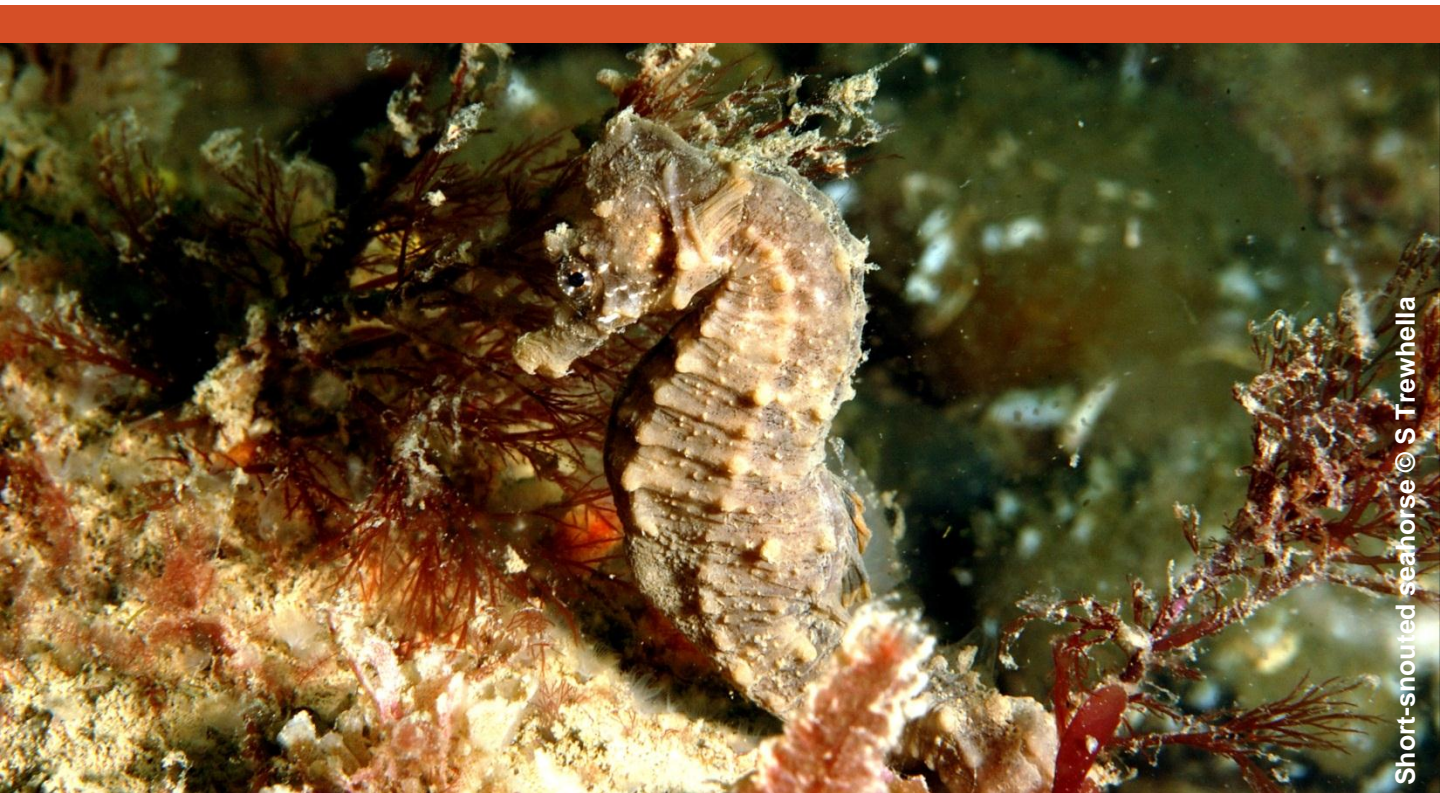


Beachy Head West Marine Conservation Zones

Where are these sites?

Beachy Head West MCZs are two spatially separate sites in the south-east of England. They run parallel to the East Sussex coastline extending from the Brighton to the Beachy Head Cliffs near Eastbourne and protects a total area of approximately 24 km². The MCZs partially overlap with the Seven Sisters voluntary marine conservation area.



Short-snouted seahorse © S Trehwella

Why are these sites important?

These sites contains some of the best examples of chalk habitat in the south east region. Here the chalk reefs and gullies support specialised communities of animals and seaweeds. Additionally, the sites are known to support the rare short-snouted seahorse.

What do these Marine Conservation Zones protect?

These sites protect 10 different types of habitat and their associated species and offer specific protection to 2 species of conservation importance. Within the MCZs there is an extensive intertidal wave cut chalk platform and subtidal chalk ridges, of which the surface is pitted with holes. These holes are created by burrowing molluscs and, once empty, can be inhabited by and provide shelter to animals such as crabs and anemones. Blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) beds and native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) are found densely packed on the chalk ridges creating a mosaic of habitats.

Within the shallower waters the rare short-snouted seahorse (*Hippocampus hippocampus*) can be found. These are a type of fish, and are one of only two species found in UK waters. Seahorses have excellent eyesight and hunt for their food by sight. They feed on a variety of small crustaceans, such as shrimp, but do not have teeth so instead suck food up through their snouts. Seahorses require protection as they are particularly vulnerable to threats which cause damage to their habitat.

Features	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain at favourable condition
Subtidal mixed sediments	Maintain at favourable condition
Subtidal mud	Maintain at favourable condition
Subtidal sand	Maintain at favourable condition
Infralittoral muddy sand	Maintain at favourable condition
Infralittoral sandy mud	Maintain at favourable condition
Low energy infralittoral rock and thin sandy sediment	Maintain at favourable condition
Blue mussel (<i>Mytilus edulis</i>) beds	Maintain at favourable condition
Subtidal chalk	Maintain at favourable condition
Littoral chalk communities	Recover to favourable condition
Native oyster (<i>Ostrea edulis</i>)	Maintain at favourable condition
Short-snouted seahorse (<i>Hippocampus hippocampus</i>)	Maintain at favourable condition
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
High energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition

Who will manage Marine Conservation Zones?

Many activities within the marine environment are regulated through marine licenses. More information regarding the marine licensing process in relation to MCZs can be found on the MMO website www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm

Other activities are regulated through different mechanisms. For example fishing activities are managed through European legislation, national statutory instruments, byelaws and self-imposed voluntary agreements. Similar arrangements are in place to manage the range of activities that may impact MCZs including pollution, coastal development and recreation.

Management of sites is currently being prioritised nationally according to the potential or actual adverse impacts of activities on the features designated in relation to fishing activities. This prioritisation will be further refined at a local level taking into account relevant information and will guide regulators to those sites which may need protection before others.

Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the features. In cases where there is a high risk to designated features being damaged emergency measures may be put in place to ensure the protection of vulnerable habitats and species.



What happens now these sites have been designated?

The site specific information below provides an overview of which activities may be affected by the designation of the MCZ and the current management measures. As new evidence becomes available about the condition of the designated features and their sensitivity to activities management measures may be required to change, either becoming more or less restrictive.

Current activities identified at this site which could be affected include commercial fisheries, port & harbour operations. Any future activities undertaken by the ports and harbour authorities will be regulated through the appropriate licensing regimes, which will take into consideration the MCZ designation when assessing environmental impacts of marine works as part of the licensing application process.

With regards to fisheries management the site is within jurisdiction of the Sussex IFCA. All Sussex IFCA District-wide byelaws will apply to this site, in addition to all relevant national and EU fisheries legislation such as Cod and Hake recovery control measures.

Further information is available at

www.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/monitoring/regulations_bluebook.htm

Relevant restrictions for IFCA management relating to this site include a 1/4 nm seasonal trawling restrictions, vessel length restrictions and shellfish regulations which restricts scallop dredging within 3nm of the coastline.

For further information visit the Sussex IFCA website at www.sussex-ifca.gov.uk

Where can I find out further information?

An interactive map showing this MCZs and other marine protected areas is available at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5201>

Additional information about this site and other MCZs is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/protecting-and-sustainably-using-the-marine-environment>

and within Natural England's advice available at

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/1499649>



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Annex: Management

Lead organisation	Activities
Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries (0-6nm) including commercial fisheries and recreational fishing activities such as sea angling For further information visit www.association-ifca.org.uk
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries (management) (6-12nm)• Fisheries (enforcement) national and EU legislation• Licensable activities such as deposit and removal activities below mean high water springs, including subsea cables (up to 12nm), construction (including renewables <100MW, ports and coastal protection), dredging and disposal• Harbour Orders and Harbour Empowerment Orders• Section 36 and safety zone consents• Enforcement of licensable activity and other consents (including deemed marine licences)• Development of marine plans integrating the social requirements, economic potential and environmental priorities of marine plan areas• Activities requiring a wildlife licence For further information visit www.marinemangement.org.uk/fisheries or www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm
Environment Agency (EA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fisheries management for migratory and fresh water fish• Coastal protection and flood management• Water quality• Permitted discharges from terrestrial sources For further information visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk/default.aspx
Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oil and Gas related activities• Renewable energy related activities For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change
Harbour Authorities and local planning authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for the port and coastal waters within their jurisdiction• Local authorities have role to manage, regulate and facilitate activities at the coast. These include management of coastal recreation, tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection, spatial planning and coastal zone and estuary management, For further information contact your local authority or IFCA
Department for Transport (DfT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for shipping, harbours, ship pollution and offshore safety For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport
Natural England (NE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public access For further information visit www.naturalengland.org.uk/