive ecosystem
- coastal driven upwelling
- biologically important species
- important economies
- increasing human population

Need to understand conservation priorities and how these priorities align with industrial activities and other threats.

Goal

To identify habitats where conservation investments are likely to benefit critical species off California and the West Coast

Methods

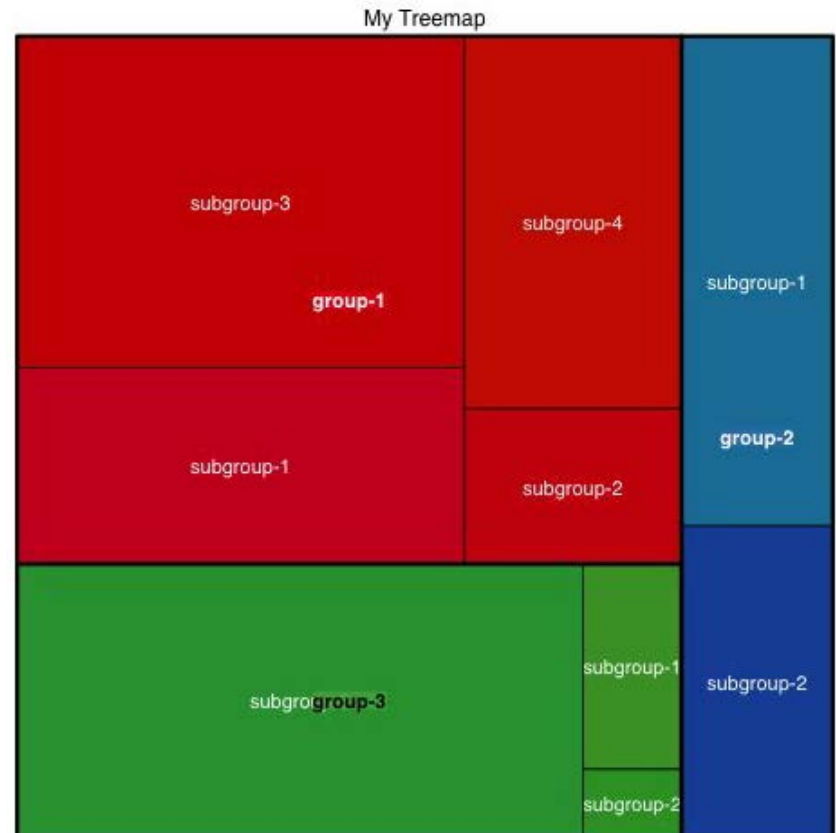
Reviewed 33 ocean documents produced from 2007 to 2018 with U.S. West Coast focus

- California Current (7)
- CA (15)
- OR (3)
- WA (5)

Documents from literature review and stakeholder input

Threats, habitats, and species

Data summarized in treemaps



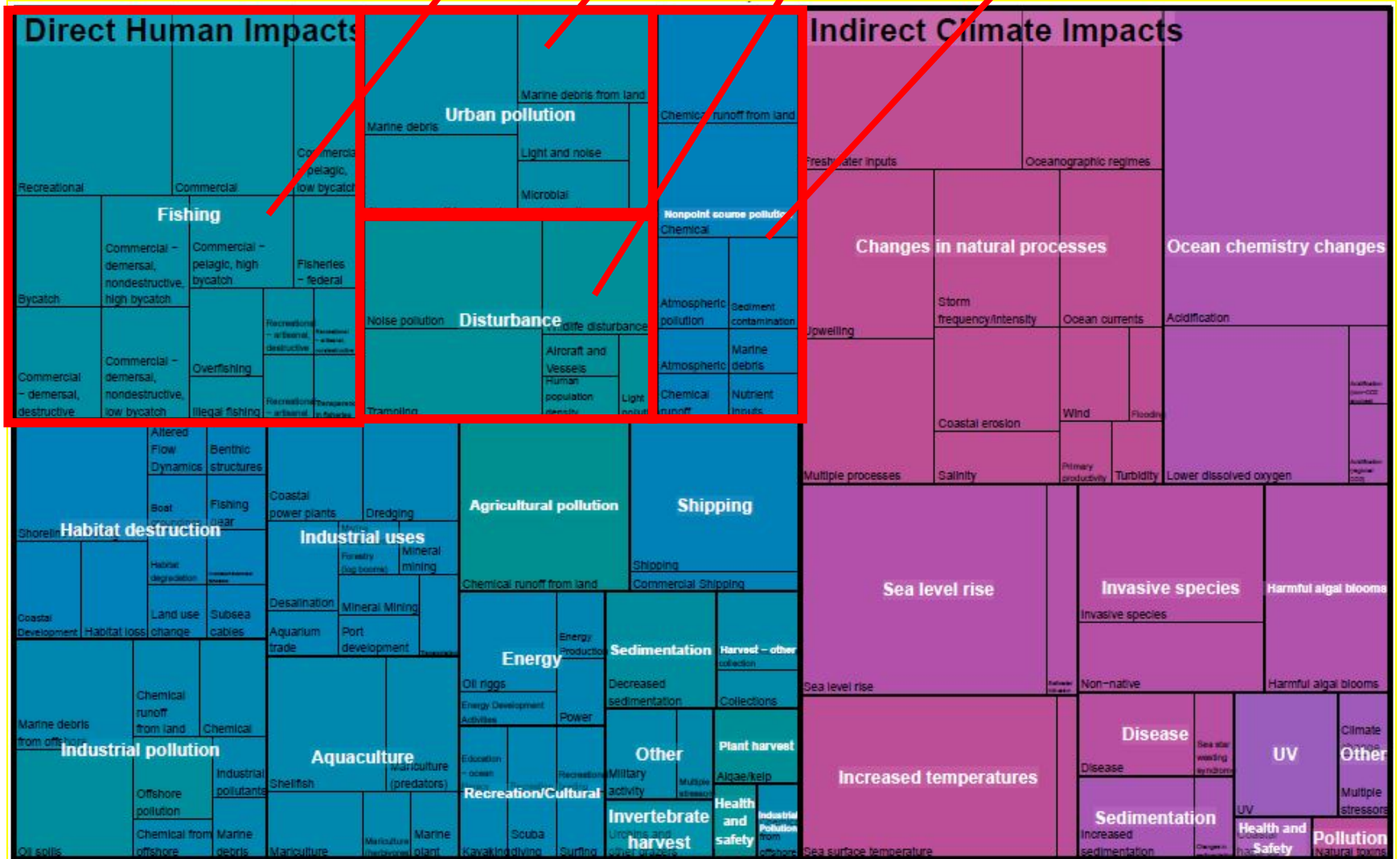
Threats

Urban pollution

Nonpoint source pollution

Fishing

Disturbance



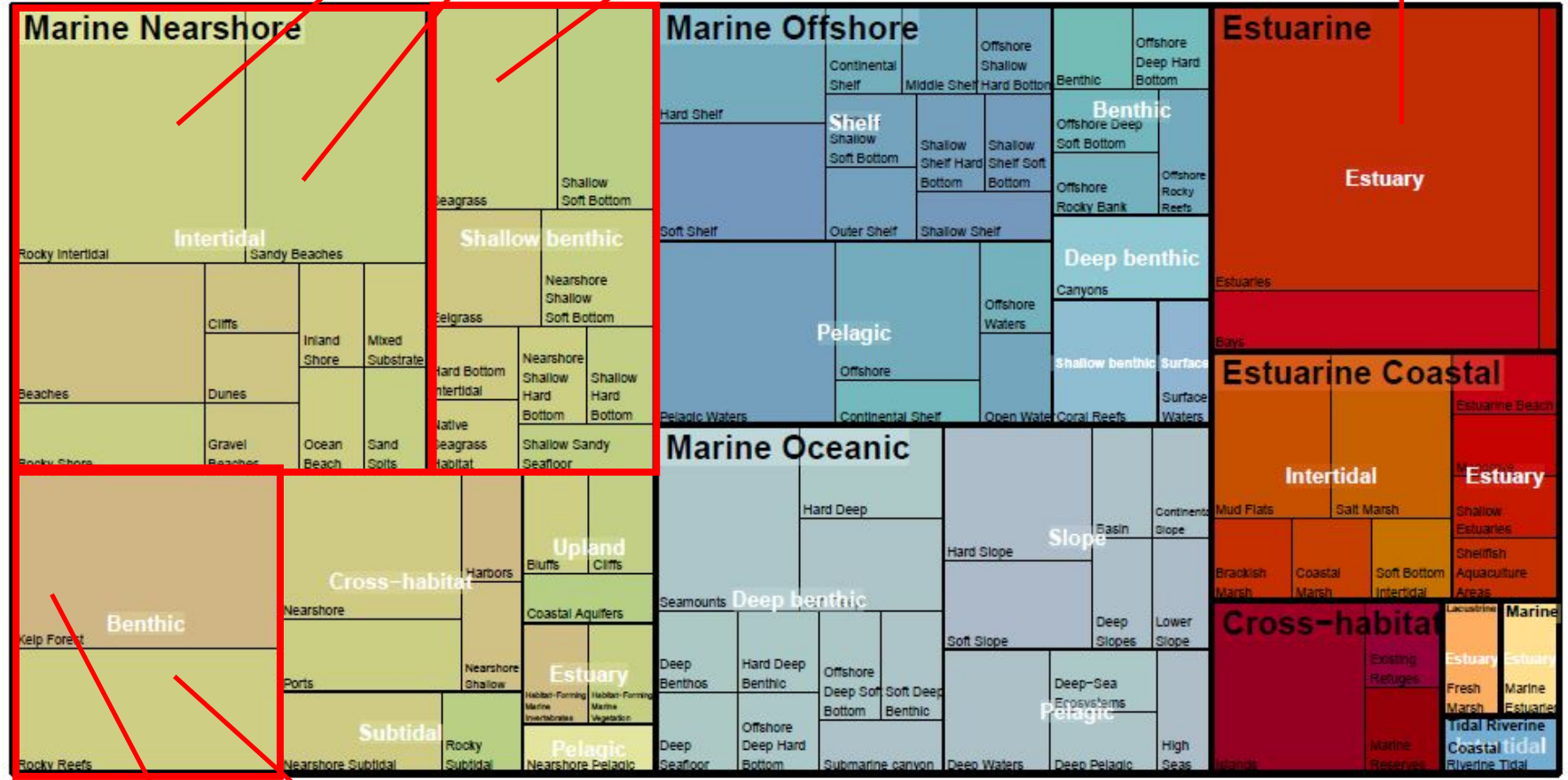
Habitats

Rocky intertidal

Beaches

Seagrass

Estuaries

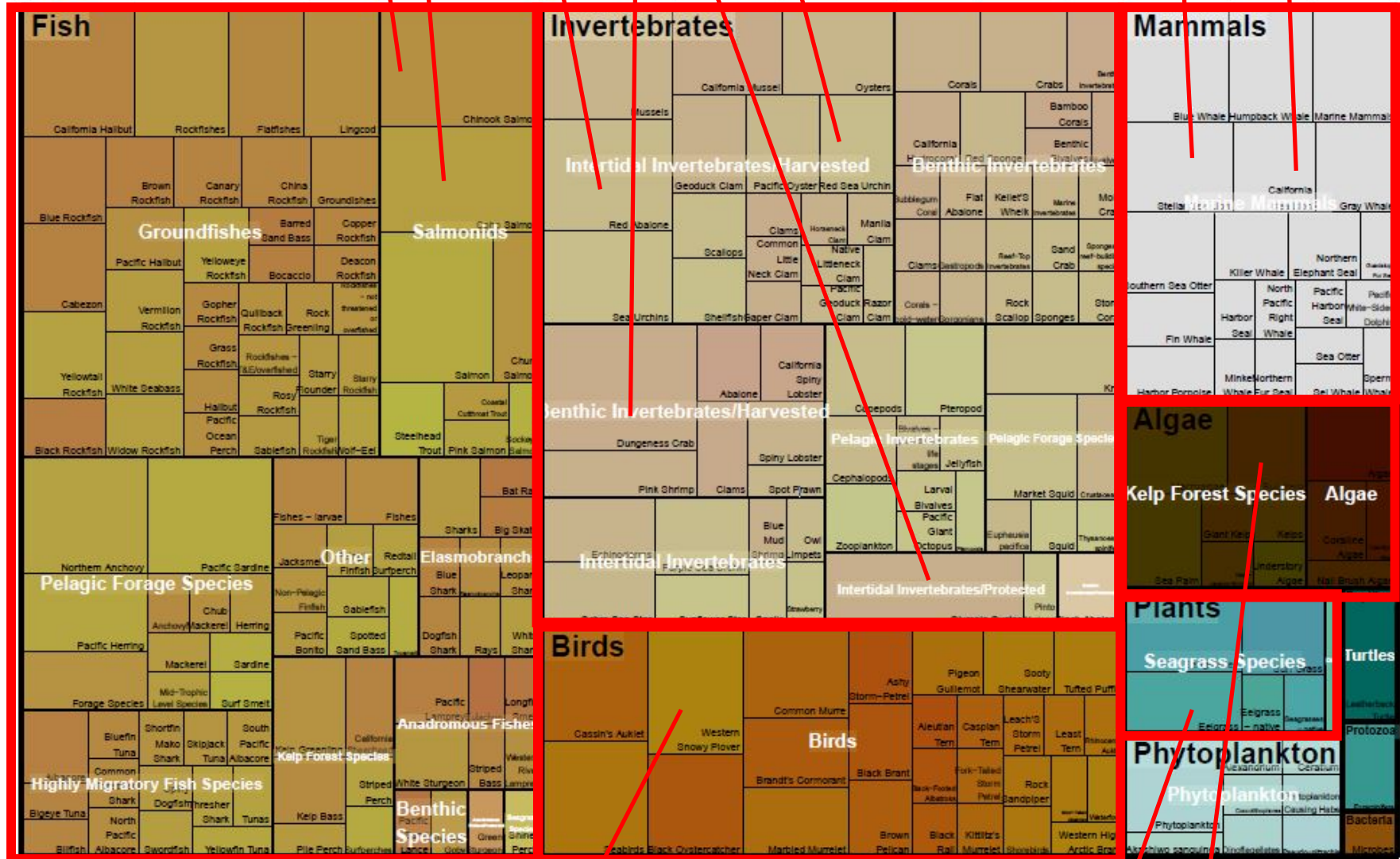


Kelp forest

Rocky reefs

Species

Chinook salmon
 Coho salmon
 red abalone
 Dungeness crab
 Olympia oyster
 red sea urchin
 Rocky Starfish
 California sea lion
 Stellar sea lion



western snowy plover

eelgrass
 bull kelp

Summary

- Threats from human activities were greater than the threats of climate change.
- We found that marine nearshore habitats and estuaries were more heavily impacted than offshore habitats.
- Nearshore habitats host most ecologically and economically important species (e.g., Dungeness crab, bull kelp, salmon).
- Managing human threats to nearshore habitats could benefit these species, giving them time to adapt to a changing climate.



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