

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Foreland Marine Conservation Zone

This document sets out why this site is important, the features protected and general management information.

31 May 2019



High energy cirralittoral rock © Natural England

Overview

This site became a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) in May 2019. This means that specific features within this area are protected and, where necessary, regulators will manage marine activities.

Where is the site?

Foreland MCZ is an inshore site covering an area of 244 km². It is located in the Southern North Sea and English Channel, extending along the mid-channel between Kent and France.

Why is the site important?

MCZs, together with other types of marine protected areas, will form the UK contribution to an international network of protected sites in the north east Atlantic. The network will help to deliver the government's vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. MCZs protect typical, rare or declining habitats and species found in our seas.

Foreland MCZ contains a variety of different habitats ranging from subtidal sand to coarse sediments and rocky habitats, and supports a wide diversity of species. A large proportion of the site is made up of subtidal sediments that provide habitats to animals such as worms, bivalve molluscs (such as clams, cockles and mussels), burrowing anemones, sand eels and fish. The north of the site is known for its distinct richness of species living on or in the seabed.

The site also includes deep water rock habitats subject to moderate to high wave energy or tidal currents. These are dominated by animal communities as there is insufficient sunlight for seaweed growth. The types of animals that thrive here include colourful sponges clinging to rock and a dense 'carpet' of sea fans and cup corals, alongside anemones, and sea squirts. Commercially valuable crustaceans, such as lobsters and crabs, shelter within rocky crevices and a range of fish species, such as wrasse and topknots, forage in this habitat.

The site also protects the very northern section of the English Channel outburst flood feature. This geomorphological feature was formed at the end of the last glaciation by the collapse of ice sheets or glaciers.

Designation of this site as a Marine Conservation Zone protects the following features. You can find detailed information about each feature protected in this MCZ at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4527>.

Protected features

General management approach

English Channel outburst flood feature	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal sand	
High energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	
Subtidal coarse sediment	

Management of the site

Now that this site has been designated, some activities may need additional management. Activities and the management measures used to regulate them may need to change if new evidence becomes available.

Most marine activity is already regulated by the relevant regulatory bodies. There is an existing legal framework that regulators use to manage fishing, coastal development, recreation and pollution. This also applies in MCZs.

Regulators will manage each site according to the features and activities in, or near, a specific area. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the designated features. Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Management in MCZs can take several different forms, including introducing voluntary measures, use of the existing planning and licensing framework, specific byelaws and orders. There has to be public consultation on permanent byelaws and orders. For activities that already need a marine licence, regulators consider the MCZ in their decision as soon as the site is consulted on. Find out more about marine licensing in MCZs at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-mczs-and-marine-licensing>.

Regulators

This table lists the authorities responsible for MCZs and the activities they manage.

Lead regulator	What it manages
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) http://www.association-ifca.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fisheries in the inshore area (0-6 nautical miles (nm)) including commercial fisheries and recreational sea angling.

<p>Marine Management Organisation (MMO) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries within British limits around the coast of England. • Licensable activities such as construction, alteration or improvement of works, dredging and disposal, other removals or deposits, incineration or the scuttling of vessels within England’s marine area. • Section 36 (of the Electricity Act 1989) Consents and Safety Zones for offshore renewable energy installations producing up to 100MW. • Activities requiring a marine wildlife licence.
<p>Environment Agency (EA) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisheries for migratory and freshwater fish. • Coastal protection and flood management. • Water quality, including environmental permits for discharges from terrestrial sources.
<p>Oil and Gas Authority https://www.ogauthority.co.uk/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing for exploration and exploitation of oil and gas reserves.
<p>Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy</p> <p>Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) – Part of BEIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil and gas related activities • Renewable energy related activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental approvals and consents for offshore oil and gas related activities, Carbon Capture and Storage and Gas Unloading and Storage, and decommissioning activities.
<p>Harbour Authorities and Local Planning Authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for ports and coastal waters within their limits. • Local planning authorities manage activities at the coast. These include coastal recreation, public rights of way (including the English Coastal Path), tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection, and planning and development on coasts and estuaries, including aquaculture in the intertidal zone.
<p>Department for Transport (DfT) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on environmental impacts associated with ports and shipping, including pollution from ships. • Policy on maritime safety including navigation safety.
<p>Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) - An Executive Agency of the Department for Transport https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/mca</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel safety consents, including certification of seafarers and equipment.

nisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency	
Natural England (NE) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment and management of the English Coastal path. • Activities requiring consents and ascents within or adjacent to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). • Activities requiring wildlife licences for terrestrial and intertidal species.
The Planning Inspectorate https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities requiring Development Consent Orders under the Planning Act 2008, regarded as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

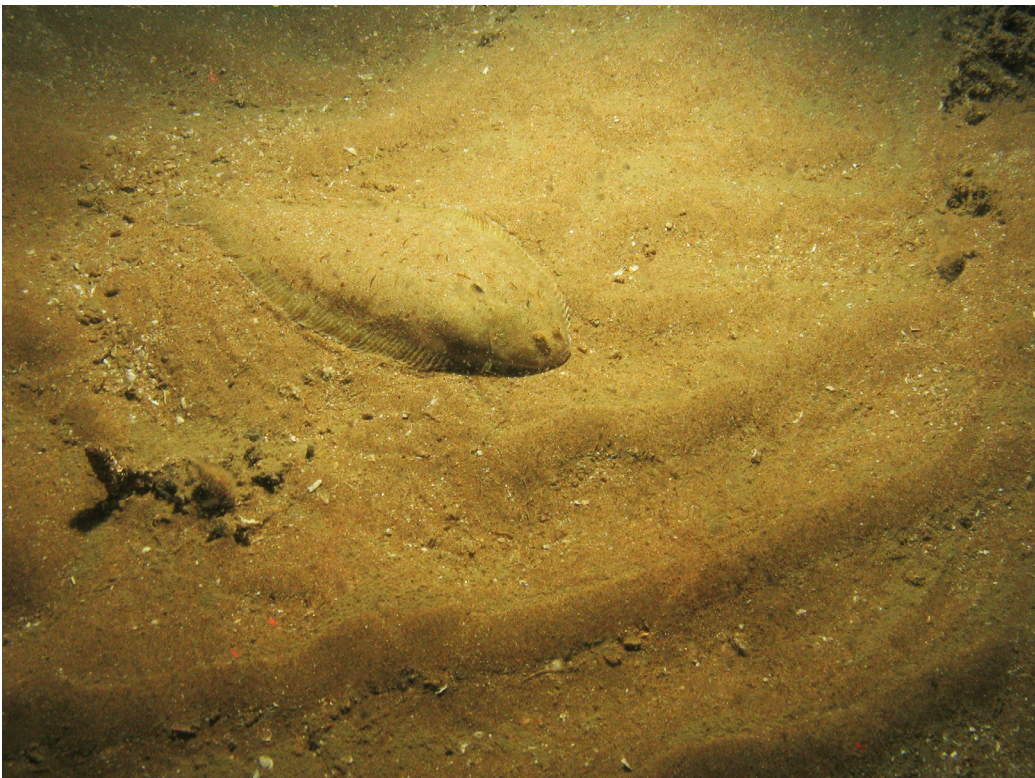
Further information

Read about government policy on MCZs at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/marine-conservation-zone-designations-in-england>

Read the advice provided by Natural England on MCZs at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5703660445368320>



Dover sole (*Solea solea*) on subtidal sand © Natural England / Cefas

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