

Isles of Scilly Marine Conservation Zones

Where are these sites?

The Isles of Scilly MCZs are in fact a collection of inshore sites located around the Isles of Scilly, a group of islands located approximately 45 km's south-west of the Cornish coast. The MCZs consist of 11 separate sites covering a total area of over 30 km². The 11 sites are Bishop to Crim; Bristows to the Stones; Gilstone to Gorregan; Hanjague to Deep Ledge; Higher Town; Lower Ridge to Innisvouls; Men a Vaur to White Island; Peninnis to Dry Ledge; Plympton to Spanish Ledge; Smith Sound Tide Swept Channel and Tean.

Why are these sites important?

The Isles of Scilly MCZs span a broad range of physical conditions which support an exceptionally high diversity of habitats and species. The depth of the seabed varies considerably across the 11 areas extending from the mean high water mark to depths of up to 70 m in places and the sites encompass a wide variety of marine habitats and their associated species.

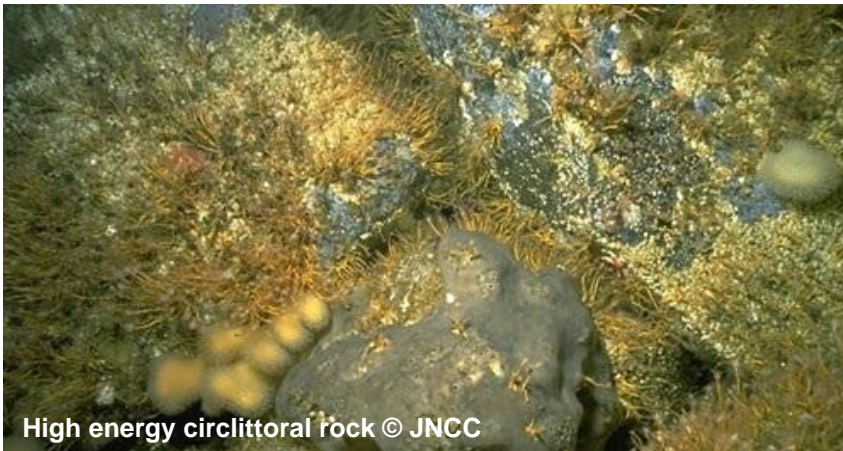
The importance of the marine environment found here has been previously recognised through the designation of the Isles of Scilly Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and 10 of the 11 sites lie within this designated area. The Isles of Scilly MCZs complement this existing SAC designation by offering protection to species and habitats that are not protected by the SAC.



What do these Marine Conservation Zones protect?

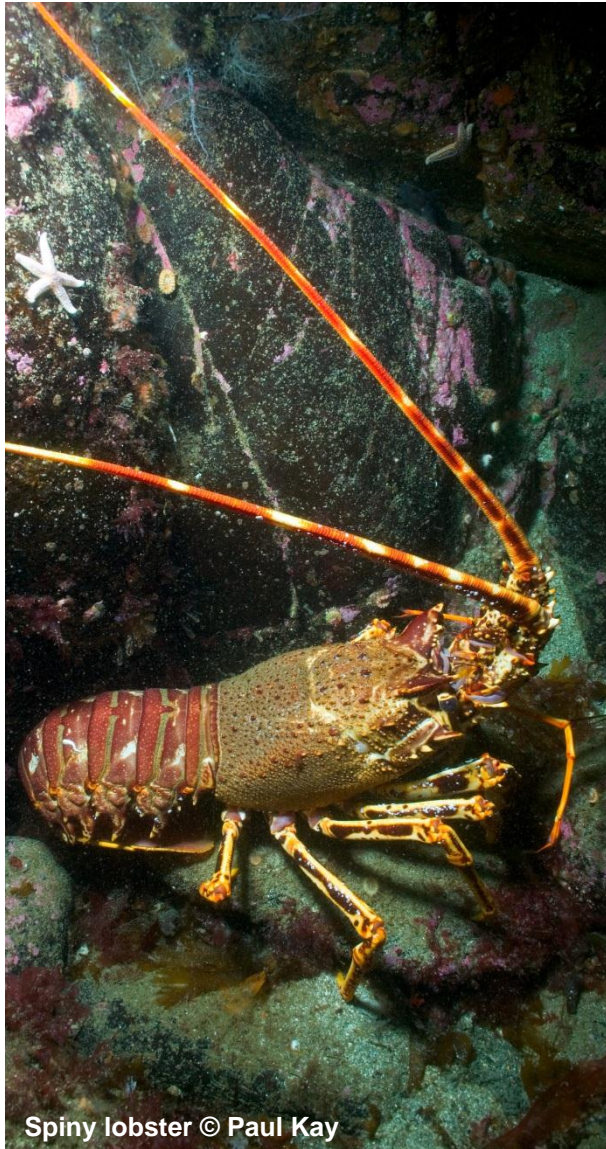
Individual sites within the Isles of Scilly MCZs have each been designated to protect a specific set of features. The table below lists the features protected within the Isle of Scilly MCZs. Further details on the features in each site, and their general management approach are given in Annex: Features.

The MCZs include a variety of habitats and their associated species, including shallow inshore waters that are rich in seaweeds and deeper water habitats that are dominated by animal communities. Intertidal rocky habitats support seaweeds, encrusting animals such as barnacles and sea squirts, as well as crabs and fish that use the space between rocks and boulders for shelter. Intertidal sediment habitats support specialised animal communities such as burrowing marine worms and shrimp-like sandhoppers. In deeper waters subtidal rocky habitats can support large colonies of sponges, sea-fans and anemones that collect their food from the passing currents.



Features
Intertidal coarse sediment
Intertidal mixed sediments
Intertidal sand and muddy sand
Low energy intertidal rock
Moderate energy intertidal rock
High energy intertidal rock
High energy circlittoral rock
Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats
Intertidal underboulder communities
Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>)
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Haliclystus auricula</i>)
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Lucernariopsis campanulata</i>)

Some of the sites will also offer protection to the spiny lobster or crawfish (*Palinurus elephas*), a large, brightly coloured crustacean that can grow up to 60cm long. The spiny lobster has small front claws, but is heavily armoured with strong spines to give protection from predators. They are typically found around the South and West coasts of the British Isles, as well as the warmer waters of the Canary Islands and Mediterranean. Once important commercially, the species now requires protection due to a declining population particularly in areas of South-west England.



The MCZs also contain a range of rare and fragile animals including two species of stalked jellyfish (*Haliclystus auricula* and *Lucernariopsis campanulata*) which spend all of their life attached to a host usually seaweed or seagrass.

These stalked jellyfish tend to be very small, rarely growing beyond a couple of cm in height. They use their stinging tentacles on the tips of eight webbed arms to feed and defend themselves.



Who will manage Marine Conservation Zones?

Many activities within the marine environment are regulated through marine licences. 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.



Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats © K Hiscock

What happens now these sites has 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 with all management measures, they may, of course, be subject to change in the light of new evidence becoming available.

Activities identified across the sites which could be affected include commercial fisheries, possible renewable energy (wave energy), ports and harbour operations, flood and coastal erosion risk management, national defence (MOD exercise areas) and archaeological excavations. Most of these activities will be regulated through the appropriate licensing regimes. MCZ designation will need to be taken into consideration when assessing environmental impacts of marine works as part of the licensing application process.

With regards to fisheries management the site is within the jurisdiction of the Isles of Scilly IFCA. All relevant IFCA District-wide byelaws will apply to this site, in addition to all relevant national and EU fisheries legislation. Further information is available at

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

There are a number of relevant fisheries restrictions relating to this site including what fishing gear can be used (the Methods of Fishing byelaw, Methods of Fishing (Dredges) Byelaw). A new Fishing Gear Permit byelaw is currently being proposed which will prohibit bottom trawling without a relevant permit and a Crustacean byelaw which will increase minimum landing sizes. Full details on the current byelaws and the new proposed byelaws are available on the Isles of Scilly IFCA website www.scillyifca.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>



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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/

Annex: Features

Breakdown of where features are protected in each Isles of Scilly site

Bishop to Crim

Feature	General management approach
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Bristows to the Stones

Feature	General management approach
High energy circalittoral rock	Recover to favourable condition
Fragile sponge and anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats	Recover to favourable condition
Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>)	Recover to favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Gilstone to Gorregan

Feature	General management approach
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Hanjague to Deep Ledge

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Higher Town

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Low energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Haliclystus auricula</i>)	Maintain in favourable condition

Lower Ridge to Innisvouls

Feature	General management approach
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Peninnis to Dry Ledge

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal mixed sediments	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Low energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Haliclystus auricula</i>)	Maintain in favourable condition

Plympton to Spanish Ledge

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Smith Sound Tide Swept Channel

Feature	General management approach
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

Tean

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition

Men a Vaur to White Island

Feature	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal sand and muddy sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy Intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
High energy Intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Intertidal underboulder communities	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Lucernariopsis campanulata</i>)	Maintain in favourable condition