

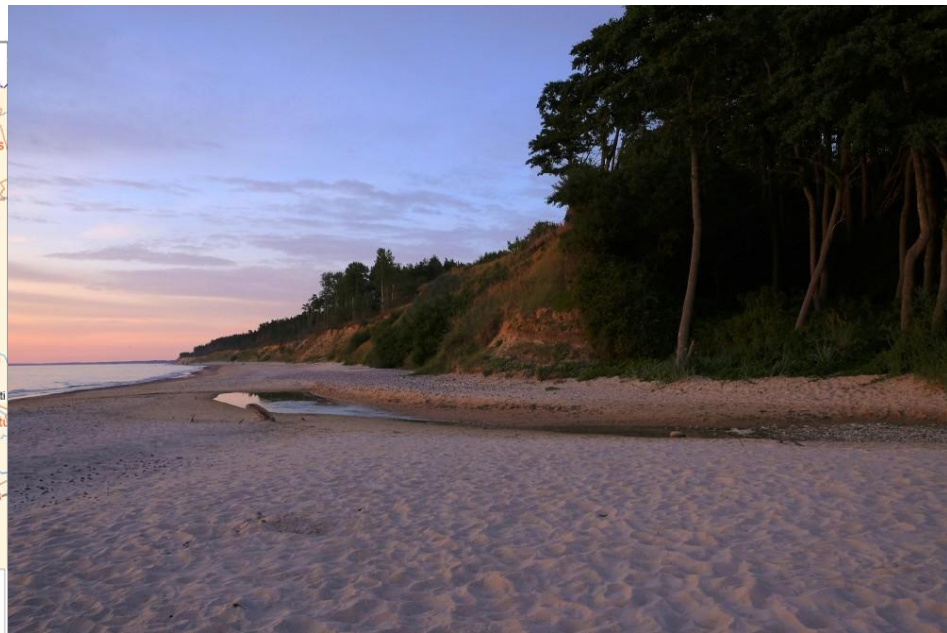
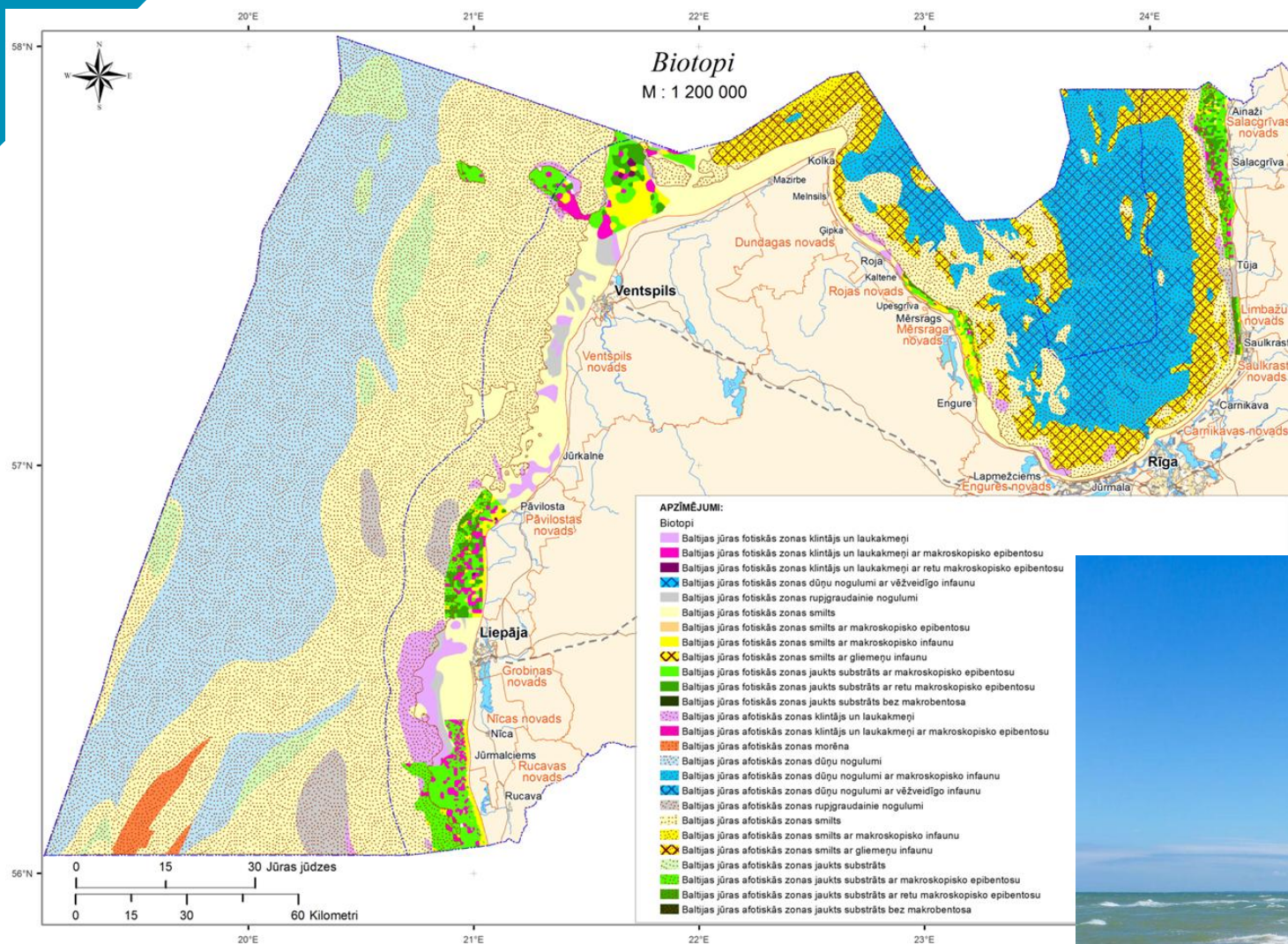
Mapping of underwater habitats in Latvian EEZ: findings and challenges

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Latvian Institute of Aquatic Ecology



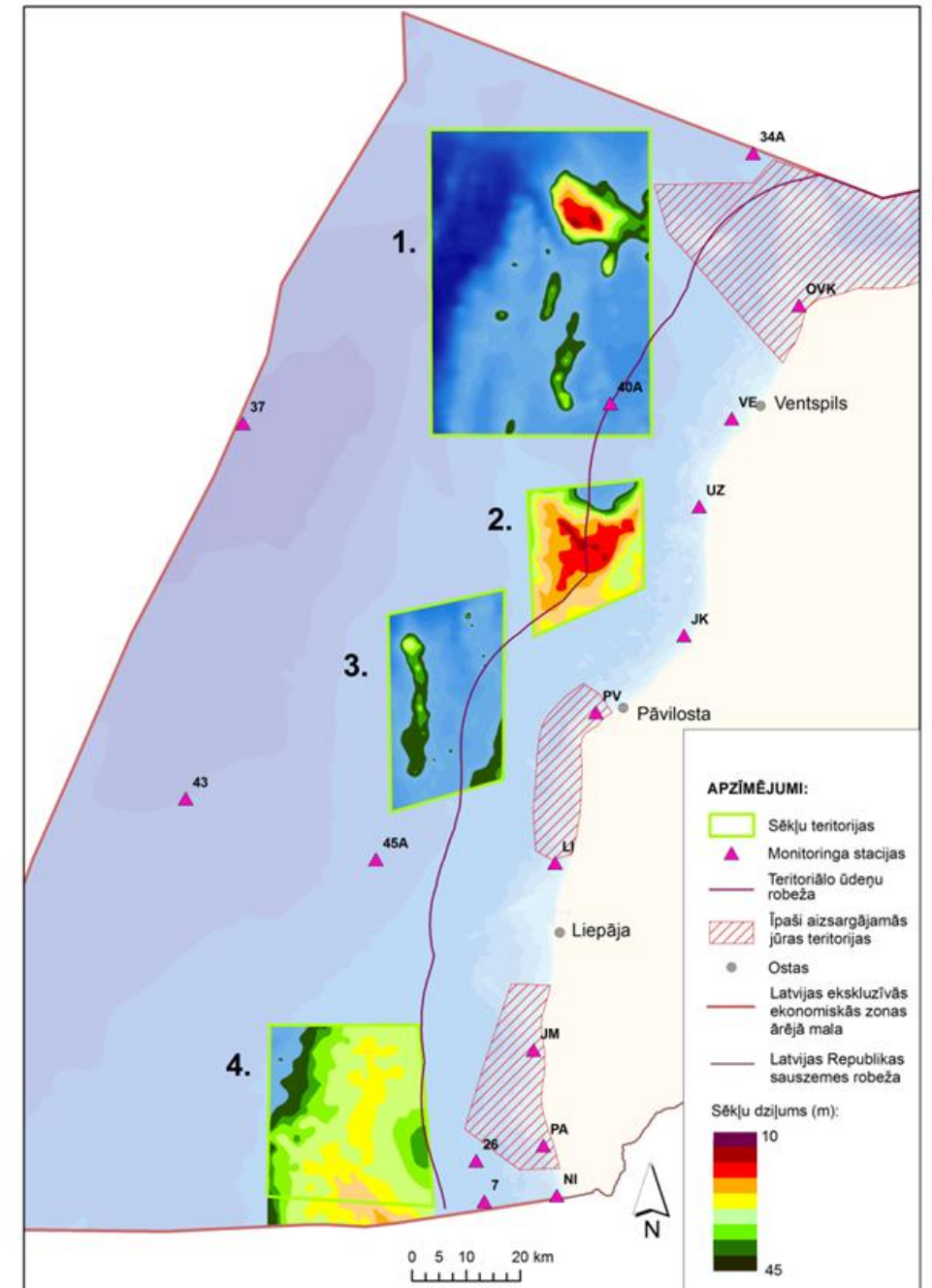
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Sand banks???

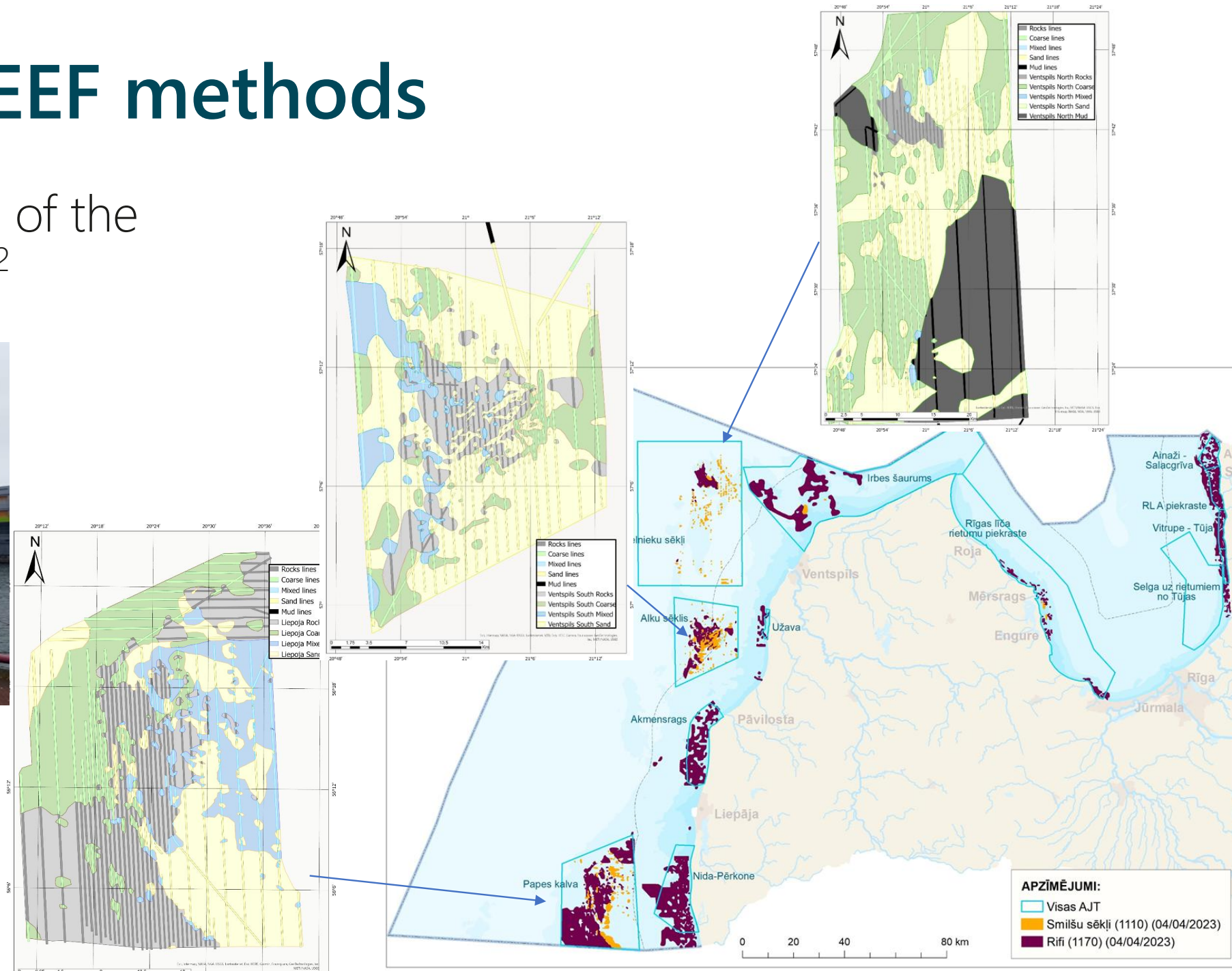
= LIFE REEF project





LIFE REEF methods

- Acoustic scanning of the territories, 4116 km²





Methods

- Underwater video observations
- Habitat identification
- Diving





Looking int

Temp
Depth
Turns

Temp 6.1C
Depth 42.6
Turns -41

sat=0
56°9'
20°1'

sat=0
56°6'14.7"
20°11'25.0"

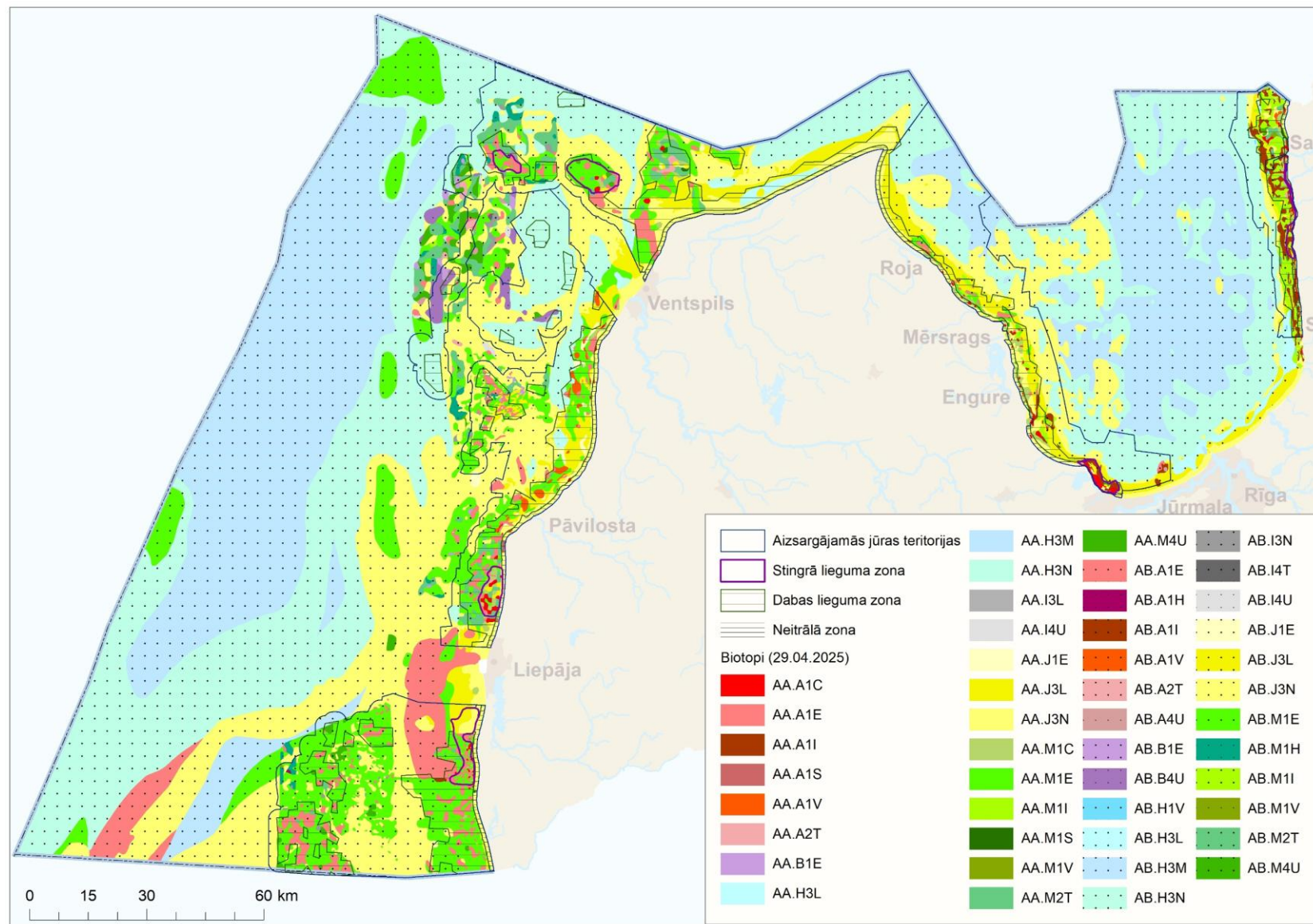
Lights
Gain
C.Tilt

Lights 99%
Gain 100 %
C.Tilt 33 %





Protected Stony reef habitats (1170)





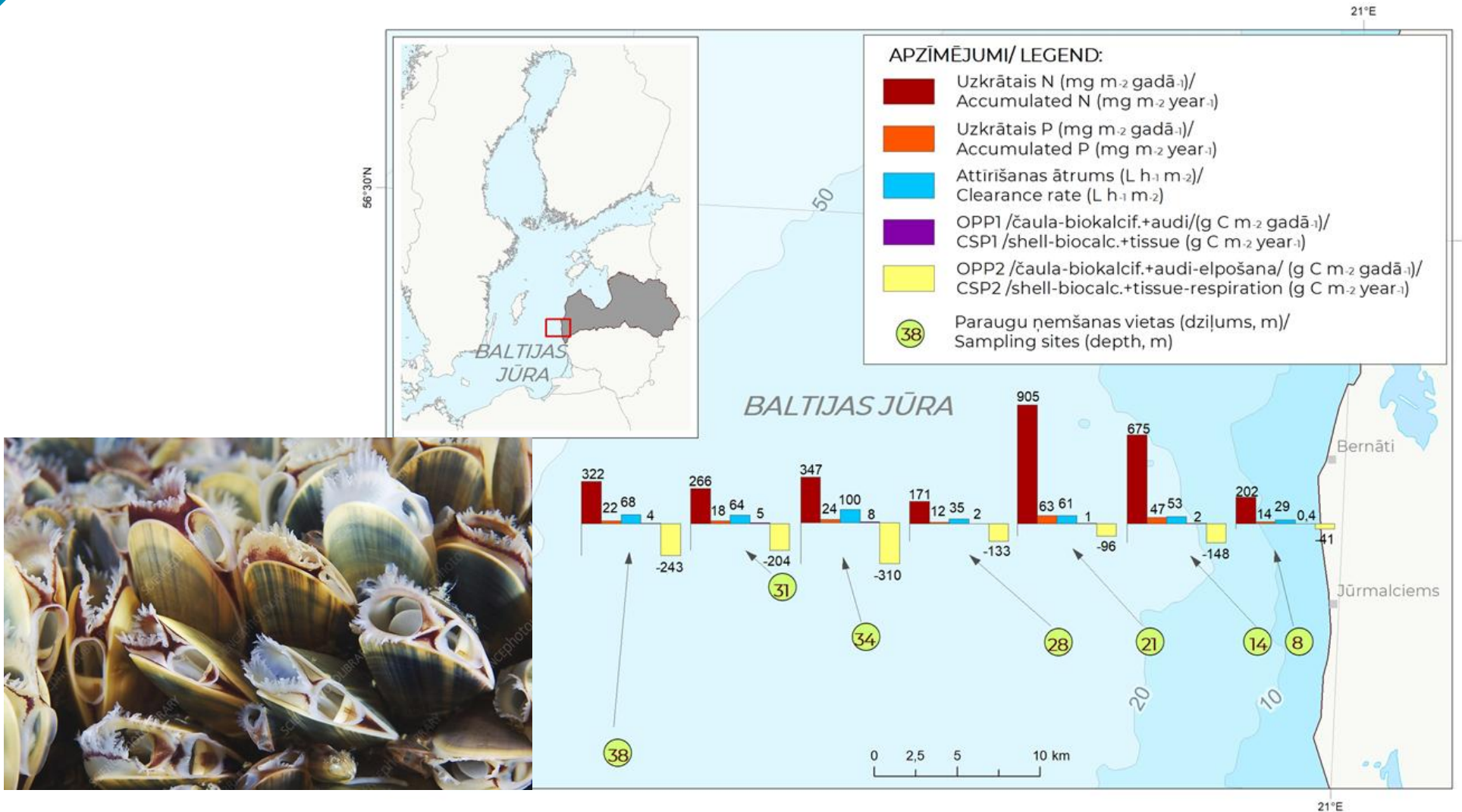
Deep reef habitats vs. coastal habitats





Distribution of ecosystem services

example of nutrient storage





Does it matter where to protect habitats? **Yes!**

- We must protect the most complex habitats
- With most of ecological functions- important for fish, birds and humans
- With most of ecosystem services important for human wellbeing!





Take home messages...

- Stony reefs in Latvian territorial waters and EEZ are widely distributed and prominent habitats
- But most valuable habitats occur in coastal waters where marine protected areas overlap with other sea-uses and most of the spatial conflicts can arise.





Thank you for
attention!



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