

**SF/JD/0331/09**

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2. The Minister for  
Environment,  
Sustainability and  
Housing

**From:** Louise George  
Marine Branch  
Nature, Access and  
Marine Unit

Tel: 02920 801258

**Date:** 3 September 2009

cc **These are mandatory:**

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PS First Minister  
PS Deputy First Minister  
PS Minister for Finance  
and Public Service  
Delivery  
PS Counsel General  
PS Minister for Rural  
Affairs

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Mark Drakeford  
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Anna McMorrin

**Officials:**

PS Permanent Secretary  
Clive Bates  
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Gareth Hall  
Rory O'Sullivan  
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Claire Bennett  
Chris Lea  
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Marilyn Lewis  
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**STRATEGY FOR MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN WALES AND PROPOSED  
APPROACH FOR IDENTIFYING MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES IN WALES**

**Issue**

1. To approve the publication of the draft strategy for marine protected areas (MPAs) and the proposed approach for identifying new marine conservation zones (MCZs) in Welsh inshore waters (i.e. out to the 12 nautical mile limit).

**Timing**

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2. Priority. The aim is for you to launch the draft strategy for public consultation at the Wales Biodiversity Conference on 16 September. A decision is therefore required by 10 September to allow sufficient time to make arrangements for printing the draft strategy (in non-glossy format), posting to the internet and circulation.

### **Recommendation**

3. That you:
  - a) agree the Statement of Information (at doc 1) and publication of the decision report;
  - b) agree the proposed approach and suggested governance structure for the MCZ Project in Wales (at doc 2), and indicate whether you have any views on the proposed membership of the project groups;
  - c) approve the content of the draft strategy for MPAs in Wales at doc 3; and
  - d) agree to launch the draft strategy for a 12 week consultation at the Wales Biodiversity Conference on 16 September (briefing for this event will be submitted separately).

### **Background**

4. The Statement of Information at doc 1 contains the facts and analyses relating to the submission that may be published in accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's Code of Practice. This statement should be read in conjunction with the following information, which is considered exempt from publication under the "Code of Practice on Public Access to Information".
5. The scope of the draft strategy covers the Welsh marine and coastal areas that Welsh Ministers currently have jurisdiction - out to the 12 nautical mile limit.
6. We have shared the draft strategy with the UK Government and it has been circulated to interested policy leads within the Assembly Government. While no specific areas of concern have been identified at this stage, we recognise that given the complex mix of activities in the sea, delivering this strategy will be a challenge, particularly in relation to fisheries management and the renewable energy agenda. The approach we have proposed below has been developed with this in mind.

### **Proposed approach in Wales**

7. It is already Assembly Government agreed policy that, given the area of the Welsh coast and seas already protected, the main focus of future conservation and protection activity should be to ensure that all of our marine protected areas (MPAs) are appropriately managed; and to complement existing sites by ensuring that the most important parts of our marine environment is afforded a high level protection in order to underpin the ecosystem approach. This would involve designating areas of the sea where the full range of biodiversity present would be protected from all damaging and disturbing activities.

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8. In line with this policy, officials propose that we use the MCZ mechanism provided by the Marine and Coastal Access Bill to establish a small number of MCZs that are afforded a high level of protection. We therefore intend to establish a project for the identification and designation of these sites in Wales; 'The MCZ Project, Wales'. This will be an Assembly Government led project managed by the Marine Branch within the Nature, Access and Marine Unit of DESH, and we intend to establish a Steering Group, a Technical Advisory Group and a Stakeholder Group to manage the site selection process.

#### **Different policy intent and approach from England**

9. Our policy intent and approach differs from that in England and publication of the draft strategy, as proposed, will highlight these differences.
10. In contrast to Wales, the existing MPA network in England makes up only 9% of the inshore waters. Defra's policy intent is to fulfil its contribution to an ecologically coherent UK network of MPAs by making greater use of the new Marine and Coastal Access Bill powers to designate MCZs. We anticipate that in comparison with Wales, this will result in a higher number of MCZs in English waters and that these MCZs will have a range of protection levels afforded to them; from highly protected sites to areas where there are minimal restrictions on activities.
11. We are aware that some NGOs are of the view that our planned approach in Wales is not ambitious enough and that Wales should also be aiming to designate a greater number of MCZs with a range of protection levels. We may be criticised for this and there may be pressure on us to use the MCZ tool more widely by selecting multi-use sites (where minimal restrictions apply and where some activities will be able to continue) throughout Welsh waters. However, as indicated, we are starting from a different base in Wales (where 40% of our inshore waters are already protected for their conservation value).
12. Advice from CCW indicates that the designation of highly protected sites through the MCZ mechanism coupled with better management of our existing European marine sites should be sufficient to deliver our contribution towards an ecologically coherent UK network of marine protected areas. It is envisaged that any new MCZs may well be within existing protected areas – i.e. affording the most ecologically important parts of these sites a higher degree of protection. The draft strategy acknowledges these points and makes clear that the MCZ Project Wales is the **first phase of activity** to deliver MCZs by 2012. This approach does not preclude the designation of further sites after 2012, if Welsh Ministers consider that appropriate and necessary to deliver an ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas. We anticipate that monitoring and reporting arrangements post 2012 will inform Wales' contribution to the UK network and will identify whether there is a need for additional protected sites in Welsh waters. A key factor that also needs to be borne in mind here is that effective management of the sites is crucial if their conservation objectives are to be fulfilled and that there is a risk that having more sites will spread our management resources too thinly.

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13. Defra is establishing 4 regional projects for the MCZ process in England; Eastern Channel Project, Finding Sanctuary (South-West) Project, Irish Sea Project and the North Sea Project. In contrast to the approach in Wales, these projects will be stakeholder led and they intend to establish regional stakeholder decision-making fora to lead the process of identifying the regional MCZ networks. We recognise the need and importance of involving stakeholders in our MCZ project. However officials consider that our more focused policy intent in Wales requires a different approach and, rather than ask stakeholders to develop the site options by in effect giving them a blank sheet of paper and asking to develop options for potential sites, our approach proposes that the Technical Advisory Group develops the site options before seeking views from stakeholders. We may be criticised for this “top-down” approach in Wales. However we are aware that 2 years into the Finding Sanctuary Project for the South-West area, which was established as a pilot project in 2007, they still do not have any site options to consider and that this is a cause of frustration to many of the stakeholders involved.
14. Defra also intend to establish a Scientific Advisory Panel, which will have a similar role to our Technical Advisory Group in providing independent scientific advice to the regional projects. Defra are in the process of recruiting members to this Panel through the public appointments route. Rather than go down this route in Wales we propose that once prospective members have been identified we approach them individually with an invitation to be the Chair/members our Technical Advisory Group. This is a less formal approach that Defra’s but we think it is the one normally adopted by the Assembly Government for the ‘task and finish’ type activities envisaged here.

#### **Use of Social and Economic criteria**

15. In contrast to the designation of European sites in UK waters, the Marine and Coastal Access Bill provides that when considering whether to designate an area as a MCZ, the Welsh Ministers may have regard to the economic or social consequences of doing so. It is our intention to take social and economic considerations into account when identifying any potential MCZs in Wales and we feel that it is important to identify any potential issues and conflicts early in the site selection process. We are however aware that some NGOs have concerns about this approach and are continuing to campaign for the relevant clause to be removed from the Bill. Their main concern is that a disproportionate emphasis will be placed on social and economic issues compared with ecological consideration.
16. Our approach to selecting sites will be to conserve ecosystems and biodiversity without causing unnecessary adverse socio-economic impacts. However the existence of socio-economic interests should not automatically preclude an area from designation as an MCZ. We envisage that the MCZ process will give due regard to this when developing the site selection criteria for Wales. It will undoubtedly be a challenge to balance the social and economic criteria with environmental ones, but a full understanding of the social and economic consequences of designating a site should be a vital consideration in the decision making process and will inform future site management, enforcement and the required management of any displaced activities.

**Governance Structure**

17. Detailed below in doc 2 are the proposed key roles and responsibilities of the groups with suggested membership for the MCZ Project Wales. Subject to your approval we intend to put this governance structure in place on a 'shadow basis' this autumn and subject to the outcome of the public consultation on the draft strategy.

**Draft MPA Strategy**

18. The key points above are included in the draft strategy at doc 3 which we plan, subject to your agreement, to issue for public consultation at the Wales Biodiversity Partnership conference on 16 September.

**Advice**

19. As noted above, our proposed approach here differs somewhat to that in England. However we think there are good reasons for taking a different approach in Wales, given the extent of existing protected areas in Welsh inshore waters. We will also link in closely with Defra and the JNCC over their plans for the designation of sites in waters neighbouring Welsh territorial waters to help ensure that we achieve a coherent overall network.

**Legal Advice**

- 20.

- 21.

**Powers**

22. The Welsh Ministers may undertake this consultation exercise in reliance on sections 60 and 71 of the Government of Wales Act 2006; and may put in place the governance arrangements and incur associated expenditure in reliance on section 60 of the Act.

**Financial Requirements**

23. There are financial implications associated with this submission. Funding for the implementation of the provisions in the Marine and Coastal Access Bill has been sought under the recent Budget Planning and RAE exercise. The precise allocation for this area is still being considered within the Nature, Access and Marine Unit (NAMU). The overall costs of the MCZ project are not expected to exceed £20,000 in 2009/10.

**Press and Publicity Arrangements**

24. The draft Strategy will be launched for consultation at the annual Wales Biodiversity Conference on 16 September and we intend to issue a joint press notice with CCW to publicise this event.

**Policy compliance**

25. This is in line with our vision for the marine environment as outlined in the Environment Strategy for Wales. In terms of other policy compliance we are not yet at a stage to assess and this will be done during the later stages of the project.

**Clearance**

26. The Head of Unit (Gerry Quarrell) responsible for this area of work is satisfied with the financial implications and compliance paragraphs of this submission.
27. The Corporate Strategy Unit covering the Department for Environment, Sustainability and Housing has had sight of this submission and is content (CSU/LF/09/360). We have consulted Legal Services.

**STATEMENT OF INFORMATION**

The draft strategy for marine protected areas (MPAs) in Wales outlines how the Welsh Assembly Government intends to use marine protected areas as one of the tools available to it to help protect and improve ecosystems in Welsh waters, and fulfil its international and legal obligations to contribute towards an ecologically coherent UK network of well managed MPAs.

Wales already has a number of marine protected areas over 70 per cent of Wales' coastline and about 40 per cent of Welsh seas are protected by some form of designation, such as Special Protection Areas and Special Area Conservation. The draft strategy provides an overview as to how the Assembly Government intends to build on the existing suite of Welsh sites to contribute towards the UK network.

The strategy also provides further detail as to how the Assembly Government intends to use the new Marine Conservation Zone powers provided under the Marine and Coastal Access Bill.

## MCZ PROJECT WALES – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### Steering Group

WAG chaired and led, this group will provide the overall direction for the project and ensure the delivery of project aims, objectives, outcomes and milestones. The group will govern and monitor the work of the Technical Advisory Group and Stakeholder Group and make the final decisions on such things as site selection criteria, site recommendations and management measures, taking into account advice from the Technical Advisory Group and views from the Stakeholder Group. The group is expected to meet at least every 6 months and will report to you as the Minister on an annual basis. This group will, through its members, provide the link with other marine protected area projects across the UK and with the WAG Fisheries Management & Marine Enforcement Project.

### Membership

**Chair** - Reflecting that this project is WAG led, either Gerry Quarrell, Head of NAMU, or Matthew Quinn, Director, DESH, will chair the Steering Group.

**Other members** will be drawn at a senior, strategic level from across the Assembly Government, Defra and public bodies which have a direct role in Wales in relation to designation and advice on nature conservation and/or environmental matters and socio-economic impacts.

- **WAG**, with a senior level representative from : CADW, Climate Change & Water Division, Department for Economy & Transport, Economic Advice, Fisheries Unit, Nature, Access & Marine Unit, Spatial Plan Unit Sustainable Energy & Industry Division, Technical Services Division and Tourism & Marketing
- **Defra**, with a senior level representative from the Marine Biodiversity Team; will establish direct link with England's MPA strategy and MCZ projects and act as conduit to other UK Government Departments who will have an interest in our work – particularly DECC
- **Public Bodies**, with a senior level representative from: the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association

The Chairs of the Technical Advisory Group and Stakeholder Group will also be members of the Steering Group to ensure strategic links between all three groups.

### Technical Advisory Group

This group will be the operational hub within the governance structure, providing technical support and advice to the Steering Group and the Stakeholder Group. It will, subject to sign-off by the Steering Group, provide the technical and expert advice on the aims and objectives of the process, develop site selection criteria, collect, collate and analyse data (ecological and socio-economic) to inform site selection and develop possible site proposals for the Stakeholder Group and the Steering Group to consider.

It is expected that the group will meet on at least a quarterly basis. It will report to the Steering Group.



### Membership

**Chair** - the key objective for the chair is for them to perform a challenge role. For this, we consider they need to be from as independent and impartial a background as practicable and a recognised expert in the marine/maritime field. We are considering inviting Professor Steve Hawkins to be chair. Professor Hawkins is Head of College at the School of Ocean Sciences, University of Wales, Bangor and a former Director of the Marine Biological Association, Plymouth. He is a representative on Defra's Science Advisory Council, which would provide a direct link to the wider UK science base, and has a specific interest in climate change adaptation.

**Other members** we propose consist of technical experts from the following bodies:

- WAG – Technical Services Division, Sustainable Energy & Industry Division, Economic Advice Division and Climate Change & Water Division
- Countryside Council for Wales
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- Environment Agency Wales
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (Cefas – UK Government Agency)
- Wales Environment Research Hub (Dr Sean Russell, Director)
- Academia

Some of the above in terms of the individuals involved might also be represented on the Steering Group. However no duplication is expected. The representatives will operate at a strategic level on the Steering Group and at an expert level on the Technical Advisory Group.

In terms of Academia, it is important that we have Wales-wide representation if possible, whilst recognising that there are experts from outside the country who could bring a wider technical perspective to this group. We are considering the following:

- **Aberystwyth University – Dr Mike Christie**, Lecturer in Environmental Economics & Sustainable Rural Development Scheme Co-ordinator
- **Bangor University - Professor Michael Kaiser**, School of Ocean Sciences, appointed to Chair the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Marine Fisheries Stakeholder Forum in November 2007, key player in the Centre for Catchment & Coastal Research (collaborative venture between Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities)
- **Cardiff University – Dr Rhoda Ballinger**, Geoenvironment Group, Coastal and estuary management, marine environmental management
- **University of Glamorgan – Dr Simon Jones**, Senior Lecturer, School of Health, Sport & Science, specialising in Coastal Zone Management including Dutch/European CZM Governance organisational theory
- **Swansea University – Professor Graeme Hays**, School of the Environment & Society, specialising in marine ecology, member of Wales Biodiversity Partnership

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- **York University - Callum Roberts**, Professor of Marine Conservation in the Environment Department at the University of York.

We are considering whether we need to appoint external consultants to assist the group in order to equip it with the breadth and depth of specialist advice and support that we believe will be necessary to cover socio-economic impacts.

We are considering paying the Chair of the Technical Advisory Group an honorarium, the amount to be decided. Other members will in general receive travel and subsistence costs only, although we could extend honorarium payments beyond the Chair if appropriate. If we were to involve external consultants, it would be in accordance with procurement rules.

### **Stakeholder Group**

The role of this group will be to ensure that all relevant stakeholder interests are represented in order to inform the site selection criteria and decisions regarding the location of marine conservation zones. The group will also facilitate wider public engagement and raise awareness of the project.

It is our intention that the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership, an existing non-statutory advisory body to WAG, will take on this role. The Chair of the Stakeholder Group will therefore be the Chair of the Partnership.

**Chair** - the Chair of the Stakeholder Group will be the Chair of the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership. The current Chair is Mrs Lynda Warren, an academic and environmental lawyer specialising in marine issues. She has a wide ranging background and has held a number of advisory roles to UK and overseas governments on environmental policy issues ranging from radioactive waste management to public participation programmes to marine environmental protection and coastal zone management.

**Membership** - will come from the existing standing membership of the Wales Coastal and Maritime Partnership - see list below -; and additional members will be included as necessary. The Partnership is establishing a working group to oversee the process. One area of interest that is likely to need additional members is the Wales Environment Link (WEL); at present two members of WEL are standing members of the partnership but this is unlikely to be sufficient to satisfy the different interests within WEL – such as the Marine Conservation Society - as far as this project is concerned.

The following are standing members of the Partnership:

ABP Ports  
Bangor University  
Bridgend County Borough Council  
British Marine Aggregates Association  
British Marine Federation  
British Wind Energy Association  
CADW  
Cardiff University  
CBI

Ceredigion County Council  
Countryside Council for Wales  
Crown Estate  
Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water  
Environment Agency Wales  
Farmers' Union of Wales  
Gwynedd County Council  
Milford Haven Port Authority  
National Farmers Union  
National Trust  
North Wales and North West Sea Fisheries Committee  
Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum  
Pembrokeshire Coastal National Park Authority  
RCAHMW  
Severn Estuary Partnership  
South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee  
Sports Council for Wales  
Wales Tourism Alliance  
Welsh Yachting Association  
WLGA  
Wales Environment Link  
Welsh Aquaculture Producers Association  
Welsh Federation of Fishermen's Associations  
Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers

# Protecting Welsh Seas

A draft strategy for marine protected areas in Wales

September 2009



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

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## INTRODUCTION

Our marine environment delivers important goods and services to society, including jobs, food and a resource for recreation and relaxation. It is important that our seas are healthy and sustainably managed to ensure that we can continue to enjoy and benefit from them today and in the future.

Sixty percent of Wales' population lives and works in the coastal area, with all our major cities and many important towns located on the coast. Ports, such as those at Holyhead, Milford Haven, Port Talbot, Cardiff and Newport, are vital for international trade, while our waters support valuable inshore fisheries and aquaculture projects.

Research undertaken by a partnership led by the National Trust has underlined how vital the coastal and marine environment is to the economy of Wales. The report 'Valuing our Environment – Economic Impact of the Coastal and Marine Environment of Wales'<sup>1</sup> indicates that the coastal and marine environment supports (directly and indirectly) 92,600 jobs in Wales, contributing £2.5 billion of GDP to the economy of Wales. The stunning environment of Welsh coast and the proximity of significant population also helps explain the importance of the coastal tourism industry which contributes over £2.5 billion each year to the Welsh economy. In 2006, spending associated with an overnight visit to the coast amounted to £648 million - nearly 40% of total tourism spending in Wales. It attracts around 4 million staying trips (16.9 million nights) each year together with an estimated 25 million tourism day trips.

The Welsh Assembly Government's vision for Wales' marine environment is as follows:

*"The marine environment will be valued by all, understood and respected for what it contains and provides. Our seas will be clean, support vibrant economies and healthy and functioning ecosystems that are biologically diverse, productive and resilient, while being sensitively used and responsibly managed."*<sup>2</sup>

The seas around Wales contain a rich variety of habitats and species, from seaweed-covered rocky reefs to deep muddy areas inhabited by burrowing animals. Widely different conditions, such as sheltered estuaries and fast-flowing tidal rapids, add to the variety creating a mosaic of different habitats from the seashore, the seabed and open water. These habitats in turn provide shelter and food for an array of species from microscopic plankton to larger and more well-known species like seals, dolphins and seabirds.

### **Purpose of this strategy**

The key purpose of this strategy is to set out how the Welsh Assembly Government intends to use Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as one of the tools available to us to help protect and improve ecosystems in Welsh waters, and fulfil international and legal obligations.

A variety of measures can be used to achieve healthy ecosystems, which will be enhanced by the provisions introduced by the Marine and Coastal Access Bill<sup>3</sup>. This strategy

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Environment Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government 2006 – p. 36

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/marine/legislation/index.htm#>

therefore needs to be seen within that wider context, particularly the new marine planning provisions under the Bill.

A protected area is defined by the IUCN<sup>4</sup> as:

*“A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.”*

MPA is the term used to describe a wide range of marine areas which have some level of restriction to protect living, non-living, cultural, and/or historic resources. This strategy focuses on MPAs that have been or will be established for the purpose of conserving and protecting biodiversity.

MPAs have been shown to be successful in protecting marine habitats and species. They can maintain existing condition and restore degraded habitats and populations of species. The marine habitats and species within protected areas play a role in the functioning of the marine environment, contributing to the productivity of marine ecosystems and enabling the protection of the essential habitats for the different life stages of marine species, including commercially important species. Under certain management regimes MPAs have been shown to contribute to increasing the biomass, density and species diversity of animals and plants within them. When fish and other invertebrates grow larger they often produce more offspring, so MPAs can contribute to maintaining and potentially increasing the populations of these species. MPAs also have a vital role to play in enabling marine biodiversity to become more resilient and adapt to changing climatic conditions<sup>5</sup>.

However, the success of an MPA will depend on many factors including its location, size, level of protection, compliance and most importantly, the biology of the species living there. MPAs may also incidentally protect areas of cultural, spiritual and historical value, such as wrecks.

MPAs can help to secure the goods and services that we expect from the marine environment, thereby underpinning many economic and social uses of the coast and sea including education, research, tourism and recreation. Marine wildlife in many parts of Wales attracts visitors to the coast and sea. Local businesses operating wildlife-related trips and events rely on maintaining a productive and sustainable marine environment.

## **Aim**

Our aim is to contribute to the development of an ecologically coherent UK network of well managed MPAs. The network will conserve rare, threatened, and representative species and habitats to enhance biodiversity and ecosystems.

We want the network to be well understood and supported by sea users and other stakeholders, to make a major contribution to the protection and recovery of the richness of our marine environment. This in conjunction with a set of marine objectives and marine spatial planning will make a valuable contribution to the overall health of the marine environment and its ability to adapt to climate change.

The existing MPA network comprises European marine sites consisting of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, intertidal Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the Marine Nature Reserve at Skomer. This strategy identifies the broad steps we intend to take and the roles and responsibilities of the

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<sup>4</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature – Dudley, N (Editor) (2008) Guideline for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Gland, Switzerland, p8.

<sup>5</sup> Climate Change Commission Adaptation Sub-Group Report on Natural Environment

organisations involved in managing this network. It also explains the process to identify, and select any additional MPAs to complete the network of MPAs in Welsh waters.

### Scope

This Strategy covers Welsh marine and coastal areas where the Welsh Ministers currently have jurisdiction (0-12 nautical miles). See figure 1

The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to working with the UK Government, other devolved administrations, statutory advisors such as the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) <sup>6</sup> and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) <sup>7</sup>, and non-statutory stakeholders to deliver an ecologically coherent UK network of well managed MPAs.

We will work closely with the regional Marine Conservation Zone projects that have been established by Defra, Natural England (NE) <sup>8</sup> and JNCC for the identification and selection of new MPAs in English territorial and UK offshore waters adjacent to England and Wales. In particular we will be participating in the Irish Sea Conservation Zone Project and the Finding Sanctuary Project <sup>9</sup> (south-west England) which between them cover UK waters adjacent to Wales and the cross-border inshore waters of the Dee and the Severn.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ccw.gov.uk/Splash.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.finding-sanctuary.org/>



## Welsh Marine and Coastal Waters

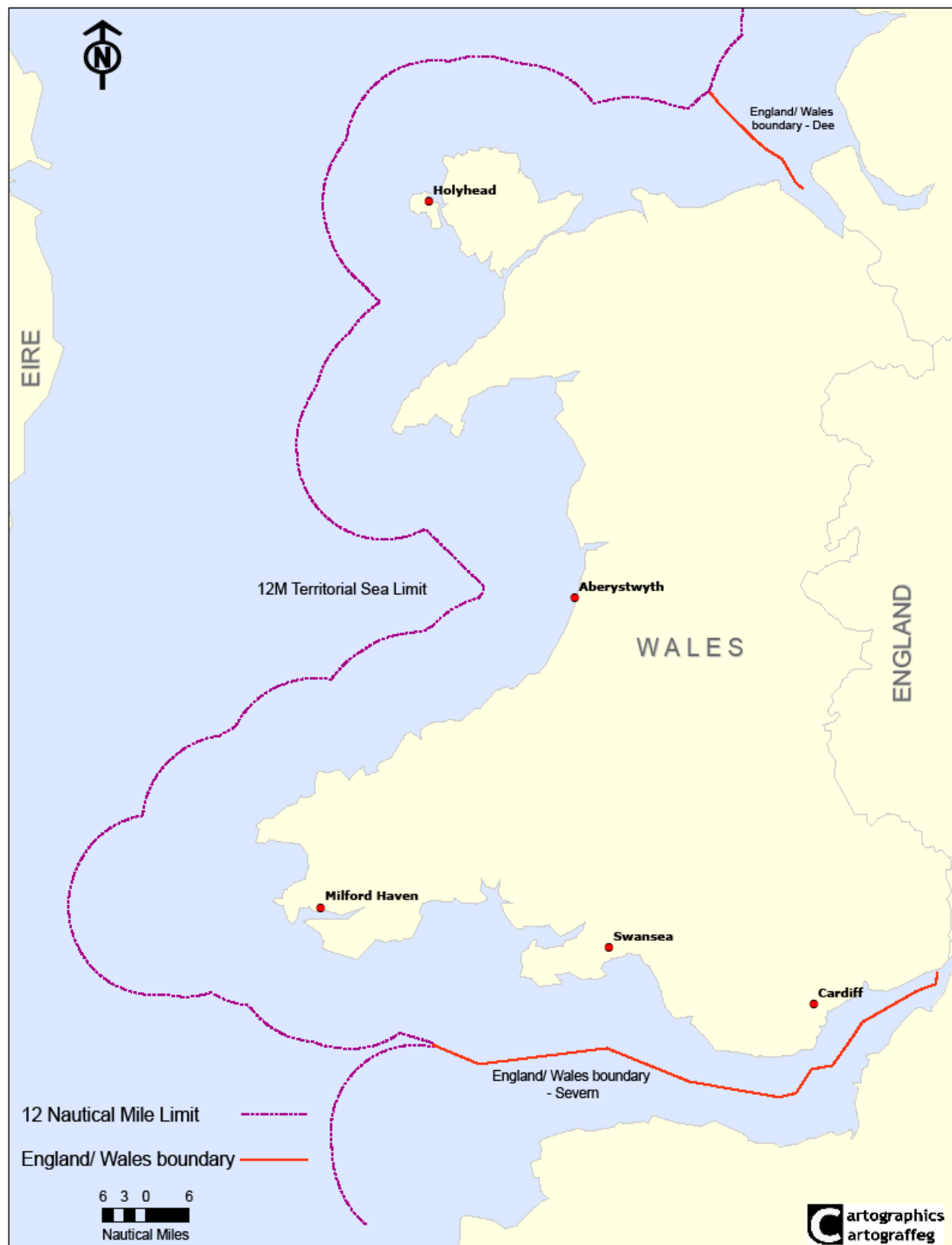


Figure 1. Map of Welsh Marine and Coastal Waters

**Timeframe**

In line with international commitments, this Strategy sets out what we intend to do between now and the end of 2012 to contribute to establishing an ecologically coherent UK network of MPAs.

Under the duty imposed under the Marine and Coastal Access Bill the Welsh Ministers will, before the end of 2012, lay a report before the National Assembly for Wales detailing the extent to which Wales has contributed towards a UK network of MPAs and the extent of any further action needed in order to meet this objective. This report will inform the Assembly Government's MPA policy beyond 2012 including further designations, management measures, monitoring requirements and ongoing review of our contribution to the UK network.

## INTERNATIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

There are a number of international and legislative commitments and obligations that have been introduced to protect marine biodiversity and ensure that the marine environment is managed in a way that facilitates recovery and increases ecosystem resilience<sup>10</sup>.

### International commitments

There are four international commitments to establish MPA networks:

- under OSPAR (the Oslo-Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic) we should develop an ecologically coherent network of well managed MPAs;
- Government's commitment at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 to establish a representative network of MPAs.
- Government's commitment to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a network of well managed MPAs by 2012 to enable delivery of WSSD targets;
- Government's commitment to the Ramsar Convention for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. There is no specific emphasis under this convention for the development of a network of sites, it is however recognised that Ramsar sites will make an important contribution to the MPA network across the UK.

### Legal obligations under European Law

#### EC Wild Birds Directive and EC Habitats Directives

The **EC Wild Birds** and **EC Habitats Directives** place legal obligations on Government to protect the most important European species and habitats both on land and in the marine environment. The Wild Birds Directive requires Member States to provide for the protection, management and control of all naturally occurring wild birds and to take special measures for the protection of migratory birds. The Habitats Directive requires Member States to take measures that contribute to the conservation of biodiversity by maintaining or restoring certain habitats and species at a favourable conservation status.

**Special Protection Areas** (SPAs) are identified and classified under the Wild Birds Directive. European Member States have an obligation to select sites for those bird species included in Annex I of the Directive and also for regularly occurring migratory species. For the marine environment, these include marine bird species, such as divers, grebes and seaducks. SPAs in Wales are classified by the Welsh Ministers in light of recommendations made by the CCW.

Under the Habitats Directive, European Member States are required to identify and protect a series of **Special Areas of Conservation** (SACs) for habitats and species that are of European importance. SACs in Wales are designated by Welsh Ministers in light of recommendations made by the CCW.

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<sup>10</sup> Resilience refers to the capacity for an ecosystem to maintain its structural and functional integrity when subject to stress, for example, climate change.

SPAs and SACs are selected on the basis of scientific evidence only; social and economic factors cannot be taken into account when drawing up site boundaries<sup>11</sup>. Stakeholders however have the opportunity to engage in informal and formal consultations during the designation and management process and will be able to comment on the scientific justification for proposing a site and its boundaries.

Collectively SPAs and SACs are known as the Natura 2000 network which is a Europe wide network of nature conservation protected areas. Where an SPA or an SAC incorporates a subtidal and/or an intertidal area, they are also referred to as "European marine sites" (EMS).

### **The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)**

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive came into force in July 2008 and requires European Member States to put measures in place to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) in their waters by 2020. Maintaining the biological diversity of our marine ecosystem will form a key element of achieving GES. The Directive leaves it to Member States to decide which measures to use to achieve GES but explicitly refers to establishing a network of MPAs as an important contribution to the achievement of GES. Under the Directive, Member States should create a coherent and representative network of MPAs by 2016. We are working with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations to transpose this Directive into domestic regulations by July 2010.

### **The Water Framework Directive (WFD)**

The Water Framework Directive is the most substantial piece of EU water legislation to date and is designed to improve and integrate the way water bodies are managed throughout Europe. In the UK, the Environment Agency (EA) is the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the Directive. The Directive came into force on 22 December 2000, and was transposed in 2003. Under the WFD, Member States must aim to achieve good chemical and ecological status in identified water bodies by 2015. This includes transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile. The MPA network will make a contribution to UK waters reaching good ecological status where they are covered by WFD.

### **Obligations under UK Legislation**

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** are notified by the CCW under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These sites are notified for the purpose of protecting species, habitats and geological features of national importance. SSSIs are primarily a terrestrial designation however they can in certain circumstances extend into the marine environment.

**Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)** are a new designation tool that will be introduced by the Marine and Coastal Access Bill. MCZs are a new protection measure for nationally important, rare or threatened marine habitats, species and ecosystems. In contrast to the process for identifying and designating European sites, the Marine and Coastal Access Bill allows for Welsh Ministers to take account of social and economic criteria when deciding to designate an area as an MCZ. Furthermore, MCZs can be established with varying levels of protection, from limited restriction of activities in the site to high levels of restriction. Conservation objectives will be used to set the level of protection required for a particular site.

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<sup>11</sup> European case law (Case C-371/98)

**SF/JD/0331/09**

The MCZ designation tool will supersede the Marine Nature Reserve designation powers under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Therefore Skomer Marine Nature Reserve will become the first MCZ in Wales on the date on which Welsh Ministers commence the relevant provisions of the Marine and Coastal Access Bill in relation to Wales by means of a commencement order made under the Bill.

## DEVELOPING THE MPA NETWORK

The MPA network will consist of:

- European marine sites (SPAs and SACs);
- SSSIs with intertidal and subtidal features;
- Ramsar sites with marine components; and the new
- MCZs.

### Design principles of the MPA Network

The network will be developed using the following design principles, which are taken from those developed for OSPAR<sup>12</sup> and IUCN<sup>13</sup>:

- **Representativity** – the network should represent the range of marine habitats and species, protecting all major habitat types (e.g. circalittoral rock; littoral mixed sediment exposed rocky reefs) in our seas.
- **Replication** – all major habitats (eg estuaries) should be replicated in each regional sea<sup>14</sup> and distributed throughout the network. The amount of replication will depend on the scale of the biogeographic area and extent and distribution of features within them.
- **Viability** – the network should incorporate self-sustaining, geographically dispersed sites of sufficient size to ensure species and habitats continue through natural cycles of variation.
- **Adequacy** – the network should be of adequate size to deliver its ecological objectives and ensure the ecological viability and integrity of populations, species and communities.
- **Connectivity** – the network should seek to maximise and enhance the linkages among individual Marine Protected Areas and between regional networks using the best current science, so that species can move between areas with suitable habitat for different stages of their life cycle.
- **Protection** – the network should include a range of protection levels. Ranging from highly protected sites (where no extractive, depositional or other damaging activities are allowed) to areas with only minimal restrictions on activities.
- **Best available evidence** – network design should be based on the best information currently available. Lack of full scientific certainty should not be a reason for postponing decisions on site selection.

### Existing Sites

Wales already has a number of Marine Protected Areas covering approximately 75% of the coastline and 32% of Welsh territorial seas. Figure 2 shows the distribution of these sites and a full list of sites is detailed at Annex A.

### Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

There are currently 5 wholly marine SACs within Welsh waters and these are listed below:

- Menai Strait and Conwy Bay;

<sup>12</sup> OSPAR (2006). Guidance on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR marine protected areas. Ref: 2006-3. OSPAR (2007). Background document to support the assessment of whether the OSPAR network of marine protected areas is ecologically coherent. Ref: BDC 07/03/14-E

<sup>13</sup> WCPA/IUCN (2007). Establishing networks of marine protected areas: A guide for developing national and regional capacity for building MPA networks. Non-technical summary report.

<sup>14</sup> UK Regional Seas refer to a set of biogeographic regions in UK waters which were developed by representatives from all of the UK Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies. Regional Seas have already been used to identify a representative suite of EU Habitats Directive Special Areas of Conservation for Annex I Reefs and Sandbanks.

- Llyn Peninsula and the Sarnau;
- Cardigan Bay;
- Pembrokeshire Marine; and
- Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries.

There are also several coastal SACs which include areas of foreshore, and therefore protect some important intertidal features, for example the Anglesey Coast SAC and the Kenfig SAC, at Bridgend in South Wales, that both protect important salt marsh habitats.

Two further sites have been formally adopted by the European Commission, the Severn Estuary and the Dee Estuary, both lying partly in Welsh waters. These sites await the final stage of designation by Welsh Ministers and the UK Secretary of State which is currently timetabled for November 2009.

### **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

There are currently 15 SPAs with coastal and/or marine components in Welsh waters; including the only entirely marine SPA within British waters - Carmarthen Bay SPA. This site was classified in 2003 for its non-breeding groups of common scoter.

### **Ramsar Sites**

There are currently 4 Ramsar Sites in Wales that have a marine component:

- Burry Inlet;
- Severn Estuary;
- Dee Estuary; and
- Cors Fochno and Dyfi.

Further detailed information on all SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites in Wales, including protected features and site boundaries, can be obtained from JNCC's website<sup>15</sup>.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**

There are over 42,000 hectares of intertidal areas within SSSIs in Wales, protecting a wide variety of intertidal habitats, such as honeycomb worm reefs and seagrass beds.

Approximately 79% of sandy shores and 48% of rocky shores are designated as SSSIs in Wales. Subtidal areas of SSSIs account for just over 5,000 hectares and are found mainly in estuaries and small embayments.

### **Marine Nature Reserve**

The sea surrounding Skomer Island is Wales' only Marine Nature Reserve (MNR). Skomer MNR is an important breeding site for grey seals and the sea bed hosts a wide variety of habitats from sheltered bays with eel grass to tidal rapids. Over 850 species have been found living buried in the sediments alone. Nearly 100 species of sponge and 67 species of sea slug have been recorded and about a third of all types of seaweeds that occur in the UK can be found in the Reserve - it has been identified as one of 9 sites in the UK of international importance for seaweeds. The reserve also supports a wide range of warm water species including pink sea fans, red sea fingers, scarlet and gold cup corals.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4>

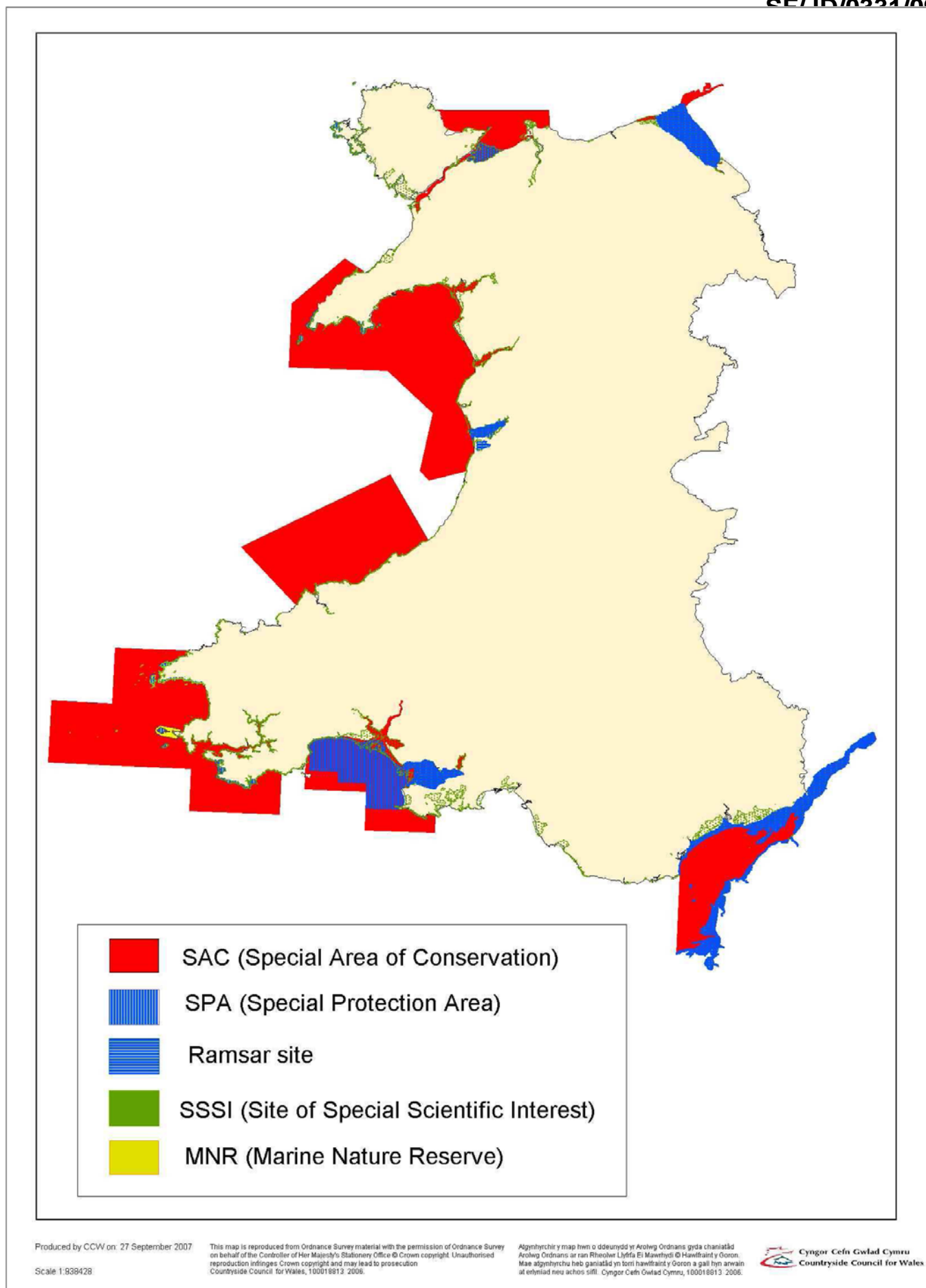


Figure 2. Map of Current Marine Protected Areas in Wales



### Improving the management and coherence of the MPA network

In order to develop a coherent and well managed network of MPAs in Wales that contributes to a wider UK network, we consider that the following are required:

- MPAs which provide protection for nationally important marine habitats and species, for example subtidal sea grass beds. Existing MPAs are limited in terms of the species, habitats or area they can protect.
- Adding some highly protected sites to the MPA network where appropriate. Currently, there are no Marine Protected Areas in Wales where the full range of biodiversity present benefits from protection from all damaging activities. There is good evidence that highly protected sites can deliver positive benefits for the marine environment. In the Leigh Marine Reserve and Tawharanui Marine Park in New Zealand, healthy kelp forests are now flourishing since being protected in the 1970's. The population of sea urchins, which graze on kelp, is now kept in check through the increase in number of fishes and lobster that prey on them. Outside the marine park, where predatory snapper and lobster are scarce, sea urchin numbers are such that kelp beds have not recovered and the sea bed is mostly barren.<sup>16</sup> Kelp forests and macro-algae dominated communities offer greater variety of places to live, shelter and food for numerous species of animals in comparison to barren, heavily grazed areas.
- Improved coordination of management of MPAs to deliver site-level and network-level objectives as well as broader biodiversity targets. The existing management schemes on many of the marine SACs in Wales have established coordination between statutory authorities and wider stakeholders in relation to MPA management at the site level. Improved coordination of this work would help to maximise the benefits of site management for the network as a whole.
- Better use of existing and new tools to deliver effective management of MPAs. For example, the Marine and Coastal Access Bill makes provisions for the use of Nature Conservation Orders to manage currently unregulated activities such as recreational activities, within MCZs and EMS where they are having a negative impact on the features of the site.

The primary aim of the network will be nature conservation and not to protect or restore commercially important fish stocks for enhanced commercial exploitation. Nevertheless, MPAs may indirectly benefit fish populations particularly where they include areas important for reproduction (spawning or nursery grounds, etc.).

### Selection of additional MPAs

#### European Marine Sites

Additional sites are currently being considered for marine bird species including marine extensions to existing terrestrial seabird breeding colony SPAs. The CCW and NE are jointly undertaking informal pre-consultation dialogue for Liverpool Bay, a proposed (cross border) SPA which is entirely marine, for protection of the red throated diver and common scoter.

We shall continue to look at the need for further European sites in Welsh waters taking into account the advice of statutory advisors.

#### Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

CCW has a duty to notify sites where they are of the opinion that the area is of special interest. It is therefore possible that further intertidal SSSIs may be notified in the future.

#### Marine Conservation Zones

To complement the existing network of MPAs and improve ecological coherence we intend to use the new MCZ designation mechanism to, in the first instance, establish a number of MCZs that will be afforded a higher level of protection. These will be known as Highly Protected Marine Conservation Zones. The intention is that these areas will be protected from the extraction and deposition of living and non-living matters, and all other damaging or disturbing activities.

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<sup>16</sup> PISCO, 2007

Such sites can contribute to marine ecosystem recovery, protect a wider range of habitats and species than existing MPAs, improve environmental resilience and enhance our understanding of natural functioning ecosystems<sup>17</sup>.

Relatively little is understood about the way the marine ecosystem functions as we have only really begun to study it in the last 60-80 years. However, we have been using its resources for much longer than this and marine ecosystems have changed over time as a result of human activities. It is difficult for us to understand how the marine environment would look if left alone to function naturally. One of the benefits of highly protected marine sites is that by leaving areas of the seas to function in the absence of significant levels of human activity, we can understand more about how such ecosystems work and use this information to inform management of the wider marine ecosystem.

Criteria for the identification and selection of MCZs in Welsh waters will be developed, agreed and used through a robust site selection process, incorporating ecological information, socio-economic information and stakeholder dialogue. This will ensure that sites are chosen to maximise ecological and socio-economic benefits while minimising any conflicts with different uses of the sea as far as possible. The need to incorporate climate change adaptation will be an integral part of the process, together with a general requirement to build in future-proofing to the criteria as far as practicable. Based on what we know about marine biodiversity around Wales and because we want to ensure that the areas protected secure the most benefit, it is likely that most of these sites will be found within existing EMS. Nevertheless, there may be cases, based on the criteria developed, where it is necessary and appropriate to designate these sites outside existing EMS.

#### **Guidance for identifying, selecting and designating MCZs.**

The Welsh Assembly Government has been working with Defra to prepare a range of joint guidance notes relating to the framework for identifying, selecting and designating MCZs. The draft guidance notes are available at [www.wales.gov.uk/environment](http://www.wales.gov.uk/environment) and your comments on these drafts will be welcomed:

- Draft guidance on selection and designation of Marine Conservation Zones.
- Draft guidance on duties on public authorities in relation to Marine Conservation Zones.
- Draft guidance on protecting Marine Conservation Zones from the impacts of unregulated activities and intentional or reckless damage.

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<sup>17</sup> Highly Protected Marine Reserves –Evidence of Benefits and Opportunities for Marine Biodiversity in Wales S. Gubbay CCW Contract Science Report No: 762 -2006

## MANAGING THE MPA NETWORK

The Marine and Coastal Access Bill will fill many existing management gaps as it provides for a holistic framework through marine spatial planning and improved marine nature conservation protection and inshore fisheries management.

The way in which all protected sites are managed in Wales is currently being further developed in response to the target set in the Environment Strategy for Wales; by 2026 sites of international, Welsh and local importance are in favourable condition to support the species and habitats for which they have been identified. Action to meet this challenging target is under way co-led by the Assembly Government and the CCW working with partners from a wide range of organisations. The CCW has established a database which lists the issues for the management units on each site. This data is used by the CCW and other bodies to agree practical actions and incorporate these into delivery plans to achieve favourable condition. The Wales Biodiversity Partnership Outcome 21 Group<sup>18</sup> leads this work. This Group will play an important role in encouraging a collaborative approach to site management, monitoring the impact of actions taken and where necessary making recommendations to others inside and outside Wales. Although this work has so far mainly been focused on terrestrial and fresh water sites, it is intended to extend this into marine sites as more data becomes available.

### European Marine Sites

Once a site has been designated the CCW is responsible for setting conservation objectives for the site features. The CCW also has a duty to advise relevant authorities on any activities that may cause deterioration or disturbance to these features of interest. The conservation objectives and advice on activities are provided in Regulation 33 packages, established under the Habitat Regulations 1994.

Relevant authorities are responsible for exercising their duties to secure compliance with SAC and SPA objectives; this includes undertaking appropriate assessments on plans or projects that are deemed to have a "significant effect" on site features and making sure that activities that are under their management do not have an adverse effect on these sites. These assessments will be informed by the Regulation 33 package and should ensure that any mitigation action is identified to prevent operations having an 'adverse effect on site integrity'.

Plans or projects will generally not be licensed/permitted if appropriate assessments cannot conclude that operations would not have an adverse effect on integrity. The exception is where, in the absence of an alternative, the plan or project is declared to be of overriding public interest. In these cases, compensatory packages must be developed to offset damage to the site.

Relevant authorities can establish site Management Schemes where appropriate. In Wales Management Schemes are in place, or under development for Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries SAC, Pembrokeshire Marine SAC, Cardigan Bay SAC and Llyn Peninsula and the Sarnau SAC. These schemes set the framework for managing activities to achieve the site's objectives. Management Schemes are informed by the conservation objectives and aim to establish measures that correspond to the ecological requirements of the site, and take appropriate steps to avoid site deterioration. They also facilitate collaborative working between relevant authorities and other stakeholders.

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<sup>18</sup> [http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/sg\\_meetings-130.aspx](http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/sg_meetings-130.aspx)

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The Marine and Coastal Access Bill amends section 37 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Regulation 36 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 to enable Welsh Ministers to make conservation orders to protect EMS, within Welsh territorial waters. The intention is to use these powers to manage activities that are harmful to EMS that would otherwise be left unregulated, for example, recreational activity. The CCW is considering how conservation orders may be used to achieve appropriate management within an EMS and so contributing to achieving favourable condition. The outcome of this work will be available in 2010 and to inform future site management options.

**Ramsar Sites**

It is Assembly Government policy that Ramsar sites should be treated as if they are European sites. Therefore, the management arrangements for Ramsar sites in Wales are as outlined above for EMS. Where a Ramsar site and EMS share the same area conservation order powers will be available as a management option.

**SSSIs**

The CCW has a legal duty to notify all landowners and occupiers and relevant authorities where it considers that land is of special interest. As part of the legal package the CCW produces a site management statement which is the CCW's views as to how the site should be managed that includes a list of operations that require the CCW's consent.

The CCW has the power to grant consent to an owner/occupier to undertake an operation, attach a condition to an operation or refuse an operation, thus managing the potential impacts on the special interest. Refusal or conditions are subject to appeal to the Assembly Government Planning Inspectorate.

Amendments to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 through the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 have further strengthened the management framework for SSSIs by introducing a duty on statutory authorities to seek permission from the CCW where they wish to undertake operations within an SSSI, and a more general duty on these bodies to further the conservation of the features of sites in the exercise of their functions.

There are other mechanisms available to help manage SSSIs in relation to the activities of owners and occupiers. The CCW has the power to notify a Management Scheme indicating a specific form of management required on an SSSI or part of an SSSI. The CCW also has the power to notify a Management Scheme indicating a specific form of management required on an SSSI or part of an SSSI. The CCW also has powers to enter into management agreements on SSSI to fund positive management works thus protecting and enhancing the special features of the site.

**MCZs – proposed management regime**

Conservation objectives for the protected features within MCZs will be set out in the order designating the site. The purpose of MCZ conservation objectives is to define the desired outcome of designating an area as an MCZ; on an individual site level and as part of the ecologically coherent UK MPA network.

Once sites have been designated, there will be a duty on all public authorities (e.g. the Welsh Assembly Government, UK Government, local authorities, Government agencies) wherever they operate, to undertake their functions in a way that will further or where that is not possible, to least hinder the achievement of site conservation objectives.

This will mean different things for different bodies but could include requirements:

- to introduce restrictions on activities, wherever they take place, that would otherwise result in the objectives of a site not being achieved; and
- to take positive measures to control damaging activities, such as taking action to mitigate impacts, where they have the powers to do so.

Public authorities will also be under a duty in relation to certain decision making functions. Where necessary, we will prepare guidance for decision makers on the factors which may be relevant to the decisions on applications to carry out activities which may be capable of affecting a feature of an MCZ or a process on which a feature depends.

Welsh Ministers will also have the power to make conservation orders for the management of unregulated activities within a site in order to further the conservation objectives of an MCZ. The CCW is working to consider the activities that are likely to be compatible with an MCZ afforded a high level of protection. The CCW is also considering how conservation orders may be used to achieve appropriate management within an MCZ. The outcome of this work will be available in 2010 and will feed into the MCZ site selection and management process in Wales.

In certain circumstances because the Welsh Assembly Government's ability to manage activities is limited by international law it will be necessary to secure agreement from other countries, Member States and in some instances, the European Commission for the management of our MCZs. An example of this is for fisheries operating between 6 and 12 nautical miles where some fishing rights exist for certain EC Member States (and some other countries). Within the relevant areas, approval from the Commission and/or any affected Member States (or other countries) will be required before additional fisheries measures can be applied to vessels from those other Member States/countries. Where an MCZ is vulnerable to fishing activities and where fisheries management measures are considered necessary, the Welsh Assembly Government will pursue the introduction of measures with other Member States, countries and (if necessary) the Commission through the UK Government.

### **Surveillance and Monitoring**

Effective surveillance and monitoring of individual MPAs and the wider marine environment will be crucial, for determining how successful we are in achieving healthy ecosystems, and to demonstrate that our aim of providing an ecologically coherent and well managed UK network of MPAs has been achieved and subsequently sustained.

Monitoring the condition of ecological features of individual sites will enable relevant authorities and agencies to adapt management measures to take account of the ecological condition of site features and achieve their conservation objectives. This process will be applied both at the level of the individual site and across the network.

There are a number of statutory requirements for surveillance and monitoring of ecological conditions within and outside existing MPAs and associated programmes to implement these. These include, the Habitats Directive, the Water Framework Directive (covering transitional and coastal waters out to one nautical mile), and other international commitments such as the OSPAR Convention. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive will have requirements beyond the scope of existing programmes. These and other monitoring and surveillance activities are brought together under the UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy (UKMMAS)<sup>19</sup>.

Within this wider framework, a rolling programme of surveillance and monitoring requirements for the MPA network in Wales will be developed and implemented.

### **Enforcement**

Enforcement of nature conservation legislation in the marine area is currently undertaken by a number of different bodies operating under varying sets of powers provided by each of the pieces of legislation operating in our marine area. The Welsh Assembly Government, Sea Fisheries Committees, the Environment Agency, Harbour Authorities, Local Authorities and the police all enforce the existing legislation in Wales.

Following the introduction of the Marine and Coastal Access Bill, Marine Enforcement Officers will have access to a unified set of common powers. As well as offences under the Bill (against conservation orders and the general offence of deliberately damaging a site), officers will be able to use these powers to enforce relevant sections of the Conservation of Seals Act (1970), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation (Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.

The Marine Enforcement Team within the Welsh Assembly Government will take the lead on enforcement for marine conservation. Welsh Ministers will have the power to give Enforcement Officers access to the suite

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/marine/science/monitoring/ukmmas.htm>

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of common powers and will be able to delegate enforcement responsibilities to others (e.g. the Royal Navy) where they are more suited to the practical work required, e.g. due to numbers of vessels, hours spent at sea etc. This Team of officers will be the primary enforcer of conservation orders and of the general offence of deliberately damaging protected features of an MCZs.

This Team will also undertake the Welsh Ministers enforcement role under the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (Wales) Regulations 2009, by assessing and enforcing damage to protected species and habitats in Welsh seas.

Enforcement sanctions in the marine environment can include criminal prosecutions or the use of civil sanctions in the form of fixed monetary penalties. The Assembly Government will work closely with the Marine Management Organisation<sup>20</sup>, the body being set up by the UK Government under the Marine and Coastal Access Bill, and the Royal Navy to ensure that enforcement of nature conservation legislation is carried out in the most cost effective manner.

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<sup>20</sup> The Marine Management Organisation is being set up under the Marine and Coastal Access Bill and will be the UK Government's principal delivery body in the marine area; preparation and delivery of marine plans around England, the licensing authority for English waters and UK offshore waters, make conservation byelaws for MCZs in English territorial waters and enforce marine licensing, conservation and fisheries legislation.

**Existing Marine Protected Areas in Wales**

**SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION**

Menai Strait and Conwy Bay  
Lleyn Peninsula and the Sarnau  
Cardigan Bay  
Pembrokeshire Marine  
Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries  
Anglesey Coast  
Kenfig

Severn Estuary –	adopted and awaiting formal designation currently timetabled for November 2009
Dee Estuary -	adopted and awaiting formal designation currently timetabled for November 2009

**SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS**

Carmarthen Bay  
Burry Inlet  
Castlemartin Coast  
Dyfi Estuary  
Aberdaron Coast and Bardsey Island  
Holy Island Coast  
Grassholm  
Mynydd Cilan, Trwyn y Wylfa ac Ynysoedd Sant Tudwal  
Ramsey and St David's Peninsula Coast  
Severn Estuary  
Skokholm and Skomer  
The Dee Estuary  
Lavan Sands, Conwy Bay  
Ynys Feurig, Cemlyn Bay and The Skerries  
Puffin Island

**RAMSAR**

Burry Inlet  
Severn Estuary  
Dee Estuary  
Cors Fochno and Dyfi

**SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST with intertidal features and saltmarsh**

Allt Wen A Traeth Tanybwllch  
Arfordir Abereiddi  
Arfordir Gogleddol Penmon  
Marros-Pendine Coast  
Newgale To Little Haven Coast  
Pembrey Coast  
Angle Peninsula Coast  
Saundersfoot - Telpyn Coast  
Barry Island  
Beddmanarch-Cymyran  
Benarth Wood  
Blackcliff-Wyndcliff  
Blackpill, Swansea

Borth - Clarach  
Bracelet Bay  
Broadwater  
Broomhill Burrows  
Burry Inlet And Loughor Estuary  
Cadnant Dingle  
Carmel Head  
Carreg Y Llam  
Castlemartin Cliffs and Dunes  
Caswell Bay  
Cemlyn Bay  
Clegir Mawr  
Cliff Wood - Golden Stairs  
Coed Y Gell and Morfa Dulas  
Coedydd Afon Menai  
Cors Llyferin  
Craig Ddu - Wharley Point Cliffs  
Craigyfulfran & Clarach  
Creigiau Aberarth-Morfa  
Creigiau Abergwaun (Fishguard Cliffs)  
Creigiau Cwm-Cerw A Ffos-Las (Morfa Bychan)  
Creigiau Llansteffan (Llanstephan Cliffs)  
Creigiau Pen Y Graig  
Little Ormes Head  
Crymlyn Burrows  
Kenfig  
Dale and South Marloes Coast  
St Bride's Bay South  
Dee Estuary  
Dinas Dinlle  
Dyfi  
East Aberthaw Coast  
Flat Holm  
Freshwater East Cliffs to Skrinkle Haven  
Gallt Y Bwlch  
Glanllynau A Glannau Pen-Ychain I Gricieth  
Glannau Aberdaron  
Glannau Penmon - Biwmares  
Glannau Porthaethwy  
Glannau Rhoscolyn  
Glannau Tonfanau I Friog  
Holy Island Coast  
Glaslyn  
Gower Coast: Rhossili To Porteynon  
Grassholm  
Gronant Dunes and Talacre Warren  
Gwent Levels - Magor and Undy  
Gwent Levels - Nash and Goldcliff  
Gwent Levels - Redwick and Llandevenny  
Gwent Levels - Rumney and Peterstone  
Gwent Levels - St. Brides  
Gwent Levels - Whitson  
Gwydir Bay  
Hayes Point to Bendrick Rock  
Henborth  
Hook Wood  
Horton, Eastern And Western Slade  
Langland Bay (Rotherslade)  
Llanbadrig - Dinas Gynfor



Lydstep Head to Tenby Burrows  
Merthyr Mawr  
Milford Haven Waterway  
Minchin Hole  
Minwear Wood  
Monknash Coast  
Cwm Ivy Marsh and Tor  
Morfa Abererch  
Morfa Dinlle  
Morfa Dyffryn  
Morfa Harlech  
Morfa Uchaf, Dyffryn Conwy  
Mynydd Penarfynnydd  
Mynydd Tir Y Cwmwd A'r Glannau at Garreg Yr Imbill  
Newborough Warren - Ynys Llanddwyn  
Newport Cliffs  
Oxwich Bay  
Pen Benar  
Great Ormes Head  
Penard Valley  
Penarth Coast  
Penrhynoedd Llangadwaladr  
Pierce, Alcove and Piercefield Woods  
Porth Ceiriad, Porth Neigwl Ac Ynysoedd Sant Tudwal  
Porth Dinllaen I Borth Pistyll  
Porth Towyn I Borth Wen  
Puffin Island - Ynys Seiriol  
Pwll-Du Head and Bishopston Valley  
Ramsey  
Rhoscolyn Reedbed  
Rhosneigr  
Rhosneigr Reefs  
Rhossili Down  
River Usk (Lower Usk)  
River Wye (Lower Wye)  
Severn Estuary  
Skokholm  
Skomer Island and Middleholm  
Slebech Stable Yard Loft, Cellars & Tunnels  
Southerndown Coast  
St. David's Peninsula Coast  
St. Margaret's Island  
Stackpole  
Stackpole Quay - Trewent Point  
Strumble Head - Llechdafad Cliffs  
Sully Island  
Tenby Cliffs and St. Catherine's Island  
The Offshore Islets of Pembrokeshire  
The Skerries  
Tiroedd A Glannau Rhwng Cricieth Ac Afon Glaslyn  
Traeth Lafan  
Traeth Llanon  
Traeth Lligwy  
Traeth Pensarn  
Trwyn Dwlban  
Twyni Chwitffordd, Morfa Landimor A Bae Brychdwn/Whiteford Burrows Etc  
Laugharne - Pendine Burrows  
Ty Croes  
Tywyn Aberffraw

Waterwynch Bay to Saundersfoot Harbour  
Whitehill Down  
Wig Bach A'r Glannau I Borth Alwm  
Y Foryd  
Ynys Enlli  
Ynys Feurig  
Ynysoedd Y Gwylanod, Gwylan Islands  
Yr Eifl

**MARINE NATURE RESERVE**

Skomer