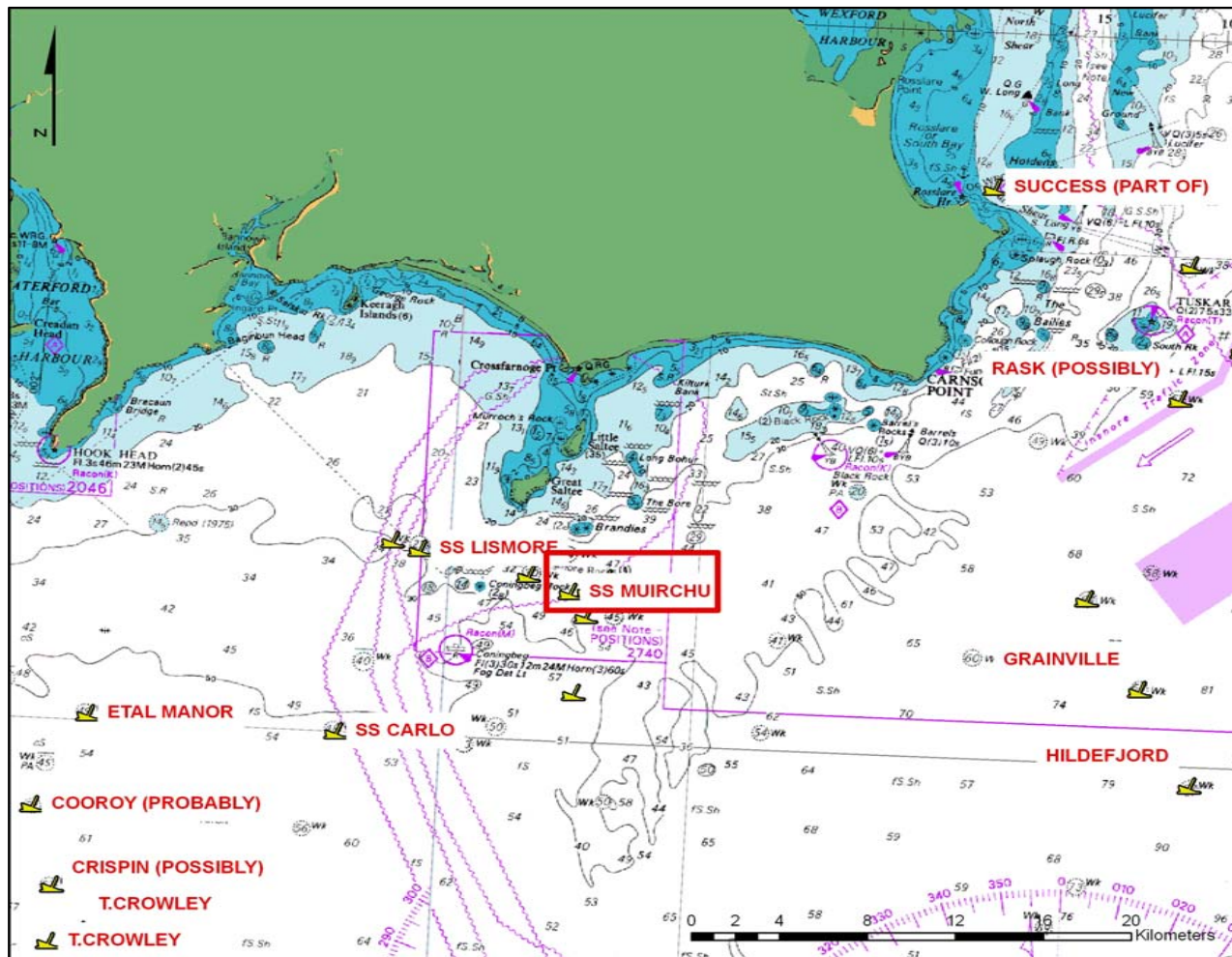
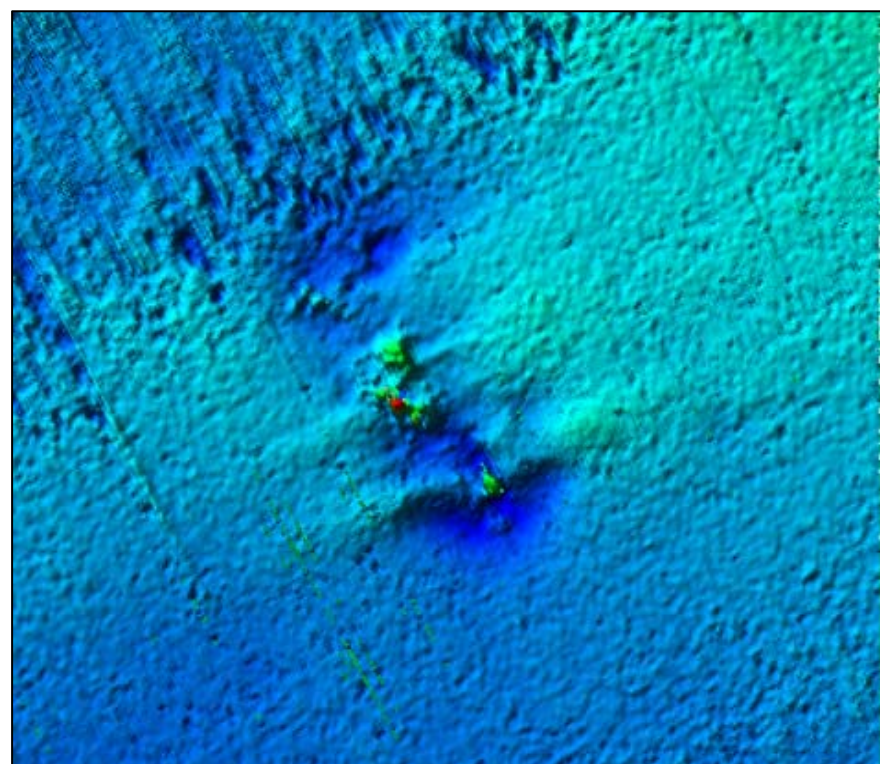


## WRECK IMAGERY



Above the location of the SS *Muirchú* off the south coast and below an image of the SS *Muirchú* from the shaded relief acquired during the INFOMAR survey CV09\_03, South eastern priority area.



## LOCATION

**Location** 19 km South West of Carnsore Point

**Coordinates** -06° 35' 06.552" W  
52° 04' 08.400" N

**Depth of Water** 48 m

## VESSEL INFORMATION

**Vessel type** Cruiser

**Flag** Irish

**Vessel Dimensions** 47.4 m (l),  
7.46 m (b), 3.8 m (d)

**Date of building** 1908

## DETAILS OF SINKING

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1947 the SS *Muirchú* was foundered off the Saltee Islands. The SS *Muirchú* was taken over by the Marine and Coastwatching Service from the Department of Fisheries and Agriculture in 1939 when World War II began. In 1947 the SS *Muirchú* was sold to Hammond Lane Foundry by the Marine and Coastwatching Service. While on passage to Dublin she sank. The entire crew were safely evacuated.



## SS MUIRCHÚ



## INFOMAR WRECK INFORMATION SHEET 16

## VESSEL HISTORY

The SS *Muirchú* was built in the Liffey Dockyard in 1908 as a fishery protection cruiser and was named the *Helga II*. She was then under the control of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) until she was taken over by the Admiralty in March 1915 when she became officially described as "His Majesty's Yacht Helga", an armed steam yacht. At this time the "II" was dropped from her name and she served as an anti-submarine patrol vessel as well as undertaking escort duty in the Irish Sea. In April 1918 she was credited with the sinking of a submarine off the Isle of Man and for the remainder of her career she carried a star on her funnel as an award for this achievement. In October of the same year the RMS *Leinster* was torpedoed off the Kish where 517 people were lost. The *Helga* was fuelling in Dun Laoghaire at the time and managed to rescue ninety of the passengers. However, it was for her shelling of Liberty Hall in April 1916 that the "Helga" is best known. She was later used to transport the British auxiliary troops known as Black and Tans around the coast when many of the roads in Ireland were rendered impassable by Irish forces in the War of Independence. Eventually the *Helga* was handed over to the Irish Free State in August 1923 and was renamed the SS *Muirchú*. She thus became one of the first ships in the newly established Irish Navy. However, in the following year the vessel was returned to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to carry on her task of fishery protection. It was not until the actual day on which the Second World War was declared that the Marine and Coastwatching Service was again established and on 12 December 1939 the SS *Muirchú* was taken over by this Service from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

## DIVE INFORMATION

Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. As the SS *Muirchú* is over 100 years old, it is protected and a license is required to dive the site which can be obtained from:

[www.archaeology.ie/servlet/apply\\_licence.jsp](http://www.archaeology.ie/servlet/apply_licence.jsp)

Under the legislation all diving on protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for archaeological underwater material is subject to such licensing requirements.

## ABOUT INFOMAR

Covering some 125,000 square kilometres of underwater territory, INFOMAR (the **IN**tegrated Mapping **FO**r the Sustainable Development of Ireland's **MAR**ine Resource) project will produce integrated mapping products covering the physical, chemical and biological features of the seabed. INFOMAR will initially focus on 26 priority bays and three priority areas around the coast delivering: hydrographic maps, illustrating everything from sandbars to underwater canyons and cliffs; seabed classification maps showing the type of sediment on the seabed. INFOMAR provides key baseline data to support coastal and inshore development. Making this information available to the world aims to stimulate research and development of Ireland's 220 million acres under the sea. The data will be of interest to fisheries managers, aquaculture operators, coastal zone managers and engineers, offshore engineering interests, licensing authorities and those carrying out environmental impact assessments. Indeed this unique dataset is of interest in its own right because of the sheer volume of data collected

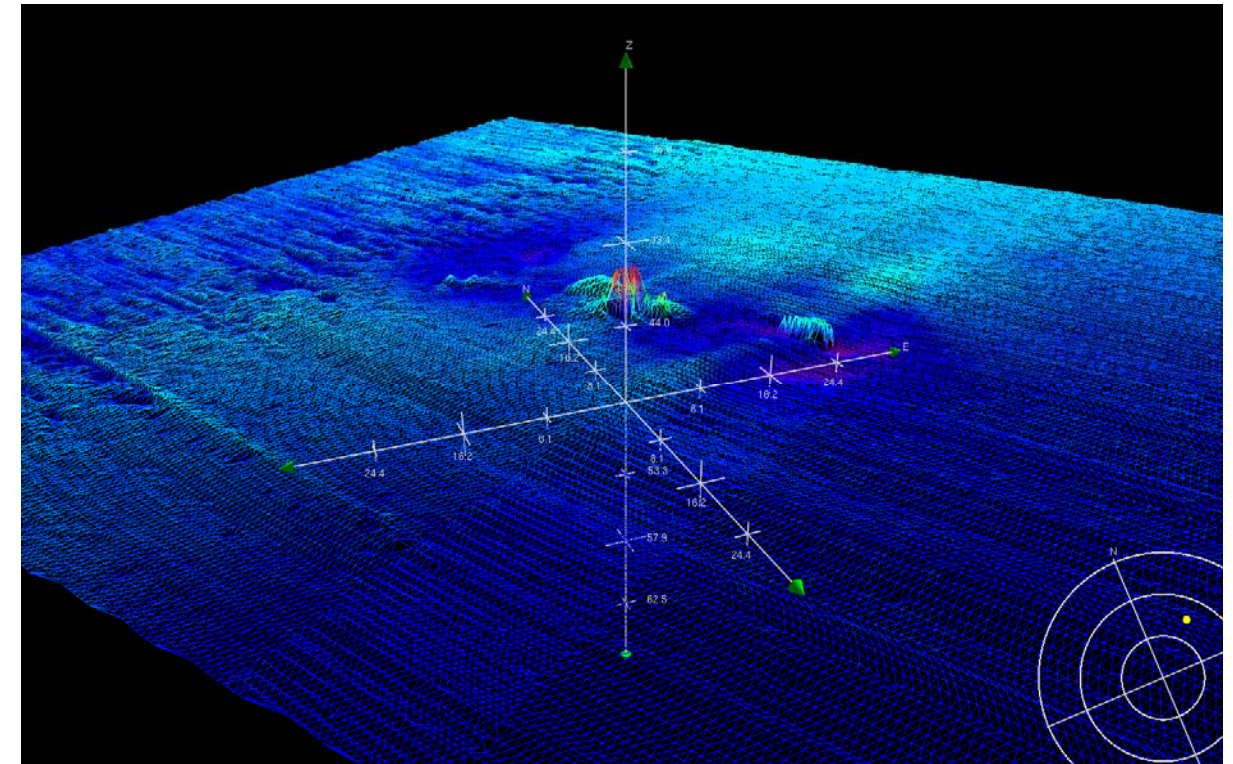
## FURTHER READING/REFERENCES

[www.infomar.ie](http://www.infomar.ie)

[www.irishwrecksonline.net](http://www.irishwrecksonline.net)

[http://www.archaeology.ie/en/Shipwreck Database/](http://www.archaeology.ie/en/ShipwreckDatabase/)

## WRECK IMAGERY



Above a 3D image of the SS *Muirchú* using Caris Hips & Sips Hydrographic software and below the SS *Muirchú* at dock.

