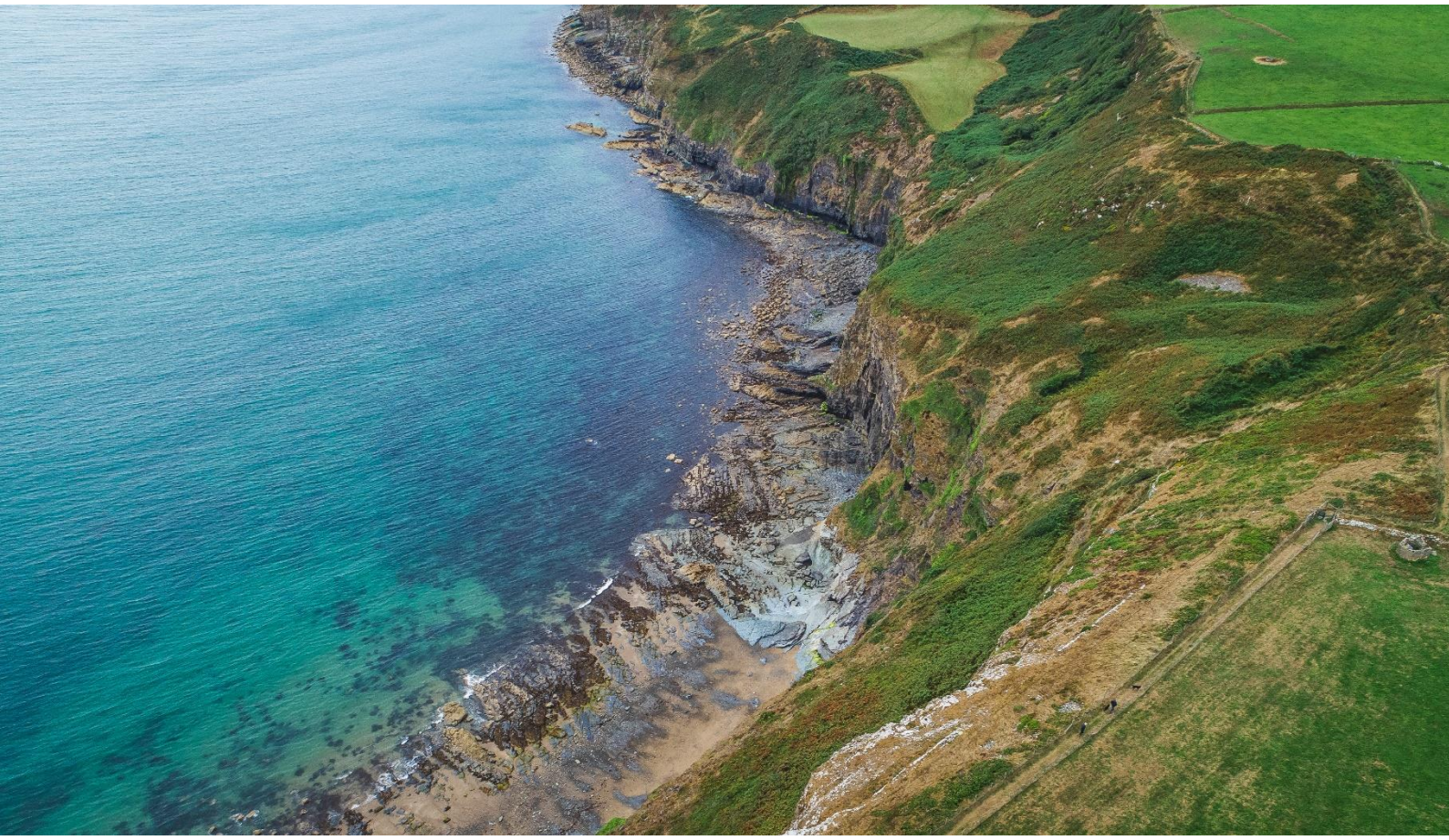
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES IN WALES



JNCC

Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Natural Resources Wales

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Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Activity	Human, social or economic actions or endeavours that may influence the marine environment, for example fishing or energy production.
Cetacean	Group of aquatic mammals comprising whales, dolphins and porpoises.
Conserve	Term used to describe the conservation objective set, where evidence indicates an attribute is unimpacted or in favourable condition. Management action is still likely to be required to keep this status.
Crustacean	Diverse group of invertebrate animals, including crabs, lobsters, crayfish, shrimps, prawns, krill, woodlice and barnacles.
Extent	Extent refers to the total area in the site occupied by the qualifying feature and must include consideration of its distribution.
EUNIS	A European habitat classification system, covering all types of habitats from natural to artificial, terrestrial to freshwater and marine.
Feature	Term used to describe the Habitat / Species / Geological / Geomorphological / Large-scale feature which is designated within the site.
Impact	The consequence of pressures (e.g. habitat degradation) where a change occurs that is different to that expected under natural conditions.
Management Measures	Ways to manage activities within an MPA to maintain or improve the condition of its features.
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	Designated to protect nationally important species, habitats, ecological processes and features of geological/geomorphological importance.
MCZ Evidence Protocols document	Outline of how NRW and JNCC will process evidence for the Welsh MCZ process.
Marine Protected Area (MPA)	A generic term to cover all marine areas that are 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.
Network	Collection of individual MPAs or reserves operating co-operatively and synergistically at various spatial scales and with a range of protection levels that are designed to meet objectives that a single reserve cannot achieve. The components of an ecologically coherent network are explained in section 2.5.
Pressure	Pressures are mechanisms through which an activity has an effect on a feature.
Ramsar sites	Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. These are coastal (and terrestrial) designations with some sites protecting marine features.
Sensitivity	The sensitivity of a feature (species or habitat) is a measure that is dependent on the ability of the feature to resist change and its ability to recover from change.

Term	Meaning
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Designated to protect any area of special interest for its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features. These are coastal (and terrestrial) designations with some sites protecting marine features.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Designated to protect habitats and species of European importance.
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	Classified to protect bird species of European importance and regularly occurring migratory birds.
Task and Finish Group (TFG)	Stakeholders that work alongside the Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC to identify MCZs that address the shortfalls identified in Welsh waters.
Welsh Waters	Includes both Welsh inshore waters, from the mean high-water mark to the 12 nautical mile territorial seas limit, and Welsh offshore waters, between the 12 nautical mile territorial seas limit and the UK-Ireland median line or the Northern Ireland adjacent waters limit.

Part 1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

1.1 The Welsh Government is committed to delivering clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse seas[1]. The identification and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to form an ecologically coherent network is key to contributing towards the health, productivity and biodiversity of the marine area.

1.2 Annex A details the legal mechanisms and policy tools for delivering an ecologically coherent network of MPAs.

Purpose and Scope

1.3 This document sets out how the Welsh Government intends to use its powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (the Marine Act) to identify Marine Conservation Zones.

1.4 It relates to all Welsh waters (inshore and offshore regions). This reflects the transfer of offshore nature conservation powers (12nm to the median line) to the Welsh Minister in 2018.

1.5 It outlines how the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) will collaborate with stakeholders to identify MCZs to complete the Welsh contribution towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs.

Overview of Biodiversity

1.6 Biodiversity is the variety of life found on Earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their abundance and genetic diversity. Biodiversity helps to sustain life and underpins our lives and livelihoods by supporting the functioning and resilience of ecosystems.

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69322/pb3654-marine-policy-statement-110316.pdf

1.7 Biodiversity is a good indicator of the health of ecosystems. By having a more diverse environment our ecosystems are more likely to be healthier and more resilient, able to adapt and recover from change.

1.8 Welsh seas are dynamic and home to a spectacular array of marine life, including seaweeds, crustaceans, seabirds and cetaceans. Many of our habitats and species are of national and international importance and some are protected because they are rare, threatened and/or declining.

1.9 Welsh seas have an intrinsic value and are an important asset to society, used by many for their livelihoods, enjoyment and personal well-being. The variety of life supported by our seas enriches the environment and enables marine ecosystems to contribute towards a sustainable and prosperous Wales by providing the vital goods and services we depend on, such as food, jobs, maritime heritage, energy security and the regulation of our climate.

1.10 As the marine environment continues to face pressures it is important that action is taken to ensure our seas are healthy, resilient and marine natural resources are managed sustainably now and for the benefit of future generations.

PART 2 DEVELOPING AN ECOLOGICALLY COHERENT NETWORK

What is a marine protected area?

2.1 A marine protected area (MPA) is a general term used to describe any area of sea or shore protected by law and managed for the conservation of habitats, species or other natural features.

2.2 MPAs are designated under a range of legislation. When taken together they form a network which can provide greater benefits to the marine environment than individual sites.

Designing an ecologically coherent network of MPAs

2.3 A well-designed and well-managed MPA network includes MPAs that represent the range of habitats and species, are of a suitable size and are distributed evenly to allow for the connectivity of habitats and species.

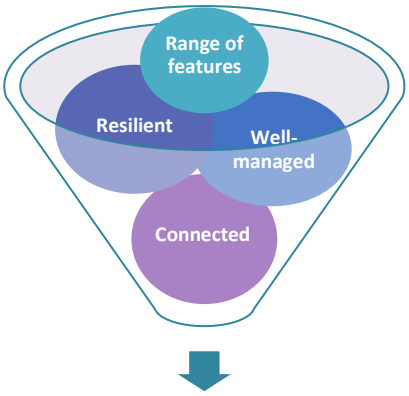
2.4 To inform the design and development of an ecologically coherent network the OSPAR Commission has developed guidance[2]. The Welsh Government, along with the other UK administrations, has used this guidance to develop principles for the development of the network in UK waters (Joint Administrations Statement)[3].

[2] https://www.ospar.org/work-areas/bdc/marine-protected-areas/guidance-for-the-development-and-management-of-the-ospar-network

[3] https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-05/marine-protected-areas-mpas-network-joint-uk-administrations-statement.pdf

2.5 By applying the guiding principles, a network of MPAs can be considered ecologically coherent if it:

- Protects the range of marine habitats and species in a proportionate manner, which are representative of UK waters;
- Is resilient to withstand, adapt or recover from impacts including those associated with the climate emergency;
- Connects areas to allow linkages and provide species with protection through different life stages; and
- Is effectively managed.[4]



Ecologically Coherent MPA Network

The benefits of an ecologically coherent well-managed network of MPAs

2.6 In addition to conserving and enhancing biological diversity and building ecosystem resilience, an ecologically coherent and well-managed network of MPAs can also provide added benefits to ecosystems, economic activity and well-being by:

Supporting **sustainable** fisheries through the protection of certain habitats, which may be important for key life cycle stages, including spawning or nursery grounds and major feeding grounds.

Supporting coastal **communities**, through job creation, personal well-being, energy security and by providing opportunities for nature-based tourism and leisure activities.

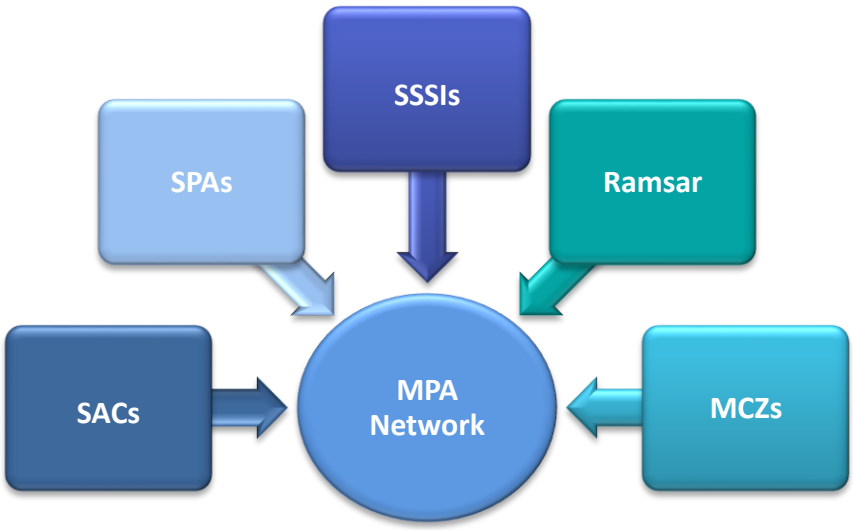
Providing opportunities for education, training and research, inspiring **future generations** and building a shared sense of ownership of our oceans.

[4] https://beta.gov.wales/marine-protected-area-network-management-framework-wales

Current Network of MPAs in Wales

2.7 There are currently 139 MPAs in Welsh waters covering 50% of all Welsh waters. A map of the current MPAs in Wales can be found in Figure 1. In Wales, the network is made up of the following types of MPAs:

- **Special Areas of Conservation** (SACs x 15) protect certain habitats and species under the European Habitats Directive (1992). SACs are designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- **Special Protection Areas** (SPAs x 13) protect wild bird populations under the European Birds directive (1979). SPAs are designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- **Marine Conservation Zones** (MCZs x 1) protect marine species, habitats, or geological features of interest. MCZs are designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009). In 2014, Part 5 of the Marine Act came into force. As a result, the Skomer Marine Nature Reserve (MNR) was reclassified as a MCZ.
- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSIs x 107) protect certain wildlife and geology under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. SSSIs can cover the seashore down to the lowest tide and the seabed of estuary channels.
- **Ramsar sites** (x3) protect internationally important wetland habitats and associated species, mostly birds, required by the 1971 international wetlands convention ('Ramsar Convention').



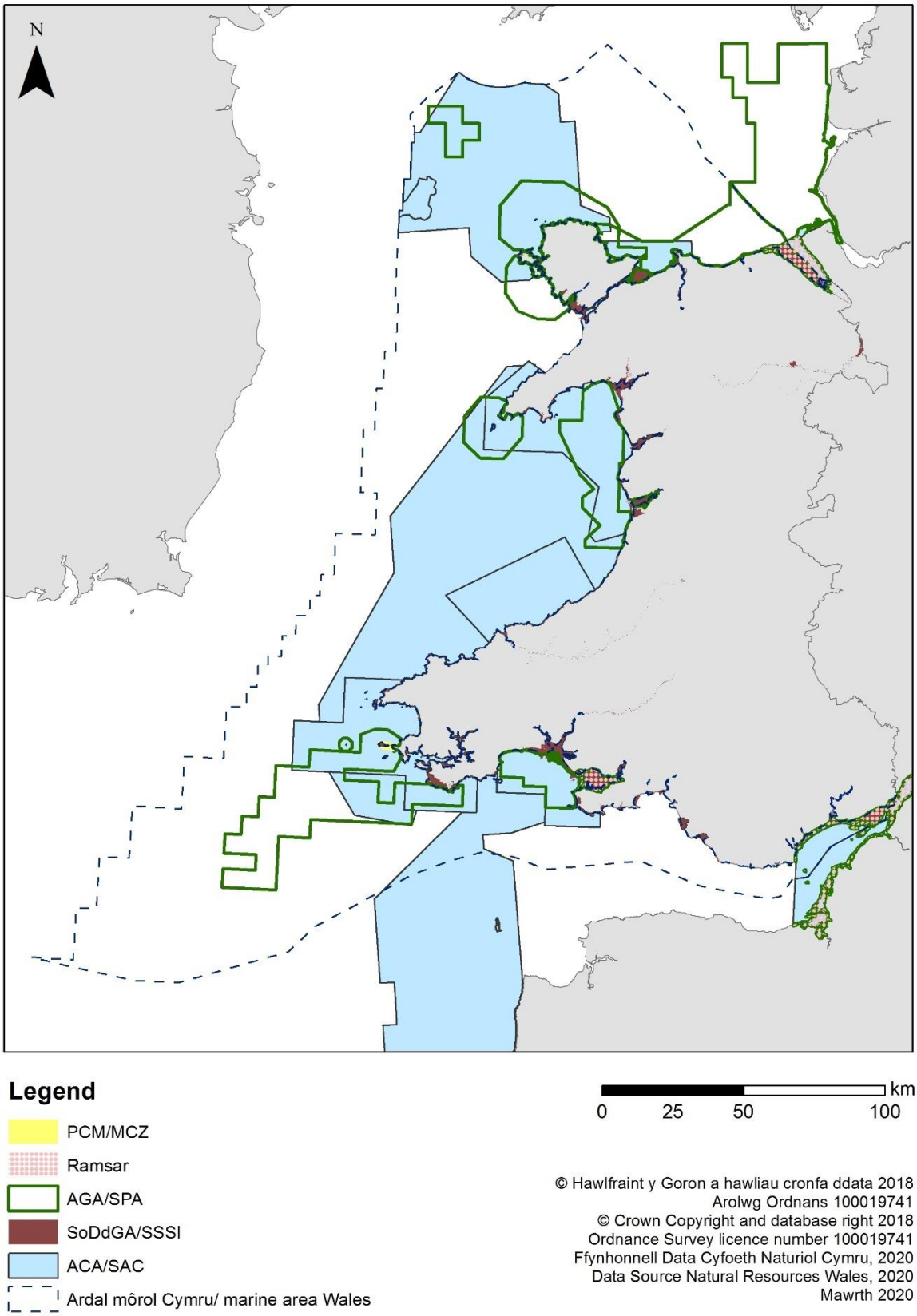


Figure 1: Designated MPAs in Welsh waters

Previous Approach to Marine Conservation Zones in Wales

2.8 In 2009, the Marine Act gave the Welsh Ministers powers to designate Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). In 2012, the Welsh Government consulted on proposals to designate highly protected MCZs to support the development of an ecologically coherent network.

2.9 The consultation generated strong views with over 6,000 responses. Many were in favour of the principle for highly protected MCZs. Others felt the highly protected approach would create unacceptable socio-economic impacts and that additional evidence was required to justify the need for further MPAs.

2.10 The Welsh Government listened to the views of stakeholders and established a Task and Finish Team to review the consultation responses and consider how MCZs should be progressed in Wales. The Task and Finish Team was supported by a Stakeholder Focus Group which represented all the major marine users.

2.11 In 2013, after considering the findings of the Task and Finish Team, the Welsh Government formally withdrew its proposals for highly protected MCZs. The Welsh Government committed to undertake further work to assess existing MPAs in Welsh waters to understand their contribution towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs.

Assessing the contribution of Welsh MPAs towards the UK network

2.12 In 2014, the Welsh Government asked JNCC and NRW to undertake an assessment of MPAs in Welsh waters to provide evidence on[5]:

a) How existing MPAs in Wales contribute towards an ecologically coherent network of MPAs in the UK;
b) Whether there are any shortfalls in the network of MPAs in Welsh waters (inshore and offshore) that need to be addressed to meet the Welsh Ministers' network obligations; and
c) An evaluation of whether any shortfalls identified could be addressed in Welsh waters.

[5] http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/JNCC_NetworkProgressWelshWaters_Final.pdf

2.13 To account for biological and geographical variation within the network it was agreed to undertake the network assessment using the regions determined for Charting Progress 2 (CP2) (Annex B): An assessment of the State of UK Seas 2010. Welsh waters overlap with two of these regions; the Irish Sea Region (shared with England and Scotland) and the Western Channel & Celtic Sea Region (shared with England). A map of the regions which relates to Welsh waters is presented in Figure 2.

2.14 To assess the contribution of MPAs in Welsh waters against each of the network design principles a number of practical criteria were agreed[6] and are set out in Table 1. Further information on how the below principles relate to the OSPAR principles is available in the JNCC 2016 Network Assessment.[5]

[6] The 2016 JNCC network assessment used four of the five OSPAR principles: Features, Representativity, Resilience and Connectivity. The assessment did not consider the criterion 'Management' to assess whether the existing MPAs in Welsh waters have the necessary management (of human activity) in place to deliver their conservation objectives. The MPA network management framework and action plan seek to address improved management of MPAs in Wales.
https://beta.gov.wales/marine-protected-area-network-management-framework-wales

Table 1: Welsh MPA Network Assessment Criteria

Principles for Welsh MPA Network	Criteria	Justification
Representation	Each feature on the MPA feature list for Wales is represented in Welsh MPAs. A minimum of 10% by area of each broad-scale habitat feature (habitats that characterise the marine area) is protected within each region.	Ensures that the full range of habitats and species are represented within the network. Ensures an appropriate amount of each habitat is represented within the network for it to be effective and ecologically viable.
Replication	Two examples of each broad-scale habitat feature are protected within each region. Where a feature is of conservation interest, three examples of the feature are protected within each region (where distribution allows).	The provision of replicates builds in resilience from impact. Ensures that all broad-scale habitats and rare/or threatened species and habitats are represented and afforded protection within the network.
Connectivity	MPAs with similar habitat types are no more than 80km apart. Adequate representation of each habitat across varying depths (where appropriate).	Applying a basic distance separation within the network increases the likelihood that sites with similar features are ecologically connected to each other[7]. Providing adequate representation across varying depths ensures the MPA network is well distributed, taking into account links between marine ecosystems.

[7] The 80km spacing was identified by Roberts et al (2010) as a guideline for the greatest distance between sites supporting similar habitats to ensure sufficient ecological connectivity. Roberts, C.M., Hawkins, J.P., Fletcher, J., Hands, S., Raab, K. and Ward, S. 2010. It has since been used by OSPAR in assessing connectivity.

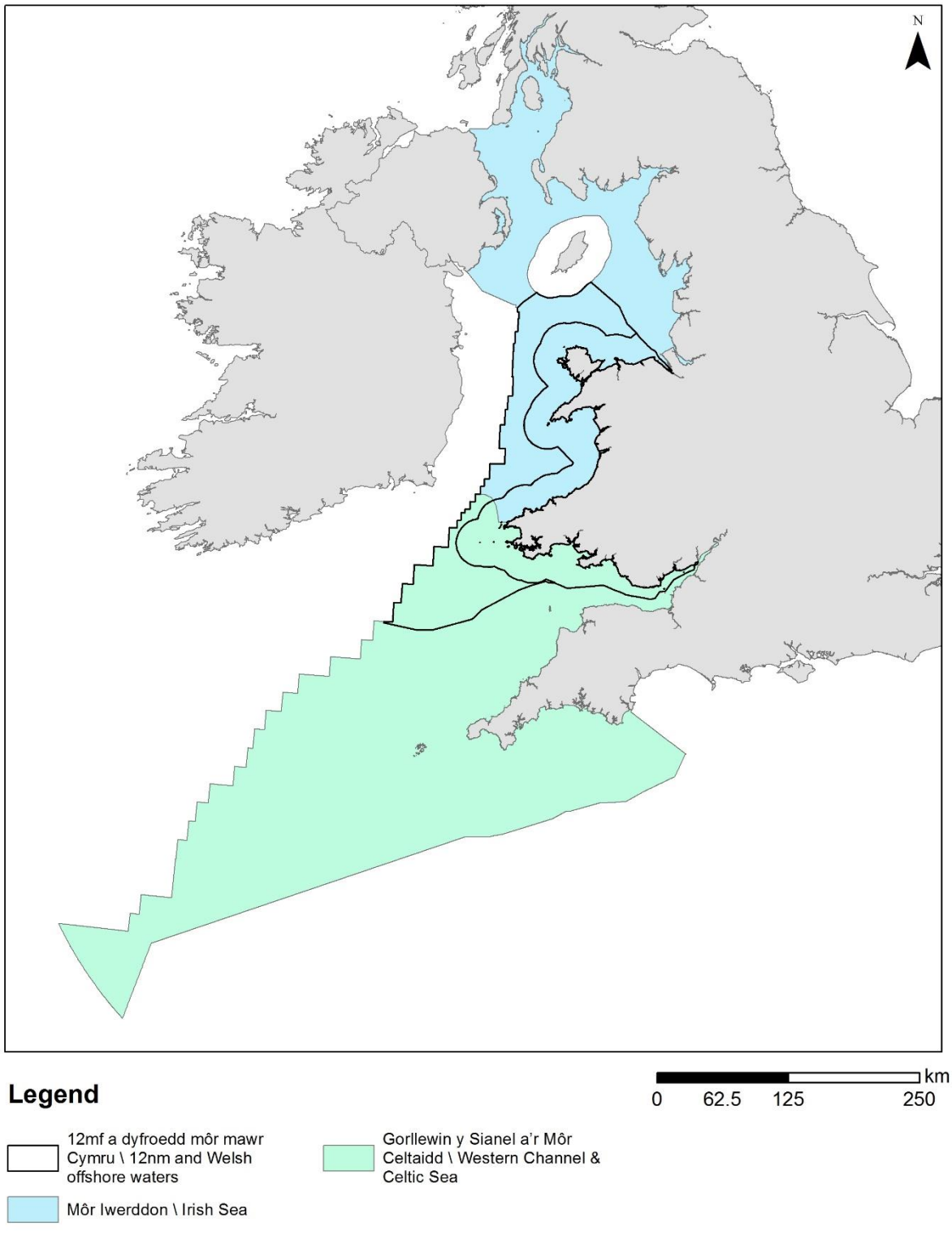


Figure 2: Charting Progress 2 regions relating to Welsh waters.

2.15 The network assessment focused on habitats and sessile/ limited mobility species:

- Broad-scale habitat features (EUNIS Level 3), to ensure the MPA network represents the full range of habitats in Welsh waters,
- OSPAR threatened and/or declining habitats and species, to ensure rare and threatened features are protected within the network;
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016 interim Section 7 list, to ensure habitats and species of principal importance in Wales are protected within the network.

2.16 A full list of features subject to the network assessment[8] can be found in Annex C of this document.

Shortfalls in the Welsh Network

2.17 The MPA network assessment was completed in November 2016 and reviewed in 2019 when new data became available. The assessment concluded that MPAs in Wales are making a substantial contribution towards ecological coherence in that they:

- Represent the majority of habitats and species,
- Where possible, replicate features to provide resilience; and
- Are well connected.

2.18 The assessment did identify a number of shortfalls in the Welsh contribution to the UK network. These shortfalls are provided in Annex C. It is not possible to address all of the shortfalls as there is insufficient evidence for some features, and/or opportunity for addressing the shortfall at this time. Annex C provides details of the shortfalls where insufficient evidence and/or opportunity was identified. These shortfalls will be reconsidered as part of any future network assessment as and when new scientific evidence becomes available.

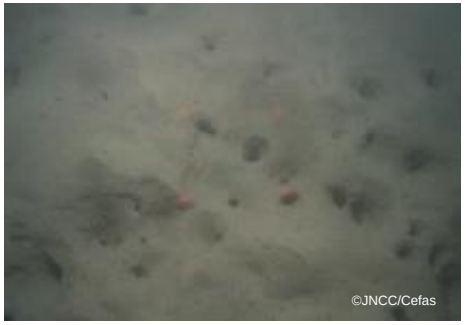
2.19 For ecological reasons, based on connectivity of marine protected areas and providing adequate representation across varying depths, there is a preference for new sites to be sited away from inshore areas, where appropriate.

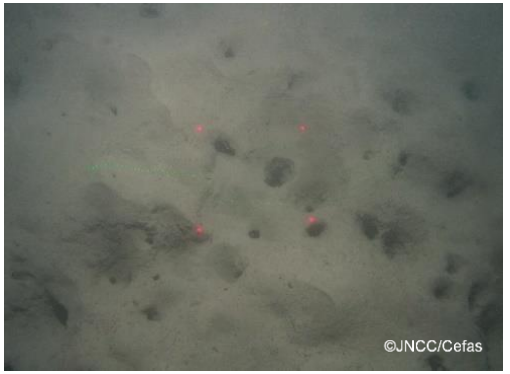
[8] Further information on the process followed to assess Welsh MPAs can be found here: http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/JNCC_NetworkProgressWelshWaters_Final.pdf

2.20 Table 2 lists the shortfalls which are being considered as suitable for MCZ identification. Further information will be provided within the Area of Search documents.

Table 2: Network shortfalls currently under consideration.

Network Shortfall in Welsh waters	Reason for Shortfall	CP2 region where shortfall exists	Brief description of feature	Feature Image
Subtidal coarse sediment	Less than 10% of area currently protected in existing MPAs	Irish Sea Western Channel and Celtic Seas	Coarse sand, gravel, pebbles, shingle and cobbles covered by seawater at all times. This habitat is often unstable due to tidal currents and/or wave action.	
Subtidal sand	Less than 10% of area currently protected in existing MPAs	Western Channel and Celtic Seas	Sandy seabed that is under water at all times. The wave action reduces most mud and clay leaving a loose, changeable habitat which is home to species like flatfish and sand eels.	

Network Shortfall in Welsh waters	Reason for Shortfall	CP2 region where shortfall exists	Brief description of feature	Feature Image
Subtidal mud	Less than 10% of area currently protected in existing MPAs	Western Channel and Celtic Seas	Cohesive sandy muds and mud that are covered by seawater at all times. Extends from the extreme lower shore to offshore, deep sea habitats.	
Subtidal mixed sediment	Less than 10% of area currently protected in existing MPAs	Irish Sea	This habitat incorporates a range of sediments including muddy gravelly sands and mosaics of cobbles and pebbles embedded in or lying upon the sediment. This combination of sediments and small rocks can allow a variety of animals living within the sediment and on the cobbles and pebbles.	

Network Shortfall in Welsh waters	Reason for Shortfall	CP2 region where shortfall exists	Brief description of feature	Feature Image
Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitat	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Irish Sea	This community is made up of sponges that grow proud of the seabed and anthozoans (soft corals, sea fans, and colonial anemones). They require sufficient water movement to bring a ready supply of food. As a result, they are found on shores which are exposed to waves or currents, but also with local shelter from the full force of the waves and tides.	
Mud habitats in deep water	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Western Channel and Celtic Seas	Cohesive sandy muds and mud that are found in depths greater than 20m.	

Network Shortfall in Welsh waters	Reason for Shortfall	CP2 region where shortfall exists	Brief description of feature	Feature Image
Sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Western Channel and Celtic Seas	On stable plains of fine mud, areas of the seabed may be marked by prominent mounds, made by animals like the volcano worm, burrows (e.g. from Dublin Bay prawns and other crustaceans) and delicate sea-pens that reach up into the water to collect food.	
Ross worm reef *Sabellaria spinulosa reef*	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Irish Sea	The Ross worm cements grains of sand together to form a tube. These can be found individually or in aggregations forming large reefs. In reef form the worm tubes rise vertically off the sandy or gravelly seabed providing habitat and food for other sea life such as crabs and juvenile fish.	

Network Shortfall in Welsh waters	Reason for Shortfall	CP2 region where shortfall exists	Brief description of feature	Feature Image
Ocean quahog *Arctica islandica*	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Western Channel and Celtic Seas	Ocean quahogs can be found from just below the low water level to depths of about 500m. They live buried in sediment, often entirely hidden with just a small tube extending up to the surface of the seabed. They can live for over 500 years.	
Pink sea-fan *Eunicella verrucosa*	Less than 3 replicates are currently protected in existing MPAs.	Irish Sea	The slow growing pink sea-fan lives in areas of strong currents on rocky reefs. The branches are covered in small bumps from which small anemone like structures emerge to feed. They can grow up to 50cm high and can live for 100 years.	

PART 3 COMPLETING THE WELSH CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS AN ECOLOGICALLY COHERENT NETWORK OF MPAs IN THE UK

Communication and stakeholder engagement

3.1 The Welsh Government will produce and implement a detailed communications plan to support the process of identifying MCZs.

3.2 The marine environment is a shared resource, used by many. In line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Welsh Government acts as a guardian for Welsh seas, working in partnership with sea users to ensure we all enjoy and benefit from a healthy, resilient and productive environment.

3.3 Stakeholder engagement is essential to informing and completing the Welsh contribution towards the UK network. Many stakeholders are out and about at sea or near the coast on a daily basis and have a lot of valuable local knowledge and expertise.

3.4 The Welsh Government will ensure:

- The need for additional MPAs in the Welsh network is understood.
- The process to identify MCZs is clear and transparent.
- There is the opportunity to input throughout the MCZ identification process.
- The purpose of conservation objectives is clear and the indicative management measures for the proposed MCZs are understood.
- That regular updates are available on the Welsh Government website, social media and through the Wales Marine Advisory and Action Group.

Task and Finish Group

3.5 To support this process, a new Task and Finish Group (TFG) has been established to work alongside the Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC to identify MCZs that address the shortfalls identified in Welsh waters (Table 2).

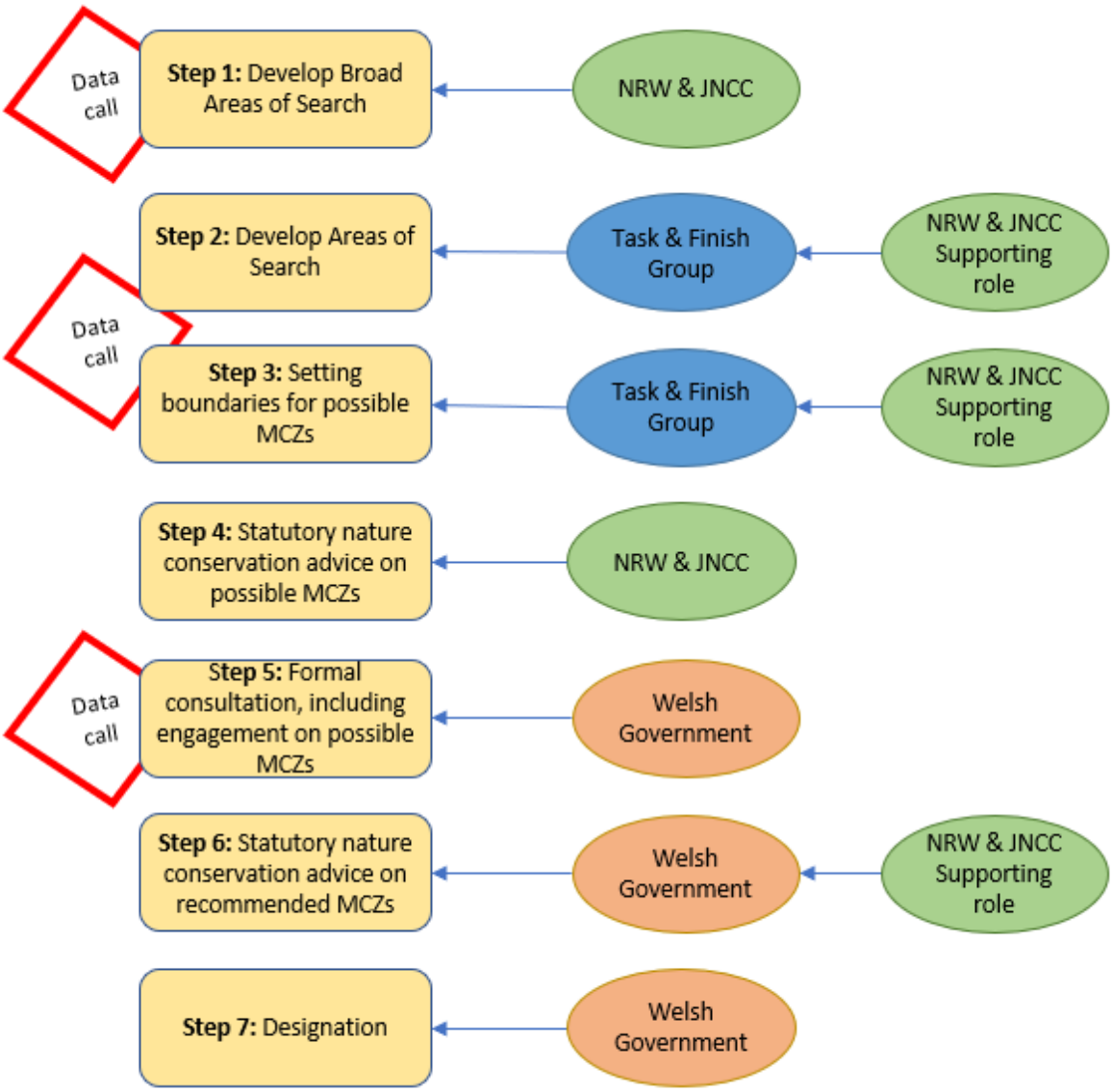
3.6 The TFG is made up of members from the Wales Marine Advisory and Action Group (WMAAG) who represent the interests of their sector. The Group is independently chaired, with the Welsh Government as

secretariat. NRW and JNCC will support the TFG, where needed, including the provision of technical and scientific advice within their statutory roles.

3.7 The agreed terms of reference for the TFG are available in Annex D.

Process for Identifying MCZs

3.8 The process for identifying MCZs in Welsh waters will follow seven steps, as presented in the diagram below and in Table 3.



3.9 The process for identifying MCZs in Welsh waters starts by looking at areas at a wide scale, which then become smaller and more focussed areas as the process develops, see diagram below.

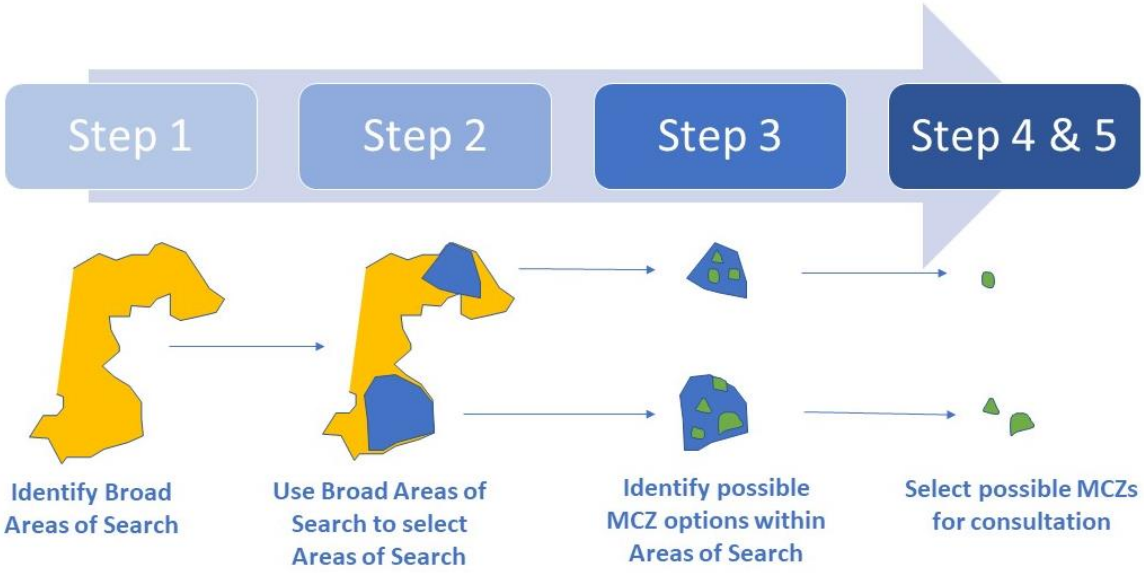
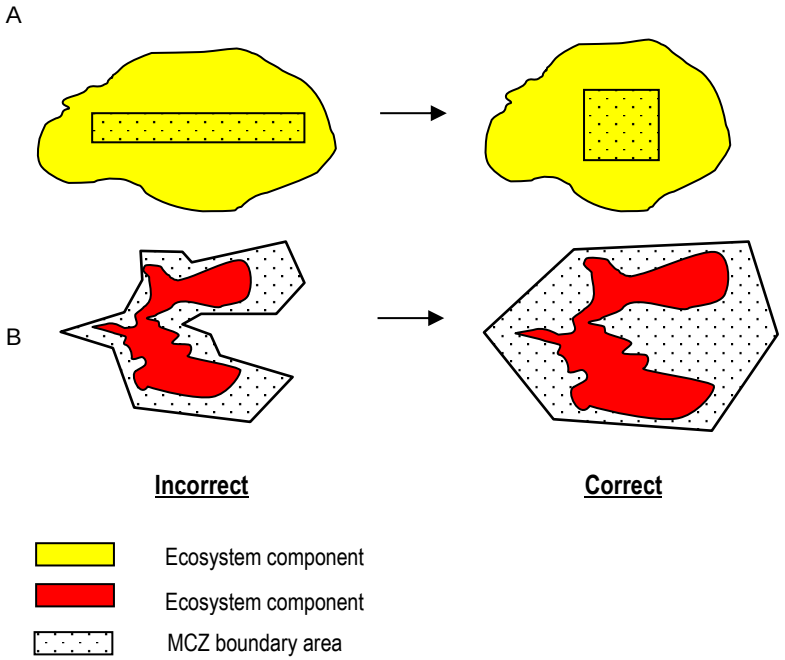

Step 1
Step 2
Step 3
Step 4 & 5
Identify Broad Areas of Search
Use Broad Areas of Search to select Areas of Search
Identify possible MCZ options within Areas of Search
Select possible MCZs for consultation

Table 3. Process for Identifying and Designating MCZs

Step	Details	Action Points
Step 1 Broad Areas of Search	**Lead**: NRW and JNCC The first step was to identify areas in Welsh waters where the shortfalls are present. NRW and JNCC worked together to identify Broad Areas of Search for each shortfall by regional sea. The following principles were applied to Step 1: • Broad Areas of Search were identified using best available ecological evidence. • Areas of a lower socio-economic interest were preferred to minimise social and economic impacts, providing the ecological value is not compromised. • Shortfall areas that overlap with existing protected site features were not considered. • The Broad Areas of Search document will present all the shortfalls in the regional sea, showing potential opportunities where more than one shortfall can be included in a location. • A call for data will go out to stakeholders to collect additional data to support the process. Data will be assessed against submission criteria and protocols before it is included within evidence packs. **Outcome**: NRW and JNCC have developed a Broad Area of Search document. This provides the following information for each shortfall in the required regional sea: • Description of the shortfall, • Maps of where the feature is available to meet shortfalls,	• Submission of data from the Task and Finish Group (TFG) • NRW & JNCC developed broad area of search documents for each regional sea • NRW & JNCC produced workshop materials

Step	Details	Action Points
	• Updated network shortfall analysis figures of the amount of habitat required to meet the shortfall, • The source of evidence used to identify the Broad Areas of Search (see Annex E), • Information on feature sensitivity to pressures; and • Information on the activities likely to be managed.	
Step 2 Areas of Search	**Lead**: TFG With support from the Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC (as needed), the TFG worked together to: • Considered and discuss Broad Areas of Search options for each shortfall presented by NRW and JNCC, • Considered socio-economic activities which may be carried out within or near Areas of Search, • Identified Areas of Search for consideration and refinement into possible MCZ options **Outcome**: The TFG identified Areas of Search for MCZs. Engagement of wider stakeholders will now take place, presenting the Areas of Search areas and a data call for further ecological and socio-economic evidence to support refinement of the Areas of Search. Information received from the wider stakeholder engagement process will be reviewed by the Project Team and presented to the TFG.	• TFG define Areas of Search • WG lead stakeholder engagement • Data call from stakeholders
Step 3 Setting Boundaries	**Lead**: NRW and JNCC	• Possible MCZ boundary options identified by NRW and JNCC

Step	Details	Action Points
	NRW and JNCC, will refine the Areas of Search identified under Step 2 by developing options for possible MCZ boundaries for discussion with the TFG. The following principles will be applied to Step 3: • Boundaries must include a viable area of each feature (Annex F details the viable sizes) and must adequately meet the network shortfall, • Boundaries may require a buffer around protected features to equate to warp length, as set out in Annex G. • Boundaries should consider the connectivity of habitats across Welsh waters, including distribution of depth ranges, • Where there is a clear ecological justification, a larger area of a habitat or a supporting habitat could be included within the boundary. To be considered on a case by case basis, • Where there are practical benefits for management purposes consider whether to include other features which overlap with a shortfall feature. To be considered on a case by case basis. • Boundaries will be drawn as simply as possible, using a minimum number of straight lines and will incorporate an appropriate margin (Annex G), to ensure the protection of the feature. Examples of best practice for drawing boundaries are shown in Figure 3 below; and • Where possible, potential sites will attempt to meet more than one shortfall.	• Preferred MCZ boundaries agreed by TFG

Step	Details	Action Points
	 Figure 3 - Illustration 'A' demonstrates the preferred boundary within a large area of broad-scale habitat. Illustration 'B' demonstrates the preferred boundary around a habitat. **Outcome** The TFG agrees boundaries and recommends possible MCZs to the Welsh Government for further consideration	

Step 4 Statutory Nature Conservation Advice (pre consultation)	**Lead**: Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC Welsh Government will seek advice from NRW and JNCC (as statutory nature conservation advisors to the Welsh Government) on the possible MCZs identified by the TFG, including advice on: • The level of confidence in the evidence used to identify possible MCZs, indicating whether additional evidence may be required to strengthen confidence in the presence and extent of features, • The level of confidence in the evidence used to advise on feature condition, • Current and future risk to the feature from human activities, • The ecological value of the possible MCZs and whether they will address the shortfalls identified in the Welsh network assessment; and • The high-level conservation objectives and preliminary advice on pressures and activities to inform potential management measures. **Outcome** NRW and JNCC will provide scientific advice on the possible MCZs identified by the TFG. This advice will be provided in a report to Welsh Government and address the points above. Further details on how this advice is developed can be found in the MCZ Evidence Protocols document.	• NRW & JNCC provide pre-consultation advice to WG
Step 5 Formal consultation	**Lead:** Welsh Government The Welsh Ministers will consider the TFG recommendations and advice from NRW and JNCC in deciding whether to proceed to consultation on the possible MCZs (or take alternative action, including gathering further evidence). Subject to a decision to consult, each possible MCZ will be consulted on for a minimum of 12 weeks.	• WG publish formal consultation (12 weeks) • WG lead roadshows around Wales • Data call • NRW & JNCC support WG in reviewing consultation responses

	The consultation package will include information on the possible MCZs and the features to be protected, preliminary advice on potential management options plus an impact assessment of anticipated costs and benefits. The consultation exercise will provide an opportunity for interested parties to make written representations and provide additional evidence to the Welsh Government on the possible MCZs. During the consultation period, stakeholders will be engaged to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage participation with wider stakeholders and the public. **Outcome:** Following consultation, all responses will be analysed and a summary of responses will be made available on the Welsh Government website.	• WG publish consultation responses
Step 6 Statutory Nature Conservation Advice (post consultation)	**Lead:** Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC The Welsh Government will consider all responses received during the consultation exercise. Depending upon the information received it may be necessary at this stage for the Welsh Government to seek further advice from NRW and JNCC.	• WG to decide on recommended MCZs • NRW & JNCC to support

Step 7 Designation Process	**Lead:** Welsh Government The Welsh Ministers have overall responsibility for designating MCZs in Welsh waters. In reaching a decision on whether to designate a recommended MCZ the Welsh Ministers will consider the following information: • Responses from the consultation exercise, • The impact assessment; and • Advice from NRW and JNCC. The Welsh Ministers may wish to correspond, discuss, seek further information or hold a public hearing before reaching a decision on designation.	• MCZs designated by the Welsh Ministers

PART 4 EVIDENCE

Ecological and Socio-economic evidence

4.1 The network assessment provides the evidence to demonstrate which features are already adequately protected by MPAs in Wales and those which need to be incorporated in the network to meet the shortfalls in ecological coherence.

4.2 The best available ecological and socio-economic evidence will be used to identify possible MCZs. In the first instance possible MCZs will be identified on the basis of ecological evidence. Socio-economic information will be used throughout the process, to refine the areas to minimise any impact on human activities as far as is practical.

Calls for Data

4.3 During the project, there will be calls for any relevant and published ecological and/or socio-economic data held by stakeholders. Information received through the initial call will be considered by NRW and JNCC when identifying Broad Areas of Search at Step 1 of the MCZ process.

4.4 Subsequent calls for data will be included as part of the wider stakeholder engagement following determination of Areas of Search (Step 2 of the MCZ process) and during the public consultation. These will enable interested parties to submit ecological and socio-economic data which they consider to be relevant. Any relevant information will be considered by NRW and JNCC whilst developing their statutory advice to the Welsh Government on the possible MCZs. The Welsh Government will consider relevant information submitted within the impact assessments on possible MCZs.

4.5 For the data to be considered relevant it must adhere to the guidance provided in Annex H and submitted with a completed checklist (provided with the call for data).

Data Confidence

4.6 In deciding which possible MCZs are suitable for consultation, and ultimately designation, the Welsh Government will require a certain level of confidence in the presence and extent of features within the MCZ. The

level of confidence will be considered on a case by case basis and subject to formal advice from NRW and JNCC. In providing this advice, NRW and JNCC will follow the method set out in the MCZ Evidence Protocols document.

4.7 Following advice from NRW and JNCC it may be necessary to obtain additional scientific evidence to strengthen the Welsh Government's understanding and confidence on the presence and extent of MCZ features.

Impact Assessments

4.8 The Welsh Government will undertake an Impact Assessment to determine the anticipated social and economic costs and benefits of designating the possible MCZs. Considerations will include current, planned and future environmental, economic, social and cultural matters.

4.9 The Impact Assessments will form part of the formal consultation package providing the opportunity for interested parties to comment on the information contained in each assessment and identify any additional relevant information.

PART 5 MANAGING MCZs

Conservation Objectives

5.1 The Marine Act requires conservation objectives to be established for MCZs. A conservation objective is a statement which describes the desired ecological or geological state (quality) of the protected feature and is the starting point for informing the need for any management measures and monitoring requirements.

5.2 As statutory nature conservation advisors, NRW and JNCC will provide advice on the necessary conservation objectives and potential management options for MCZs, including:

- Conservation objectives for the MCZ
- Advice on feature condition; and
- Advice on which activities may impact upon features.

5.3 Further information on the development of conservation objectives and management will be published in due course.

Management

5.4 Following designation and the publication of conservation objectives each MCZ will be managed as part of the wider network of MPAs in Wales, as set out in MPA Management Framework[9].

5.5 As the group responsible for overseeing management of the MPA network in Wales, the MPA Management Steering Group will be kept informed throughout this process.

[9] https://beta.gov.wales/marine-protected-area-network-management-framework-wales

PART 6 FUTURE WORK

Highly mobile marine species

6.1 Highly mobile marine species, such as porpoise, dolphins, seals and seabirds play an important role in our marine environment. They are often used as one of the key indicators in assessing the health of marine ecosystems.

6.2 Many mobile species are already protected by the MPA network in Wales, with MPAs for harbour porpoise, bottlenose dolphin, grey seals and a range of seabirds. The Welsh Government will consider the need for MCZs to protect any additional species in future phases of work.

Skomer MCZ

6.3 In 1990, the waters around Skomer Island and Marloes Peninsula were designated as a MNR under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). In December 2014, Part 5 of the Marine Act came into force which changed the classification of MNRs. As a consequence, Skomer MNR was reclassified as an MCZ.

6.4 The byelaws that were introduced to protect and manage the MNR remain in place following the reclassification.

6.5 A future phase of work for Skomer MCZ will involve the Welsh Government introducing a designation order, detailing the protected features of the MCZ and associated conservation objectives, as required by the Marine Act. NRW and stakeholders will inform this future phase of work.

Annex A. Marine Biodiversity and MPA Network Obligations

International	
	The **Convention on Biological Diversity** – requires parties to the convention to establish and maintain representative and effectively managed marine protected areas that contribute towards a global network of protected areas.
	The **Oslo and Paris Convention** (OSPAR) – aims to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. One of the tools to achieve this is the establishment of an ecologically coherent well-managed network of marine protected areas.
	The **Bern Convention** - aims to conserve and protect wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats and seeks to establish the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.
	The **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance 1971** aims to conserve wetlands to support their sustainable use.
UK	
	UK **Marine Policy Statement** – provides a framework for marine planning. It requires marine plan authorities and decision makers to take account of how developments may impact on the UK's aim to halt biodiversity loss and the legal obligations relating to MPAs, their conservation objectives, and management.
	The **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009** - places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to form a network of sites, which contribute towards the conservation and improvement of the marine environment in the UK.
	The **UK Marine Strategy** - requires Welsh Ministers and other UK Administrations to put in place measures to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) in our seas by 2020. A network of MPAs will be a key tool in contributing to the achievement of GES.
	The **Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017** and The **Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017**- provide for the establishment of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.
	The **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981** protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK and provides for the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
National	
	The **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015** – aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It sets out seven wellbeing goals for the Wales we want, the goals include a Wales which is globally responsible and resilient.
	The **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** - sets out Wales' approach to planning and managing natural resources at a national and local level in line with the principles of the sustainable management of natural resources and places a duty on public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems.

Annex B. Scale of the UK Network Assessment

The aim is to establish an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas in UK waters, which support a wider network of MPAs in the North-east Atlantic. When considering ecological coherence, OSPAR recommend considering the biological and geographical characteristics of an area rather than focusing on features within administrative boundaries.

It was decided the regional seas boundaries used to inform the Charting Progress 2 (CP2), State of the Seas Report in 2010 would be used to set the scale for the MPA network assessment. CP2 divided UK seas into eight regions based on their biological and geographical characteristics as seen in the Figure 4 below.

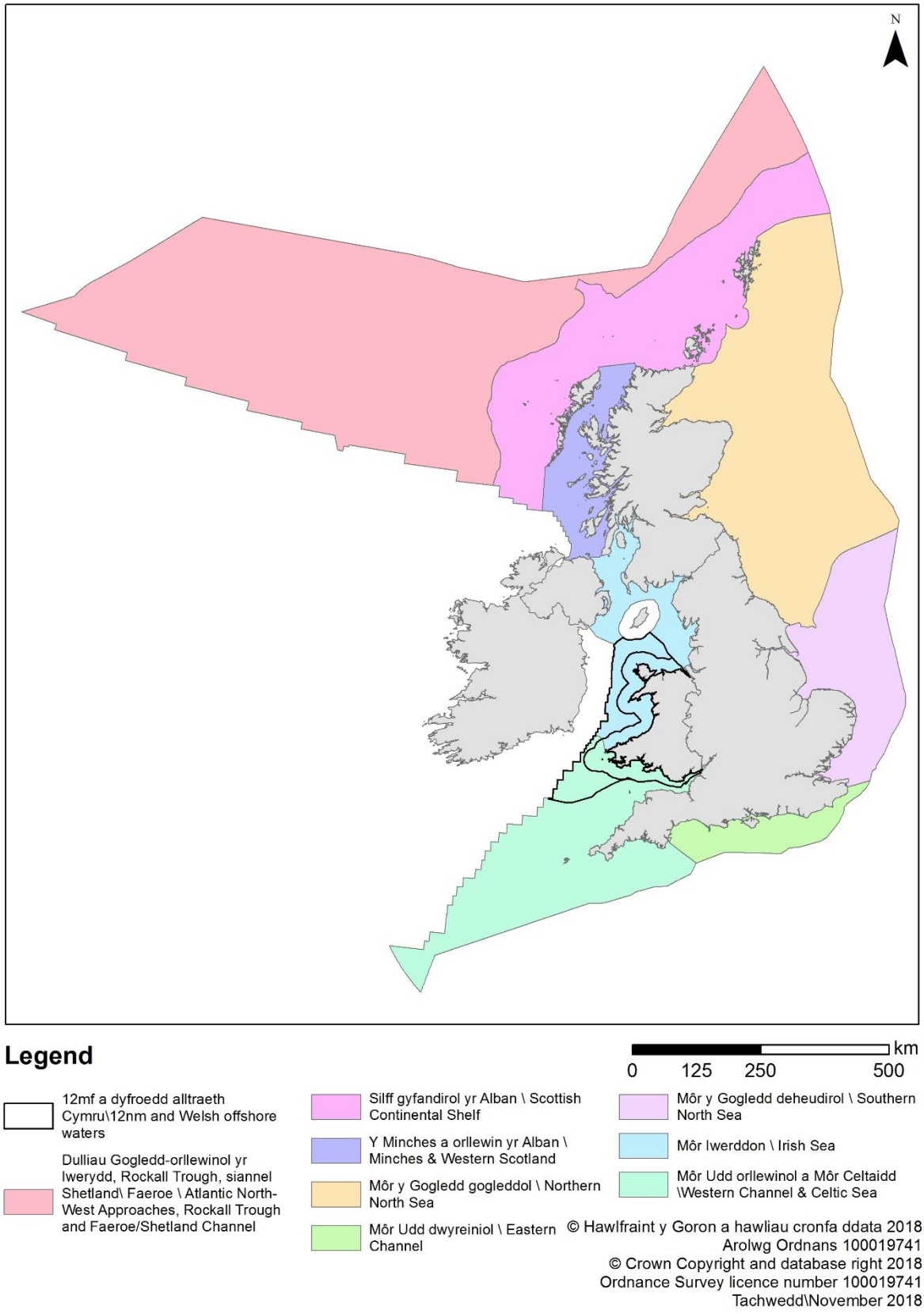


Figure 4: Charting Progress 2 regions

Annex C. Network Assessment – features and results

Broad-scale Habitats			
Broad-scale Habitats	**Common Description**	**Shortfall in the Welsh Network Yes/No**	**Region where there is a shortfall**
High energy littoral rock	Rocky shore very exposed to wave and/or tidal currents	No	
Moderate energy littoral rock	Rocky shores with some wave exposure and/or tidal current	No	
Low energy littoral rock	Rocky shores sheltered from waves and tidal currents	No	
Littoral coarse sediment	Seashores made of pebbles, gravels and coarse sand	No	
Littoral sand and muddy sand	Sandy seashores	No	
Littoral mud	Muddy seashores	No	
Littoral mixed sediments	Seashores made of a mixture of stones, gravels, sand and mud	No	
Coastal saltmarshes and saline reedbeds	Sheltered muddy areas at the top of the shore where salt-tolerant flowering plants grow	No	
Littoral sediments dominated by aquatic angiosperms	Sheltered muddy shores where seagrasses and other salt-tolerant flowering plants grow	No	
Littoral biogenic reefs	Reefs on the seashore made from hard parts of living things	No	
High energy infralittoral rock	Rocky seashores, exposed to very strong waves and/or currents	No	
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	Rocky seashores with some shelter from waves and/or currents	No	
Low energy infralittoral rock	Rocky seashores sheltered from waves and currents	No	
High energy circalittoral rock	Deeper water rock exposed to very strong waves and/or currents	No	
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Deeper water rock exposed to some shelter from waves and/or currents	No	
Low energy circalittoral rock	Deeper water rock sheltered from waves and currents	No	
Subtidal coarse sediment	Undersea beds of coarse sand, gravel and shingle	Yes	Irish Sea and Western Channel and Celtic Seas
Subtidal sand	Undersea beds of sand	Yes	Western Channel

Broad-scale Habitats			
			and Celtic Seas
Subtidal mud	Undersea beds of mud	Yes	Western Channel and Celtic Seas
Subtidal mixed sediment	Undersea beds of a mixture of stones, gravels, sands and muds	Yes	Irish Sea
Subtidal macrophyte-dominated sediment	Underwater beds of pebbles, gravel, sand or mud where seagrass or seaweeds grow	No	
Subtidal biogenic reefs	Underwater reefs made from the hard parts of living things	No	
Habitats of Conservation Importance			
Blue mussel beds		No	
Carbonate reefs		No	
Estuarine rocky habitat		Yes Shortfall cannot be met in Welsh waters. Limited evidence of habitat outside of existing sites.	Irish Sea
Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats		Yes	Irish Sea
Intertidal mudflats		No	
Intertidal underboulder/boulder communities		No	
Maerl beds		No	
Modiolus modiolus beds (horse mussel beds)		No	
Mud habitats in deep water		Yes	Western Channel

Broad-scale Habitats		
		and Celtic Seas
Musculus discors beds (Green crenella (carpet mussel))	Yes Shortfall cannot be met due to limited evidence of feature in Welsh waters	Irish Sea
Ostrea edulis beds (Oyster beds)	No	
Peat and clay exposures	No	
Sabellaria alveolata reefs (Honeycomb worm (mostly intertidal species))	No	
Sabellaria spinulosa reefs (Ross worm (subtidal species))	Yes[10]	Irish Sea
Seagrass beds	No	
Sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities	Yes	Western Channel and Celtic Seas
Sheltered muddy gravels	Yes Shortfall cannot be met in Welsh waters. Limited evidence of habitat outside of existing sites.	Western Channel and Celtic Seas

[10] At the time of the network assessment evidence on the presence of *Sabellaria spinulosa* reefs was limited. Since the assessment further evidence has become available and is now a shortfall.

Broad-scale Habitats			
Subtidal mixed muddy sediments		No	
Tide-swept channels		No	
Sessile or Low Mobility Species of Conservation Importance			
Scientific Name	**Common Name**	No	
Alkmaria romijni	Tentacled lagoon worm	No	
Anotrichium barbatum	Bearded red seaweed	No	
Arctica islandica	Ocean quahog	Yes	Western Channel and Celtic Seas
Cruoria cruoriaeformis	Red seaweed	No	
Dermocorynum montagnei / Grateloupia montagnei	Red seaweed	No	
Edwardsia timida	Burrowing anemone	No	
Eunicella verrucosa	Pink sea-fan	Yes	Irish Sea
Haliclystus auricula	Stalked Jellyfish	Yes Shortfall cannot be met due to limited evidence of feature in Welsh waters	Irish Sea
Lithothamnion corallioides	Coral maerl	No	
Lucernariopsis campanulata	Stalked jellyfish	No	
Ostrea edulis	Flat/native oyster	Yes Shortfall cannot be met due to limited	Irish Sea and Western Channel

Broad-scale Habitats			
		evidence of feature in Welsh waters outside of existing sites	and Celtic Seas
Padina pavonica	Peacock's tail	No	
Palinurus elephas	Crayfish (crawfish or spiny lobster)	Yes Shortfall not considered outside of a restoration scheme	Irish Sea
Phymatolithon calcareum	Common maerl	No	
Tenellia adspersa	Lagoon sea slug	No	

Annex D. TFG ToR

MPA Network Completion Project Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference

Purpose of the group

For marine stakeholders to work in partnership with the Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC to identify Marine Conservation (MCZs) in Welsh waters, to complete the Welsh contribution to an ecologically coherent network of MPAs in UK waters.

Membership

The Task and Finish Group (TFG) will be independently chaired, with meetings facilitated by the Welsh Government.

Members of the TFG will primarily be representatives from the Wales Marine Advisory and Action Group (WMAAG) [now Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership] and from sectors undertaking activities either in the Welsh offshore area, or adjacent, if not already represented by WMAAG [now Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership]. Members will represent the views of their sectors and ensure information from the group is shared with their networks in good time.

Members will:

- Make every effort to attend meetings or send a deputy when they aren't available to ensure the project keeps on track;
- Actively participate in meetings, openly sharing information and knowledge,
- Share information with their sector prior to meetings to gather their sector's views to inform meeting discussions;
- Following meetings, members have a responsibility for disseminating consistent messages with their respective networks and bringing forward any issues arising;
- Members will be respectful of each other's position; and
- Work constructively to find solutions in the event of any areas of disagreement.

Ways of working

- Secretariat:
    - This will be provided by the Welsh Government Marine and Fisheries Division: Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity Branch.
    - Agendas (& papers) will normally be circulated 5 working days before the meeting date and a note of key messages and actions will be made of each meeting. These will be shared with WMAAG [now Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership] & made publicly available on the Welsh Government website.
    - The Welsh Government will provide written updates to the WMAAG [now Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership] on the work of the TFG.
- Frequency of meeting:
    - Three meetings of the TFG have been built into the stepped approach for identifying MCZs. The Project Team will keep this under review.
- Format and location:

- Meetings will be held face to face to enable effective discussion and engagement amongst members. Meeting locations in south, mid and north Wales will be considered.

Project governance and responsibilities

The Welsh Ministers have overall responsibility for designating MCZs in Welsh waters, with approval needed from the Secretary of State for any MCZs proposed in Welsh offshore waters, in line with the Wales Act 2017.

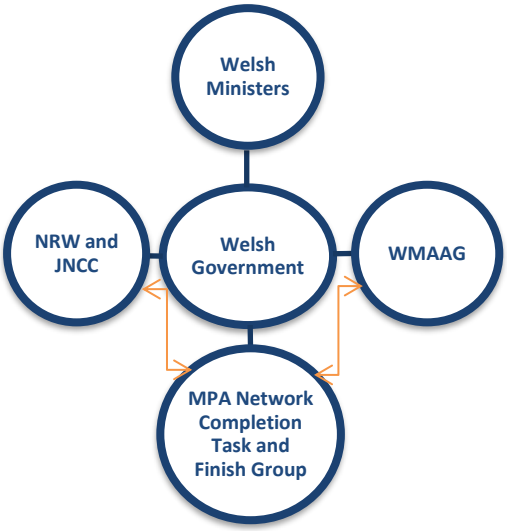
An MCZ Project Team comprising officials from the Welsh Government, NRW and JNCC has been established to support the process and work alongside the TFG.

NRW and JNCC have a dual role. They will:

- Attend meetings of the TFG providing scientific and technical support where necessary; and
- Provide statutory advice to the Welsh Government on the gap filling MCZ proposals to ensure proposals meet the Welsh Government's network obligations.

It will be the responsibility of the Welsh Government to make recommendations to the Welsh Ministers following consideration of:

- Potential MCZs proposed by the TFG;
- Consultation responses;
- Conclusions of the Impact Assessments; and
- Statutory advice from NRW and JNCC on gap filling possible MCZs.



Once the TFG has identified potential MCZs, the MPA Management Steering Group will be informed of the high-level conservation objectives and any potential management measures. The MPA Management Steering Group will have an on-going role following the designation of MCZs to ensure the MCZs are managed as part of the wider MPA network.

Once the Welsh Government has made recommendations to the Welsh Ministers on the proposed MCZs, the on-going role of the TFG will be reviewed.

Annex E. Sources of Data

List of the initial data layers used to identify Broad Areas of Search.

Table 1. Ecological data

Data Layers	Data	Source
Ecological data	Broad-scale habitat map at EUNIS L3 (Modelled and survey data)	UK Seas Combined Map, JNCC[11]
	Other habitats and sessile and low mobility species • Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitat • Sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities • Mud habitats in deep water • Pink sea fan *Eunicella verrucosa* • Ocean quahog *Arctica islandica* • Ross worm reef *Sabellaria spinulosa*	NRW Section 7 and OSPAR habitat and species data on DataMapWales[12]

[11] https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/marine-habitat-data-product-eunis-level-3-combined-map/

[12] https://datamap.gov.wales/

Table 2: Data sources of existing infrastructure, licensed activities and protected habitats used to create the Blue Layer within the Broad Areas of Search

Sector	Data layer	Source
Aggregate Extraction	Licenced areas	The Crown Estate
	Exploration and option area	The Crown Estate
	Private dredging licences	Welsh Government
Aquaculture	Several and regulating order areas	Welsh Government
Dredging and disposal	Licensed disposal sites	Natural Resources Wales
Energy - Oil and Gas	Offshore production areas	UK Hydrographic Office
	Offshore platforms	Oil and Gas Authority
	Wellheads	Oil and Gas Authority
	Pipelines	Oil and Gas Authority and UK Hydrographic Office
Energy - Renewables - wave	Existing leased areas	The Crown Estate
Energy - Renewables - tidal stream	Existing leased areas	The Crown Estate
Energy - Renewables - wind	Existing leased areas	The Crown Estate
	Hard constraints New windfarm extensions	The Crown Estate
Ports and shipping	Anchorage areas	UK Hydrographic Office
	Docks	UK Hydrographic Office
Marine licensing within 12nm	Marine licensed areas	Natural Resources Wales
Marine licensing outside 12nm	Marine licensed areas	Marine Management Organisation
Annex I habitats in sites	2018 Article 17 reporting Annex I habitats	Natural Resources Wales

Annex F. Minimum Viable Patch Size[13]

Feature	Viable Patch Size
Seabed of course sand, gravel and/or stones	5km
Sandy seabed	5km
Muddy seabed	5km
Seabed of mixture of stones, gravels, sand and mud	5km
Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitat	0.5km
Mud habitats in deep water	1km
Sea-pen and burrowing megafauna communities	1km
Ocean quahog	0.5km
Pink sea-fan	5km

[13] https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/94f961af-0bfc-4787-92d7-0c3bcf0fd083

Annex G. Boundary guidance to account for fishing activity

The following table presents the appropriate distance to extend the site boundary if protected features are considered sensitive to fishing activity. This is based on generalised trawl warp lengths (JNCC MNPG 2008[14]; SERAD 2001[15]).

Water Depth	Ration warp length: depth	Approx. length of trawl warp	Boundary extension to be added to the habitat area of interest
Shallow waters (≤ 25 m)	4:1	100 m at 25 m depth	4 x actual depth
Continental shelf (25-200 m)	3:1	600 m at 200m depth	3 x actual depth
Deep waters (200 to over 1000 m)	2:1	2000 m and 1000m depth	2 x actual depth

(Taken from Ecological network guidance, JNCC & Natural England, 2010)[16]

[14] JNCC MNPG. UK guidance on defining boundaries for marine SACs for Annex I habitats sites fully detached from the coast. Peterborough: JNCC Marine Natura Project Group, 2008

[15] SERAD. A fishing industry guide to offshore operators. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2001

[16] http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/PDF/100705_ENG_v10.pdf https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/94f961af-0bfc-4787-92d7-0c3bcf0fd083

Annex H. Submitting data to support designation of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)

Gaining access to data and information is fundamental to the success of this network completion project. It will not be possible to identify potential MCZs without a good knowledge of the marine environment, its value in ecological and economic terms, and its importance to sea users.

To ensure that data is robust enough to support the designation of new sites, all data will undergo a quality assessment where they are scored from 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest). Below we provide a brief explanation of the required format of data and its accompanying metadata. More information on criteria used to assess quality of data can be found in the following table.

Table 11: Basic criteria to assess quality of data records.

Quality Score	Criteria
3*	Data records were collected using approved standards and interpreted by an appropriate specialist with quality standards applied and documented. Photographic evidence has location stamped into the image, has undergone validation and interpretation by an appropriate specialist.
2*	Data records have been collected by documented methods and interpreted by an appropriate specialist but limited evidence on quality standards applied. Limited information in the methods used for data interpretation.
1	Limited information on how data were collected, verified or interpreted; data identified by non-specialists. Data based on local knowledge or anecdotal information with no supplementary verification.

*Where the spatial accuracy of a data record is important (e.g. for feature records in close proximity to a critical boundary) then the quality value may be downgraded to reflect any spatial uncertainty in the record. Such spatial uncertainty may place the record outside a site boundary and therefore would question the feature's presence in the site.

For physical samples a quality score of 3 normally requires exact coordinate data that provides positional accuracy, a level of expertise to ensure quality control and Particle Size Analysis (PSA) to identify sediment habitats.

For images, NRW and JNCC recommend a minimum of 5 different photos to support each feature, Photos should ideally be taken of the ground as a 'point' photo, rather than as a panoramic photo (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Example of point (left) and panoramic (right) images.

A score of 3 is given to images when the feature of interest is clear and identifiable. All images should have coordinate data that provides its exact geographic location. If the image does not contain exact coordinate data or the feature is not clearly identifiable then the image will be scored 2 or lower.

High quality data will result in high confidence of a feature's presence, extent and condition, as detailed in Annex 1 of the 'Use of Evidence in the Welsh MCZ process' document produced by NRW and JNCC (in draft). If data submitted does not pass the quality assessment the data may not be used as supporting evidence during the Welsh MCZ process. Further, all data submitted should relate to the shortfall features as listed in Table 1 of the main document.

NRW and JNCC aim to make all publicly funded data accessible so, where possible, non-sensitive, un-restricted information will be made publicly available under the terms of the Open Government Licence. A Data Provider Agreement will be available at submission, ensuring all sensitive data is handled with suitable restrictions.

A Data Agreement is a formal agreement between the data provider and the data receiver for the terms and conditions of use and access. The Agreement will make clear to both parties the basis upon the data can be held, used and shared. It is important to note that, while the agreement can range from a simple email to a detailed legal document, it is formal and has legal standing.

Data submission

Calls for data will be made to stakeholders throughout the Welsh MCZ process. Information will be considered by NRW and JNCC using the guidance provided in the MCZ Evidence Protocols document.

The data submission checklist and associated data agreement should be completed by third parties before submitting their data to support the designation of Welsh Marine Conservation Zones. The checklist ensures only relevant data is put forward for use in the Welsh MCZ designation process.

Data submission checklist.

Please check the appropriate box if you answer 'yes' to the following questions:

1. **Does the data refer to a 'shortfall feature' in Welsh waters?** ☐
2. **Has the data been through a Quality Assurance process?** ☐
3. **Has the data been published?** ☐
4. **Is the meta data openly available?** ☐
5. **I have read and completed the Data Provider Agreement?** ☐

DATA CALL PRIVACY NOTICE

If you choose to provide some data to Welsh Government to support this data call the Welsh Government will need to process some personal information about you. Your personal information is needed in order to keep a record of who has provided data and possibly to make contact with you to discuss the dataset(s) provided within the aims of the MPA Network Completion Project.

The Welsh Government will be the Data Controller for your personal information in relation to submitting data for the data call. The lawful basis for processing your data is Welsh Government's public task, that is to exercise its official authority to undertake the core role and functions as the Government of Wales.

We will process the following information about you:

- Name
- Email address
- Telephone Number
- The name of the organisation you represent

We may share your personal information with other public sector stakeholders involved in the MPA Completion Project but only for the purposes of meeting the aims and objectives of the project.

The Welsh Government will retain your personal information for a period of 3 years in line with Welsh Government's Information retention Policy.

Your rights

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data Welsh Government holds about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

Contacts

If you wish to discuss the data call exercise, please contact: mcz.wales@gov.wales

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ
Email: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

If you wish to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner Office

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Helpline: 0303 123 1113
Website: https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/

Data Provider Agreement

The submission of data to Welsh Government during the Welsh Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) data call confirms the Data Owner's agreement to grant Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee permission to access, hold and use the material for the purposes of further informing the recommendations, designation and management of MCZs and related MPAs. This includes any personal information associated with the submission included on this data submission form and/or with metadata associated with the data submitted.

We encourage openness and transparency in the provision and use of data and information. Our intention is to make all material we hold publicly available for re-use under the Open Government Licence OGL)1, with the exception of information that is personal, sensitive, or confidential, or that contains third party rights we are not authorised to license. Where material cannot be released under the OGL we may still make high level information on the data (e.g. metadata) publicly available. Please identify in your response any restrictions on use of the submitted information.

Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee have developed best-practice guidelines for data providers on collecting and submitting data to support designation of MCZs. These guidelines can be found at the start of this Annex. While we will consider all information submitted during this data call, following the guidelines will assist Welsh Government in making the best use of available information.

Please submit the following information for environmental and/or socio-economic data being submitted. **Please note that if the information requested is not provided, we may be unable to use the data you submit.**

I agree to the terms and conditions in the data provider agreement
Contact name[3]: Email: Telephone:
MCZ feature, site or regional area data relates to[4]:
Has this information been previously submitted as part of the MCZ process[5]? Please note there is no requirement to submit reports or data that have already been submitted unless you wish to submit a more recent version of any report. For data that has already been submitted please provide details including the reference number.
Please confirm we may re-use the data provided under the terms of the Open Government Licence, or specify any copyright restrictions or restrictions on use (including attribution of any third-party rights in the data):
Signature:

Section 1: Environmental data/evidence

Data owner:
Type of survey (e.g. geophysical/bathymetric/geotechnical/environmental/ socioeconomic/cost information):
Date of survey:
Name of survey:
Survey co-ordinates OR for full coverage maps, perimeter coordinates or GIS of area:
Survey contractor:
Purpose of survey:
Type(s) of data obtained (e.g. geophysical/bathymetric/geotechnical/environmental/ aspects of socio-economic data):
Method(s) of acquisition (e.g. 0.1m^2 Hamon grab samples/survey format):
Processing method(s):
Output(s) (please include file names if possible):
Quality assurance/control method(s), include reference to standards where possible and / or detail of peer review where relevant:

Section 2: Socio-economic data

Data owner:
Type of survey (e.g. socio-economic/cost information):
Date of survey:
Type(s) of data obtained (e.g. aspects of socio-economic data):
Method(s) of acquisition (survey format):
Quality assurance/control method(s), include reference to standards where possible and / or detail of peer review where relevant:
Non-survey socio-economic data (please use this space for description of data, how data was derived, any quality assurance process)