

The Manacles Marine Conservation Zone

Where is this site?

The Manacles MCZ is an inshore site located on the southern coast of Cornwall. It extends 2 km from the coastline to encompass a series of large underwater rocky outcrops, known as The Manacles. The depth of the site ranges from 14 to 57 metres which creates a diverse seafloor landscape.

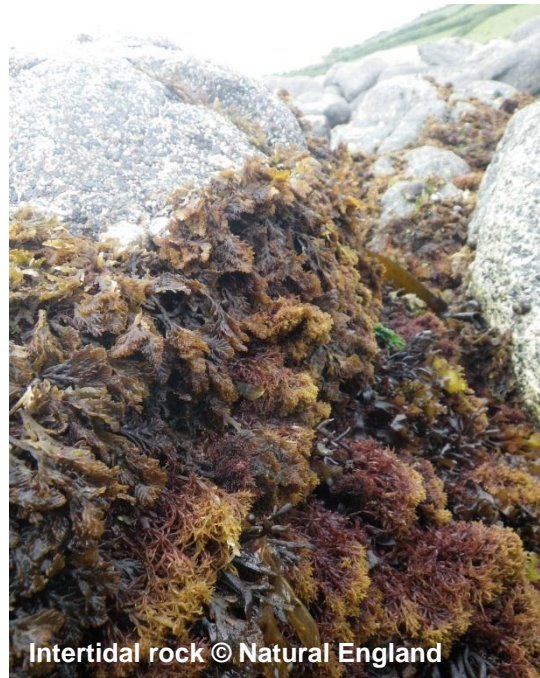
Why is this site important?

This site has been extensively studied and is known to cover an area that is rich in marine biodiversity. The rocky outcrops have been the site of many shipwrecks, which over time have been colonised by some of the species found in this area. The seabed varies extensively throughout the site and includes sedimentary habitats, vertical rock faces and rocky reefs that support a number of highly sensitive features.



What does this Marine Conservation Zone protect?

The high quality rocky reef within the site extends from the shoreline out through shallow into deep waters. These different areas are classified as the intertidal, infralittoral and circalittoral zones. Shallow waters are rich in plant life but at greater depths as the amount of available light reduces the waters become dominated by animals. This rocky habitat supports well known species such as sea-fans and anemones, as well as commercially fished species including common lobsters and crabs.



Intertidal rock © Natural England

The surrounding seabed includes a range of sedimentary habitats that also support important marine communities such as maerl beds. Maerl is a collective term for several species of red seaweed. Maerl is unlike many other species of seaweed because it has a hard, chalky skeleton. As the seaweed grows it deposits lime in its cell walls creating a brittle skeleton. This, combined with slow growth, means that maerl is vulnerable to damage. Maerl grows on sedimentary habitats and can form extensive underwater beds. Juvenile animals are likely to be found sheltering within the branched structures while other species such as urchins, anemones and sea cucumbers can burrow into the gravelly under layer.



Jewel anemones growing on rocky surfaces
© Angela Gall

The MCZ supports a number of interesting animals such as the spiny lobster (*Palinurus elephas*) which is a heavily armoured crustacean with strong spines that protect it from predators. The tiny stalked jellyfish (*Haliclystus auricula*) found within the site actually spends all of its life on the seabed, usually attached to seaweed. It uses the stinging tentacles on the tips of its eight webbed arms to kill or paralyse prey and to defend itself.

Small sea-fan anemones (*Amphianthus dohrnii*) can also be found. These attach to pink sea-fans, a type of erect coral found growing on rock. Sea-fan anemones can group together to form large, closely-packed colonies. Their unusual method of reproduction leaves behind a train of fragments from the base of its body, which grow into new genetically identical anemones.



Sea-fan anemone © Paul Kay

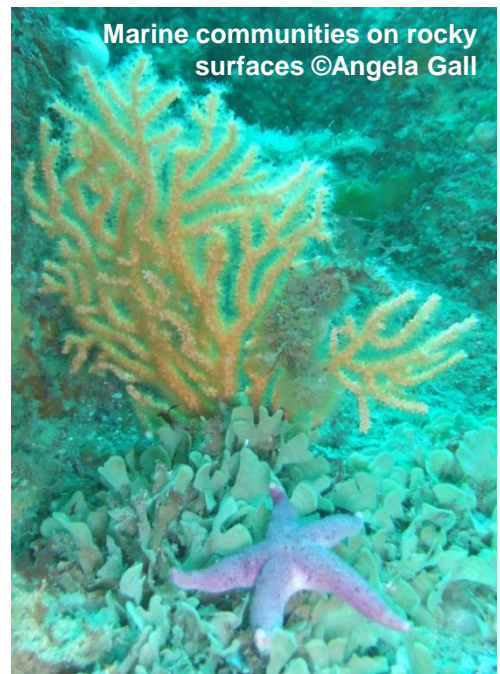
Features	General management approach
Intertidal coarse sediment	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal macrophyte dominated sediment	Recover to favourable condition
Moderate energy intertidal rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy infralittoral rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Moderate energy circalittoral rock	Maintain in favourable condition
Maerl beds	Recover to favourable condition
Sea-fan anemone (<i>Amphianthus dohrnii</i>)	Maintain in favourable condition
Spiny lobster (<i>Palinurus elephas</i>)	Recover to favourable condition
Stalked jellyfish (<i>Haliclystus auricula</i>)	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal coarse sediment	Recover to favourable condition
Subtidal mixed sediments	Recover to favourable condition
Pink sea-fan (<i>Eunicella verrucosa</i>)	Recover to favourable condition

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.



Marine communities on rocky surfaces ©Angela Gall

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 this site 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.

Current activities identified at this site which could be affected include commercial fisheries and archaeological activities and in a limited capacity ports and harbour operations. Archaeological activities such as excavation 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 Cornwall 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.marinemanagement.org.uk/fisheries/monitoring/regulations_bluebook.htm

Current relevant restrictions relating to this site include specific restrictions to netting in part of this site, restrictions on the removal of berried (egg bearing) spiny lobsters and a minimum size for the removal of spiny lobsters through Cornwall IFCA byelaws. All existing and legacy byelaws are being reviewed through the Cornwall IFCA Byelaw Review process, due to report in 2015. For further information visit www.cornwall-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>



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/