

Site Improvement Plan

Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0030373 Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI

Site description

Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone lies off the south coast of England off of the counties of Devon and Cornwall. The site comprises a mosaic of three areas containing annex I bedrock reef habitat: Start Point to West Rutts reefs, Bigbury Bay to Plymouth Sound reefs, and the Eddystone Reefs.

The inshore areas of reef comprise of coastal reef associated with the extension of the exposed terrestrial geology out into the sublittoral zone, and large areas of outcropping bedrock, boulders and cobbles in the offshore extents of the area.

The Eddystone and surrounding reefs lie in deep water and rise steeply, and in the case of the Eddystone, break the water's surface. The site contains a high degree of topographic complexity resulting in a wide range of biological communities including extensive kelp forests and rich communities of branching sponges and a variety of rare species such as the pink sea fan *Eunicella verrucosa*, the sea fan anemone *Amphianthus dohrnii*, the sunset cup coral *Leptopsammia pruvoti* and the sponge *Adreus fascicularis*.

The IFCAs and MMO have not been formally consulted during this stage, however we are currently supporting them in their assessments of fisheries activities in this site as part of Defra's revised approach to managing fisheries in European Marine Sites, which deal with the same issues raised in the Site Improvement Plan.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

| Priority & Issue | Pressure or Threat | Feature(s) affected | Measure | Delivery Bodies |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| 1 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine | Pressure/ Threat | H1170 Reefs | Ensure continuing compliance with byelaws | Cornwall Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO) |
| 2 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine | Pressure/ Threat | H1170 Reefs | Complete assessments to establish whether management is required | Cornwall Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO) |

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Dredges (inc. hydraulic), benthic trawls and seines are categorised as 'Red' for this interest feature (and specifically the sub-feature: Bedrock reef) as part of Defra's revised approach to commercial fisheries management in European Marine Sites (EMS), and requisite mechanisms are being or will be implemented by Devon & Severn IFCA, Cornwall IFCA and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Physical damage to the reef from bottom trawling and dredging could be occurring within this site.

| Action | Action description | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism | Funding option | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s) |
|--------|---|--------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| 1A | Ensure compliance with bye-law and provide an appropriate level of reporting to ensure sites are well managed and to enable Natural England to provide advice on the condition of features and potential condition threats. Ongoing action. | Not yet determined | 2015 onwards | Enforcement: Byelaws | Defra, Local Authority | Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA) | Cornwall Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO) |

2 Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Commercial fishing activities categorised as 'amber or green' under Defra's revised approach to commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites (EMS) require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This assessment is being undertaken by Devon & Severn IFCA, Cornwall IFCA (and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)). For activities categorised as 'green', these assessments should take account of any in-combination effects of amber activities, and/or appropriate plans or projects, in the site. Physical damage to the reef from potting could be occurring within this site. The main amber activities occurring in this site are potting and netting.

| Action | Action description | Cost estimate | Timescale | Mechanism | Funding option | Delivery lead body | Delivery partner(s) |
|--------|--|---------------|-----------|---|------------------------|--|--|
| 2A | Where the assessments indicate management is required, introduce appropriate measures. Deadline December 2016. | No cost | 2015-16 | Regulation: Creation / amendment of byelaws | Defra, Local Authority | Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA) | Cornwall Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO) |

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Action description</i> | <i>Cost estimate</i> | <i>Timescale</i> | <i>Mechanism</i> | <i>Funding option</i> | <i>Delivery lead body</i> | <i>Delivery partner(s)</i> |
|---------------|---|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| 2B | If management measures are established, ensure compliance with bye-law and provide an appropriate level of reporting to ensure sites are well managed and to enable Natural England to provide advice on the condition of features and potential condition threats. Ongoing action. | Not yet determined | 2015 onwards | Enforcement: Byelaws | Defra, Local Authority | Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA) | Cornwall Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA), Marine Management Organisation (MMO) |

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI H1170 Reefs

Site location and links

Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI

Area (ha) **34076.13** Grid reference **50 12 36
N, 03 59
01 W** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Devon County Council; South Hams

Site Conservation Objectives [Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone SCI](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [Start Point to Plymouth Sound and Eddystone cSAC](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [Regulation 33/35 package link](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <i>River basin</i> | South West RBMP |
| <i>WFD Management catchment</i> | South Devon |
| <i>WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)</i> | n/a |

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

| Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI | Blackstone Point SSSI |
| | Erme Estuary SSSI |
| | Prawle Point & Start Point SSSI |
| | Bolt Head to Bolt Tail SSSI |
| | Salcombe to Kingsbridge Estuary SSSI |
| National Nature Reserve (NNR) | |
| Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI | n/a |
| Ramsar | |
| Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI | n/a |
| Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) | |
| Start Point to Plymouth Sound & Eddystone SCI | n/a |

| <i>Version</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.0 | 30/07/2015 | |

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