

Inquiry into the management of marine protected areas in Wales - Consultation submission form

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Would you like to be added to the Committee's contacts database for future inquiries?	Yes

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Submitting evidence

If you wish to submit evidence, please send an electronic copy of your submission form to SeneddCCERA@assembly.wales.

Alternatively, you send it to: Committee Clerk, Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee, National Assembly for Wales Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.



We have been asked to provide answers to the following four questions:

(1) What are the greatest issues facing MPA management in Wales, the UK and internationally?

International

The international literature on MPAs is widespread and diverse¹. An analysis of a global MPA database showed ~3.5% of the world's seas under national jurisdiction have been designated as MPAs, whereas only 0.5% have been protected within 'no-take zones' (NTZs) or marine reserves². A significant proportion of the ~6,000 global MPAs are found within tropical latitudes and have traditionally focussed on protecting coral reef systems. This is a very important to differentiate from MPAs in temperate regions, which when combined with socio-economic and political differences, means we should not derive our approaches to temperate marine conservation from lessons learned in a tropical context. A global review of studies of 124 NTZs / marine reserves revealed that fishes, invertebrates, and seaweeds had the following average increases inside the reserves: biomass increased an average of 446%; density increased by an average of 166%; body size of animals increased by an average of 28%; and species diversity increased by an average of 21% (Biological benefits within MPAs, FAO)³.

One key example of the differences between temperate and tropical contexts, is that tropical coral reef systems, although they represent less than 1% of global oceans, have a very high diversity and biomass of marine life (they are effectively oases in a low diversity environment)⁴. For this reason; the need for, benefits of, and ease of, identification, designation and identifying the impacts of MPAs⁵ are much easier and clearer in coral reef systems. Also these impacts⁶ are frequently linked to fishing communities or eco-tourism operations which are more likely to benefit from changes in management of those areas (in terms of fisheries⁷, biodiversity⁸ and tourism revenue). *Some key supporting papers for reference are included in the footnotes. See also the UN FAO effects of MPAs⁹.*

In contrast, temperate MPAs¹⁰ do not necessarily have the equivalent fisheries spill-over benefits¹¹, community linkages or traditional tenure systems that characterise many successful tropical coral reef MPA case studies¹². There are however clear benefits of using MPAs and Marine Reserves (i.e. NTZs) in a temperate / European context in terms of species and habitat conservation as well as ecosystem recovery, especially in conjunction with wider fisheries

¹ <http://www.piscoweb.org/publications/outreach-materials/science-of-marine-reserves-0>

² 'Analysis of the WDPA (August 2014) calculated that MPAs now cover approximately 12,300,000km² or 3.41% of the world's ocean. Only 0.59% of the global ocean area (2 163 661 km² within 1124 areas) is protected in no-take areas'. <http://www.proteuspartners.org/resources/evaluating-official-marine-protected-area-coverage-for-aichi-target-11.pdf>

³ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/i0433e/I0433E05.htm>

⁴ http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/blue_planet/coasts/coral_reefs/

⁵ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1095-8649.2001.tb01385.x/full>

⁶ <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0960982206017015>

⁷ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/wol1/doi/10.1046/j.1523-1739.1996.10041187.x/abstract>

⁸ <http://www.int-res.com/abstracts/meps/v388/p51-62>

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16201/en>

¹⁰ http://www.piscoweb.org/files/images/pdf/SMR_Intl_HighRes.pdf

¹¹ http://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/8853/1/8853_McClanahan_et_al_2007.pdf

¹² <http://coral.org/coral-reefs-101/why-care-about-reefs/food/>



management systems.¹³ For details of an EU wide meta-analysis from 2010 on available impacts and case studies please see: *Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans. 2011. The Science of Marine Reserves (2nd Edition, Europe)*. www.piscoweb.org.
http://www.piscoweb.org/files/file/science_of_marine_reserves/SMR_EU-HR.pdf

I focus here on the major management issues facing temperate MPAs: *in the interest of brevity I have highlighted issues rather than providing an in-depth analysis of each issues – there is an overall distinction between Governance issues (including socio-economics) and bio-physical elements (design etc).*

Bio-physical and scientific factors:

- Scale – management issues will vary depending on the scale of the MPA, the distance from shore and the scale of protection afforded to species and / or habitats.
- Design – an inclusive design process which is science-led and developed with key maritime users is essential to create a sense of ownership and buy-in for management of the area. Whether the sites within the network are representative of the habitats and ecological features of Wales, or ecologically coherent¹⁴ as a network will also determine how management objectives are linked to other protected areas. A 'zoning' approach for management has proved successful in many instances.
- Climate change¹⁵, including sea level rise, species and regime shifts and ocean acidification, which present further threats to the marine environment cannot be mitigated against by using MPAs. However, this is where the cumulative benefits of a global MPA network adds to resilience and the ability for marine systems to withstand further stressors. Therefore the big picture and contribution of cumulative coverage and management of MPAs are important to consider beyond the value of individual sites and national networks.

Governance:

Economic factors

- Funding – MPAs require investment to designate, monitor and enforce. They can in some instances deliver tangible economic benefits, whether through increased fisheries biomass, increased tourism revenue or wider ecosystem service provision, but this is limited to those MPAs which are accessible to the public (divers, fishers or anglers for example). Parts of an ecologically coherent network will also include mud habitats for example, which have a value which is not widely noted or understood by the public, so there is a bias towards public support for sites which contain charismatic species or habitats that are of interest to the public. However this does not mean those are the only sites which need to be designated for a representative network / managed and therefore the science-led network approach is essential.
- Enforcement - co-management can lower the costs and increase the compliance with management measures; but a clear risk-based enforcement strategy which is well communicated is essential if management is to lead to improved outcomes as a result of designating an MPA.
- Monitoring – baseline data is essential as are annual / multiannual monitoring plans which are consistent and geared towards monitoring the condition of the site, as well as the extent of habitat or species recovery as a result of a NTZ or management that impacts

¹³ http://www.piscoweb.org/files/file/science_of_marine_reserves/SMR_EU-HR.pdf

¹⁴ <http://icesjms.oxfordjournals.org/content/66/1/22.full>

¹⁵ http://marineprotectedareas.noaa.gov/pdf/helpful-resources/mpas_climate_change_march_2013.pdf



marine industries (such as energy, fishing or aquaculture) as well as other sea users (NB: this could include disturbance by recreational activities for example).

- Economic growth and extractive industries are given primacy in political decisions, for this reason the interests of the marine environment and that of future generations needs to be considered in the designation and management process. There is wider value in having a healthy marine ecosystem and ignoring this in the interest of short term economic return risks further degrading our marine commons.
- Fisheries - MPAs are sometimes presented or thought of as fisheries management tool, but that mainly comes from their historical use in the tropics. MPAs should be viewed as a tool which enables spatial management of all (extractive) industries, rather than a focus on fisheries alone – wider fisheries management measures (effort or quota restrictions, minimum sizes and technical gear requirements or licensing are all more effective tools than MPAs for managing fisheries).
- Opportunity for spatial management – MPAs allow for spatial management where impacts on habitats and designated species can be used to develop access criteria. Every MPA does not need to be a NTZ, but there needs to be a clear understanding of those impacts that are negative, which need to be reduced or eliminated from the MPA in question.

Social factors

- Governance¹⁶ in its widest sense provides a major sticking point for the success of well-managed MPAs. Who has a place at the table, how decisions are reached, whether there is consensus for management measures and where conflicts between resource users, NGOs and regulators are prevalent - a coherent and equitable governance process which is transparent and well communicated is essential.
- Stakeholders – engagement from the outset is essential to create buy-in and understanding of why the site needs protection. An accessible engagement program which is inclusive and considers the key differences among stakeholder groups (e.g. whether representatives are paid to attend meetings or are taking time out of work in order to attend) should be acknowledged and accommodated for / resourced.
- Management approaches: top down v bottom up¹⁷ management characterises the main split between approaches. In reality both need to play a part as the science led, objective process of determining which sites need to be considered in the network is top-down, but user groups or membership organisations may help in developing management in a bottom-up manner. A management approach which is flexible and open is therefore important.
- Paper parks / perception / outreach / buy-in: A risk exists that sites are designated to meet International and national requirements but that the management measures are not decided upon for a long time and not stringently enforced. This created the perception of 'paper parks' which exist only on paper. In order to generate support and buy-in for management the measures which are proposed need to accompany the initial process of determining which sites are needed for what reasons. Providing a designation and then adding management afterwards risks alienating otherwise supportive groups.

Europe (European Marine Sites – EMS), no socio-economics are to be taken into account in designation to meet the requirements for the Natura 2000 network (SPAs and SACs) designated under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive. These provide a cornerstone for European designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and are led by the biological and ecological needs of a network rather

¹⁶ <http://www.mpag.info/>

¹⁷ <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1020327007975>



than by stakeholder consensus.¹⁸ This is an essential difference between the EU and UK process. It is worth noting that the EU Habitats and Birds Directives recently underwent thorough reviews and have repeatedly been shown to be fit for purpose¹⁹.

The European Environment Agency paper '*Marine protected areas in Europe's seas — An overview and perspectives for the future*' (2015) <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/marine-protected-areas-in-europes> is an essential supporting document which is not addressed in detail here

However, it is worth highlighting the recommendations in brief:

- '*Europe needs to implement a modern, holistic approach to MPA design, management and evaluation, if EU MPA networks are to reach their potential in protecting marine biodiversity.*
- '*The ecosystem-based approach introduced by the MSFD [Marine Strategy Framework Directive] and the CFP [Common Fisheries Policy] provides an opportunity to employ a holistic approach towards designing and managing MPA networks in Europe's seas.*
- '*Only comprehensively managed MPAs and MPA networks can help accomplish the visions and objectives of existing EU policies and legislation i.e. halting the loss of biodiversity.*'

UK - MPAs are intended to meet wider international commitments, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and contribute to achieving the Good Environmental Status (GES) required by the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The UK Government has committed itself to developing a *UK-wide well-managed and ecologically coherent network of MPAs* (which includes EMS and Marine Conservation Zones MCZs designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act MACAA - 2009), which would include more than 25% of English waters (*including those under the Secretary of State until the Wales Bill due in 2018*) by 2016. MCZs can and do consider socio-economics and this has impacted the number and order of designations of MCZs due to the perceived impact on industry (from fisheries to energy). This is clear weakness in the process in terms of what it can deliver biologically, when a key driver is acceptability to marine resource users (oil and gas, aggregates, fisheries etc), rather than a science led decision process. It is inherently political.²⁰

UK specific issues: (*NB: points related to devolution and Brexit are dealt with in Q2*)

- Simply 'maintaining' features in their current state is not an ambitious target, as many UK marine ecosystems are in a degraded condition. The conservation objectives for MCZs could be set to 'recover', in order to ensure that the condition improves over time, rather than remaining static or degrading further and wider impacts such as climate change and invasive species have an impact.²⁶
- A lack of reference area – NTZs / marine reserves – a major shortcoming of the UK MPAs is the lack of reference areas. Without a clear understanding of ecosystem and species recovery in the absence of anthropogenic impacts, the wider opportunity and value of using and managing MPAs will never be realised. Beyond that, the perception of paper parks where business as usual can continue risks alienating stakeholder groups which are otherwise supportive of MPAs.
- Management – developing management measures after the designation of sites has caused problems. A lack of clarity about how the measures were agreed and who has shaped them is also proving to be problematic for regulators. There are multiple examples from the UK MCZ process where reaching a broad consensus about what management should support a site's designation would have been helpful. This could be improved by providing likely scenarios or

¹⁸ <http://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/protected-areas/marine-protected-areas>

¹⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/index_en.htm

²⁰ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvaud/221/221.pdf>



indications of what suggested management would be, before designating the site. Welsh Government policy requires that the draft conservation objectives of EMSs are included in the consultation documents.

- Enforcement – funding and stringency of enforcement has been criticised for the UK MPA process.
- Systemic management issues – the feature by feature approach to management is problematic for a number of reasons; in an MPA multiple features share a space and looking at the impacts in this way, rather than holistically makes management unclear, possibly incoherent and more complicated. A site level or sectoral basis would have been easier to develop.
- Fisheries – most other marine industries impacts are assessed via EIAs, but Defra’s ‘revised approach’²¹ to fisheries still does not have the same requirements for fisheries. This is problematic in terms of gaining stakeholder support from those who want a level playing field.
- MPAs are mainly designated within the 6nM limit– this has a disproportionate impact on the budget, planning and capacity for inshore regulators versus the MMO. It also disproportionately affects the inshore fishing fleet, although higher in terms of vessel numbers, they have a lower fishing capacity and generally use static gear so it is questionable whether this approach makes scientific sense or can be justified as strategic, rather than just easier or quicker to apply.
- Marine licensing in the UK is only reactive, when a plan or project is developed – but there is no overarching plan. Management regimes rest on licensing, but this does not follow a systemic, strategic plan²² which contributed to the problems outlined above.
- Austerity (Defra. MMO²³) is a major barrier to effective management, research, monitoring and enforcement.
- Deregulation / voluntary measures²⁴ – the risk of deregulation and adopting soft voluntary measures rather than clear legally binding measures is a major concern and in combination with austerity measures makes the risks of paper parks significant, thereby eroding the opportunities provided by recovering marine ecosystems for current and future generations.
- Selections were criticised²⁵ from all sides, this could be reduced by a science-led inclusive process from the outset, which is framed by a clear strategy and plan.

Wales

- Inconsistency and lack of clear communication has been noted by multiple stakeholder groups as the major problem.
- There is also no agreed definition of what a coherent network of MPAs will look like (this is a wider issue for the MPA network within the entire OSPAR region as well).²⁶

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-approach-to-the-management-of-commercial-fisheries-in-european-marine-sites-overarching-policy-and-delivery>

²² Environmental Audit Committee *Tuesday 10 January 2017 - Marine Protection Areas Revisited*
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/news-parliament-2015/marine-protected-areas-revisited-ev2-16-17/>

²³ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/may/30/action-against-illegal-fishing-falls-after-cuts-at-enforcement-agency>

²⁴ <http://www.pembrokeshiremarinecode.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/WEL-Voluntary-Marine-Management-2011.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvaud/221/221.pdf>

²⁶ <http://www.assembly.wales/Laid%20Documents/GEN-ID9645%20-%20Report%20to%20the%20National%20Assembly%20for%20Wales%20on%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas%20in%20Wales-06022014-253588/gen-id9645-e-English.pdf>



- Assessing the impacts of fishing activities in Welsh MPAs²⁷, has shown some features to be vulnerable to particular fishing activities – however, it remains unclear when the Welsh Government intends to limit and/or prevent these fishing activities.
- Austerity (NRW cuts) is major barrier to effective management, research, monitoring and enforcement.
- Government should work with local authorities to encourage and support communities that wish to play a leading role in managing their coastal and marine environment, for example through community-led MPAs. Newly created areas should follow scientific and expert advice on design, implementation, and management principles. Local areas can lead the creation and management of MPAs close to their coast by bringing together local tourism businesses, scientists, and marine managers to create strategies in line with the particular needs of protected areas and species.²⁸
- The forthcoming Wales Bill (passing the conservation duty in offshore waters as a devolved responsibility to the Welsh Government - due 2018 after multiple delays) also means there is a grey area where no discussions are being driven forward about how to designate habitats and species in this offshore area. This reinforces the need for cross-border collaboration for the wider benefit of the marine environment.

(2) What are the potential implications on marine biodiversity of the UK's decision to leave the European Union?

- To deliver a truly integrated ecosystem-based management for Welsh waters will require political will and also the collective implementation of the Environment (Wales) Act, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and Marine and Coastal Access Act (MACAA, 2009).
- The need for MPAs has not changed as a result of the EU referendum. Nor has the global / EU context within which UK commitments to MPAs were made. For the UK to ensure that the progressive marine policies and marine protection is not lost as a result of the Government decision to leave the EU following the 2016 referendum, it is essential that the UK and devolved Governments build on all the environmental protections that have come from Europe and add to that ambition. The UK can become a global leader in marine conservation measures and develop a thriving coastal economy. Following the 20 point Action Plan in NEFs Blue New Deal, coastal UK economies rely on healthy marine environment which could support 160,000 additional jobs and £7.2 billion additional income in coastal Local Authorities.²⁹ This potential can only be realised when the marine environment is in a healthy state and MPAs play a role in improving that overall ecosystem health and resilience.
- We are an island nation and the marine environment is a crucial underpinning our economy and society, and we must secure and restore its health for future generations. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations have a shared vision of “*clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas*”³⁰. On leaving the EU, it is imperative that they work together to create new laws that will deliver this vision and become a global leader in ecosystem based management in the marine environment: the Well-being of Future Generations Acts in Wales, provides a major opportunity to turn this commitment into a meaningful change for Welsh waters as the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing can be linked to marine plans and (coastal) MPAs.

²⁷ <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/our-projects/assessing-welsh-fishing-activities/?lang=en>

²⁸ <http://neweconomics.org/2016/11/turning-back-to-the-sea/>

²⁹ <http://neweconomics.org/2016/11/turning-back-to-the-sea/>

³⁰ The UK Marine Policy Statement, “**Safeguarding our Seas: A Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of our Marine Environment**” Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, March 2011



- Key pieces of UK legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA, 1981) and the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA, 2009) will still form important pieces of primary legislation protecting and managing the marine environment. Together with the Marine Policy Statement (MPS) adopted by all the devolved administrations it is unlikely these marine policy instruments will change in the near future – but there is a risk that they may be withdrawn in the future.
- The devolved administrations should ensure that whatever the wider implications of leaving the EU, they maintain, enhance and ensure the existing levels of legal protection and management for all MPAs. It is also crucial to retain the *precautionary principle* / approach in the assessment impacts on the marine environment, as Article 6 of the Habitats Directive requires.³¹
- The most straightforward approach post Brexit would be for the UK to adopt all relevant EU legislation into UK law (which has taken 40 years to establish), until key government departments have been able to review and adopt UK specific legislation. If the UK is not bound by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and not liable to infraction for infringements of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives there is a major risk to the health of our marine environment and the successful management of MPAs designated as EMSs. UK specific legislation covering these EMS would depend on the political will of the elected governments. NB: the majority of MPAs in Wales are designated under the EU nature directives
- EU legislation has created MPAs, but regulations can be complex and often are not clearly communicated. A new legal framework and supporting regulations – alongside enforcement powers - must include international commitments to protect marine habitats and species and enable the management of shared resources in co-operation with international partners (this relates very strongly to fisheries). The devolved administrations must also deliver non-EU commitments on MPAs (under the CBD - Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi target >10% of seas to be covered by well-managed MPAs), as well as the delivery of a coherent and well-managed network of MPAs under the OSPAR Convention, as well as wider fisheries management issues which impact on the marine environment.³²

Delivering sustainable fisheries management: A sustainable future for UK seas - A briefing for policy makers following the EU referendum (January 2017)³³ – excerpt provided below:

- *‘Specific protections: the creation and effective management of an Ecologically Coherent Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). These need to be well managed to achieve each MPA’s conservation objectives, with fishing and other maritime activities restricted where they could be damaging.*
- *Effective monitoring and enforcement: measures to ensure compliance and high levels of confidence in the achievement of domestic and international policy objectives, including combatting Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing.*
- *Good governance: development and implementation of new laws should include clear processes for engagement of stakeholders, involving scientists, NGOs and industry representatives with a*

³¹ <http://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/future-uk-seas>

³² <http://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/future-uk-seas>

³³ <http://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-01/WWF161204%20Green%20Alliance%20A4%20PPFINAL.pdf>



wide range of perspectives, in line with the UK's international commitments under the [Aarhus Convention](#).³⁴

Key implications of leaving the EU

Legislative

- 80% of UK environmental legislation is shaped by the EU and will need to be replaced, adopted or modified upon leaving the EU. Implications of this are elaborated with reference to the recent **House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee - The Future of the Natural Environment after the EU Referendum (2017) – key excerpts**
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmenvaud/599/599.pdf>
- *'The EU provides a number of strong legislative protections to the UK environment. The Birds and Habitats directives will no longer apply in UK law even if the UK remains in the Single Market, which has the potential for far-reaching negative impacts on the UK environment. The Government should legislate for a new Environmental Protection Act whilst Article 50 negotiations are ongoing to maintain the UK's environmental standards. The Act should be in place before we leave the EU. This would reduce the risk of 'zombie legislation', which is a term which describes EU legislation transposed into UK law which is no longer updated and which can be eroded through statutory instruments with minimal parliamentary scrutiny.'*
- *The Birds and Habitats directives are at risk even if the UK remains a member of the EEA. Defra must, as part of leaving the EU, ensure that plans for post-EU environmental coordination between the countries of the UK is sufficient to ensure that funding is allocated fairly and transparently, with shared strategic objectives complemented by minimum environmental standards, so that the UK can continue to meet its international obligations.*³⁵
- *EU legislation underpins much of the UK environmental protections. The Government needs to ensure that it maintains the strength and range of protection given to the UK's most valuable wildlife sites, particularly around Natura 2000 sites currently defined through EU legislation.'*

Scientific - The UK and Wales are likely to lose access to research partnerships and knowledge base as well as guidance in monitoring and enforcement processes as a result of leaving the EU.

Financial

- The UK and Wales are likely to lose access to financial support for wider marine management e.g. the eventual loss of European Marine Fisheries Fund (EMFF) after 2020. The EMFF includes funding opportunities for the protection of the environment through measures in support of fisheries resources management e.g. transition to Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), the introduction of the discards ban, and the adoption of Long Term Management Plans. The EMFF aims to reduce the impact of fisheries/aquaculture on the marine environment, including through support for low impact fishing gear – this loss of funding needs to be met by UK Government commitments.
- Management, restoration and monitoring of Natura 2000 sites and of other marine protected areas are also supported by the EMFF and will be lost upon leaving the EU (after 2020). In addition, the budget for data collection and scientific advice (to increase the number of fish stocks for which scientific advice is available), and fisheries control (to ensure better compliance) has been substantially increased under this latest round of EU EMFF funding.³⁶ The EMFF scheme help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing, support coastal communities in diversifying

³⁴ <http://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-01/WWF1612-04%20Green%20Alliance%20A4%20PPFINAL.pdf>

³⁵ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmenvaud/599/599.pdf>

³⁶ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-311_en.htm?subweb=343



their economies, finance projects that create new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts.³⁷ The UK has €243 million (around £190 million) of the programme which is split between England (€92.1 million), Scotland (€107.7 million) Northern Ireland (€23.5 million) and Wales (€19.7 million). The restoration of marine ecosystems is a priority, money spent on data collection and enforcement

Other funding:

- The EU LIFE programme, with €3.4 billion of funding available between 2014 and 2016 for projects that address nature and environmental matters and the impact of climate change
- Interreg funding to stimulate cross-border cooperation between EU regions
- The Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, which has nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020) across Member States

(3) What can be done to improve the management of MPAs (in Wales)?

There are currently 125 MPAs in Wales³⁸. The management of marine MPAs in Wales is mainly carried out using the consenting process and HRAs (Habitats Regulation Assessments), to control activities with very little in the way of direct intervention such as INNS³⁹ (invasive / non-native species) removal or restoration. In the past this process has been used to prevent new development but a change in *approach has been noted by some stakeholders, whereby over the last couple of years with more of a focus on encouraging sustainable development. This relates to the formation of NRW to replace CCW with more economic development outlook.* It is essential that the Sustainable Development principles are upheld with regards to future developments.

According to NRW, improving the effectiveness of MPA management⁴⁰ and site condition requires:

- Leadership
- Co-ordination and Consistency
- Prioritisation
- Collaboration
- Communication

What specific improvements can be made:

- Include draft management plans with consultation documents to enable practical discussions about management earlier with the groups affected
- Stakeholder buy in is not possible if they don't know how it will impact their livelihood, and without knowledge of management measures it is not possible to make an assessment of the actual economic effect of designation⁴¹

³⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/european-maritime-and-fisheries-fund-emff-before-you-apply>

³⁸ <http://www.assembly.wales/Laid%20Documents/GEN-LD9645%20-%20Report%20to%20the%20National%20Assembly%20for%20Wales%20on%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas%20in%20Wales-06022014-253588/gen-ld9645-e-English.pdf>

³⁹ <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?pageid=258>

⁴⁰ <http://www.assembly.wales/Laid%20Documents/GEN-LD9645%20-%20Report%20to%20the%20National%20Assembly%20for%20Wales%20on%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas%20in%20Wales-06022014-253588/gen-ld9645-e-English.pdf>



- Harmonise management and manage sites based on broad principles of ecosystem recovery versus Likely Significant Effect, rather than on a features led basis.
- Aim for a Co-management approach from the outset
- Run pilot schemes where ‘zoning’ is used as a management strategy from the outset. Use lessons learned for future designations and development of management strategies.
- Ensure adequate funding and human resources are allocated to enable implementation, enforcement, monitoring and outreach.
- Aim for recovery rather than maintain as objectives for MPAs

(4) What can be done to raise awareness of the role of MPAs, so as to communicate their economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits?

- The benefits and reasons for designating MPAs are not well communicated to the public at large
- The Institute for research in schools⁴² has shown the merit of student led research and engagement with University departments would help generate sense of shared ownership of public resources, generate enthusiasm and make more out of the public money spent on MPAs, to widen the social benefits for current and future generations
- Using Apps and social media to reach out to a younger audience (visual media) is essential to engage younger people in the conservation of the marine environment.
- Currently requires numerous sites / organisations to navigate – one site for “Welsh MPAs” including images, footage and interviews could draw anyone who uses a search engine into an umbrella site which enthuses people.
- As the previous UK MPA enquiry showed ‘*The evidence we have received suggests that the Government has not yet got its communications right, with a risk that there could continue to be resistance from those who might otherwise support the programme*’.⁴³ It is unclear whether this has since been addressed, but a simple google search suggests it has not.
- Joint information task force could be created alongside a central platform for information, images and management proposals for Welsh MPAs.
- Work with NGOs to reduce the costs and resource burden to Government.
- Share information via the Blue New Deal network hosted by NEF.
- 2018 is the “year of the sea” – this provides a major opportunity to engage the public and relevant sectors (Welsh Government initiative to boost tourism)

Example of what NEF has done to aid communication about MPAs and the Impact Assessment process and evidence.

Between 2012 and 2015 NEF ran the Marine Socio-Economics Project (www.mseproject.net) and one of the outputs of the project aimed to demystify the Impact Assessments produced for MPAs and ensure that the information was better communicated and more easily accessible for members of the public.

As part of this approach we produced an ‘Infographic Impact Assessment’ for the MCZ network which was designated in the second tranche <http://www.mseproject.net/infographic-ia>

- This used the available information from Impact assessments for MPAs (MCZs) but aimed to make the information more accessible, visual and ready for engagement with a wider audience.
- Infographic IAs were produced for four sites in tranche 2 of the MCZ process.
- Details on the methodology were also provided to make this approach replicable.

⁴¹ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvaud/221/221.pdf>

⁴² <http://www.researchinschools.org/>

⁴³ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmenvaud/221/221.pdf>



Annex 1: The Infographic Impact Assessment for MCZs - 16 June 2015

The UK Government traditionally relies on Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) as a tool to support environmental decision-making, but looking beyond this rather limiting approach should lead to better outcomes for people and the ocean. The purpose of our this Infographic Impact Assessment (IIA) is to present trade-offs in a visual way and lay out a much more holistic range of criteria to consider.

People attach high value to these MCZs and that the protected areas would also support significant benefits to people which cannot be measured in monetary terms and which are frequently overlooked.

So far, twenty-seven new MCZs have been designated from an original list of 127 recommended by regional stakeholder groups in 2012. While consideration of some prospective sites becomes very focussed on the monetized costs in Impact Assessment summary sheets, the IIA includes monetized benefit estimates. A consultation on a third tranche of sites is expected in 2016 and it is hoped that the approach can help decision makers value these marine sites holistically when deciding on their designation.

In addition to an overall summary of all 23 sites currently being consulted on, illustrative 'infographic impact assessments' have been developed for four individual sites that present a more holistic range of information to support decision-making in a way that goes beyond the very narrow cost-based focus of standard economic decisions making tools.

The four sites presented are: Offshore Overfalls; Western Channel; Coquet to St Marys and Holderness Inshore. In every case, including offshore sites that are not easily visited by people, the estimated benefits of protection are shown to outweigh costs.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE LINKS PROVIDED BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION

[1 - MCZ summary](#)

[2 - Holderness](#)

[3 - Coquet St Marys](#)

[4 - Western Channel](#)

[5 - Offshore Overfalls](#)

[6 - Infographics Impacts Assessments - Methodology](#)



