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FOI2021/06663

14 July 2021

Dear

Thank you for your email of 21 June 2021 requesting the following information:

***Environmental Information Regulation Request  
Failure to Protect Marine Protected Areas from Damage from Large Anchors***

*I read with interest the BBC article today in respect of the failure to protect the marine restricted areas from damage by large anchors from cruise liners. See link below:*

*BBC Cruise Liner Anchor Damage to Seabed*

*In the light of the above, I wish to raise an Environmental Information Request regarding the failure to ensure that the restricted areas are shown on the required charts used for navigation in respect of vessels over 500 tonne.*

*For example, with regard to Admiralty Chart 1613, surprisingly the Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) (Areas B & C) areas are not shown or depicted on the chart. It is my understanding that the Government Department responsible for MCZs and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is DEFRA and one of the bodies used to promulgate these restricted areas to the fishing sector are the regional IFCAs. Given the environmental sensitivity and ecological protection offered by MPAs and MCZs it seems counter intuitive to ensure smaller vessels (fishing/recreational) do not damage the seabed (fauna and flora) whereas a vessel greater than 500 tonnes bounded by Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations must navigate/operate using the published hydrographic chart. To that end, because the MCZ/MPA area limits are not currently shown or depicted on the SOLAS chart there is currently no means of informing mariners on large vessels where MPAs/MCZs exist, and there is every possibility that large ships could unknowingly operate and or anchor in the MPAs and MCZs causing significant damage in those protected waters.*

*My Environmental Information Regulation request is therefore as follows:*

- 1. Please provide data to include all documentation and correspondence, regarding the area Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) (Areas B & C) areas, passing between the UK Hydrographic Office and any fishing regulator, whether MMO, DEFRA or Devon & Severn IFCA, as to the requirement for the Special Area of Conservation (Areas B and C) to be included on the navigational charts for vessels of over 500 tonne. If there has been no request for the chart to be updated on the charts used by vessels over 500 tonne, please confirm.*
- 2. Please provide all data held as to the request by Defra, or any other marine stakeholder or regulator, to update the Hydrographic Office with the marine spatial areas that are restricted, or special areas of conservation or the like, on the Admiralty Charts or Solas charts, to ensure that vessels over 500 tonne are aware of the restricted areas from the navigational charts used, whether Admiralty Charts or Solas Charts or the like. If there has been no such request please confirm.*
- 3. Please provide data held as to how many marine spatial areas that are restricted to commercial fishing, or*

*Special areas of Conservation/MCZ/MPA that restrict commercial fishing, are missing from the Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts used by vessels whose tonnage is registered in excess of 500 tonne.*

*4. Please provide data held as to how many marine spatial areas that are restricted to fishing, or Special areas of Conservation/MCZ/MPA that are restricted to commercial fishing, are shown on the Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts used by vessels whose tonnage is registered in excess of 500 tonne.*

*5. Please provide data held as to what charts the Marine Protection area near Weymouth, Dorset (referred to in the BBC article above, is recorded upon as to Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts or the like. The Weymouth Marine Protection area is covered within the District of Southern IFCA.*

*I have kept the Environmental Information Regulation request to a minimum in the light of the need to check the charts within your department and look forward to hearing from you within 20 working days, in order that I can consider your reply, and revert to you further should the need arise.*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Environmental Information Regulation (2004).

A search for the information has now been completed within the UKHO, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found below, at annex A.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

UKHO Secretariat

## Annex A

Please see UKHOs response to your Environmental Information Regulation Request below, shown in bold after your questions.

Please note that Admiralty Charts do not discriminate between sizes of vessels– they are available for all vessel sizes in UK waters (the exceptions to this are our Small Craft Folios which are aimed at the leisure mariner).

Due to the large number of Marine Protected Areas (generic term - MPAs), our policy has been to only show MPAs on our paper and electronic navigational charts if there are legislated navigational restrictions associated with them such as no anchoring or no fishing of any description. This policy was determined because inclusion of all MPAs would have introduced too many conflicting limits on charts, which would make them difficult for the mariner to interpret.

The next generation of standards being developed by the International Hydrographic Organization in collaboration with Member States (S-100) is seeking to address some of these issues, and in particular the S-122 standard is focussed on Marine Protected areas – see: [S-100 Based Product Specifications | IHO](#). It is worth noting that it is early days for these standards, however UKHO is involved in early trials and is seeking to publish some trial data later this year.

Marine Protected Areas are shown on our ADMIRALTY website in the ‘Marine Limits App’ on the ‘Marine Data Portal’. They can be accessed here [Maritime Limits App \(admiralty.co.uk\)](https://www.admiralty.co.uk/marine-limits-app) .

The screenshot below shows the data we include for the Plymouth Area. For each site we quote an ‘Identity’ reference which can then be used to access further details on the applicable website eg JNCC or Natural England.

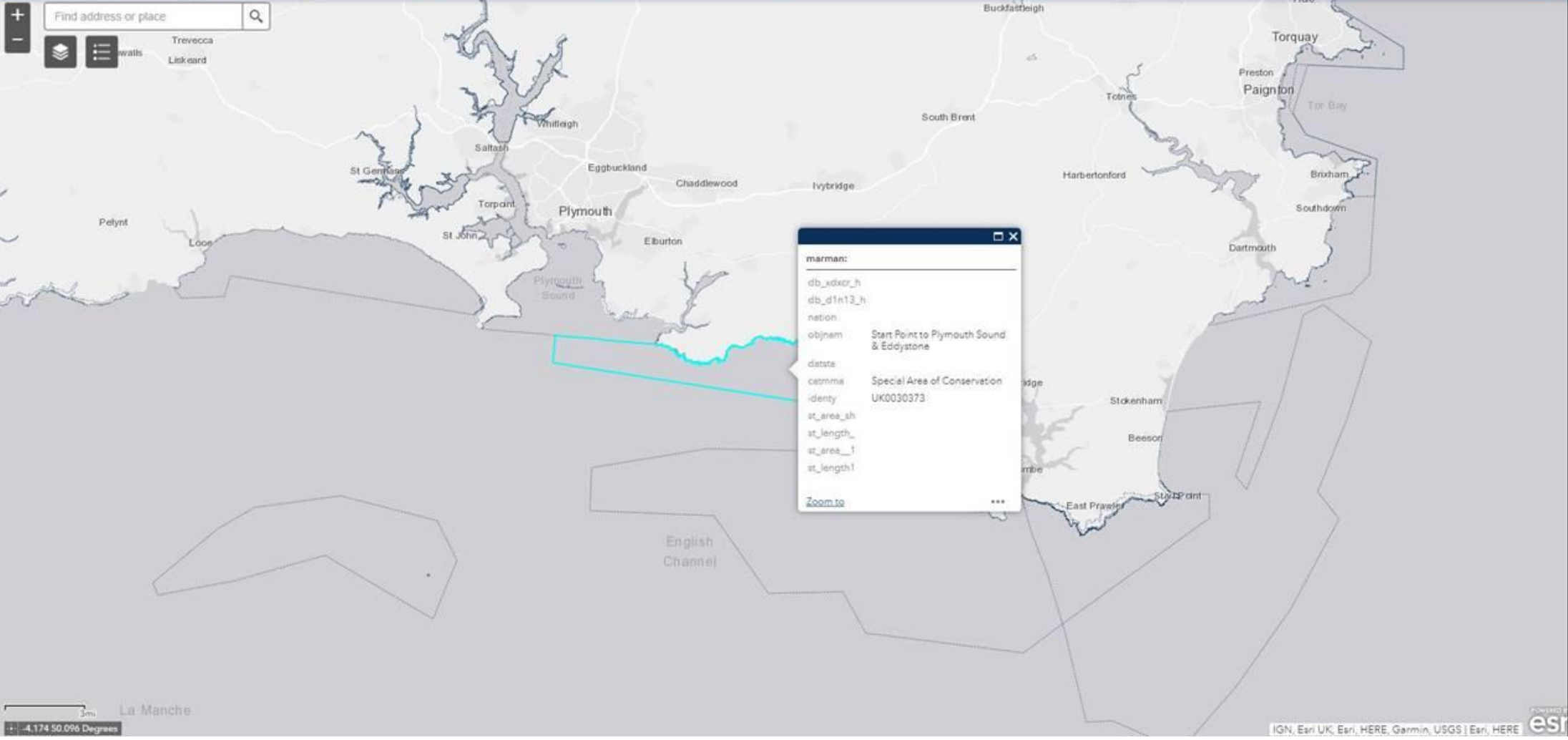
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Layers

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1. Please provide data to include all documentation and correspondence, regarding the area *Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) (Areas B & C) areas, passing between the UK Hydrographic Office and any fishing regulator, whether MMO, DEFRA or Devon & Severn IFCA, as to the requirement for the Special Area of Conservation (Areas B and C) to be included on the navigational charts for vessels of over 500 tonne. If there has been no request for the chart to be updated on the charts used by vessels over 500 tonne, please confirm.*

**UKHO are not aware of any request from MMO, DEFRA or IFCAs for Admiralty charts to be updated for the 'Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) (Areas B & C)' areas.**

2. *Please provide all data held as to the request by Defra, or any other marine stakeholder or regulator, to update the Hydrographic Office with the marine spatial areas that are restricted, or special areas of conservation or the like, on the Admiralty Charts or Solas charts, to ensure that vessels over 500 tonne are aware of the restricted areas from the navigational charts used, whether Admiralty Charts or Solas Charts or the like. If there has been no such request please confirm*

**UKHO are not aware of any request by DEFRA (or other regulator) for Admiralty charts to include marine spatial areas that are restricted (or SACs or similar) on Admiralty charts. We have received occasional requests from wider marine stakeholders to include MPAs on our charts.**

3. *Please provide data held as to how many marine spatial areas that are restricted to commercial fishing, or Special areas of Conservation/MCZ/MPA that restrict commercial fishing, are missing from the Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts used by vessels whose tonnage is registered in excess of 500 tonne.*

**Please see response to question 4 regarding which areas are shown on Admiralty charts. No other SACs/MCZs/MPAs are shown.**

4. *Please provide data held as to how many marine spatial areas that are restricted to fishing, or Special areas of Conservation/MCZ/MPA that are restricted to commercial fishing, are shown on the Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts used by vessels whose tonnage is registered in excess of 500 tonne.*

**The following Marine Conservation Zones are included on Admiralty Charts as these are the only ones that we are aware of which have legislated navigational restrictions associated with them:**

- **Lundy Marine Conservation Zone – Admiralty paper charts 1160 & 1164 and equivalent electronic charts**
- **Skomer Marine Conservation Zone – Admiralty paper charts 1482, 2878 & 1478 and equivalent electronic charts**
- **Strangford Lough Marine Conservation Zone – Admiralty paper chart 2156 and equivalent electronic charts**

**Additionally, Scottish Ministers designated an urgent Marine Protected Area (Red Rocks and Longay Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area) under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, which came into force on 17 March 2021, initially for a period of 12 months. UKHO issued Temporary Notice to Mariners 1572(T)/21 to inform mariners that anchoring, fishing & diving are prohibited in the area. This Notice to Mariners applies to Admiralty Charts 2209, 2480 & 2498 and equivalent electronic charts.**

5. *Please provide data held as to what charts the Marine Protection area near Weymouth, Dorset (referred to in the BBC article above, is recorded upon as to Admiralty Charts/Solas Charts or the like. The Weymouth Marine Protection area is covered within the District of Southern IFCA.*

**No Marine Protected Areas are shown on Admiralty Charts in the vicinity of Weymouth, however MPA's in the area are shown on our Maritime Limits App as below and can be interrogated for further details.**

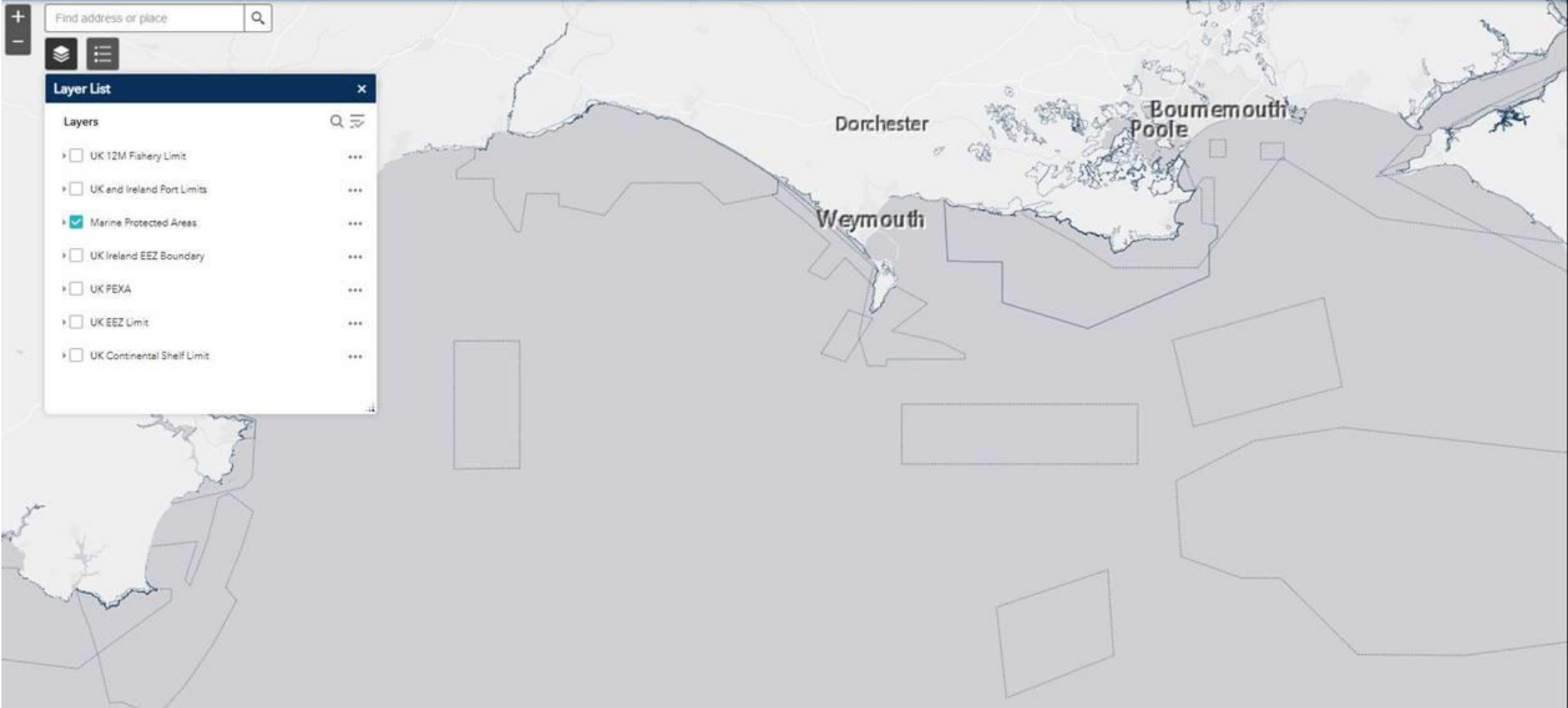
Find address or place



**Layer List** [X]

Layers [Search] [List Icon]

- UK 12M Fishery Limit [More]
- UK and Ireland Port Limits [More]
- Marine Protected Areas [More]
- UK Ireland EEZ Boundary [More]
- UK PEXA [More]
- UK EEZ Limit [More]
- UK Continental Shelf Limit [More]



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